

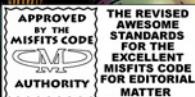


# BETTER MOUSETRAP

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THE REVISED AWESOME STANDARDS FOR THE EDITORIAL MATTER MISFITS CODE FOR EDITORIAL MATTER

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# BETTER MOUSETRAP

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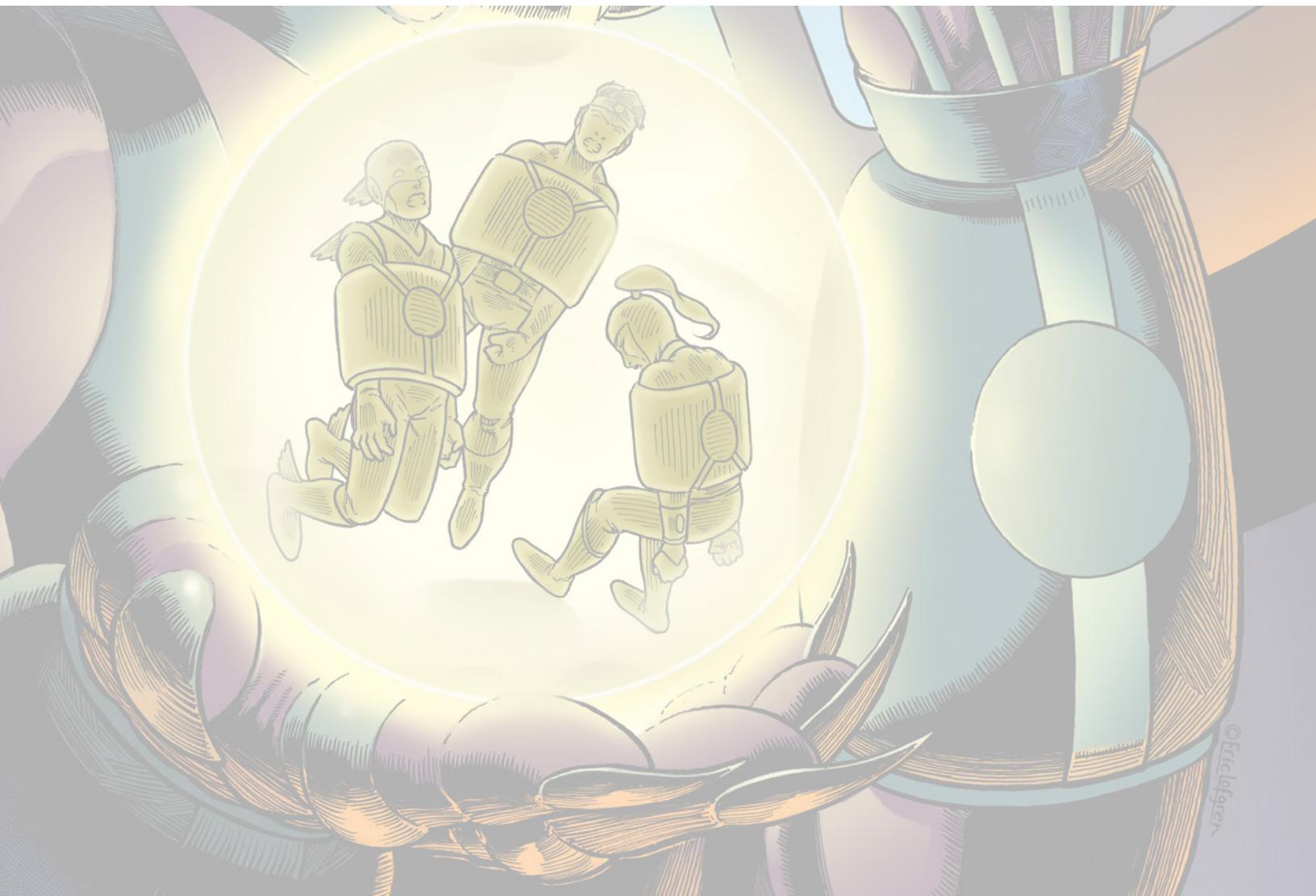
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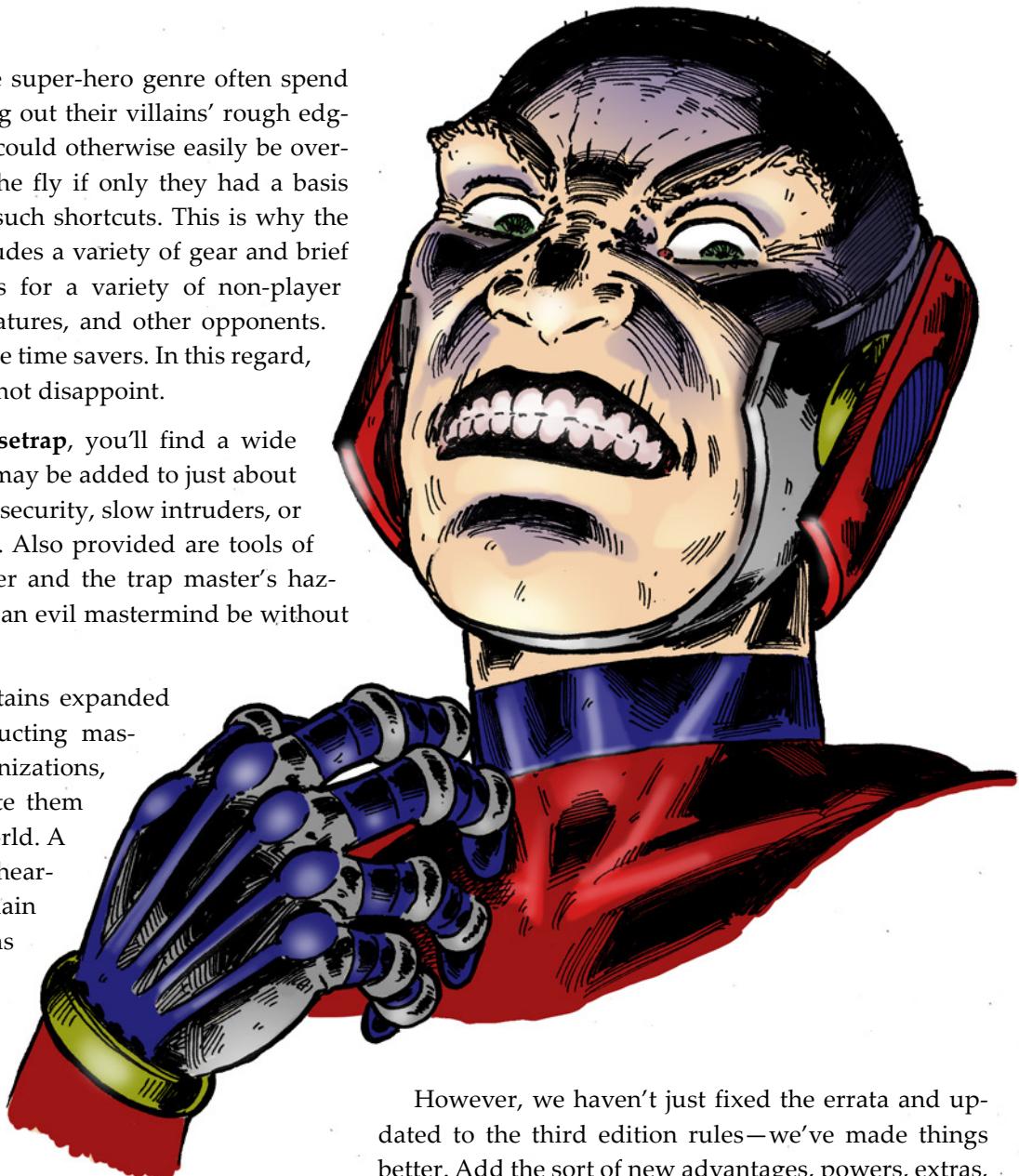
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# INTRODUCTION

Gamemasters of the super-hero genre often spend plenty of time rounding out their villains' rough edges, filling in gaps that could otherwise easily be overlooked or refined on the fly if only they had a basis upon which to define such shortcuts. This is why the core book already includes a variety of gear and brief game statistic capsules for a variety of non-player characters (NPCs), creatures, and other opponents. These are all meant to be time savers. In this regard, **Better Mousetrap** will not disappoint.

Within **Better Mousetrap**, you'll find a wide selection of items that may be added to just about any location to beef up security, slow intruders, or add a taste of lethality. Also provided are tools of the villainous gadgeteer and the trap master's hazards. And what would an evil mastermind be without his army of minions?

This work also contains expanded information on constructing master villains, evil organizations, and how to incorporate them into your campaign world. A Gamemaster tired of hearing his players complain about how his villains lack imagination or trap them in a viciously monotonous cycle of fighting the same sort of conflict again and again, against villains that seem stripped directly from the comic books, will find plenty of helpful suggestions and information in **Better Mousetrap**. This is a resource intended to give Gamemasters a leg up when it comes to designing their villains to stand out while also providing players a reason to fear what the Gamemaster will throw at them.



However, we haven't just fixed the errata and updated to the third edition rules—we've made things better. Add the sort of new advantages, powers, extras, and flaws that customers of our previous products have come to expect, coupled with new art from Eric Lofgren, and you've got the ultimate villain's cookbook in **Better Mousetrap**. It has now updated and revised for the latest version of the rules, and to represent the feedback of you, the customer.

Enjoy, and go be naughty!

# CONTENT SUMMARY

## CHAPTER ONE: SKILLS

Better Mousetrap begins with Expanded and detailed instances of the Expertise skill.

## CHAPTER TWO: ADVANTAGES

The second chapter contains new and appended advantages. Two new categories of advantages are also presented: minion and organization advantages.

## CHAPTER THREE: POWERS

This chapter is filled with new extras, flaws, and power builds.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RULES

Here is where you'll find new and updated or expanded complications, combat rules, and the like.

## CHAPTER FIVE: MAKING A BETTER BAD GUY

This chapter contains suggestions on how Game-masters may build memorable villains, and provides some villain and minion archetypes you can employ in your games.

## What is a "Metahuman"?

Throughout this work, you will see the word "metahuman" used. This is a catch-all term for an augmented being—be it human, alien, or whatever—who have abilities, technology, and power beyond that of ordinary people.

## CHAPTER SIX: GADGETS AND GEAR

Information on new weapons, armor, ammunition types, deathtraps, and plenty of other treats to flesh out a well-equipped villain's bag of tricks.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: THE MANY FACES OF EVIL

New rules on building organizations, and how to take a crowd of non-player characters, such as minions and creatures, and unify them into a single group entity with game mechanics of its own.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: HEADQUARTERS,

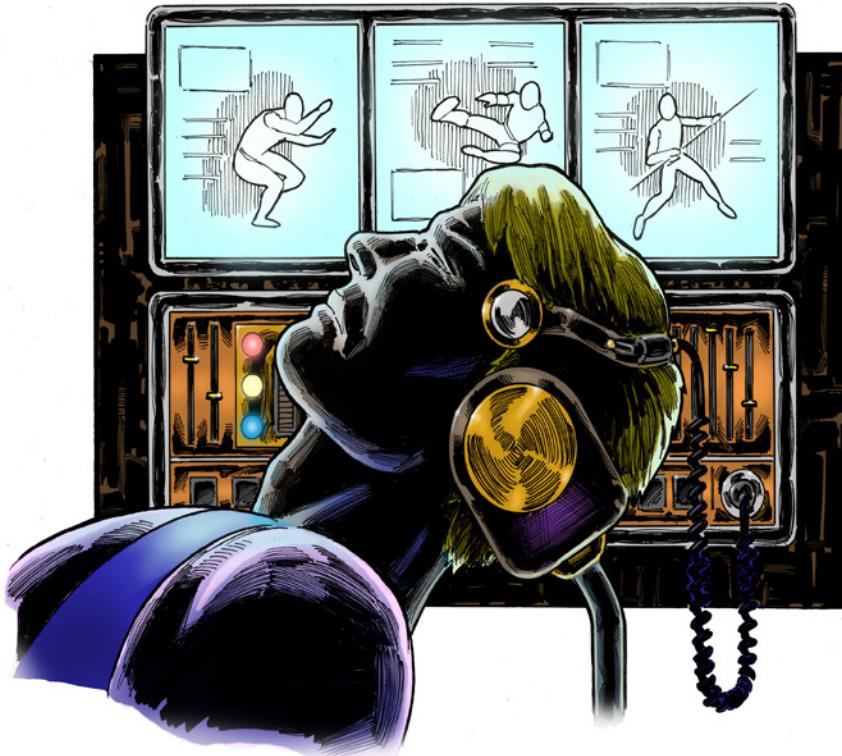
More detailed—and vastly expanded—rules for building headquarters. Includes new features, flaws, and extras intended for headquarters.

## CHAPTER NINE: EVIL TO THE UTMOST

Using the rules and suggestions found in other chapters, here you'll find two examples of villainous organization, CORE and Masters Inc., followed by various individual villains for use in your game.

## APPENDIX: ORIGINAL FORMAT HEADQUARTERS DESIGN

This appendix contains the new headquarters information in the original format used in the core rules for those who prefer the latter to the new headquarters rules presented in **Better Mousetrap**.



## Metahuman Threat Scale

To make using the accompanying creatures easier, a threat scale is used throughout this work. Each character will be assigned a threat level from this scale, providing players and Gamemasters alike an idea of how characters and appropriate organizations should perceive the creature, regardless of actual PL. The assigned threat level takes into account more than the immediate threat posed because it also considers goals, ideals, behavior, state of mind, and so on.

If desired, this metahuman threat scale (MTS) can be incorporated into your game as the system actually used to assess metahuman threats, in much the same way as the government uses a color system to indicate states of national security awareness and preparedness.

**Alpha:** Of minimal danger, an Alpha-level threat is relatively low-powered and/or modestly trained. Such metahumans offer little more threat than a common non-metahuman street thug. A typical law-enforcement response should be sufficient to deal with the threat in most instances.

Such a threat can be restrained within standard containment facilities.

**Beta:** Beta-level threats possess sufficient metahuman abilities and/or training to pose a risk to a typical law-enforcement response. Tactical response units are likely the best way of dealing with such a threat, just to be safe.

Such a threat can often be restrained within standard containment facilities, or those that have undergone a minimum of alteration.

**Gamma:** Threats of this level are an exceptional danger to society, and are not easily dealt with by standard law-enforcement personnel (including ordinary tactical response units.) This is the most common metahuman threat level in most societies, and usually represents the apex of threats whose abilities are based entirely on knowledge and training rather than metahuman powers.

Such a threat can rarely be held for long within standard containment facilities, usually requiring specially prepared conditions for long-term confinement.

**Delta:** Extremely dangerous, and only to be approached in force and with extreme care, Delta-level threats have the capability of causing considerable damage. They represent a significant, immediate threat to life and public resources/services. Delta-level threats are best handled by other metahumans of comparable (individual or combined) power, or by specially trained response units and/or the military. Such a threat cannot be held within standard containment facilities, requiring specially prepared conditions for long-term confinement.

**Epsilon:** Entire nations, continents, and possibly even whole planets are at risk from Epsilon-level threats. Possessing abilities and/or influence to shatter civilizations, nations devote vast resources into anticipating and countering such beings before their machinations or rampages cause irreparable damage to a planet's social order, political stability, and/or physical well-being.

Such a threat cannot be held within standard containment facilities, requiring specially prepared, often-unique conditions for long-term confinement. In the most extreme cases, practical containment is impossible and more extreme (permanent?) solutions must be found.

**Omega:** Omega-level threats are the greatest threat known because they can affect things on a cosmic scale, be it by eradicating entire intergalactic civilizations or putting the very fabric and stability of reality at risk. This threat level is the broadest in its scope, allowing for a variety of actual ability potencies.

Restraining such threats requires a legendary act by beings of lesser threat levels, or an intervention of another Omega being/artifact/power. Generally speaking, though, Omega-level threats are considered unstoppable forces of nature/the cosmos/whatever. They are better tricked, negotiated with, or avoided altogether than directly opposed, as undertaking the latter can easily result in the dangers meant to be avoided.

Containing such beings requires the power of a sun, act of god, or similarly extraordinary expenditure of cosmic power or influence, feats usually only available to other Omega-level beings or incredibly advanced civilizations.

**“-A” Notation:** When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is arcane/magical in nature.

**“-E” Notation:** When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is extraterrestrial (alien) in nature.

**“-D” Notation:** When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is extradimensional (from another plane of existence) in nature.

**“-P” Notation:** When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is psychic in nature.

**“-T” Notation:** When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is Terran (from Earth), but not human in nature.

# CHAPTER 1

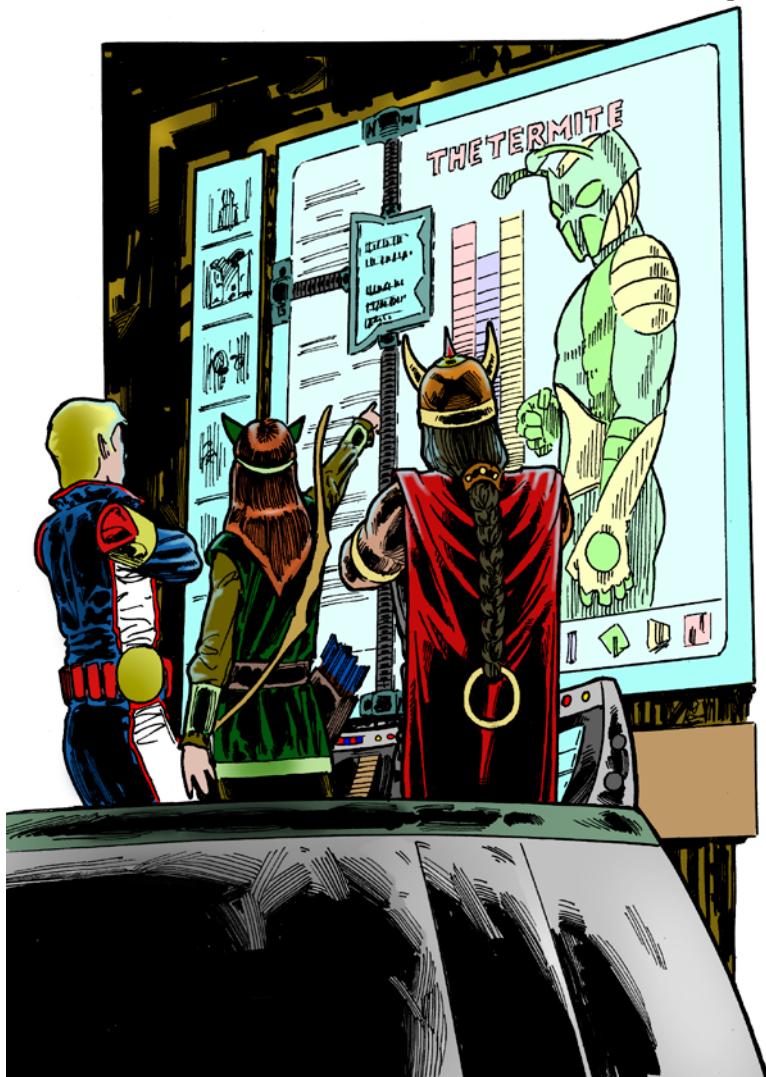
# SKILLS

The skills presented in the **Super-Powered by M&M** rules are far more streamlined than those of previous editions, compressing many previous skills into new, more focused talents. For example, Expertise has come to represent much of what was previously otherwise addressed by multiple, separate skills. Many gamers may still want some of these details fleshed out in order to better understand what their characters are capable of, however. As such, this section explains some specific instances of what falls under the umbrella of the Expertise skill.

The following are some additional areas of Expertise to aid in character building, although this expanded list is not exhaustive. When appropriate, alternatives to using Intellect are indicated, as are potential instances of unskilled Expertise use.

Each provided variation of Expertise is also accompanied by a table of example skill check DC benchmarks appropriate to the skill's use.

A listing of "Type" indicates a particular area of knowledge or focus must be selected for that Expertise skill.



*For Expertise: Instrument, the character must choose a specific instrument, such as the guitar, allowing the skill to be written as Expertise: Guitar. For Expertise: Lore, one could select a particular location, such as Expertise: Toronto, indicating knowledge of the city of Toronto.*

## Ancient Weaponry (Intellect)

Knowledge of the historical significance, craftsmanship, development, and construction and maintenance techniques, practical application, and characteristics of axes, polearms, bows, crossbows, swords, and so on. This does not equate to training in their actual use.

DC	Example
10	Knowing how and why a particular weapon was developed.
15	Understanding harm can be caused to the weapon by firing an unloaded bow or crossbow.
20	Recognizing the differences between how two outwardly appearing similar spearheads were forged.
25	Being able to identify the national origins of a decorative, millennia-old sword that was only in use for a few decades.

## Expertise and Technology

Although some areas of Expertise, such as Electronics and Mechanics, cover the general understanding of the respective body of knowledge, including how to design such devices, they do not cover any physical processes of maintaining, building, or inventing. This is addressed by the Technology skill. However, if the Gamemaster wants to promote a greater relationship between the two, an appropriate Expertise skill may be allowed before a relevant Technology skill check. Every degree of success with the former grants a +2 bonus to the latter's skill check.

### Animal Handling (Awareness; Unskilled)

The understanding and use of techniques for training and taking care of creatures with an animal Intellect (typically -2 or lower) by utilizing predetermined stimuli in order to elicit a conditioned response. Although this may be attempted unskilled, Gamemasters should increase the DCs for anything but the most rudimentary of response, such as teaching a cat to use a litterbox, and more difficult tasks, such as training a dog to attack on command, should only be allowed as a trained use of the skill.

DC	Example
10	Basic behavioral reinforcement techniques.
15	Recognizing an animal that has been trained to attack based on its behavior.
20	Estimating which training techniques work best on a rare animal the character has never previously encountered.
25	Creating a behavioral program that will train an animal to perform an extremely difficult task, such as getting a cat to use and then flush a toilet rather than resorting to a litter box.

### Anthropology (Intellect)

This scientific field is the overall study of mankind—its nature, history, physical and social development, future direction, defining characteristics, and so on. Within this field, there are experts who focus on specific aspects of humanity, such as how its societies are organized or its biological evolution.

DC	Example
10	Naming the more recent predecessors of Homo Sapiens.
15	Being able to identify skulls from the species of known hominids via examination.

DC	Example
20	Extrapolating a reasonably accurate futurist model of likely human evolution to come based upon current metahuman trends.
25	Identifying the region a femur bone came from based on incredibly sparse, trace evidence.

### Archaeology (Intellect)

The use of historical architecture, biological remnants, and other artifacts preserved within the environment in order to understand better humanity's history are addressed by this realm of expertise. Excavation and artifact analysis techniques are also addressed by Expertise: Archaeology.

DC	Example
10	Identifying the overall object a large pottery fragment came from.
15	Recognizing a carefully crafted fake historical artifact.
20	Reading strata layers to identify how old an archaeological dig site is.
25	Recognizing a small fraction of an artifact is out of place in the region it is found in despite a close resemblance to local relics.

### Astronomy (Intellect; Unskilled)

The study and specialized physics of celestial phenomena, including planets, cosmic radiation, solar systems, comets, and much more, touching upon their nature, origins, and even the beginning and evolution of the universe at large.

There are many amateur astronomers who pursue the shallow end of this discipline, but the more advanced principles, theories, and depths of understanding related to Expertise: Astronomy are beyond their ability to make unskilled checks to undertake.

DC	Example
10	Predicting solar flare trends using longitudinal data on the subject.
15	Determining the impact of a sizeable rogue celestial body passing through the solar system.
20	Examining stellar sensory information to identify what classification a stellar body light years away is.
25	Using alien star charts found within a crashed spacecraft to trace its point of origin.

### Biology (Intellect)

This expertise includes knowledge and the study of living organisms, including their classification, evolution, propagation, function, etc. from the cell on up.

DC	Example
10	Taxonomically classifying a well-known biological species.
15	Dissect an unknown organism in order to identify its basic physiology.
20	Taxonomically classifying an organism based off limited or damaged samples.
25	Dissect an unknown organism in order to identify extremely mutated aspects of its physiology.

## Brainwashing (Intellect, Presence)

This skill covers the use of manipulation techniques that can include psychological, emotional, and/or behavioral coercion, as well as physiological methods that degrade endurance and sleep, rendering the subject susceptible to suggestion and alteration.

**Presence** is appropriate to Expertise: Brainwashing uses that involve appealing to or manipulating the subject by using reasoning and argument to brainwash, usually once the subject's willpower has otherwise been broken down.

**Intellect** is appropriate for deliberate and calculated techniques of a more methodical, formulated nature that do not require the brainwisher build a rapport with his subject. Intellect is also appropriate when devising brainwashing methods.

## Bionics (Intellect)

This area of expertise is an umbrella for a number of sub-disciplines that together represent the understanding of biology in the design and implementation of mechanics and electronics, separately and in combination. This includes creating machines that have characteristics found in living creatures or the melding of machines and the biological.

Related skills, such as Biology, Medicine, Mechanics, and Electronics have clear uses that can help in specific, appropriate areas of this skill's use.

DC	Example
10	Explaining how observing animals can improve machine design to someone uninitiated in bionics.
15	Finding a problem preventing a bionic limb from properly responding to the commands of the flesh it is attached to.
20	Designing a submarine that is propelled using the same principles that allow a shark to swim so quickly.
25	Transplanting a human brain into a bionic body that will respond to the mind's commands as though it were attached to a flesh and blood nervous system.

DC	Example
10	Recognizing techniques such as a low-protein diet to increase a subject's psychological malleability.
15	Recognizing that a subject's memories and/or personality have been altered.
20	Recognizing signs of someone having undergone "Manchurian Candidate" programming.
25	Knowing how to program someone to become a "Manchurian Candidate."

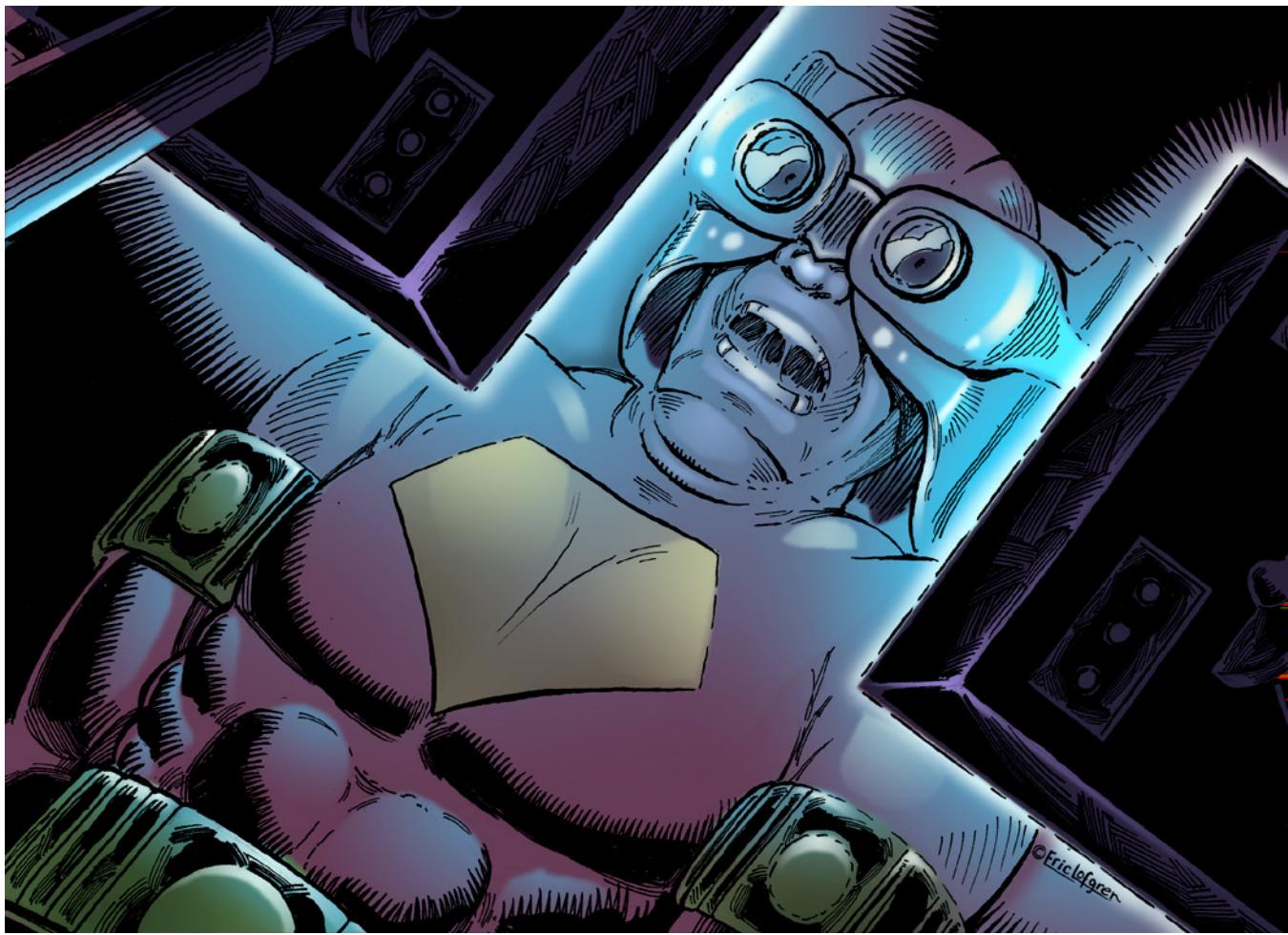
The use of brainwashing on a subject should never come down to a simple matter of a single die roll. It should be a gradual process representing the need to first break down the subject's will and then rebuild it the desired fashion. Graded, opposed skill checks against the subject's Will are used to represent this process, using cumulative, consecutive degrees of success until the desired result is achieved. This means graded degrees of success from consecutive Expertise: Brainwashing skill checks compound.

Each desired effect Expertise: Brainwashing checks attempt to achieve applies different modifiers to the brainwisher's roll, and requires the brainwisher achieve a specified degree of success in order to obtain the intended result. If the required degrees of success on the skill check are not obtained on the first Expertise: Brainwashing attempt, the next attempt to add additional successes through another skill check requires an amount of time equal to the effect's normal action, plus one rank on the **Measurements Table**. If that still does not get the job done, increase the required action by yet another rank, and so on.

## Botany (Intellect)

Although related to biology, Expertise: Botany focuses on flora. It covers the classification, evolution, propagation, function, etc. of plants.

DC	Example
10	Taxonomically classifying a well-known plant.
15	Dissect an unknown plant in order to identify its basic structure.
20	Taxonomically classifying a plant based off extremely limited or damaged samples.
25	Dissect an unknown plant in order to identify extremely mutated aspects of its structure.



Every graded degree of success on the subject's part (or graded degree of failure on the brainwisher's part) reduces the brainwisher's cumulatively achieved successes by one. If this reduces the brainwisher's obtained successes up to that point to 0, all brainwashing progress previously obtained will be negated.

**Expertise:** Brainwashing does not work on a subject with an Intellect of -4 or -5, nor does it work on creatures immune to Will Effects.

What the subject's attitude towards the brainwisher is shall apply a modifier to all of the subject's Will resistance checks for the session, as indicated in **Brainwashing Subject Malleability**.

## Brainwashing Subject Malleability

Subject's Inclination	Will Modifier
Hostile	+5
Unfavorable	+3
Indifferent	-
Favorable	-5
Helpful	-3

## Special Weakness

Having recently undergone brainwashing weakens the subject's mind to external influence. A subject that has successfully been brainwashed within the past 24 hours suffers a -4 penalty to Will resistance checks against mind-affecting/mental effects, including further brainwashing sessions. This penalty is reduced to -2 if brainwashing occurred in the past three days. Beyond that timeframe, no penalties are applied.

## Flashbacks

Anytime someone who has been brainwashed is placed under greater than normal mental stress they roll a Will check (DC 15.) Failure means they are struck by a sudden flash of traumatic memories resulting from the brainwashing process. A flashback can also occur if the subject is otherwise required to make a Will resistance check. Barely succeeding at such a resistance check—rolling only one degree of success—will allow some of the brainwashing process to leak through from the subject's subconscious and manifest as a flashback.

## Brainwashing Player Characters

The brainwashing of player characters is a tricky thing—not the actual mechanics of it because that works as described, but rather how it plays out afterward. Perhaps the easiest way to handle the situation is to resolve it away from the game table. Ask the player to show up early or role-play the situation via email or the like during the game's off hours. If the brainwashing succeeds, the Gamemaster and player can outline parameters for the character's behavior when none of the other players are around to become suspicious.

Such subterfuge is not easy to pull off. It will likely require more private conversations between the player and Gamemaster so they may discuss how the brainwashing will make the character behave during situations that arise. You may also need to find excuses to step away together for a bit.

Ultimately, if the brainwashing is not found out prematurely by the other players, the experience can be a rewarding element of role-playing and a fun twist to the story. Make sure the brainwashed character and its player are rewarded for playing out the situation well.

Flashbacks can manifest in a number of ways. It can be a brief look at a memory of when and/or where the brainwashing occurred, a shadow of a real memory if they have been programmed with a new identity, and so on. The Gamemaster decides what is appropriate.

### Break Will

**Expertise Modifier:** None

**Successes Required:** Five

**Action:** 1 day for subjects with a total Will resistance bonus of +5 or less, 2 days for a resistance bonus of +6 to +12, 4 days for a resistance bonus of +13 to +25, and an additional rank of time on the **Measurements Table** per +10 range beyond +25

Breaking the subject's willpower so their mind and memories becomes pliable and susceptible to suggestion and reconstruction is the first step of brainwashing. This can involve any number of techniques, including torture.

Once the subject's will is broken, additional Expertise: Brainwashing checks are needed to induce a desired result from the subject.

### Alter Identity

**Expertise Modifier:** -2 for minor; -5 for major

**Successes Required:** One for minor; five for major

**Action:** 1 day for a minor alteration; 1 week for a major alteration

The subject's identity, including its sense of personal and social identity, is changed. Minor changes involve keeping the core identity intact but changing

one aspect of that persona. Making someone who is normally very tight-lipped unable to keep their mouth shut about secrets, for example, would be a minor alteration. The subject would still believe they are themselves, but the brainwashing would have changed this part of who they are.

A major alteration is the act of entirely recreating the subject's identity and combines elements of the Alter Loyalty and Tailor Memory brainwashing effects. This means you do not have to additionally make checks for either of the latter two effects if the subject's entire sense of self is being altered, unless the brainwasher wants to go back into the subject's identity afterward and make some minor changes to their initial identity programming.

Subjects who have undergone a major alteration to their identity no longer believe themselves to be who they truly are. Instead, they are programmed with a new identity—a new name, a new personal history, and new memories. They will forget their true identity and believe their programming, accepting themselves as this new person. This means questions about the validity of their programmed identity will read as true during any lie detection test because the subject's belief in their programming will be total.

### Alter Loyalty

**Expertise Modifier:** None

**Successes Required:** Two per rank of attitude shifted

**Action:** 4 hours

Through coaxing, convincing, and manipulation, the subject's attitude (see Persuasion in the core rules) can be shifted negatively or positively one rank regarding

something. This attitude change can be towards just about anything, including positively towards new loyalties (the brainwisher's masters, for example) or negatively regarding existing loyalties (such as the subject's teammates.)

This change in attitude will seem normal and natural to the subject. They will find ways to explain the change, attributing it to carefully reconsidering the situation or the like.

### Deprogramming

**Expertise Modifier:** -5

**Successes Required:** Five

**Action:** 8 hours if the subject's attitude towards the programming is helpful, 16 hours if favorable, 1 day if indifferent, 2 days if unfavorable, or 4 days if hostile

Removing all aspects of deprogramming is done in one concentrated effort. First, the deprogramming requires the subject's will be broken again (see previous Break Will effect.) Once that is done, a combination of techniques are used to return the subject's mind to its previous state.

If the required degrees of success are achieved, the subject is no longer under the influence of any previous brainwashing. However, depending on how traumatic the experience may have been, the Gamemaster may decide some long-term psychological effects remain such as flashbacks of the experience, post-traumatic stress disorder, and so on.

### Manchurian Programming

**Expertise Modifier:** +5 helpful, +3 favorable, +0 indifferent, -3 unfavorable, -5 hostile

**Successes Required:** Five

**Action:** 16 hours if the subject's attitude towards the programming is helpful, 1 day if favorable, 2 days if indifferent, 4 days if unfavorable, or 1 week if hostile

This brainwashing effect involves programming the subject to undertake a certain course of action upon receiving a specific code word, phrase, or symbol. The difficulty of such programming depends on how receptive the subject is to the outcome, using Persuasion's attitude scale as a measurement. If it is something the subject would normally ardently oppose (hostile), the process is much more difficult than programming a course of action the subject may otherwise be willing to do (helpful.)

Someone who has undergone Manchurian programming will work with all their will and ability to complete their programmed task once they have been activated. They will do so as best suits who they are—sneaky people will try subterfuge first, whereas muscle men will be inclined towards violence, for example—but ultimately they will pull out all stops to get the job done, even to the point of harming themselves or people they care about. All that matters is their programming once they have been “turned on.”

Apply an additional -2 penalty, increase the action by one rank of time on the **Measurements Table**, and two more degrees of success are needed if the subject is to forget performing the programmed action once it is complete.

### Tailor Memory

**Expertise Modifier:** Varies (see following)

**Successes Required:** Two per memory

**Action:** 8 hours per memory

You insert a memory of your choosing into the subject's mind, leaving the rest of the mind and identity largely intact. Starting at 30 seconds, this memory can be up to one rank on the **Measurements Table** in length per 2 ranks of Expertise: Brainwashing the brainwisher possesses.

The brainwisher chooses when the event occurred within the past two months; each step further into the past on the **Measurements Table** imposes a -2 penalty to the skill check.

Among other things, this brainwashing effect is frequently used to erase the subject's memory of the brainwashing process. It is not necessary if the subject's entire identity is replaced via the Alter Identity brainwashing effect.

The memory is best kept general in its nature to increase the chance of meshing with the subject's natural memories. Impose a -1 to -4 penalty to the skill check, at the Gamemaster's discretion, for trying to implant a memory that is out of context with the natural memories or for a memory that is especially complex or specific. A memory of the subject in a city he's never been to would be a significant problem, for instance.

A memory that can't possibly be true, such as the subject having committed suicide, causes the check to automatically fail.

A failed check on the brainwasher's part means the subject will recognize the memory as false upon "remembering" it.

### Strengthen Programming

**Expertise Modifier:** Varies (see following)

**Successes Required:** One per +2 Will bonus

**Action:** Varies (see following)

Once someone has been brainwashed, it is possible to strengthen the hold the process has on their mind. Doing so requires additional Expertise: Brainwashing skill checks using the modifiers applies to the brainwashing effect being strengthened. The time required is 2 ranks of time lower on the **Measurements Table** than was originally required of the brainwashing effect that is to be strengthened.

Every degree of success rolled to strengthen a brainwashing effect grants the subject a +2 bonus to Will when resisting someone's attempt to undo that particular effect.

Because attempting to strengthen existing brainwashing requires delving back into the subject's mind, it is not without risks. If the Expertise: Brainwashing check fails, the subject is immediately allowed a Will resistance check (DC 25), reducing the DC by 5 per degree of failure made during the check to strengthen the programming. If the subject succeeds, the brainwashing effect that was to be strengthened unravels and is no longer applied to the subject.

Strengthen programming checks are made separately for each brainwashing effect to be bolstered in this fashion.

### Business (Intellect; Unskilled)

This variation of Expertise covers the principles of not only running a business, but also of the strategies, theories, and methodologies of employee management, financing, strategies, marketing, and so on. The unskilled use of Expertise: Business allows for the basics of these elements, but not advanced aspects that stretch beyond the purview of a small business.

DC	Example
10	Devise a simple marketing strategy for an established product line.
15	Preparing a thorough business plan.

DC	Example
20	Create a marketing strategy for a product line already suffering heavy losses against competing products.
25	Define a longitudinal strategy for infiltrating and taking over a strong competitor.

### Chemistry (Intellect)

**Expertise:** Chemistry is the science of how types of matter exist, are formed, change, interact with each other, react to environmental changes, etc.

DC	Example
10	Properly measure common chemicals for a desired, simple reaction.
15	Identify a common chemical compound using rudimentary means.
20	Creating an explosive compound from common household chemicals, such as products found in a kitchen, bathroom, and garage.
25	Examining a mysterious chemical residue to identify the component chemicals that created it.

### Computers (Intellect)

Use, repair, and maintenance of computers are addressed by the Technology skill, but Expertise: Computers covers theories of computer programming and hardware development, coding principles and techniques, knowledge of computer operation technologies in general, and so on.

DC	Example
10	Identifying a simple driver error.
15	Custom installing multiple operating systems on a single computer.
20	Troubleshooting commonly available software for an error.
25	Writing a complex program intended to undertake a sophisticated task or the like.

### Criminal (Intellect; Unskilled)

Criminal culture, the operation of specific criminal techniques and methods, and examining, critiquing, and planning criminal activities are all addressed by this skill. The process of actually carrying out a crime will likely require the use of another skill, power, or ability, and should be role-played.

DC	Example
10	Knowing the best part of town to find information regarding a well-known criminal or type of crime.
15	Finding the weaknesses in a jewelry store security system schematic with regards to how it can be defeated by burglars.

# Chapter 1: Skills

DC	Example
20	Knowing a fence who can handle an incredibly rare and “hot” stolen item.
25	Recognizing the MO (Method of Operation) of an obscure criminal who primarily operates in a distant country.

## Criminology (Intellect)

Drawing from other areas of Expertise in a more focused manner than comes from possessing those areas of Expertise on their own, Criminology uses elements of anthropology, psychology, and sociology. It does so in a specialized format and framing that applies principles of the latter to better understand crime. This includes causes, statistics, trends, types, effects, and social and legal reactions to crime.

DC	Example
10	Predicting how a city's officials will react to rapid crime trend changes.
15	Determining the people a criminal is likely to associate with based on examination of a psychological profile.
20	Examining a series of ritually slain murder victims in order to create an accurate psychological profile.
25	Identifying likely neighborhoods a highly specialized criminal came from based on his MO (method of operation) and targets.

## Cryptography (Intellect)

Knowledge of how to secure information, devices, and the like from unapproved viewing, or access or use, respectively, as well as how to try and penetrate the efforts of others to do the same.

Expertise: Cryptography is profoundly rooted in mathematics and symbol recognition. Modern cryptography mainly relies upon mathematics and computer systems with regards to both encryption and decryption methodology. This means attempting modern cryptography without the proper tools can leave one at an extreme disadvantage against adversaries who do have access to such means.

DC	Example
10	Decrypting a simple substitution cipher.
15	Identifying the most likely form a specific code's decryption key would take.
20	Recognizing a decryption key when presented with it, despite it being concealed within a book or similar means of obfuscation.
25	Devising a computer cipher that uses twice as many bits as is currently common on the market.

## Current Events (Awareness; Unskilled)

The study and awareness of current happenings in society, such as present and recent events of social, cultural, artistic, and historical significance.

DC	Example
10	Knowing when a popular entertainment act is coming to town.
15	Being able to recite the entire discography and year of production for a popular prolific band that has been together for several decades and has recently staged a comeback tour.
20	Reciting from memory a timeline and locations of terrorist events related to a particular organization that has recently become of particular interest, including which individuals were believed to be responsible, spanning several decades.
25	Predicting the important domestic social ripples a little-known, under-reported foreign news event will likely carry.

## Dancing (Agility, Intellect; Unskilled)

Use **Agility** for performing dance techniques.

Use **Intellect** to represent knowledge of dance history, practical instruction, and to choreograph a dance routine (although **Presence** may also do in some cases of the latter.)

Dancing checks may be attempted unskilled, although extremely difficult maneuvers should have higher than usual DCs at best, or be disallowed at worst, under such circumstances.

DC	Example
10	Impressing the crowd at a dance club with your moves enough for people to clear you some space and watch.
15	Outlining the development and history of a specific form of dance, as well as explaining its current relevance.
20	Choreographing an entire musical show.
25	Trying out for a world-class ballet company.

## Demolitions (Intellect)

Although the actual process of undertaking demolitions uses the Technology skill, this area of Expertise covers the practical and theoretical sciences involved with demolitions, including relevant principles of metallurgy, physics, and engineering as they relate to blowing things up. Also included is knowledge of technologies, chemicals, and so on used in demolition, and how they are obtained.



DC	Example
10	Examine a large blast site to determine the point of origin.
15	Based on a specialized, desired demolition effect, determine the best type of explosive for the job and why.
20	Design a shaped demolitions charge intended to cut through a specific structure in a specific way without damaging anything around the target area.
25	Setting explosives in a building so that it appears to be caused by a natural disaster or accident rather than an act of demolitions.

#### Electronics (Intellect; Unskilled)

This area of Expertise is used to figure out, understand, or design electronic devices, and working or theoretical principles thereof. Expertise: Electronics skill checks may be attempted unskilled, but only for rudimentary activities such as stripping or splicing a few wires. Anything much more complicated than this requires a Trained skill check.

DC	Example
10	Tracking down an electrical short in a simple device's circuit board based on its design specs.
15	Planning the wiring of a house's electronics and power.
20	Examining a custom-made electronic device in order to determine who manufactured it.
25	Designing a better low-light, image-enhancing system for military pilots that provides brighter, clearer vision.

#### Engineering (Intellect)

This skill represents an understanding of scientific and economic theories and principles as they relate to structural design and construction techniques, processes, and the like. It can be used while designing structures, discussing design theory, or for examining a structure for weaknesses and strengths.

DC	Example
10	Designing a safe, stable building foundation in a durable, solid environment.
15	Finding weaknesses in another engineer's detailed office building schematics.
20	Designing a building capable of resisting earthquake damage.
25	Designing an underwater structure.

## Environmentalism (Intellect; Unskilled)

Knowledge of social, scientific, and historical events, processes, and theories as they relate to improving and preserving the environment and its relationship to organisms, as well as knowledge of what places the environment at risk of harm. Unskilled uses of this skill are likely going to be limited to aspects of environmentalism confined to what is generally considered common knowledge, such as information commonly found on the news, special interest web sites and the like, making these skill checks more vulnerable to misinformation, rumor, and so on than would those of a character with ranks in this skill.

DC	Example
10	Understanding the impact on local wildlife removing all wetlands will pose.
15	Explaining the long-term damage to a local economy caused by pursuing the short-term goals of sacrificing environmental conservation in the name of unrestricted industrial progress.
20	Evaluating a city's civil engineering plans for the upcoming decade in order to devise an environmental impact report.
25	Devising a preservation program to preserve and increase the population of a nearly extinct species without any remaining natural habitat.

## Espionage (Intellect)

Training in operational techniques and tactics for obtaining confidential information, covertly passing along secrets, devising and enacting infiltration strategies, conducting counterintelligence, and conducting other aspects of clandestine tradecraft are all addressed by this skill. The rudiments of cryptography are also included, but the degree of ability is not sufficient for modern code-breaking.

DC	Example
10	Deciphering a coded conversation with another agent in order to discern the real message.
15	Identifying a pattern of behavior in a business that strongly suggests it is a front for covert, intelligence-gathering operations.

DC	Example
20	Knowing how to contact a foreign operative working undercover in the city in order to broker a deal.
25	Designing a flow of false intelligence intended to cause enemy agents hidden throughout government agencies at all levels of operation to reveal themselves when they intercept and pass along the information to their controllers.

## Forensics (Intellect)

Using numerous scientific disciplines related to discerning facts about criminal events and scenes. This discipline includes utilizing physical clues to determine the cause and tools of a victim's death or identifying a location of an attack's origin based on indicators such as biological remnants on an object, angle of entry into the body, etc.

**Expertise:** Forensics can also be used as the basis for utilizing other areas of expertise to better effect, such as using Profession: Accountant to know how to trace a crime suspect's finances to determine their location during a crime, to see if they made any out of character payments recently, and so on.

DC	Example
10	Identifying an attacker's likely position during a murder by examining the victim's blood splatter patterns.
15	Unraveling a web of creative accounting, such as numerous foreign and domestic bank accounts owned by front companies that are being used to launder money.
20	Identifying a likely murder weapon based upon highly unusual wound markings on the victim.
25	Sifting for forensic evidence through an area littered with refuse and other environmental elements that are changing, degrading, or otherwise drastically interfering with their examination.

## Forgery (Dexterity, Intellect; Unskilled)

Knowledge of techniques required to imitate documents, handwriting, currency, and the like. Forgery checks and the like may be attempted unskilled, but should not be allowed for more complex and involved undertakings.

**Intellect** is used to design automated means of undertaking a forgery, understanding forgery prevention methods, and recognizing forgeries.

**Dexterity** is applied to checks involving hands-on forgery attempts, such as etching currency plates or imitating someone's signature.

DC	Example
10	Forging someone's signature.
15	Falsifying photo identification implementing rudimentary authentication methods, such as watermarks and distinctive inks.
20	Duplicating polymer monetary bills with forgery-proof measures, such as electronic scan bars built below their surface.
25	Forging a full body scan, biometric security identification signature for a specific person currently approved by the system.

### Gambling (Intellect, Presence; Unskilled)

Rules, history, and the culture of games of chance and similar gambling means are all addressed by this skill.

**Intellect** is used when strategizing and calculating odds or the like.

**Presence** is used while participating in a gambling event wherein you try to influence another player's decisions or perceptions, or if you attempt to create a falsehood for other players to perceive in such a way not addressed by another skill, such as Insight, Perception, or Persuasion.

DC	Example
10	Knowing when not to accept additional cards while playing Blackjack.
15	Understanding the rules of a somewhat obscure variation of Poker.
20	Collating and analyzing previous performance data and the like to calculate the odds of a given horse winning a race.
25	Counting cards.

### Genetics (Intellect)

An aspect of biology, Expertise: Genetics focuses on how the genes of living organisms work—their structure, modification through procreation and artificial means, and so on. This discipline is the root of genetic modification and manipulation, a common aspect of the super-hero genre.

DC	Example
10	Identifying a species by examining its DNA.
15	Performing a genetic test on a person to match them to a DNA sample.
20	Mutating a virus at the genetic level so it only affects organisms with a specific genetic marker.
25	Splicing alien and human DNA.

### Geology (Intellect)

Geology is the study of a planet's physical, earthen components (rocks, minerals, soil, tectonic plates, etc.) in the present and past. This skill can be used to examine the development of these components, their future changes, and effects on the environment.

DC	Example
10	Identify a rock strata sample.
15	Building a soil erosion model for a specific region.
20	Use accompanying mineral isotopes to date a fossil.
25	Employ geological information to predict an upcoming earthquake on the other side of the planet.

### Geography (Intellect)

This skill covers the study of the earth, its composition and lands, and its relationship to the people and creatures that live upon it.

DC	Example
10	Deciphering a topographic map.
15	Estimating how long something has been buried based on the layers of strata found above it by comparing to similar features in the surrounding geography.
20	Determining the location of lost ruins using an ancient map based on soil erosion and other geographic factors that have altered the landscape over time.
25	Devising a detailed map of the history of environmental changes upon the landscape wrought by humanity since the beginning of recorded history.

### Governing (Awareness)

Expertise in the theory, policies, and practice of administrating and running a government body. This broad skill covers the machinations that come with political maneuvering, the needs of a stable society, law creation and enforcement, dealing with foreign dignitaries, public relations, economic management, and so on within a government framework, be it on a municipal, regional, national, planetary, or even galactic scale.

Use of this skill does not guarantee wise governing or the creation of policies that will work best in a given situation—it is no replacement for judgment or experience. Expertise: Governing represents the knowledge and theory necessary to evaluate a given situation in order to arrive at a number of conclusions, not all of which are ideal.

# Chapter 1: Skills

DC	Example
10	Understanding the intricacies of royal lineage and how they relate to one's own claims to the throne.
15	Arriving at a way to smooth things over after one of your ambassadors accidentally insults a neutral foreign power you are trying to woo into becoming an ally.
20	Notice suspicious signs of people manipulating government resources that could indicate an impending coup attempt.
25	Balancing the needs and attention of a dozen quarrelling political factions of relatively equal power, all of which want to force their own agenda on your rule by trickery, violence, or blackmail, all while keeping the government functioning.

## Guns (Intellect)

Knowledge of the historical significance, craftsmanship, development and construction techniques, practical application, maintenance techniques, and characteristics of pistols, submachine guns, rifles, and other firearms. This does not equate to training in their actual use.

DC	Example
10	Identify a non-standard bullet caliber by eye.
15	Field strip, clean, and reassemble an automatic rifle.
20	Recite all the specs for a well-known, prolific firearm manufacturer for each gun in its product line.
25	Custom designing a new part for a firearm that radically improves its capabilities in some way.

## History (Intellect; Unskilled)

The research, collection, and analysis of facts concerning past events, including analyzing how specific past events have affected the present. Widely known historical events can be touched on with an unskilled check, but in-depth analysis, little-known facts, discerning common misconceptions from the truth, and the like require the character possess ranks in the skill.

DC	Example
10	Knowing key figures in a well-known historical event, such as who opposed Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo.
15	Understanding how a historical area of technological development has continued to impact society from then until the modern era.
20	Examining a period in history and sifting through its events to find clues that can help solve a mystery.
25	Trace and argue for the impact on modern society of an obscure, seemingly nondescript person centuries ago by tracing the subject's genealogy and following what his many descendants have done since.

## Hypnosis (Intellect, Presence)

Hypnosis is the process of putting someone in an awakened mental state wherein the subject's focus, relaxation, and susceptibility to suggestion are markedly decreased at the expense of significantly reduced peripheral awareness. Aside from its value as a source of entertainment, Expertise: Hypnosis can also be used in aid of interrogation, to break someone else's hold on the subject's mind, to explore suppressed memories, and much more with regards to both the conscious and subconscious aspects of the mind.

Using hypnosis on a subject should never come down to a simple matter of a single die roll. It should be a gradual process representing the need to bypass the subject's will and natural inclinations. Graded, opposed skill checks are used to represent this process, using cumulative, consecutive degrees of success until the desired effect is achieved. This means graded degrees of success from consecutive Expertise: Hypnosis skill checks compound within each attempt to achieve the desired result.

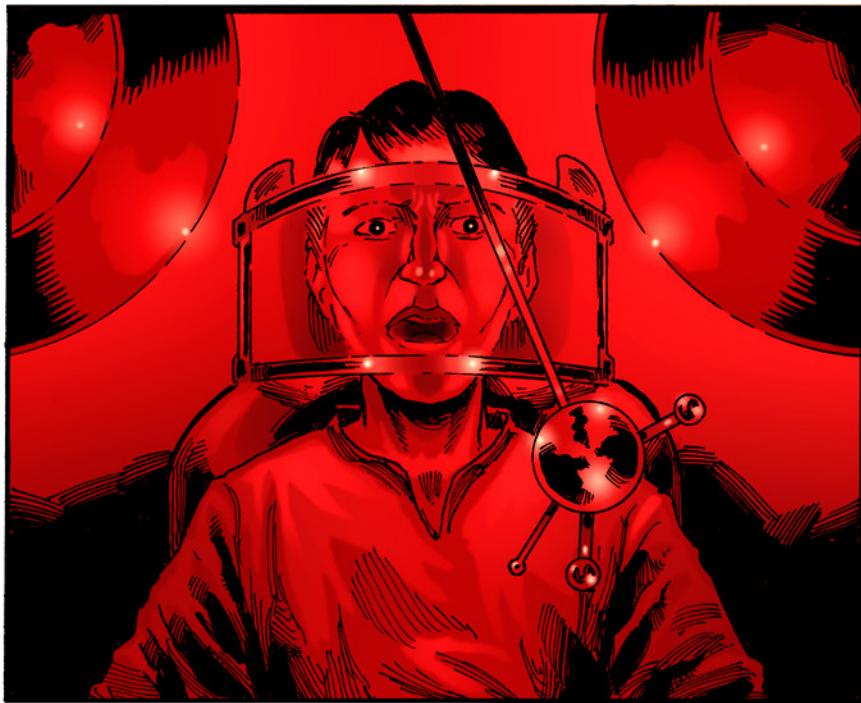
Each desired effect Expertise: Hypnosis is employed to achieve applies different modifiers to the hypnotist's roll and requires the hypnotist achieve a specified degree of success in order to achieve the intended result. If the required degrees of success on the skill check are not obtained on the first Expertise: Hypnosis attempt, the next attempt to add additional successes requires an amount of time equal to the effect's normal action, plus one rank of time on the **Measurements Table**. If that still does not get the job done, increase the required time by yet another rank, and so on.

Every graded degree of success on the subject's part (or degree of failure on the hypnotist's part) reduces the hypnotist's cumulatively achieved successes by one. If this reduces the hypnotist's obtained successes up to that point to 0, all hypnosis progress previously obtained for the desired effect will be negated.

*A subject must first be placed in a hypnotic state before any other effects may be attempted.*

Expertise: Hypnosis does not work on a subject with an Intellect of -4 or -5, nor does it work on creatures immune to Will Effects.

Just how open the subject is to the hypnosis process will apply a modifier to all of the Subject's Will resis-



tance checks for the session, as indicated in **Hypnosis Subject Malleability**.

### Hypnosis Subject Malleability

Subject's Inclination	Will Modifier
Entirely willing	-5
Favorable	-3
Reluctant	+3
Unwilling	+5

A hypnotist can bring a hypnotized subject back to an ordinary state of awareness at any time as a move action. Similarly, any event that can normally break someone's concentration inflicted on a subject while in a hypnotic state requires a Will resistance check (DC 15.) Failure results in the subject being brought out of the hypnotic state. The subject may also attempt to bring himself out of the hypnotic state by making another Will resistance check against the initial *initiate hypnotic state* Expertise: Hypnosis check. However, this resistance check suffers a -4 penalty because a hypnotized mind is more easily manipulated.

The subject is entirely aware of what's going on while hypnotized and will remember everything unless directed otherwise with the *suppress session* effect.

### Special Weakness

Having recently undergone hypnosis weakens the subject's mind to external influence. A subject that has successfully been placed in a hypnotic state within the past 24 hours suffers a -4 penalty to Will resistance checks against mind-affecting/mental effects, including further hypnosis sessions. This penalty is reduced to -2 if hypnosis occurred in the past three days. Beyond that timeframe, no penalties are applied.

#### Initiate Hypnotic State

**Expertise Modifier:** None

**Successes Required:** Two

**Action:** 1 minute for subjects with a total Will resistance bonus of +5 or less, 4 minutes for a resistance bonus of +6 to +12, 15 minutes for a resistance bonus of +13 to +25, and an additional rank of time on the **Measurements Table** per +10 range beyond +25

To initiate a hypnotic state, the subject must have a calm mind. If their mind is agitated or fully aware and/

or unwilling, hypnosis simply will not work without first artificially calming it through drugs, sleep deprivation, or the like. If the relaxed state exists for the entire stretch of time needed to induce a hypnotic state, the hypnotist may attempt the required graded Expertise: Hypnosis check.

Using a rhythmic object (e.g., a swaying pendulum) as a focus to aid in the process grants a +2 bonus to Expertise: Hypnosis checks to initiate a hypnotic state. Doing so requires the subject retain eye contact with this focus at all times. This bonus is not applied to subsequent checks to elicit a desired result from the subject. At the Gamemaster's discretion, other foci may be used, such as a rhythmic voice or particularly soothing type of music.

Once a hypnotic state is achieved, additional Expertise: Hypnosis checks are needed to induce the desired result from the subject.

## Acquire Information

**Expertise Modifier:** None

**Successes Required:** One per question

**Action:** As long as is needed to both ask and answer the question—typically one round combined

This effect entails asking the subject to reveal information consciously or unconsciously held within his memory. Examples include the truth of a particular matter, a pass phrase, lock combination, or location of the desired item.

## Delusion

**Expertise Modifier:** Minor delusion +0 to +2; major delusion: -1 to -4

**Successes Required:** One for minor delusion; Two or more for major delusion

**Action:** Typically a round to build the delusion, although some minor delusions are only a standard action while more complex, major delusions will take longer

Hypnosis for the sake of entertainment involves inducing hallucinations and/or delusions, such as making the subject believe they are a chicken or existing within a false situation. A minor delusion requires very little in the way of convincing the subject. The delusion likely has a great deal of basis in reality, but merely alters how the subject perceives and interacts with the false existence created for them.

Making the subject believe they are talking with someone they know, regardless of that false person's behavior, would be an example of a minor delusion. A major delusion involves grand changes to the subject's perception of their ordinary reality. Making an ordinary, Average Joe believe he was talking with a potent and powerful demigod (an entity he's highly unlikely to ever encounter otherwise) or that he is breathing underwater while visiting a merman king would both be examples of major delusions.

The effect of a delusion depends on any number of circumstances and should be left to the Gamemaster to determine. The hypnotist can spend a standard action to end the delusion whenever he wants; otherwise, it can last as long as the subject remains hypnotized.

## Instill Bonus

**Expertise Modifier:** None, or a cumulative -4 (see following)

**Successes Required:** One per bonus

**Action:** This requires as many rounds to bring about as the subject's existing skill bonus or twice as many rounds as the existing Will resistance bonus, respectively

Hypnotism can be used to instill confidence and clarity of mind that temporarily enhances one's capacity to perform.

The hypnotist can choose to provide either a temporary +2 bonus to the subject's Will resistance modifier or a +2 bonus to a skill of the hypnotist's choosing (the subject must have at least one rank in the skill.) This bonus does not come into effect until after the subject is released from the hypnotic state. It lasts 1 round afterward, plus a time equal to one additional rank on the **Measurements Table** per degree of success for the Expertise: Hypnosis check used to induce the result.

**Separate Expertise:** Hypnotism checks may be rolled to instill both the skill (or multiple skills) and resistance modifiers in the subject, allowing them to be in effect simultaneously. However, doing so imposes a cumulative -4 penalty to the skill check per additional bonus (be it Will modifier or skill) beyond the first instilled bonus.

## Restore Suppressed Memory

**Expertise Modifier:** None

**Successes Required:** One per memory

**Action:** 1 minute per memory

A memory that has been artificially suppressed by means of an external source—such as mind manipulation or through the natural process of the mind defending itself against trauma—may be retrieved by a hypnotist. By employing Expertise: Hypnotism, it is possible to seek out the “footprints” of such memories and revive them into active memory.

If the memory was suppressed by someone else’s active manipulation, the hypnotist makes an opposed check against the former’s power or skill check result initially used to suppress the memory. Otherwise, the check is opposed by the subject’s Will.

If a memory is large or complex, the Gamemaster may wish to break it down into components, each of which requires obtaining separate degrees of success, with failure leaving holes in the memory.

#### Suggestion

**Expertise Modifier:** -1 or -2

**Successes Required:** One

**Action:** One round if the suggestion is to occur while the subject is in a hypnotic state. A post-hypnotic suggestion requires 5 minutes to prepare.

You influence the actions of the subject by suggesting a course of action (limited to a sentence or two.) The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the activity sound reasonable. Asking the subject to do something obviously harmful automatically negates the attempt.

The suggested course of activity can continue for as long as the subject is kept in a hypnotic state. If the suggested activity can be completed in a shorter time, the suggestive state ends when the subject finishes what it was asked to do. If the suggestion is not completed before the hypnotic state expires, the activity is not performed.

It is also possible to install a *post-hypnotic suggestion* that will occur once the hypnotic state ends, although it may be resisted in the same fashion as a normal hypnotic suggestion. A post-hypnotic suggestion can be activated at a given time or under specific circumstances (such as with a code word, specific condition or place, etc.), and will normally end once activated.

Programming the subject so the post-hypnotic suggestion will occur more than once requires an addi-

tional degree of success per instance of doubling the amount (two degrees for twice, three degrees for four times, or four degrees for eight times.) Five degrees of success mean the post-hypnotic suggestion will occur whenever activated, without limit, for the full duration of the suggestion.

The post-hypnotic suggestion will disappear on its own after as many weeks as the hypnotist has Expertise: Hypnosis ranks if the maximum amount of times it may be activated is not reached first. If five degrees of success were achieved while implanting the post-hypnotic suggestion. However, there is no limit to how long its effects will last if not somehow removed.

#### Suppress Memory

**Expertise Modifier:** -3

**Successes Required:** Two per memory to be suppressed

**Action:** 1 minute per check

A memory can be artificially suppressed by burying it deep in the subject’s subconscious, leaving them unaware of its associated events. If a memory is long or complex, the Gamemaster may wish to break it down into components, each of which requires a separate degree of success. Failure leaves the subject confused by the resulting incomplete portions or “flashes” of the memory still active in his mind.

#### Suppress Session

**Expertise Modifier:** -5

**Successes Required:** One per session result/memory to be suppressed

**Action:** One standard action per result/memory to be suppressed.

A subject normally remembers everything that happened during a hypnotic state once brought back to full awareness. The hypnotist may choose to suppress part or all of the session. The longer and more difficult the subject’s hypnotic state, however, and the more memories from the session that are to be suppressed, the more difficult it will be for the hypnotist to succeed.

#### Tailor Memory

**Expertise Modifier:** Varies (see following)

**Successes Required:** Two per memory

**Action:** 1 minute per memory

# Chapter 1: Skills

You insert a memory of your choosing into the subject's mind. Starting at 30 seconds, this memory can be up to one rank on the **Measurements Table** in length per 2 ranks of Expertise: Hypnosis. The hypnotist chooses when the event occurred within the past week; each step further into the past on the **Measurements Table** imposes a -2 penalty to the skill check.

The memory is best kept general in its nature to increase the chance of meshing with the subject's natural memories. Impose a -1 to -4 penalty to the skill check, at the Gamemaster's discretion, for trying to implant a memory that is out of context with the natural memories or one that is especially complicated or precise. A memory of the subject in a city he's never been to would be a major problem, for instance.

A memory that can't possibly be true, such as the subject having committed suicide, causes the check to fail automatically.

A failed check on the hypnotist's part means the subject will recognize the memory as false upon awakening.

## Undo Mind-Affecting Ability

**Expertise Modifier:** -5

**Successes Required:** Two

**Action:** One round, plus one rank up the **Measurements Table** per point of the mind-affecting ability's DC above 15

Be the effect caused by a spell, psionic power, hypnosis, or something else entirely, Expertise: Hypnosis can be used to remove a mental effect currently operating upon the subject.

*A hypnotist may attempt to remove the effects of Mind Control power currently affecting the hypnotized subject.*

If applicable, instead of being opposed by the subject's Will, the Expertise: Hypnosis check is opposed by the result of whatever power or effect was employed against the subject.

*A subject who is influenced by a Mind Control effect achieved with an effect roll result of 22 would require an Expertise: Hypnosis check (DC 22) to undo.*

## Instrument (Type; Dexterity)

Training in the proper playing and maintenance of a particular type of instrument. This skill may be taken multiple times with each instance applying to a different instrument. How specific the type of instrument must be is up to the Gamemaster. Some may rule Expertise: Wind Instrument is appropriate while others may require the character be as specific as to use Expertise: Flute, for example.

DC	Example
10	The ability to tune and clean the specified instrument
15	Performing a typical piece of music.
20	Performing an extremely complex piece of music.
25	Performing a piece of music written for multiple instruments using only one instrument while making the results sound as it was intended to be performed that way.

## Journalism (Intellect; Unskilled)

Researching, analysis, and reporting on current events are addressed by Expertise: Journalism. This skill is complimented and enhanced by other skills, such as Expertise: Writer and Investigation, allowing the journalist to become more adept in an aspect of journalism that has far more reaching potential on its own.

DC	Example
10	Writing a human interest story intended to elicit an emotional response, but does not require much in the way of research or examination of data.
15	Writing an investigative story where the information is all out in the public but the connections have not yet been made between the facts and the appropriate conclusion arrived at.
20	Writing a piece that has a reasonable chance of changing public opinion on a highly polarized topic.
25	Writing a detailed, prize winning story on deep-rooted government corruption, citing all manner of corroborating sources and whistle-blowers.

## Law (Intellect)

Understanding of the legal system and the process of litigation are addressed by this skill.

Operating in foreign jurisdictions will impose penalties to any skill checks with the penalty worsening the more alien the legal system is that the skill check is being made for.

DC	Example
10	Knowing simple, commonly used laws, such as traffic laws.
15	Devising a legal strategy for a client in a rudimentary criminal or civil case.

DC	Example
20	Designing an ironclad contract that is (virtually?) free of loopholes or weaknesses to exploit.
25	Knowledge of an obscure, centuries-old legal precedent that can throw a monkey wrench in seemingly otherwise cut-and-dry legal proceedings.

### Law Enforcement (Intellect)

Knowledge of enforcement policies, techniques, and strategies designed to reveal, capture, and (when necessary) punish someone who has broken the law. This knowledge includes deterrent and prevention methods intended to impede the breaking of laws in the first place.

Operating in foreign jurisdictions will impose penalties to any skill checks with the penalty worsening the more alien the legal system the skill check is being made for is.

DC	Example
10	Planning an adequate police presence at a city-wide parade.
15	Plotting a secure transport route through a city that will provide the safest path to transport a prisoner between the jail and courthouse.
20	Designing a strategy for using undercover police officers to penetrate the local underworld en masse in order to uncover a super-villain plot.
25	Devising a plan for optimal dispersal of riot police when a super-villain releases a virus that causes the entire city's civilian population to become violent, raging maniacs.

### Lore (Type; Intellect)

This skill represents knowledge of the facts, traditions, values, rumors, stereotypes, norms and the like of a given body of knowledge. A particular ethnicity, nation, sub-culture, location, or social group (e.g., aristocracy) are all excellent examples of an area of Lore, as are more general areas of knowledge, such as pop culture or religion in general. Unskilled checks may be allowed for facts and the like concerning an area of Lore that are considered a part of common knowledge.

DC	Example
10	Knowing where to find a decent restaurant using Lore for a particular city.
15	Knowing the proper ritual and routine to greet nobility in a small, obscure country using Lore: Aristocracy.
20	Using Lore: Pop Culture to recite in order the twenty most popular songs of a given year over four decades ago.

DC	Example
25	Understanding the details of a now-forbidden exorcism rite that has long since been suppressed and struck from all official records using Lore: Religion.

### Magic (Intellect)

This covers magic, astrology, numerology, and similar topics. Aside from rituals and other arcane processes and methodologies, Expertise: Magic represents a history of the arcane arts, the culture surrounding it, and the people renowned (or despised) for its use.

This skill does not address stage magic and arts of mundane illusion, such as sleight of hand.

DC	Example
10	Being able to differentiate between real magic and stage magic during a performance supposedly using the latter.
15	Identifying a somewhat simple (so far as such things go) arcane ritual being cast by an opponent.
20	Delving into the history of a rare magical artifact in order to figure out how to use it correctly.
25	Casting a 10 point arcane ritual using what you find in an arcane library.

### Mathematics (Intellect, Unskilled)

The systematic process of using patterns to arrive at spatial or quantitative results, be they factual or theoretical in nature, including how they are structured and change. Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division are the most common forms mathematics takes in practical terms. However, this Expertise consists of far more and is relevant, in one form or another, to many other areas of Expertise, such as Science, Medicine, and even Visual Arts. This skill may be used unskilled, but is limited to rudimentary, common elements of the discipline.

DC	Example
10	Calculating some simple geometry.
15	Calculating pi to a dozen or so digits.
20	Undertaking a game theory calculation to aid in determining weaknesses in a military strategy.
25	Designing a new approach to understanding a field of experimental mathematics.

### Mechanics (Intellect; Unskilled)

This skill is used to figure out, understand, or design mechanical devices, and working or theoretical principles thereof. Technology is used for actual construction, repairs, and the like. Use Intellect for the thought process behind the design

# Chapter 1: Skills

**Expertise:** Mechanics skill checks may be attempted unskilled, but only for rudimentary activities such as designing a rudimentary device out of pre-built, easily understood parts. Anything much more complicated than this requires a trained skill check.

DC	Example
10	Knowing how to change a car's oil.
15	Devising a temporary fix to keep a machine working long enough to get it someplace where proper repairs may be made.
20	Designing a stock model car from scratch.
25	Planning the repair of extensive combat damage in a nearly destroyed mecha.

## Medicine (Intellect)

The practice and study of healing and health. This area of Expertise includes understanding and being able to expand upon preventative health measures, appropriate methodologies for maintaining proper health, and knowledge of corrective and healing procedures. The Treatment skill is still required to undertake the practical, hands-on aspects of medicine.

DC	Example
10	Identifying the best medication for a person to take for a common ailment.
15	Designing an effective, individualized dietary and exercise plan to improve health and impact weight loss.
20	Researching a patient's vast family history, cross-referencing their various medical details, to predict concerns with the current patient.
25	Examining a longitudinal study's results of thousands of patients in order to determine a pattern of correlation indicating the rise of a previously unknown disease.

## Metahuman (Intellect; Unskilled)

The study and understanding of beings possessing metahuman (super) abilities, covering said abilities, known personal information regarding individuals in that community, and aspects of metahuman sub-culture.

Unless a metahuman's true identity is a matter of public knowledge, knowing his real name and other details of his real life should *never* be revealed as a mere matter of an Expertise roll. The same goes for other elements of the character's nature that are not publicly known, such as the secret origins of how they got their powers, or an unknown vulnerability or deadly allergy. Such confidential information should



only be revealed through the course of the game's events and role-playing.

DC	Example
10	Knowing the metahuman's most often used powers.
15	Being able to name the metahuman's frequent associates or teammates.
20	Knowing where the metahuman operates.
25	Understanding of the metahuman's favored tactics, objectives, and methodology.

## Meteorology (Intellect)

Crossing over and drawing from several scientific fields, such as physics and chemistry, meteorology is the study of the atmosphere. Most notably, meteorology pertains to weather and how various environmental factors, man-made and natural, affect them in both immediate and longitudinal terms.

DC	Example
10	Making a general weather prediction based on observation of current atmospheric conditions.
15	Creating a weeklong weather forecast.
20	Predicting an atmospheric disturbance, such as a cyclone, well ahead of time.

DC	Example
25	Creating an accurate model of continued ramifications of global warming, using constantly shifting environmental variables.

## Military (Intellect)

Knowledge of military procedures, policies, organization and hierarchy, logistics, methodology, basic strategic techniques, roles, tasks, history, and the like are addressed by this area of Expertise. This skill also covers having to interact with military organizations appropriately using their respective chain of command and inherent bureaucracy.

DC	Example
10	Knowing the proper etiquette in a given situation while among officers.
15	Identifying the best sort of military unit, from the appropriate branch of the Armed Forces, for a particular mission based on provided parameters.
20	Preparing a detailed chain of command and sustainable logistics plan for a long-term, joint operation overseas between several units from different branches of the military that may be at cross-purposes with each other.
25	Spotting a foreign commando dressed in plain clothes based on behavior, how he carries himself, grooming, and the like, and being able to identify the unit he likely belongs to.

## Mythology (Intellect; Unskilled)

The study and understanding of myths, folklore, and legends, usually surrounding gods, epic heroes, supernatural beings, origin stories, and the like. In addition to knowledge of these tales, this Expertise can help better understand how mythology and actual history may sometimes overlap, especially in a world of super-beings and gods who walk among men.

DC	Example
10	Knowing Odin is the Norse pantheon's patriarch.
15	Understanding the differences between the Greek and Roman pantheons, including the different names for the various gods in each version of the similar mythologies, and how they were worshipped.
20	Preparing the proper protocol to meet a specific god who has decided to walk the mortal world as a hero.

DC	Example
25	Preparing a detailed analysis comparing and calculating similarities between all gods of similar purposes from all cultures spanning all known human history in order to pursue a theory of a shared heritage between them.

## Occult (Intellect)

Although science is sometimes used to study the occult, this area of Expertise concerns itself with that which is to be found outside the realms of science as is currently understood. The occult involves the paranormal and supernatural, as well as those organizations, secret societies, cults, and other practitioners involved with them.

DC	Example
10	Recognizing arcane designs carved into the floor as part of a magical ritual.
15	Knowing what sort of minerals or plant is supposed to be able to act as wards against a specific type of paranormal entity.
20	Recognizing arcane designs carved into the floor as part of a magical ritual and being able to identify the type of supernatural creature it was used to summon.
25	Identifying the secret society that buried a tomb deep under a modern city hundreds of years ago, and what it was meant to contain, based on the unique symbols of a lost tongue chiseled in its walls.

## Oceanography (Intellect)

The study and application of science and environmentalism as they pertain to oceans. Numerous other scientific disciplines cross over with oceanography because the latter involves itself with what lives in the oceans, how man-made chemicals alter its ecosystems, how its currents flow and shift, the effects of landmasses and tectonic plates on the ocean environment, and so on.

DC	Example
10	Identifying a common ocean-based fish.
15	Predicting the effects on its respective region if an ocean species becoming extinct.
20	Building weather projection models based on unexplained changes in the ocean currents.
25	Examining a water sample and, based on the pollutants in it, identifying the likely region of the world it is from.

# Chapter 1: Skills

## Physics (Intellect)

The science of how energy, matter, and force function in relation to the rest of the universe and its natural phenomenon. Physics is at the root of many other scientific disciplines that operate under a tighter focus on a particular area.

DC	Example
10	Figuring out the amount of friction between two objects that collide based on the distance travelled from their starting points.
15	Predicting the trajectory of a projectile weapon based on its inclination, shape, and speed.
20	Using a crashed alien spacecraft's translated log-books, mechanical performance details, and remaining fuel in its tanks to calculate how far it travelled before impact.
25	Calculating the probability of surviving versus being torn apart by a rift torn in space to an alternate reality.

## Poisons (Intellect)

This field of Expertise includes the use, making of, and origins of substances that cause some manner of (usually detrimental and dangerous) disruption or the like in a living thing. This skill also covers antidotes and decontamination practices while handling poisons.

DC	Example
10	Knowing how best to safely poison rats infesting one's home.
15	Poisoning someone's drink in a way that will not easily show up during a medical exam.
20	Identifying by sight and scent venom upon the tip of a wooden blowgun dart found at a crime scene.
25	Creating a new toxin to poison alien invaders with a physiology that is not entirely understood.

## Politics (Intellect)

Knowledge of how a government operates, including the functions, relationships, and behaviors of its component parts.

DC	Example
10	Knowing the basic principles and positions of a government political party.
15	Examining a politically-oriented speech to determine if it is likely to appeal to the intended audience.
20	Deciphering a bill being considered to determine the likely practical ramifications if it was made into a law.

DC	Example
25	Determining the likely political repercussions within the native government and voting public, along with the potential responses of foreign governments, for a head of state undertaking a particularly complicated course of action.

## Profession (Type; Ability Varies; Conditionally Unskilled)

This broad Expertise skill represents the ability to perform a particular profession's required tasks, and also imparts related knowledge. It does not, however, cover areas already represented by other skills even if they cross over at some level. However, at their discretion, the Gamemaster may permit rudimentary understanding of that other skill under some conditions. In such instances, the Gamemaster may require the character possess those other skills in order to take an Expertise skill related to a given profession.

*Expertise: Scientist would allow the character to make a living as a scientist and impart understanding of proper laboratory and scientific procedures. Yet another skill, such as Expertise: Genetics, would be required to splice DNA. In this case, the Gamemaster also declares the character cannot be of this profession unless they also possess Expertise: Science or a similar skill.*

The ability applied to a given profession will vary far more than is typical of other aspects of Expertise, depending on the Gamemaster's judgment, as well as whether or not the skill may be used unskilled.

*Presence is an ability that may be suitable for Expertise: Comedian, which may be used unskilled. Anyone can try to be funny and, arguably, timing and knowing how to play to one's audience are the most critical elements of comedy.*

*Expertise: Soldier represents the training and discipline of a professional soldier, as well as their mandate and responsibilities. The version of Expertise is best served by Intellect and cannot be used unskilled.*

Example professions include *Accountant, Actor (Unskilled), Assassin, Astronaut, Combat Instructor, Comedian (Unskilled), Criminal Profiler, Diver, Educator (Unskilled), Fashion Designer (Unskilled), Federal Agent, Hunter (unskilled), Lawyer, Mercenary (Unskilled), Miner (Unskilled), Policeman, Radio Host (Unskilled), Pharmacist, Physician, Sailor, Soldier, Stage Magician (Unskilled) Trainer (Unskilled), Writer (Unskilled)*

DC	Example
10	Sewing some stitches into a deep cut (physician)
15	Writing a well-received role-playing game supplement (writer)
20	Teaching a bear to walk around on top of an inflated ball (trainer)
25	Taking a wide variety of seemingly unrelated crimes spanning two decades and five continents, and finding common implied behavioral and psychological links that indicate they were perpetrated by the same person (criminal profiler)

## Psychic (Intellect)

Covering all lore and study of psychic phenomenon, this specialty may be used in place of Expertise: Magic in conjunction with the Artificer advantage to design and construct temporary devices of a psychic instead of mystic nature.

DC	Example
10	Identifying the tricks a typical fraudulent psychic is using to claim they talk to the dead.
15	Recalling the name of a famous psychic who operated in the city over a century ago.
20	Identifying a paranormal item as being psychic rather than mystical in nature by watching how it functions.
25	Understanding the purpose of an ancient, esoteric psychic device found deep beneath the Earth's surface, abandoned many millennia ago by aliens.

## Psychology (Intellect)

By applying scientific principles and methodology to the study of the mind, this Expertise deals with understanding why and how people—as individuals and collectively—behave and think as they do. Psychology is also used to treat mental disorders using this knowledge.

DC	Example
10	Examining a criminal suspect to determine if they are legally sane and able to stand trial.
15	Analyzing someone's reaction to something you say to determine if they are hiding anything in their response.
20	Predicting a villain's likely next move using a psychological profile and based on a clue purposefully left behind.
25	Striving to understand, and subsequently treat, the thought process of the world's most dangerous, psychopathic super-villain.

The use of psychology on a subject as a means of treatment should never come down to a simple mat-

ter of a single die roll. It should be a gradual process. Graded, opposed skill checks are used to represent this process, using cumulative, consecutive degrees of success until the desired result is achieved.

## Quantum Mechanics (Intellect)

Also known as quantum physics, this area of study concerns itself with the physics of energy and matter within the quantum realm. It is the foundation of atomic theory and similar scientific theories of atomic and subatomic relationships.

DC	Example
10	Being able to explain how a laser beam is created and sustained.
15	Understanding how multiple universes can occupy the same space at a quantum level.
20	Using quantum interference to use the heat generated by firing a particle beam pistol back into energy to refill its fuel cell.
25	Proofing the math for a quantum computer design.

## Religion (Intellect; Unskilled)

Study of organized spiritual systems of faith and belief that collectively define cultural aspects ranging from morality and behavior to the origins of existence. Expertise: Religion is primarily considered with the rituals, policies, and practices of the organizations built around these belief systems and not just what those beliefs represent. There is some overlap with mythology, especially in a world where super-heroes exist, and ancient gods walk among mortals.

DC	Example
10	Knowing why people of the Jewish faith do not eat pork.
15	Being able to imitate a religion's basic behaviors so as to pass a cursory inspection as one of its members.
20	Using a little-known religious law to free someone sentenced to death as a heretic in a theocracy
25	Being able to translate the meaning behind the ritual death dance of the lost Tonga people on the Island of Monsters.

## Research (Awareness; Unskilled)

The process of seeking data on a given subject by distilling fact and meaning from the source material such as books, Internet websites, and the like. There is often overlap with aspects of the Investigation skill.

# Chapter 1: Skills

DC	Example
10	Sifting through recent news articles to learn a politician's stance on particular issues.
15	Doing a background check on a politician in order to dig up some dirt.
20	Looking through history to find references to an immortal metahuman.
25	Hunting through a massive, ancient, alien library with no organization system to find a single line of text relevant to solving the current problem.

## Riding (Agility; Unskilled)

Expertise: Riding indicates skill and knowledge of how to ride an animal, such as a horse.

See **Chapter 4** (pg 84) guidelines and rules for doing so, including relevant DCs. Essentially, it is employed in a similar fashion as the Vehicles skill, save it applies to using a mount.

## Robotics (Intellect)

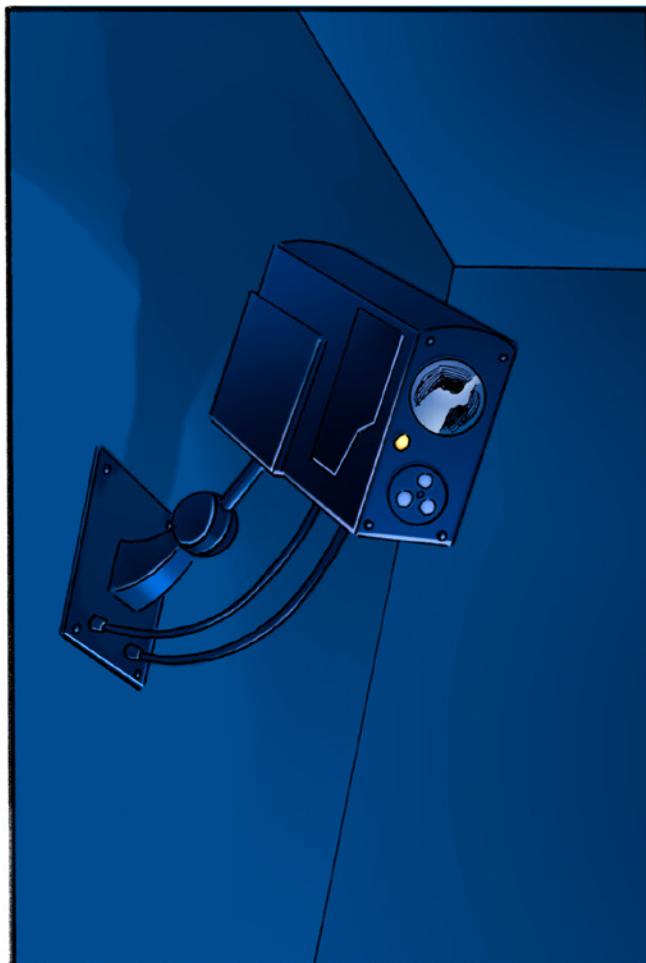
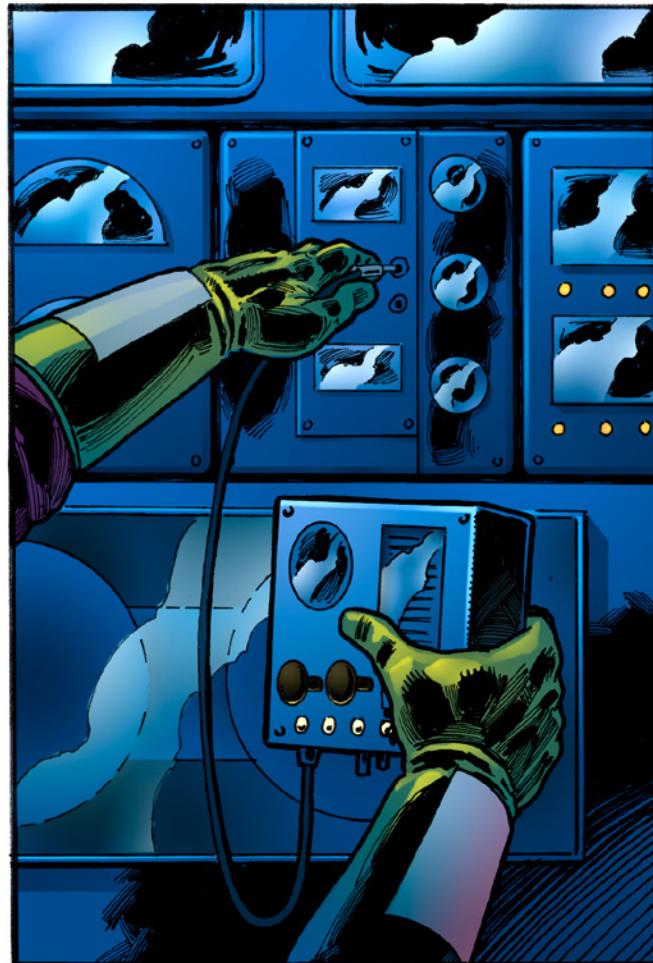
The design and practical theories of robot constructs are addressed by this area of Expertise. Such knowledge ranges from the physical components to the software

running the machine, including those that have a degree of artificial intelligence or are otherwise able to perform decision-making functions.

DC	Example
10	Designing a cat-sized robot that will vacuum the floor using motion detectors and spatial awareness software.
15	Designing a robot vehicle that can drive itself using programmed parameters and destinations.
20	Designing a combat-capable, humanoid robot bodyguard.
25	Knowing how to repair the synapse-emulating circuits in an artificially intelligent android's brain-like CPU.

## Science (Intellect; Unskilled)

Although there are many specialized Expertise skills focusing on particular aspects of science, this skill covers the fundamentals of all but the most highly specialized fields. This allows the character to make skill checks for most science-related tasks but, usually, with higher DCs than would be required of someone with a more refined Expertise skill focusing on that particular field of scientific endeavor.



DC	Example
10	Safely mixing two chemicals together to determine what they are.
15	Identifying a plant based on its leaves
20	Teaching the basics of quantum mechanics in a high-school course.
25	Properly dissecting and cataloguing an alien life form's rudimentary physiology.

#### Security (Intellect)

Understanding of security measures, ranging from how to set-up a manned perimeter to the operation of sophisticated anti-infiltration devices, are addressed by this skill. This expertise represents familiarity with the technology, people, and techniques of securing locations, objects, and people against their penetration, theft or destruction, or kidnapping or assassination thereof, respectively.

DC	Example
10	Choosing an optimum, commercial home security system.
15	Recognizing someone who is fairly well-known in the field of private security.
20	Determining the likely location of a security system's controls within a facility based solely on familiarity with the system model.
25	Devising a manned and automated security cordon for a large location that has dozens of possible, difficult to defend entry points and similar weaknesses.

#### Singing (Presence; Unskilled)

The measure of one's talent for singing, as well as a trained or inherent understanding of singing techniques, styles, and practices.

DC	Example
10	Singing a typical nursery rhyme.
15	Singing a typical pop song.
20	Providing an award winning singing performance.
25	Singing an incredibly complex opera with long sustained, rapidly ranging notes and the like.

#### Sociology (Intellect)

Using various forms of study, observation, and analysis, this skill covers the study of society through the various relationships of its component elements and the people that comprise them. These factors include demographics, religion, contemporary culture, social status and stratification, the law, and criminality, among others.

DC	Example
10	Analyzing demographic information to provide regional crime statistics.
15	Examining modern society and relating it to historical demographic trends to illustrate changes to racist perceptions.
20	Applying social theory to predict global conflict trends in the near future.
25	Conducting a social survey of an alien race in order to construct a detailed social profile outlining everything from customs to behavior to a detailed look at their anomalies.

#### Stage Magic (Intellect, Dexterity)

Also known as illusion, stage magic involves using distraction, sleight of hand, and other forms of trickery and shenanigans in order to create the appearance of performing arcane or preternatural acts.

**Dexterity** is used for acts of physical prestidigitation, eye-hand coordination, or the like not addressed by Sleight of Hand.

**Intellect** is employed while designing, figuring out, or otherwise being engaged in stage magic in a manner other than hands-on. The latter is also used to figure out how to work sleight of hand into an act.

DC	Example
10	Discerning how three interlocked, solid rings can be pulled apart.
15	Keeping track of a card's position in a shuffling deck.
20	Figuring out how a professional illusionist is able to levitate random audience members during his show.
25	Designing a trick that will make an entire city seem to disappear in front of a live audience.

#### Streetwise (Awareness; Unskilled)

Understanding and awareness of urban culture, especially unorthodox and youthful aspects, also known as "underground" or fringe cultures rooted in the city streets, including appropriate lingo and behaviors. Drug, dance and music clubs, and homeless cultures of the city are all addressed by this area of Expertise, as is knowing how to access the information grapevine that exists among urban criminal elements, such as prostitutes, drug dealers, and black marketers.

# Chapter 1: Skills

DC	Example
10	Know the best places in the city to attend illegal dance parties.
15	Guessing a likely place to find someone selling illicit street narcotics.
20	Seeing the signs of homeless teenagers working together to conduct a neighborhood crime wave of extortion and robbery.
25	Knowing a black market fence in the city who is likely to be able to sell a stolen experimental time distortion device.

## Survival (Awareness)

This skill represents training and knowledge of how to keep yourself and others safe and fed in the wild. How to build a shelter and otherwise protect oneself from the elements, and how to discern poisonous plants from those that are edible or have medicinal properties are the sort of thing Expertise: Survival addresses.

DC	Example
10	Providing food and water for one person.
15	Build a shelter or otherwise fortifying yourself against the weather and other hazardous climate conditions.
20	Provide food and water for a small group (2 to 5) of people.
25	Provide food and water for a small group (2 to 5) of people in an environment that barely sustains native life.

## Tactics (Intellect)

Tactics covers the philosophy, planning, policies, strategies, and techniques for facing an opponent within the context of the resources, environment, and other applicable conditions available. Most often, this skill is utilized in a military capacity to plan how best to defeat one's foe, but it can also be employed in other areas, such as business or politics.

DC	Example
10	Using superior numbers and terrain to plan how to ambush a squad of enemy soldiers.
15	Preparing a counterattack from a prepared position surrounded by the enemy.
20	Devising a way to sneak supplies through an enemy blockade to allies entrapped within the cordon.
25	Planning the deployment of an inferior number of spacecraft to attack a galaxy-spanning empire of vastly superior military strength.

## Temporal Mechanics (Intellect)

This skill covers the confusing and complex study of how physics relates to time, especially time travel. This includes the theoretical (or real, depending upon what is possible in your game) means of travelling through time, the ramifications of operating in a time not your own, such as the creation of paradoxes, and the existence and creation of alternate histories.

DC	Example
10	Understanding the dangers of your actions should you travel to the past.
15	Postulating the moment in time when events changed, creating an alternate history.
20	Recognizing sufficient subtle differences to realize you have travelled to an alternate history before seeing anything obviously different.
25	Mathematically devising a theory of how time travel is possible, should a machine be created to allow the situation outlined by the math to become a reality.

## Theology & Philosophy (Awareness, Intellect; Unskilled)

Studying religion and divinity from a position of critical reason rather than faith, along with a similar examination of knowledge, thought, existence, time, relationships between humanity and reality, morality, and the like are addressed by this skill. This includes their history, policies, nature, and implications, respectively, in the broad terms required for critical analysis.

There is some inevitable overlap with Expertise: Mythology and Expertise: Religion, especially in a world where super-heroes exist and ancient gods walk among mortals. However, this skill is driven less by fact and more by questions.

Use **Intellect** while reasoning through a relevant analysis.

Employ **Awareness** when trying to recall a relevant fact or theory.

DC	Example
10	Comprehending the orthodox dogma of a specific organized religion.
15	Presenting a rational argument regarding the nature of predetermination and probability on the nature of choice.
20	Unraveling the clues to a puzzle that are left in a long series of Zen prose.
25	Charting a theoretical history of mankind that speculates what would have happened differently if Christianity had never developed as a religion.

**Torture (Intellect; Unskilled)**

Torture is the application of extreme psychological, emotional, and/or physical stress (including pain) as a form of severe punishment or a means to extract information from the subject. Torture can be brutally random or extremely calculating in how it is implemented, depending upon the desired goal, timeframe to achieve those results, and the torturer's skill.

Aside from employing this skill to conduct actual torture, it is also used to create or analyze torture techniques. This includes someone else's torture methods in order to determine what the torture intended to achieve, how long it lasted, the degree of harm it likely inflicted, and similar details.

DC	Example
10	Recognizing the physical and mental signs of trauma caused by torture.
15	Being able to differentiate scars from physical torture from those obtained in other ways, such as from an accident or in combat.
20	Assessing someone in order to ascertain the best torture techniques for breaking them, based on their perceived strengths and weaknesses.
25	Devising a new, effective means of torture unlike any previously seen.

The use of torture should never come down to a simple matter of a single die roll. It should be a gradual process representing the need to break down the subject's will. Graded, opposed skill checks against the subject's Will are used to represent the progressive cracking of someone's resolve, using cumulative, consecutive degrees of success to represent the process until the subject cracks. This means graded degrees of success from consecutive Expertise: Torture skill checks compound.

Every graded degree of success on the subject's part (or graded degree of failure on the torturer's part) reduces the torturer's cumulatively achieved successes by one. If this reduces the torturer's obtained successes up to that point to 0, all torture progress previously obtained will be negated.

Degrees of Success	Results
1	Insignificant break. Minimal information, such as name, rank, and serial number are provided.
2	Minor break. Information of minor importance that has a low risk of compromising anything or anyone will be revealed.

Degrees of Success	Results
3	Major break. Information of importance that may compromise something or someone will be revealed.
4	Severe break. Although the subject will impart much of what is asked, they will withhold the most vital, important details.
5	Broken. The subject will impart anything desired.
+1	You can continue to extract additional information of the sort obtained from a Broken result.

**Traps (Intellect)**

Knowing how to design, construct, bait, prepare, and conceal traps. In the case of highly advanced traps, the Technology skill may be required for construction purposes.

DC	Example
10	Building a simple deadfall trap out of logs.
15	Building a poisoned needle trap into a doorknob.
20	Devising a trap tailored to a particular target's powers.
25	Designing an intricate, city-wide deathtrap.

**Visual Arts (Dexterity, Intellect; Unskilled)**

Knowledge of art forms that are mainly visual in nature. This body of knowledge includes understanding the various visual disciplines and schools of thought, including the principles and techniques that combine to create visual art. Practical forms of visual art, such as graphic design and the aesthetics of architecture are included.

This skill may be used to identify forged art using opposed skill checks against the forger's Expertise: Forgery skill.

**Dexterity** is used to create a work of visual art.

**Intellect** is reserved for analyzing and studying it.

DC	Example
10	Identifying Renaissance influences in a modern painting
15	Creating a new logo that represents the client company's products and identity
20	Recognizing the underlying, unifying moral of an entire series of post-modern art collaborated upon by different artists.
25	Painting a masterpiece.

# Chapter 1: Skills

## Writing (Intellect; Unskilled)

The ability to communicate textually in a manner that is true to the appropriate grammatical style, the chosen medium, and the desired context. It also includes the ability to communicate a message or story in such a way as to engage the reader. Expertise: Writing encompasses creative writing, both prose and poetry, as well as more practical writing purposes, such as those of a technical or journalistic nature. It also accounts for the process of analyzing someone else's writing for meaning, influences, and the like.

DC	Example
10	Writing a clear, concise memo.
15	Analyzing a poem in order to extract the real meaning hidden beyond the literal.
20	Documenting the life of a mediocre person in a way that makes them seem incredibly intriguing.
25	Writing a work of immense, culture-spanning literature.

## Xenobiology (Intellect)

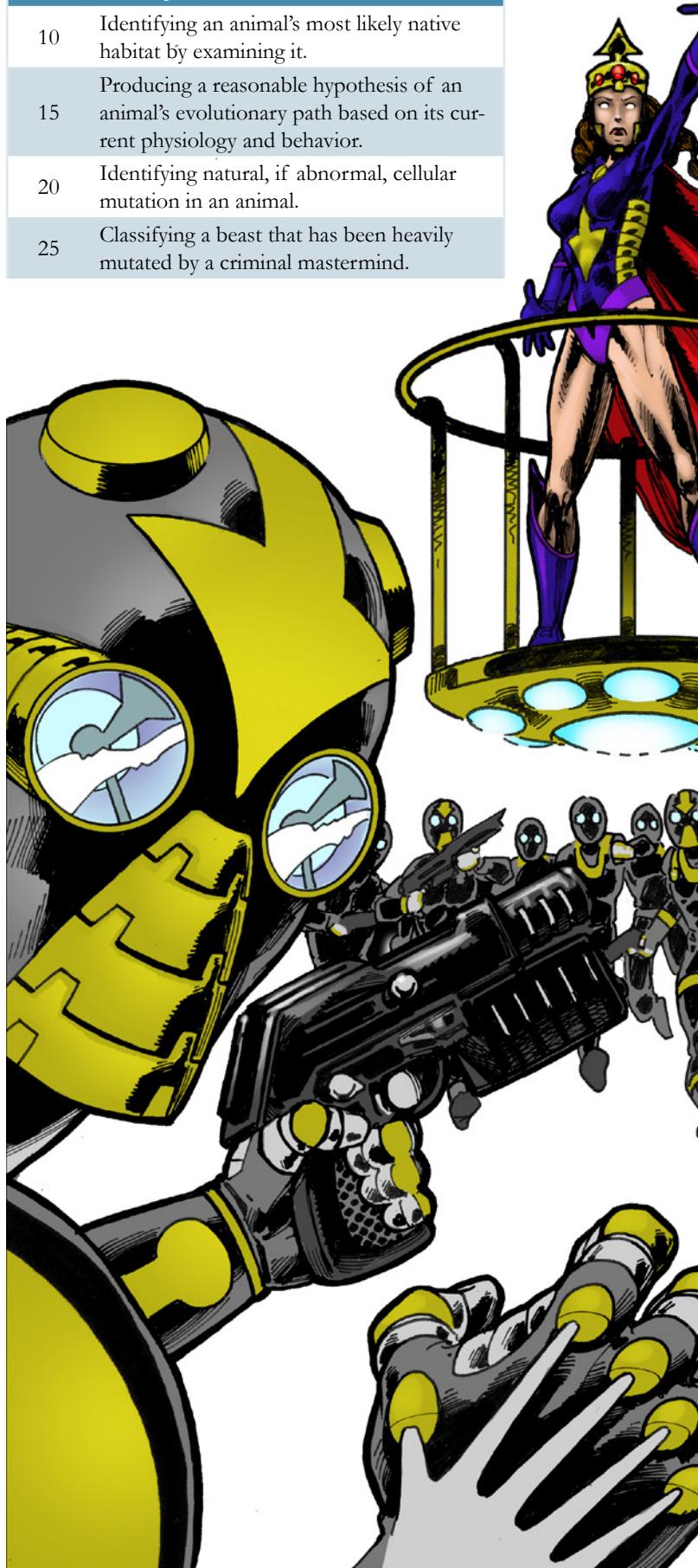
This is the study of the behavior, physiology, evolution, distribution, habitat, and origins of living creature alien to Earth: extraterrestrials. In games where aliens do not exist, this is a skill of theory and guesswork by extrapolating conditions based on observations made within the scientific constraints of Earth. Games that make use of alien races, however, utilize exobiology as a practical discipline that serves a very real function, and has the opportunity to use actual specimens to pursue knowledge.

DC	Example
10	Identifying a creature's cellular structure as one alien to how life evolved on Earth.
15	Using a live alien specimen to develop likely theories regarding the creature's native habitat.
20	Constructing theories on likely evolution scenarios for extraterrestrial life forms given a model of an alien environment radically different from any on Earth.
25	Devising a package to be shot into space that can communicate mankind's intentions, physiology, aspirations, history, and desire for peaceful contact in a way that can universally be understood.

## Zoology (Intellect)

A variation of biology specifically concerned with animals. Instinctual and learned behaviors, habitations, evolution, classification, physiology, and the like are all concerns of this discipline.

DC	Example
10	Identifying an animal's most likely native habitat by examining it.
15	Producing a reasonable hypothesis of an animal's evolutionary path based on its current physiology and behavior.
20	Identifying natural, if abnormal, cellular mutation in an animal.
25	Classifying a beast that has been heavily mutated by a criminal mastermind.



# CHAPTER 2

# ADVANTAGES

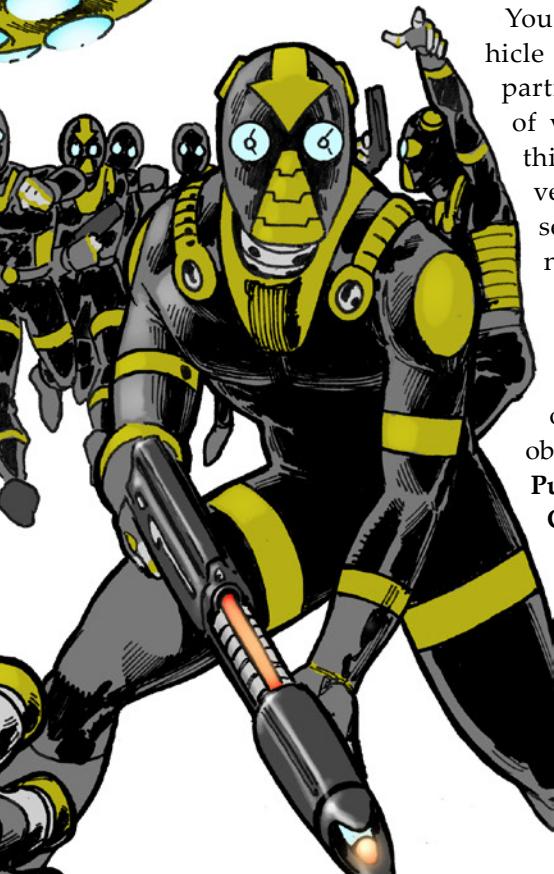


The following new advantages are listed by name, type, ranks (if applicable), and a description detailing their benefits and function.

Some of the “new” advantages are second edition feats that did not make the cut into the third edition rules, for one reason or another. However, there is value in many of these feats becoming advantages—following some alterations and tweaking to make them more appropriate for the third edition.

## ACE

## SKILL, RANKED



You gain benefits to Vehicle skill checks with a particular model/type of vehicle per rank in this advantage. A new vehicle type must be selected with each new rank.

When in a selected vehicle, you reduce the chance of encountering an obstacle by 2 (see **Hot Pursuit & Vehicle Combat Optional Rules**, pg 84.) Also, you require half the usual amount of Leads (round up) required to perform a pursuer or target maneuver.

Expertise: Riding may be substituted for the Vehicles skill while riding a mount, or Acrobatics for individual, personal movement powers

## AVOIDANCE

## COMBAT, RANKED [2]

You enjoy a +2 circumstance bonus to Dodge checks to avoid a grab or similar ensnaring effect. If you have 2 ranks in this advantage, your circumstance bonus increases to +5.

## BANTER

## SKILL, RANKED

Make a Deception check as a free action every round this advantage is employed. This is resisted by your targeted foe’s Will, or opposed by their Deception or Sense Motive (whichever is best.) Success means you gain a circumstance bonus of (Presence + Banter ranks) to your Dodge or Parry (as appropriate) against that opponent. You only benefit from this bonus while your opponent is able to hear you and you keep up the witty (read: annoying) repartee.

Banter also takes away from your full attention, however, imposing a -2 circumstance penalty on your attack, skill, and power checks while in use. However, you can become a natural at annoying your target by spending a second rank in Barter to remove these penalties. (Annotate as “No Penalties.”) A rank spent in this way cannot be used to obtain a Dodge or Parry modifier.

Your total Dodge or Parry bonus is limited by the campaign’s PL.

## COMMANDER

## GENERAL

Commanding a minion or similar follower counts as a free action provided there is a means to communicate the command, and the command is both brief and simple. Only one such command may be issued per round. Any additional commands require the usual amount of time to communicate the desired message.

## CONNECTED, REVISED SKILL, RANKED

This advantage works as described in the core rules but, optionally, a Gamemaster may want to refine its use to be more precise. Instead of generally applying to

# Chapter 2: Advantages

## Combat Advantages

Advantage	Effect
Avoidance	Circumstance bonus to avoid grab and ensnaring effects.
Improved Throw	Choose if opponent uses Acrobatics or Athletics to oppose your trip attack.
Moment of Weakness *	Select an appropriate action you may undertake as though you had prepared a ready action.
Monkeywrencher *	Circumstance bonus to Damage versus mechanisms and electronics, and disabling or sabotaging may take less time.
Ranged Hold	Make attack check to pin targets with ranged weapons.
Reliable Attack *	The selected attack type is no longer subject to critical misses.
Sneak Attack	Gain a circumstance bonus to a surprise attack's Damage rank equal to your attack's degree of success.

\* These Advantages are ranked

## Fortune Advantages

Advantage	Effect
Enduring Inventions *	Grants more scenes for inventions when a hero point is spent.
Enduring Psi-Rituals *	Grants more scenes for psi-rituals when a hero point is spent.
Enduring Rituals *	Grants more scenes for rituals when a hero point is spent.
Extra Extra	Add an extra to a power effect.
Second Wind	Removes the dying condition and replaces it with staggered.
Taskmaster *	Inspire minions to gain a +2 circumstance bonus to some defense or resistance checks.

\* These Advantages are ranked

## General Advantages

Advantage	Effect
Commander	Sending simple commands to one's minions is a free action.
In the Wings	The character need not wait until between adventures to replace minions or call upon more followers.
Micro-Architect *	Reduce the required Space of headquarters features by 1.
Minion Addendum *	You may spend ranks on gaining additional minions or followers instead of spending more points on a single minion.
Organization *	Acquire 15 points per rank to spend on an organization.
Rise to the Occasion *	Increases a specified PL limitation.
Trademark *	+1 bonus per rank to succeed at Trademark maneuver.

\* These Advantages are ranked

the character's connection in all aspects of life, you must choose a particular faction of society to have active connections with. Every rank allows you to choose a different faction of society.

By fractioning Connected in this manner, an element of realism is added, preventing characters from drawing on inappropriate help with the constant need for Game-master fiat. This revision also helps further define the character's concept.

The first rank you select for this advantage will indicate your primary connected faction with all others being secondary.

*You could have Connected 3 (P: Criminal; S: Military, Police.) These distinctions can be as broad or as narrow as the Gamemaster feels is appropriate to the character's concept.*

You gain a +5 circumstance bonus to Persuasion checks within your primary faction and 2 for secondary factions. This bonus cannot increase your total effective skill rank higher than the campaign's PL limit.

You may later switch which faction is your primary faction, but doing so requires purchasing a rank in Connected without acquiring a new faction for it.

## Skill Advantages

Advantage	Effect
Ace *	Halve Leads needed for vehicle maneuvers and reduce the chance of encountering an obstacle.
Banter *	Use a steady stream of annoying chatter to frustrate your opponent into losing accuracy.
Connected, Revised *	Choose factions within society with which to gain a circumstance bonus to Persuasion checks.
Contacts, Revised *	Choose factions within society with which to gain a circumstance bonus to Investigation checks.
Ear to the Ground *	Halve the usual time for Connected's Persuasion checks and Contact's Investigation checks.
Gambler *	Circumstance bonus on Insight and Persuasion checks while gambling.
Gifted Craftsman *	May construct inventions faster.
Gifted Inventor *	May design inventions faster.
Invention Expertise *	Reduce the cost of devices built with the specified effect by 5 points per rank.
Master Trap-Maker *	Gain traps in situations where you have a chance to prepare in advance.
Mesmerist	Halve the ranks of Time needed to perform an Expertise: Hypnosis effect.
Muscle Up	Climb with one hand without penalty.
Poisoner *	Gain a circumstance bonus to create poison, to poison-related power checks, and to resistance checks versus poison.
Psi-Artificer	Use Expertise: Psychic and Technology to create temporary magical devices.
Psi-Ritual Expertise *	Reduce the cost of psi-rituals researched with the specified effect by 5 points per rank.
Psi-Ritualist	You can create and manifest psychic rituals.
Rapid Builder *	Reduce time to build items related to the selected skill.
Ritual Expertise *	Reduce the cost of rituals researched with the specified effect by 5 points per rank.
Skill Adept *	The minimum you can roll with the selected skill, before modifiers, is (5 + ranks.)
Specialization *	Gain a circumstance bonus on a particular aspect or area of a skill.
Strongarm	Use Strength instead of Presence while <i>coercing</i> .
Trainer *	Teach animals to perform special tricks.
Wire Fighter	Defending yourself while climbing is less prohibitive.

\*These Advantages are ranked

### CONTACTS, REVISED

### SKILL, RANKED

This advantage works as described in the core rules but, optionally, a Gamemaster may want to refine its use to be more precise. Instead of generally applying to the character's contact in all aspects of life, you must choose a particular faction of society to have active contacts with. Every rank allows you to choose a different faction of society.

The first rank will indicate your primary faction with all others being secondary.

*You could have Contacts 2 (P: Federal Government; S: Legal.) These distinctions can be as broad or as narrow as the Gamemaster feels is appropriate to the character's concept. You gain a +5 circumstance bonus to Investigation checks within your primary faction and 2 for secondary factions. This bonus cannot increase your total effective skill rank higher than the campaign's PL limit.*

You may later switch which faction is your primary faction, but doing so requires purchasing a rank in Contacts without acquiring a new faction for it.

### EAR TO THE GROUND

### SKILL, RANKED

You are exceptionally competent at working your connections and contacts, allowing you to halve the time required of Connected's Persuasion checks and Contact's Investigation checks.

If using the revised Connected and Contact advantage rules presented in this chapter, Ear to the Ground becomes a ranked advantage. You must purchase a rank for every faction you wish Ear to the Ground's benefits to apply to.

### ENDURING INVENTIONS

### FORTUNE, RANKED

You may employ an invention you construct for as many additional scenes while spending a hero point as

## Chapter 2: Advantages

this advantage's ranks, plus one. This is instead of the usual one additional scene gained from a hero point used for this purpose. The Gamemaster reserves the right to cut this short if the story's progress demands it.

*Having three months of in-game time instantly pass by in real time as the heroes heal from their most recent scene would be a good reason for the Gamemaster to rule the invention no longer worked, even if this advantage would otherwise allow it to.*

You are limited to no more ranks in this advantage than half the game's PL (rounded down.)

### ENDURING PSI-RITUALS FORTUNE, RANKED

You may employ a psi-ritual for as many additional scenes while spending a hero point as this advantage's ranks, plus one. This is instead of the usual one additional scene gained from a hero point used for this purpose. The Gamemaster reserves the right to cut this short if the story's progress demands it, as per the Enduring Inventions advantage.

You are limited to no more ranks in this advantage than half the game's PL (rounded down.)

### ENDURING RITUALS FORTUNE, RANKED

You may employ a ritual for as many additional scenes while spending a hero point as this advantage's ranks, plus one. This is instead of the usual one additional scene gained from a hero point used for this purpose. The Gamemaster reserves the right to cut this short if the story's progress demands it, as per the Enduring Inventions advantage.

You are limited to no more ranks in this advantage than half the game's PL (rounded down.)

### EXTRA EXTRA FORTUNE

Spending a hero point temporarily bestows you with an additional flat 1 point or +1 cost per rank extra to a power effect of your choice. Increase the flat point value or +1 cost per rank value by one per additional hero point spent, in which case you may split your ranks among various extras, but not across different power effects. The additional extra(s) lasts until the end of the scene or until the effect's duration expires, whichever comes first.

### GAMBLER

### SKILL, RANKED [2]

You are exceptionally talented at reading and playing off people when there is something at stake, giving you a +2 circumstance bonus on Insight and Persuasion checks against subjects you are gambling with. If you take a second rank, you increase this bonus to +5. This bonus does not provide bonuses to checks made that have nothing to do with the gambling at hand.

### GIFTED CRAFTSMAN

### SKILL, RANKED

Every rank of this advantage allows you to reduce by 1 rank of Time on the **Measurements Table** the amount needed for an invention's construction check without suffering the usual -5 circumstance penalty to the Technology check.

### GIFTED INVENTOR

### SKILL, RANKED

Every rank of this advantage allows you to reduce by 1 rank of Time on the **Measurements Table** the amount of time needed for an invention's design check. This is done without suffering the usual -5 circumstance penalty to the Technology check.

### IMPROVED THROW

### COMBAT

You're skilled at throwing opponents off-balance. When making a trip attack (normally or using a power), choose for your opponent whether they must use Acrobatics or Athletics to oppose you.

### IN THE WINGS

### GENERAL

Once per session, replace lost minions and/or followers of the same type in a timeframe equal to the rank of time on the **Measurements Table** equal to the minion's rank on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77) plus their PL.

*Replacing 10 (amounts rank -1) PL 3 thugs could be done within 30 seconds (-1 + 3 equals a Time rank of 2.)*

### INVENTION EXPERTISE SKILL, RANKED

Select an effect you can duplicate or represent with a device. Reduce by 5 points per rank the total cost (not cost per rank) of powers using that effect as part of a device, with a minimum total cost of 1 point. Additional ranks allow you to apply this advantage to another effect or further reduce the point cost of the selected effect.

Although any combination of extras and flaws may be applied to this effect when building such a device, this advantage's benefits do not apply if the power is built as part of a multi-effect power, is linked to, or has an Alter-



nate Effect that does not also benefit from this advantage. If Invention Expertise applies to all relevant effects, use the highest applicable advantage rank and ignore the rest.

*A character with Invention Expertise 3 (Affliction) and Invention Expertise (Weaken) builds a device with a power comprised of Ranged Affliction 8 and Ranged Weaken Strength 4. This would normally cost 24 points. Thanks to the Invention Expertise 3 Affliction, however, it costs 9 points; the Invention Expertise (Weaken) effect is not applied.*

Use the adjusted point cost instead of the normal point cost for the sake of determining device's design or the invention check.

You may not have more ranks in this advantage than half the game's PL.

#### **MASTER TRAP-MAKER SKILL, RANKED**

If you have the opportunity to prepare for an encounter, you can fill an area with traps. For every rank of this advantage, you may fill the area with 10 points worth of traps, distributed as desired. The trap-layer then makes an Expertise: Traps check.

## Chapter 2: Advantages

When someone enters the trapped area, they must make a Dodge resistance check every time they move across the ground (or through the air if any of the traps affect airborne targets.) This is against a DC equal to the trap-layer's Expertise: Traps check result, +1 per rank of speed the subject is moving at through the area beyond a speed of 0. If the resistance check fails, a randomly determined appropriate trap goes off.

No more Dodge resistance checks need be made (taking for granted the traps do not automatically reset. In such cases, Dodge checks gain a +5 circumstance bonus because the trap's location has been revealed) once the total amount of traps set in the area have been activated. The trap-layer does not need to make this resistance check (unless an opponent makes a point of forcibly subjecting the trap-layer to one of his own traps, at the Gamemaster's approval.) Allies who were pointedly made aware of the traps' locations make their resistance checks with a +5 bonus.

Preparing an area in this manner requires as much Time on the **Measurements Table** as the equivalent Volume rank.

*Filling a 1,000 cubic foot area (rank 10) would take 2 hours. The amount of time may be reduced by imposing a -5 penalty to the Expertise: Traps check per time rank reduction (minimum rank of 0; 6 seconds.) Making the area safe again by removing the traps requires half this time.*

### MESMERIST

### SKILL

The time needed to induce a hypnotic state or perform a hypnotic activity to someone already in such a state, as per the Expertise: Hypnosis skill, is reduced to half the usual ranks (rounded up) to a minimum of 0 ranks of Time (6 seconds.)

### MICRO-ARCHITECT

### GENERAL, RANKED

Any headquarters feature that requires more than 1 Space reduces the Space it requires by 1 per rank of this advantage, to a minimum of 1 Space (which is why this advantage doesn't apply to anything already using 0 or 1 Space.) Similarly, no headquarters feature can have its required Space reduced by more than half its usual amount via this advantage.

Each rank of this advantage beyond the first requires you have 2 cumulative ranks of Expertise: Engineering.

*Micro-Architect 3 would require a minimum of Expertise: Engineering 6.*

### MINION ADDENDUM

### GENERAL, RANKED

Every two ranks of this advantage beyond the ranks needed to create the character increases your total number of minions of that particular type by one rank, starting the amount at two (rank -4) on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77.)

*With Minion 6, you can have a single 90-point minion, two 60-point minions, eight 30-point minions, and so forth.*

### MOMENT OF WEAKNESS

### COMBAT, RANKED

Select one of the following action types or maneuvers per advantage rank:

*Aid, defend, demoralize, disarm, feint, grab, recover, stand, trick, or trip*

When an opponent attempts such an action against someone other than yourself within your range of perception, you may simultaneously perform an appropriate action against that enemy (meaning an action the circumstances allow for) as though you had previously readied an action to do so. This means your action takes part outside the usual initiative order as though you had taken a ready action.

You cannot utilize this advantage if you do not have sufficient remaining actions to perform your desired maneuver.

### MONKEYWRENCHER

### COMBAT, RANKED

If you choose to attack a mechanical or electrical device or piece of equipment, such as a suit of power armor, a rifle, or a similar item, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your Damage. With a second rank, your circumstance bonus is +5. As a rule of thumb, this bonus only applies to mechanisms that have moving parts, require electrical power, or are fueled by a chemical reaction.

You can also spend ranks to allow you to disable or sabotage such items using the Technology skill faster. Doing so requires one less rank of Time than is normal on the **Measurements Table** per rank of this advantage spent on this purpose (this means excluding the one or two ranks spent on the Damage circumstance bonus.) This includes when making a routine check, to a minimum of a single action.

## MUSCLE UP

## SKILL

You can make Athletics checks for climbing with only one hand without incurring a penalty or slowing down, leaving the other hand free.

**Note:** Someone without this advantage suffers a -5 penalty while climbing with one hand, if the Gamemaster rules circumstances permit it at all.

## ORGANIZATION

## GENERAL, RANKED

Your character has directly contributed resources to building an organization (pg 178), granting the organization (rank x 15) points for its use via this advantage. This advantage is only for designing the organization itself. Personnel, headquarters, and equipment must be purchased separately using the appropriate advantages unless there is a layer of obfuscation or hierarchy between the character and the people, equipment, etc. involved that prevents the latter from knowing who they really work for. This makes the personnel only loyal to the organization and not the characters contributing the necessary points.

Multiple characters may contribute ranks from the Organization advantage to jointly construct an organization, but withdrawing from the organization may be handled in one of several ways. At the most severe end of the spectrum, the character loses the advantage but does not get back the expended points. Optionally, the Gamemaster may return expended points immediately after leaving the organization, after completing an important mission or story element to earn them back, or the next time character rewards are dished out. Regardless, the organization retains the points but will not gain future support from the withdrawn character.

## POISONER

## SKILL, RANKED [2]

At one rank, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to skill checks for making poisons and to any power checks involving powers with a poison descriptor.

You also gain a +1 bonus to resistance checks versus poison. With 2 ranks, the circumstance bonus to skill checks is +5 and you benefit from a +2 bonus to resistance checks against poison.

## PSI-ARTIFICER

## SKILL

You can use the Expertise: Psychic and Technology skills to create temporary psychic devices in the same fashion as one uses Expertise: Magic to create magical inventions.

## PSI-RITUAL EXPERTISE SKILL, RANKED

Select an effect you can duplicate or represent with a psi-ritual. Reduce by 5 points per rank the total cost (not cost per rank) of powers used during a psi-ritual, with a minimum total cost of 1 point. Additional ranks allow you to apply this advantage to another effect or further reduce the point cost of the selected effect.

Although any combination of extras and flaws may be applied to this effect when using an appropriate psi-ritual, this advantage's benefits do not apply if the psi-ritual is built as part of a multi-effect power, is linked to, or has an Alternate Effect that does not also benefit from this advantage. If Psi-Ritual Expertise applies to all relevant effects, use the highest applicable advantage rank and ignore the rest.

*A character with Psi-Ritual Expertise 3 (Affliction) and Psi-Ritual Expertise (Weaken) prepares a psi-ritual with a power comprised of Ranged Affliction 8 and Ranged Weaken Strength 4. This would normally cost 24 points. Thanks to the Psi-Ritual Expertise 3 Affliction, however, it costs 9 points; the Psi-Ritual Expertise (Weaken) effect is not applied.*

Use the adjusted point cost instead of the normal point cost for the sake of determining device's design or the invention check.

You may not have more ranks in this advantage than half the game's PL.

## PSI-RITUALIST

## SKILL

You can use the Expertise: Psychic skill to create and manifest psychic (psi) rituals in the same way as arcane rituals are created and cast using Expertise: Magic.

# Chapter 2: Advantages

## RANGED HOLD

## COMBAT

You can use a ranged weapon (or similar ranged attack) to pin an opponent to a nearby, suitable surface (e.g., wall, tree) within 5 feet behind or beside the target.

Make a standard attack roll against the target. If your attack succeeds, the target makes a Dodge resistance check against your attack roll result. Failure leaves the target immobile in that location.

To break free, the victim must take a move action for Strength or Sleight of Hand check (DC 15 + 1 per degrees of success beyond the first.) A Strength or skill bonus greater than the DC allows the target to escape as a free action.

## RAPID BUILDER

## SKILL, RANKED

Select a skill used to design something, such as Expertise: Electronics, Expertise: Engineering, or Expertise: Mechanics. Each rank of this advantage reduces by 1 rank on the **Measurements Table** the Time needed to build items relevant to that skill, to a minimum of one rank of time (6 seconds.)

You may select additional, appropriate skills for this advantage and apply ranks to them as well.

Devices are not affected by this advantage; see the Gifted Inventor and Gifted Craftsmen advantages.

## RELIABLE ATTACK

## COMBAT, RANKED

Apply each rank of this advantage to a separate, narrow or broad type of attack (unarmed, ranged, a particular power, etc.), as per the Gamemaster's discretion. (For particularly broad types, the Gamemaster may require two ranks rather than one.) The selected attack type is no longer subject to a critical miss on a natural 1.

## RISE TO THE OCCASION

## GENERAL, RANKED

You increase a single PL maximum limit by an amount equal to this advantage's ranks. You must purchase this advantage separately for each of the following trait PL limitations you may wish to apply it to: skill modifier (choose a single skill), attack and effect (choose an attack, be it a single attack type, such as a specific power, or a group of related attacks, such as guns, at the Gamemaster's discretion), Parry and Toughness, Dodge and Toughness, or Fortitude and Will.

*A PL 5 character with Rise to the Occasion 3 (attack and effect, Deadly Eye Beams) increases his maximum possible attack bonus combined with effect rank from +10 to +13 when using his Deadly Eye Beams power.*

You may apply ranks in this advantage to the same PL limitation, or to separate limitations.

## RITUAL EXPERTISE

## SKILL, RANKED

Select an effect you can duplicate or represent with a ritual. Reduce by 5 points per rank the total cost (not cost per rank) of powers used during a ritual, with a minimum total cost of 1 point. Additional ranks allow you to apply this advantage to another effect or further reduce the point cost of the selected effect.

Although any combination of extras and flaws may be applied to this effect when using an appropriate ritual, this advantage's benefits do not apply if the ritual is built as part of a multi-effect power, is linked to, or has an Alternate Effect that does not also benefit from this advantage. If Ritual Expertise applies to all relevant effects, use the highest applicable advantage rank and ignore the rest.

*A character with Ritual Expertise 3 (Affliction) and Ritual Expertise (Weaken) prepares a ritual with a power comprised of Ranged Affliction 8 and Ranged Weaken Strength 4. This would normally cost 24 points. Thanks to the Ritual Expertise 3 Affliction, however, it costs 9 points; the Ritual Expertise (Weaken) effect is not applied.*

Use the adjusted point cost instead of the normal point cost for the sake of determining device's design or the invention check.

You may not have more ranks in this advantage than half the game's PL.

## SECOND WIND

## FORTUNE

Spending a hero point instead of making the usual Fortitude check for the dying condition immediately removes this condition, replacing it with the staggered Damage condition.

## SKILL ADEPT

## SKILL, RANKED

Select a skill to which this advantage applies. Using this advantage, you create a minimum threshold of (5 +



advantage ranks) you are considered to roll naturally. Any actual, natural roll result below this minimum threshold is instead treated as a roll equal to the advantage's threshold. Apply the usual skill modifiers to the threshold result.

This advantage's ranks, when applied to any one skill, cannot exceed one-half (rounded down) the actual number of ranks you have with the skill (meaning you cannot apply it to a skill you would normally use untrained.)

*5 ranks of Skill Adept (Acrobatics) results in a minimum "natural roll" of 10 for Acrobatics checks, but would only be allowed to a character with 10 or more ranks of*

*Acrobatics. This means any roll on the d20 during an Acrobatics check that is lower than 10 would count as a 10, to which all the usual modifiers would then be added.*

This advantage must be purchased separately for every skill it is to be applied to. This advantage cannot, however, be applied to the Close Combat or Ranged Combat skills. Doing so would unbalance combat far too much.

### SNEAK ATTACK

### COMBAT

When you successfully make a surprise attack, you gain a bonus to the attack's Damage rank of +1 per degree of success with the attack roll. You cannot sneak attack an opponent you cannot accurately perceive (due to concealment or the like), and opponents immune to critical hits suffer no additional Damage from this advantage.

Your total Damage modifier is limited by the campaign's PL.

### SPECIALIZATION

### KILL, RANKED [3]

By applying this to a skill, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to a particular area or aspect of that skill. With a second rank, you increase this to a +5 circumstance bonus, and a third rank increases it to +10. Many Expertise skills may be further specialized as well, such as Specialization (Expertise: Physician, neurosurgeon.)

*Specialization (Athletics, jumping) bestows a +2 bonus to the Athletics skill when using its Jumping aspect, whereas Specialization 2 (Persuasion, haggling) grants a +5 bonus while negotiating prices.*

It is up to the Gamemaster to decide what counts as a specialization, but it must be very focused and cannot grant a bonus to something already covered by another advantage. What's truly special about this advantage is that a bonus gained from Specialization allows a skill to exceed the campaign's normal PL limit, but only with regards to what the advantage is specializing in. Each new rank must be devoted to a new specialization.

# Chapter 2: Advantages

## Sample Specializations

Acrobatics—Tumbling	
Athletics— Jumping	
Close Combat—This skill cannot have any specializations.	
Deception— Gambling	
Expertise: Forgery—Identification	
Expertise: Metahumans—Villains	
Expertise: Religion—Buddhism	
Expertise: Survival—Jungle	
Expertise: Tactics—Anti-Terrorism	
Insight—Evaluate	
Persuasion—Children	
Ranged Combat—This skill cannot have any specializations.	
Sleight of Hand—Escaping	
Stealth—Hiding	
Technology—Vehicles	
Treatment—Poisons	
Vehicles—Motorcycles	

## STRONGARM

## SKILL

You can apply your Strength modifier rather than your Presence modifier to Intimidation checks made while *coercing* a subject.

## TASKMASTER

## FORTUNE, RANKED

By spending a hero point as a standard action, minions of yours exposed to your inspiration or forceful commands will push themselves beyond their normal capability. This grants them a +2 circumstance bonus to one Dodge, Fortitude, or Will check of your choice during the next round.

The maximum number of minions affected in this is way equals the advantage's ranks on the **Amounts Table**, starting at -5.

*Taskmaster 3 would affect 4 minions (Amounts rank -3.)*

## TRADEMARK

## GENERAL, RANKED

The character is exceptional at one very specific thing, and he is known for it. Choose any aspect of an attack type, defense maneuver, power stunt, skill use, etc. the character is capable of, granting a +1 circum-

stance bonus per rank to the relevant check needed to perform the Trademark.

Ultimately, it is up to the Gamemaster to decide what qualifies as a Trademark, but it must be very specific. A Ranged Damage power cannot be a Trademark, for example, but ricocheting shots around corners with an eye-based Ranged Damage power would qualify. This bonus allows the character to exceed normal PL restrictions, although the character may not have more ranks in this advantage than half his PL (rounded down.)

When the character uses their Trademark, the Gamemaster may decide that people will recognize how “naturally good” they are with the ability. This may produce interesting situations devised by the Gamemaster on the fly—it may result in what is effectively an Intimidation or Persuasion result, for instance.

The character cannot have more than one Trademark at a time. Choosing a new Trademark requires buying the advantage anew, a decision that loses all points spent on the previous Trademark. The Gamemaster may also demand the character undertake some sort of in-game action, such as a quest, that allows the character the opportunity to illustrate why the advantage should be changed.

## TRAINER

## SKILL, RANKED

Each rank allows you to train animals of Intellect -4 or higher to perform one particular, extraordinary trick following an Expertise: Animal Handling check. Just what this trick may be is up to the player, but it must be approved by the Gamemaster who must set the skill check DC appropriately for the trick's complexity. The trick must be indicated when a new rank is purchased.

Example tricks include how to pick a lock following an Expertise: Animal Handling check (DC 20) or how to use sign language (DC 25.)

Use your judgment regarding which animals can perform which tricks. Certain animals will be prevented from learning certain tricks because of the limitations of their anatomy. A fish, for example, does not have the means to pick a lock because it has no appendages with which to do so.

## WIRE FIGHTER

## SKILL

You do not suffer the usual +5 Athletics DC modifier while moving to avoid attacks while climbing. This benefit does not apply if you are dazed, stunned, staggered, or

## Minion Advantages

Advantage	Benefit
Against the Odds *	Suffer the normal effects of the selected resistance check if an additional Fortitude resistance check succeeds.
All or Nothing *	The minion increases a power's ranks or an attack modifier by risking their life for their master.
Blaze of Glory	PL restrictions on attack, defense, and resistance check modifiers are removed by risking the minion's life for their master.
Blind Devotion *	Gain a circumstance bonus to Will resistance bonus versus commands contrary to their master's orders.
Create Opening	Grants their master a +1 circumstance bonus to the latter's attack modifier by sacrificing the minion's life against the master's foe.
Fanatic	The minion is zealously loyal to its master to the point of being willing to sacrifice itself.
Hard as Nails *	Reduces the effectiveness of non-minions making routine attack checks upon the minion.
Heed the Call *	Move faster than normal while running so long as the minion is rushing to aid their master.
Horde	Freely move to the location once occupied by a fallen, adjacent comrade.
Loyalty	+2 circumstance bonus to any roll/check once per encounter if in service of their master.
Lucky Shot	Allows minions to score critical hits against non-minions by rolling a second die.
Move as One *	As a crowd entity, the minions lose less of their Dodge and Parry modifiers due to the crowd's size.
Power of Many *	+1 (or greater) circumstance bonus to Damage while Aiding fellow minion.
Power of One	May champion fellow minions to score critical hits against non-minions.
Swarm *	Double the time to attack an opponent surrounded by allies to gain a Damage bonus against this target.
Wide Open	The minion drops his guard to allow his master a surprise attack against the selected foe.

\* These Minion Advantages are ranked

otherwise incapable of taking action normally and unfettered. Likewise, you do not need to make an immediate Athletics check if you fail a resistance check while climbing unless you get two or more degrees of failure.

## MINION ADVANTAGES

Minions are a different breed of character than either noteworthy villains or the heroes themselves. Because of their unique role in a campaign, only beings made using the Minion advantage or via the Summon effect may possess any of the following advantages.

These advantages are special in that they are designed to complement the minion's nature as a devoted follower and all-purpose cannon fodder rather than accommodating the sort of character that is developed into a fully three-dimensional identity. To this end, minion advantages allow those who possess them to carry out unusual deeds or function in such a way as are stereotypical of their role.

Due to their nature, several Minion Advantages only function for those that have already selected the Fanatic

minion advantage (pg 44) or are called via a Summon effect with the Fanatical extra (pg 62.)

### AGAINST THE ODDS

#### MINION, RANKED

Select a type of resistance check this advantage applies to with each rank. The minion suffers the effects of such a failed resistance check normally instead of suffering the worst possible degree of the effect if it also succeeds at a Fortitude resistance check against the effect's DC. (Yes, this means the minion attempts two Fortitude resistance checks if this advantage is applied to Fortitude.)

### ALL OR NOTHING

#### MINION, RANKED

If a fanatic minion (pg 44) risks their life for their master in such a manner that means almost certain death (Gamemaster's discretion), they increase the number of effective ranks for either one power or their attack modifier by an amount equal to this advantage's ranks.

A minion is not allowed to have more ranks in this advantage than the character's Minion Rank (point cost / 15.) If the minion survives despite the odds, they are hindered for the following two rounds (four if used with Blaze of Glory.)

## Chapter 2: Advantages

All benefits remain restricted by the campaign's PL limitations.

### BLAZE OF GLORY

### MINION

If a fanatic minion (pg 44) risks their life for their master in such a manner that means almost certain death (Gamemaster's discretion), no PL limits apply to any of their attack, defense, or resistance modifiers for the rest of the round. If the minion survives despite the odds, they are hindered for the following two rounds (four if used with alongside All or Nothing.)



### BLIND DEVOTION

### MINION, RANKED [2]

The minion is so loyal to their master that at one rank they gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Will resistance checks that would force them to do anything contrary to their master's commands. Two ranks in this advantage increases the benefits to +5.

The Gamemaster has the final say as to which situations this advantage will apply to.

These benefits may surpass the campaign's PL limits.

A minion cannot simultaneously apply this advantage to more than one master. If the advantage is applied to someone new, all existing ranks regarding the previous master are lost without compensation.

### CREATE OPENING

### MINION

By sacrificing their life (or sincerely intending to, even if they don't actually die) upon the attacks of their master's foe, a fanatic minion (pg 44) creates a distraction. This grants the master a +1 circumstance bonus to his attack modifier against that same foe for the following round.

If more than one minion uses this advantage at once, the combined bonuses can do no better than double their master's normal attack modifier. These benefits may surpass the campaign's PL limits, however.

In case the minion somehow survives, they may not use this advantage again for the remainder of the encounter.

### FANATIC

### MINION

A new degree of attitude is added to those that may be held by NPCs (see the Persuasion skill), so that the attitude table now appears as follows:

Attitude	Effect
Hostile	Will take risks to attack or interfere with you.
Unfavorable	Will insult, mislead, or otherwise cause you trouble.
Indifferent	Acts as socially expected towards you.
Favorable	Will chat, provide advice, and offer limited help.
Helpful	Will take risks to help or protect you.
Fanatic	Will do anything for you.

Minions with this advantage automatically have a fanatic attitude towards their master. This means they will do anything asked of them by whoever commands their loyalty, including fighting to the death no matter how impossible the odds.

A minion with this advantage gains no additional benefit from the Fanatical extra (pg 62.)

## HARD AS NAILS

## MINION, RANKED

When a non-minion character makes attack checks against the minion as a routine check, the usual automatic 10 “rolled” is reduced by 1 per advantage rank.

*Routine checks made against a minion with Hard as Nails 3 would be considered to have rolled a 7.*

The minion may not take more ranks in this advantage than his Minion Rank (points / 15), to a maximum of 9 ranks.

## HEED THE CALL

## MINION, RANKED

If the minion’s master calls for immediate assistance due to dire circumstances (Gamemaster’s use your discretion), the minion may move all out to get to his master’s side. This requires making an Athletics check (DC 15) for running, as normal, but success increases the minion’s speed rank by +2 instead of the usual +1. This rate may be maintained for as many rounds as this advantage has ranks.

This additional speed is only maintained if it is used to bring the minion to his master’s aid. The speed returns to normal if the command is countered or if the minion stops running.

## HORDE

## MINION

As a free action taken at any time in the round (even interrupting other characters in the middle of their turn), a minion with this advantage may immediately move into the adjacent location occupied by a fellow minion if the latter is slain or otherwise incapacitated. This change of location does not use any of the minion’s usual movement allotment for the round.

This advantage may only be used in the moment immediately following the other minion’s death or incapacitation. If anyone else acts first, the opportunity is missed, and then only if the moving minion still has some movement remaining to him for the round.

Both minions must belong to the same master.

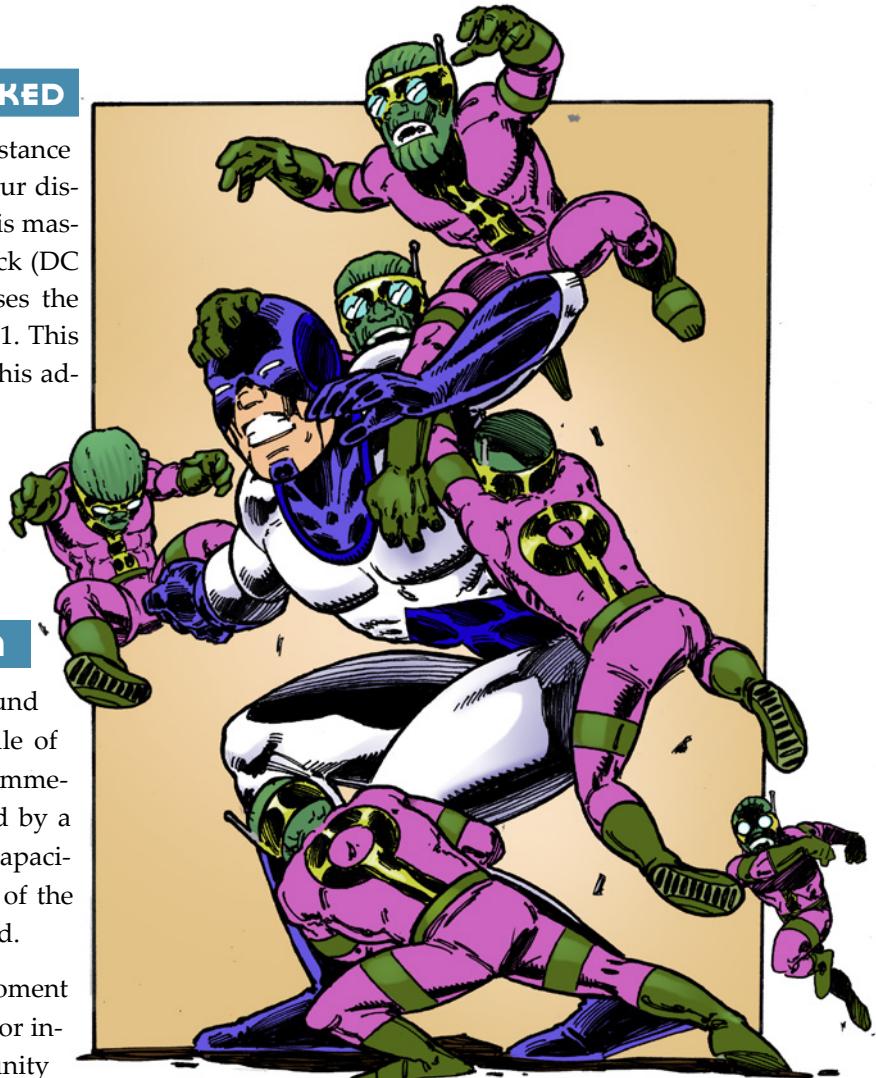
## LOYALTY

## MINION

Once per encounter, the minion may apply a +2 circumstance bonus to *any* single check or roll so long as the check or roll is in service of the master the minion is loyal to.

When this advantage is selected, indicate the individual, small group, board, etc. that represents the authority the minion will be loyal to. If the minion’s loyalty ever shifts to a new master, this advantage is lost without compensation but may be retaken to regain the advantage’s benefits. Gamemasters may allow this advantage to switch masters if the loyalty is to the title or position rather than the person filling it.

These benefits may surpass the campaign’s PL limits.



## LUCKY SHOT

## MINION

The minion may achieve a critical hit against a non-minion, but only by rolling second die as a free action once the possibility of a critical hit is indicated. This second die must also result in a critical hit for the critical hit result to take effect.

# Chapter 2: Advantages



## MOVE AS ONE

## MINION, RANKED

The minions are accustomed to fighting together en masse, utilizing mass combat tactics while retaining a cohesive defense. When amalgamated as a crowd entity (see **Chapter 7**, pg 189), halve (rounded down) the latter's rank on the **Amounts Table** with regards to the crowd entity's size for the purpose of calculating its Dodge and Parry modifiers.

Two ranks of this minion advantage means the crowd entity's Dodge and Parry modifiers are not reduced by its size at all.

## POWER OF MANY

## MINION

Minions with this advantage are experts at dogpiling troublesome heroes. When the minion Aids an-

other minion of the same master to attack a target, a +1 circumstance bonus to Damage is also bestowed. This Damage bonus increases by an additional +1 per rank higher than rank -4 (2 minions) on the **Amounts Table** of other minions who also have this advantage and are lending Aid to the same person.

*Five minions (rank -2) with this advantage Aiding another minion who is attacking a non-minion would confer a +3 Damage bonus (+1, +1 for rank -3, +1 for rank -2.) Whereas fifty such minions (rank 1) offering their Aid would grant a +6 Damage bonus.*

## POWER OF ONE

## MINION

When minions surround and enclose a non-minion opponent on all sides, a minion with this advantage may step forward as a champion against that non-minion in single combat. This allows the champion to score critical hits normally so long as their fellow minions continue to surround the non-minion and do not themselves engage the champion's opponent.

## SWARM

## MINION, RANKED

When the minion and their allies have an opponent entirely surrounded on all sides, the minion can use team tactics. This doubles the time normally needed to make an attack, in order to gain a Damage bonus when the attack is made. This Damage bonus is equal to this advantage's ranks. If the attack misses, the Damage bonus does not carry over until the next attack.

The minion cannot have more ranks in this advantage than is greater than half his Minion Rank (rounded down; points / 15), with a minimum of one rank. These benefits may surpass the campaign's PL limits. This bonus stacks with any other applicable modifiers.

## WIDE OPEN

## MINION

If the minion successfully conducts a feint against an opponent, that minion's Dodge and Parry modifiers drops to +0 for a round. However, his master may make a surprise attack against that same opponent as a result.

# ORGANIZATION ADVANTAGES

Although organizations are built in a fashion very similar to that of characters (see **Chapter 7, The Many Faces of Evil**), they are distinct enough to merit some special advantages of their own.

## MOLE NETWORK ORGANIZATION, RANKED

The organization has a widespread network of agents who have infiltrated various other organizations, agencies, and secure facilities around the world.

To determine whether there is such a “mole” within any given top-secret research lab, police station, CIA field station, etc., the organization (or associated individual with access to the organization’s resources) must make an Investigation check. Use the following basic DCs, based on the extent of influence the organization running the network has.

## Basic Mole Network DC

Organization’s Influence	DC
Local	40
Regional (province, state, etc.)	35
National	30
International	25
Global	20

Any Investigation check made against this DC is subject to the following modifiers, based on information concerning the targeted facility or organization.

## Organization Advantages

Advantage	Benefit
Mole Network *	Make Investigation checks to see if the organization is Connected to a targeted organization or facility
Reinforcements *	Can summon minions to an encounter
Secure *	Gain a +/−5 modifier or +5 DC increase to security measures versus the specified threat type
Zealous *	Modify the organization’s morale resistance check DC by −2 per rank

\* These Organization Advantages are ranked



## Mole Network DC Modifiers

Circumstance	DC Modifier
Your organization has the Connected advantage appropriate to target	+5
Target’s existence is public knowledge	+0
Target’s existence is secret but rumored	−5
Target’s existence is secret and unknown	−10
Target’s membership is open to public	+0
Target’s membership is screened (basic)	−5
Target’s membership is screened (thorough)	−10
Target has the Lax Security (Mole Operatives) complication	+modifier
Target location’s population	+ (rank of population’s value on the Amounts Table minus 5)
Your organization has the Mole Network advantage	+ ranks
Target has the Secure (Mole Operatives) advantage	−5

## How to Use the Mole Network Advantage

This advantage is intended to be a tool for throwing plot twists into the game or offering players a final opportunity to break open an otherwise dead end. It should not be exploited or abused to replace thinking a problem through or to avoid developing a plan of the players' own. As such, Gamemasters are always allowed to rule that no such Investigation check is possible due to circumstances or common sense.

### Example Spy Network Usage

A hero on loan to the CIA is in a bind while operating in a small, South American town and needs someone from the Company to get him a false passport so he can flee the country. The hero hopes the local police station has a CIA operative in it, so he enters and tries to get a feel for the local policia's real loyalties.

This requires an Investigation check (DC 20) because the CIA is an organization with global influence. The CIA also has an extensive network of operatives, represented by 5 ranks of the Mole Network advantage (+5.) The local policia station only has a population of four officers (-8), is public (+0) with membership that is screened (-5), but security is lax (+5.) So, this Investigation check to Gather Information has a total modifier of -3.

If the Investigation check succeeds, an operative exists at the specified location and can be treated as granting the benefits of the Connected advantage.

## REINFORCEMENTS ORGANIZATION, RANKED

This advantage allows an organization with minions to call in reinforcements to just about any operation it has running, although the Gamemaster has the final say whether or not conditions are extreme enough to prevent this. These reinforcements are taken from the organization's pool of minions. Just how the reinforcements are able to arrive, and how quickly, is up to the Gamemaster to describe and make sense of when permitted.

The initial ranks in this advantage indicate the amount of reinforcements to show up, as indicated by

the rank's value on the **Amounts Table** minus 6. The first rank of this advantage purchases 1 reinforcement (1 rank of Reinforcements – 6 equals a value of -5, or 1 minion, on the **Amounts Table**.)

Ranks of this advantage may also improve the time required for reinforcements to show up. Without purchasing any additional ranks for this advantage to improve the time required, reinforcements appear in 4 hours (rank 11 on the **Measurements Table**.) Every additional rank spent on this aspect of the advantage reduces the time on the **Measurements Table** by one rank.

*Reinforcements 9 (32 minions, 30 minutes) means the organization spent 6 ranks on the amount of minions summoned while spending the remaining 3 ranks to reduce the time needed for them to arrive.*

Of course, any forces the organization purposefully places nearby as reinforcements can be summoned without need of this advantage, taking as much time to arrive as their means of conveyance allows them to travel.

## SECURE ORGANIZATION, RANKED

For each rank of this advantage, choose one type of threat that places an organization's security at risk. Your Gamemaster has the final say on what qualifies or not, but some examples include arcane spying, psychic spying, mole operatives, and physical infiltration.

Any security measures the organization has designed to counter the selected type of security risk gains a +/-5 circumstance modifier (whatever works in the organization's favor) to carry out its duties in relevant circumstances, or increases its DC by 5, as is most appropriate to how the security measure functions.

## ZEALOUS ORGANIZATION, RANKED

The organization's members are fanatically loyal, modifying the organization's morale resistance check DC, as indicated in **Chapter 7, The Many Faces of Evil**, by -2 per rank.

# CHAPTER 3

# POWERS

This chapter provides new, revised, and/or updated powers, flaws, extras, complications, and more example power builds.

## NEW POWER EFFECTS

This book would not be complete without at least one new power effect to add to your game's repertoire. Also included are two addenda on previously published effects.

### GROWTH, ADDENDUM

As a character gets larger, its limbs and other extremities also get proportionately larger. This means that—in the absence of some other factor—the character obtains 1 free rank of the Reach extra for every 4 ranks of Growth.

### SENSES—PSYCHOMETRY • 4 RANKS

You can sense and read the psychic "fingerprints" left on objects by the emotions of those who owned, held, or were around them. The stronger the emotions and the less time that has passed since the event, the easier it is to know what has been imprinted.

To understand what the imprint is telling you, make a Perception or Presence check (whichever you prefer or, if the Gamemaster restricts you to one or the other, depending on the circumstances.) The base DC for this check is indicated in the **Psychometry DCs** table and is modified by the passing of time.

### New Power Effects

Name	Type	Action	Range	Duration	Resistance	Cost
Growth, Addendum	General	Free	Personal	Sustained	—	2 per rank
Senses—Psychometry	Sensory	None	Personal	Permanent	—	4
Shrinking, Addendum	General	Free	Personal	Sustained	—	2 per rank

### Psychometry DCs

Emotional Strength of the Event	Base DC
Insignificant (typical, everyday happenstance)	25
Minor (emotional release, but nothing out of the ordinary)	20
Moderate (definite emotional investment, such as a symbol of true love)	15
Major (something of great emotional significance, such as a vengeful murder)	10
Extreme (something incredibly emotionally turbulent, such as genocide)	5

This base DC is then modified by how much time has passed since the event being read occurred. However, there is no time modifier if the event happened within a rank of time on the **Measurements Table** equal to or less than double your Presence rank, with a minimum value of 0 (1 round.) For each rank higher on the **Measurements Table** beyond double your Presence since the incident occurred, the DC is increased by a +1 modifier.

*A character with Presence 4 suffers no DC modifier for reading events that occurred within the past 30 minutes. If the event being read happened a year ago (rank 23), that would be 15 steps down the table, increasing the DC by +15.*

Game Masters are encouraged to add their own modifiers if they feel the circumstances warrant it. Trying to read emotions off the weapon of a mass murderer still encrusted with the dried blood of its victims, for example, may result in a significant DC reduction. On the other hand, trying to read anything of substance from a cobblestone in a popular tourist spot that is stepped

# Chapter 3: Powers

upon thousands of times a day would appropriately suffer from a considerable DC increase.

## What Is Learned?

To determine the nature of what is learned about the subject, roll on the **Psychometry Subject** table. Two columns are presented for the subject: one is used if purposely seeking specific information (e.g., “who killed the woman who owned this comb?”) and another for blindly probing the object in the search for any information at all without specifics in mind (e.g., “who has owned this comb I just found on the ground?”)

Every degree of success beyond the first achieved with the Perception or Presence check to use this power provides a +5 bonus to the roll for determining what is learned. You may continue attempting to learn new information from the same object so long as you continue using this power anew with each effort.

## Psychometry Subject

Roll Result	Subject (Purposeful)	Subject (Random)
01-10	Learn of something entirely unrelated to desired subject	Learn about an event in the most distant past possible for the object
11-14	Learn of something peripherally related to desired subject	Learn about an event in the recent past
15-18	As 11-14	Learn about an event in the immediate past
19+	Learn something about the intended subject	Learn of the most recent, most powerful possible subject

The clarity and specificity of information learned about the determined subject depend on the degree of success achieved with the initial Presence or Perception check.

## Psychometry Information

Degree of Success	Information Learned
One Success	A brief, unclear flash of insight that is barely helpful and very cryptic
Two Successes	A single, brief moment caught in time (e.g., minor clue)
Three Successes	A small clip or scene of an “emotional movie” (e.g., helpful clue)
Four Successes	Entire event plays out precisely, emotions and all—the insight is as good as being there

*A hero wants to use Psychometry on a glove left behind at a recent murder scene with the intention of discovering something about its wearer. The Perception check to do so results in two degrees of success, granting a +10 bonus on the Psychometry Subject table. The hero's roll results in a 17—something peripherally related to a particular subject. Because the hero's initial Perception check resulted in two degrees of success, this means the peripheral information will be a single, brief moment caught in time.*

## SHRINKING, ADDENDUM

As a character gets smaller, its limbs and other extremities also get proportionately tinier. This means that, in the absence of some other factor, the character's reach is 0 feet or less (meaning the character must essentially be occupying the same location of what it is touching) with its Unarmed attacks after 8 ranks of Shrinking.

## NEW POWER BUILDS

The following are sample powers built using the varied effects presented here and elsewhere. Each build may be further modified as desired within the rule's restrictions. Several builds have also been uniquely customized to set them apart from the standard use of power effects in the constructing of a final power. They may be used as guideposts for players to do the same on their own.

Some power builds are accompanied by suggested additions, such as new components for the build, Alternate Effects, complementary but separate powers, or extras and/or flaws especially suited to the power build.

## DISEASE

**Effect:** Weaken Selected Ability, Drawn Out, Progressive • 4 points per rank

You can infect others with disease pathogens by touch, affecting the selected ability score. The target makes a Fortitude resistance check immediately and, if it fails, the target is infected. After an hour passes, a second resistance check is required. If this also fails, a victim of your Disease loses points from the affected ability equal to the difference between the check result and the DC, up to a maximum of the Weaken rank when the disease takes effect. An additional resistance check

## New Power Builds

Name	Type	Action	Range	Duration	Resistance	Cost
Disease	Attack	Standard	Close	Instant	Fort	4 per rank
Fearsome Presence	Attack	Standard	Close (Area)	Instant	Will	2 per rank
High-Speed Dodge	General	Free	Personal	Sustained	—	1 per 2 ranks
Intuitive Reflexes	General	None	Personal	Permanent	—	1 point
Longevity	General	None	Personal	Permanent	—	1 point
Marksman	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Toughness	2, plus 2 per rank
Master Plan	General	Standard	Personal	Continuous	—	-3, plus 5 per rank
Minion Ambush	Control	Standard	Ranged	Continuous	—	-4, plus 7 per rank
Radioactive	Attack	Standard	Close	Instant	Fort	+2 per rank
Rage	General	Free	Personal	Sustained	—	-2, plus 2 per rank
Speed of Thought	General	None	Personal	Permanent	—	1 point
Spinning	General	Free	Personal	Sustained	—	3 per 2 ranks
True Immortality	Defense	None	Personal	Permanent	—	3 points, plus 3 points per rank
Weapon Master	Attack	Standard	Close	Instant	Toughness	2, plus 1 per rank

is required each hour thereafter, with the same result for failure. If any of the additional resistance checks succeed, there is no effect during that round.

Two successful resistance checks in a row eliminate the Disease effect from the target's system; otherwise it continues each round. The target cannot recover from the Disease effect until it is cured or purged. A Healing effect can counter a Disease effect with an opposed effect check.

### Suggestions

#### Contagious (Extra)

Seemingly tailored for the disease power build, this extra allows the initial victim to pass the disease along to others. *Flat +1 cost per rank.*

#### Incurable (Extra)

Adding this extra makes a disease especially devastating, because outside help is all but impossible. A high ranked, incurable disease power is very useful against subjects with a low resistance modifier. *Flat +1 point.*

#### Insidious (Extra)

An insidious disease is particularly dangerous because its victim is less likely to seek help while unknowingly suffering its effects. *Flat +1 point.*

#### Slow Progress (Flaw)

This flaw is useful for extending the time between

resistance checks made against the disease's effects. *Flat 1 point per increased rank of time value.*

## FEARSOME PRESENCE

**Effect:** Perception (Sense Type) Area Affliction (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Disabled, Paralyzed) • **2 points per rank**

You can inspire fear in others by merit of your appearance, words, stink, etc. (choose an applicable sense.) Take a standard action to strike a suitably fearsome pose or utter an intimidating threat (or so on, as appropriate to the affected sense.) Anyone within 30 feet who is able to sense your fearsomeness (as appropriate to the selected sense) must make a Will resistance check (DC 10 + rank) or suffer the appropriate condition.

**First Degree:** Impaired; **Second Degree:** Disabled;

**Third Degree:** Paralyzed. Alternatively, you may select Compelled (Flee) as the second degree result.

### Suggestions

#### Innate (Extra)

Add this extra if you want Fearsome Presence to be a matter of the character's nature rather than an effect that can be nullified. *Flat +1 point.*

#### Selective (Extra)

Adding Selective ensures one's allies are not affected. *Flat +1 cost per rank.*

# Chapter 3: Powers

## Subtle (Extra)

Applying Subtle to this power means the reason the character is fearsome is not as simple or obvious as a hideous or frightening appearance. Rather, there is a perhaps entirely indescribable sense of dread about him. *Flat +1 or +2 points.*

## Intimidation Check Required (Flaw)

This flaw indicates the character's ability to instill fear in others with his presence replies upon a conscious effort. *Flat -1 point per rank.*

## Limited Degree (Flaw)

Removing one or two degrees of effect makes the fear effect less perilous. Doing so imposes penalties upon the subject, illustrating their inability to think clearly, but does not render them stuck in place. *-1 or -2 cost per rank.*

## HIGH-SPEED DODGE

### Effect: Enhanced Dodge, Limited to Sacrificing Movement Ranks • 1 point per 2 ranks

You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Dodge for each rank of speed below the maximum rank of your movement effect you are currently traveling at. Standing still, moving at a rate (speed 0), or the like prevents you from obtaining the Dodge bonus. The Dodge bonus may be no higher than the power's ranks, the ranks of the movement effect it is fueled by, or the game's PL.

This power build obviously requires the character also possess a movement power that provides greater than normal speed.

## INTUITIVE REFLEXES

### Effect: Feature 1 (Use Awareness for Initiative) • 1 point

Usually used in cooperation with Enhanced Awareness, you can use your Awareness modifier rather than your Agility modifier when making initiative checks.

## LONGEVITY

### Effect: Feature 1 (Long Life) • 1 point

Unlike the full-blown Immunity to Aging effect, it is possible to possess an extended lifespan where aging is slowed rather than altogether bypassed. Similarly, a character concept may call for an extended life without being immune to effects that control aging. Since few games will ever have the opportunity to practically ad-

dress this issue as anything other than an aspect of character and story development, such a prolonged life is treated as Feature 1. The actual age range is chosen by the Gamemaster and/or player.

Longevity and Immunity to Aging both cost 1 point, so which is selected for a character is a matter of what best suits the character's concept.

## MARXS MAN

### Effect: Ranged Damage, Limited to Ranged Weapons; Enhanced Ranged Attack, Limited to Ranged Weapons; Feature 1 (Extra Effort); Feature 1 (Trick Shot) • 2 points, plus 2 points per rank

When using a ranged weapon, Marksman grants you several benefits. This power's benefits do not apply to powers, such as eye or hand energy blasts.

#### Damage Bonus

Your Damage ranks equals either the weapon's normal Damage or your ranks in Marksman (whichever is greater) while using ranged weapons due to your superior skill. Even when you wield a projectile or thrown weapon, your talent rather than its potency determines its Damage. You still gain the other benefits and detriments the weapon offers.

#### Attack Bonus

You also gain a bonus to your attack roll equal to your ranks in Marksman when using ranged attacks. Your total attack modifier remains restricted by the usual PL limits.

#### Trick Shots

Trick shots—exceptionally difficult attacks that are impossible for anyone who lacks your super-human shooting ability—are now possible. You can bank bullets off walls, shoot someone's hat off to scare them away, or strike a target in pitch-black conditions, for example.

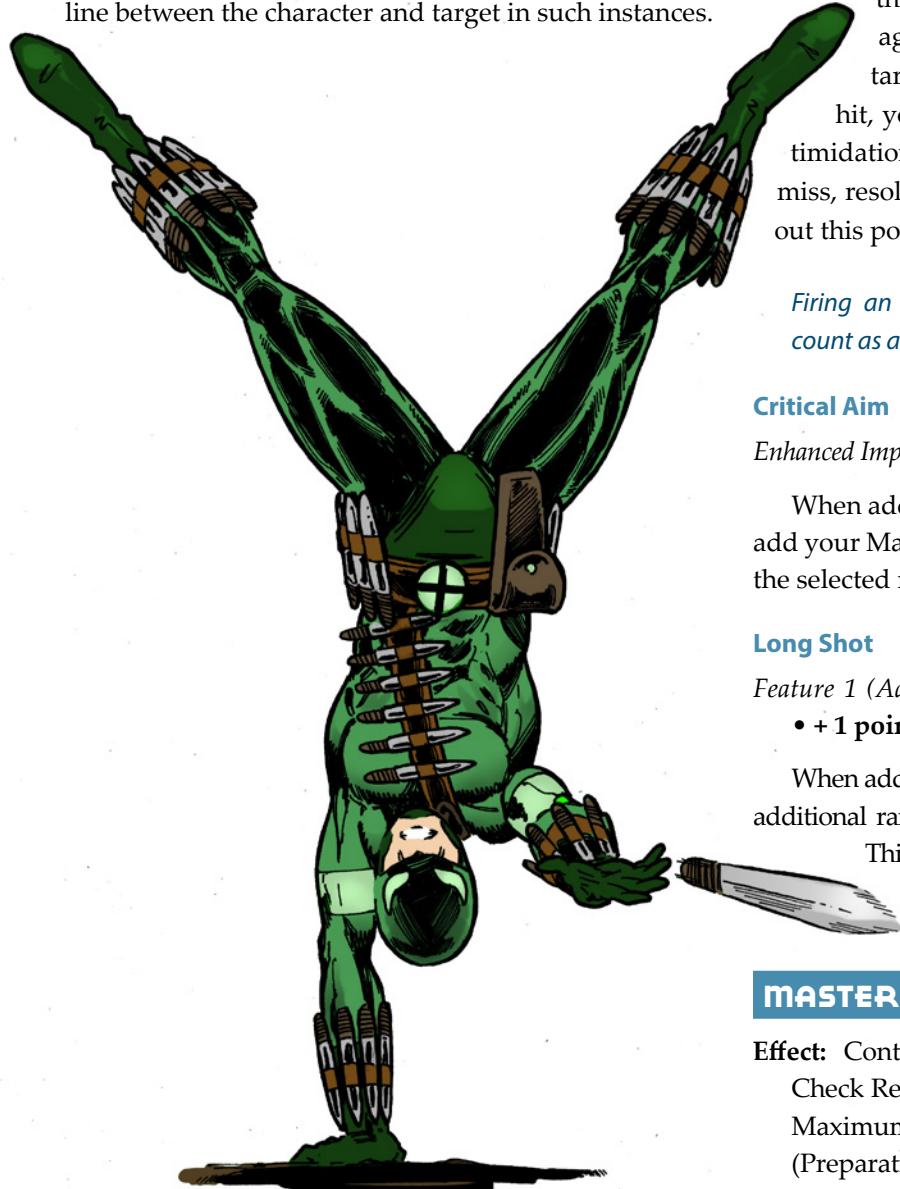
A trick shot allows you to attempt to ignore environmental conditions that would typically make it impossible for you to attack a target, such as shooting around a corner. A trick shot to ignore an environmental condition demands a power check using the action usually required of the attack type. The DC for this check depends on the difficulty of your trick shot, at your Gamemaster's discretion.

## Trick Shots

Trick Shot DC	Example Benefit
15	Ignore a target's cover.
20	Bank a shot around a corner, make a ranged trip or disarm attack.
25	Ignore concealment.
30	Deny a target's advantage, Agility, or circumstance bonus to Dodge (choose one.)

If your Marksman power check succeeds, you may then make an attack normally. Failure means your attack automatically misses.

Measuring the distance the attack would have to travel to hit the target may include turning around corners and the like. As such, account for that when determining range instead of relying upon the most direct line between the character and target in such instances.



## Extra Effort

You gain an additional option when using extra effort with this power: extra effort now allows you to employ a single combat advantage that, in some manner, benefits your ranged weapon attacks. Such a benefit lasts for a number of rounds equal to your ranks in Marksman.

Your Gamemaster determines if a given advantage is a valid choice.

## Suggestions

### Cowing Shot

*Enhanced Intimidation (Linked to Marksman Ranged Attack Success) • 1 point per 3 Marksman ranks*

As a complimentary power or Alternate Effect, you may attempt a trick shot to scare or intimidate rather than harm your target. First, make an attack against (or near to, to be more accurate) your target using a Marksman ranged attack. If you hit, you deal no Damage but gain additional Intimidation ranks equal to this power's ranks. If you miss, resolve your Intimidation check normally without this power's bonus.

*Firing an arrow between the target's fingers would count as a cowing shot attempt.*

### Critical Aim

*Enhanced Improved Critical • + 1 point per Marksman rank*

When added as a component of Marksman, you may add your Marksman ranks to the critical threat ranges of the selected ranged attacks.

### Long Shot

*Feature 1 (Additional Range Increment to Marksman) Flat • + 1 point*

When added as a component of Marksman, you gain an additional range increment while making ranged attacks.

This extreme range (rank x 250 feet) impose a -8 circumstance penalty to ranged attacks.

## MASTER PLAN

**Effect:** Continuous Variable Effect, **Expertise:** Tactics Check Required, Limited to Enhanced Skills, Limited Maximum Bonus, Limited to Prepared Area, **Quirk 2 (Preparation Time)** • -3 points, plus 5 points per rank

If you have the opportunity to prepare the area for an impending encounter, you can formulate a plan that grants you an advantage. The act of preparation requires at least a few minutes—longer at the Gamemaster's discretion. Once the preparations are complete and you remain within the prepared area, you can make an Expertise: Tactics check (DC 10 + flaw rank.) If successful, you gain a benefit to particular skill checks (including Close Combat and Ranged Combat), as distributed amongst the Variable effect's provided points.

A successful skill check allows a maximum +1 bonus to a single desired Enhanced Skill. Increase the bonus' maximum by +1 per one point the check result was higher than the DC by. Of course, the maximum bonus is also limited by the power's ranks and provided points.

*An Expertise Tactics (DC 13) roll resulting in a 17 would allow a maximum bonus of +5 on any one skill.*

This power essentially allows a character to obtain benefits similar to that of the Inspire advantage without spending a hero point to do so, and with a longer duration.

## Suggestions

### Allies

#### (Affect Others, Burst Area, Ranged, and Selective Extras)

Adding these four extras combined to this power build allows you to pass along its benefits to allies. *+4 cost per rank*

## Alternate Master Plan Build

To make the Master Plan power build more manageable (and less expensive), you should consider replacing the Variable effect with specific Enhanced Traits. Select the specific skill benefits you want the power build to cover, representing the sort of tactics the character specializes in. A character who is a master of camouflage, for instance, may have Master Plan for Enhanced Stealth only. An especially effective combatant may employ the power build using both Enhanced Close Combat and Enhanced Ranged Combat.

## MINION AMBUSH

**Effect:** Continuous Burst Area Ranged Summon, Active, Horde, Multiple Minions, Stealth or Expertise: Tactics Check Required, Limited Amount of Minions by Advantage and Roll, Limited to Prepared Areas, Noticeable, Quirk 2 (Preparation Time) • **-4 points, plus 7 points per rank**

If you have the opportunity to prepare for an encounter, you may conceal minions throughout a particular area. The act of preparation requires at least a few minutes—longer at the Gamemaster's discretion. Once the preparations are complete, you can attempt an Expertise: Tactics or Stealth check (DC 10 + flaw rank.) If successful, you may summon minions to your aid from out of hiding through use of a prearranged signal (the triggering event of the power's Reaction aspect) if you are within the prepared ambush area.

A successful skill check allows one minion to be hidden in this way. Increase this amount by one step up the **Amounts Table** per one point the check result was higher than the DC. However, you may not hide more minions in this manner than your Minion advantage allows. (See pg 38 for the relevant Minion advantage addendum.)

*An Expertise Tactics (DC 15) roll resulting in a 19 would allow 16 minions to hide in the prepared area.*

Perception checks are permitted to see if the hidden minions are spotted, using the Expertise: Tactics or Stealth check's result as the Perception check's DC.

## RADIOACTIVE

**Effect:** Affliction (Resisted by Fortitude), Harmful, Linked (Select Power to be Radioactive) • **plus 2 points per rank (3 points per rank if Ranged)**

The effect to which this power build is linked becomes radioactive, risking anyone exposed to the latter's effects to also be affected with radiation sickness. Target's exposed to the radiation roll a Fortitude resistance check (DC 10 + affliction's rank), with failure indicating radiation sickness has set in. The conditions resulting from failure are:

**First Degree:** Impaired; **Second Degree:** Exhausted; **Third Degree:** Damage

## Alternate Radioactive Build

**Effect:** Burst Area Affliction (Resisted by Fortitude), Harmful, Triggered by Indicated Power's Use • **1 point, plus 3 points per rank**

When the triggering power is used, a 30-foot burst of radiation is released around the character.

This power build otherwise works the same as the linked variation of Radioactive.

## Radiation Leak Complication

A complication that would compliment this power could indicate the radiation leaks from the character, risking exposure at the indicated radiation rank to others nearby at all times. A successful Perception check (DC 10 + power rank) allows anyone in that area to notice the tell-tale signs of radiation. This can include feeling a bit woozy or the hair standing up on their skin, although they won't necessarily recognize either the cause or source.

### RAGE

**Effect:** Enhanced Fearless; Enhanced Strength, Activation (Move), Exposed (Dodge), Exposed (Parry), Inhibited (Routine Checks), Tiring; Enhanced Fortitude; Enhanced Will • **-2 points, plus 2 points per rank**

You can fly into a berserk rage as a move action, becoming fearless, and gaining a +1 circumstance bonus to Strength, and to both Fortitude and Will resistance checks per rank. You cannot make routine checks while in a rage, and are -2 to Parry and Dodge while doing so.

Your maximum Strength and resistance bonuses are limited by the campaign's PL.

### Suggestions

#### Fades (Flaw)

The longer you stay enraged, the weaker its effects become as your calm slowly reinstates itself. *-1 cost per rank*.

#### Inhibited (Concentration) (Flaw)

You can't undertake any other action that requires concentration while in a rage. This includes any power or skill with a Concentration or Sustained duration—the latter does not apply to the rage itself.) *-1 cost per rank*.

#### Limited to Failed Will Check (Flaw)

You cannot enter a rage whenever desired. Instead, your natural state of calm fights against it, requiring you fail your own Will resistance check (DC 10 + Will) to become enraged. *-1 cost per rank*.

#### Timed (Flaw)

Adding this flaw limits the amount of time you can rage for, also enforcing a period of rest before you may rage again that extends beyond any fatigue imposed by the Tiring flaw. *Cost varies*.

### Uncontrolled (Flaw)

A common addition to rage, it is used to represent a condition that will throw you into a rage without you wanting to lose control. This is typically exposure to something, such as an emotion, pain, etc. *-1 cost per rank*.

## The Return of Rage

Rage, like some other advantages (previously known as feats), did not make the transition from second to third edition. We think it still has a place in the game, so we are reintroducing it as a power build. Adjust the ranks of Enhanced Strength to be greater than that of Fortitude and Will to bring it more in line with the second edition feat, if you like.

### SPEED OF THOUGHT

**Effect:** Feature 1 (Use Intellect for Initiative) • **1 point**

Usually used in cooperation with Enhanced Intellect, you can use your Intellect modifier rather than your Agility modifier when making initiative checks.

### SPINNING

**Effect:** Enhanced Dodge, Limited to Grabs, Snare, etc.; Enhanced Defensive Roll • **3 points per 2 ranks**

You can spin rapidly along your vertical axis at tremendous speed without becoming disoriented. So long as you are spinning, you gain a bonus equal to your power rank to Dodge checks against Grabs, the Snare power build, and similar effects and powers. You also gain a bonus on Toughness resistance checks equal to your power rank.

### Suggestions

#### All-Around Sight

*Senses 2 (Radius Visual) Flat • 2 points*

An ideal complimentary power or a new component to the Spinning build, you can see any point around you while spinning.

#### Bladestorm

*Burst Area Damage • 2 points per rank*

As an Alternate Effect or complimentary power, you rapidly release various small blades (knives, shuriken, etc.) while spinning. This creates a 30-foot burst area around you filled with lethal metal. Additional ranks of the area extra can also be added to increase the area filled by this power effect.

# Chapter 3: Powers

## Centrifuge Slingshot

*Enhanced Strength, Limited to Throwing Distance While Spinning* • 1 point per rank

As an Alternate Effect or complimentary power, you can use the centrifugal force of your spinning to toss something you are holding farther away.

## Drilling

*Burrowing* • 1 point per rank

As an Alternate Effect or complimentary power, you can spin in such a way as to allow you to burrow through the ground like a drill.

## Full Dodge

*Remove Limited flaw* • Spinning costs 2 points per rank

By removing the Limited flaw from the Enhanced Dodge aspect of the power build, you become fully capable of spinning about most attacks.

## Get Air

*Flight* • 2 points per rank

As an Alternate Effect or complimentary power, spinning allows you to fly as would a helicopter or tornado.

## Shred

*Burst Area Damage, Reduced Area -2* • -2 points, plus 2 points per rank

As an Alternate Effect or complimentary power, you are able to make close combat attacks against everything immediately around you as you spin. This could be by holding blades out, or merely your hands, depending on the character concept.

## Spin Along

*Speed* • 1 point per rank

As an Alternate Effect or complimentary power, spinning allows you to race along the ground like a speeding dust devil.

## Vortex

*Enhanced Strength, Limited to Lifting and Carrying While Spinning* • 1 point per rank

As an Alternate Effect or complimentary power, you can use the air pressure created by your spinning to help you lift and carry weights that would normally be too heavy.

## TRUE IMMORTALITY

**Effect:** Immortality 1; Immunity 3 (Aging, Disease, Poison); Regeneration 1 • 3 points, plus 3 points per rank

You do not age and are immune to ordinary diseases and poisons. You also gain the benefits of the Immortality and Regeneration effects equal to your True Immortality rank.

## Suggestions

### Innate (Extra)

Add this extra if you want the character's immortality to be a natural state. *Flat +1 point*.

## WEAPON MASTER

**Effect:** Strength-Based Damage, Limited to Melee Weapons; Enhanced Close Attack, Limited to Melee Weapons; Feature (Extra Effort); Feature (Heroic Attack) • 2 points, plus 1 point per rank

Your talent with melee weapons transcends the usual limitations of mortal beings. You fight with unbelievable skill and unparalleled talent, allowing you to attempt maneuvers and attacks that would be impossible for lesser warriors. This power's benefits do not apply to powers or natural attacks, such as claws, fangs, or martial arts.

## Damage Bonus

Your Strength-based Damage rank with a melee weapon attack equals the normal Damage for the weapon or your ranks in this power, whichever you choose to use.

## Attack Bonus

When fighting with a melee weapon, you gain an attack bonus equal to your power rank.

## Heroic Attack

Your skill is such that even a simple, mundane melee weapon is a deadly tool in your hands. You can attempt heroic attacks in combat, allowing you to gain an edge on a foe by making a successful power check with this ability using the action normally required of the attack type. The DC for this check depends on the difficulty of your heroic attack, at your Gamemaster's discretion.

In general, your action must have a direct effect on your attack. For example, you couldn't usually use

Weapon Master to run along a wall or jump a great distance. However, you could use it to gain an advantage over an opponent, such as denying him an advantage's modifier to his Parry by attacking from an unexpected direction.

If your power check fails, you can still use your next standard action as you wish. A list of suggested options for the heroic attack and their DCs follow.

## Weapon Master Heroic Attacks

Heroic Action DC	Example Benefit
15	Ignore a target's cover.
20	Turn while charging to attack.
25	Ignore concealment.
30	Deny a target's advantage, Fighting, or circumstance bonus to Parry (choose one.)

### Extra Effort

You gain an additional option when using extra effort with this power. Extra effort now allows you to employ a single combat advantage that improves your close combat ability with a melee weapon for a number of rounds equal to your ranks in Weapon Master.

Your Gamemaster determines if a given advantage is a valid choice.

### Suggestions

#### Cowing Attack

*Enhanced Intimidation, Linked to Weapon Master Close Combat Attack Success • 1 point per 3 ranks*

As a complimentary power or Alternate Effect, you may attempt a heroic attack to scare or intimidate rather than harm your target. First, make an attack against (or near to, to be more accurate) your target using

a Weapon Master close combat attack. If you hit, you deal no Damage but gain additional Intimidation ranks equal to this power's ranks. If you miss, resolve your Intimidation check normally without this power's bonus.

*Whirling your blades about an enemy at dizzying speeds, making tiny cuts in his clothes and hair without touching the skin beneath, would count as a cowering attack.*



## Fine Touch

*Protection, Only Affects Objects, Only Affects Others, Limited to Melee Weapons • +1 point per 2 ranks*

When added as a component of Weapon Master, any melee weapons you wield increase their Toughness by +1 per rank of Weapon Master.

## Limited to Double Original Damage (Flaw)

You cannot more than double a weapon's normal Damage rank when replacing the latter with your power ranks. For instance, if a character with Weapon Master 7 and this flaw is using a weapon that is normally Damage 3, the character could only apply 6 ranks of Weapon Master, improving the weapon to Damage 6 in his hands. *Flat -1 point*.

## New Extras

Name	Effect	Cost	Description
Addictive	—	+1 per rank	Target may obtain the Addiction complication regarding the power's effect
Adroit	Enhanced Skill	1 flat per rank	Skill's PL limit increases by 1 per rank
Alternate Ability	Enhanced Resistance, Enhanced Skill	+0 or +1 per rank	Effect uses a different ability to determine its modifier
Altered Effect	Summon	+1 per rank	Summoned minions of the same type have one different power effect
Alternate Attack	—	+0 or +1 per rank	Effect uses a different combat skill than normal
Autonomous	Illusion	+1 per rank	Illusion operates independently from its creator
Critical Trait	Enhanced Trait	1 flat point	Upon rolling a natural 20, increase the roll's modifier by an additional +5
Drawn Out	—	+1 per rank	The power effect is drawn out over an extended period, requiring multiple resistance checks
Easily Repaired	—	1 flat point	+5 circumstance bonus to repair the Device
Enhanced Knockback	—	1 flat per rank	+1 per rank to Damage solely for determining knockback
Fanatical	Summon	+1 per rank	Summoned minions have the fanatic attitude
Fast Priming	—	1 flat per rank	Priming, as per the Priming flaw (pg 71), occurs at one additional effect rank per action, per extra rank
Harmful	Affliction	+1 per rank	Third degree condition becomes a Damage effect
Liberated	—	+0 per rank/1 flat per rank	Sustained effects have a duration independent of their wielder
Prolonged Recovery	Affliction	1 flat per rank	Increase the time to recover from third degree conditions by 1 rank of time per extra rank
Pull	—	0-1 flat point	Knockback pulls towards effect rather than pushes away
Relay	Communication	1 flat point	Power effect acts as a relay for other Communication effects
Reservoir	—	1 flat per rank	+1 point per rank for dynamic alternate effects to distribute
Slow Fade	—	1 flat per rank	+1 use or +1 time rank per use, per rank

## NEW EXTRAS

The following extras allow power effects to be modified in new ways. Some are general in nature while others are specific to the indicated power effects.

### ADDICTIVE

**+1 cost per rank**

If the target's initial Fortitude or Will resistance check against a power with this extra fails, the target is at risk of becoming addicted to that effect, even if the

power is harmful. An additional Will or Fortitude resistance check (selected during the power's design) must be made 24 hours later against the same DC, +2 per rank of this extra beyond the first. The target makes another resistance check each day that follows.

If two of these subsequent resistance checks succeed in a row, eliminate the craving for the power—the person is not at risk of becoming addicted from that particular application of the power's effects (although that won't prevent the possibility if affected by the power again in the future.) Two failed resistance checks in a row, on the other hand, results in the target acquiring the Addiction complication with regards to the power's effects.

Do not include the initial resistance check against the power itself when counting the two back-to-back successful or failed resistance checks.

Healing can counter an Addictive effect with a power check (DC 10 + Addictive power's rank +2 per each additional rank of this extra.)

The Addictive extra has no influence on targets without an ability score related to that of the Addictive extra's resistance check (i.e., Stamina for Fortitude or Awareness for Will), or an appropriate Immunity, even though the power's effect still works normally on such targets.

*Constructs cannot become addicted to a Damage 6, Addictive (Fortitude) power, but may still suffer physical harm from it.*

### Handling the Addictive Extra

Although this extra will most likely see use as something to add to powers that influence the subject's mind, emotions, or the like, it is indeed possible to create physically harmful powers with addictive effects. In such cases, the Gamemaster and player must decide if the addiction is oriented towards the power alone or to its more general effects.

For instance, if a character has steel claws with the special effect of being coated in a toxin that can make their victims addicted to being slashed, the Gamemaster must decide if the addiction is to those particular claws alone or if the victim becomes addicted to the feeling of their flesh being sliced into, regardless of what is used to perform the mutilation.

<b>ADROIT</b>	<b>[ENHANCED SKILL]</b>
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**Flat • 1 point per rank**

Every rank of this extra increases by 1 the PL limit to a single, indicated Enhanced Skill. The Gamemaster must approve each skill this modifier is applied to, and should give special consideration before allowing it for the Close Combat and Ranged Combat skills. More severe game balance issues may arise from allowing Adroit to be applied to these two skills.

<b>ALTERNATE ABILITY</b>	<b>[ENHANCED RESISTANCE, ENHANCED SKILL]</b>
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**+0 or +1 cost per rank**

An Enhanced Resistance or Enhanced Skill effect with this modifier uses a different ability other than that which it is normally based on to determine the resistance or skill modifier, respectively. If the Gamemaster rules applying the extra grants a considerable advantage while using the affected trait, this counts as a +1 extra, otherwise it is a +0 extra.

*Enhanced Ranged Combat, Alternate Ability (Awareness) could represent a psychic's ability to more intuitively guide their ranged attacks using their will rather than their hand-eye coordination.*

<b>ALTERED EFFECT</b>	<b>[SUMMON]</b>
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**+1 cost per rank**

A somewhat more refined version of Summon's Variable Type extra, Altered Effect applies to one of the summoned minion's power effects. Select an effect the minion possesses and apply this extra to it. You cannot select an array. The summoned minions may spend the points assigned to the selected power on other effects, thus allowing a degree of customization.

If the Variable Type extra is also applied, you can only apply Altered Effect if the selected effect is shared among all the minions. The various types of minions do not have to all possess the same rank in the effect or at the same points cost, but the selected power must otherwise be exactly the same across all minion types. If not, Altered Effect cannot be applied.

You may apply Altered Effect more than once, selecting an additional power each time.

# Chapter 3: Powers

This extra is especially useful when applied to the Duplication power build for creating duplicates that have their own unique power that sets them apart from all the other duplicates, potentially suiting a particular theme or interesting concept.

## ALTERNATE ATTACK

**+0 or +1 cost per rank**

A power with this modifier uses the opposite attack modifier (Close Combat or Ranged Combat, respectively) than is normal for an attack of its type. This can be used to represent “point-and hit” ranged attack powers or “ranged” attacks that spring immediately from the character. This may be a better option when using power modifiers such as Increased Range, Reach, or Reduced Range do not seem to be the most appropriate way to accommodate the power’s concept.

This is normally a +0 modifier, but the Gamemaster may want to increase the modifier to +1 if the switch grants the character an exceptional benefit or is skirting the boundaries of being appropriate to the power’s design concept.

### Using Alternate Attack Responsibly

Alternate Attack, like all power modifiers, should first and foremost be used to achieve a power and character concept rather than as a way to cheat the system. It should not be used to take advantage of other elements of the character that may be better, but result in a power that doesn’t make sense.

*Adding this extra to a Ranged Damage build simply because the character has lots of ranks in the Close Combat skill without the change actually fitting what the power is supposed to do would be an irresponsible use of this extra.*

### Alternate Attack Used Properly: the Shadow Boxing Gloves

A character’s unique ranged artifacts and devices are typically created using a Ranged Damage power or the like, but the concept here is a character that has a pair of special boxing gloves that allow solid shadow projections to deliver his punches over a distance.

The concept calls for the shadowy gloves to appear in mid-air, suspended before their target rather than being linked back to the wearer. This makes a Damage power build with the Reach extra inappropriate

for what we want. A Ranged Damage power build seems a better fit, but we want Close Combat to be used with the attack checks as a representation of the wearer’s fighting ability.

**Shadow Boxing Gloves:** Ranged Damage 6, Alternate Attack (Close), Removable (-3 points) • **9 points**

## AUTONOMOUS

**[ILLUSION]**

**+1 cost per rank**

This extra allows an illusion to operate independent of their creator’s thoughts and control. It is instilled with an Intellect equal to the power’s rank (to a maximum of the creator’s Intellect), although the character may instill it with a lower Intellect if that suits the intended illusion. The creator gives the illusion a set of rules to follow at the time of creation, and the illusion follows them, but is otherwise incapable of any independent action. The creator can still override the illusion and assert control as a free action so long as all other conditions for controlling the illusion are met.

## CRITICAL TRAIT

**[ENHANCED TRAIT]**

**Flat • 1 point**

When you roll a natural 20 to determine the outcome of the selected Enhanced Trait, you increase the roll’s normal modifier by +5. This additional modifier counts as a circumstance bonus, meaning the result can surpass the usual PL limits.

## DRAWN OUT

**+1 cost per rank**

This extra causes an instant duration effect to draw out its effects over time, much like many poisons or diseases. If the target’s resistance check fails, the target is infected, but the Drawn Out effect does not work immediately. Instead, the target makes another resistance check an hour later. If that resistance check fails, the effect occurs, but if the resistance check succeeds, there is no effect during that period. The target makes another resistance check yet another hour later to resist suffering the effect again, and so on.

Two successful resistance checks in a row eliminate the Drawn Out effect from the target, otherwise it continues to require a resistance check each hour. The target cannot recover from the Drawn Out effect until it is cured (or otherwise appropriately negated) or two re-

sistance checks in a row succeed. A Healing effect can counter a Drawn Out effect that is toxic or infectious in nature with an opposed effect check.

Each additional rank of this extra reduces the time between resistance checks by one rank of time lower on the **Measurements Table**.

*Drawn Out 3 would require a resistance check against the effect every 15 minutes.*

This extra cannot be applied to effects that already require additional resistance checks, such as is the case with Affliction.

### EASILY REPAIRED

**Flat • 1 point**

A device, artifact, vehicle, article of equipment, etc. with this extra is easier than normal to fix. You gain +5 circumstance bonus to appropriate checks to repair or

otherwise mend any harm done it.

### ENHANCED KNOCKBACK

**Flat • 1 point per rank**

Applied to an effect that causes knockback (see the knockback optional rule in the **GamemasterG 3e**), this ranked extra adds +1 to the Damage result purely for the sake of determining whether knockback occurs, as well as for knockback distance.

*A Damage 3 attack with Enhanced Knockback 3 is treated as a Damage 6 attack for determining if knockback occurs and, if so, the distance the target is thrown by it.*

Generally, the amount of ranks is limited to not more than the ranks of the power effect to which it is applied, but the Gamemaster may modify this as desired.



## FANATICAL

## [summon]

+1 cost per rank

Your summoned minions have a fanatic attitude and devotion to you, as per the Fanatic minion advantage (see page 44.)

A minion that already has the Fanatic minion advantage (pg 44) gains no further benefits when summoned with a power to which this extra has been applied.

## FAST PRIMING

Flat • 1 point per rank

Each rank in this extra allows a power with the Priming flaw (pg 71) to prime one additional power rank per action.

*Teleport 9, Priming, Fast Priming 2 would prime 3 ranks of power per action, requiring 3 actions (one and a half rounds) to reach full power.*

You can have no more ranks in this extra than half the ranks (rounded down) of the power it is applied to.

## HARMFUL

## [AFFLICTION]

+1 cost per rank

When added to an Affliction power effect, the condition applied at three degrees of failure is a Damage effect of a rank equal to that of the Affliction. Due to its nature as an Affliction condition, this Damage effect bypasses the usual protective measures that guard against physical harm. The Damage resistance check is made using the target's Fortitude or Will defense, as per the Affliction, rather than the target's Toughness defense.

## LIBERATED

+0 per rank; Flat • 1 point per additional rank

Applied to a sustained effect as a +0 modifier, this extra makes its duration independent of the user and based instead on the number of ranks in the effect. The effect occurs normally for as many rounds as it has ranks, after which the effect dissipates/turns off all at once. While it lasts, the effect requires no attention or maintenance from the user. It acts like a continuous duration effect, although it can still be countered or nullified, or even deactivated by its creator as a free action.

Each additional 1 flat point applied increases the duration per rank before the effect dissipates by 1 rank of time up the **Measurements Table** (e.g., 2 rounds for 1 point, 30 seconds for 2 points, 1 minute for 3 ranks.)

*A Create 6, Liberated effect (costing 12 points) would last 6 rounds before turning off, but Create 6, Liberated 4 (costing 16 points) would last 12 minutes before dissipating.*

A Liberated Alternate Effect that has already been activated continues to function even when the array's point distribution is reconfigured. If an effect is not sustained, modify its duration before applying this modifier.

Liberated is useful for effects like Create (for objects that fade or melt away) or Environment (for changes to the environment that slowly return to normal.)

## PROLONGED RECOVERY

## [AFFLICTION]

Flat • 1 point per rank

Increase the time needed to recover or apply outside aid to overcome an Affliction effect's third degree conditions by 1 rank on the **Measurements Table** per rank of this extra.

*An Affliction power with Prolonged Recovery 2 means the target requires 4 minutes to recover from third degree conditions.*

## PULL

Flat • 0 or 1 point

When applied at no cost to a power effect that both causes knockback (see the knockback optional rule in the **GamemasterG 3e**) and has an area, the knockback pulls the targets inwards, towards the center of the area of effect. This is rather than outwards away from the center, as would be normal.

If the knockdown distance is greater than the distance from the knockback's target to the effect's center, the target normally continues past the center in a straight line. However, for 1 additional point, the knockback's target stops at the center point rather than continuing through it and onward.

## Reservoir Example

Consider the following power:

**Plasma Field:** Dynamic Array (12), Reservoir 12 (+12 points)

- **Hand Blast:** Ranged Damage 6, Dynamic • 13 *points*
- **Flash:** Burst Area Affliction 6 (Resisted by Fortitude; Vision Impaired, Vision Disabled, Vision Unaware), Dynamic • 2 *points*
- **Hard Energy Net:** Cumulative Ranged Affliction 4 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobile), Extra Condition, Dynamic, Limited Degree • 2 *points*
- **Plasma Wave:** Move Object 6, Dynamic • 2 *points*

The primary power—the hand blast—is built using 12 points, and there are three Alternate Effects, each also able to use a maximum of 12 points. Because the array is dynamic, however each of the points (including the hand blast) costs 1 additional point each. Reservoir 12 is then added to the array, allowing a total of 24 points worth of active powers among the dynamic array at any given time. The array's total cost is 31 points.

Alternate effects that are not dynamic cannot utilize the array's reservoir.

### RELAY

### (COMMUNICATION)

**Flat • 1 point**

When connected to more than one appropriate medium for the Communication power effect, your medium (a radio, your mind, etc.) can act as a relay point through which those others may communicate if they are out of range of each other. This is useful for building hive minds, radio networks, or similar chained communication channels, depending on the power's nature.

### RESERVOIR

**Flat • 1 point per rank**

When applied to a power with Dynamic Alternate Effects, this modifier provides 1 additional point per rank to be distributed among those Alternate Effects. Essentially, this allows more powers to be activated at once with greater potency without making the base power effects themselves more powerful. No one of these powers can have more points allocated to it than its normal maximum.

Do not include the cost of this extra when considering how many points are available to build the primary power's Alternate Effects. It is purchased in a fashion that serves as a pool of points that is applied directly to the array itself.

This extra cannot provide more additional points than the maximum required to activate all Dynamic Alternate Effects simultaneously.

The dynamic extra of a power effect within an array need not be paid for from the reservoir's available points in order to activate the desired alternate effect, even if using the effect at its full capabilities.

### SLOW FADE

**Flat • 1 point per rank**

An effect that fades over time—such as an effect with the Fades flaw—does so slower with this extra. For effects with an Instant duration, each rank adds an additional use before a rank of effectiveness fades. Effects with a duration longer than Instant increase the time rank on the **Measurements Table** by 1 per rank of this extra with regards to what length of time is considered “one use.”

*One rank of Slow Fade on a Continuous effect with the Fade flaw would consider 12 seconds (2 rounds) as one use, two ranks would be 30 seconds, and so on.*

When applied to a Weaken effect, each application of this extra increases by 1 rank of time on the **Measurements Table** the duration between lost points returning.

## NEW FLAWS

The following flaws allow power effects to be modified in new ways. Some are general in nature while others are specific to the indicated power effects.

### ABATING

#### -1 cost per rank

When applied to a ranged power of three or more ranks, reduce the power's effective rank (potency) with regards to effect DCs and the like by one-third at medium range. Reduce it by two-thirds at long range (round up, with a minimum of 1 rank.)

Medium and long range are always determined by the power's regular rank and not the reduced, effective rank resulting from this flaw's application.

### ADDITIONAL RESISTANCE

#### +0 or -1 cost per rank

A power effect with this flaw grants two resistance checks rather than just one, and the target avoids the power's influence if either resistance check succeeds, the target avoids the effect. This flaw may only be applied to power effects that allow a resistance check. The additional resistance check can be the same type as the first or a different resistance type; choose when the modifier is applied, but both have the same DC, regardless.

## New Flaws

Name	Effect	Cost	Description
Abating	—	-1 per rank	The Ranged effect's potency decreases over distance
Additional Resistance	—	+0 or -1 per rank	Allows two (possibly different types of) resistance checks to overcome effect's influence
Bulky	—	-1 or -2 flat points	Penalties to use one-handed and to conceal with Sleight of Hand
Bungling	—	-1 or -2 flat points	Penalty to the effect's activation and operation checks
Compact Range	—	-1 flat per rank	Reduce the power's effective ranks by 1 per rank to determine range
Complex	—	-1 flat per rank	The item is difficult to design, build, and repair
Delicate	—	-1 flat per rank	The item is -1 Toughness per rank
Diminishes	—	-1 per rank	Area effect's potency decreases the farther one is from its center
Dire Consequence	—	-1 flat per rank	Using the effect in specified circumstance causes a problematic side-effect
Drain Trait	—	-points equal to the drained trait	Activating the effect drains a trait
Exposed	—	-1 flat per rank	Using the effect imposes a Dodge or Parry penalty
Exposure	—	-1 or -2 flat per rank	The effect's potency is determined by the degree of exposure to something
Fallible	—	-1 flat point	Effect doesn't automatically hit on a natural 20
Falter	—	-1 flat per rank	Effect is -4 per rank to initiative checks
Fast Fade	—	-1 flat per rank	Fade flaw is expedited by +1 fading effect rank per rank of this flaw
Fluctuating	—	-1 per rank	Power check required to use the effect at full potency
Fragile	—	-1 or -2 per rank	Power is unreliable based on the character's condition and injuries
Gradual	—	-1 per rank	Effect requires time to fill its Area
Heavy Recoil	—	-1 flat per rank	A Strength check is required to resist becoming prone
Imperfect	Insubstantial, Protection	-1 flat per rank	Insubstantial or Protection, as appropriate, is less effective against a particular descriptor
Imprecise	—	-1 flat per rank	Increase an attack's natural miss range by 1 per rank
Inhibited Trait	—	-1 flat per rank or -1 per rank	Using the effect prevents another trait from functioning
Knockback Only	—	-1 per rank	The effect only results in knockback

Both resistance checks are assumed to occur simultaneously.

*A Burst Area Damage effect might involve whirling blades an attacker can avoid with a successful Dodge check, circumventing the need for a Toughness check against the Damage.*

If Additional Resistance is applied to an attack power and is meant to replace the attack roll instead of permitting an additional resistance checks, the initial step of this flaw is +0 instead of -1. The value is also +0 instead of -1 if the additional resistance check only reduces the power's effect by half rather than negating it completely (this use cannot be used by an Area power.) If applied

to an effect with the Area extra, this flaw may instead indicate a successful resistance check means the effect is entirely avoided instead of being reduced to half ranks.

## BULKY

**Flat • -1 or -2 points**

Any personal device or equipment with this flaw is unwieldy and difficult to conceal on one's person, palm, and the like. For 1 point, this flaw imposes a -2 penalty to Sleight of Hand checks involving the item and concealing, legerdemain, and stealing. This penalty increases to -5 at 2 points. Furthermore, these penalties also apply to attack checks (or the like) while wielding the item one-handed.

## New Flaws, Continued

Name	Effect	Cost	Description
Light Touch	—	-1 flat per rank	-1 Damage for the purpose of determining knockback and knockback distance
Low Thrust	Any Movement Effect	-1 flat per rank	-1 Strength for certain purposes while using the movement effect
No Knockback	—	-1 per rank	The effect does not result in knockback
Non-Critical	—	-1 per rank	The effect cannot obtain a critical success or critical hit
Priming	—	-1 per rank	The effect builds towards its maximum rank at a rate of 1 rank per action
Reduced Area	—	-1 flat per rank	Reduce the area from its initial value by one distance rank per flaw rank
Reduced Penetration	—	-1 flat per rank	Increase the target's effective Impervious ranks by 1 per rank
Reduced Trait	—	-points equal to the Reduced trait	The indicated trait is reduced in value while the power is active
Reload	—	-1 flat per rank	The effect is restricted by a limited amount of uses before those uses must be replenished
Self-Destruct	—	Varies	Using the effect destroys it or the containing device
Self-Fuelled	—	-1 flat per rank	Using the effect subjects the user to Damage equal the flaw's rank
Shutdown	—	-1 flat per rank	Using the effect has a chance of nullifying a power the character also possesses.
Slow Progress	—	-1 flat per rank	The time between a Progressive effect's resistance checks is increased
Source	—	-1 or -2 per ranks	The effect requires the presence of a source in order to function
Staggering	—	-1 flat per rank	The effect causes the user to become staggered
Stationary	—	-1 flat per rank	The effect requires time to set-up to use and must remain in place
Stunning	—	-1 per rank	The effect causes the user to become stunned
Timed	—	-1 flat per rank	The effect can be used for a limited time, requiring it be inoperable for a period to follow
Unreliable Addendum	—	-1 per rank	A separate d20 must be rolled with each action/use to determine if the effect works for each possible instance of effect
Wild	—	-1 per rank	Controlling the effect's direction is unpredictable

# Chapter 3: Powers

These penalties are in addition to any others associated with other factors, such as the item's size. The flaw may only be applied to reasonable, personal items meant to be used while out and about. You could not apply Bulky to a desktop computer or car, for instance, because neither is a personal, mobile device (although, yes, the car is indeed mobile.)

## BUNGLING

### Flat • -1 or -2 points

The character does not have complete control over the power's activation and use, or has not yet learned how to master it. This flaw imposes a -2 penalty to all power, skill, or ability checks (but not attack rolls), as appropriate, related to the power's activation and/or operation. At -2 points, the penalty for this flaw is increased to -5.

Powers without any such roll cannot have this flaw applied to them.

## COMPACT RANGE

### Flat • -1 point per rank

Each rank of this flaw reduces a ranged power's effective ranks by 1 solely for the purpose of determining the distance of its short, medium, and long range. This flaw cannot reduce a power's effective ranks below 1 for this purpose.

## COMPLEX

### Flat • -1 point per rank

Applicable only to equipment, devices, and the like, this flaw indicates a detrimental degree of complexity in the item. Design and building/construction check DCs, along with any DCs for repairs and maintenance, are increased by +2. At two ranks, this modifier is +5, and increases to +10 for 3 ranks or +15 for 4 ranks.

At the Gamemaster's discretion, this same DC modifier can be applied to checks made against the item to sabotage, disable, or disarm the item.

## DELICATE

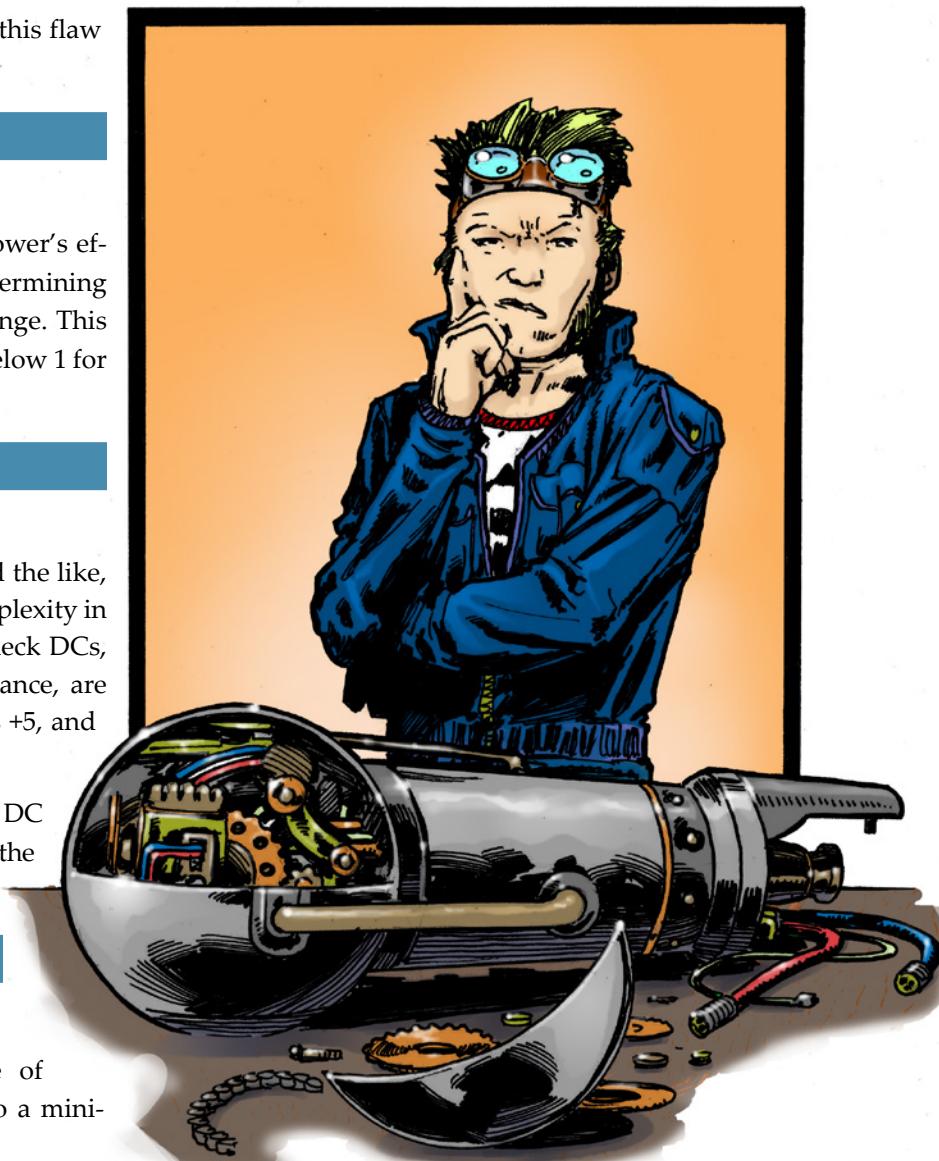
### Flat • -1 point per rank

Every rank reduces an artifact's, article of equipment's, device's, etc. Toughness by 1, to a minimum Toughness of 0.

## DIMINISHES

### -1 cost per rank

When applied to a power with two or more ranks of an Area extra, that power's effectiveness weakens the farther from the Area's center one gets. The power works normally within the space represented by the Area extra's first rank of area (e.g., 30 ft. for a Burst Area.) However, this is reduced by as many effective ranks as power's ranks divided by its Area ranks (round down, with any remainder being applied to the farthest extent of the Area) within the Area's second distance rank. The power's effective ranks are likewise cumulatively reduced again in the Area's third distance rank (if it has one), and so on until the Area's end.



A Diminishes Burst Area 4 Ranged Damage 9 power would have an overall 250-foot radius. The first distance rank is from 0 to 30 feet, the second 31 to 60 feet, the third 61 to 120 feet, and the fourth distance rank covering 121 to 250 feet. Because the power has 9 ranks and 4 ranks of Area, its effectiveness diminishes by 2 ranks per distance rank of its Area.

**9 / 4 = 2, with 1 remainder**

The blast would effectively have 9 ranks up to 30 feet away, 7 ranks from 31 to 60 feet, 5 ranks from 61 to 120 ranks, and 3 ranks up to 250 feet away.

## DIRE CONSEQUENCE

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

This flaw induces some sort of problematic / detrimental state upon meeting its conditions, such as using the power effect against a target of a particular color, a specific type of person, or to perform a forbidden type of deed. The Gamemaster has the final say on whether a condition is sufficient to qualify for this flaw, otherwise consider it to be a complication instead.

The Dire Consequence has 5 points worth of a detrimental power effect per rank of this flaw. Although this power effect normally targets the character, it is possible it affects someone else instead. For instance, triggering a Dire Consequence may result in the character's closest loved one being mind controlled into forgetting the character exists.

Gamemasters may allow Dire Consequence effects that are not purchased as a power effect and are more story-oriented in nature. However, they must use their best judgment to decide a roughly equivalent value in order to determine how many ranks of this flaw are required.

Dire Consequence is ideal for characters that live by some sort of preternaturally regulated code of conduct, such as those who serve a Higher Power, or whose powers come from a supernatural or divine source that innately discourages abuse. This flaw can also easily be used to represent powers—on their own or collectively in a concept—that are not meant to operate in particular locations or under certain circumstances.

## DRAIN TRAIT

**Flat • -points equal to the drained trait**

Each time the effect is activated, the specified trait's value is reduced by an amount equal to how much of the base trait could be obtained by spending one point. Some traits may require more than one rank of this flaw to result in a single loss of rank when the power is activated.

*Drain Trait 1 (Dodge) reduces a Dodge trait by 1 per activation of the power. Drain Trait 1 (Acrobatics) reduces the Acrobatics skill by 2 skill ranks per activation. Drain Trait 4 (Strength) reduces the Strength ability by 2 per power activation.*

The maximum detrimental effect this flaw can apply to any single trait is to reduce it to 0 ranks with a single power activation.

Trait ranks lost in this way return at a rate of 1 rank per round. Instead of reducing the selected trait's value, ranks of this flaw can be used to increase the time needed to recover the affected trait. Doing so moves one rank of time up the **Measurements Table** per point of the flaw applied for this purpose.

*Drain Trait 8 (Intellect 3, 30 seconds) spends 6 ranks on the amount of Trait drained and 2 ranks on the time between recoveries.*

This flaw cannot be applied to Permanent powers (unless it also has the Removable flaw), but may be applied more than once to the same power with each instance being applied to a different trait.

## EXPOSED

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

A -2 penalty is imposed upon the character's Dodge or Parry defense bonus (select one) during any round in which the power effect is used or active. This penalty increases to -5 at 2 ranks, -10 for 3 ranks, and -15 for 4 ranks.

This flaw may be used to represent heavy, clumsy, or bulky weapons or armor that prevent the user from being as capable of getting out of an attack's way, etc., or a power that otherwise slows or hinders you, such as by distorting your ability to perceive incoming attacks.

You may apply this flaw twice to the same power effect, once for Dodge and once for Parry.

## EXPOSURE

### -1 or -2 cost per rank

This flaw limits the effective rank to an amount based on exposure to a specified circumstance—the greater the degree of exposure, the more ranks one may employ. This circumstance may be exposure to a particular emotion in the character or others in his surroundings, a chemical or environmental condition, etc. Whatever the character's power requires exposure to in order to reach its full potency must be approved by the Gamemaster to ensure it is both fair and appropriate. Similarly, the proximity for exposure is also up to the Gamemaster to approve—does the source of exposure need to be within 30 feet of the character? 10 feet? 5 feet? Direct physical contact?

Apply a -1 cost per rank value if the required type of exposure is broad in nature (e.g., moonlight, fertile vegetation, water), or a -2 cost per rank if it is very specific (light of the full moon, flowers, sea water.)

The Gamemaster may rule some types of exposure are far too broad or not really restrictive at all, disallowing them. For instance, a Gamemaster could rule that Exposure (Around People) is not limiting at all, and thus disallows it. Exposure (Around Children), on the other hand, could be considered a legitimate broad circumstance, and Exposure (Around Own Children) could represent a proper specific circumstance.

Consult the Exposure Table to determine how many effect ranks are available based on the degree of contact with the indicated circumstance.

### Exposure Table

Exposure	Available Ranks *	Circumstantial Exposure
Negligible	None	When none (or an insignificant amount) of the required circumstance is present
Minimal	One-Third/ One-Quarter	Some exposure exists, but not much
Moderate	One-Half	There is a near balance between the presence and absence of the required circumstance
Major	Two-Thirds/ Three-Quarters	More of the circumstance is present than not Maximum Full Peak saturation of the circumstance
Maximum	Full	Peak saturation of the circumstance

\* Round down. Use whichever the power's ranks are most easily divisible by when two options are presented.

For obvious reasons, this flaw may only be applied to effects where ranks have incremental implications for how potent the effect is. Effects where ranks are used to indicate new characteristics are obtained, such as is the case with Senses, cannot normally use this flaw. Similarly, you cannot select a type of exposure that is already part of the effect's mechanics or descriptor. You cannot apply Exposure (Harm) to a Protection effect, for example, because Protection's effectiveness is already inherently tied to being exposed to harmful effects.

*A character with Enhanced Strength 8, Exposure (Sunlight) would consider the flaw to have a -1 value. While inside and only being able to access what little light makes it through the thick curtains, barely lighting the room, the character is receiving negligible exposure; his power is considered Enhanced Strength 0. If he finds a ray of light managing to get in through the drapes at another window, he would gain minimal exposure (Enhanced Strength 2) by standing in it. Making it outside, the character stands in the light shade of the roofed porch, gaining moderate exposure (Enhanced Strength 6.) Stepping off the porch into the full light of the sun would be considered major exposure (Enhanced Strength 8.)*

## FALLIBLE

### Flat • -1 point

A power effect with this flaw no longer automatically hits on a natural 20. A hit and critical threat are still possible if the attack manages to strike its intended target anyway, based on the roll after modifiers are accounted for.

This flaw may only be applied to effects requiring an attack roll.

## FALTER

### Flat • -1 point per rank

Whether you are slow to act or the power needs a bit of time to ready, you suffer a -4 penalty to initiative checks per rank of this flaw when using this power. Also, you cannot benefit from the Quick Draw or Seize Initiative advantages during a round in which the power is used (or cannot use the power in a round you benefited from these advantages, as appropriate.)

In practical terms, you roll initiative normally and if you decide to use this power once the round has begun, reduce your initiative appropriately and act during the resulting initiative count instead.

## FAST FADE

### Flat • -1 point per rank of power loss

When applied to a power effect with the Liberated extra or Fade flaw, each of this flaw's ranks increases the amount of effective ranks the power loses with each instance of fading by 1.

*Fast Fade 3 would mean a power's effectiveness fades by 4 ranks each time an effect's rank fade occurs (3 ranks from Fast Fade and the initial 1 rank from Fade.)*

## FLUCTUATING

### -1 cost per rank

For some reason, such as a faulty connection with its energy source, the power operates at an unreliable degree of potency. A separate power check is required each time you use this power or for every round it has been in operation (if appropriate.) If this power check fails, the power loses 1 rank for that use (or round, if appropriate), to a minimum of 0 ranks, for each point on the roll that the result was lower than the DC.

*A DC 15 power check for which a 10 is rolled would result in the power losing 5 ranks of effectiveness.*

A power reduced to 0 ranks either does not function at all or is all bells and whistles without any actual effect, as seems most appropriate to the power effect in question.

The power check required of this flaw is in addition to any other power check required for the power's operation.

## Gradual Example

Using the following power...

### Gradual Burst Area 3 Affliction 8, Concentration

... we divide 8 (the power's ranks) by 3 (the Area ranks) and get 2, with 2 remaining. This means in the first round of activation, the power fills a 30-foot area and is considered Affliction 4 (the 2 ranks plus the remainder.) It will fill a 60-foot area at Affliction 6 in two rounds and reach its full 120-foot area, Affliction 8 potential in the third round. So long as the character maintains their concentration, they may maintain the power at its full level of effectiveness after the third round since it was activated.

## FRAGILE

### -1 or -2 cost per rank

The power doesn't work properly or at all if the character is injured. If dazed, staggered, or disabled, the character must make a power check to get the power to function, regardless of any other circumstances or whether the power normally functions without needing a power check.

Apply a -2 penalty to this power check if the character is dazed or -5 if staggered or disabled in any way (including those entirely unrelated to the power.) Spending a hero point allows the character to use the power once per encounter without needing to make this power check. After this, further uses will require the power check until the relevant dazed, staggered, or disabled condition is removed.

If the power cannot be activated at all if the character is dazed, staggered, or disabled, not even allowing a power check to attempt doing so, this flaw is worth -2 points per rank. A Hero point may still be spent to activate this power once per encounter under such circumstances.

This flaw cannot be applied to a Permanent power effect.

## GRADUAL

### -1 cost per rank

When applied to a power with an Area extra of more than one rank and a duration longer than Instant, this flaw causes that area to fill with the power effect gradually instead of immediately, all at once.

First, divide the power's ranks by the Area extra's ranks, rounding down. In the first round of using this power, treat the effect as a power with the resulting number's ranks and 1 rank of Area. In the second round, it has twice as many effective ranks as the first round

and 2 ranks of Area. Continue in this fashion until the power reaches its full effectiveness and Area.

Add any remaining power ranks to the first round the power is active.

Once the power's full potential is reached, it remains at that level of potency so long as the power remains active. A power that turns off before reaching its maximum ranks loses the benefit of those missing ranks.

## HEAVY RECOIL

### Flat • -1 point per rank

Activating the power has a recoil that hammers the character with tremendous force, causing them to make a Strength check. On a failed Strength check (DC 10), the recoil knocks the character prone, and any check to use the power (such as an attack roll) suffers a -2 penalty per degree of failure. In the absence of a Strength check, a naked die roll is used.

The Strength check's DC increases by 5 per rank of this flaw beyond the first.

A character who is flying or otherwise in a situation where becoming prone is not an appropriate result of this flaw, the Gamemaster should still apply the penalty to the power check or attack roll. Also, devise an additional appropriate result. For instance, a flying character may be knocked off course and lose half their Dodge bonus for the round while they recover.

## IMPERFECT (INSUBSTANTIAL, PROTECTION)

### Flat • -1 point per rank

Select a descriptor that your Insubstantial or Protection effect does not function properly against, such as magic or fire. Alternatively, you may choose area effects instead of a descriptor. Roll 1d20 when such an effect is used against you under circumstances for which Insubstantial or Protection would normally operate. A result of 11 or higher means Insubstantial or Protection only functions partially against the effect; halve the incoming power's effective ranks, if appropriate (if not, the effect targeting the character operates normally.)

Imperfect is worth -1 flat point, plus -1 point per additional rank. Additional ranks may be used to reduce the number that must be rolled equal to or lower than in order for Insubstantial or Protection to function properly.

*Imperfect -3 would mean a roll of 9 or higher allows the incoming effect to function partially against the character.*

Use a combination of the Unreliable and Limited flaws if you want a power build that has a chance of not working at all against a particular descriptor or area effects.

This flaw may be selected more than once, applying it to something different with each instance.

## IMPRECISE

### Flat • -1 point per rank

For every flaw rank, the attack power effect increases its natural miss range by 1.

*Applying Imprecise 3 to a Damage power means a natural roll ranging from 1 to 4 while attacking with that power always misses.*

## INHIBITED TRAIT

### Flat • -1 point per flaw rank or -1 cost per rank

While the power effect this flaw applies to is functioning, the indicated Traits are unable to function. The cost of this flaw varies and may be applied more than once to different traits or trait groups, as follows.

Inhibited Trait has a flat cost of -1 point per rank of the flaw, with each flaw rank indicating a separate Inhibited Trait selected individually. Such a trait can be a power, ability, skill, advantage, etc. At a cost of -1 per rank, you can also apply a group of related Inhibited Traits, such as physical abilities, Manipulation skills, defenses, Fortune advantages, or Control powers. (If you want to select three or more traits within the same group to be applied to the same power, you *must* purchase them as a group instead of individually.)

Selecting an array as an Inhibited Trait requires purchasing it at the group cost, regardless of how many Alternate Effects are included in it.

*A character with Ranged Burst Area Damage 8 power effect decides to reduce the cost somewhat by applying some Inhibited Traits. The power's concept is such that it fogs the user's mind, so the player applies Inhibited (Intellect) for a flat cost of -1 point and Inhibited (Interaction Skills) with a cost of -1 per rank*

The Gamemaster has the final say on what this flaw can and cannot apply to, especially when deciding what constitutes a group of related traits. Also, the Gamemaster should disallow Inhibited Traits that don't apply to the character (in other words, the character does not possess the Inhibited trait) or when selecting a trait that wouldn't function at the same time as the initial effect anyway.

Similarly, if the character does not have at least three traits that fall within a given group, that group should not be permitted as an Inhibited Trait flaw. This would then require both Traits be purchased separately at a flat cost of -1 point each.

## KNOCKBACK ONLY

**-1 cost per rank**

When this flaw is applied to an effect that normally causes Damage and knockback (see the knockback optional rule in the **GamemasterG 3e**), the power no longer causes any harm. Instead, it is only capable of knockback. You must roll a Toughness check against the power effect's Damage, but you only use the results to see if knockback occurs. Do not apply any Damage effects from the Toughness check's results.

Damage may still be suffered from the knockback, as normal.

## LIGHT TOUCH

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

Applied to an effect that causes knockback (see the knockback optional rule in the **GamemasterG 3e**), every flaw rank reduces by 1 the Damage effect's rank purely for the sake of determining whether knockback occurs, as well as for knockback distance. Otherwise, treat the Damage effect's ranks normally.

*A Damage 6, Light Touch 3 power is treated as a Damage 3 attack for determining if knockback occurs and, if so, the distance the target is thrown by it.*

You can have no more ranks in this flaw than there are ranks in the power effect, minus 1. If you wish to rule out knockback altogether, apply the No Knockback flaw (pg 71.)

## LOW THRUST (ANY MOVEMENT EFFECT)

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

When applied to a movement effect, the character's Strength is reduced by 1 per flaw rank for the purpose of determining lifting and carrying capacity, or when performing a slam maneuver, while traveling using that movement effect.

## NO KNOCKBACK

**-1 cost per rank**

When applied to an effect that normally causes knockback (see the knockback optional rule in the **GamemasterG 3e**), this flaw removes its ability to do so.

Obviously, a power that is not capable of inflicting knockback may not have this flaw applied to it.

## NON-CRITICAL

**-1 cost per rank**

The power effect is no longer capable of obtaining a critical success or critical hit, as appropriate.

This flaw cannot be applied to a power effect that cannot normally obtain a critical success or critical hit.

## PRIMING

**-1 cost per rank**

A power with this flaw requires time to reach its full potential, and thus it may only be applied to powers that increase their potency with additional ranks (such as with Damage) rather than new effects per rank (such as with Senses.)

Once the power is initiated as a free action, one rank's worth of potency is primed per action (3 seconds, or 2 ranks per round) that passes. Initiating the power to begin priming it does not require a power check. Once priming has begun, the power may be activated at any time, but if it is activated before reaching full charge (its full rank value), it operates at the rank it is currently primed to.

Whether fully primed or not, activating a power still requires meeting the power's action requirement.

This flaw cannot be applied to powers that activate as a free action or reaction, nor to Permanent powers.

A primed power, upon reaching its full potential, can remain in reserve, inactivated until needed rather

# Chapter 3: Powers

than unleashing it immediately, for as many rounds as it has ranks. If the power is not unleashed after this time has passed, it shuts off and the priming process must begin again if the power is to be used.

## Priming Example 1

A character with **Ranged Damage 10, Priming** would require the passing of ten actions (5 rounds) to

tial, they must spend a standard action (the sixth action of the process) to do so. This enables them to employ a **Ranged Damage 5** effect.

## Priming Example 2

A character with **Teleport 6, Priming** would require 6 actions (3 rounds) to be capable of teleporting their maximum distance of 1,800 feet. If they teleport after only 3 actions have passed (1.5 rounds), they may spend a move action (the fourth action of the process) to teleport up to 250 feet as though they possessed **Teleport 3**.

## REDUCED AREA

**Flat • -1 point per decreased rank of distance value**

Each rank of this flaw reduces the area's distance rank down by 1 rank upon the **Measurements Table**.

*A Burst Area power with Reduced Area 2 has a 6-foot radius (distance rank -2), a 3-foot radius at Reduced Area 3 (distance rank -3), and so forth.*

Only powers that already have the Area extra or a built in area of effect may have this flaw applied to them. What's more, the Area must be at its base value—you cannot increase the area's size from its default (via an extra or otherwise) and then apply this flaw.

## REDUCED PENETRATION

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

When a power with this flaw is used against a target with the Impervious extra, the ranks of Impervious are increased against the power's effects by an amount equal to this flaw's ranks. The ranks of Impervious applied via this flaw cannot surpass the target's total Toughness value



reach full power at 10 ranks once they decide to initiate the power. If 5 actions pass and the character is forced to use this power before it reaches its full poten-

**A Ranged Damage 6, Reduced Penetration 2 effect targeting a person with Impervious Protection 2 and Toughness 2 would grant the target Impervious Toughness 4 against the attack. If the attack had Reduced Penetration 3, it could not provide the target does not gain the benefit of Impervious Toughness 5 because the target has a Toughness modifier of 4.**

## REDUCED TRAIT

**Flat • -points equal to the reduced trait**

Similar to Drain Trait, each time the effect is activated, the specified trait's value is reduced by an amount equal to how much of the base trait could be obtained by spending one point. Some traits may require more than one rank of this flaw to result in a single loss of rank when the power is activated.

*Reduced Trait 1 (Parry) reduces a Parry modifier by 1 while the power is active, whereas Reduced Trait 1 (Treatment) reduces the Treatment skill by 2 skill ranks while active, and Reduced Trait 4 (Flight) reduces the Flight power by 2 while active.*

The maximum detrimental effect this flaw can apply to any single trait is to reduce it to 0 ranks with a single power activation.

Trait ranks lost in this fashion return immediately once the power is deactivated. As such, this flaw may not be applied to effects with either a Permanent (unless it also has the Removable flaw) or Instant duration.

This flaw may be applied more than once to the same power with each instance being applied to a different trait.

## RELOAD

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

Because the rules are designed for fast-paced play, one need not normally worry about ammunition beyond periodic common sense reminders from the Gamemaster. In some instances, it is conceptually and/or mechanically important (even necessary) to take note of a power that has a limited amount of uses before its ammunition stores need to be replenished. (This flaw can also be used to represent a power that needs a certain amount of time to pass between uses—a recharge time, if you will.)

Permanent powers cannot have this flaw.

There are two factors that must be considered when determining this flaw's value: the time needed to reload and how frequently reloading is necessary.

### Required Time

At one rank, this flaw requires 3 seconds (one standard or move action) to reload its ammunition stores or recharge between uses. Increase the flaw's value by one rank per rank of time longer the reload process requires according to the **Measurements Table**.

### Auto-Loading/Auto-Recharging

Reloading normally requires attention and action on the wielder's part during the reload process, but this is not always the case. Reduce the flaw's ranks by 1 if the power automatically reloads or recharges. This means it will undertake the process on its own, allowing the user to direct his attention elsewhere until the power may be used again.

### Frequency

Roll an additional d20 whenever the power is used. This is known as the **Reload Die**. For no additional ranks, the power only needs to reload when the Reload Die results is a 20. Increase the flaw's rank by 1 per roll below 20 on the Reload Die that can result in a reload.

*At 4 ranks applied to the frequency, a reload would be needed whenever a 16 or higher is rolled on the Reload Die.*

The maximum Reload Die value is 11, for 9 ranks. There is no longer a Reload Die if you purchase 10 ranks for the flaw's frequency. Instead, 10 ranks indicates the power needs to be reloaded after each and every use.

### Reloading Example 1

Let's build a Ranged Damage power that is intended to require reloading, but needs to be reloaded periodically, a process that takes a single action. 1 rank of the Reload flaw is required for the 3 second reload time. Adding a Reload Die value of 18 requires two ranks in this flaw. The Reload flaw has a final value of 3 ranks.

**Ranged Damage 4 (Reload Die 18, 3 Seconds) • 5 points**

### Reloading Example 2

This time we want to build a Flight power that requires recharging between uses. We'll design it so that

## Do I Have to Add Reload to All Firearms?

Just because **Better Mousetrap** has introduced a Reload flaw doesn't mean you're now expected to go add it every firearm or similar item or power. That would not only be a pain to undertake, but would throw off the established costs and bog down your game with minutiae the rules are specifically designed to ignore. You should only add this flaw when it is conceptually important to do so.

The exception may be a low-power, dark and gritty setting where gunplay is more common than super powers. Examples include campaigns involving so-called "street level" vigilantism rather than four-color super beings, or if using the rules to emulate non-super-hero genres, such as the Old West or a game taking place in World War II.

30 seconds is needed to recharge, resulting in 4 ranks of the Reload flaw. However, we want it to be auto-recharging, so this value is reduced to 3. Also, the power must recharge between every use—another 10 ranks for this flaw. The Reload flaw has a final value of 13 ranks.

**Flight 7** (250 mph; Always Reload, 30 Seconds, Automatic) • 1 point

## SELF-DESTRUCT

**-1 or -3 cost per rank or flat • -1 point per 5 points**

As a -3 cost per rank flaw, using the power destroys the entire device, artifact, item of equipment, etc. once the power expires if it is duration Concentration, Sustained, or Continuous; or once it is activated if it has an Instant duration. This flaw cannot be applied to Permanent powers. As a -1 modifier, the device remains intact, but components are burned out or otherwise damaged beyond the ability to function, and must be replaced.

Although this flaw is normally limited to an artifact, device, equipment, or the like, it can be applied to powers other than the former with the Gamemaster's permission. To do so, it must be understood the character with the power is automatically killed by the self-destruction as a -3 modifier, or permanently loses the power (and the points spent on it) if a -1 modifier. In the latter case, the Gamemaster may decide the power may be regained in some fashion, such as completing a difficult quest to obtain a substance that will return it. Alternatively, the character may have to undertake a similar course of action to regain the points lost by the power that self-destructed.

If added to a device, vehicle, or the like, apply the flaw to the overall item. In this case, the flaw is worth -1 point per 5 total power points of the item's *final* cost, after applying extras and flaws to its effects. If the Removable flaw is also applied, calculate both flaws using

the final cost rather than the cost after the other flaw has been deducted.

## SELF-FUELLED

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

Using the indicated effects draws upon your life force (or inflicts harm if a construct or the like), causing you to suffer as though from a Damage effect of this flaw's rank each time the power is used. If the effect allows you to control how many ranks are used at a given time, this Damage effect's rank is instead equal to the power's currently employed rank if the latter is lower than this flaw's rank (in other words, using less of the power risks less harm to you.)

The flaw's Damage effect is resisted by Toughness, Fortitude, or Will, to be selected when the flaw is applied. However, the Damage effect bypasses all power effects that would normally enhance the base resistance check (e.g., Protection, Enhanced Fortitude, Enhanced Will.)

If applied to effects with Concentration, Sustained, or Continuous duration, the Damage effect is suffered when the power is first activated. This flaw cannot apply to Permanent powers.

This flaw's ranks cannot exceed that of the power to which it is applied.

## SHUTDOWN

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

Using the power this flaw is applied to may result in turning off a power effect indicated when this flaw is chosen.

Roll a Fortitude or Will (select one) resistance check (DC 10) when using the power. If the resistance check fails, the selected power turns off—it is considered nullified for 6 seconds (one round) and cannot be reactivated during that time. If the power being used and the

power to be shutdown are the same, the power turns on, for an Instant duration if the power normally lasts longer, and is then shutdown immediately thereafter. If the power has an Instant duration, it cannot apply Shutdown to itself.

Arrays count as a single power for the sake of selecting a power to be shutdown; you cannot select individual effects within an array that are shutdown via this flaw.

This flaw cannot be applied to Permanent or Innate effects.

Another power to be shutdown can be added by applying additional rank (don't apply this flaw separately unless the powers to be shutdown have different DCs to resist the flaw or are shutdown for different durations), or a rank can increase the resistance check DC by 5—increasing the DC beyond 25 instead makes the shutdown automatic. Lastly, additional ranks may be used to extend the shutdown's duration period by 1 rank of time on the **Measurements Table**.

*A character with Affliction, Flight, Mind Reading, Move Object, and Ranged Damage powers has Ranged Damage 8 (Shutdown 5; Flight, Move Object, Will DC 15, 30 seconds.) One rank apiece is used to select Flight and Move Object as the Shutdown effects, one rank increases the Will resistance check DC to 15. Two ranks increase the Shutdown duration to 30 seconds (5 rounds.)*

This flaw is a way to manifest some uses of the Power Loss complication in a more tangible manner.

## SLOW PROGRESS

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

When applied to a power with the Progressive extra, every rank of this flaw increases the time between resistance checks by one rank on the **Measurements Table**. The default time value is 0.

## SOURCE

**-1 or -2 cost per rank**

The power only works when you have access or contact with a particular source or type of contact, such as electricity, scrap metal, being on the ground, and so forth. Without this source or the necessary exposure, your power doesn't work. At the Gamemaster's discretion, an incredibly rare source counts as a -2 modifier.

Mechanically, this is a shorthand variation of the Limited flaw that somewhat crosses over with the Power Loss complication.

## STAGGERING

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

An effect with this flaw causes you to become staggered when you use it unless you succeed at a Will or Fortitude (select one) resistance check (DC 10.) You recover from this staggered condition normally. Two ranks increases the DC to 15, three ranks to 20, four ranks to 25, and five ranks indicates no resistance check is allowed—becoming staggered is automatic.

This flaw cannot be applied to Permanent effects unless they also have the Removable flaw.

## STATIONARY

**Flat • -1 point per rank**

A Device or piece of equipment with this flaw must be erected and remain stationary to use. It may be broken down into its component parts to be moved elsewhere or set-up for use within a round. Increase the time needed to set-up or breakdown the item by one rank up the **Measurements Table** per additional rank of this flaw.

## STUNNING

**-1 cost per rank**

An effect with this flaw causes you to become stunned when you use it. If the effect has an Instant duration, you are stunned immediately after the effect is activated. A Concentration, Sustained, or Continuous duration effect requires a Will or Fortitude (select one) resistance check (DC 10) every round the power is active, to be rolled after each round's effect occurs. Increase the DC by +2 per round the effect is maintained. Failing the check means you become stunned.

You recover from being stunned normally, and may use hero points to do so by spending the hero point at the start of the round following the use of a Stunned effect. In essence, the power requires extra effort in order to use it without detriment.

Stunning may be applied to just some ranks of an effect to represent a higher level of the effect, usable only through extra effort.

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*A hero might have a rank 8 Damage effect, but routinely use only 6 ranks of it. The remaining 2 ranks are Stunning, so using them takes the hero out of the action.*

This flaw cannot be applied to Permanent effects unless they also have the Removable flaw.

## TIMED

### Flat • -1 point per rank

This flaw indicates there is a time limit attached to a Concentration, Sustained, or Continuous effect; it cannot be applied to Instant or Permanent effects. Once the indicated window of time expires, a period of downtime is necessary before the effect may be used again. This time limit is the maximum value—if you do not use the full operational time, you must still wait the indicated downtime before using the effect again.

Timed has a flat cost of -1 point for an operational time of 6 seconds and a downtime of 6 seconds. Each increased rank of operational time on the **Measurements Table** reduces the flaw's value by +1. Each increased rank of downtime increases the flaw's value by -1. By determining the flaw's final value in this way, you cannot select an operational time and downtime that result in the flaw having a value of 0 or with a positive value.

An effect that may be used cumulatively—meaning turning the power off before the operational time is entirely used up will not result in the downtime window occurring—reduces the flaw's value by +2. Once the cumulative operational time is expended, the downtime follows.

*If a Timed effect has an operational duration of 1 minute, you would be able to use it for one round, then thirty seconds, and so on—any combination leading up to one minute. The flaw's value would be 2 points less than normal, however.*

If a period of time equal to or greater than the downtime passes between uses, the operation time resets to its maximum.

## UNRELIABLE ADDENDUM

### -2 cost per rank

Instead of requiring a d20 be rolled every round to determine if the effect works, this flaw may be purchased at a higher degree of penalty (-2 cost per rank) that requires a separate reliability roll be made every action or use/instance the effect comes into play. This includes for each potential subject if the power also has the Area extra. This may result in multiple reliability checks be made per action for certain effects.

## WILD

### -1 cost per rank

Once activated, controlling the power's direction becomes difficult. When applied to any ranged power, roll a die for each range increment (short, medium, long) before its effect manifests or reaches the intended target. Consult the **Wild Power Direction** table with each roll to see if the effect diverts from its intended path and, if so, in what direction.

You can change the result up or down on the table by one step, as desired, per degree of success obtained with the power's attack check or power check, as applicable.

## Wild Power Direction

Roll	Direction
1-2	Veers left 45 degrees
3-4	Veers right 45 degrees
5-6	Veers down 45 degrees
7-8	Veers up 45 degrees
9-10	Veers left and up 45 degrees each
11-12	Veers right and up 45 degrees each
13-14	Veers left and down 45 degrees each
15-16	Veers right and down 45 degrees each
17-20	Unchanged; stays on intended course

If the power veers off its originally intended course, it will continue in that direction until it meets the conditions of its effect's activation/manifestation (such as an energy blast hitting something or telepathy running across a person), or the full extent of its range is reached.

This flaw may be applied to other effects with the Gamemaster's permission, although some manner of choice pertaining to the direction must be involved. For example, if applied to Flight, this flaw would indicate controlling the direction flown in is extremely difficult.

# CHAPTER 4

# RULES

This chapter provides new, revised, and/or updated rules, including vehicle combat and complications.

## KEEPING TRACK OF AMOUNTS

It may sometimes become helpful—even necessary—to keep track of the amount of something in a ranked manner in much the same way as the standard **Measurements Table** is used with regards to mass, distance, time, and volume. As such, we introduce the **Amounts Table**.

### Amounts Table

Rank	Amount
-5	1
-4	2
-3	4
-2	8
-1	16
0	32
1	64
2	125
3	250
4	500
5	1,000
6	2,000
7	4,000
8	8,000
9	16,000
10	32,000
11	65,000
12	125,000
13	250,000

Rank	Amount
14	500,000
15	1 million
16	2 million
17	4 million
18	8 million
19	16 million
20	32 million
21	65 million
22	125 million
23	250 million
24	500 million
25	1 billion
26	2 billion
27	4 billion
28	8 billion
29	16 billion
30	32 billion
+1	x2

## OPTIONAL RULE: RADIATION EXPOSURE EFFECTS

The basic guidelines for radiation exposure (see **Chapter 8: Action & Adventure** of **M&M3e**) assume “comic book” radiation, which is usually treated as directly harmful energy (like electricity or heat.) For more realistic radiation exposure guidelines, consider using the following rules.



## Radiation Exposure

Situation (effect ranks)	Rank of Exposure Time (Minimum)				
	0 (6 seconds)	3 (1 minute)	6 (8 minutes)	9 (1 hour)	14 (1 day)
<i>Character in irradiated area</i>					
Lingering radiation (1)	none	none	none	mild	mild
Lightly irradiated (2-5)	mild	mild	mild	mild	low
Moderately irradiated (6-10)	mild	mild	low	low	moderate
Highly irradiated (11-12)	low	low	moderate	moderate	high
Severely irradiated (13-14)	moderate	moderate	high	high	severe
Extremely irradiated (15+)	high	high	severe	severe	extreme
<i>Character exposed to radiation source (materials or power effect)</i>					
Lingering radiation (1)	none	none	mild	mild	mild
Lightly radioactive (2-5)	mild	mild	low	low	low
Moderately radioactive (6-10)	low	low	moderate	moderate	moderate
Highly radioactive (11-12)	moderate	moderate	high	high	high
Severely radioactive (13-14)	high	high	severe	severe	extreme
Extremely radioactive (15+)	severe	severe	extreme	extreme	extreme

## Radiation Sickness

Degree of Exposure	Effect
Mild	Affliction 2 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Exhausted, Damage), Cumulative, Drawn Out, Harmful, Progressive
Low	Affliction 5 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Exhausted, Damage), Cumulative, Drawn Out, Harmful, Progressive
Moderate	Affliction 8 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Exhausted, Damage), Cumulative, Drawn Out, Harmful, Progressive
High	Affliction 11 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Exhausted, Damage), Cumulative, Drawn Out, Harmful, Progressive
Severe	Affliction 14 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Exhausted, Damage), Cumulative, Drawn Out, Harmful, Progressive
Extreme	Affliction 20 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Exhausted, Damage), Cumulative, Drawn Out, Harmful, Progressive

When characters are exposed to harmful radiation, they may be afflicted with radiation sickness. Radiation sickness requires a Fortitude resistance check (DC 10 + radiation rank.) The effects of radiation sickness vary with the dose's degree of potency, of which there are six degrees: mild, low, moderate, high, severe, and extreme.

For potency, start with the type of exposure: either an irradiated area (such as a location near a nuclear explosion after the fact, or a lab that has been flooded with radioactive gas), or a particular source of radiation (such as a lump of radioactive material or character who leaks harmful radiation.) Next, consult the **Radiation Exposure** table to determine the degree of exposure based on the total time of exposure within a given 24-hour period (rounding up.)

*A hero fighting a villain who expels radioactive sludge (a Damage 10 effect) spends the battle dodging the dangerous materials and dancing around pools of the radioactive muck where it falls upon the ground. The*

*Gamemaster rules this constitutes sufficient exposure to be considered highly irradiated, and contact and proximity during the fight puts the hero at risk of moderate exposure (an Affliction 8 effect.)*

## TREATING RADIATION SICKNESS

Radiation sickness is considered a treatable disease that can be cured using the *Treat Disease and Poison* aspect of the Treatment skill, and by the Healing and Regeneration powers. Advanced medicine and technology may also eliminate radiation sickness or hinder its harmful effects, at the Gamemaster's discretion.

## NEW COMPLICATIONS

Although the concept of complications is entirely open-ended, the core rules do include a number of examples. As such, we thought we would provide some additional examples to excite your imagination.

## AMNESIA

You have lost some or all of your memory. Maybe it's just recent memories that are gone, or your entire identity. The lost memories could be the result of physical trauma, such as a blow to the head suffered during a fall, or psychological in nature, such as the suppression of a particularly horrifying event. It is also entirely possible that, due to the memory loss, you do not know what brought on the amnesia.

Regardless of the cause or degree of loss, there are gaps in your mind that make relationships with others difficult. This will likely cause you to doubt whether many of the choices you make are of the sort you would take were you fully aware of the memories that should be defining who you are.

## ANTI-SOCIAL

You possess some form of anti- or counter-social behavior or attitude, such as feeling alienated from people who would otherwise be your peers, or you are active in a counter-culture movement. The extent of this behavior goes beyond merely standing out in a crowd—it is jarring, abrasive, and alienating. This makes fitting in with the mainstream somewhat complicated.

## BAD LUCK

Things always seem to take a bad turn for you, even when they generally seem to be working in your favor.

There are several ways to utilize this complication, but perhaps the easiest is for the Gamemaster to periodically decide something unfortunate and detrimental happens to the character. This should not be too severe during regular game play—the character's car breaks down while rushing for an important meeting, or the character's credit card is refused due during a date to a computer malfunction. During an encounter, however, things can go far more awry, such as tripping while charging an opponent or a weapon jamming at a pivotal moment.

If the Gamemaster wants to tie this complication to the game mechanics, the results of bad luck can also be ruled to manifest whenever a degree of failure is obtained on the relevant check. The degree of bad luck worsens the greater the degree of failure. If this is the case, even a single degree of success may be overshadowed by minor bad luck, indicating that even when

something goes right for the character, something can also go wrong.

## DEBT

You owe money (or something else valuable, such as an extraordinary favor), to someone with the power and/or authority to collect. In most cases, some sort of lending institution holds the debt, and the payments are not too arduous but still cause problems. You find it difficult getting credit, and must hand over a substantial amount of your income to the lender.

If you are using the optional wealth system in the **GamemasterG 3e**, purchasing an item with a purchase DC higher than your current wealth rank decreases your wealth rank by 2 per 5 points instead of 1. Also, the lost wealth rank returns at a rate of 1 point every 2 months instead of 1 per month.

## EXTERNAL POWER SOURCE

A variation of the Power Loss complication, your power effects are transmitted from an outside source. This source may be an artificial intelligence beaming you energy from a satellite system, a mystic entity you have sworn to serve, or an inter-dimensional aperture that only you can tap into. You and the Gamemaster may define the source however you wish. You are, therefore, subject to being cut off from your power source, leaving you only with whatever energy you have stored (alternatively, you may lose power immediately.)

If you retain the power you had stored before being cut off, all powers affected by this complication simultaneously lose one or more rank of effectiveness per use of any such power drawing from the source. This continues until the power reaches 0 ranks, at which point the power is considered lost until the connection to the power source returns.

## FLASHBACKS

You suffer memory flashbacks at inopportune moments, resulting in distraction and broken concentration. Work with the Gamemaster to determine what the flashbacks are of (past traumas or perhaps lost memories?), when they manifest, and what their implications are on gameplay and the story. The Gamemaster may require a Will resistance check to resist the flashback's effects should they happen at an inopportune moment.

## FRAIL

Whether due to age, disease, or some strange genetic quirk, you are easily exhausted. You must make an average Fortitude resistance check (DC 10) any time you make Acrobatics or Athletics skill checks, as well as for every 5 rounds you are engaged in combat. Even attacking at range results in increased mental and physical stress—such as adrenaline in the body—resulting in exertion. If the resistance check fails, you become fatigued.

Cumulatively increase the resistance check DC by one step (average becomes tough, tough becomes challenging, etc.) per additional minute of skill use or per additional 5 rounds of combat.

## INCOMPETENT

### [ABILITY]

Select an ability (Strength, Intellect, etc.) to which this complication is applied—you cannot apply it to Stamina. You are not able to use the selected ability unskilled, and cannot make a routine check when using any skill related to that ability.

## INDECISIVE

You have difficulty making decisions and acting earnestly in a confrontation, requiring a Will resistance check whenever initiative is to be rolled (the Gamemaster determines the DC based on the situation.) Failure imposes a -4 penalty to initiative.

## LIFELINKED

A character with this complication shares a deep connection with another being, item, or place that binds them together. Any time the linked being/item/place suffers damage, the Lifelinked character must make a Will or Fortitude resistance check against the same damage (select which when the complication is chosen.)

If both Lifelinked beings/items/places have this complication, the link works both ways.

If the other being/item/place dies or is destroyed, a Lifelinked character must make an immediate appropriate resistance check (DC 25) or die as well.

## LIMITED ACTION

Due to programming, mystic control, or unshakable conscience, characters with Limited Action cannot commit certain, relatively *important* actions under specified circumstances. A character with Limited Ac-

tion (Killing), for instance, could never kill a person or allow someone to die because of his *inaction*—even if they wanted to!

Characters can do nothing to overcome the limitation unless the Gamemaster decides otherwise, and such allowances should result in radical consequences for the character. The nature of this complication isn't simply a matter of choice, but rather something that is "written" into the character's very makeup or is compelled by some external force.

## LOSE CONTROL

A specific situation, substance, or the like causes the character to lose control of his actions and brings about some manner of predetermined effect. This effect can be a type of behavior (e.g., entering a blind rage, as per the Rage power build, whenever around blood), activating a specific power (e.g., igniting an explosion centered on the character when wounded), or even the activation of another complication (e.g., causing a Separate Personality to assume control if taunted, teased, or the like.)

If the player and Gamemaster agree that it is not appropriate for this complication's results to occur automatically, assign a DC and resistance check. Every time the complication may factor into game play, the character rolls a resistance check against the indicated DC (the higher the DC, the more difficult the complication is to resist.) Should the resistance check fail when the character is exposed to the appropriate circumstances, the character is unable to control itself and the complication's effects occur.

## MENTAL DISORDER

You suffer from some form of psychiatric disorder that makes functioning normally (such as things go) difficult. The Gamemaster may allow a Will resistance check to resist the disorder's effects in a specific situation, setting the DC appropriately.

The various types of mental illness vary, and two are already mentioned in the core rules (obsession and phobia), but some additional examples follow:

- **Anxiety Disorder:** You suffer from debilitating anxiety that is especially prone to occur during moments of stress, possibly resulting in fatigue and impairment.

- **Conversion Disorder:** You suffer a physical symptom of trauma during times of stress despite no actual physical trauma having been suffered. This can include senses being dulled or outright negated, limbs going numb, and so on. The severity of the catalyzing stress often determines how severe the effects are.
- **Delusional:** You suffer from a false perception or belief, such as believing the President of the United States is a sleeper terrorist, the Post Office is run by aliens, or that one's neighbor is a werewolf.
- **Depression:** You are subjected to overpowering feelings of sadness and guilt that make concentration and ordinary aspects of life, such as sleeping and eating, incredibly difficult. Thoughts of death and suicide are common.
- **Hypochondriasis:** You live with the constant fear of contracting an illness, even when provided with proof to the contrary. This makes you afraid of contact with others, publicly accessible objects, and so on. If confronted with the risk of actual illness, you may be induced into outright panic.
- **Kleptomania:** You suffer a compulsion to steal, regardless of whether or not what you take has any value to you.
- **Mania:** You are overcome with energy, often manifesting as an inability to sleep, fluidity and rapidity of ideas and thought, coupled with irritability and exaggerated animation and happiness. This frequently makes being around you very difficult for people of a more sedate nature.
- **Manic-Depression:** You alternate between periods of mania and depression, usually without provocation. You suffer the appropriate effects of the state you are currently in.
- **Megalomania:** You suffer from delusions of greatness, and entertain fantasies of obtaining and wielding wealth and power, possibly even omnipotence.
- **Multiple Personalities:** You possess more than one different personality, each with its own behavioral quirks. Severe stress or associations can cause you to switch between personalities.

Apply separate Agility, Dexterity, Fighting, Intellect, Awareness, and Presence values to each personality, although none may have a value higher than that of your actual personality. Each personal-

ity can also have its own complications, possibly including those related to powers, representing mental blocks or a lack of understanding or awareness of the power in question.

The different personalities cannot normally interact with each other or talk amongst themselves—they possibly may not even be aware of each other's existence. However, hypnosis or the like may allow this circumstance to occur.

- **Night Terrors:** This is a sleep disorder that occurs before you obtain a state of full sleep. It is usually accompanied by difficulty breathing, shaking, and screaming, whereby you are subjected to and overcome by the raw emotion of fear rather than having a typical nightmare with a focus to be afraid of. It is also difficult to wake you while in this state, requiring someone make the effort to do so. Typically, the longer you go without sleep, the more likely night terrors are to occur, and the more powerful they shall be.
- **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder:** Unwelcome thoughts, such as ideas, vivid images, or internal dialogue afflict you, making you incredibly anxious, a state that can be alleviated somewhat by both obsessive and compulsive behaviors. Such ritualized behaviors waste time, and can draw stigmatization and alienation due to their social awkwardness and rational disparity.
- After the disorder's characteristics are determined—specifically what obsessions and/or compulsions you suffer from—the Gamemaster should play this disorder by ear. Apply penalties (usually never more than -2) to social situations influenced by such behaviors, lengthening the time required to get tasks done due to "breaks" needed to carry out compulsions, and so on.
- **Paranoia:** A particular form of delusion wherein you experience an unreasonable belief you are being persecuted, a conviction often reinforced by apparent (possibly self-fulfilling) logic. This makes fully (or even partially) trusting others incredibly difficult, if not impossible, for you.
- **Phobia:** A phobia is an overpowering fear of something that cannot be rationalized, regardless of context or circumstances. While exposed the phobia's source, you are impaired unless a Will resistance check succeeds. A new resistance check is required each round or additional instance of exposure.

Sample phobias include arachnophobia (fear of arachnids/spider), agoraphobia (fear of open places), claustrophobia (fear of enclosed spaces), social phobia (fear of social situations and scrutiny), and fear of specific places, objects, or creatures.

- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** An anxiety disorder also known as “shell shock,” it has come to afflict you because of a severe instance (or repeated instance) of mental and/or physical duress, either by threat or actual occurrence. Stress may bring on the effects, rendering you impaired at best or frozen and unable to act at worst. If the stress resembles the original trauma, you are far more likely to succumb.
- **Psychopath:** You are subject to extreme anti-social behavior that manifests as violent and/or perverted (often criminal) actions that do not result in the guilt or other appropriate emotional responses normally expected to accompany such actions.
- **Schizophrenia:** You do not correctly perceive or interact with reality, and suffer from delusions, paranoia, hallucinations (typically auditory, but other senses may also be involved), and the like. Because you act so strangely and cannot accurately perceive via your senses, you are impaired whenever they succumb to their disorder.

Despite what one might think, some mental disorders, especially those like megalomania and psychopath, may not be appropriate complications for villains if running a game where the players take on the role of bad guys. This is not to say villains do not possess these insanity types, merely that the insanity must be a setback for the character’s regular operation. For villains who seek to kill wantonly or take over the world, this means the mental disorder is a part of how they openly operate rather than something to be kept under wraps and prevented from interfering with the villain’s life.

## NO HEALING

This complication prevents you from healing naturally in normal circumstances—you do not remove one Damage condition per minute of rest. When defining why you cannot heal naturally, you must indicate an external condition(s) that allows the character to recover from Damage.

*A character may apply this complication, indicating they can only heal while submerged in water.*

## POOR HEALER

You take longer to recover from Damage—recovery of one Damage condition takes longer than the normal minute. How many ranks down the time scale on the **Measurements Table** is up to the player, with a greater amount of time resulting in an increased challenge for the character. Furthermore, halve the power’s ranks when a Healing effect is used upon the character.

## POWER BURN-OUT

Upon the occurrence of a pre-defined condition, one or more of the character’s powers will disappear—permanently. (This is essentially a variation of the Power Loss complication that imposes greater, longer lasting consequences.) The player and the Gamemaster should work out the condition using the following criteria:

1. The Burn-Out should be something the character can avoid, even if they may not want to avoid it.
2. A logical or thematic reason for the Burn-Out to occur should exist. Do not define a condition that makes no sense to the game or the character’s concept.
3. Both the player and the Gamemaster operate with the understanding that the Burn-Out will almost certainly occur at some point (otherwise it isn’t really much of a downside to taking this complication.)

Some examples of conditions that would result in Power Burn-Out are losing one’s honor, the character fulfills the goal to which end the power was bestowed in the first place, or the character draws innocent blood.

Once the power is gone, it cannot (normally) be regained. The points spent on the power, however, may be reacquired in a way fitting the game, such as by completing an important mission.

## POWER NULLIFIER

An active power’s currently operational effects are immediately nullified by the introduction of a certain condition. Unlike the Power Loss complication, Power Nullifier does not affect a character’s ability to use a power, instead only affecting its resulting impact, much like the Nullify power with an absolute certainty of working.

*Power Nullifier would not be able to prevent a character from using Mind Control, but would remove Mind Control already influencing a subject when its conditions are met.*

## PRICE

There is a “price” to be paid for using the power effect this complication is applied to, and it must be paid every time the power is used. Typically, this complication is only applied to power effects that are rarely used, although this is not set in stone. Determine a Price that is comparable to the effect’s potency and how it fits the character’s concept.

This Price can be an actual cash requirement, in which case the trait’s value should be determined as though it were a piece of equipment with the same capabilities. Maybe every time a piece of Equipment is used, parts of it need replacing or servicing by a specialist (who may charge a high fee or ask a favor), most likely after the adventure. In most cases, the Price will be a role-playing effect or something other than monetary in nature.

*Example Prices include the soul of an innocent, a favor to be performed on behalf of the character’s patron deity, or a permanent reduction to the character’s Will modifier.*

The Gamemaster has final approval on what the Price is, but the Gamemaster and player should confer regarding whether the Price is paid before the power effect is activated or after, as suits the power’s concept and the nature of the Price.

## TECHNOLOGY REPELLANT

Characters with this complication are nearly incapable of using any type of advanced technology correctly. Bad things usually happen while using technology, even if no check is involved.

The Gamemaster should determine what happens (and how often) based on this complication’s concept. Things are easier to decide when a check is involved—the worse the degree of failure, the more severe the repercussion. Even when a single degree of success is achieved, something minor should go wrong to offset the good somewhat. A die roll is not necessary, however, if the Gamemaster wants to come up with appropriate consequences on the fly.

*One degree of success with a Technology skill check to operate a computer means the computer does what desired, but the complication also causes a fatal error.*



*This forces the system to slowly reboot, which wastes time before letting the character do anything else with the computer. Another example would be a car’s brakes giving out during a routine driving maneuver that did not require a skill check.*

## TRAIT OF CONSEQUENCE

There is a chance for an adverse effect in either the result of the game mechanics or role-playing whenever the character uses the advantage or skill this complication applies to.

*If applied to the Contacts advantage, a contact may only aid the character in exchange for something of value that is difficult to get. Some reason would have to exist why the character would need to keep the contact happy and the assistance coming.*

Here's another example.

*A character with the Expertise (History) skill would normally be considered to have sweeping knowledge of history in general. However, this complication could be applied to indicate a total lack of knowledge in a particular region or era that would be of value to the character.*

This complication can also be applied to skills to disallow using hero points or extra effort with it, to prevent the character from taking a routine check with the skill and similar handicaps.

## Hot Pursuit & Vehicle Combat Optional Rules

This section lists some general modifiers you can use when dealing with vehicles in combat, chase scenarios, and similar situations. It leaves further specifics up to the Gamemaster, common sense, and process of telling the story. Only employ these rules as and when needed—do not feel compelled to regulate each and every instance of vehicle use in your game.

For the sake of clarity, whenever a “vehicle” is mentioned, you can also assume a mount, such as a riding beast, or other means of conveyance that can be controlled by a character. This includes a mecha that is piloted from within (and sometimes even characters with Movement powers.)

A vehicle’s drive system (the exact mechanics of its movement) is left as a descriptor, regardless of the type of movement capabilities it possesses. The vehicle’s fuel and power systems are also handled as descriptors and complications on the occasions when problems arise.

### VEHICLES AND PL

On their own, the unmodified vehicle templates provided by size category within the core rules are all PL 3. This is based on their Defense and Toughness ranks, with room for a +1 modification of either without changing PL. This allows vehicles to fit comfortably into virtually any series.

### Characters as Vehicles

Some characters may be big or strong enough to carry passengers or otherwise make use of the vehicle combat rules when they are engaged with vehicles. Similarly, the Gamemaster may wish to use these rules—especially the maneuvers—while role-playing a chase between two or more characters with Movement powers comparable to those provided by vehicles. For instance, two speedsters chasing each other through city streets might utilize these rules, as might characters with Flight who are dog-fighting in the skies, or a pair of Atlanteans fighting against an enemy submarine.

It is up to the Gamemaster to determine when this occurs, if it is even desired in the first place. Doing so is entirely optional.

Vehicles generally have the same PL limits as characters although, in some games, the Gamemaster may wish to institute separate PL limits for characters and vehicles. This is most appropriate for settings where vehicles are common and characters are primarily intended to be their lower-level pilots.

### VEHICLES AND ENVIRONMENTS

A vehicle is assumed to provide the necessary life support for its passengers for the environments it is equipped to move through. For example, an aquatic vehicle is considered to be water-tight and have its own oxygen supply, while a space vehicle is assumed to provide a safe, breathable environment (and even gravity if such technology exists.) These are part of the vehicle’s descriptors and have no point cost.

Immunity to environments or other effects not normally part of the vehicle’s mode(s) of movement is acquired as a power for the vehicle. Typically, this is done using Affects Others and Others Only for a net +0 modifier, protecting everyone inside the vehicle.

### PASSENGER ACTIONS

Passengers in a vehicle (anyone who’s not piloting the vehicle) suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls while the vehicle is in motion. This is true even if the vehicle is moving slower than the character could move under their own power. The character has no control over the movement, and thus has difficulty responding to or anticipating factors that affects their ability to strike a target.



In some circumstances, the Gamemaster may require Acrobatics checks for characters to maintain their balance in fast-moving vehicles. Such a situation could be as simple as standing up inside of a van, and need not be extraordinary in nature.

## DRIVER / PILOT ACTIONS

Most Vehicles skill checks are move actions, unless specified otherwise. Controlling a vehicle in operation requires a move action each round, and may require a check. Routine operation, such as driving at a safe speed along a clear road, flying under normal and clear conditions, or walking while piloting a mecha, does not require a check.

If no one is spending at least a move action each round controlling the vehicle, it goes out of control per a failed control check (see following.)

The Vehicle skill is used to control and maneuver most vehicles, although Expertise: Riding is used for handling mounts. In most regards, this is simply a matter of using the latter in the same way as one would employ the former in vehicle control situations.

### Vehicle Combat Skills

“Vehicle Weapons” is its own specialization of the Close Combat and Ranged Combat skills (as is “Mecha Weapons” while using such vehicle/constructs.) The default assumption is that ranks of the Close Attack and Ranged Attack advantages apply to using vehicle weapons as well as personal weapons. So, attacks with vehicle weapons use:

*Pilot’s Dexterity + Attack advantage (if any) + Vehicle Combat Skill (if any)*

If the vehicle is a mecha, the following is used instead:

*Mecha's Dexterity + Attack advantage (if any) + Mecha Combat Skill (if any)*

Some vehicle weapons may also be Accurate, applying that bonus, or Area effect weapons requiring no attack check, except for a direct hit.

If vehicle combat is relatively rare in the setting, the Gamemaster may choose to allow personal combat skills to apply to similar vehicle weapons.

*Ranged Combat: Guns may be suitable for firing a vehicle-mounted gun, and Close Combat: Swords may apply for wielding a giant mecha's blade.*

## VEHICLE SPEED

Vehicle speed should be handled in all ways like character speed, including any possible Defense modifiers (see the **Hitting Moving Objects** sidebar.) Keep in mind that vehicles don't suffer from fatigue in the same manner as do characters (although Gamemasters should use common sense when it comes to wear and tear, and the need for regular maintenance.)

### Falling from a Vehicle

Falling from a vehicle inflicts Damage equal to the vehicle's current speed rank, to a maximum of Damage 20, or is based on the distance fallen (whichever is greater), and is treated like falling Damage in all other respects.

### Hitting Moving Objects Optional Rule

Things moving fast should be more difficult to hit, right? Not always in a super-hero universe. However, if you want to add a bit more realism, there's a simple solution: every rank of speed the target is moving results in a -1 penalty to any attack roll against it. Optionally, you can consider relative ranks of speed instead of actual ranks of speed if the Gamemaster determines the situation warrants it.

*Two jet fighters are chasing each other in a dogfight. Fighter A is being pursued by Fighter B, who is trying to shoot A down. A is flying at speed rank 8 and B at speed rank 7. There is a relative speed rank difference of 1, so the Gamemaster rules B only suffers a -1 penalty to attack Fighter A instead of -8. If they were traveling in opposite directions and B had some means to attack backwards, however, both their speed ranks relative to each other would be 15 (A's 8 plus B's 7.) In this situation, B's speed rank of 15 relative to A would impose a -15 penalty.*

Calculating relative speed ranks in this manner cannot result in an attack bonus—you can't get a better chance at hitting something moving slowly than you can at that same target while it is standing still.

## ATTACK RANGE

Attacks made from vehicles have their normal range. You can only use a close attack from a vehicle if the target is in the same vehicle with you, or the distance to another vehicle is 0 lengths (see **Pursuit** for details, pg 92.)

## VEHICLE COMBAT ACTIONS

Actions during vehicle combat are handled the same way as actions during personal combat. In general, a character can take two move actions, or one move action and one standard action. Free actions and reactions can be performed normally, in conjunction with other actions. If not specified otherwise, actions take the same time in vehicles as outside of them.

### Free Actions

Communicating and ducking down behind a door are examples of free actions. Unless otherwise restricted, characters can perform as many free actions in a single round as the Gamemaster believes to be reasonable.

### Move Actions

Changing position within a vehicle is usually a move action, especially if the character has to trade places with another character. If the character's movement is short and unobstructed, the character can do it as a free action (with the Gamemaster's approval.) Otherwise, it requires a move action.

### Standard Actions

Anyone aboard a vehicle can make an attack with a personal weapon, and drivers and gunners can make attacks with any vehicle-mounted weapons controlled from their positions.

### Standard Combat Maneuvers

Just as in personal combat, one can also perform most standard combat maneuvers while controlling a vehicle. Any Defense modifiers acquired from these maneuvers, such as All-Out Attack or Defensive Attack, are applied only to the vehicle. Attack modifiers, however, apply to the vehicle and any of its occupants unless they indicated as weapon specifics.

## ATTACKING VEHICLES

Attacking a vehicle is just like attacking a character. Vehicles generally have a Defense value that has been modified by its size (and potentially other factors.) This tends to make vehicles easier to hit than most characters.

A vehicle's driver can take a standard action for "evasive maneuvers" during a round. In such instances, substitute the result of the character's relevant skill check (Vehicle or Expertise: Riding), modified by the vehicle's size (and, again, by any other applicable factors), for the vehicle's normal Defense that round.

*A character piloting a huge vehicle (-2 size modifier) takes evasive action and gets a Vehicle check result of 22. Subtracting the vehicle's size modifier provides a Defense score of 20 for that round. This is much better than the vehicle's default Defense of 8.*

## TARGETING VEHICLE OCCUPANTS

An attack against a vehicle occupant is made like any other attack. Remember, however, that a character in a vehicle usually benefits from any cover or concealment it provides (and from its speed, if the Gamemaster applies such modifiers—see pg 86.)

### Target Lock

A vehicle occupant manning a weapons station, be it the pilot or a gunner, can take a Ready action to achieve a "weapons lock" on a target. At the Gamemaster's discretion, this may be possible with other weapons that possess some kind of tracking targeting system.

The attacker makes the attack check in advance. If it is successful, the weapon is "locked on" and the attacker can make that successful attack automatically when using the readied action. If the attack check is unsuccessful, no weapon lock is achieved. The gunner may choose to try again on the next turn or use the readied action to fire manually, making the attack check when the attack is made.

Taking another action while holding a weapon lock breaks the lock, but the attacker still gets a +2 bonus if making an attack check with that weapon in the next turn (like the aim action.) Anything that conceals the target from the attacker's accurate senses also breaks the weapon lock.

## VEHICLE DAMAGE

Vehicles suffer Damage as per other pieces of equipment. All Damage conditions remain in effect until repaired.

### Vehicle Damage Check Results

**Success:** The Damage has no effect.

**Failure (one degree):** The vehicle suffers a -1 circumstance penalty to further Toughness checks against Damage.

**Failure (two degrees):** The vehicle loses 1 feature, suffers a -1 penalty to checks involving the vehicle (with the exception of Toughness checks), loses 1 point of capability per -1 penalty to Toughness checks, or suffers another sort of break (such as a hole punched through it), with a 50% chance of requiring a control check (Gamemasters choose which or roll randomly; and suffers a -1 circumstance penalty to further Toughness checks against Damage.

**Failure (three degrees):** The vehicle is "staggered" and no longer functions. A vehicle that is staggered while moving drops one speed rank each round until it comes to a stop. The driver cannot attempt any maneuvers except a 45-degree turn. A staggered water vehicle may begin to sink slowly.

**Failure (four degrees):** The vehicle is destroyed (shattered, smashed to pieces, etc.)

## REPAIRING VEHICLES

Repairing serious vehicle damage requires the proper tools and a garage, hangar, or similar facility in order to access the proper equipment and facilities. A character without the proper tools suffers a -5 circumstance penalty on the Technology skill check, as usual.

Repairing minor damage such as a Toughness penalty is a simple check (DC 15, one hour), but repairing a staggered result is a complex check (DC 25, one day.) Destroyed vehicles cannot be repaired; they are "totaled" and must be rebuilt from scratch.

## Redlining: Vehicles & Fatigue

The **Limits of Equipment** section of the core rules notes that extra effort used in conjunction with equipment always places the strain on the equipment rather than the character. This is also the case for vehicles, where extra effort is known as “redlining” the vehicle—pushing it past its normal specifications and limits.

As with characters, the vehicle has three distinct levels of strain from this effort: **impaired**, **disabled**, and **immobilized**.

The circumstance penalties for an impaired or disabled vehicle apply to all checks utilizing the vehicle’s systems. Additionally, a disabled vehicle is hindered (−1 to speed rank) much like an exhausted character.

These conditions persist until the vehicle undergoes maintenance to repair them.

Sometimes, it may be possible to perform on-the-spot repairs in the midst of action using a repair check.

### On-the-Spot Repair Check

When vehicles suffer damage in an action scene, characters may need to initiate emergency repairs or bypass some of the vehicle’s systems. This generally requires a Technology or Vehicles skill check versus a DC based on the damage’s severity or the system’s complexity, as decided by the Gamemaster. (See the guidelines for jury-rigging provided for the Technology skill.)

## VEHICLE CONTROL CHECKS

Control checks are required when a maneuver calls for a crash check, or the vehicle suffers damage that results in a crash check.

The control check is a DC 15 Vehicles skill check (or perhaps a Dodge resistance check if in a mecha or the like, and the Gamemaster feels it is appropriate for characters engaged in a pursuit.) You make only one control check per round per vehicle even if more than one check is called for: every additional control check required instead increases the check DC by +5.

On a failed check, the vehicle crashes into an obstacle (or possibly another vehicle, depending on the situation.)

The vehicle and the obstacle (and any occupants of either) suffer a base Damage equal to the fastest moving vehicle’s Speed rank, and is adjusted for the circumstances in the **Vehicles Collision Damage Modifiers** table. For vehicles moving in the same direction, subtract the lower speed rank from the higher speed rank to get the effective speed rank of the crash for the purpose of determining the Damage rank.

## Vehicle Collision Damage Modifiers

Circumstance	Damage Rank
Collision with another vehicle	+1
Per size category difference to the smaller vehicle	+1
Two degrees of failure on the control check	+2
Three or more degrees of failure on the control check	+5

Occupants make Dodge checks against a DC of (Damage rank + 10) to suffer half Damage from the crash. Failure results in suffering full Damage.

An air or space vehicle may stall on a failed control check if there is no hard terrain or other obstacle to crash into. The pilot can restart the vehicle with a successful Vehicles skill check (DC equal to the control check) or Technology check (DC equal to the control check + 5.)

A failed crash check for a character involved with a pursuit is the same as for a vehicle: the character collides with an obstacle and suffers damage. A character failing the Dodge resistance check against crash Damage is considered prone after the collision.

### Speed Kills

Control checks typically suffer a penalty equal to the Speed rank the vehicle is traveling at; the faster one is moving, the more difficult controlling a vehicle becomes.

## MOUNTED COMBAT

Characters may ride into combat on various sorts of mounts, from horses to dragons, griffons, or sea-monsters. Such mounts are generally minions, although some can be sidekicks. Use the following guidelines for mounted characters in combat.

Your mount acts on your initiative count as you direct. You move at the mount's speed, but the mount uses its action to move. Use Expertise: Riding to control your mount instead of the Vehicles skill.

## COMBAT WHILE MOUNTED

You can guide your mount with your knees and use both hands to attack or defend yourself with an Expertise: Riding (DC 5) check. This is a free action.

You can "ride defensively" while mounted, using the evasive maneuvers and defensive options for vehicles, but substituting an Expertise: Riding skill check for the indicated Vehicles skill check. See **Attacking Vehicles** (pg 87) for details.

When you attack a creature that is on foot and smaller than your mount, the Gamemaster may decide to provide you with a circumstance modifier to attack or even Damage to represent the advantages of height and leverage. Even at your mount's full speed, you don't take any penalty on close attacks while mounted, but ranged attacks suffer any penalty that may normally be applied.

If your mount charges, you also suffer the attack penalty associated with the charge if you also make an attack at the end of the charge.

You can use ranged weapons while your mount is running, but at a -4 penalty on the attack roll. This attack roll is made when your mount has completed half its movement. You can take move actions (such as drawing a weapon or using a skill) normally while your mount is moving. However, any move actions your mount uses are move actions you cannot yourself spend on moving that round.

*If your mount uses both its move actions running, you could not dismount at the end of its run and then spend your move actions to continue traveling. If your mount uses one of its move actions moving, though, that would allow you to use one of your own move actions on movement once dismounted in the same round.*

If your mount falls, you must make an Acrobatics or Expertise: Riding check (DC 15) to make a soft fall and take no Damage. If the check fails, you suffer Damage as though falling from the vehicle when you hit the ground (more if your mount is higher off the ground), accounting for speed.

If you are knocked unconscious, paralyzed, or similarly incapacitated while riding, you have a 50% chance

to stay in the saddle. Otherwise, you fall and take Damage as though falling from the vehicle when you hit the ground (more if your mount is higher off the ground), accounting for speed. Without you to guide it, a mount generally avoids combat and may even come to a halt.

## INTELLIGENT MOUNTS

The guidelines for mounted combat assume mounts of animal-level intelligence, like horses. If you're riding an intelligent being (one with an Intellect higher than -4), the Gamemaster may want to give your mount greater freedom of action.

The normal assumption is your mount acts on your initiative count as you direct and nothing more (and are typically treated as minions rather than as sidekicks.) At the Gamemaster's discretion, roll initiative separately for you and your mount if it is intelligent. The mount carries you automatically, moves using its own actions on its own initiative count, and can take other actions as it sees fit or as you direct. So, an intelligent mount could move and then take a standard action (such as making an attack) on its initiative, then you can take your actions on your initiative.

This option is more detailed but involves keeping track of both your and the mount's initiative and actions in combat.

## MECHA

Mecha are similar to both constructs and vehicles—vehicles because they may carry a pilot or even passengers, and constructs due to their form, which is generally humanoid or otherwise based on a living creature. Mecha do not include form-fitting power armor of the type that are worn as enhancing suits rather than piloted.

Mecha are acquired with equipment points, the same as vehicles and headquarters.

## MECHA ABILITIES

Like constructs, mecha have their own ranks in Strength, Agility, Dexterity, Fighting, and Awareness. They have no ranks in Stamina, Intellect, or Presence by default. They have Dodge, Parry, and Toughness defenses, but no Fortitude or Will.

**Strength** is typically based on a mecha's size and the efficiency of its artificial "muscles." It determines close combat Damage and lifting/carrying capacity.

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**Agility** is the mecha's mobility or "handling," and determines its basic maneuverability and Dodge defense.

**Dexterity** is the mecha's precision for targeting, as well as using its limbs. A mecha lacking manipulative limbs may still have Dexterity (for targeting purposes), but also a Disability complication.

**Fighting** likewise measures a mecha's precision with close combat attacks and its ability to evade the same.

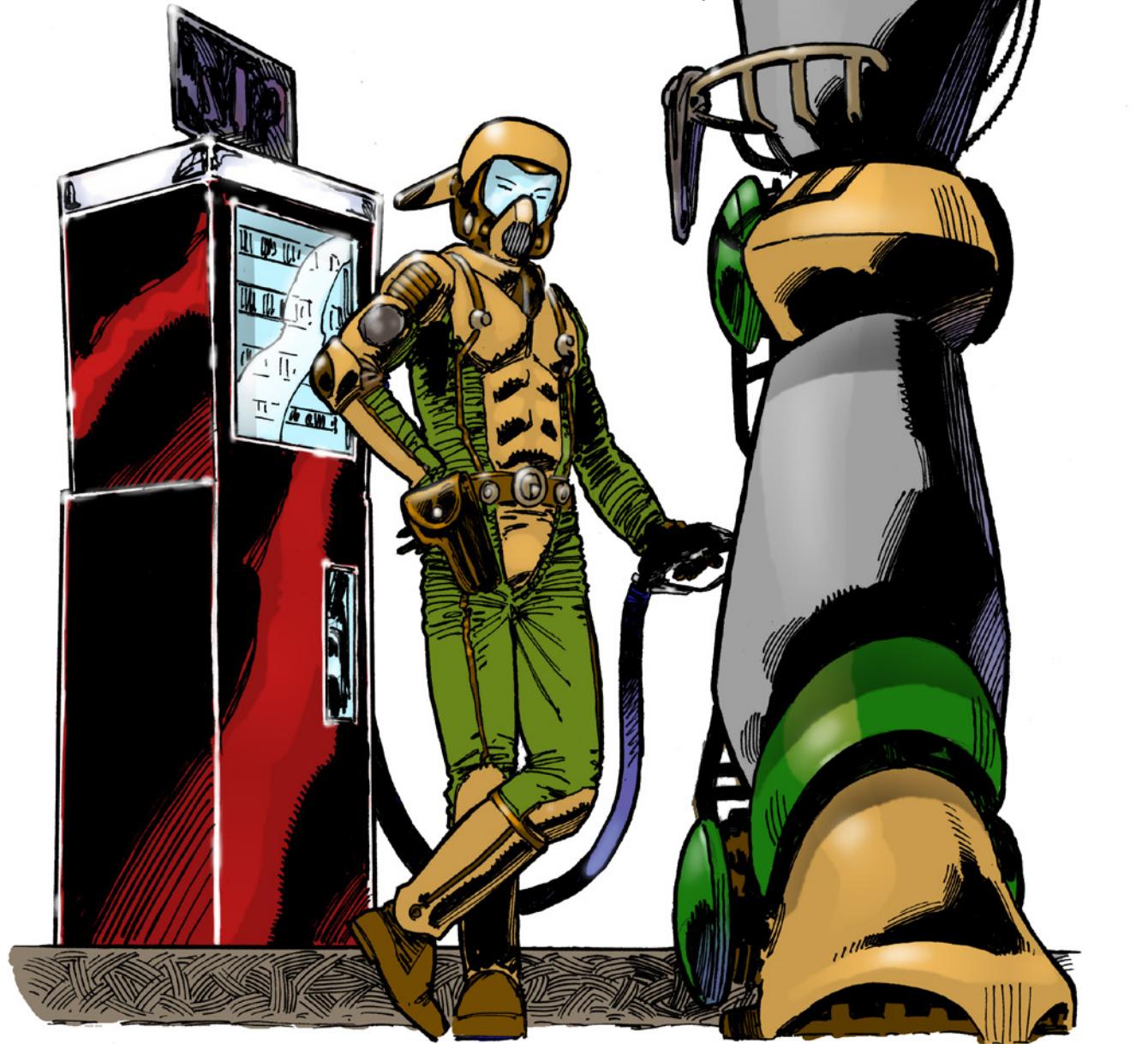
**Awareness** measures the sensitivity of the mecha's sensor systems, and ability to pick up and process information.

A mecha's abilities substitute for the pilot's, combining the controlling pilot's skill rank with the mecha's ability rank (subject to PL limits.)

*A mecha pilot with Fighting 4 and Close Combat: Sword 4 would normally gain a +8 (4 + 4) bonus while using a sword, but this would be reduced to +6 (4 + 2) in a mecha with Fighting 2.*

"Mecha" given Stamina ranks are bio-mechanical beings able to heal on their own, while mecha with Intellect ranks are intelligent and capable of independent action.

They may also have Presence ranks if they



can interact with other creatures, and Intellect and Presence skills of their own, appropriately.

## MECHA AND ENVIRONMENTS

Mecha have no Stamina rank and possess Immunity to Fortitude Effects, meaning they have no life support requirements of their own and can, by default, function in any environment that does not cause direct Damage (resisted by Toughness rather than Fortitude.) The inability to function in a particular environment, or impaired function in an environment, may be considered a complication for some mecha.

Similarly, like vehicles, mecha are assumed to provide the benefits of their capabilities to their pilots and passengers. This stands so long as they are enclosed within the mecha, crew are immune to any environmental effects outside of it. Failure of a mecha's environmental systems may be a potential complication or the result of damage or stress to the mecha.

## MECHA SIZE

By default, mecha should be at least size rank -1, big enough to enclose a size rank -2 human pilot. Smaller "mecha" tend to fall under the category of power armor unless the pilot is correspondingly smaller. A size rank -2 (human sized) mecha might have a size rank -4 alien pilot, for example.

This means mecha usually have 4 or more ranks of Permanent, Innate Growth, with the standard size modifiers applied to their traits. Mecha size does not modify Stamina (as they have none), but does affect Toughness.

## MECHA PILOTING

As a default, mecha pilots use the Vehicles skill for checks involving operating and controlling mecha. Also, the Vehicles skill may substitute for any Agility- or Strength-based skill check like Acrobatics or Athletics involving mecha.

There are generally no "routine" operation checks for mecha, so characters untrained in the skill cannot pilot mecha unless the Gamemaster specifically chooses to allow it.

## LINKED MECHA

For some settings and mecha types, the Vehicles skill may not be needed or used. Mecha linked to their pilots and designed to mimic their movements, for example,

may simply translate the pilot's own physical skills and movements into those of the mecha.

This is a **0-point Feature** (although the Gamemaster may choose to charge a Feature rank for it in settings where linked mecha coexist alongside more cumbersome ones piloted with the Vehicles skill.)

Linked mecha operate essentially like any other larger-sized characters with Growth, taking their regular allotment of actions (one move and one standard, plus a number of free actions) each turn.

## MECHAMORPHS

In some settings, mecha have morphing or transforming abilities, either changing their form and function, or merging to form even more powerful mecha out of their assembled parts.

### Morphing Mecha

Morphing mecha use the Metamorph modifier of the Morph effect. The mecha can have Metamorph as a standalone Feature and does not need Morph unless its transformation also serves to disguise it in some way, such as allowing the mecha to appear as an otherwise ordinary vehicle.

Mecha can have multiple Metamorph extras, allowing them to assume different configurations. All of the mecha's forms must be at least a minimum size for its pilot and crew. Mecha able to assume an exceptionally wide range of forms may have a Variable effect rather than Metamorph; the mecha redistributes power points amongst its traits whenever it changes form. See the Variable effect for additional information and ideas.

### Composite Mecha & Vehicles

A composite mecha is formed when two or more smaller mecha or vehicles merge to form another (usually more powerful) machine. This is essentially a Summon effect costing 2 points per rank that requires all of the components be present to assemble the composite form. This leaves the components unable to act on their own while a part of the whole.

Divide the point cost of the composite mecha or vehicle by 15 to determine the required Summon rank, then divide the needed ranks amongst the component mecha or vehicle as evenly as possible. Typically, the "lead" or "head" component carries any remainder in the Summon ranks. The composite form may have a higher PL than its components, although it is still limited by the PL(s) set for the game.

If the components can combine in multiple ways (such as five mecha or vehicles able to link together into five different combinations), make each additional composite form an Alternate Effect of the most expensive (and highest ranked) form. If the composite form can also morph—without the need to break apart and recombine—apply the guidelines for morphing mecha previously explained.

## PURSUIT

Action involving vehicles often involves pursuit, with characters and vehicles chasing each other. Pursuit in the system presented here is handled abstractly, making it easier to run without a map, counters, and similar tools (although it is certainly possible to do so if you desire.) This abstract system is intended to provide quick and simple results.

### STARTING PURSUIT

During a pursuit, one party—the pursuer—is assumed to be trying to catch the other—the target. The distance between the two is called the *lead*, measured in *lengths*: abstract units adjustable to the situation. A length may only be a matter of feet in a running pursuit, but it could be hundreds or even thousands of miles for a pursuit in deep space (or light years in hyperspace)!

A pursuit typically starts out with a lead of 8 lengths for the sake of keeping things simple, although the Gamemaster can adjust this as desired to fit the conditions. The lead may never be less than 0 or greater than 30. If any maneuver puts the lead beyond those bounds, adjust the lead to the closest number.

The pursuer wants to decrease the lead enough to perform a finishing maneuver and catch the target, while the target wants to increase the lead enough to perform a finishing maneuver and escape. Pursuit continues until a successful finishing maneuver, a crash, or the pursuers choose to break off pursuit.

### PURSUIT STEPS

Follow these steps during a pursuit:

#### 1. Choose Maneuvers

Each character or vehicle involved in the pursuit chooses a maneuver from those available.

#### 2. Maneuver Checks

The participants reveal their maneuvers.

#### Untrained Vehicles Skill Use

Although the Vehicles skill cannot be used untrained, *routine* operation of vehicles is permissible without ranks in the skill. You do not have to be trained in Vehicles to know how to drive a car in the modern world in all instances (although following the rules of the road, knowing how a vehicle will perform, and so on is a different story.) Most characters can be assumed to know how to do so. Lacking the ability to routinely operate a commonly known vehicle (in a way that is relevant to the story) can be treated as a complication if and when it arises.

Each then makes a maneuver check using the appropriate skill, including any modifiers. This is an opposed check between the pursuer and the target if two or more vehicles are maneuvering against each other, such as in a chase or if one vehicle is contesting the other vehicle's attempt to perform a maneuver against it. A failed maneuver check may result in a control check.

If the vehicle initiating the maneuver's check succeeds, apply the effects of the desired maneuver. If the vehicle opposing the maneuver succeeds, the maneuver fails and the vehicle attempting the maneuver must make a control check. If neither succeeds, or their check results are tied, the chase continues. If both succeed, apply the maneuver effect with the most degrees of success.

The trait used for a maneuver check depends on the pursuit's conditions. For characters in vehicles, the maneuver check is usually a Vehicles skill check—Expertise: Riding while mounted. For individuals, it's usually an Acrobatics skill check. The Gamemaster may call for different skill checks for maneuvers as suits the situation and the particular pursuit.

#### 3. Resolve Maneuvers

Apply the winner's maneuver to the pursuit and adjust the lengths between the pursuer and the target as necessary.

#### 4. Obstacles & Control Checks

Obstacles may crop up with the intention of providing flavor during the pursuit, with frequency depending on terrain. The Gamemaster should feel free to add obstacles to help liven up otherwise uninteresting pursuits.

When an obstacle occurs, the target and then the pursuer make a control check (pg 88.) On a failed

obstacle check, make a crash check (pg 88.) Some maneuvers may also require a control check, as may suffering damage.

## 5. Other Actions

Whether pursuit has ended due to a finishing maneuver or not, those involved now perform any actions open to them.

### Defensive Check

A vehicle's pilot may use a standard action for "evasive maneuvers" during a round. If so, substitute the character's Vehicle skill check result, modified by the Defense modifier for the vehicle's size, for the vehicle's normal Defense that round.

*A character piloting a gargantuan fighter jet (Defense Class 6, meaning it has a Defense modifier of -4) takes evasive action, obtaining a Vehicle skill check result of 22. Subtracting the jet's size modifier provides a Defense of 18 that round.*

## 6. Damage & Control Checks

Apply any damage inflicted against participants in the pursuit (from attacks and so forth) and see if any participants must make a control check. Situations requiring control checks are provided in the text when appropriate.

## TERRAIN

Terrain falls into three categories for pursuits: **open**, **close**, and **tight**. Each applies certain conditions to the pursuit, including how often obstacles crop up and the control check DCs to avoid them.

### Open Terrain

Open terrain is easy to traverse—it has few obstacles. Examples include open highways and salt flats on the ground, open and calm water, and clear skies and mostly empty space.

**Speed:** Pursuit in open terrain begins at three-quarters maximum speed (rounded down.) The fastest participant receives a +2 circumstance bonus on maneuver checks. If only one participant is in open terrain, then that participant receives the +2 circumstance bonus.

**Obstacle Chance:** 19 or better on d20

**Control Check DC Modifier:** -5

### Close Terrain

Close terrain is generally narrow and filled with things to run into, sideswipe, or burst through. Examples include city streets, winding dirt roads, narrow rivers, busy docks, cloudy mountaintops, scattered asteroids, and so forth.

**Speed:** Pursuit in close terrain begins at half maximum speed (rounded down.)

**Obstacle Chance:** 17 or better on d20

**Control Check DC Modifier:** None

### Tight Terrain

The most dangerous terrain type, tight terrain is filled with obstacles and conditions that change from moment to moment. Examples include busy highways, steep inclines, rapids, indoor parking garages, asteroid and debris fields, and such.

**Speed:** Pursuit in tight terrain begins at one-quarter maximum speed (rounded down.)

**Obstacle Chance:** 15 or better on d20

**Control Check DC Modifier:** +5

## SPEED

Obviously, faster characters and vehicles have an advantage in a pursuit. The type of terrain determines the starting speed, based on the speed of the fastest participant. Speed changes during the pursuit according to the various maneuvers selected.

Whenever pursuit speed exceeds a participant's maximum speed, a character or vehicle must employ extra effort. Hero points may be spent by characters piloting or mechanically maintaining a "redlining" (pg 88) vehicle to address such stress, as usual for extra effort.

### Speed Benchmarks

**Common Highway Speed Limit (US):** Rank 6.

**Common Road Speed Limit (US):** Rank 5.

**Mach 1 (Sound Barrier):** Rank 9. It is actually about halfway between 8 or 9, so the latter is used.

**Speed of Light:** Rank 24. It is actually a bit over rank 23, so we go with the higher of the two.

**Typical Commercial Jet Airplane:** Rank 8 or 9 (stopping shy of Mach 1.)

Movement Rank	Speed—Distance per ...			
	Day	Hour	Minute	Round
-5	2 miles	500 ft.	6 ft.	6 in.
-4	4 miles	900 ft.	15 ft.	1 ft.
-3	8 miles	1,800 ft.	30 ft.	3 ft.
-2	16 miles	1/2 mile	60 ft.	6 ft.
-1	30 miles	1 mile	120 ft.	15 ft.
0	60 miles	2 miles	250 ft.	30 ft.
1	120 miles	4 miles	500 ft.	60 ft.
2	250 miles	8 miles	900 ft.	120 ft.
3	500 miles	16 miles	1,800 ft.	250 ft.
4	1,000 miles	30 miles	1/2 mile	500 ft.
5	2,000 miles	60 miles	1 mile	900 ft.
6	4,000 miles	120 miles	2 miles	1,800 ft.
7	8,000 miles	250 miles	4 miles	1/2 mile
8	16,000 miles	500 miles	8 miles	1 mile
9	32,000 miles	1,000 miles	16 miles	2 miles
10	64,000 miles	2,000 miles	30 miles	4 miles
11	125k miles	4,000 miles	60 miles	8 miles
12	250k miles	8,000 miles	120 miles	16 miles
13	500k miles	16,000 miles	250 miles	30 miles
14	1m miles	32,000 miles	500 miles	60 miles
15	2m miles	64,000 miles	1,000 miles	120 miles
16	4m miles	125k miles	2,000 miles	250 miles
17	8m miles	250k miles	4,000 miles	500 miles
18	16m miles	500k miles	8,000 miles	1,000 miles
19	32m miles	1m miles	16,000 miles	2,000 miles
20	64m miles	2m miles	32,000 miles	4,000 miles

## MANEUVERS

Since pursuit is represented as an abstract system, the distance covered and specific locations of each participant are left to your imagination. What's really important is the lead—the distance between the pursuer and the target at any given time. Many maneuvers require a certain lead, so make sure to update the lead at the start of each round.

### Maneuver Descriptions

Maneuvers are split into pursuer and target categories. Each maneuver has a general description you can modify to suit the particular conditions of a pursuit. Maneuvers include the following information:

- Finishing:** A finishing maneuver has prerequisites that must be met before it can be attempted, but ends the pursuit if performed successfully.
- Lead:** The minimum or maximum lead required to perform the maneuver.
- Speed:** Some maneuvers modify current pursuit speed. If both pursuer and target choose maneuvers that alter speed, only the highest modifier (positive or negative) applies.
- Success:** The maneuver's effect if the character wins the opposed maneuver check for the round.
- Special:** Any additional information about the maneuver.

## PURSUER MANEUVERS

Pursuer maneuvers are aimed toward slowing down and catching the target.

### Box-In Finishing

It takes skill to trap an opponent without any damage, but sometimes it's essential to do so.

**Lead:** 5 lengths or less.

**Success:** The pursuer wins the chase, forcing the target into a corner where there's nowhere left to run.

### Pursuit and Gamemaster Fiat:

#### Clean Getaways

You can choose to have a fleeing NPC automatically escape pursuit by exercising Gamemaster fiat. You should award players a hero point when this happens, usually ensuring a villain's getaway to appear in a later scene of the adventure.

You can also help ensure a clean getaway for certain targets by giving the heroes other things to worry about. If a fleeing villain blasts the support cables of a bridge, for example, the heroes should break off pursuit to help the people endangered by the bridge's imminent collapse. Players should also get a hero point for this sort of setback and allowing the villain to escape (as well as any great acts of heroism during the rescue attempt.)

**Crowd Finishing**

The pursuer comes up behind the target and forces him into a crash.

**Lead:** 2 lengths or less.

**Success:** The pursuer wins the chase. If the pursuer's maneuver check results in two or more degrees of success, the target also collides with an obstacle. The target is assumed to have failed a control check and the pursuer comes to a safe stop.

**Cut Off Finishing**

The pursuer surges forward and cuts in front of the target, forcing him to stop.

**Lead:** 0 lengths.

**Speed:** The pursuer wins the chase, cutting off the target. If the target fails his maneuver check, he collides with the pursuer. The pursuer may make a Dodge resistance check (DC 15) to avoid the collision. In the case of a successful Dodge, the pursuer ejects or leaps clear as the target collides with his (now vacant) vehicle.

**Herd**

By keeping the pressure on and cutting off the target's options, the pursuer drives the target into difficult terrain.

**Lead:** 10 lengths or less.

**Success:** Reduce the lead by 1 length. Each participant must make a crash check, but the target's DC is increased by the difference between the maneuver check results.

**Special:** If the pursuer's maneuver check results in two or more degrees of success, the pursuer may shift the terrain by one step at the end of the round (open or tight becomes close, or vice versa.) This also reduces or increases the crash check DC by 5, as appropriate.

**Intercept**

Coming at the target from another angle can be a useful shortcut, but often also involves losing line of sight and unforeseen obstacles.

**Lead:** Any.

**Success:** Reduce the lead by a number of lengths equal to twice the amount of degrees of success. The pursuer must make a crash check.

**Match**

The pursuer matches the target's speed and movement, forcing the relative speeds down to almost nothing and stabilizing pursuit for others to attack.

**Lead:** 10 lengths or less.

**Success:** Reduce the lead by 1 length per degree of success. The pursuer (and any passengers) gains the benefit of an Aid action for the round when making attacks against the target.

## Ram Finishing

The pursuer speeds up and rams into the target.

**Lead:** 5 lengths or less

**Success:** The pursuer wins the chase, colliding with the target like a slam attack.

## Surge

The pursuer puts on a burst of speed to catch up to the target.

**Lead:** Any.

**Speed:** Increase pursuit speed by one-quarter (round down), not exceeding maximum speed.

**Success:** Reduce the lead by a number of lengths equal to the difference between the maneuver check results.

**Special:** If the pursuer chooses to use extra effort with a surge maneuver, increase pursuit speed by one-third (round down) and reduce the lead by twice the difference between the maneuver check results. However, the pursuer (or his vehicle) suffers the effects of the extra effort.

## TARGET MANEUVERS

Target maneuvers are aimed toward escaping the pursuer.

### Lure

The target controls the direction of pursuit, leading the pursuer into all kinds of trouble.

**Lead:** Any.

**Success:** Increase lead by 1 length. Each participant must make a crash check, but the pursuer's DC is increased by the difference between the maneuver check results.

**Special:** If the target's maneuver check results in two or more degrees of success, the target can become the pursuer until the end of the current round (letting the target use forward-mounted weapons on the pursuer, for example.) If the target's maneuver check

results in three or more degrees of success, the target can also shift the terrain by one step at the end of the round (open or tight becomes close, and vice versa.) This also reduces or increases the DC of each participant's crash check by 5, appropriately.

### Obstacle Course Finishing

The target barrels through a cluttered area to evade pursuit.

**Lead:** 25 lengths or more.

**Success:** The target wins the chase. Both participants must make crash checks.

### Pull Ahead

A straightforward maneuver, the target puts on as much speed as possible to widen the distance.

**Lead:** Any.

**Speed:** Increase pursuit speed by one-quarter (round down), not exceeding maximum speed.

**Success:** Increase the lead by a number of lengths equal to the difference between maneuver check results.

### Reverse

As the pursuer closes in, the target slows and turns suddenly in the opposite direction!

**Lead:** 10 lengths or less.

**Speed:** Reduce pursuit speed by one-quarter (round down), but falling short of no longer moving.

**Success:** Increase lead by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between the maneuver check results.

### Set Up

Instead of running, the target leads the pursuer on a merry chase, usually right into an ambush.

**Lead:** 10 lengths or less.

**Success:** Increase the lead by 1 length. The target and all passengers gain the benefit of an Aid action for any attacks against the pursuer this round.

**Special:** If the target's maneuver check results in two or more degrees of success, the target may become the pursuer for the current round (letting the target use forward-mounted weapons on the pursuer, for example.)

### Stunt Finishing

The target pulls off a daring stunt, hoping the pursuer can't match it.

**Lead:** 20 lengths or more.

**Success:** The target wins the chase. If the target's maneuver check results in two or more degrees of success, the pursuer must make a crash check.

### Tight Turn Finishing

The target leads the pursuer at high speed into a tight turn until one falls out of the pursuit.

**Lead:** 20 lengths or more.

**Speed:** Reduce pursuit speed by one-third (round down), but falling short of no longer moving.

**Success:** The target wins the chase, taking one or more turns the pursuer can't match. Both participants make crash checks.

### Vanish Finishing

The target disappears in a burst of speed, leaving all pursuers eating dust.

**Lead:** 30 lengths.

**Speed:** Increase pursuit speed by one-third (round down), not exceeding maximum speed.

**Success:** The target wins the chase and gets away.

### Zig-Zag

The target clips obstacles, terrain, or even other vehicles to send them into the pursuer's path.

**Lead:** Any.

**Success:** Increase lead by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between the maneuver check results. The target must also make a crash check.

## VEHICLE MODIFIERS

If the Gamemaster wishes, the following modifiers to the Equipment advantage may be permitted for ranks allocated to vehicles. Note these are modifiers to the cost of the Equipment advantage itself, *not* the point cost of the vehicle, much like power modifiers apply to the cost of a power. These modifiers are optional and may not be appropriate for all settings.

*A 43 point vehicle normally requires Equipment 9 to purchase, at a cost of 9 points. The same vehicle with the Durable and Summonable vehicle modifiers increases the Equipment advantage's cost to 3 points per rank regarding the vehicle, meaning the required Equipment 9 advantage would cost 27 points.*

### DURABLE

Vehicles bought with Equipment ranks with this modifier suffer damage like characters rather than normal equipment. The vehicle still functions while staggered, but suffers a -1 penalty to Speed rank. It only stops functioning once it is incapacitated, and is only destroyed if its condition becomes "dying." *+1 point per rank.*

### MINION

Vehicles bought with Equipment ranks with this modifier are considered minions, having all the conditions outlined for character minions in the core rules. *-1 point per rank.*

### SUMMONABLE

The character with the Equipment advantage can summon the vehicle out of nowhere as a standard action, causing it to appear next to the summoning character. The character can likewise dismiss the vehicle back to wherever it came from as a free action, causing it to disappear. The vehicle reappears in the same condition as it was last seen.

For an additional +1 modifier, the vehicle always reappears in its normal condition, recovering from any damage while it is "away". *+1 or +2 points per rank.*

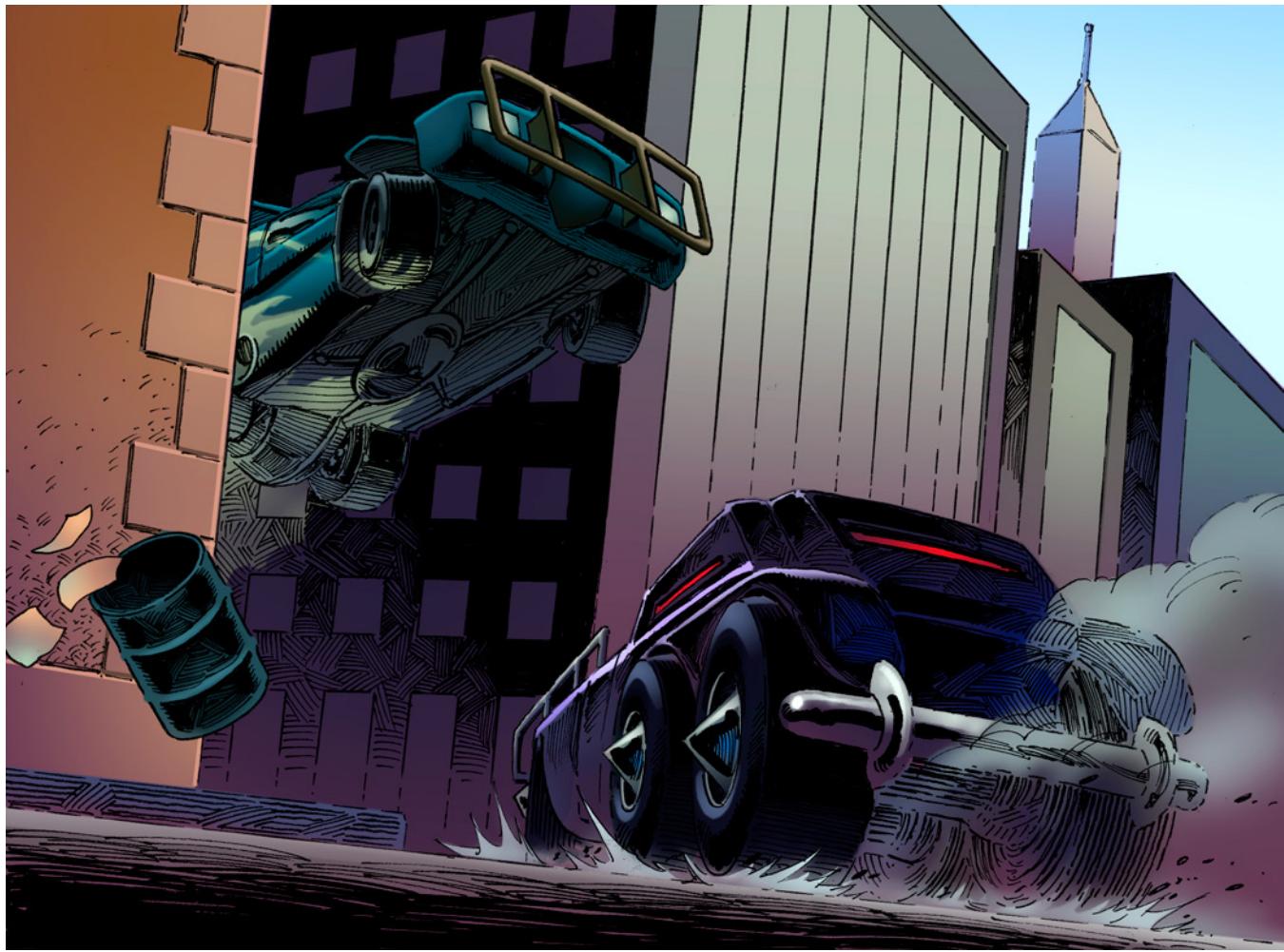
## VEHICULAR COMPLICATIONS

As with characters, vehicles may also suffer from complications that help to define their characteristics, operation, and ability to influence the game's story. The following are a number of complications unique to vehicles.

### OPERATIONS

Whether it is a problem with how the vehicle handles, is maintained, or is able to stay together, this vehicular complications category addresses it.

- **Clunker:** Gum, glue, duct tape, and a whole lot of hopeful thinking are what holds the vehicle together.



er as much any bolts or welds. It is prone to having pieces fall off and/or stop functioning at inopportune moments.

- **Compromised Environment:** The vehicle's usual, assumed proof against the environmental conditions its type of movement exposes it to is compromised in some significant way. For instance, an aircraft may have an open cockpit, exposing a pilot to extreme cold and lack of oxygen at sufficient altitudes, or a submersible with external controls that require the crew wear diving gear.
- **Guzzler:** The vehicle requires noticeably more fuel to operate than normal—just how much is to be determined appropriately for each vehicle. If the vehicle is beast-drawn, something about it requires more beasts of burden than is typical in order to get it around, or the beasts tire more quickly.
- **Hold Together!**: The vehicle always seems to be on the verge of falling apart. Every time a Toughness resistance check is required of the vehicle, roll a die. On

an 11 or higher, the vehicle's Toughness is applied at full value. A roll of 10 or less results in a penalty to the vehicle's Toughness: 1 or 2: -5, 3 or 4: -4, 5 or 6: -3, 7 or 8: -2, 9 or 10: -1. The Toughness cannot be reduced lower than 0 by this complication.

- **Lemon:** The vehicle may look nice and fully operational, but it only operates up to three-quarters (rounded down) its normal efficiency without effort. This means its speed, Toughness, and all other traits do not function properly beyond this limit. Roll a die any time the top one-quarter of any trait's ability to perform is called upon—on a 10 or less, that top one-quarter cannot be utilized. The die must be rolled again every round a trait is maintained at this level of performance. Roll separately for each trait.
- **Out of Order:** A specific aspect of the vehicle is non-functional and always seems to break down, no matter how often it is fixed. This could be anything from the radio (a real pain for heroes trying to keep up with local news) to a particular weapon system never firing or the vehicle being unable to make left turns. Getting

the item to work may first require an appropriate Expertise (DC 20) or Technology (DC 15) check.

- **Personality:** The vehicle seems to have a personality and something of an intelligence, no matter how mundane it may seem. In defiance of all logic, the vehicle tends to suffer problems when mistreated, but performs at its best when coddled, pampered, and even spoken to by name. Gamemasters should have fun with this, applying the effects of other operations complications as best fits the situation. However, they should balance these instances with periodic moments of exceptional performance and perhaps even bonuses when the vehicle is exceptionally well-treated.
- **Rare:** Whether the vehicle is a “classic,” limited edition, unique creation, or an uncommon import, finding parts is extremely difficult. Availability of what should be simple components (and costs, if using a wealth system) is about twice (or more) difficult than normal. Any checks to locate parts suffer a DC modifier relative to how rare the vehicle is intended to be (ranging from DC +5 to +25.)
- **Twitchy:** There is nothing wrong with the vehicle that anyone can put their finger on, no matter how many times it is opened up and manually examined. The vehicle is just ... twitchy. The Gamemaster should roll a die whenever it is vital for a system to perform as intended (or just any time the Gamemaster likes.) On a 10 or less, that system does not work that round and must be activated again, also requiring a roll. That particular system will not function properly again until an 11 or higher is rolled, or the whole vehicle is turned off.
- **Vulnerability:** Something about the vehicle’s initial design or the unintended results of poor maintenance or previous repairs has left a vulnerable spot in the vehicle. Attacks or other suitable effects made against this particular location increase their effective ranks by an indicated amount (typically +10%, +25%, +50%, or double.)
- **Weakness:** The vehicle has a weakness that can overcomes its normal defenses, like a wooden vehicle being especially susceptible to flame. Alternatively, the vehicle may suffer harm from things that are harmless (or relatively so) to other vehicles, such as water, sunlight, or gravity. A weakness may add degrees of effect or impose an entirely different effect. Affliction is a typical effect, but some weaknesses inflict out-

right Damage, Weaken the vehicle’s speed, or have some other effect.

## BACKGROUND

- **Appropriated:** Originally someone else’s property, this prior relationship can come back to trouble the current owners. This may entail the previous owners periodically appearing to try and take the vehicle back, or it may involve the occasional case of mistaken identity.
- **Bad Memories:** The vehicle’s presence brings back bad memories (perhaps even acting as a trigger for past traumas.) The memories may be held by the public in general due to some event or the like they associate the vehicle with, or perhaps a specific individual (or small group) are tormented by the recollections.
- **Haunted:** The vehicle is haunted by a spirit or otherwise inhabited by pests or something else (e.g., gremmels or fairies) that can interfere with using the vehicle properly. Just how this causes problems (or perhaps even benefits) for the vehicle’s crew depends on the haunting’s nature. The reason for the haunting will be tied to something from the vehicle’s history.
- **Recognized:** The specific vehicle is very well known, be it famous or infamous. It is extremely unlikely it can travel in public without drawing attention.

## EXCEPTIONAL EXTRA EFFORT

Super-hero comics are full of stories wherein heroes must push beyond their normal limits to accomplish something remarkable because the alternative is too dire. Normally, extra effort covers going beyond a character’s normal limits, but sometimes even that isn’t enough. Sometimes, a character must push their limits beyond endurance, beyond pain, and beyond safety by crossing a threshold that puts the character at risk of real harm.

This dangerous realm of endeavor is known as exercising exceptional extra effort.

*A hero with super-strength is trapped in a transit tunnel that is collapsing, preparing to bring down tons of*

*rubble upon him and the civilians trapped within. Using his might to keep the tunnel roof aloft would normally be beyond his muscle's uppermost limits, even if employing normal extra effort, so he must push himself even further. Doing so means placing demands on his strength that risk tearing the hero apart, otherwise the roof will come down and kill everyone beneath.*

*Exceptional extra effort* is used the same way as regular *extra effort*: the character declares they are doing so. Unlike normal, however, *exceptional extra effort* is expressed in terms of ranks. There is no limit to how many ranks a character may attempt to employ in a single turn, but doing so is not without its cost (as later detailed.)

Once a character decides how many ranks of *exceptional extra effort* to risk, consult the following to determine the benefits—all ranks must be spent upon the same benefit. The payoff for taking on even a single rank of *exceptional extra effort* is compounded with the benefits of normal *extra effort*.

*Increasing the character's Strength by +3 ranks means one rank comes from normal extra effort and two ranks from the exceptional extra effort.*

## ACTION

No ranks of *exceptional extra effort* may be spent on obtaining any additional actions beyond that provided by normal *extra effort*.

## BONUS

In addition to the benefits obtained for normal *extra effort*, each rank of *exceptional extra effort* increases the circumstance bonus by an additional +2 (or negates an additional -2 of a circumstance penalty if involving unusual circumstances that go beyond the typical major penalty limit of -5.)

## POWER

In addition to the benefits obtained for normal *extra effort*, each rank of *exceptional extra effort* further increases the selected power effect's rank by +1.

## POWER STUNT

No ranks of *exceptional extra effort* may be spent on obtaining any additional Alternate Effects beyond that provided by normal *extra effort*.

## RESISTANCE

No ranks of *exceptional extra effort* may be spent on obtaining any additional resistance checks beyond that provided by normal *extra effort*.

## RETRY

No ranks of *exceptional extra effort* may be spent on obtaining any additional retries beyond that provided by normal *extra effort*.

## SPEED

In addition to the benefits obtained for normal *extra effort*, each rank of *exceptional extra effort* further increases the hero's speed rank by +1.

## STRENGTH

In addition to the benefits obtained for normal *extra effort*, each rank of *exceptional extra effort* further increases the hero's Strength rank by +1.

## COST OF EXCEPTIONAL EXTRA EFFORT

At the start of the turn immediately after using *extra effort*, the hero suffers the usual effects of using *extra effort*. Additionally, the hero may suffer physical harm from their exertion. Roll a Damage resistance check (DC 15 + 2 per rank of *extra effort* used.) Instead of Toughness, use Will if the nature of the *extra effort* was mental in nature or Fortitude if it was physical in nature.

*Pushing one's Speed or Strength far beyond the norm would be physical, but a psychic power effect would be mental.*

Using a hero point does not cancel out the need to make the resistance check against suffering harm from *extra effort*. It does, however, counter the normally resulting fatigue, and provides a +2 bonus to the Damage resistance check's roll.

# CHAPTER 5

# MAKING A

# BETTER BAD GUY

If you have ever read a comic book, you'll know that a super-hero is only as memorable as their villains are noteworthy. Indeed, in comic books it is often the villain more so than the hero who drives the story and pulls the reader into the action and drama.

Role-playing games are much the same: if the villain doesn't capture one's imagination, the game will likely wither and die from lack of interest. This is especially true of super-hero games wherein villains are the driving motivation for the characters to strap on their capes and face the wild, wicked world every morning. But it isn't enough that your players' characters notice the villain for the story being created to seem complete—the characters must admire them for their wickedness, if even only a little.

The villain should be admired to some degree. The cad's concept and actions must do more than just grab the players' attention, but also retain it. The bad guy must be so evil, vile, outrageous, cool or, yes, even humorous that they stick in the players' memories and creates in them a desire for the villain's return. The true hallmark of a successful comic book bad guy is to come back to fight another day, and the players must want them to do so.

Practically speaking, allowing a villain the opportunity to make reoccurring appearances is not just a matter of good storytelling—it is a matter of practicality.

Creating a new villain takes time and thought on the Gamemaster's part. This is a process that can quickly become trying, and no longer a matter of fun if all that work results in an opponent who only lasts a single appearance. Likewise, the players will become fed up with one-trick ponies that do not afford their characters the

chance to experience the comic book staple of familiar enemies (or, dare it be said, a nemesis.) They will likely demand something more intelligent and engaging than foes that are never allowed to develop.

A great villain must be more than a cardboard cut-out or shooting gallery target against which the heroic characters will toss their powers and inevitably triumph. Villains that stand out from the flock are more than just the sum of their game statistics. They have a history and personality—not to mention goals—that drive them towards their objectives with purpose (well, usually; as the lines goes, some men just want to watch the world burn.)

Such factors (and more) should be considered when presenting a villain to your players. Your players are more likely to show interest in such better-defined bad guys, and thus want them to return later—if only to defeat them again.

Expanding upon and developing the many relevant aspects of your games' villains will also determine the tactics used against the player characters. Not all opponents think or act alike, especially when they have different goals. Knowing what one's foe will do in any given situation—even if it doesn't seem to make sense—is an important part of separating one character from the rest of the Gamemaster's malevolent menagerie of menaces.

Is the villain the sort who learns from their mistakes and accounts for them in future encounters, for instance? If so, they will be better prepared and ready to adapt when during the next encounter. Or are they driven by ego, stupidity, or insanity? Will they keep trying new twists on the same thing, over and over, because that is the kind of predictable or unimaginative creature they are?

A Gamemaster should be careful to maintain the illusion of acting as a villain throughout the game and not let their personal knowledge of what's going on influence the outcome too greatly. A villain that acts out of character because the Gamemaster knows of or has realized something that doesn't make sense for the bad guy's character to be aware of will break the game's carefully crafted illusion. By such actions, often referred to throughout the hobby as "meta-gaming," the character will be reduced to little more than the latest two-dimensional representation of the Gamemaster. As such, the character will be unable to stand out as unique and memorable in its own right.

Often, the most interesting bad guys are often those tailored to a particular, unique concept. This isn't always possible due to a variety of reasons, however. Writer's block, time constraints, and a number of other elements—potentially including an intentional effort to emulate a known comic book universe—can all conspire to blur the lines that distinguish the game's villains from each other. When this happens, available hero and villain archetypes provide a solid foundation of ideas. Still, these archetypes are just that: a foundation that must be built upon in order to be considered solid.

Character archetypes require distinctive characteristics and alterations that build upon the basic presentation in order to arrive at a result that best suits your game's particular needs. Throwing an evil sorcerer or mastermind archetype at the heroes once in a while is fine if you are using it as shorthand and don't need to create any sort of identity for the characters. However, such opponents quickly lose their luster. Employing an unaltered archetype more than once means all characters they are meant to represent will essentially be the same except for whatever name you've provided to distinguish them. That's boring, and players will quickly get tired of it and demand more (and rightly so!)

You need to keep your villains fresh (yes, even those built on archetypes) by changing details and traits, even if only a little. There must always be something about the character that remains unexpected and adds depth to their nature.

Regardless of what the villain's game statistics may be, defining an engaging personality and set of goals may otherwise suffice to set it apart from the archetype you've used as a foundation. Introduce interesting and unexpected story elements into the villain's past, as well as into their current desires and goals.

Maybe the bad guy has fallen in love with one of the player characters or is even related to one of the heroes, by way of example.

If the player group has lost or retired characters through the course of gameplay, perhaps the bad guy is really this former friend returned to gain vengeance on the comrades they think abandoned them.

Have any player characters lost a sidekick to death or maturity during the course of play? If so, a villain could be that sidekick returned to obtain some manner of revenge for some reason, be it real or imagined.

Go nuts—let your imagination run wild. The more unexpected the events surrounding the villain, the more memorable they'll be!

Unfortunately, even with plenty of resources to draw from, a good idea for a noteworthy villain can still elude even the most creative Gamemasters. When that happens, it's time to draw on what you know, and that means looking at the books, comics, and movies that inspire you for ideas.

## MAKING THE FAMILIAR STRANGE AND NEW

Many players and Gamemasters enjoy role-playing the super-hero genre because of satisfaction derived from comic books (or comic-inspired movies.) This trend often results in player and non-player characters that resemble those taken from favored source material.

The character bitten by a radioactive insect who can stick to walls as a result; the shadowy, gadget-wielding nocturnal detective; and the lone, odd-looking alien who seeks to blend in with humanity while protecting it in spite of its prejudices are each examples of the kind of inspiration comic book reading role-players may utilize in their own games. Drawing too heavily on familiar source material can lead to its own problems.

Patterning a game's character (or something else relevant to game play, such as an organization, artifact, or event) after something from shared source material like comic books can very easily result in the two becoming conflated. The Gamemaster and other players may come to view the character in the same terms as the source material—identical instead of just inspired by.



This could rob the character of its potential to develop its own identity because everyone else would always consciously or unknowingly try to force the character to develop within the limits of these expectations.

And, of course, as this is true for the heroes, so too is it true for the game's villains.

Villains trapped within the boundaries set by their inspiring source material are at risk of the players knowing things about their foe that their character shouldn't have access to because it appeared in the inspirational

material. For example, the villain in a game modeled after a famous comic book character would not be able to keep its weaknesses and goals secret from the heroes if the players were familiar with that villain's comics. The source material would outline what to expect and do during encounters, possibly becoming problematic for the Gamemaster's plans for the bad guy.

For instance, if the source material reveals something about the villain once the game has begun, the players will likely expect the counterpart in their game to fol-

low a similar path. This conclusion would undoubtedly interfere with the Gamemaster's own story and machinations. If the Gamemaster chooses to continue on their own path rather than sticking to the inspiring source, they then risk alienating their players who expect them to stick to the canon material.

Ideally, the Gamemaster should create some distance between the original inspiration and the game's version of the character from the outset so everyone will understand the characters are two separate entities. This will allow the players to adjust their expectations and perceptions according, and permit the character to evolve as the game needs. There are some simple ways a Gamemaster can shake things up to create the necessary distance between the original source and your derivative character.

Altering the villain's power source is one such method. The battlesuit-wearing villain taken from a comic book is fitted with arcane armor in the game or perhaps the powers originally provided by a suit become biological in nature, for example. Changing power descriptors is another spin on this approach—the fire-using villain from the movie can be changed to use electricity in the game.

Another useful technique is to add or switch one or more abilities for something entirely unrelated to the character in the source material. Doing so provides a surprise for players who expect a carbon copy of the bad guy they're familiar with. If a character is known as a ponderous, ground-bound villain with powerful eye beams, for instance, adding the ability to fly or run fast would be a surprising twist. Making a solo villain a team player, or vice versa, is another route that is often enough of a curve ball to obscure the character's origins in popular media in order to surprise the players.

An additional, rather simple technique is to combine two inspirational villains into a single character, taking from both what is desired for a single, derived bad guy. From that point on, the amalgamated character should be subjected to the same techniques and scrutiny needed to change them from the source material as would any other character similarly inspired from an alternate media.

Two more radical approaches are to take a hero or villain from your source material and switch what side they are on, from good guy to villain, or even change their gender! Both methods can often be sufficient on their own to throw off most players so long as each technique is used sparingly. Combining this switch with

other methods also outlined here will help keep the players guessing.

A Gamemaster who finds the right balance between drawing upon external, popular source material and original ideas of their own will likely find their players becoming more interested in their games.

## A VILLAIN IS ONLY AS GOOD AS THEIR MACHINATIONS ARE EVIL

One of the more defining questions concerning a villain is what drives them to do evil? Why don't they use their powers for good or, at the very least, just ignore their powers altogether and try to lead normal lives? You'll want to come up with an answer that is true to the villain's concept and also engage the players enough to keep them interested. Sure, there are common, traditional themes in the super-hero genre that will always do in a pinch. Still, they lack the appeal and staying power of something that's been put together with more thought and care.

Originality is almost always more interesting than the predictable and expected.

### I'M GOING TO TAKE WHAT'S MINE

Greed is easily the most common motivator for villains. It's a simple, easily employed excuse for someone turning bad and employing their powers in a selfish manner. Unfortunately, it's also cliché and usually unimaginative. Sure, there are interesting spins you can put on greed, but in the end it breaks down to little more than "I see it, I want it, I take it."

Arguably, greed is a great motivator for so-called 'street-level' villains, such as thugs, mobsters, and the like, but it begins to lose its luster the higher up the power scale one goes. The obvious response to this scale of diminishing returns is to ensure the greed manifests in a fashion as grand and inspired as the character is powerful. Whereas a common thief's greed doesn't extend much further than robbing the nearest bank vault or till, a god-like villain will aspire to steal planets, souls,

or something equally lofty. Ultimately, what bigger and bolder way is there to illustrate a character's greed than with the desire for conquest? Don't just take some things—take everything! (But more on that later.)

The problem with the whole "villain robs bank, heroes catch villain, villain goes to jail, villain gets out of jail, villain robs bank again" formula is it gets very stale very quickly. Although the details can be switched around to offer a bit of variety—one week it's a bank and the next it's an auction house that gets robbed—the character's objectives remain unchanged: take stuff and try to get away to spend it.

Yawn.

Most players shall quickly become bored if their super-powered opponents do little more than steal because the Gamemaster will have to aim the story in unusual and increasingly nonsensical directions to make the villain at all challenging. This is why such villains work best as quick time-filler encounters or as part of a larger picture rather than acting as the game's focus.

If the heroes are encountering a lot of villains out to steal things, are they doing so as part of a larger agenda, for example? Are they stealing for the sake of increasing their wealth, for the thrill, or because what they are taking are all required as components for a far grander scheme? For example, are they building some sort of doomsday machine designed by a master villain working behind the scenes? (And, if so, are the thieves even aware of why they are taking the items? After all, if the world is destroyed, what shall remain for them to steal?)

Another approach to the greedy-driven foe is that of a mercenary or assassin. While such characters are often portrayed as evil or immoral, it's not uncommon for this sort of bad guy to operate according to their own sense of justice and honor. The latter, when it exists, usually mitigates their activities but, above all, remains their greed—their desire to improve their lot in life through unconventional and illegal means.

That is not to say all mercenaries are good guys in the making, just looking for someone to show them the light. It isn't even saying that all mercenaries and assassins act primarily out of a need for cash. The character may be driven by other motives (such as bloodlust or earning money to pay off a debt), and their current occupation is just something that is necessary for the time being, for whatever reasons.

Greed can also push a person to become a criminal out of necessity, especially when the bad guy's ultimate goal is something other than theft itself—something expensive. Many a mad scientist has their minions steal in order to fund their whacky experiments, experiments that on their own merits may actually have nothing malevolent about them. And then there are the unfortunate individuals afflicted with some sort of unusual illness or debilitation, requiring massive funding to keep the villain (or their loved one) alive and, possibly, search for a cure. Similarly, it's possible the villain's heart is in the right place and they seek to redress the harm they have afflicted on others, and likewise requires large amounts of cash to do so. In such situations, the bad guy's ambiguous ethics tell them that the end justify the means.

## THIS WORLD SHALL BE MINE!

But let's return to a notion brought up earlier as a way to make greed a more interesting plot element: what about theft and greed on a much larger scale? Say ... that of stealing a nation or planet? Although the pursuit of conquest can be considered the villain resorting to thievery—taking by illicit means something that doesn't belong to them—there's a big difference between taking a few hundred thousand dollars from a bank and taking control of an entire country or world.

(Yes, despite what you've heard, sometimes size *does* matter.)

Conquest—the desire to take by threat, guile, or force a city, nation, continent, planet, or galaxy that doesn't belong to the villain—is often another, more dramatic manifestation of greed. The desire for power and resources is not necessarily the only driving force behind a villain's need for conquest, however.

Some bad guys walk the path of conquest due to a sense of ideological superiority. They hold that their beliefs surpass those of the people they seek to lord over, and so the conquest is righteous in the villain's eyes. Or maybe the conqueror is out to prove their own personal superiority as a matter of ego. By subjugating others on such a scale grandiose scale, they prove they are better than everyone (or perhaps someone specifically.) Similarly, some conquerors seek to demonstrate their idea of racial superiority, be that an issue of local ethnicity or the star-spanning superiority of one race from a given planet above those races born to other worlds.

Sometimes, and almost certainly most tragically, there are those conquerors who seek nothing more than to destroy that which came before them. Or perhaps destruction is the end as well as the means—the bad guy believes true power can only be proven by such utter and complete devastation.

Of course, there are also the pretenders—would-be tyrants who may actually obtain control of something of worth for a while, but lack the means and vision to do so properly. Instead, they make a nuisance of themselves, likely cause a lot of death and property damage, but never really had a chance at mastering anyone for long. On the other hand, true conquerors are counted among the most dangerous foes player characters can face. Their actions and machinations are backed by the resources their goals demand, and are driven by the intellect or temerity that makes their success a real risk.

## I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS, BUT I HAVE NO CHOICE

Greed and a desire to have power over others and accumulate incomparable wealth are arguably the most common, obvious, and understandable forces that drive villains to do what they do. But what about those opponents who would rather be anything but play the role of super-powered bad guy? What compels or incents them to act in a manner that is so against their nature or desires?

As previously touched upon, some villains set upon their foul career by circumstance rather than design. Being in the wrong place at the wrong time is not just a standard method for gaining powers, but can also outline the terms of one's standing in the eyes of the law.

Misunderstandings, seemingly innocuous mistakes that snowball into something worse, and frame-ups can all cause a person to become a villain for lack of any other choice or a chance to explain the truth of things. But once they've been forced to put on a black hat, what keeps driving them onward in that direction?

A case of mistaken identity or intent is one thing, but why would someone who didn't want to be a villain continue acting that way? They may feel they have no choice because events have cut them off from everyone they love and everything they know. In such desperate circumstances—without access to money, especially—the reluctant bad guy may be left with no choice but to become what the world already mistakenly believes them to be.

On the up side, because such characters never wanted to become a villain, given the right change of circumstances, they are also the most likely to redeem themselves and set matters right. Such characters present an opportunity to shift the plot in new directions by turning old foes into allies (or at least no longer leaving them an enemy.)

## THE VOICES TOLD ME TO DO IT

Although greed and conquest are typically the most common reasons for someone becoming a villain, never underestimate insanity as a catalyst for nefarious deeds.

Why does the bad guy blow stuff up? Because a little voice in their head told them to.

How come they kill children at random? Because they believe they are possessed by demons.

What drives them to conquer the world? They believe themselves to be the only one fit to save the planet from itself.

Why do they burn down buildings with people still in them? Because they've got nothing better to do and thinks the way people in pain scream is funny.

You get the idea.

Although an excellent way of adding a bit of flavor and unpredictability to the game, insanity as a villain's motivation shall quickly grow tired and uninteresting if overused. And not every villain who does something incredibly atrocious or who doesn't (overtly?) make sense should be considered insane—sometimes people are just evil. Do not take this to mean a villain cannot be both insane and evil, especially when dealing with mental disorders that affect perception of ethics and morality, however. Perhaps the most important issue that arises when combining the two during character design is that the context of both is altered by the other's inclusion. Neither is the same as they are on their own.

Of great note is that evil brought on by madness means the bad guy can be cured. If portrayed correctly, the need to capture and treat the villain's illness rather than seeking their death or incarceration can make for some interesting stories. When psychological recuperation becomes the goal, it allows an imaginative Game-master greater opportunity to manipulate player characters by means of their opponent's alternating state of mind (and, in relation to that, state of evil.)

Comic books all but overflow with bad guys who are “cured” of their insane maliciousness and return to productive lives only to once more raise high villainy’s banner following something that causes a psychological regression. This possibility keeps the players on their toes, but is yet another trick in a Gamemaster’s arsenal that should not be overused.

## AND THE WORLD SHALL KNOW YOUR NAME

Far less common than most of the motivators already discussed, fame is yet another goal that may incite someone to turn to the Dark Side.

Indeed, there are far easier, more reliable ways to become famous other than stealing stuff and hurting people (especially if you have super-powers.) However, villains who seek fame (likely in conjunction with other goals) typically do so because of the risk and darkness involved. They enjoy their reputation all the more for it being of a taboo sort rather than the “common” fame enjoyed by glittering heroes or even by celebrities.

To such bad guys, “infamous” and “famous” are synonymous.

## THE TRUE BELIEVER

One of the more dangerous villain types are those who fight for a cause—a desired end that exists beyond mere greed or thirst for power. Tyranny and avarice may both prove to be symptoms or tools of such a grand objective. These cads fight for something they pursue out of some manner of faith, and so they believe everything they do to achieve their goals is justified by their cause.

Common causes include an ideological belief, such as religion, total freedom from all governing bodies, ethnic superiority, the right of intellectuals to govern, national pride, revenge, or any number of similar banners to be raised high. Essentially, if a concept or thing can rally supporters or followers, it can become a cry for those with super-powers to gather behind. The faithful will take on all comers in their beliefs’ name, even if doing so places them on the wrong side of the law.

The degree to which a villain may follow such a cause varies, ranging from the transparency of mere lip service to the blind fellowship of zealotry. Zealots are almost guaranteed to be the most dangerous of villains to serve a cause because they have total, blind faith that what they are doing is somehow correct or deserved.

This same zealotry also adds a degree of predictability that an opponent who only pays lip service to the cause lacks, however.

A zealot may be relied upon to do what is best for the cause, frequently even at the expense of their own well-being. On the other hand, someone else’s behavior may be mediated and directed by other factors, including self-preservation. Regardless, a villain with a cause is handy because they provide the Gamemaster with a focus upon which to build the game, if only for a brief time.

Alternate goals and motives certainly exist for villains to undertake, but the previously mentioned are some of the more common. Additional objectives will become apparent as the game unravels within the setting, often practically writing themselves to suit the circumstances and results of the player characters’ actions.

## DIFFERENT TIME, DIFFERENT EVIL

A villain’s goals and motivation will definitely differ between characters of different eras, be they of a superhero genre (silver, golden, etc.) or historical periods. Each different period is rampant with its own unique ideals and stereotypes with regards to both heroes and villains, although many are meta-elements that step back from reality a bit and dive more into theatrics and false perception. For example, although it may be appealing to imagine the mustache-twirling villain in a game placed in the Old West, such an image is purely a theatrical stereotype of the era and does not represent historical truth.

Of course, it is such theatrics that make playing in different eras so notable and fun.

A vital part of making one era seem different from the next (and why play in a such a time if these variations are not meant to be noted?) is playing up to and feeding the players’ expectations. Much of that, you’ll likely find, is indeed rooted in these stereotypes. After all, if you want your game to be more than just a modern mindset and attitude played against the backdrop of the past, you’ll need to play up to such stark contrasts to enliven the game’s flavor and place it apart from a game set in the present.

## Chapter 5: Making a Better Bad Guy

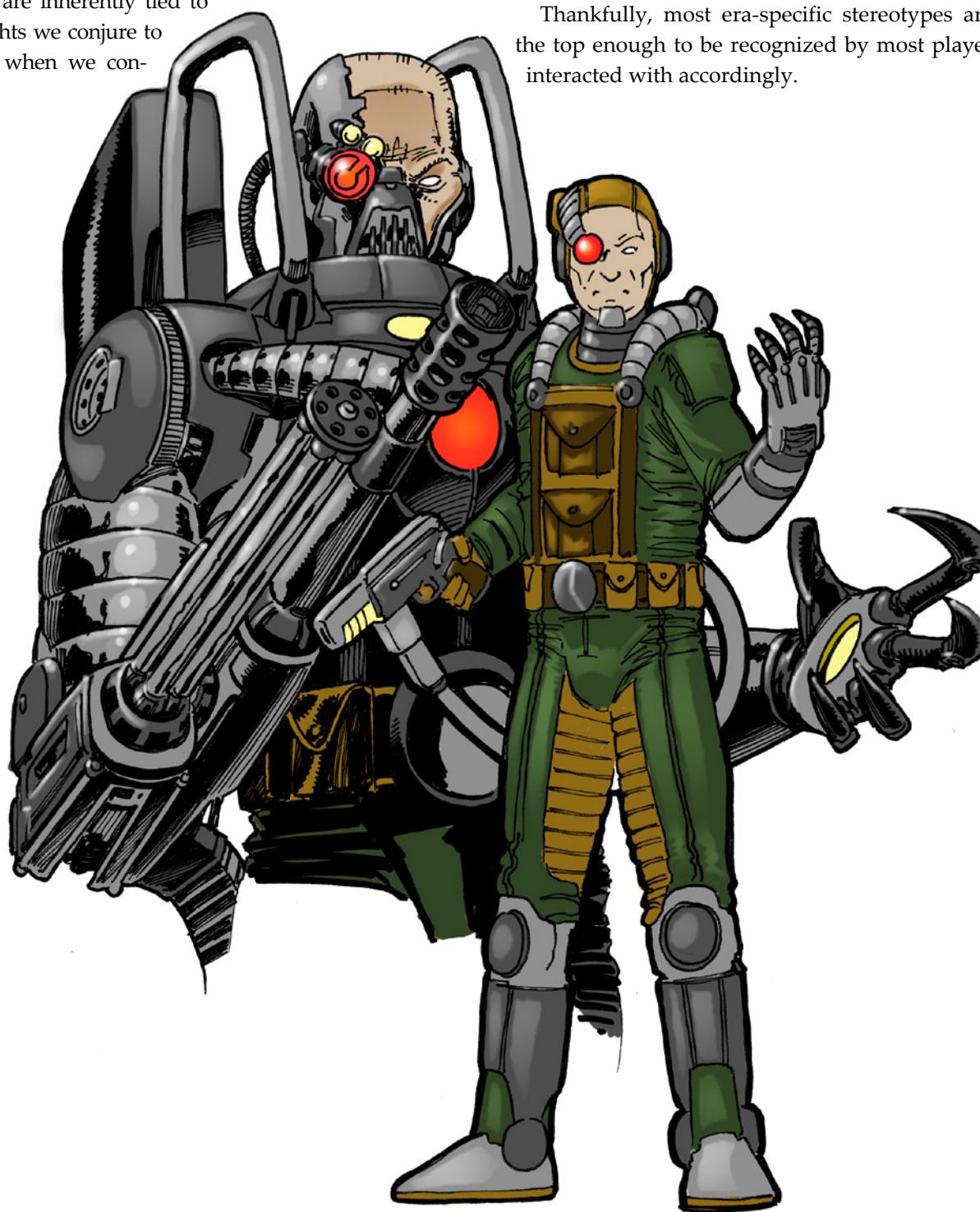
One may think history would be the right place to start looking for the proper way to play a villain in a different era, but you'd be wrong. History is the backdrop—it is the details that fill in the time and spaces between the characters, but it should not be the defining elements of a typical super-hero game in another era.

It is the exaggeration and misconceptions surrounding history that will be needed to create the environment the Gamemaster is likely looking for. Era-specific stereotypes are inherently tied to thoughts we conjure to mind when we con-

template the golden age of comics, and filtering out that conception alters the notion of that time's reality.

For example, if playing a golden age of super-heroes game, one would play up to the black and white nature of good and evil. The moral shades of gray found in modern comics simply didn't exist in that era so far as the stereotypes are concerned. Good guys were valiant and self-sacrificing, and the bad guys were predictably evil and horrific.

Thankfully, most era-specific stereotypes are over the top enough to be recognized by most players and interacted with accordingly.



## TELLING THE STORY

Even a villain with incredibly well-defined goals can be hamstrung by a poorly crafted story or character background. A well-prepared back-story—be it the history of a villain or player character hero—provides the Gamemaster with material from which plot elements and the game's pacing may be pulled. A seemingly innocuous fact dropped without thought into a character's origin story may later spark ideas on a single event or perhaps even an entire plotline, for instance.

A truly devious Gamemaster can also use such background elements as red herrings to confuse the players. This is done by leading them to believe an element of their back-story has been activated within the current plot, directing their suspicions in one direction while actually leading the story down another path. Use what is available to keep the story moving and interesting. Also keep in mind that the villains are a part of the world that continues to move forward around the characters.

Even though the player characters haven't seen a particular group of villains for several story arcs, this doesn't necessarily mean the latter have been doing nothing in the meanwhile. The bad guys are not just sitting around, playing video games and watching television as they await their turn to come back into the heroes' lives. It is during such downtime that villains plot and prepare for the next such encounter or, if the player characters are not the villain's biggest concern, when they take on non-player character heroes "backstage."

Of course, all this activity taking place out of the sight and minds of the player characters means the villains are similarly continuing to gain experience and evolve. The bad guys are improving control over their powers and expanding their knowledge and talent, as represented by a continuing crawl towards the next PL. This "off camera" progress provides further opportunities to surprise the heroes with new twists to the villain to be revealed during the next encounter. This helps keep the game fresh and allows the Gamemaster some breathing room to adjust their arsenal of opponents as needed.

A villain's advancing story can also be shifted about by having solo villains sign on to a group of bad guys, be it a newly established collective, a former group born anew, or as a member of an established assembly. Likewise, a group member can split off to try taking on the world by their lonesome.

Villains who join a group will differ from previous incarnations in that they will have access to group tactics, but they will also have to learn how to perform as a single cog in a larger machine. The need for such an adjustment (or the problems that arise because the character is unable to modify their thinking) is especially true of villains who are incredibly strong-willed and/or consider themselves a leader. Of course, things are different if such a character has signed on to the group as its new leader. If not, there will definitely be conflict with the group's existing leader as the two lock horns over who has the right and ability to command.

The flip side of this coin is bad guys who decide to go solo will change as much as is needed to survive without anyone watching their back or directing their movements. This is especially relevant if the villain isn't known for being much of a planner or thinker. The Gamemaster may also need to find ways to account for the now-solo bad guy's vulnerabilities—weaknesses designed with a group in mind that become especially exposed while on their own.

Another aspect of the off-camera villain transition is having a bad guy move up (or possibly down) through the ranks of the criminal underworld. A once laughable villain the heroes barely considered a threat during their previous encounter can later return with a new bag of tricks and altered outlook on the whole villain shtick. Such an unexpected change will throw the player characters for a loop because the bad guy they remember beating on so easily has become a genuine threat. Contrariwise, a villain the heroes once knew as one of their toughest foes can fall upon hard times and be reduced to a pitiful lackey of a new enemy. This serves to throw the heroes off the scent of whoever is actually pulling the strings.

A Gamemaster needs to keep in mind there must be reasons why such radical changes occur, however, even if they are not immediately made known to the player characters. Without a logic working behind alterations to a villain, such changes can work to dilute the world the Gamemaster and players are collaborating on to build rather than strengthen it.

## DARK REFLECTIONS

As has previously been discussed, villains built from recognizable source material are often a quick and easy

route to fun. And yet there is another way to make the bad guy familiar other than merely emulating existing material from comic books or the like: make the bad guy the polar opposite of one (or all) of the heroes.

If the player characters see a bit (or a lot) of themselves in their enemy, the story will likely be drawn off into new and exciting directions. Not only do such plot devices create interesting villains to fight, considering such foes often possess abilities that mirror and counter that of the heroes, but they also spawn many opportunities for great role-playing.

There are several ways to handle the dark reflection of a hero, with many being staples of the superhero comic book genre. A corrupted, twisted clone of the hero is an oldie but a goody, as is the appearance of an until-then unknown sibling (especially twin) who possesses similar powers but a radically different outlook on the world. The return of an absent parent from whom the hero inherited their abilities is also a fun nod to the character's origin story.

One of the more interesting (and common) ways to present the hero's dark reflection is to take the cliché to its most literal conclusion: the villain is an evil version of the hero. This twist is usually accomplished by having the villain somehow transported from an alternate dimension where that existence's version of the hero (or entire group of heroes, if the Gamemaster wants to take that extra step) is actually a bad guy. Such dimensions typically turn the whole story's cast on its head—not only are the heroes villains, but the despicable foes the players are familiar with are the good guys of this mirror realm. Such characters make for interesting opponents because the villain and hero may more readily anticipate each other and will know exactly how their counterpart's powers work.

A similar but slightly different variation on the theme of villain as a literal dark version of the hero is to transplant the bad guy out of history, usually from the future. It is possible the villain is actually the hero, taken from a moment yet to come that follows some life-shattering event that caused the hero to switch sides. In this case, seeing what their future will become may afford the hero the opportunity to fix things.

Or maybe the bad guy isn't truly a version-yet-to-come of the hero at all, but merely someone who adopted their ways and supplanted their identity. For example, it's possible the villain from the future is one of

the hero's descendants who has taken the polar opposite view of life, and thus turned to wickedness. Alternatively, the bad guy could merely be someone who has decided to steal the hero's identity for their own ends. The latter option is especially useful if the hero is of the sort that can leave a legacy to be found and used by future generations. For example, metahumans who gain their abilities from technology, magical items, deities, cosmic forces, and so on.

## LAW DOES NOT ALWAYS EQUAL JUSTICE—ANTI-HEROES

Stepping back from the dark reflection character option for a moment, let's explore a type of opponent that isn't exactly a villain but finds themselves on the opposite side of the law, if not necessarily justice, because of their methods.

The so-called "anti-hero" can be used as a protagonist as easily as they may villain, depending on how deep within the grayer shades of morality the character exists. Even while wholly embracing methods society considers excessive, immoral, and reprehensible, it is possible for such characters to fill the role of foe while serving a broader sense of justice than the law recognizes.

An anti-hero can show the good guys what they may have become if some things in their lives had been different—if they'd gone left when they should have gone right, so to speak. This can force the heroes into a position of self-examination regarding their own choices and paths. It is this aspect of "what may have been" that makes anti-heroes so interesting and useful for developing the game's story. However, if these ethically ambiguous characters are used as just another shade of villain to oppose the heroes' sense of righteousness, the anti-hero will quickly lose much of the flavor that accounts for its appeal.

Of course, there are also going to be characters other than anti-heroes who are not easily defined as either hero or villain. It remains up to the player characters to decide how to react to such indecipherable individuals. Rebels who fight in the name of justice, freedom, and righteousness in the face of the law of the land are good examples of this. Certainly, such radicals may truly be fighting for a worthy cause, but their operations are contrary to the law. This may put them at odds with any characters that strive for a firmer balance between justice and legality.

## A NEW OUTLOOK— REFORMED VILLAINS

Transforming a heroic associate into a villain can produce much the same sense of introspection as results from confronting opponents who may be morally righteous but working contrary to the law. Imagine how one's values and confidence in one's sense of right and wrong would be shaken by having a fellow hero—a confidant, teammate, and friend—fall into darkness. After all, if it can happen to someone the players considered a champion of good, what is there to prevent them from likewise suffering from temptation and corruption?

This possibility is underscored by the fact that such a change is rarely sudden. In hindsight, there will probably have been clues and hints of the impending change that the player characters failed to notice or act on in time. Such themes of duality step beyond the usual “see the bad guy, stop the bad guy” simplicity that often defines super-hero genre games, leaving them feeling predictable and unexciting. This scenario shakes things up by adding unexpected twists that force the heroes to ponder more than just immediate events. This leaves them with no choice but to face an enemy they cannot necessarily tackle head on: the possibility of their own darker ambitions.

Such villains can be exceptionally dangerous because they'll likely know things about their former friends—now opponents—that can be exploited. If the hero-turned-villain knows any of their former allies' secret identities, for example, they can strike at them or their families when they are at their most vulnerable. A hero's changing allegiances can also cause significant harm to the reputation of those former comrades the villain once associated with, covering them with distrust and suspicion.

Similarly, a change of heart can overcome a villain, bringing the bad guy over to the side of justice. This is an especially interesting plot twist when the once-villain was a reoccurring element in the campaign and the characters' main opponent. But what can cause a bad guy to completely (or perhaps only partially) reverse their evil ways and join the side of good? Let's look once more to comic books for the answer.

Some crooks get involved in crime for the money alone. Give them an “honest” job (as a government operative, private investigator, freelance troubleshooter,

etc.) that pays sufficiently and you now have someone who has no (or a significantly reduced) interest in perpetrating crime. Perhaps the villain was won back to the light by reason. Maybe the former scoundrel perpetrated an atrocity that was too much even for their jaded soul to handle.

It's also possible the reformed outlaw has fallen in love or become a parent. Such an occurrence will have altered their world perspective and forcing them to see they can never be with their loved ones so long as they are running from the law. Use your imagination while considering real world incentives for rehabilitation.

Whatever caused the change of heart, also consider what would happen if that element in the reformed villain's life were removed. Would they turn their back on the world and revert to their evil ways? The Damocles Sword this possibility represents can spice up just about any game considering the level of suspicion that would almost certainly already follow a converted scoundrel.

As always, the Gamemaster should be careful not to overuse this story device for risk of damaging its value as a surprising and interesting tool that is handy for shaking a game up.

## “YOU AGAIN!”— THE ARCHENEMY

As has been hammered into you by this point, one of the more important aspects of creating memorable villains is defining their goals and motivation for using their knowledge and powers towards disreputable, if not evil, ends.

Is the villain a common criminal just out for money, are they seeking revenge against someone in particular (or maybe all of mankind), or do they seek to conquer the world?

Knowing and understanding what drive a bad guy is essential to defining the NPC's role in the game. Sure, it may be fun every now and again to employ an opponent for no other reason than to let the player's experiment and go wild with their powers in new ways or earn some experience, but this is not a long-term proposition. If the Gamemaster wants a villain to fill the role of “archenemy”—a NPC who will be one of the heroes’

# Chapter 5: Making a Better Bad Guy

greatest, long-running threats throughout the game—a greater investment of time and development is required.

Developing a bad guy into an archenemy first requires the Gamemaster make them as three-dimensional as possible.

What are their goals?

Why is the character operating on the darker side of the law and justice?

What are their favorite methods and tactics?

Who are their allies and why have the latter signed on to the villain's cause?

Does the villain have any opposition other than the heroes and, if so, does that make the bad guy's completion friends to the heroes?

These are all good questions the Gamemaster should be prepared to answer if they want the players to invest enough interest in the NPC to allow the latter to rise to the station of archenemy.

But why is an archenemy desirable—perhaps even important—to the game? An archenemy creates a sense of consistency in the plot by providing a familiar face that keeps coming back for more, no matter how many times the heroes soundly thump them. Unlike antagonists the heroes just happen to stumble across and catch in the act as part of a random encounter, the archenemy is designed to work towards greater and more strategically relevant things.

If the archenemy becomes embroiled in ordinary criminal acts, they are no different than any number of other faceless opponents and won't stand out from the crowd as anything of note. Indeed, it is their drive to pull off impressive schemes that are necessary to foil that keeps drawing back the hero's attention to a particular foe. If this happens often enough, breeding the required degree of familiarity, spite, and accountability in the bad guy's plans, this will eventually earn the villain the title of archenemy.

An archenemy is far more than lofty goals and wide-ranging plots, however. They must have the abilities and resources needed to make them a constant and returning threat. An archenemy isn't much good if they are soundly defeated once and isn't later able to make a comeback. Similarly, an archenemy should certainly not be a breeze to walk all over and defeat with ease. Instead, a well-crafted opponent of this nature should

continue to pose a serious threat to the heroes and whatever they stand for. Better yet, the level of threat should continue to increase as time goes on. A truly notable archenemy learns as much about their opponent as possible and won't pose much of a danger if they do not acquire experience as do the heroes themselves.

It is their ability and desire to find new ways to oppose the hero that makes an archenemy dangerous and interesting to introduce into the game. Depending on the game's scale, such threats should also be of a scope that goes beyond mere threat to personal life and limb. These ultimate foes need not necessarily be the sort of nemesis that puts the entire world at risk to suit this role—it's the threat they pose to the hero and those around them that matters. Using what they know of their opposite number, an archenemy will use ploys and diversions to test the hero's resolve, ethics, sense of legal and moral responsibility, and capacity for putting the greater good's welfare above their own, all as part of a larger plan that pursues their overall agenda.

An archenemy's ability to evade capture and live to trouble the hero another day is perhaps their most necessary ability. It doesn't matter if their miraculous escapes are the results of powers, careful planning, or pure luck—an archenemy that ends up in jail and stays there is hardly a reoccurring threat. This is why climactic battles with these paramount cads should be epic in their importance to the hero and a true culmination of the plot. If they are just another random fight that will blend in with all the rest five minutes after the last punch is thrown, the character has insufficient impact on the game or in the hero's development.

The need to ensure conflict with an archenemy is unique and memorable as part of their mystique and relevancy to the process of building a nemesis should not be underestimated.

## WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS ...

While going fist to fist (or energy blast to energy blast) with one's archenemy is all well and good, it will quickly lose its appeal if that's all there is to the game. A

plot needs to follow a pattern of beats—lows and highs in the narrative—if it is to remain engaging.

If the players feel the game is nothing more than the Gamemaster mindlessly throwing their archenemy at them, the former will quickly become exhausted and bored of the routine. Something interesting must take up the time between bouts with the hero's nemesis, but this doesn't mean the game needs to become bogged down in mediocrity. If these low points are filled with nothing more than common robberies and seemingly random and meaningless fights in the streets, the game is similarly put at risk of succumbing to boredom.

An easy way to fill these gaps with exciting and challenging events noted for their variety is to introduce criminal organizations (see **Chapter 7, The Many Faces of Evil** for plenty of tools for doing so) and teams of villains. Both offer Gamemasters an easily exploited resource for developing their game's story, but in different ways.

Although randomly throwing teams of bad guys at the heroes runs the same risks of damaging the game's flow as does over-using solitary villains, there is an upside to such a tactic. A team of opponents is an opportunity to utilize a variety of backgrounds and goals in a single mix, providing more material from which to develop a reason for the encounter beyond needing to kill time. Furthermore, even facing a team the heroes have battled before need not be a rehash of the previous conflict. Using a team means the Gamemaster can point their villains at different heroes each time—they can switch up opponents with the hope of avoiding mistakes that resulted in defeat during their previous encounters.

Evil organizations can likewise provide a dynamic pool of possibilities to draw from. Although a villainous organization can be just as useful as most other opponents as a means to focus the game's main plot, its generally expansive reach allows it to simultaneously work towards multiple goals. Not all of these objectives need to be revealed to the heroes in any given encounter. Doing so over time allows the Gamemaster to develop a secondary story "off camera" without the players knowing, instead revealing it to them when the time is right. This allows the Gamemaster to drop the organization's members into the game between currently developing plot points with no immediate need to explain how they fit the existing narrative.

This same mutability makes organizations and teams useful as more than just filler.

An organization's size often provides them impressive resources in terms of manpower and their ability to manipulate events to suit their needs. This ability makes them an ideal plot focus and ultimate enemy within a story, especially if encounters during downtime in a previous plot arc involving a different foe were used to de-

velop the new conflict. The organization's manpower allows it to act simultaneously across great distance, making it much more difficult for the heroes to connect the dots or respond to all threats. Few things can be as satisfying for a Gamemaster as watching the look on a player's face when puzzle pieces begin to fall together and events they previously thought were entirely unrelated are revealed to be parts of a much bigger plan.

Yet another reason for Gamemasters to make proper use of opposing teams and organizations is their abil-



ity to rebound from defeat in new and surprising ways. In any game, there is always the chance that even the most dangerous and carefully constructed archenemy will one day be defeated in such a way that even the most creative of Gamemasters couldn't bring them back without totally tossing reason and common sense aside. A team or organization, on the other hand, can replace losses with new members.

Vast, renewable resources, be they of men or material, not only allow such foes to return after a sound defeat without much additional explanation, but also provide a useful excuse for changes in abilities and tactics. Organizations can develop new technologies to fight the heroes, and teams can take on new members (possibly even an archenemy or two), for instance. Keep these differences and points in mind when deciding how to pace a story's downtime or central arc. Otherwise, the plot can end up accidentally derailed and the player's disappointed with its thematic and logical consistency.

## KEEP COMING BACK FOR MORE

At this point, we come to an important question for any super-hero game: what good is spending all this time and effort building up a villain into something that will offer more than just a brief moment's entertainment? Why bother if the player characters are going to end up subduing them the first time out, be it by killing them or locking them up in jail?

A common reason for Gamemasters resorting to seemingly random, quickly conceived conflicts is a lack of preparation time or inspiration. So, who wants to waste the thought and energy needed to develop memorable opponents if they are removed from the game too quickly? How and why does the relationship between hero and villain get drawn out in a way that doesn't seem contrived or make the heroes' efforts to defeat the bad guy seem pointless? To avoid this trap, part of the NPC's design should include reasonable ways to bring the villain back into the picture later on.

Many Gamemasters may find their first instinct will be to design villains powerful enough to slap the heroes around like rag dolls. This is the most obvious and easiest way to keep the bad guy alive and around to cause

trouble later on. Opponents of this sort are just as obviously going to ruin the players' fun in the process if that is all they are: power for the sake of power—for surviving the player characters.

Pumping up a bad guy in this fashion can also make Gamemastering the character difficult because, although such NPCs will indeed make for a tough fight, it also leaves little room to round out the character. The end result is an inevitable loss of interest because such villains ignore the careful balance a Gamemaster should strive for between making their scoundrels tough enough to put up a fight without being so powerful as to clearly place the fight out of the heroes' reach.

Another obvious—yet precarious—method of keeping interesting bad guys in the game is ensuring each carefully-crafted villain is designed with a means of escape. Teleporters, powers that freeze time, or conveniently located escape tunnels and delaying obstacles or minions during a fight are all typical of this technique.

Although providing NPCs with a means of escape is all well and good for saving the villain's butt so they can come back to cause trouble another day, players will often grow tired of everyone they fight having a get out of jail free card. This is why, as with most things regarding proper villain design, a balance must be achieved and care taken not to overuse any one character design technique or plot idea.

For the sake of achieving this necessary balance, the Gamemaster must consider if the means of escape is reasonable and whether it fits the context of the character's concept. It's all well and good in a low PL, street-level game to make a regular opponent of a master assassin who lives by their wits and guns rather than any super powers, but tossing in a global teleporter that allows them to escape any and all attempts to capture them will clearly and unavoidably be out of place in a game about gunplay and fisticuffs. Doing so will raise questions that are not easily answered in the game's context.

Where did they get the teleporter?

Considering they can go wherever they want, why hasn't the villain chosen to do something more grand and profitable with it?

Keep questions like this in mind while deciding if a particular method of allowing a villain to become reoccurring is suited to the type of game you want to run. In a game where most characters have relatively weak or

no powers, such an ability would allow the assassin to steal just about whatever they wanted. This would make them rich without having to go through the bother (not to mention the risk) of becoming a killer-for-hire. Simply put, a teleporter doesn't fit well with the low-powered sort of game being played in our example.

Another possibility that requires quick thinking rather than preparation is to use the surroundings as a means of escape rather than as just the conflict's backdrop.

If the villain leaps from a cliff and falls out of site into the depths below rather than face jail time, is there a river to break their fall?

If left for dead upon a chilly mountaintop, are there any benevolent and ancient monks in a hidden, nearby monastery to bring the bad guy back from the brink of oblivion?

Was the bad guy's body recovered by allies (or someone looking to exploit the dead man) and restored to life by forbidden science or dark magic?

Do other villains simply break them out of prison after they have been captured?

This sort of "off camera" escape is a staple of comics that writers frequently enjoy employing to bring back characters long thought dead.

And never underestimate the value of a good hostage. Taking an innocent bystander as proof against pursuit is a good stand-by for extracting a villain from

risk of death or capture. Furthermore, taking as hostage someone important to the heroes makes for a good escape plan, and has the additional benefit of possibly launching another sub-plot.

For instance, if the villain not only gets away but also manages to do so without returning the loved one,

will the hostage become bitter towards the heroes? Will the hostage be killed anyway, or perhaps brainwashed into turning against the good guys? Such situations hold great potential for throwing the heroes' lives into turmoil through story arcs spun out of the event.

Although such contingencies are handy for keeping the heroes' foes free when all else fails, they should not be overused—individually or collectively. If the players feel their characters are never able to capture an opponent or otherwise achieve some manner of proper resolution, they will feel they are unable to actually affect the world in which they play.

In the absence of being able to obtain a satisfying conclusion to their conflict with the bad guy, many players will decide that triumphing over evil will always be out of reach with that particular Gamemaster running the show. As a result, their attention will wander. Worse yet, they may come to resent the Gamemaster for overly meddling—seeing them as an opponent rather than the impartial moderator and voice for everything in their game that is not the player characters.



Similarly, there are times when a Gamemaster might have to let a carefully crafted villain fall by the wayside in light of player character actions, even if further plans for the NPC were intended. An unforeseen but excellent plan that covers all the angles in order to capture the bad guy, for example, should be allowed to alter the Gamemaster's plans and result in the villain being apprehended. If the Gamemaster is not willing to adjust for the unexpected, they are again telling the players nothing they do will affect the game world. In gamer parlance, this sort of Gamemaster fiat is the worst kind of "railroading." This is especially true if it is a frequent element in the game, and is employed contrary to all reason, strategy, or ability for the players to prepare for.

Aside from the frustration excessive railroading will create for players, the latter will come to expect everyone they think defeated beyond all possibility of return to miraculously come back at a later time, no matter how unreasonable such a reappearance may be. This expectation renders the "escape clause" plot tool largely impotent, removing any surprise it can conjure if used sparingly and with careful thought. Overuse also encourages player characters to go to extreme measures to ensure the villain really won't be coming back, perhaps even those that should be beyond consideration for the heroes. Such actions consequently force the Gamemaster to use even more absurd means to revive the character later on.

It's a vicious cycle of predictability and one-upmanship that may end up ruining the fun for all involved.

The key to a villain's continued existence without sacrificing common sense and fun is moderation. The Gamemaster should be careful not to overdo the whole "oh, look who's returned ... again" technique, nor should they back the players against the wall so they feel they are left with no other choice than to do unheroic things to ensure their victory. A little forethought, some careful planning, and the intelligent selection of a villain's powers and/or gear can all go far towards ensuring the bad guy's escape and survival without the Gamemaster having to paint themselves into a corner.

It should also be mentioned that not every group of players is the same. An attentive Gamemaster should come to know what their players find to be the most fun and build their stories around that, while keeping things spicy enough to maintain their own enjoyment. No matter what your particular flavor of game turns out

to be, the end result should be just that: fun for everyone. So, tailor things as best suits your needs and be content you're doing what's right for your game and players.

## NEW VILLAIN ARCHETYPES

### BEAST LORD

A Beast Lord is someone who has developed some manner of exceptional—if not preternatural—connection to animals. Whether via empathetic means or a hard-won respect from such creatures that establishes who their master is and whose commands they must obey, members of the Animal Kingdom all but abase themselves before the Beast Lord. They act upon his will and fulfill their assigned roles in his plans.

The archetype adorns itself in beast-themed regalia, adopting animal motifs into everything from the Beast Lord's clothing to its weapons and facilities. Just how and why a Beast Lord comes to be what he is will vary, although some sort of connection to the wilds prior to the character assuming its current roll is most common.

Big game hunters, environmental extremists, and the like are good starting points for a Beast Lord's origins.

#### Themes

Although the basic Beast Lord can be an impressive adversary in its own right, there are thematic possibilities that can differentiate them from the baseline in significant ways. Focusing on how the Beast Lord obtained his powers, or how his abilities function, results in variations that stand well on their own or combined with each other.

#### Animal Mojo

The Beast Lord had no abilities until he somehow acquired the means to command animals, such as would happen if he stumbled across an ancient, mystical totem (a necklace, fur cloak, medallion, etc.) Logically, this would require adding the Removable flaw to the Beast Lord's powers. Alternatively, the character may have obtained his powers after encountering a "lost" tribe of animal worshippers in some dark, as-yet-unexplored corner of the world who then made him their representative and champion in man's modern world.

## Born to be Wild

Rather than being a person who found his abilities or acquired them through long training, they come naturally to the Beast Lord. As such, adding the Innate extra to the character's power is a good idea. Rather than the archetype being a mutant human, the Beast Lord was born with his powers because he is an animal-like alien or beast-man that has crawled out of the wilds. Another option is a human-animal hybrid created in a lab it later escaped from.

Such beginnings would easily explain why the character has such hatred for the modern world and wishes to tear it down to once more make room for all animalkind.

## King of the Seven Seas

Instead of lording over all animals, the King of the Seven Seas has claimed the world's waters as his dominion and all its denizens as his subjects. The archetype's powers become limited to fish and waterborne mammals, and he may also have the ability to breathe underwater and Swimming added.

## Master of the Skies

Much like King of the Seven Seas, this theme is master of a select part of the Animal Kingdom instead of it all. The skies, and all beasts that claim it as their home, are his to control. As such, the archetype's powers will be limited to birds and the like. Furthermore, it is likely the Beast Lord has the means to fly, or to somehow use the animals he controls to permit him to do so.



## Name Ideas

Animan, Beast Lord, Beast Master, Jungle King, Warlord of the Wilds, Wildlord. The archetype tends to select names that combine majesty and animal themes.

## Classic Bits

### Environmental Avenger

Because of their close ties to animals, a Beast Lord is likely to be very aware of the harm the modern world has inflicted on his companions' dominion. Pollution, encroachment on habitats, and outright extinction are all ways in which the Animal Kingdom has suffered at man's hands. It is therefore common for a Beast Lord to strike out at the sources of such intrusions and destruction. This includes attacks against prolific polluters and industries, destroying developments that are paving over animal habitats, and so on.

### Gone Native

It is common for a Beast Lord to abandon the ways of civilization to stand apart from the modern world.

Aside from being somewhat of a necessity of associating with animals on a level required of this archetype, it is also an understandable choice for someone with the anti-social behaviors typical of this archetype.

### Your Laws do not Apply

Because of the lengths this archetype has gone to in order to disassociate itself with civilization, the Beast Lord doesn't believe man's laws apply to him any longer. This belief extends to the literal laws of the land as well as those of its ethics—the social compact that acts as the glue binding civilization together as a (largely) functional organism.

Having cast these definitions of right and wrong aside, the Beast Lord has adopted a moral compass that is far more Darwinian in nature. They believe that one's rights are defined by one's ability to enforce their will and power on others.

It's the law of the jungle rather than that of man.

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BEAST LORD		PLS	
<b>Abilities</b>			
<b>Strength</b>	4	<b>Fighting</b>	10
<b>Stamina</b>	4	<b>Intellect</b>	0
<b>Agility</b>	5	<b>Awareness</b>	2
<b>Dexterity</b>	5	<b>Presence</b>	2

## Powers

**Beast Control:** Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Affliction 10 (Resisted by Will; Entranced, Compelled, Controlled), Limited to Animals • 40 points

**Beast Senses:** Senses 3 (Acute Smell; Danger Sense; Low-Light Vision) • 3 points

**Mimic Beast:** Variable Effect 4 (Animal-Based Powers), Move Action, Limited to Animals in Perception Range • 28 points

## Advantages

Agile Feint, Animal Empathy, Assessment, Favored Environment (Select one, most likely inhabited by a favored animal), Great Endurance, Precise Attack (Close, Concealment), Ranged Attack 5, Sidekick 12 \*, Sneak Attack, Startle, Trainer 8, Tracking

\* Spend on one or more beast companions

## Skills

Acrobatics 8 (+13), Athletics 10 (+14), Expertise: Animal Handling 12 (+14), Expertise: Riding 8 (+13), Expertise: Survival 12 (+14), Insight 4 (+6), Intimidation 10 (+12), Investigation 8 (+8), Perception 10 (+12), Sleight of Hand 4 (+9), Stealth 10 (+15)

## Offense

Initiative +5

Unarmed +10      Close Damage 4

## Defense

Dodge	10	Fortitude	10
Parry	10	Toughness	4

Will      7

Power Points			
Abilities	64	Skills	48
Powers	71	Defenses	16
Advantages	34	Total	233
<b>Complications</b>			

**Defender of the Wilds:** Despite all the Beast Lord's villainous shortcomings, he feels obligated to protect wild animals and their natural habitats.

**Law of the Jungle:** The right of the most dangerous creature (or person) to rule and survive is at the core of the Beast Lord's drive. This makes him an aggressive and violent adversary, but also indicates a code of honor that respects a worthy foe that has proven itself deserving of life or victory.

**Temperamental:** Like an animal, the Beast Lord listens to his instincts and trusts them to the point of allowing his initial reflex to govern his actions. This makes his behavior mutable and quick to lose his temper.

**Uncivilized:** The Beast Lord has largely cast aside the trappings of modern civilization, instead preferring the wilds, living like the beasts. This leaves the Beast Lord little inclination to follow most social conventions, such as manners.

## Tactics

Like many master villains, the Beast Lord sees great value in employing an army to aid the pursuit of his goals and ambitions. However, instead of recruiting a mass of cannon fodder street criminals or building an army of robots, the Beast Lord amasses creatures from the animal kingdom to do his bidding. Similarly, Beast Lords tend to roost in headquarters heavily rooted in animal motifs, possibly even going so far as to resemble a beast's lair more than anywhere a man would normally live.

Because of this close association with animals and his understanding of their primal nature, the Beast Lord is a capable (if raw) and dangerous foe in combat. He operates on instinct as much as cognitive thought and planning. This can make the Beast Lord an unpredictable opponent, both in terms of nailing down his overall objectives and regarding how he will behave in a fight.

**“IT IS THE WAY OF PREY TO FALL BEFORE THE PACK.”**

## Capers

Adventures involving the Beast Lord may include the following:

### A Day at the Zoo

In an effort to expand his bestial army, the Beast Lord has arranged for the local zoo's animal occupants to be freed. He will then use the beasts as tools to achieve his objectives or, at the very least, to cause as much chaos and destruction as possible. If he has the ability to do so, the Beast Lord could attempt to pull off this strategy throughout a much larger area, or even an entire country, at all zoos simultaneously.

### Nature's Champion

The Beast Lord has grown tired of mankind's continuing abuse of its environment, especially with regards to the influence on animals and their natural habitats. As a self-appointed champion of the animal kingdom, the Beast Lord looks to push humanity back upon itself and defend (if not grow) what lands remain to the beasts.

If people must die so that the animals may survive, so be it.

### Urban Jungle

Using powerful magic, super-science, or a similar extraordinary means, the Beast Lord has managed to transform the metropolitan area into a literal urban jungle. Wild vines claw up the sides of even the tallest buildings, puncturing glass and concrete, trees grow like lamp posts along the streets, and grass has begun to fill the plazas and cover the sidewalks. A canopy of trees stretches down most major streets. Water pipes have burst and form rivers down roads and waterfalls from skyscraper heights.

Into this madness, the Beast Lord unleashes a comparably sized population of wild (and often dangerous) animals in an effort to exert mastery over man's modern world.

## CORRUPT TYCOON

A planner and a plotter, a Corrupt Tycoon survives on the merits of his vast resources, lofty goals, and subtle strategies rather than by the potency of any extraordinary powers.

Acting through dummy corporations and legal proxies that often abuse the spirit—if not the letter—of the law in order to skirt its intention, these shadowy scoundrels are the spider at the heart of a tangled web of plans within plans. All of their schemes are hidden behind a convoluted paper trail and layers of minions who act as their employer's eyes and hands.

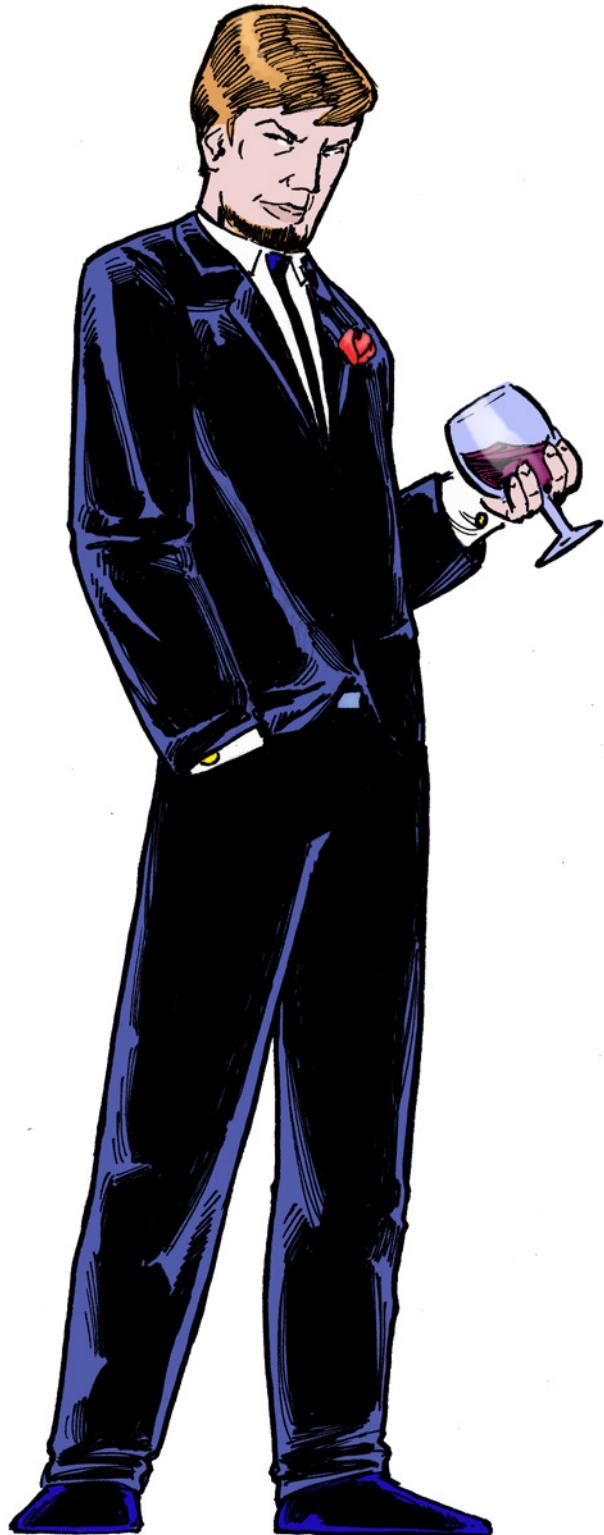
Unlike a more traditional Crime Lord, the Corrupt Tycoon's connections to the criminal underworld are thin at best. What ties do exist are concealed behind layers of scapegoats, all of which can be sacrificed to keep the actual villain squeaky clean in the eyes of the law and public. So far as most people are concerned, the Corrupt Tycoon is a friend to all mankind—a philanthropist, job creator, and quite possibly neophyte politician. Behind the curtain, this corporate head uses his wealth to pursue illegal and illicit goals that are far grander than anything like mere acquisition of wealth (although that is certainly a part of it.)

True power is what the Corrupt Tycoon desires, and he will utilize all his expansive resources to obtain it. Any law, hero, or innocent who gets in the way is merely an inconvenience to be dealt with (and then covered up.)

### Themes

The nature of a Corrupt Tycoon's corporate empire will primarily be defined by their goals. If the villain sees technology as a way to reach his objectives, for example, he will own many research and development facilities and tech manufacturers. His philanthropy will include providing venture capital to innovative entrepreneurs who show promise (and the potential to be exploited), and supporting think tanks.

You may want to apply, reduce, or redistribute ranks in Benefit (Wealth), Equipment, Minion, and the like for Corrupt Tycoons with notably more of one than the other. See the various minion archetypes for examples of suitable Corrupt Tycoon minions, paying particular attention to those of a covert nature.



## Alien Beachhead

So far as the world is concerned, the Corrupt Tycoon is just another person—certainly wealthier than most, but just a man. The truth, however, is that this wealthy businessman is an agent for an alien effort to invade. The nature of this alien force could be outer space or another dimension, but it certainly does not have Earth's best interests at heart.

Whether they have sent the Corrupt Tycoon ahead to accumulate wealth to influence industry into destroying the environment or to infiltrate technology into the planet's greatest armies so they may be shut down when the invasion forces arrives depends on the story you want to tell. Regardless, this "businessman" is anything but what he seems, and he will have worked very hard to keep it that way.

Exposing him will not be easy.

## Secret Society

More than just a smokescreen for his own play for personal power, the Corrupt Tycoon's public persona conceals a much darker secret: the villain is the head of a terrible secret society that seeks to conquer (or destroy) the world. Instead of just deep coffers to draw upon, the Corrupt Tycoon also has his society's members working towards his goals. They carry out his wishes and infiltrating agencies, businesses, and government positions that could cause him problems or otherwise serve his interests.

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## Name Ideas

A Corrupt Tycoon is usually not interested in playing the "metahuman game," meaning they don't see themselves as super-villains and, consequently, do not often choose extraordinary names for themselves. Indeed, it is rare for these foul magnates to so much as choose a nom de guerre for whatever underworld persona some may develop as part of any subterfuge required when using hired help. Instead, a Corrupt Tycoon utilizes their own name and that of their corporations.

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## Classic Bits

Some classic elements associated with the Corrupt Tycoon include:

### A True Villain

Occasionally, a Corrupt Tycoon will become overconfident, lose patience, find his hand forced into action, or go mad. When this happens, he may step out from be-

hind his carefully-crafted image and take direct action to pursue his objectives. If this happens, he knows he will be opposed by metahuman heroes seeking to stop him (such as the player characters), so he will be prepared.

The Corrupt Tycoon may spend years and millions of dollars on research and development, hunting magical artifacts or whatever suits his concept best in order to be as ready as possible. When the time comes, though, this preparation will be revealed, and the heroes likely won't be expecting it.

### For Your Own Good

Rather than merely seeking power out of a megalomaniacal need for control, the Corrupt Tycoon may see himself as a savior. In his mind, only he is fit to save his country or all humanity (from itself, aliens, metahumans, or whatever.) So, naturally, he must rule it so whatever is threatening it cannot occur again.

Whether this belief an honest (if twisted) perspective or a delusion that buries the villain's true purpose so deep even he no longer realizes it will matter very little. This villain will be so focused on his goal—on the common good—that he will do just about anything to rise to power.

### Pillar of the Community

One way to achieve power is to have the ignorant masses vote you into it. Although many philosophers and economists believe money is truly more powerful than political office, the latter represents legitimate authority—the sort of power that can be exploited to further increase one's wealth, and thus one's capacity to acquire yet more authority. The entire process is a cycle of payoffs, bribes, policy and law making, and the like, the end game of which is clawing yet higher upon the political ladder until, finally, the top is reached.

When that happens, the world becomes the villain's to shape to his will.

### The Reformed Man

No matter how much effort a Corrupt Tycoon puts into staying in the shadows, eventually someone is going to find a way to shine a light on him. When that happens, the malevolent magnate will have to suffer the judgment of his peers in a court of law. Despite such justice, a man of such wealth and power cannot be imprisoned long. He will have spent untold fortunes buying judges, politicians, and other people in positions of authority for just such a need.

Before too long, the Corrupt Tycoon will find a way to be released, and when that happens he will have to rebuild his image in the public's eyes. If he cannot, he will never again be able to work within the system towards his objectives as was previously possible. It is good for him, then, that he has enough money to pay the best public relations agencies in the world to portray him as a victim of a criminal justice system that was mislead by vigilante so-called "super-heroes."

Once damage control is in full swing, the villain may actually come out stronger than before. Indeed, it may even be the heroes who are looked upon with disfavor by the very people they were protecting from the Corrupt Tycoon.

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### Tactics

Devious and ingenious, a Corrupt Tycoon will use money, lies, and other subtle means to get what he wants and thwart any heroes who oppose him. Direct conflict, even through proxies, is an unavoidable last resort because of the risk of exposure such tactics represent. Instead, this slippery villain will pull strings and grease palms to get the law and public opinion to do his dirty work for him. For example, they may portray the heroes as dangerous or lobby to pass laws branding unlicensed metahumans as outlaws.

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### Capers

Adventures involving the Corrupt Tycoon may include the following:

#### The Enemy of My Enemy is My Enemy

Rather than attacking his enemies full on, the Corrupt Tycoon has manipulated them into fighting each other. Carefully planted false information, propaganda, and insinuated allegations first leads to friction among the heroes themselves or between them and another sometimes-rivals-sometimes-allies group of metahumans. When suspicions are at their peak, a subtle nudge from the Corrupt Tycoon causes the bubbling tensions to boil over into chaos if not outright conflict. The villain will attempt using the resulting confusion to achieve an objective, an effort that can only be stopped if the heroes snap out of it, realize what was actually happening, and work together.

#### Hello, Mr. President

Despite a history of criminal activity (proven or not—laws about convicted felons holding public office can be changed with enough money, after all), the Corrupt Ty-

# Chapter 5: Making a Better Bad Guy

## CORRUPT TYCOON PL7

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	0	<b>Fighting</b>	5
<b>Stamina</b>	0	<b>Intellect</b>	7
<b>Agility</b>	1	<b>Awareness</b>	4
<b>Dexterity</b>	1	<b>Presence</b>	7

### Powers

**Master Plan:** Continuous Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Ranged Variable Effect 4 (Skills), Affect Others, Selective, Expertise: Tactics Check Required (DC 11), Limited to Enhanced Skills, Limited Maximum Bonus, Limited to Prepared Area • 39 points

**Super-Weapon:** A Corrupt Tycoon always has some kind of devastating device around somewhere; use these points to build as necessary • 30 points

### Equipment

This villain likes to be prepared, but also prefers to be seen as nothing more than a powerful and wealthy business mogul. He will be armed and equipped as necessary for the expected circumstances so long as doing so doesn't draw unnecessary attention.

**Headquarters:** Skyscraper (10 Floors) • 53 points

**Size** Huge; **Spaces** 45 of 64; **Toughness** 10, **Features:** Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 3 (DC 35; 0), Global Communications (0), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 4 (+6; 2), Defense System 3 (30 points, Non-Lethal; 0), Fire Prevention System 3 (Nullify 9; 0), Gym (1), Hangar (16), Infirmary (2), Basic Laboratory x 2 (2 Spaces each; 4), Library (3), Basic Living Space (4), Luxury Living Space (2), Personnel (0), Pool (4), Power System (Generator w/ Backup; 5), Security System 3 (DC 30; 0), Workshop (Select Type; 2); **Powers:** 10 alternate headquarters; **Complications:** Accessible Bowels

### Advantages

Benefit (Alternate Identity), Benefit 5 (Wealth), Commander, Connected 4 (P: Business; S: Government, Legal, Organized Crime), Contacts 4 (P: Business; S: Government, Legal, Organized Crime), Ear to the Ground 4 (P: Business; Government, Legal, Organized Crime),

Equipment 11, In the Wings, Jack-of-all-Trades, Languages 3 (Select 4), Minions 8 (45-point Militants x 32), Organization 7, Teamwork, Well-Informed

### Skills

Deception 10 (+17), Expertise: Select One at 8 ranks, Expertise: Select One at 10 ranks, Expertise: Business 10 (+17), Expertise: Law 10 (+17), Expertise: Current Events 8 (+12), Expertise: History 8 (+15), Expertise: Tactics 12 (+19), Expertise: Theology & Philosophy (AWE/INT) 6 (+10/+13), Insight 4 (+8), Investigation 4 (+11), Perception 4 (+8), Persuasion 10 (+17), Technology 6 (+13)

### Offense

Initiative +1

Unarmed +5      Close Damage +0

### Defense

Dodge	7	Fortitude	4
Parry	7	Toughness	0

Will      10

### Power Points

Abilities	50	Skills	55
Powers	69	Defenses	18
Advantages	52	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>244</b>

### Complications

**Entitlement:** The Corrupt Tycoon's expansive wealth has led him to believe there is very little (if anything) he cannot get—or deserves. He has grown used to people doing what he says and accommodating him, so he is surprised when he does not get his way. Why become rich and powerful, after all, if it cannot get people to bend to your will?

**People are Commodities:** Life has little value to someone so far removed from everyday life as is the Corrupt Tycoon. People are pawns to be moved on his game board—assets to be bought, used, and discarded as necessary. Understandably, this can make the Corrupt Tycoon very off-putting—even shocking—when he forgets to conceal his callous nature behind his carefully constructed façade of caring philanthropist.

**"YOU THINK YOU'VE WON, BUT YOU ONLY KNOW WHAT I WANT YOU TO KNOW. SOON THE TRUTH SHALL BE REVEALED THROUGH MY VICTORY!"**

## Corrupt Corporation

93 points

This is an example corporation headed by a Corrupt Tycoon. Modify it to suit your needs.

PL: 10

**Leadership:** Dictatorship (Tycoon); publicly, it is a Council (Board Members)

**Intellect 8; Awareness 6; Presence 10**

Will 8

**Skills:** Deception 6 (+16), Expertise: Business 4 (+12), Expertise: Law 4 (+12), Intimidation 2 (+12), Investigation 2 (+10), Perception 2 (+8), Persuasion 2 (+12), Stealth 6 (+14)

**Advantages:** Connected 4 (P: Business; S: Government, Legal, Organized Crime), Contacts 4 (P: Business; S: Government, Legal, Organized Crime), Mole Network 8, Secure 7 (Corporate Espionage 3, Law Enforcement 2, Mole Operatives 2)

**Headquarters:** See the Corrupt Tycoon's description

**Totals** Abilities 48 + Advantages 23 + Skills 14 + Defenses 2 = 87

coon has decided to try a new route to power: political authority. Using all means available, the master villain employs a host of financial and public relations strategies, such as charitable donations and social projects, to win the public's trust and appear reformed. At the same time blackmail, bribes, and assassination are used from behind the curtain to bring others in line. Even though the heroes may know the Corrupt Tycoon hasn't left his evil ways behind, will they be able to prove it to everyone else before it is too late?

### The Whisper Behind the Face

Rather than revealing himself (even as just a supervillain alias), the Corrupt Tycoon is pulling someone else's strings from the shadows. Most likely, the puppet is an established organization or group of villains already familiar to the heroes. Regardless of how the puppet got involved and is now controlled by the Corrupt Tycoon (indeed, it's most likely even they do not know who is actually pulling their strings), uncovering the manipulation will not be easy. The heroes shall have to unravel many layers of obfuscation and bypass numerous red herrings in order to reach the truth.

## HYPNO-ADEPT

The Hypno-Adept is a master of mesmerism, capable of bending the will of others to his own with a look that exerts his mental strength and talent for hypnotism. What makes this mind lord's mental manipulations so dangerous is they cannot be nullified, as may regular powers. This is because they are the result of skill rather than metahuman ability.

### Themes

For the most part, a Hypno-Adept is a low-powered villain who works through a protracted process rather than an immediate effect. In other words, his hypnotism takes time. Some minor tweaking can change this, though. Aside from enabling the hypnotism to work faster, it can become more potent by creating specific hypnotic outcomes regarding subjects by using additional power effects.

Another interesting twist is to add personal powers that use hypnotism as a descriptor rather than as a way to directly manipulate or control others. For example, consider powers that allow the villain to subliminally convince those around him that he's invisible or in a disguise at all times, or alter their perception so the Hypno-Adept becomes more difficult to strike.

### Alternate Senses

The default sense by which a Hypno-Adept's abilities work is visual. He must make eye contact or otherwise require subjects of his influence to observe the source of his power. It is possible to alter this so the ability to hypnotize others rests with another sense. Helpful examples include a character who hypnotizes with song or by playing an instrument, or by means of a pheromone that must be inhaled.

### Hypnotic Devices

The Hypno-Adept utilizes a device that speeds up the hypnotism process. Alternatively, the device can build upon the villain's skill to grant far more potent powers in general. For example, a device that grants a mind-controlling Affliction effect with the Expertise: Hypnosis Check Required flaw would be an ideal way of representing a more powerful version of hypnosis that remains tied to the character's skill. Some examples of such a device would be a visual catalyst, such as a strobe light, pocket watch that emits brain-altering en-

# Chapter 5: Making a Better Bad Guy

ergy waves, a musical instrument, or a gas that makes those who inhale it susceptible to suggestion.

## Super-Hypnosis

Outright replacing the character's reliance on Expertise: Hypnosis with an appropriate power effect is arguably the easiest way to increase the villain's potency. The various results that may be obtained with the skill become part of the effect's concept. Although the Hypno-Adept's abilities become susceptible to Nullify, they are more immediate and straightforward (and, most likely, powerful.) It is still possible to keep the character's hypnotic ability rooted in his skills by adding the Expertise: Hypnosis Check Required flaw, however.

## The Signal

Whether the Hypno-Adept was originally a living, organic being or began as a computer program or the like, the character is a sentient signal bouncing through the airwaves. It now attempts to manipulate organic life through its own inventions, such as the television and radio. This makes finding and combating the villain extremely difficult because it is largely ethereal in nature. Consider adding additional powers that allow it to travel quickly through communication means, effectively teleporting between machines via fiber-optic cables and the like.

## Name Ideas

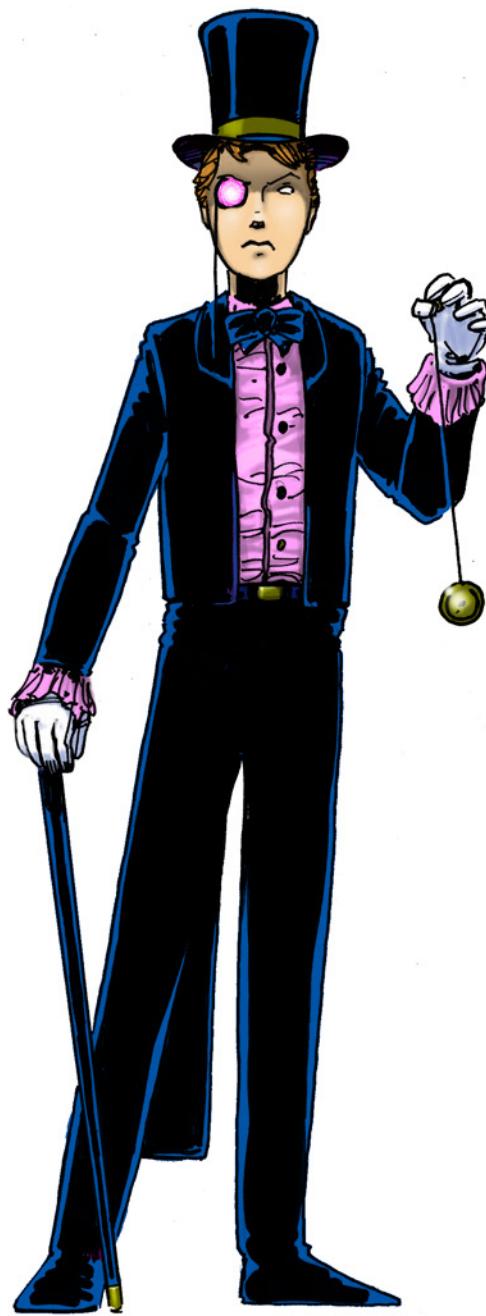
Names directly derived from, or a variation on, hypnotism are ideal. Combining such an element with words representing some manner of mastery or mental state is also common. Examples include Brainwisher, Hypnochrat, Mindwrangler, Mistress of Mesmerism, Thought Filler, and the Whipnotist

## Classic Bits

Some classic elements associated with the Hypno-Adept include:

### Black Widow

Instead of being a master of general hypnosis, the Hypno-Adept specializes in influencing the minds of a specific group of people. A villainess who has raised the art of seduction to incomparable levels—with the help of hypnosis, of course—in order to get men to obey her commands is perhaps the most common example. Another would be the head mistress of an orphanage who uses her hypnotic abilities to turn the



children in her care into a den of thieves or assassins no one would suspect.

### I'm Here to Help

A Hypno-Adept must acquire his extraordinary skill set somewhere, and as a hypnotherapist is as good a place as any. It is possible the villain started out wanting to help people until something changed, or it was merely a means to an end. Regardless, the villain may still lead a double life, hiding behind a healer's mask when not undertaking illicit behavior.

HYPNO-ADEPT		PL12	
<b>Abilities</b>			
<b>Strength</b>	-1	<b>Fighting</b>	6
<b>Stamina</b>	0	<b>Intellect</b>	5
<b>Agility</b>	0	<b>Awareness</b>	8
<b>Dexterity</b>	0	<b>Presence</b>	4

## Powers

**Hypnosis:** Dynamic Array (62 points), Expertise: Hypnosis Check Required (DC 11; -1 point)

**Hypnosis:** Perception (Visual) Area Cumulative Affliction 12 (Resisted by Will; Dazed, Compelled, Controlled), Dynamic, Innate, Progressive, Selective, Subtle, Distracting • 63 points

• **Delusion:** Illusion 10 (All Sense Types), Dynamic, Independent, Innate, Selective, Subtle, Resistible by Will • 2 points

• **Disorientation:** Perception (Visual) Area Cumulative Affliction 12 (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Confused, Unaware), Dynamic, Innate, Progressive, Selective, Subtle, Distracting • 2 points

• **Emotion Control:** Perception (Visual) Area Cumulative Affliction 11 (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Disabled, Incapacitated), Dynamic, Innate, Progressive, Selective, Subtle, Variable Descriptor (Emotions), Distracting • 2 points

**Trusting Face:** Enhanced Attractive 2 • 2 points

## Advantages

Banter, Commander, Eidetic Memory, In the Wings, Languages 2 (Select Two), Mesmerist, Minion 10, Skill Mastery 3 (Deception, Expertise: Hypnosis, Insight), Ranged Attack 6, Specialization 2 (Expertise: Hypnosis, post-hypnotic suggestion, suggestion), Taunt, Trance

## Skills

Deception 8 (+12), Expertise: Hypnosis (INT/PRE) 8 (+13/+12), Expertise: Metahuman 6 (+11), Expertise: Psychology 10 (+15), Expertise: Theology & Philosophy (AWE/INT) 3 (+8/+11), Insight 8 (+16), Intimidation 8 (+12), Investigation 1 (+6), Persuasion 8 (+12)

Offense	
Initiative +0	
Delusion	Perception Ranged Illusion 10
Disorientation	Perception Area Affliction 12
Emotion Control	Perception Area Affliction 11
Hypnosis	Perception Area Affliction 12
Unarmed +6	Close Damage -1

Defense	
Dodge	12
Parry	8
	Fortitude 6
	Toughness 0
	Will 12

Power Points	
Abilities	44
Powers	71
Advantages	30
Skills	30
Defenses	30
Total	205

Complications	
<b>Confidence Reliant:</b> A Hypno-Adept relies upon his ability to dominate someone's will to use most of his abilities. If his confidence is shaken, the Game-master should apply appropriate penalties to power and skill checks related to his powers. In the most extreme cases, the Hypno-Adept may temporarily be unable to use any of his powers.	

Quirk	
Quite often, a Hypno-Adept's super-villain is wholly or partially defined by his eccentricities. Sometimes, this trait is sufficiently unusual as to be debilitating in some circumstances. For example, a character who themes himself after a famous character from literature may only be able to operate in a way that is in line with this assumed premise.	

Superiority Complex	
In a world of super-strong metahumans, the Hypno-Adept must get by through force of will and ingenious schemes. This is especially true if the reason the villain turned to crime in the first place is because of being unappreciated, underpaid, or the like. As such, a Hypno-Adept sees his plots as opportunities to prove the power of his mind to the world by defeating those who rely upon brute force or equally blunt means to operate.	

**"LOOK INTO MY EYES AND FEEL MY DESIRES BECOME YOUR GOALS."**

# Chapter 5: Making a Better Bad Guy

## I Need a Volunteer from the Audience

Hypnotism is a highly specialized field one is not likely to merely stumble upon unless one's abilities are obtained entirely from a device or the like. Years of study and practice are required to learn the art and understand its relationship to its subjects. An entertainer who uses a hypnotism-based act is a common way to come by this skill. In such instances, it is not unheard of for an unscrupulous entertainer to become disenchanted with how little money his considerable (to his mind at least) skills can obtain honestly. As such, he turns to crime, often using interactions with his audience to plant the seeds of future crimes.

### Tactics

A Hypno-Adept acknowledges that going toe-to-toe against most opponents will not turn out in his favor, so he employs careful strategies that play to his strengths: his intellect and willpower. Ideally, heroes won't even come into direct confrontation with the Hypno-Adept, instead finding themselves working to untangle the web of deceit and subterfuge his hypnotism has woven using others as pawns. When a more direct form of intervention is required, this villain will deploy individuals under his control, be they innocent civilians, police or military personnel, or even metahumans.

### Capers

Adventures involving the Hypno-Adept may include the following:

#### Behind the Throne

Not wanting to take the spotlight (and risk) himself, the Hypno-Adept has used his hypnosis to ingratiate himself to important people in the government. Through the power of hypnotism, the Hypno-Adept has convinced the VIPs that he is a valuable confidant and advisor, possibly even a holy man or prophet if the nation remains open to such religious interaction at its highest levels of power. Although the heroes may know the truth about the Hypno-Adept, how will they undertake any action against him without bringing down the full weight of the law that clearly sides with the master manipulator?

#### Opiate for the Masses

Using principles much the same as those used in designing the Idiot Box (pg 162), the Hypno-Adept is us-

ing television to hypnotize the entire nation or, possibly, even the world by broadcasting his image and then utilizing his powers. The attempt can be as obvious as an openly defiant message of conquest that works its will upon an audience too captivated by watching a villain on TV to turn away. Alternatively, it could be as subversive as the hypnotist hiding as a legitimate character on a show as he works his hypnotics into his routine.

## Switching Teams

One of the heroes (or an incredibly well-known and powerful hero), is acting extremely unusual of late. Although merely puzzling at first, the hero's actions soon degrade to the point of being criminal. The other heroes will almost certainly assume some form of mind control, but they will be confounded by their inability to nullify the effects, not realizing he has been hypnotized. The heroes will have to save their peer from himself before he completely ruins his reputation or hurts someone.

## IMMORTAL DESPOT

Born at the Dawn of Mankind or a similarly distant, crucial period of pre-history, the Immortal Despot is an accident of nature, magic, or something similar. As such, this timeless villain is unaffected by the usual boundaries of death and aging. With such a span of time within which to evolve, the Immortal Despot has nearly reached the peak of natural human development. He thus seeks to continue his evolution, be it physical, mental, spiritual, or even social in nature. This means this savage, mighty, deranged warrior out of time and student/master of humanity will do what he considers necessary to keep on, a fact made easier by possessing such an enormous amount of time to distance himself from the weak "bugs" that are normal people.

Having largely outgrown the rest of humanity, an Immortal Despot is no longer grounded in his shared origins with mankind. Instead, he considers mortal beings to be little more than pawns upon his board, to be moved and sacrificed at will. All that matters is obtaining power and maintaining his prolonged lifespan—at all costs. The character's goals will almost always revolve around these two key points, and he has had many lifetimes over which to assume the identities and position of power needed to pursue them.

## Themes

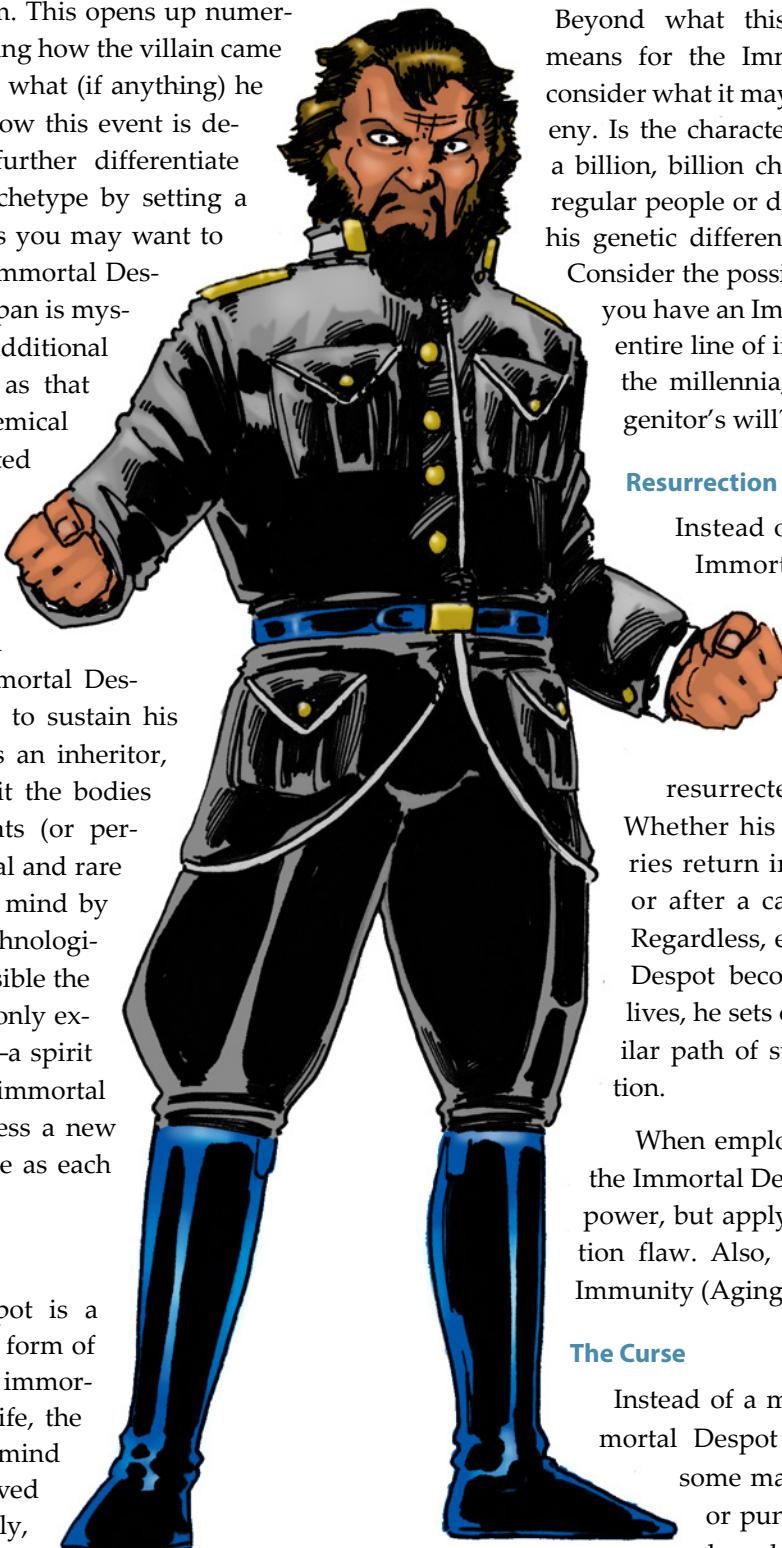
An Immortal Despot's origins can be an important aspect of defining who the character is and what initially came to drive him. This opens up numerous possibilities regarding how the villain came by his immortality and what (if anything) he must do to retain it. How this event is defined can also help further differentiate characters from the archetype by setting a theme for other powers you may want to add. For example, an Immortal Despot whose endless lifespan is mystic in nature may have additional magical powers, such as that of the spells or alchemical knowledge that granted him immortality.

## Body Hopping

Rather than living through the ages in his own body, the Immortal Despot requires assistance to sustain his unending existence. As an inheritor, the villain must inhabit the bodies of his own descendants (or perhaps equally exceptional and rare hosts), transferring his mind by psychic, mystical, or technological means. It's also possible the Immortal Despot now only exists as a body hopper—a spirit of pure intellect and immortal energy that must possess a new host in order to survive as each previous body dies.

## Born this Way

The Immortal Despot is a fluke of nature—a new form of human that was born immortal. With such a long life, the character's body and mind have actually evolved and improved naturally, within a closed system of one organism, himself, without the need for passing evolutionary imperatives along to future generations. This means all additional powers can be the result of



this closed-system evolutionary process, or the result of knowledge, items, and artifacts the ageless villain has acquired through the centuries.

Beyond what this evolutionary process means for the Immortal Despot directly, consider what it may also mean for his progeny. Is the character the result of a one in a billion, billion chance? Are his offspring regular people or do they also benefit from his genetic differences, wholly or in part?

Consider the possibilities for your game if you have an Immortal Despot ruling an entire line of immortals, born through the millennia, all to serve their progenitor's will?

## Resurrection

Instead of true immortality, the Immortal Despot lives lifetime after lifetime, dying and being born anew as a child. Each time the villain's life ends, he is resurrected in a new body. Whether his previous lives' memories return immediately, over time, or after a catalytic event can vary. Regardless, every time the Immortal Despot becomes aware of his past lives, he sets out to head down a similar path of supremacy and domination.

When employing this theme, adjust the Immortal Despot's True Immortality power, but apply a Limited to Resurrection flaw. Also, remove the character's Immunity (Aging) effect.

## The Curse

Instead of a matter of choice, the Immortal Despot may be the result of some manner of accident, curse, or punishment. A "curse" is a broad term for any undesired circumstance that acted as a catalyst for the character's immortality and continues to have negative repercussions for his current existence.

# Chapter 5: Making a Better Bad Guy

## IMMORTAL DESPOT PL12

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	5	<b>Fighting</b>	12
<b>Stamina</b>	5	<b>Intellect</b>	5
<b>Agility</b>	5	<b>Awareness</b>	5
<b>Dexterity</b>	5	<b>Presence</b>	5

### Powers

**Imposing Presence:** Perception (Visual) Area Affliction 5 (Resisted by Will; Dazed, Stunned, Paralyzed), Innate, Subtle • 12 points

**Rage:** Enhanced Strength 2, Activation (Move), Exposed 2 (Dodge, Parry), Inhibited (Routine Checks), Tiring; Enhanced Fortitude 2; Enhanced Will 2 • 1 point

**True Immortality:** Immortal 3, Immunity (Aging, Critical Hits, Disease, Poison, Suffocation Effects), Regeneration 3 • 16 points

### Equipment

Whatever gear, vehicles, and weapons suit the moment. The Immortal Despot is typically armed with a knife and heavy pistol, although he much prefers the hands-on approach to combat.

### Advantages

Connected 2 (Select Two), Contacts 2 (Select Two), Eidetic Memory, Equipment 6, Fast Grab, Fearless, Great Endurance, Improved Grab, Improved Initiative 2, Inspire, Languages 5 (Select Sixteen, Spanning the Centuries), Ranged Attack 7, Reliable Attack (Unarmed), Tracking

### Skills

Acrobatics 8 (+13), Athletics 2 (+7), Deception 6 (+11), Expertise: Current Events 8 (+13), Expertise: Governing 8 (+13), Expertise: History 14 (+19), Expertise: Metahumans 12 (+17), Expertise: Riding 10 (+15), Expertise: Sociology 6 (+11), Expertise: Survival 8 (+13), Expertise: Tactics 14 (+19), Expertise: Theology & Philosophy (AWE/INT) 8 (+13/+13), Expertise: Select Four

### PL12

Professions 6 ranks each, Insight 6 (+11), Intimidation 12 (+17), Investigation 2 (+7), Perception 6 (+11), Persuasion 4 (+9), Sleight of Hand 8 (+13), Stealth 6 (+11), Technology 2 (+7)

### Offense

Initiative +13

Heavy Pistol +12 Ranged Damage 4

Knife +12 Close Damage 6, 19-20

Unarmed +12 Close Damage 5

### Defense

Dodge	15	Fortitude	15
Parry	12	Toughness	5
		Will	15

### Power Points

Abilities	94	Skills	87
Powers	29	Defenses	30
Advantages	32	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>272</b>

### Complications

**Arrogant:** An Immortal Despot has had centuries, if not millennia, to acquire his knowledge and build his power base, and lifetimes to make mistakes and learn from them. This makes an Immortal Despot incredibly sure of himself, to the point of his own confidence in his abilities becoming one of his greatest weaknesses.

**Timeless Megalomaniac:** Having lived so long, an Immortal Despot has inevitably come to think of himself as the only one with the wisdom and experience to rule. Coupled with seeing people around him grow old and die in a mere fraction of his own existence, he no longer values human life or society's rules. An Immortal Despot will go to any length to succeed, no matter the cost —after all, he has the time to wait out any consequences.

**“I HAVE RULED BEFORE UNDER A HUNDRED NAMES.  
I SHALL RULE AGAIN AS I SO CHOOSE.”**

For example, the Immortal Despot may be required to undertake some despicable action to maintain his immortality. He does so out of fear of death or, if he does not, because his immortality will remain but something dire will happen. For example, he could become an ageless, weak husk of a man that is unable to summon even the power to move. (Could this be how vampire legends started?)

## Name Ideas

The name given an Immortal Despot is open to a wide range of possibilities. Like any other villain, he may assume a nom de guerre that reflects his abilities and powers. Alternatively, he may simply stick with his own name, or one belonging to one of the many identities he has assumed over time. Time Master, the Ever-Living Emperor, the Undying One, and the Ageless Conqueror are all examples of the former.

## Classic Bits

Some classic elements associated with the Immortal Despot include:

### Eternal Life Has a Price

To maintain a sense of balance, it is common for immortality to come at a price. Sometimes this price is paid by the Immortal Despot himself but, most often, it is paid by the rest of society. This is usually necessitated by the villain's moral and ethical detachment and sense of superiority. Whether the character must conduct human sacrifices to absorb life essence, must remain in a confined location that sustains his extended life, needs to periodically be exposed to an impossibly rare catalyst, or must eat flesh of his blood (meaning his descendants), some element is in play that must be complied with for the Immortal Despot to remain a man removed from time's normal temperament.

### False God

Full of his own insane arrogance and undying will, the Immortal Despot has come to view himself as a living god and has erected a fanatical cult of zealots around himself. These minions will do anything for their false god, including perpetrating deadly scheme after deadly scheme in his name against non-believers. Not only must the heroes stop whatever it is the Immortal Despot has decided he must perpetrate against mankind as part of his divine right, but they must also shatter the religion he has built around himself.

## Historical Figure

Not satisfied to be the true power behind the scenes, the Immortal Despot has assumed one (or many) alternate identities well-known by history. The character has made use of his long-won knowledge and experience to assume power (or be as close to it as possible), a fact he may or may not play close to the vest. If the character is open (or, at the very least, indifferent) about his past, his previous identities will contain clues regarding what the villain is capable of and what his goals may be. If not, the Immortal Despot's secret past lives are a secret to be discovered as part of the game's plot.

## Man out of Time

Although it may seem obvious that a man not plagued by time's influence would have plenty of opportunities to adjust to each new age's culture and technology, this is not necessarily so. Consider how previous generations fare during such change within the span of a single lifetime—a grandfather born before the invention of the jet engine adjusting to computers as an assumed matter of everyday life, for instance.

It is possible the Immortal Despot has not been able to keep up with the times very well, potentially leaving him trapped in the culture and ways of his birth (a worst case scenario.) It is more likely, though, the character will be several centuries behind because some degree of adapting is all but impossible to ignore. This will be a weakness of sorts (a complication?) because the Immortal Despot cannot adequately account for modern technology and behaviors, likely making him reliant upon subordinates in many regards.

## Power Behind the Throne

For some power hungry, ageless tyrants, it is necessary or preferred to stay out of the public eye rather than assuming power directly for themselves. This keeps them out of the crosshairs and makes it easier to hide their true nature. Explaining why they are able to drink poison meant to topple a malevolent ruler is far more difficult than painting the target on someone else's back.

Using an Immortal Despot as the power behind the throne allows the Gamemaster to throw various other opponents at the heroes, using these cads as a smoke-screen. Doing so allows the player characters to believe they have defeated the bad guy, while allowing the actual threat to remain hidden and unknown.

## Wanting to Die, Unable to Do So

Not everyone who obtains immortality desires it. In some cases, an Immortal Despot does not seek power for its own sake, but rather because it fits the perception of the monster they believe themselves to be. This sort of character is especially appropriate to an Immortal Despot using the Curse theme. The curse can perhaps most easily be defined as the character being someone who wanted to die, for whatever reason, but their eternal life is applied as punishment for something they have done.

Just why this turns the character into a villain depend on the nature of why the immortal does not want the burden of everlasting life. Does he want to be with his deceased family but, as punishment for allowing them to die (or killing them), is he required to force his pain upon others? Perhaps he seeks conquest as a way of making himself a target in a world filled with metahumans, hoping one of them will come along with an ability that can finally kill him. Whatever the reason, such an undying foe will be all the more dangerous due to their utter disregard for their own well-being.

## Wealth of Ages

The Benefit (Wealth) advantage is purposely absent from the Immortal Despot's game statistics. This is because not all will have acquired exceptional wealth despite their many years of opportunity. However, it makes sense that someone who has lived centuries will have had ample chance to pillage, plunder, and invest. Most Immortal Despots should have an impressive treasury with which to fund their plotting, with an appropriate amount of accompanying minions and lackeys to carry out such plans. Give your villain as much wealth as you feel suits their concept and the role you want him to play in your game.

## Tactics

An Immortal Despot's plans differ from those of other would-be world conquerors by merit of the many years he has had to evolve in all respects. This means they can literally work over decades or even centuries towards their objectives, working as slow as they feel is necessary to succeed. Think of it: an opponent who began moving towards a particular goal hundreds of years before the heroes were born, undertaking each component of the plan in a time from which no one else survived to tell anyone about. How can the heroes discover such a long-standing, insidious plot, let alone hope to unravel it?

## Capers

Adventures involving the Immortal Despot may include the following:

### Dear Old Dad

Of all the skeletons for a hero to find revealed in his family closet, among the harshest is to learn he is related to a super-villain. Making things worse is the fact that this bad guy is an infamous Immortal Despot. What's more, this ageless ancestor has recently turned his attention to the hero, deciding it is time to make his descendant a part of his plans.

Whether the Immortal Despot needs to feast upon the hero's flesh to survive, steal his body to house his undying consciousness or for something else entirely is up for the hero to learn while staying out of his ancestor's grasp.

### Return of the King

Using his vast range of acquired knowledge, the Immortal Despot has made himself a ruler of nations and tribes many times throughout history, often under assumed names. Now this villain has decided the time has again come for him to command lesser men. To this end, he has created a cult of personality around himself, using mortals to aid in creating an opportunity for a power grab. Whether this means there will be a new organization of evil arriving on the scene or the Immortal Despot will merely take over one that already exists is up to the Gamemaster to decide.

### The Crash

Over the centuries, as nations around the world rose and fell, moving from barter-based economies to feudal systems to evolved capitalist frameworks, the Immortal Despot has wormed his way into the roots of the global financial systems. Buying controlling shares in multinational corporations considered too big to fail because of how many people rely on them for jobs and the like, acting as the faceless shell account that owns major banks around the world, and operating subsidiaries that buy up and hoard essential resources and commodities such as gold and gasoline over the centuries are this villain's tools.

By secretly placing himself as an invaluable lynchpin at the center of the global economy's foundation, the Immortal Despot plans to crash the world's finances, plunging it into irreparable anarchy. When money be-

comes worthless and nations are no longer able to pay their militaries, the Immortal Despot will swoop in with his loyal armies and cached resources. He will fill the role of savior or conqueror in order to last make the world his. (Unless the heroes can discover his plans and stop him, that is.)

## QUEEN OF THIEVES

For the Queen of Thieves, villainy is all about greed—taking what others have and making it her own. She is not like most super-villains in so far as there is very little about her that is flashy and eye-catching. Indeed, if everything is going right for her, she shouldn't be seen at all.

Rather than flashing powers back and forth and roughing it up with fisticuffs, the Queen of Thieves sticks to the shadows, out of sight. From concealment, her deft fingers can work her magic and she can get away before anyone knows what she's done. She may sometimes serve others, including super-villains, when doing so suits her goals (or she is forced to), but, for the most part, she prefers to work on her own, unseen.

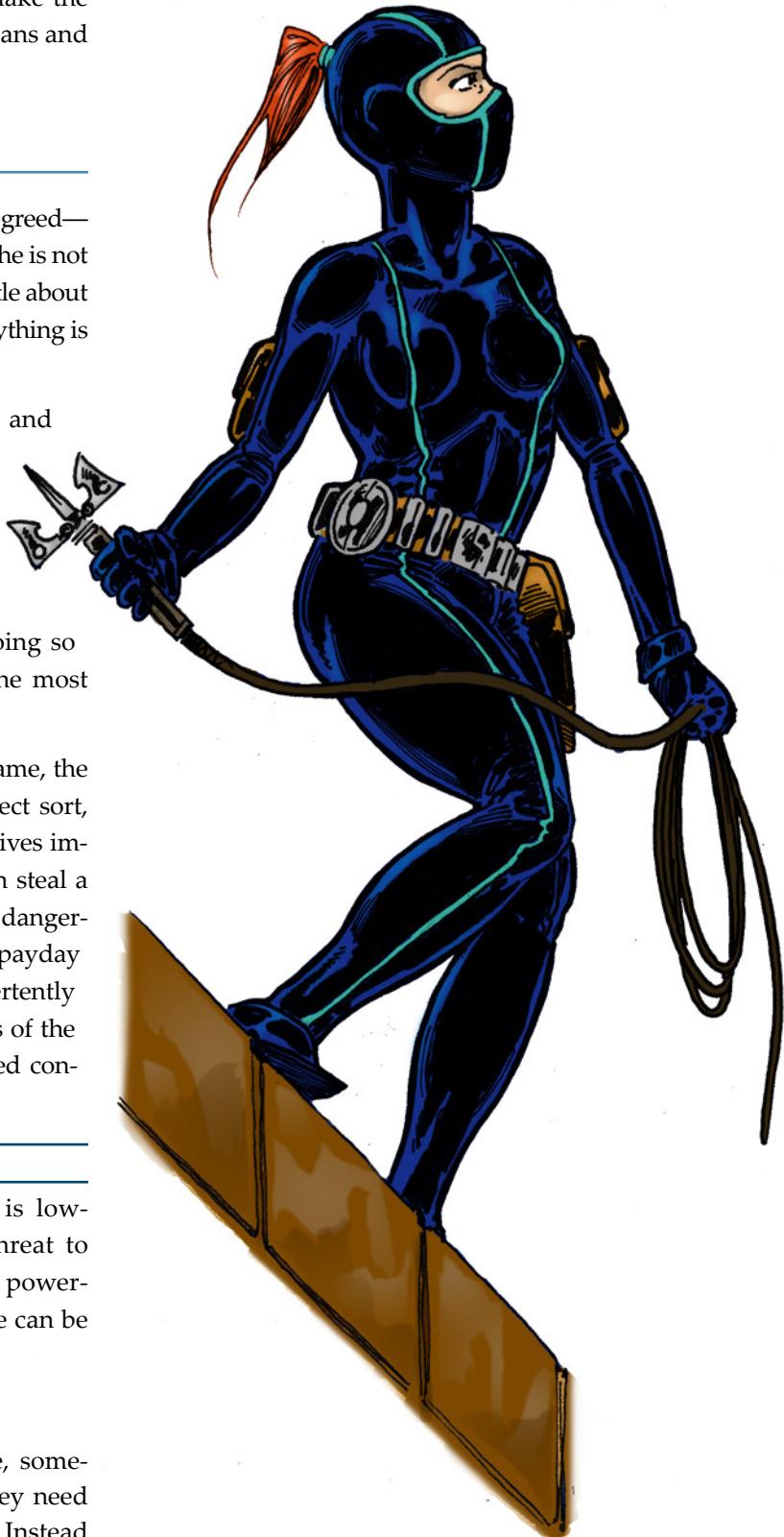
Unless playing a low-powered, street-level game, the danger this character represents isn't of the direct sort, but of the variety where her activities and objectives impede the heroes' own needs and efforts. She can steal a valuable artifact the heroes have discovered to be dangerous, for example, thinking she has scored a big payday without realizing the destruction she may inadvertently unleash. In this way, she can serve other aspects of the plot without becoming a typical, combat-oriented conflict.

### Themes

For the most part, the Queen of Thieves is low-powered and won't pose much of a direct threat to heroes accustomed to going toe-to-toe with powerhouses. However, her ability to be troublesome can be enhanced in several ways.

### Den Mother

Skilled though a Queen of Thieves may be, sometimes even the best in a given trade realizes they need help. Besides, who is a queen without her court? Instead of acting on her own, the villainess has surrounded herself with assistants to carry out lesser crimes that help



pay the bills and serve as practice, but are beneath her to waste time upon. These assistants are typically apprenticed children or animals—subjects that require her care and protection as much as the training she has to offer.

### Intergalactic Felon

It is often enough that a criminal be from the local area to pose a respectable threat to the heroes, but sometimes the more memorable villains come from out of town. Way out of town.

The Queen of Thieves may be on the run from an authority greater than any on Earth. She is from another planet (or dimension), and is being sought by forces that consider Earth to be little more than a backwater one can easily overlook with the blink of an eye. This is what makes it the perfect spot for this villain to hold up and hide. Unfortunately for Earth's residents, she is not content to merely sit around and wait for things to cool down. To entertain herself or find the means to return from whence she came, she has taken up her old ways and has quickly made a name for herself.

### The Queen's Power

Typically, the Queen of Thieves' relies upon pure skill, guts, and self-interest to see the job done. It is possible, however, to "pump up" her abilities somewhat, making her more capable of posing a threat to metahuman heroes. Adding additional powers, such as Invisibility or Teleport, will make catching the Queen of Thieves much more difficult, for example. This would allow her to commit bolder and more frustrating crimes, and then escape with greater ease. Considering the Queen of Thieves mundane nature, such abilities would most likely come from a device, but it's also possible they are the result of genetic mutation or experimentation.

### Name Ideas

Cat, Cutpurse, Highrise, the Rooftop Queen.

### Classic Bits

Some classic elements associated with the Queen of Thieves include:

### Calling Card

One of the greatest tools in this character's repertoire is her ability to sneak into where she doesn't belong and to sneak out again. However, that doesn't mean she doesn't take pride in her work or desires total anonymity. A Queen of Thieves is likely to adopt a particular

calling card she leaves at the scene of her crimes—either literally or metaphorically within the means by which she commits her crime. The latter usually entails employing techniques and costumes—and selecting targets—centered around a shared theme; a cat burglar who literally dresses like a cat and strikes cat-related targets, for instance.

### Femme Not-So-Fatale

The Queen of Thieves is not interested in death, destruction, and mayhem. She is driven by the need to acquire wealth (for whatever reasons), and/or by the thrill of the risk involved. When she does employ violence, it is to delay and distract, or out of necessity. This is not to be mistaken for a lack of danger, however. When cornered or provoked beyond other options, this villainess will do what is required to keep herself safe and escape to steal another day.

### Heart of Gold

Although the Queen of Thieves' actions are illegal and involve taking what does not belong to her, the motivation behind her actions is not always one of selfishness. Sometimes this incomparable burglar steals because she has someone else to take care of, be it a relation, a close friend, people who remind her of a past version of herself, and so on. Whoever they are, this villainess is compelled to take care of them and is not beyond using her rarified skills to do so.

### Honor among Thieves

Despite her penchant for taking things that don't belong to her, the Queen of Thieves is governed by her own sense of ethics and morality that is not necessarily rooted in evil. Even those ruled by something more malicious than mere selfishness may still follow a code of conduct preventing them from fully crossing the line into darkness. A refusal to kill or keeping her word (although she won't be above being flexible with her promises' meaning), for example.

### Star-Crossed

Although the Queen of Thieves stands on the wrong side of the law, she is not, therefore, opposed to justice, nor is she necessarily evil. She could be a good and kind person who just so happens to have a different understanding of property than do most people. This can lead to a hero who frequently finds himself at odds with her striking up a friendship of sorts that somehow

QUEEN OF THIEVES		PL10	Offense	
<b>Abilities</b>				
<b>Strength</b>	3	<b>Fighting</b>	6	Knife +6 Close Damage 4, 19-20
<b>Stamina</b>	2	<b>Intellect</b>	2	Grappling Line/Whip +6 Improved Grab, Improved Trip, Reach 3
<b>Agility</b>	6	<b>Awareness</b>	2	Thrown Knife +6 Ranged Damage 4, 19-20
<b>Dexterity</b>	6	<b>Presence</b>	3	Unarmed +6 Close Damage 3
<b>Powers</b>				
<b>Nimble Feet:</b> Movement 1 (Sure-Footed), Innate • 3 points				
<b>Safety Line:</b> Movement 1 (Slow Fall); Limited to While Near Surfaces • 1 point				
<b>Equipment</b>				
This character typically carries a variety of criminal and security-related gear, and likely a light weapon or two.				
<b>Advantages</b>				
Agile Feint, Benefit (Ambidextrous), Contacts 2 (P: Criminal; Smugglers), Equipment 8, Hide in Plain Sight, Improved Initiative, Improvised Tools, Second Chance 2 (Perception: Traps, Technology: Security), Specialization (Technology: Security)				
<b>Skills</b>				
Acrobatics 12 (+18), Athletics 12 (+15), Deception 8 (+11), Expertise: Current Events 6 (+8), Expertise: Law 6 (+8), Expertise: Visual Arts (DEX/INT) 6 (+12/+8), Expertise: Security 8 (+10), Perception 12 (+14), Sleight of Hand 10 (+16), Technology 12 (+14), Stealth 10 (+16)				
<b>Defense</b>				
Dodge	15	Fortitude	6	
Parry	6	Toughness	2	
		Will	7	
<b>Power Points</b>				
<b>Abilities</b>	60	<b>Skills</b>	51	
<b>Powers</b>	4	<b>Defenses</b>	18	
<b>Advantages</b>	18	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>151</b>	
<b>Complications</b>				
<b>But It's So Shiny!</b> : The Queen of Thieves always has great difficulty passing up something of value that catches her eye. No matter what she is doing, she cannot easily resist the impulse to steal when confronted with temptation.				
<b>Debt</b> : The villainess owes someone a debt, be it money or something else. This obligation frequently forces the Queen of Thieves to do things she'd rather not (even if it is just pay over money she considers rightfully stolen for herself.)				
<b>Independent to the Core</b> : There is a reason most of these mistresses of the high-rise crime prefer to work alone. They don't like taking direction (let alone orders) from anyone. They like doing what they want, when they want to. This is especially true when it comes to the particulars of their crimes.				

**"IT'S PROTECTED BY ARMED SENTRYS, MOTION SENSORS, IR, LASER GRIDS, PHOTON EMITTERS, AND PHEROMONE SENSORS? I ALMOST FEEL SORRY FOR TAKING THEIR STUFF CONSIDERING IT'S SO POORLY GUARDED."**

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manages to survive their opposing beliefs and goals. Sometimes this friendship develops into more. Despite being so different (or perhaps even because of it), the Queen of Thieves and hero fall in love, leading to a cycle of pursuing redemption and falling from grace as the two try to be together.

## The Debt

It is not unheard of for criminals to take to a life of crime—or to escalate their activities if they are already a criminal—because of a debt owed to someone. With the Queen of Thieves, it is possible she needs to steal because she owes someone in a position of power or authority a debt. This could be a monetary obligation, a matter of duty, or a compulsion to follow orders to keep something bad from happening to a loved one or the like. Regardless of the reason why, she will do what is necessary to avoid defaulting on the debt and suffering the dire consequences for doing so.

## Tactics

For the most part, the Queen of Thieves relies upon stealth and careful planning. She wins encounters by avoiding direct conflict, which means careful preparation, such as plotting multiple escape routes and not allowing heroes to become aware of her intentions to begin with. This entails deploying distractions, red herrings, and traps to throw do-gooders off her scent.

When a fight is unavoidable, this nimble athlete will focus on evasion and escape. This is not a sign of weakness or lack of skill, mind; she can handle herself if required. Rather, the Queen of Thieves prefers flexing her mind rather than her muscles, and she doesn't like wasting time in a prolonged fight. She feels that creating a problem to bog down pursuing heroes so she can flee is so much safer.

## Capers

Adventures involving the Queen of Thieves may include the following:

### Museum Mayhem

An ancient relic the Queen of Thieves has stolen from a prized touring collection has unleashed a mystical disaster, be it a horrible curse that causes widespread destruction within the city or unleashing a horde of undead. Unless the heroes can find the thief and return the item to the collection, the mayhem will continue to get worse.

## Pieces of the Puzzle

A series of thefts have come to the heroes' attention, and their investigation reveals the Queen of Thieves' involvement. Furthermore, the heroes learn, the stolen items are all of the sort that, when combined, can possibly be used to create an incredibly dangerous weapon. It turns out a master villain is paying the Queen of Thieves a lot of money to snatch these components, but she is wholly unaware of what they do when united. If caught and shown what the components are meant to do, will the Queen of Thieves flip on her employer for the greater good or will her sense of loyalty to her paymaster prove to be the stronger tie?

## The Robin Hood Syndrome

The Queen of Thieves has been on a rash of highly successful and profitable thefts of late with no signs of slowing down, consequently drawing the heroes' attention. As their investigation and attempts to catch the Queen of Thieves progress, the heroes learn their prey's targets are all criminal in some (likely secret) way. Additionally, the stolen goods and money are being used to help charities and the poor (for whatever reason.) This presents the heroes with a moral conundrum: although the Queen of Thieves' actions may arguably be for the greater good, she is still breaking the law. What will the player characters do?

## TRAP MASTER

The Trap Master is neither a lover nor fighter. He is someone who believes careful planning, an extra helping of foresight, and a devious understanding of both one's environment and one's foe is the path to victory. By employing all his guile and deceptive nature, the Trap Master avoids direct confrontation, instead filling the location of an anticipated confrontation with contraptions and traps of a deadly or confining nature, depending upon his intentions.

Trap Masters tend to be more than just a tad theatrical, enjoying the hunt as much as the kill. How else can one explain why someone would choose to continually employ often woefully complex and convoluted plans and gadgets to ensnare and harm an enemy rather than merely putting a bullet in their head from a safe distance? This doesn't make these villains stupid, however—far from it. Only someone of impressive cunning

and intellect would be able to pose a risk to metahumans by such means of attack, after all.

## Themes

### Killer for Hire

Although some Trap Masters take up their trade for other reasons, such as the thrill or an obligation to someone, many are assassins. Instead of using the more traditional blade, poison, or bullet, these shrewd mercenaries utilize traps intended to kill or capture, depending on what the job calls for. Because of the preparation and resources required for a Trap Master to ply his trade, they must charge impressively high fees. As such, anyone willing to pay their fee either has a sense for theatrics or a reason to make their chosen target suffer by jumping through hoops rather than opting for a more traditional double-tap.

### Survival Extremist

Considering the environment and means by which the Trap Master most likely learned his trade, it is possible he has taken the survivalist lifestyle to the extreme. Every day requires the villain prove he is worthy of the life he possesses, so he pits himself and his deathtraps against worthy opponents. Although this deranged scoundrel may choose to test himself against others for more reason than this on occasion, putting his skills up against people who could pose a danger to his well-being—the thrill of the risk involved—is what drives him.

## Name Ideas

Trap Masters tend towards trap-centric names, sometimes coupled with an additional, overall supervillain theme. Examples include Deathtrap, Mantrapper, Pitfall, Trapdoor, Tripwire.

## Classic Bits

Some classic elements associated with the Trap Master include:

### Rules of the Game

For the Trap Master, the ends are not typically as important as the means. If killing or catching his quarry were his only goal, a bullet to the head from a great distance would be much simpler and cheaper. No, for these connoisseurs of snares, the game of preparation and anticipation is where the excitement and challenge are to be found. And, like any game, the Trap Master plays by certain rules. A trap isn't nearly as much fun if its outcome is absolute. So, the Trap Master will leave



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TRAP MASTER		PL5	
<b>Abilities</b>			
<b>Strength</b>	0	<b>Fighting</b>	4
<b>Stamina</b>	2	<b>Intellect</b>	6
<b>Agility</b>	2	<b>Awareness</b>	4
<b>Dexterity</b>	2	<b>Presence</b>	4
<b>Powers</b>			
<b>Booby-Traps:</b> Continuous Variable Effect 5 (Spontaneous Traps); Slow • 35 points			
<b>King of His Castle:</b> Concealment 1 (Normal Vision), Precise; Limited to While in Headquarters • 2 points			
<b>Master Plan:</b> Continuous Burst Area (60 ft.) Ranged Variable Effect 4, Affect Others, Selective, Expertise: Tactics Check Required (DC 11), Limited to Enhanced Skills, Limited Maximum Bonus, Limited to Prepared Area • 39 points			
<b>Equipment</b>			
Spend up to 10 ranks (50 points) of the Equipment Advantage on vehicles, weapons, and gear. The remaining 20 ranks (200 points) are spent on a headquarters, including any deathtrap "playgrounds" the Trap Master may have prepared.			
<b>Advantages</b>			
Benefits 4 (Wealth), Close Attack 2, Contacts 2 (P: Criminal Underworld; S: Mercenaries), Daze (Deception), Equipment 30, Favored Environment (Headquarters), Inventor, Master Trap-Maker, Ranged Attack 2, Rapid Builder (choose)			

**“BEHIND ONE OF THE DOORS BEFORE YOU IS THE WAY OUT. DEATH AWAITS YOU BEHIND THE OTHER TWELVE. CHOOSE.”**

a means of escape or avoidance (although nothing says he can't cheat once in a while, such as by ensuring one trap's escape route leads to another trap.)

## Signature Trap

Much like bomb makers may be recognized by how they design their deadly packages, so too may many Trap Masters be recognized by their methods and creations. For some, their signature constitutes the types of

Skills			
Deception 4 (+8), Expertise: Chemistry 8 (+14), Expertise: Electronics 12 (+18), Expertise: Engineering 15 (+21), Expertise: Mechanics 12 (+18), Expertise: Science 7 (+13), Expertise: Tactics 8 (+14), Expertise: Traps 12 (+18), Perception 4 (+8), Technology 8 (+14)			
<b>Offense</b>			
Initiative +2			
Unarmed +6		Close, Damage 0	
<b>Defense</b>			
Dodge	8	Fortitude	6
Parry	6	Toughness	2
		Will	8
<b>Power Points</b>			
Abilities	48	Skills	45
Powers	76	Defenses	16
Advantages	45	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>230</b>

## Complications

**Anti-Social:** A villain who relies upon his own mind to devise deadly and devious contraptions doesn't often have much use for other people. As such, they tend to employ few if any minions because the latter may take away from the glory that is using nothing more than a trap to defeat one's foe.

**Overconfident:** Being able to set-up a trap in a given location and walk away from it, sure it will fulfill its purpose as intended, requires a great deal of confidence. This doesn't always work in the Trap Master's favor, however.

traps they prefer to employ (e.g., only blades or animals.) With others, it may be the actual designs themselves—the complex circuitry or the like, or perhaps the type of bait they use to lure in their prey (e.g., kidnapping loved ones or an elaborate web of lies and deception.)

## The Play's the Thing

It is not enough for a Trap Master to merely kill or capture his prey. There must be a show of some sorts—

some manner of display that highlights the villain's intellect and strategy. This showmanship often manifests in a thematic fashion that may also reveal itself in the identity the Trap Master has chosen for himself. A Trap Master who wears a carnival themed costume, for example, may employ deathtraps resembling carnival rides and attractions.

## Welcome to My Island

Trap Masters are notorious for their deadly headquarters. The wealthiest, most reclusive, and more deranged among them have a tendency to put down roots in remote locations where they may erect their traps however they wish, unmolested. Islands; remote mountains; hidden valleys; and dilapidated, abandoned city blocks are all prime real estate for their purposes. It is here, in their out-of-the-way home, where their best, deadliest traps are likely to be found.

## Tactics

Obviously, these devious villains prefer to use traps to obtain their objectives, be they ensnaring someone in a dangerous maze until their loved ones pay a ransom or employing deathtraps to kill an assigned target. Doing anything face-to-face with their prey is to be avoided whenever possible, as most Trap Masters are not the best combatants. Why develop fighting skills, after all, when one's traps are supposed to do all the work?

By their nature, traps are not obvious or overt, and thus so too are a Trap Master's strategies subtle and sneaky. They must think two or three steps ahead of their prey so they will know what devices are appropriate and where they must be placed. Anticipation, expectation, and preparation are all important. This is especially true when it comes to figuring out what manner of bait is best for luring a target into one's traps.

## Capers

Adventures involving the Trap Master may include the following:

### Game of Death

The heroes are invited to participate in a charity event on a far-off island, travel expenses, room, and board all paid for. The event requires the heroes complete a competition and, if they finish, their mysterious (or false) benefactor will donate a handsome sum to a charity of the heroes' choice. Soon after arrival, however, the heroes learn that nothing is as it appears. The

entire island is actually a series of puzzles, mazes, and deathtraps designed to finally do away with the troublesome player characters (and possibly other heroes who were also invited.) Will they escape with their lives, let alone discover who arranged such a complicated plot, let alone why?

### Race against the Clock

Hostages have been taken and placed in a deathtrap by the Trap Master. Unless the heroes go through the latter's maze of traps in a set amount of time, the hostages will die. This scenario can come about because the hostages are needed to draw the heroes in, or because the Trap Master needs to distract the heroes away from something else.

### Traps for Hire

Tired of failing on his own to kill the heroes, or in need of a distraction while he undertakes an important activity, a nemesis has hired the Trap Master to take on the heroes on his behalf. This will likely make the encounter more difficult for the player characters because they won't have any frame of reference with which to gauge their assailant's motives and methods.

## RANK AND FILE

Behind every great evil genius is an army of lackeys waiting to die (or, at the very least, spend some time behind bars) for their master's cause.

No matter how dangerous or malevolent a villain may be, he can only do so much himself. This is why so many join groups—not only do more hands make evil work easier, but diversification of ability improves their collective chance of success. But, when it comes to working with other metahuman bad guys, teams of villains often find their goals and egos clashing. This is partly why so many are far more content to take the solo approach and sit upon a gilded throne atop a criminal empire staffed by underlings and cannon fodder.

The following section provides simple, easy-to-use game stats for a variety of common minion archetypes a Gamemaster will likely wish to employ in service to a greater villain. Each minion archetype is presented in two sets of game statistics, one for low-powered games and one that should offer more significant challenge for more powerful heroes.

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Gamemasters can use these examples to quickly fill the rank and file of their own villainous organization, or they may be used as a basis for tailoring specific minions.

## ASSAULT TROOPER

The assault trooper is intended for heavy action and will usually act in support of troopers or as the spearhead of an attack.

### ASSAULT TROOPER, LOW-LEVEL PL6 • 39 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 1, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt 4, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Blaster Rifle, Fragmentation Grenades, Bulletproof Vest. 1 in 3 will be armed with a grenade launcher, rocket launcher, or other heavy weapon instead of a blaster rifle.

**Advantages** Equipment 8, Hard as Nails, Ranged Attack 4, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 2 (+3), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+4), Expertise: Survival 3 (+3), Expertise: Tactics 2 (+2), Intimidation 3 (+3), Perception 2 (+2)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Blaster Rifle +4 (Ranged Damage 8), Fragmentation Grenades +4 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Unarmed +4 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 4, Fortitude 2, Toughness 5/1 \*, Will 0

**Totals** Abilities 12 + Advantages 14 + Skills 8 + Defenses 5 = 39

\* Without bulletproof vest.

**Threat Level:** Beta

### ASSAULT TROOPER, HIGH-LEVEL PL8 • 76 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 3, Sta 3, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 7, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Blaster Rifle, Fragmentation Grenades, Bulletproof Vest. 1 in 3 will be armed with a grenade launcher, rocket launcher, or other heavy weapon instead of a blaster rifle.

**Advantages** Equipment 8, Hard as Nails 3, Lucky Shot, Power Attack, Power of Many, Power of One, Ranged Attack 7, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 4 (+7), Expertise: Soldier (AWE), Expertise: Survival 4 (+4), Expertise: Tactics 6 (+6), Intimidation 4 (+4), Perception 2 (+2)

**Offense** Initiative +2, Blaster Rifle +8 (Ranged Damage 8), Fragmentation Grenades +8 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Unarmed +7 (Close Damage 3)

**Defense** Dodge 7, Parry 7, Fortitude 7, Toughness 7/3 \*, Will 0

**Totals** Abilities 30 + Advantages 23 + Skills 13 + Defenses 10 = 76

\* Without bulletproof vest.

**Threat Level:** Beta

## BRUTE

A brute is little more than raw muscle. They are a blunt instrument that serves little purpose beyond roughing someone up or carrying something heavy.

### BRUTE, LOW-LEVEL PL4 • 42 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 3, Sta 3, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt 2, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Leather Jacket, Knife, and Light Pistol

**Advantages** Close Attack 2, Equipment 2, Hard as Nails 2, Loyalty (Leader), Ranged Attack 4, Power of One, Strongarm, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 4 (+7), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+4), Intimidation (PRE/STR) 4 (+4/+7), Vehicles 4 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Light Pistol +4 (Ranged Damage 3), Knife +4 (Close Damage 4, 19-20), Unarmed +4 (Close Damage 3)

**Defense** Dodge 2, Parry 2, Fortitude 5, Toughness 4/3 \*, Will 0

**Totals** Abilities 16 + Advantages 14 + Skills 8 + Defenses 4 = 42

\* Without leather jacket.

**Threat Level:** Beta

### BRUTE, HIGH-LEVEL PL6 • 68 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 5, Sta 4, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 4, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Leather Jacket, Knife, and Light Pistol

**Advantages** Close Attack 3, Diehard, Equipment 2, Hard as Nails 4, Improved Critical (Unarmed), Loyalty (Leader), Ranged Attack 4, Power of One, Strong-arm, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 6 (+11), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+4), Intimidation (PRE/STR) 6 (+6/+11), Vehicles 4 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Light Pistol +5 (Ranged Damage 3), Knife +7 (Close Damage 6, 19-20), Unarmed +7 (Close Damage 5, 19-20)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 4, Fortitude 9, Toughness 5/4 \*, Will 1



**Totals** Abilities 30 + Advantages 19 + Skills 10 + Defenses 9 = 68

\* Without leather jacket.

**Threat Level:** Beta

## COMMANDO

Elite troopers, the commando is assigned special operations of an especially dangerous and/or covert nature.

### COMMANDO, LOW-LEVEL

**PL6 • 59 POINTS**

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 2, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 5, Int 0, Awe 1, Pre 0

**Equipment** Assault Carbine, Fragmentation Grenades, Knife, Bulletproof Vest

**Advantages** Close Attack 1, Equipment 6, Lucky Shot, Power of Many, Ranged Attack 5, Swarm 2, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 2 (+3), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+4), Expertise: Survival 3 (+4), Expertise: Tactics 2 (+2), Intimidation 3 (+3), Perception 2 (+3), Stealth 4 (+5), Technology 2 (+2)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Assault Carbine +6 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Diminished Range), Fragmentation Grenades +6 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Knife +6 (Close Damage 2, 19-20), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 5, Parry 5, Fortitude 5, Toughness 6/2 \*, Will 3

**Totals** Abilities 22 + Advantages 17 + Skills 11 + Defenses 9 = 59

\* Without bulletproof vest.

**Threat Level:** Beta

### COMMANDO, HIGH-LEVEL

**PL8 • 100 POINTS**

**Abilities** Str 3, Sta 3, Agl 3, Dex 3, Fgt 7, Int 1, Awe 1, Pre 0

**Equipment** Assault Carbine, Fragmentation Grenades, Knife, Bulletproof Vest

**Advantages** Close Attack 1, Equipment 8, Hard as Nails, Improved Initiative, Lucky Shot, Power of Many,

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Power of One, Ranged Attack 5, Swarm 4, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 5 (+8), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 6 (+7), Expertise: Survival 5 (+6), Expertise: Tactics 5 (+6), Intimidation 5 (+5), Perception 4 (+5), Stealth 6 (+9), Technology 4 (+5)

**Offense** Initiative +7, Assault Carbine +8 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Diminished Range), Fragmentation Grenades +8 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Knife +8 (Close Damage 2, 19-20), Unarmed +8 (Close Damage 3)

**Defense** Dodge 8, Parry 7, Fortitude 8, Toughness 7/3 \*, Will 5

**Totals** Abilities 42 + Advantages 24 + Skills 20 + Defenses 14 = 100

\* Without bulletproof vest.

**Threat Level:** Gamma

## CYBER-BRUTE

A cyber-brute is made for tearing into hardened opponents, such as super-tough heroes, tanks, and battlesuits.

### CYBER-BRUTE, HIGH-LEVEL PL8 • 88 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 2 (4), Sta 2, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt 2, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre -1

**Powers** **Cybernetic Arms:** Enhanced Strength 2, Penetrating 2; **Cybernetic Muscles:** Enhanced Strength 4, Limited to Lifting; **Cybernetic Senses:** Senses 5 (Darkvision; Infravision; Radio; Ultra-Hearing); **Sub-Dermal Plating:** Protection 4, Impervious 2

**Equipment** Heavy weapon or large, bulky firearm

**Advantages** Close Attack 2, Equipment 4, Hard as Nails 2, Improved Critical (Unarmed), Loyalty (Leader), Power of One, Strongarm, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 4 (+6/+8), Expertise: Streetwise 2 (+2), Intimidation 4 (+3), Vehicles 2 (+2)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Unarmed +4 (Close Damage 2/4, Penetrating 2, 19-20)

**Defense** Dodge 2, Parry 2, Fortitude 4, Toughness 6/2 \*, Will 0

**Totals** Abilities 10 + Powers 21 + Advantages 13 + Skills 6 + Defenses 4 = 52

\* Without sub-dermal plating

**Threat Level:** Beta

### CYBER-BRUTE, HIGH-LEVEL PL8 • 88 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 4 (7), Sta 3, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 4, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre -1

**Powers** **Cybernetic Arms:** Enhanced Strength 3, Penetrating 3; **Cybernetic Muscles:** Enhanced Strength 4, Limited to Lifting; **Cybernetic Senses:** Senses 5 (Darkvision; Infravision; Radio; Ultra-Hearing); **Sub-Dermal Plating:** Protection 6, Impervious 3

**Equipment** Heavy weapon or large, bulky firearm

**Advantages** Close Attack 3, Diehard, Equipment 4, Hard as Nails 4, Improved Critical 2 (Unarmed), Loyalty (Leader), Power of One, Strongarm, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 6 (+10/+13), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+4), Intimidation 6 (+5), Vehicles 4 (+5)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Unarmed +7 (Close Damage 4/7, Penetrating 3, 18-20)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 4, Fortitude 8, Toughness 9/3 \*, Will 1

**Totals** Abilities 24 + Powers 27 + Advantages 18 + Skills 10 + Defenses 9 = 88

\* Without sub-dermal plating

**Threat Level:** Gamma

## CYBER-TROOPER

The cyber-trooper is a basic foot soldier that has been enhanced with cybernetic implants.

### CYBER-TROOPER, LOW-LEVEL PL5 • 55 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 0 (2), Sta 1, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 3, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Powers** **Arm Blaster:** Ranged Damage 4; **Cybernetic Arms:** Enhanced Strength 2; **Cybernetic Muscles:** Enhanced Strength 2, Limited to Lifting; **Cybernetic Senses:** Senses 5 (Darkvision; Infravision; Radio; Ultra-Hearing); **Sub-Dermal Plating:** Protection 4, Impervious 2

**Equipment** Assault Rifle, Fragmentation Grenades

**Advantages** Equipment 6, Ranged Attack 2

**Skills** Athletics 2 (+2/+4), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+4), Expertise: Tactics 2 (+2), Intimidation 2(+2), Perception 2 (+2)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Arm Blaster +3 (Ranged Damage 4), Assault Rifle +3 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack), Fragmentation Grenades +3 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Unarmed +3 (Close Damage 0/2)

**Defense** Dodge 3, Parry 3, Fortitude 3, Toughness 5/1 \*, Will 0

**Totals** Abilities 12 + Powers 25 + Advantages 8 + Skills 6 + Defenses 4 = 55

\* Without sub-dermal plating

**Threat Level:** Beta

## CYBER-TROOPER, HIGH-LEVEL PL7 • 93 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 1 (3), Sta 2, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 5, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Powers** **Arm Blaster:** Ranged Damage 6; **Cybernetic Arms:** Enhanced Strength 2; **Cybernetic Muscles:** Enhanced Strength 2, Limited to Lifting; **Cybernetic Senses:** Senses 10 (Darkvision; Ranged Detect Vibration [Touch], Accurate; Infravision; Radio; Tracking; Ultra-Hearing); **Sub-Dermal Plating:** Protection 5, Impervious 2

**Equipment** Assault Rifle, Fragmentation Grenades

**Advantages** Close Attack, Equipment 6, Improved Initiative, Move as One, Ranged Attack 5

**Skills** Athletics 4 (+5/+7), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 6 (+6), Expertise: Tactics 6 (+6), Intimidation 4(+4), Perception 4 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +5, Arm Blaster +6 (Ranged Damage 6), Assault Rifle +6 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack), Fragmentation Grenades +6 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 1/3)

**Defense** Dodge 5, Parry 5, Fortitude 7, Toughness 7/2 \*, Will 3

**Totals** Abilities 20 + Powers 35 + Advantages 14 + Skills 12 + Defenses 12 = 93

\* Without sub-dermal plating

**Threat Level:** Gamma

## FROGMAN

A frogman is a basic cannon fodder type who is an expert at operating in a water environment with the aid of SCUBA gear.

### FROGMAN, LOW-LEVEL

PL4 • 31 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 0, Sta 1, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 3, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Assault Rifle, Knife, Multi-Tool, SCUBA Gear. The frogman's assault rifle has been modified for underwater use and fires metal darts rather than bullets (half range in atmosphere.)

**Advantages** Equipment 4, Favored Environment (Water), Ranged Attack 2

**Skills** Athletics 4 (+4), Expertise: Diver 4 (+4), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 2 (+2), Expertise: Tactics 2 (+2), Intimidation 2 (+2), Perception 2 (+2)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Assault Rifle +3 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack), Knife +3 (Close Damage 1, 19-20), Unarmed +3 (Close Damage 0)

**Defense** Dodge 3, Parry 3, Fortitude 3, Toughness 1, Will 0

**Totals** Abilities 12 + Advantages 7 + Skills 8 + Defenses 4 = 31

**Threat Level:** Beta

### FROGMAN, HIGH-LEVEL

PL6 • 59 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 2, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 5, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Assault Rifle, Knife, Multi-Tool, SCUBA Gear. The frogman's assault rifle has been modified for underwater use and fires metal darts rather than bullets (half range in atmosphere.)

**Advantages** Close Attack, Equipment 4, Favored Environment (Water), Improved Initiative, Ranged Attack 5

**Skills** Athletics 6 (+7), Expertise: Diver 6 (+6), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+4), Expertise: Tactics 6 (+6), Intimidation 4 (+4), Perception 4 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +5, Assault Rifle +6 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack), Knife +6 (Close Damage 2, 19-20), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 1)

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**Defense** Dodge 5, Parry 5, Fortitude 7, Toughness 2, Will 3

**Totals** Abilities 20 + Advantages 12 + Skills 15 + Defenses 12 = 59

**Threat Level:** Beta

## INFILTRATOR

The infiltrator is an expert at sneaking into places designed to keep people out.

### INFILTRATOR, LOW-LEVEL PL4 • 42 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 1, Agl 2, Dex 2, Fgt 3, Int 1, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** A variety of criminal and surveillance gear, as the mission demands. Knife, Light Pistol, Undercover Shirt.

**Advantages** Daze (Deception), Equipment 4, Evasion, Improvised Tools, Ranged Attack

**Skills** Acrobatics 4 (+6), Athletics 4 (+5), Deception 4 (+4), Perception 2 (+2), Sleight of Hand 2 (+4), Stealth 4 (+6)

**Offense** Initiative +2, Knife +3 (Close Damage 2, 19-20), Light Pistol +3 (Ranged Damage 3), Unarmed +3 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 4, Fortitude 1, Toughness 3/1 \*, Will 1

**Totals** Abilities 20 + Advantages 8 + Skills 10 + Defenses 4 = 42

\* Without undercover shirt

**Threat Level:** Beta

### INFILTRATOR, HIGH-LEVEL PL7 • 73 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 1, Agl 3, Dex 3, Fgt 6, Int 1, Awe 1, Pre 1

**Equipment** A variety of criminal and surveillance gear, as the mission demands. Knife, Light Pistol, Undercover Shirt.

**Advantages** Daze (Deception), Equipment 4, Evasion, Improvised Tools, Ranged Attack, Throwing Master 2

**Skills** Acrobatics 6 (+9), Athletics 6 (+7), Deception 6 (+7), Perception 4 (+5), Sleight of Hand 6 (+9), Stealth 8 (+11)

**Offense** Initiative +2, Knife +6 (Close Damage 2, 19-20), Light Pistol +4 (Ranged Damage 3), Thrown Knife +6 (Ranged Damage 4, 19-20), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 8, Parry 6, Fortitude 4, Toughness 3/1 \*, Will 4

**Totals** Abilities 34 + Advantages 10 + Skills 18 + Defenses 11 = 73

\* Without undercover shirt

**Threat Level:** Beta

## PILOT / DRIVER

The pilot/driver is skilled at operating their chosen type of vehicle. It is their responsibility to transport other minions and provide cover from the relative safety of their vehicle.

### PILOT/DRIVER, LOW-LEVEL PL4 • 35 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 0, Sta 0, Agl 2, Dex 2, Fgt 4, Int 0, Awe 1, Pre 0

**Equipment** Vehicle, Light Pistol, Undercover Vest

**Advantages** Ace (Select Vehicle Type), Equipment 5, Ranged Attack 2

**Skills** Expertise: Mechanics 3 (+3), Perception 2 (+3), Technology 1 (+1), Vehicles 4 (+6)

**Offense** Initiative +2, Light Pistol +4 (Ranged Damage 3), Unarmed +4 (Close Damage 0)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 4, Fortitude 2, Toughness 3/0 \*, Will 1

**Totals** Abilities 18 + Advantages 8 + Skills 5 + Defenses 4 = 35

\* Without undercover shirt

**Threat Level:** Beta

### PILOT/DRIVER, HIGH-LEVEL PL6 • 55 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 1, Agl 2, Dex 2, Fgt 6, Int 0, Awe 1, Pre 0

**Equipment** Vehicle, Light Pistol, Undercover Vest

**Advantages** Ace 3 (Select Three Vehicle Types), Equipment 6, Improved Initiative, Ranged Attack 4

**Skills** Expertise: Mechanics 4 (+4), Perception 4 (+4), Technology 2 (+2), Vehicles 8 (+10)

**Offense** Initiative +6, Light Pistol +6 (Ranged Damage 3), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 6, Parry 6, Fortitude 3, Toughness 4/1 \*, Will 1

**Totals** Abilities 26 + Advantages 14 + Skills 9 + Defenses 6 = 55

\* Without undercover shirt

**Threat Level:** Beta

## SHARPSHOOTER

These elite foot soldiers are expert marksmen, and are often employed to strike heroes from a distance while other troopers get in close and personal.



### SHARPSHOOTER, LOW-LEVEL

**PL4 • 36 POINTS**

**Abilities** Str 0, Sta 1, Agl 2, Dex 2, Fgt 3, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Sniper Rifle, Light Pistol, Undercover Vest

**Advantages** Equipment 4, Improved Aim, Improved Critical (Rifles), Precise Attack 2 (Ranged; Cover, Concealment), Ranged Attack 3

**Skills** Athletics 2 (+2), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+4), Expertise: Tactics 2 (+2), Perception 2 (+2), Stealth 2 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +2, Light Pistol +5 (Ranged Damage 3), Sniper Rifle +5 (Ranged Damage 5, 18-20), Unarmed +3 (Close Damage 0)

**Defense** Dodge 3, Parry 3, Fortitude 3, Toughness 4/1 \*, Will 0

**Totals** Abilities 16 + Advantages 11 + Skills 6 + Defenses 3 = 36

\* Without undercover shirt

**Threat Level:** Beta

### SHARPSHOOTER, HIGH-LEVEL

**PL7 • 66 POINTS**

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 2, Agl 2, Dex 2, Fgt 6, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Sniper Rifle, Light Pistol, Undercover Vest

**Advantages** Equipment 5, Improved Aim, Improved Critical (Rifles), Improved Initiative, Precise Attack 2 (Ranged; Cover, Concealment), Ranged Attack 7

**Skills** Athletics 4 (+5), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 6 (+6), Expertise: Tactics 4 (+4), Perception 4 (+4), Stealth 6 (+8)

**Offense** Initiative +6, Light Pistol +9 (Ranged Damage 3), Sniper Rifle +9 (Ranged Damage 5, 18-20), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 5, Parry 6, Fortitude 7, Toughness 5/2 \*, Will 3

**Totals** Abilities 26 + Advantages 17 + Skills 12 + Defenses 11 = 66

\* Without undercover shirt

**Threat Level:** Gamma

## TECHNICIAN

A technician is the nameless guy in a lab coat or coveralls who flits about the control room or headquarters hallways, building, fixing, and operating equipment. Technicians are not intended to become involved in combat and are rarely armed with anything more than whatever is at hand.

### TECHNICIAN, LOW-LEVEL

**PL3 • 30 POINTS**

**Abilities** Str 0, Sta 0, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt 2, Int 1, Awe 1, Pre 1

**Equipment** Whatever tools their duties demand. At most, they might be armed with a Light Pistol

**Advantages** Equipment 3, Jack-of-all-Trades

**Skills** Expertise (Select Two suited to a Technician) 2 (+varies) Expertise (Select Two suited to a Technician) 4 (+varies), Technology 4 (+5)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Unarmed +2 (Close Damage 0)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 4, Fortitude 1, Toughness 0, Will 2

**Totals** Abilities 10 + Advantages 4 + Skills 8 + Defenses 8 = 30

Threat Level: Alpha

### TECHNICIAN, HIGH-LEVEL

**PL4 • 52 POINTS**

**Abilities** Str 0, Sta 0, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt 3, Int 2, Awe 2, Pre 1

**Equipment** Whatever tools their duties demand. At most, they might be armed with a Light Pistol

**Advantages** Equipment 3, Improvised Tools, Jack-of-all-Trades

**Skills** Expertise (Select Two suited to a Technician) 4 (+varies) Expertise (Select Two suited to a Technician) 8 (+varies), Technology 8 (+10)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Unarmed +3 (Close Damage 0)

**Defense** Dodge 6, Parry 6, Fortitude 2, Toughness 0, Will 6

**Totals** Abilities 16 + Advantages 5 + Skills 16 + Defenses 15 = 52

Threat Level: Alpha

## TROOPER

As an organization's basic foot soldier, the trooper will be at the forefront of any combat action.

### TROOPER, LOW-LEVEL

**PL5 • 31 POINTS**

**Abilities** Str 0, Sta 1, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 3, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Assault Carbine, Fragmentation Grenades, Bulletproof Vest

**Advantages** Equipment 7, Ranged Attack 2

**Skills** Athletics 2 (+2), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+4), Expertise: Tactics 2 (+2), Intimidation 2 (+2), Perception 2 (+2)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Assault Carbine +3 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Diminished Range), Fragmentation Grenades +3 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Unarmed +3 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 3, Parry 3, Fortitude 3, Toughness 5/1 \*, Will 0

**Totals** Abilities 12 + Advantages 9 + Skills 6 + Defenses 4 = 31

\* Without bulletproof vest

Threat Level: Beta

### TROOPER, HIGH-LEVEL

**PL6 • 59 POINTS**

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 2, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 5, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Assault Carbine, Fragmentation Grenades, Bulletproof Vest

**Advantages** Close Attack 1, Equipment 7, Improved Initiative, Move as One, Ranged Attack 5

**Skills** Athletics 4 (+5), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 6 (+6), Expertise: Tactics 6 (+6), Intimidation 4 (+4), Perception 4 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +5, Assault Carbine +6 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Diminished Range), Fragmentation Grenades +6 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 5, Parry 5, Fortitude 7, Toughness 6/2 \*, Will 3

**Totals** Abilities 20 + Advantages 15 + Skills 12 + Defenses 12 = 59

\* Without bulletproof vest

Threat Level: Beta

# CHAPTER 6

# GADGETS AND GEAR

Every villain—from the grandest of world conquerors to the lowliest of petty thugs or cannon fodder—needs weapons and equipment to get the job done. This chapter includes new items to add to this arsenal, making the villain's efforts all the more interesting ... and dangerous.

## POISON AND DRUGS

The world is rife with illicit substances, which is why encounters with drug dealers—be they local bottom-feeders or top cartel members—are so common in superhero games. Usually, these substances are nothing more than window dressing for the encounter, but sometimes the Gamemaster has the narcotic play a more direct role in the story, requiring appropriate game statistics.

Illegal drugs usually come into play when a Gamemaster employs them on NPCs, forcing the player characters into a position of having to deal with the social ramifications (i.e., resulting crime and addicted friends.) Sometimes, however, the drugs are used directly on the heroes themselves. (This is especially true of poisons.)

The player character may be accidentally exposed or forcibly addicted to the substance by a villain as a means to control or blackmail the hero or ruin their reputation.

Regardless of how the addiction comes about, however, illegal drugs can add interesting, subtle twists to a story that typically deals mainly with finding the bad guy and smashing their face in.

### POISONS

The following are examples of poisons one may find during the course of the game. They may also be used as a basis from which more may be developed. Similarly, characters who utilize particular poisons as part of their powers may use these game statistics as the foundation upon which their abilities are constructed.

The potency of most poisons may be altered (typically requiring a skill check to do so properly), increasing or reducing their effect ranks. The indicated Expertise: Poison DC may be used to determine the difficulty of doing so and, if appropriate, otherwise preparing the poison properly.

#### ANEMONE VENOM

Taken from the stingers of the bulb anemone, this poison is injected into the subject in some fashion (usually with a dart or the like), causing paralysis.

**Anemone Venom:** Affliction 8 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Immobilized, Paralyzed), Progressive • 24 points

**Expertise: Poison DC:** 16

#### Heroes and Drugs

It is not unheard of for comic book heroes to succumb to the allure of illegal narcotics. Indeed, this can be an interesting plot element that can offer all manner of twist and turns. Stories may be driven in new directions, and characters can radically alter their behaviors and personality. Relationships are often strained by such situations, especially if a villain finds out about this aspect of the hero's life and chooses to exploit it via blackmail or the like.

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## ARSENIC

Common to pesticides, insecticides, and herbicides, this metalloid is extremely poisonous when ingested.

**Arsenic:** Weaken Stamina 6 (Resisted by Fortitude), Drawn Out, Progressive; Weaken Strength 6 (Resisted by Fortitude), Drawn Out, Progressive • 48 points

**Expertise: Poison DC:** 24

## MARBLED CONE SNAIL VENOM

The venom found on the harpoon-like proboscis of this reef-dwelling snail causes weakness and pain, and then stops the lungs from working. It must be injected or ingested.

**Snail Venom:** Cumulative Affliction 6 (Resisted by Fortitude; Fatigued, Stunned, Incapacitated), Drawn Out, Progressive; Weaken Stamina 5 (Resisted by Fortitude), Progressive • 45 points

**Expertise: Poison DC:** 20

## REAPER

Aptly named, reaper is a manufactured poison tailored to target metahumans (meaning people with genes that have been altered from their species' baseline, by whatever means, and have thereby acquired special abilities.) If consumed by a non-metahuman (this includes alien species and the like who possess powers that are unusual to humans but are uniformly part of the species' genes) there is no effect beyond having to deal with the poison's extremely powerful sour flavor.

Because both substances contain the same mysterious chemical as its core ingredient, Reaper is thought to have been designed by the creator of Ambrosia (pg 146.) Reaper's full chemical composition continues to elude even the best scientists, making treatment extremely difficult.

**Reaper:** Damage 12 (Resisted by Fortitude), Secondary Effect, Limited to Metahumans • 12 points

**Expertise: Poison DC:** 35

## NARCOTICS

There are certainly more narcotics to be found than presented here, but the following samples will provide an excellent basis upon which to build more. Furthermore, most narcotics can be made to vary in their effects

to some degree under the pretense of being made from, and with, varied resources and methods.

## AMBROSIA

Ambrosia, or metamethaline-X as it is known to chemists, is comprised of a number of known (although rare) compounds. These includes a catalyzing compound that continues to mystify and elude everyone who has tried breaking down the drug. Similarly, Ambrosia's manufacturer is a carefully guarded mystery that remains protected behind a many-tiered, cell-like distribution system.

When ingested by someone without metahuman abilities, Ambrosia will randomly bestow one super-power upon them. This power lasts until the user succeeds at a Fortitude resistance check, at which point the power disappears; unlike normal Variable Effects, this power cannot be changed until another dose of Ambrosia is taken. A metahuman who ingests or injects the narcotic, however, risks being poisoned.

**Ambrosia:** Variable Effect 4 (Metahuman Powers), Addictive (Fortitude), Limited to One Power, Resistible (Fortitude), Side-Effect (as Reaper Poison), Uncontrolled (Power is Random) • 16 points

**Expertise: Chemistry DC:** 35

## COCAINE

This white, refined powder is derived from the cocoa plant's dried leaves. It is inhaled, snorted, or injected into a vein, depending upon the prepared variation. A stimulant, cocaine grants a temporary boost of energy but is highly addictive and can result in a heart attack.

The Gamemaster should increase the Damage Effect's ranks if the cocaine is "cut" with dangerous substances, resulting in an increased chance of a heart attack or other health risk.

**Cocaine:** Enhanced Stamina 2, Addictive (Fortitude) 2, Resistible (Fortitude), Side-Effect (Damage 6, Resisted by Fortitude) • 4 points

**Expertise: Chemical DC:** 16

## LSD

D-lysergic acid diethylamide, better known as "acid," causes altered perceptions and visual illusions for extended periods. LSD must be injected or swal-

lowed, placed under the eyelid or otherwise exposed to the body in such a way as it may be directly absorbed.

Taking this drug produces psychedelic hallucinations, and affects one's senses and degree of awareness. Radical shifts in cognitive abilities, emotional state, and thought process are also common. The drug is not addictive.

**LSD:** Cumulative Affliction 6 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Compelled, Controlled), Drawn Out, Progressive; Close Illusion 12 (Visual and Auditory), Independent, Resistible (Will) • 42 points

**Expertise:** Chemical DC: 16

## MARIJUANA

The most common and easily acquired illicit drug the world over, it consists of dried leaves from the Cannabis plant, although it can also be used as a food ingredient or as a tea to similar effect. Marijuana's effects are primarily a result of THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol).

Potency varies, as does the form it may appear in (e.g., hashish.) It affects one's senses, behavior, ability to think, memory, and mood. It also has some medical purposes, especially as a pain blocker.

**Marijuana:** Cumulative Affliction 5 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Controlled), Addictive (Fortitude), Drawn Out, Progressive, Limited to Calming and/or Fear/Paranoia, Side-Effect (Memory Loss and Extreme Appetite); Enhanced Will 8, Limited to Pain; Enhanced Fortitude 8, Limited to Pain; Weaken Intellect 4 (Resisted by Fortitude), Progressive • 40 points

**Expertise:** Gardener DC: 15

## METHAMPHETAMINE

Although meth amps up one's energy levels and keeps one awake, it also makes the user incredibly moody. It also causes one's limbs to shake uncontrollably and become twitchy, and can lead to a heart attack or stroke.

Methamphetamine must be ingested or inhaled.

**Meth:** Cumulative Affliction 5 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Compelled, Controlled), Addictive (Fortitude), Drawn Out, Progressive, Side-Effect (Damage 6, Resisted by Fortitude; Tooth Loss; Withdrawal), Uncontrolled; Enhanced Stamina 3; Immunity 1 (Need for Sleep); Weaken Dexterity 4 (Resisted by Fortitude), Progressive • 36 points

**Expertise:** Chemical DC: 18

## ZOOM

Newly arrived upon the streets, zoom alters a psychic's brain chemistry, thereby boosting their abilities. Because it is meant for psionic metahuman use, however, zoom can easily have deadly effects on a non-psychic. A user suffers a loss of judgment and, oddly, the boosting process leaves the psychic's mind more open to influence and manipulation.

Zoom must be ingested or injected.

**Zoom:** Variable Effect 6 (Psychic Abilities), Addictive 2 (Fortitude), Limited to Enhanced Trait, Side-Effect (Damage 20, Limited to non-Psychics), Uncontrolled; Weaken Awareness 8 (Resisted by Fortitude), Progressive • 60 points

**Expertise:** Chemical DC: 30

# MELEE WEAPONS

## SIMPLE MELEE WEAPONS

**Hammer:** This simple tool can be used as a weapon in a pinch, using the blunt end of the head for bludgeoning or the nail-removing claw on the opposite side for piercing attacks.

**Mono-Dagger:** A mono-dagger's blade is a mere single molecule thick, allowing it to cut through most things with relative ease.

**Sledgehammer:** A heavy, two-handed tool intended for driving objects into the earth and for demolition, a sledgehammer can be a devastating weapon in melee combat.

**Snap Baton:** The collapsible snap baton is an easily concealed metal weapon that can cause more harm than a tonfa or club. While collapsed, a snap baton suffers no Sleight of Hand penalties to conceal it.

## ARCHAIC MELEE WEAPONS

**Hand Axe:** Whether a small, one-handed fighting axe or a woodcutter's hatchet, this light axe may also be thrown as a ranged attack.

**Mono-Sword:** A mono-sword's blade is a mere single molecule thick, allowing it to cut through most things with relative ease.

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## Melee Weapons

Weapon	Effect	Critical	Cost
<i>Simple Weapons</i>			
Hammer	Damage 2, bludgeoning or piercing	20	2
Mono-Dagger	Damage 3, Penetrating 2, piercing	18-20	7
Sledgehammer	Damage 4, bludgeoning	19-20	5
Snap Baton	Damage 2, bludgeoning, Feature (Collapsible)	20	3
<i>Archaic Weapons</i>			
Hand Axe	Damage 2, slashing	20	2
Mono-Sword	Damage 6, Penetrating 2, slashing	19-20	9
Mono-Sword, Short	Damage 4, Penetrating 2, piercing	18-20	8
Short Sword	Damage 2, Piercing	19-20	3
<i>Exotic Weapons</i>			
Chain Axe	Damage 6, Complex 2, slashing	18-20	6
Chain Knife	Damage 2, Complex 2, slashing	17-20	3
Chain Sword	Damage 6, Complex 2, slashing	17-20	7
Concussion Baton	Damage 2, Enhanced Knockback 8, bludgeoning	20	10
Concussion Maul	Damage 5, Enhanced Knockback 8, bludgeoning	20	13
Concussion Staff	Damage 3, Enhanced Knockback 8, bludgeoning	20	11
Greataxe	Damage 6, slashing	19-20	7
Greatsword	Damage 5, slashing	20	5
Mono-Sword, Great	Damage 8, Penetrating 2, slashing	19-20	11

**Mono-Sword, Short:** A short mono-sword's blade is a mere single molecule thick, allowing it to cut through most things with relative ease.

**Short Sword:** A sword with a shorter blade, making it more suited to close-combat work.

## EXOTIC MELEE WEAPONS

**Chain Weapons:** Essentially weaponized chainsaws, gears drive a chain covered with serrated blades along the weapon's "edges." Chain weapons are as loud as one would expect.

**Concussion Weapon:** Upon impact, these advanced melee weapons also release a burst of concussive force into the target, effectively increasing the amount of momentum delivered.

**Greataxe:** A heavy-bladed axe requiring two hands to use.

**Greatsword:** A heavy-bladed sword requiring two hands to use.

**Mono-Sword, Great:** A great mono-sword's blade is a mere single molecule thick, allowing it to cut through most things with relative ease.

## RANGED WEAPONS

### PROJECTILE RANGED WEAPONS

**Anti-Materiel Rifle, Advanced:** Improved craftsmanship allows this weapon to better handle the kick of firing its high-caliber payload while also making it more portable.

**Anti-Materiel Rifle, Basic:** This high-caliber weapon is designed for attacking materiel at a distance, making it ideal for sniping lightly armored vehicles, supply depots, armored soldiers, etc.



**Assault Carbine:** A shortened version of the assault rifle, this weapon is often used for urban combat and by elite military forces.

**Compound Bow:** This is a modern bow fitted with cams or pulleys that make it easier to pull for greater force.

## Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Effect	Critical	Cost
<i>Projectile Weapons</i>			
Anti-Materiel Rifle, Advanced	Ranged Damage 7, Enhanced Knockback 4, Penetrating 4, Bulky, Exposed 2 (Dodge)	17-20	22
Anti-Materiel Rifle, Basic	Ranged Damage 7, Enhanced Knockback 4, Penetrating 4, Bulky 2, Exposed 2 (Dodge), Heavy Recoil 2	17-20	19
Assault Carbine	Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Diminished Range	20	14
Compound Bow	Ranged Damage 4	20	8
Crossbow, Hand	Ranged Damage 2	19-20	5
Crossbow, Repeating	Ranged Damage 3, Multiattack	19-20	10
Flechette Pistol	Ranged Damage 2, Penetrating 3	18-20	9
Flechette Rifle	Ranged Damage 4, Penetrating 5	18-20	15
Gyrojet Pistol	Ranged Damage 4, Feature (Works in Vacuum)	20	9
Gyrojet Rifle	Ranged Damage 6, Feature (Works in Vacuum)	20	13
Heavy Machine Gun	Ranged Damage 6, Multiattack, Penetrating 4, Bulky 2, Exposed 2 (Dodge), Heavy Recoil 2	20	16
Light Machine Gun	Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Bulky, Heavy Recoil	20	13
Net Pistol	Cumulative Ranged Affliction 5 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Bulky, Diminished Range 2, Inaccurate, Limited Degree	—	12
Net Rifle	Cumulative Burst Area Ranged Affliction 5 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Bulky, Inaccurate, Limited Degree	—	18
SAW	Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Bulky, Compact Range	20	13
Slingshot	Ranged Damage 2, Diminished Range	20	3
<i>Energy Weapons</i>			
Concussion Pistol	Ranged Damage 3, Enhanced Knockback 8, Diminished Range 2, Limited to Nonlethal	20	9
Concussion Rifle	Ranged Damage 6, Enhanced Knockback 8, Diminished Range 2, Limited to Nonlethal	20	12
Monstro-Cannon	Line Area 6 (900 ft.) Damage 12, Bulky 2, Exposed 2 (Dodge), Inaccurate 2, Reload (1 use, Self-Recharging, 1 round)	16-20	72
Zero-Point Pistol	Burst Area Ranged Damage 4, Enhanced Knockback 4, Bulky, Diminished Range, Inaccurate, Pull (Stops at Center)	20	12
Zero-Point Rifle	Burst Area Ranged Damage 6, Enhanced Knockback 4, Bulky, Diminished Range, Inaccurate, Pull (Stops at Center)	20	18
<i>Heavy Weapons</i>			
Grenade Launcher, Automatic	Burst Area Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack	—	20
Grenade Launcher, Pistol	Burst Area Ranged Damage 5, Diminished Range	—	14

**Crossbow, Hand:** A small crossbow that may easily be fired one-handed, and quickly reloaded.

system allows the act of firing to provide much of the energy needed to re-cock the weapon.

**Crossbow, Repeating:** A hopper atop the crossbow allows it to be gravity fed while an ingenious spring

**Flechette Pistol:** This slender pistol fires a slim metal sabot rather than a bullet. The dart, which is made

# Chapter 6: Gadgets and Gear

of a dense metal such as depleted uranium, causes less ballistic damage but has exceptional penetration.



**Flechette Rifle:** A larger rifle-sized weapon that fires a larger sabot.



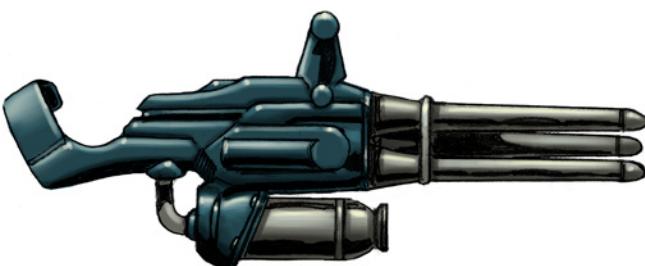
**Gyrojet Pistol:** A high-tech pistol that fires self-propelled rounds that are essentially small rockets. This makes the ammunition relatively expensive. This weapon is favored by space-faring military forces that do not utilize energy weapons because the gyrojet can be fired within a vacuum.



**Gyrojet Rifle:** A larger rifle-sized weapon that fires a larger round.



**Heavy Machine Gun:** A heavy, rapid-firing projectile weapon. A heavy machine gun is typically mounted on a vehicle or fixed position.



**Light Machine Gun:** A weighty, rapid-firing projectile weapon. A light machine gun is usually mounted on a vehicle or fixed position, but can also be carried on foot as a support weapon.

**Net Pistol:** This wide-bore pistol has a heavy, blunt look because it fires a packaged net that unfurls and twists about its target thanks to weights located around its perimeter. Unfortunately, the weight significantly reduces the range and impedes accuracy.



**Net Rifle:** A larger version of the net pistol that has improved range and larger net.



**SAW:** The Squad Automatic Weapon is a man-portable machine gun that can be carried and used by one man with relative ease.



**Slingshot:** A simple projectile weapon, consider a slingshot a thrown weapon for the sake of range increments.

## ENERGY RANGED WEAPONS

**Concussion Pistol:** A pistol that fires a wave of pure concussive force.



**Concussion Rifle:** A larger rifle-sized weapon that fires a more powerful wave of force.

**Monstro-Cannon:** This is a massive energy weapon with a slower rate of fire because it takes time for the blast capacitor to recharge. Its size and bulk make it difficult to aim and leaves the user exposed to attack, although a tripod is provided for stability.



## Grenades And Explosives

Item	Effect	Dodge DC	Cost
Blasting Cap	Burst Area Ranged Damage 2, Reduced Area 3	12	3
Detonation Cord	Burst Area Damage 2, Penetrating 2, Reduced Area 5	12	1
Nerve Gas	Cloud Area Ranged Affliction 4 (Resisted by Fortitude; Hindered, Stunned, Paralyzed)	14	12
Nitromethane Foam	Burst Area Damage 5, Penetrating 5, Reduced Area 4	15	11
Phosphorous	Burst Area Ranged Damage 5, Contagious, Secondary Effect	15	25

**Zero-Point Pistol:** A pistol that utilizes a contained cosmic event, much like a black hole in miniature, allowing the weapon to utilize zero-point energy. The resulting burst also resembles a small black hole that briefly tears into anything in its radius, pulling objects towards its center. For obvious reasons, this weapon is nicknamed the “black hole gun.”

**Zero-Point Rifle:** A larger rifle-sized weapon that fires more powerful zero-point energy events.

## HEAVY RANGED WEAPONS

**Grenade Launcher, Automatic:** A belt- or drum-fed grenade launcher. Increase the cost by +1 per additional type of grenade carried.

**Grenade Launcher, Pistol:** A single shot, short-range grenade launcher slightly larger than a flare gun. Increase the cost by +1 per additional type of grenade carried.

## GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

**Blasting Cap:** A small detonator explosive used on its own for minor demolition or as a means to ignite more destructive explosive materials.

**Detonation Cord:** A reliable tool for timing a larger explosion, the cord has an explosive core that detonates progressively down its length, making it capable of igniting other, attached explosives in succession.

On its own, detonation cord can be used as a low-grade cutting explosive for use on cables, metal bars, etc.

**Nerve Gas:** This grenade’s gas works to paralyze the subject by preventing their nerves from firing properly.

**Nitromethane Foam:** This explosive comes in a pressurized can that mixes the nitromethane (NMX) foam

with a catalytic mixture of propane and isobutene. The two components are kept in separate chambers within the same can as the NMX. Separately, the NMX and catalyst are inert, making the explosive incredibly safe to transport and store, but when mixed they can be detonated with a blasting cap, detonator, etc. One ounce of foam is enough to cover nine inches in a straight line.

NMX is used primarily to breach obstacles, such as doors, and to destroy other explosives, like mines, because it has a very contained blast.

**Phosphorous:** Burning phosphorous fills the grenades explosive radius and continuous to burn for a while.

## FIREARM AMMUNITION

The following ammunition traits are considered “add-ons” for existing firearms. They modify a firearm’s regular capabilities at the indicated cost, which can be a modifier per rank and/or a flat modifier.

Some ammunition types are not suited to certain types of firearms and will be noted as such. The Game-master should also give careful thought to combining ammunition types into a single round.

### ACID ROUND

A collapsible capsule built into the round’s head splatters the target with acid upon impact. The liquid causes the round to tumble slightly off-center, however, and its penetration is significantly reduced.

This round is only available to projectile weapons (with the exception of shotguns not firing solid slugs) and similar solid ammo weapons, such as grenade and rocket launchers.

# Chapter 6: Gadgets and Gear

## Effect

- Half of the weapon's Damage ranks are normal (ballistic) Damage and half are acid Damage. In the case of an uneven split, the larger fraction is considered normal Damage. *No cost*.
- Inaccurate 2. *Flat -2*.
- Reduced Penetration 2. *Flat -2*.
- Secondary Effect is added to the acid Damage. *+1 cost per rank*.

**Cost:** Flat -4 points, plus the acid Damage ranks are +1 cost per rank.

**Sniper Rifle with Acid Rounds:** Ranged Damage 3 (Ballistic); Ranged Damage 2 (Acid), Secondary Effect; Improved Critical, Inaccurate 2, Reduced Penetration 2 • 9 points

## CONCUSSIVE ROUND

These rounds are fitted with a small explosive charge in their tip. Although this explosive is not large enough to affect an area, it delivers a greater "kick."

This round is only available to projectile weapons (with the exception of shotguns not firing solid slugs) and similar solid ammo weapons, such as grenade and rocket launchers.

## Effect

- Enhanced Knockback 8. *Flat +8*.

**Cost:** Flat +8 points.

**Heavy Pistol with Concussive Rounds:** Ranged Damage 4, Enhanced Knockback 8 • 16 points

## FUEL AIR EXPLOSIVE ROUND

The Fuel Air Explosive (FAE) round is one of the most dangerous personal munitions available, so it is extremely rare and highly restricted. Upon impact, it fills the immediately surrounding area with a volatile aerosol that is ignited immediately afterward by a spark, creating an intense, fiery explosion.

Only high-caliber projectile weapons, such as grenade launchers and anti-materiel rifles, can utilize the FAE round.

## Effect

- Burst Area 2. *+2 cost per rank*.

- Inaccurate 1. *Flat -1*.
- Damage becomes fire Damage. *No cost*.
- Remove any extras or flaws that affect the base weapon's Damage, such as Enhanced Knockback, Improved Critical, or Penetrating. *Cost varies*.

**Cost:** Flat -1 point, plus +2 cost per rank. The cost may vary further if any Damage-affecting flaws or extras need to be removed from the weapon's base statistics.

**Basic Anti-Materiel Rifle with FAE Rounds:** Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Ranged Damage 7, Bulky 2, Exposed 2 (Dodge), Heavy Recoil 2, Inaccurate • 21 points



## FLECHETTE ROUND

A small dart replaces the usual bullet or like round. A flechette is built of dense metal, usually depleted uranium, and is better at penetrating armor at the cost of reduced ballistic Damage.

This round is only available to projectile weapons (with the exception of shotguns not firing solid slugs) and similar solid ammo weapons, such as grenade and rocket launchers.

## Effect

- Reduce the Damage effect rank by 1. *Cost varies*.
- Improved Critical. *Flat +1*.
- Penetrating 2. *Flat +2*.

**Cost:** Flat +3, plus the cost of reducing the Damage effect by 1 rank.

**Submachine Gun with Flechette Rounds:** Ranged Damage 3, Improved Critical, Multiattack, Penetrating 2 • 12 points

## RIOT ROUND

These rounds are designed to subdue rather than kill. Usually only available to projectile weapons (with the exception of shotguns not firing solid slugs) and similar solid ammo weapons, such as grenade and rocket launchers some, Gamemasters may allow these rounds

## Armor

Armor	Effect	Cost
Energy Webbing	Protection 4, Limited to Energy	2
EOD Suit	Protection 1; Impervious Protection 5, Limited to Explosions, Reduced Agility 2	2
Flak Coat	Protection 1; Impervious Protection 3, Limited to Explosions, Reduced Agility	2
Flak Jacket	Protection 1; Impervious Protection 2, Limited to Explosions	3
Flak Vest	Impervious Protection 1, Limited to Explosions	1
Turtleshell	Protection 8, Reduced Agility 2	4
Turtleshell, Heavy	Impervious Protection 8, Reduced Agility 3	10

for energy weapons under the pretext of employing a different form of energy.

**Assault Rifle with Tracer Rounds:** Ranged Damage 5, Accurate 1, Multiattack, Reduced Stealth 2 • 15 points

### Effect

- Limited to Nonlethal Damage. *-1 cost per rank.*

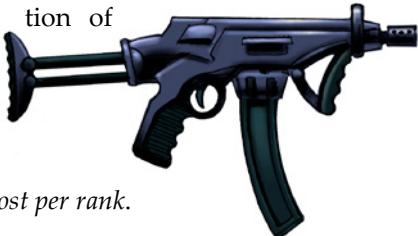
**Cost:** *-1 cost per rank.*

**Light Pistol with Riot Rounds:** Ranged Damage 3, Limited to Nonlethal • 3 points

## SPARK ROUND

These rounds release an electrical discharge rather than a solid projectile when fired.

This round is only available to projectile weapons (with the exception of shotguns not firing solid slugs.)



### Effect

- Contagious. *+1 cost per rank.*
- Diminished Range 1. *Flat -1.*

**Cost:** Flat *-1 point, plus +1 cost per rank.*

**Machine Pistol with Spark Rounds:** Ranged Damage 3, Contagious, Multiattack, Diminished Range 1 • 11 points

## TRACER ROUND

These rounds leave a phosphorous trail that make correcting one's firing much easier.

This round is only available to projectile weapons (with the exception of shotguns not firing solid slugs.)

### Effect

- Accurate. *Flat +1.*
- Reduced Stealth 2. *Flat -1.*

**Cost:** No cost modifier.

## ARMOR

Although many super-villains do not care enough about their minions to keep them sufficiently protected against injury, some realize one of the best ways to obtain one's goals is to ensure the survival of one's tools long enough to get the job done. As such, the following presents some new armor options with this purpose in mind.

- **Energy Webbing:** A microfilament body glove that helps dissipate energy attacks. It may be worn beneath any other type of armor and most clothing.
- **EOD Suit:** A cumbersome Explosive Ordnance Disposal suit fully covers the body, including a thickly padded helmet to protect the head. It provides minimal protection against most attacks, but its design is more effective against explosions.
- **Flak Coat:** A full-length, trench-coat style raiment that covers the arms and torso, and provides some protection to the legs while it hangs to its full length. Minimal protection is provided against most attacks, but its design is more effective against explosions. This may be worn over other modern body armor.
- **Flak Jacket:** A sleeved jacket that provides minimal protection against most attacks, but its design is more effective against explosions. This may be worn over other modern body armor.
- **Flak Vest:** A sleeveless jacket that provides minimal protection against explosions.
- **Turtleshell:** A complete, full-body suit of ballistic plates attached to a body glove.

- **Turtleshell, Heavy:** A complete, full-body suit of heavy ballistic plates attached to a body glove.

## WEAPONS AS DEVICES

The following section includes items that are beyond the scope of ordinary equipment and must be purchased as devices or power builds in most games. If added to the character as a typical article of equipment, adding the Removable flaw would be appropriate.

### FLAME PISTOL

**6 points**

This bulky pistol is essentially a much smaller, more efficient flamethrower with a greater range than the common back-mounted variety, although with a much-reduced shot capacity.



#### Flame Pistol: Area

Line 2 (60 ft.) Damage 3, Contagious, Split 2, Bulky, Reload (Reload Die 15, 1 round) • 6 points

### FLAME RIFLE

**29 points**

A rifle-sized version of the flame pistol, this weapon has a greater range and capacity for inflicting harm.

**Flame Rifle:** Area Line 4 (250 ft.) Damage 6, Contagious, Split 2, Bulky 2, Reload (Reload Die 15, 1 round) • 29 points

### FREEZE PISTOL

**11 points**

A pistol that fires a blast of deadly cold. Alternatively, the pistol can be set to encase the target in quick melting ice or cover a surface in a slippery sheet of ice.



#### Freeze Pistol: Array (9 points)

**Freeze Blast:** Area Line 2 (60 ft.) Damage 3 (Resisted by Fortitude) • 9 points

- **Ice Block:** Cumulative Ranged Affliction 3 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Limited Degree • 1 point
- **Ice Sheet:** Burst Area Cumulative Ranged Affliction 3 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable), Extra Condition, Limited Degree 2 • 1 point

### FREEZE RIFLE

**32 points**

A larger version of the freeze pistol, the freeze rifle is more powerful and has a greater range.

#### Freeze Rifle: Array (30 points)

**Freeze Blast:** Area Line 4 (250 ft.) Damage 6 (Resisted by Fortitude) • 30 points

- **Ice Block:** Cumulative Ranged Affliction 10 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Limited Degree • 1 point
- **Ice Sheet:** Burst Area Cumulative Ranged Affliction 10 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable), Extra Condition, Limited Degree 2 • 1 point



### QUAKE PISTOL

**5 Points**

This pistol unleashes a ripple of undulating energy that, when it strikes a solid object, causes the target to shake and vibrate with damaging results.



**Quake Pistol:** Burst Area Ranged Damage 4, Penetrating 2, Bulky, Limited versus Organic (Half Damage), Reload (Reload Die 18, 1 round) • 5 points

## QUAKE RIFLE

12 Points

A larger, rifle-sized weapon that fires a more powerful energy vibration than does the quake pistol.

**Quake Rifle:** Burst Area Ranged Damage 8, Penetrating 2, Bulky, Exposed (Dodge), Limited versus Organic (Half Damage), Reload (Reload Die 18, 1 round) • 12 points



## QUAKE CANNON

19 points

A larger, machine gun-sized weapon that fires a more powerful energy vibration at much greater range than does either the quake pistol or quake rifle.

**Quake Rifle:** Burst Area Ranged Damage 12, Penetrating 3, Bulky 2, Exposed 2 (Dodge), Limited versus Organic (Half Damage), Reload (Reload Die 18, 1 round) • 19 points



## SONIC PISTOL

32 points

Tipped with a cone-shaped emitter at the end of its coiled barrel, the bulky sonic pistol unleashes a wave of sound that damages and disorients.

**Sonic Pistol:** Area Cone 3 (120 ft.) Damage 4; Cumulative Area Cone 3 (120 ft.) Affliction 4 (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Disabled, Unaware), Limited to Auditory • 32 points

## SONIC RIFLE

90 points

A larger, rifle-sized weapon that fires a more powerful sonic blast than does the sonic pistol.

**Sonic Rifle:** Area Cone 4 (250 ft.) Damage 9; Cumulative Area Cone 4 (250 ft.) Affliction 9 (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Disabled, Unaware), Limited to Auditory • 90 points

## MISSILES

Missiles can easily be built as nothing more than the descriptor for a standard power, such as stating a Burst Area Ranged Damage effect is a missile rather than an energy blast. However, sometimes it's useful (and more realistic) to further customize the power to focus the missile on a particular way of operating or to attain an effect other than a simple-if-harmful explosion.

## TARGETING SYSTEMS

Missiles may be fitted with a variety of Extras and/or Linked power effects (typically Senses) to represent various forms of guidance systems.

With the exception of the dumb fire option, most of the following targeting systems can be used in combination with each other on the same missile.

### DUMB FIRE

A missile that relies entirely on the operator's unaided Ranged Attack modifier is considered dumb fire—the operator aims and rolls to attack, and that's it. This best suits the "missile-as-descriptor" approach to building such weapons, and is a default missile or rocket build.

#### Effect

- None

**Cost:** No additional cost.

### ENHANCED TARGETING

Efficient computer targeting systems allow the missile to better track and strike against its intended target.

The missile uses the operator's Ranged Attack modifier when fired.

#### Effect

- Accurate 4. *Flat +4*.

**Cost:** *Flat +4*.

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## FIRE-AND-FORGET

A course-correcting computer in the missile allows it to make course adjustments in flight.

The missile uses the operator's Ranged Attack modifier when fired.

### Effect

- Homing 6. *Flat +6.*

**Cost:** Flat +6 points.

## GENETIC HOUND

Also known as "assassin guidance," this advanced targeting system will seek out a specific genetic signature in order to strike that target. The genetic designation could be as broad as an entire ethnicity or species, or as narrow as a single bloodline or individual. The genetic marker must be uploaded to the targeting computer prior to launch.

If the genetic marker is not detected or is lost following launch, the missile will not detonate. However, if it explodes while attacking an appropriate target, anything caught in its blast radius is also at risk.

The missile uses the operator's Ranged Attack modifier when fired.

### Effect

- Senses 7 (Accurate Ranged Detect Genetic Marker [Smell], Extended 3.) *Flat +7.*
- Limited to Attacking Genetic Marker. *-1 cost per rank.*

**Cost:** Flat +7 points, plus *-1 cost per rank.*

## INFRARED GUIDED

This targeting system allows the weapon to seek a target using the infrared spectrum.

The missile uses the operator's Ranged Attack modifier when fired.

### Effect

- Senses 4 (Infravision, Extended 3.) *Flat +4.*

**Cost:** Flat +4 points.

## MAGNETIC

The targeting system seeks out strong magnetic fields to attack.

The missile uses the operator's Ranged Attack modifier when fired.

### Effect

- Senses 6 (Accurate Magnetic Awareness, Extended 3.) *Flat +6.*

**Cost:** Flat +6 points.

## NIGHTVISION

This targeting system allows the weapon to be fired against targets in the dark without penalty.

The missile uses the operator's Ranged Attack modifier when fired.

### Effect

- Senses 2 (Darkvision.) *Flat +2.*

**Cost:** Flat +2 points.

## SAMPLE MISSILES

The following are examples of several missile builds. They are presented without the previous targeting systems to make it easier to customize them as desired.

## ANTI-AIR MISSILE

A missile intended to spread shrapnel over a large area as a way to assault airborne targets.

**Anti-Air Missile:** Burst Area 3 (120 ft.) Ranged Damage 11, Limited to Attacking Airborne Targets • 33 points

## ANTI-SHIP MISSILE

A long-range missile to be launched against watercraft from shore or another waterborne vessel.

**Anti-Ship Missile:** Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Ranged Damage 13, Extended Range 8, Penetrating 2, Limited to Attacking Waterborne Targets • 49 points

## ANTI-SURFACE MISSILE

A missile launched from aircraft, ground craft, or watercraft to attack surface targets.

**Anti-Surface Missile:** Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Ranged Damage 11, Penetrating 2, Limited to Attacking Surface Targets • 35 points

## BUNKER BUSTER

This missile initially detonates against a hard, outer surface and then launches a sub-munition that enters through the hole the original attack made in order to attack the target's interior.

**Bunker Buster Missile:** Ranged Damage 8, Penetrating 8; Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Ranged Damage 6, Triggered (Initial Detonation) • 49 points

## MICRO-MISSILE

This is a tiny missile roughly the size of a soda can. It is often fired from battlesuits or firearm-sized launchers.

**Micro-Missile:** Burst Area (6 ft.) Ranged Damage 4, Reduced Area 2 • 10 points

## LIMPET MISSILE

When the target is reached, the missile's warhead explodes and disperses a number of magnetic shaped charge sub-munitions over the area that in turn only explode if they stick to a metal object. The limpet missile is useful for attacking vehicle convoys.

**Limpet Missile:** Burst Area 3 (120 ft.) Ranged Damage 10, Selective (Magnetic) • 51 points

## PHOSPHOROUS MISSILE

The missile fills the area with burning white phosphorous.

**Phosphorous Missile:** Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Ranged Damage 6, Contagious, Secondary Effect • 36 points

## PSYCHO-MISSILE

A truly villainous super-weapon, the ICBM-sized psycho-missile releases a neurotoxin that affects the brain's ability to think straight, reaping mayhem and destruction if launched upon a population center.

**Psycho-Missile:** Cloud Area 5 (250 ft.) Ranged Affliction 8 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Compelled, Controlled) • 56 points

## ROCKETS

These explosive weapons are typically mounted in aircraft to be used en masse against ground targets.

**Rocket:** Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Ranged Damage 9, Inaccurate • 35 points

## VEHICLES FEATURES

Whether it is a futuristic tank the villain's forces are using to conquer the city or the souped-up motorcycle a local vigilante uses to get around upon, vehicles of all sorts, both mundane and extraordinary, are staples of the super-hero genre.

The following are new vehicle features to be employed in your game. Each costs 1 point (per rank in some instances.)

### ADVANTAGE

The vehicle has the equivalent of a combat or general advantage. Vehicles cannot have fortune or skill advantages (although their pilots may.)

### AUTOPILOT

The vehicle is capable of self-piloting with its own Vehicle skill of 4 skill ranks per rank in this Feature (half the usual cost of the skill, since it is Limited to just this vehicle.)

### CARGO

The vehicle has space to contain cargo inside of itself. It can carry a volume of cargo equal to its size rank +10. So a size rank 0 vehicle can carry up to 1,000 cubic feet of cargo (volume rank 10.)

### CHAFF

The vehicle can eject packets of chaff that are meant to better its chances of evading incoming missiles. This feature provides a +2 bonus to Defense, but only against visually-guided missiles. A second rank increases this bonus to +5, and a third rank to +8.

### COMMUNICATIONS

The vehicle has a communications system (CB radio, cellular link, even subspace or FTL comlink) designed to communicate with similar systems. For an especially broad-spectrum system, the Gamemaster may wish to charge an additional Feature rank.

### COMPUTER

The vehicle has an on-board computer capable of accessing information and controlling the vehicle's routine operations.

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## DUAL SIZE

The vehicle has two size categories: its inside category (purchased normally) and an outside category, one or more size categories smaller, making it larger on the inside than the outside. Pay the cost of the larger interior size, plus 1 rank in this feature for each size category reduction of the exterior size.

Determine the vehicle's Str and Tou from the larger size and its Defense from the smaller one.

## EJECTION SYSTEM

The vehicle's pilot is provided with some form of ejection system that, although allowing them to leave the craft in the event of an emergency, leaves them exposed to the craft's external environment.

When ejecting, the pilot must make a Dodge check (DC 15) or suffer a damaging hit equal to the attack that destroyed the vehicle. If appropriate, subtract the vehicle's Impervious ranks from the attack's rank to determine the strength of the hit to apply against the ejected character.

Each additional rank increases the amount of ejection systems in the vehicle by one rank up the **Amounts Table** (pg 77) For example, the ejection system accommodates two people at 2 ranks, four people at 3 ranks, and so on.

## ESCAPE POD

An escape capsule allows the vehicle's pilot to escape the craft in the event of its destruction or failure to function.

An escape capsule can provide any Immunity traits the vehicle had for one week before its power fails, and has a Toughness of 5. The Toughness can be increased by +1 per additional rank. The capsule has ranks in movement equal to half the vehicle's rating, but provides no means of control. Instead, it merely seeks out the nearest safe landing point. Otherwise, it has none of the vehicle's powers or features.

Each additional rank increases the amount of space on the escape pods (or amount of individual, solo pods) in the vehicle by one rank up the **Amounts Table** (pg 77.) For example, the escape pods accommodate two people at 2 ranks, four people at 3 ranks, and so on.

## IMPROVED HANDLING

The vehicle has superior steering and response capabilities, offsetting up to -2 in penalties incurred during

maneuvering. A second rank increases the penalty that may be offset to -5, and a third rank to -8.

## PASSENGERS

The vehicle can carry people other than its pilot and crew. The vehicle must be at least size rank 0 (enough to carry four passengers.) Each additional size rank doubles the number of passengers.

## RAM PROW

The vehicle's front is fitted with some manner of ram and/or it is reinforced to better conduct such an attack. When using the ram prow to conduct a slam attack with the vehicle, you gain an additional +1 circumstance bonus to Damage. Also, your vehicle only suffers one-quarter the Damage rank of the attack inflicted on the target (rounded down.)

The ram is bulky and can interfere with steering on smaller vehicles, however. This imposes a cumulative -2 penalty to Vehicles skill checks on Large vehicles or -4 on Medium vehicles.

## REMOTE PILOTING

The vehicle can be piloted remotely via telepresence, similar to the Communication Link effect of Senses and the Mental Link extra of Summon. Choose a sense type for the link, sensory effects targeting that sense type may interfere with or disrupt it.

## ROOMS

At the Gamemaster's discretion, a Gargantuan or larger vehicle can incorporate some headquarters features, essentially functioning like a mobile installation. For example, a Gargantuan jet plane might have an Infirmary and Living Space on board, while an Awesome-sized starship might have that plus a Gym, Hangar, Holding Cells, Laboratory, and more!

For Dual Size vehicles (see previous) the vehicle's internal size determines if this feature is available.

If using the new headquarters rules presented in **Chapter Eight: Headquarters, Revisited & Revised**, the amount of Spaces a vehicle has is indicated on the following table. If not, the Gamemaster shall need to rely upon their judgment to determine what shall fit in the vehicle.

## Vehicle Room Space

Vehicle Size	Spaces
Medium	Not possible
Large	Not possible
Huge	1
Gargantuan	2
Colossal	4
Awesome	8

## TRANSPONDER

The vehicle has an IFF (Identification, Friend or Foe) system, sending out a signal other IFF transponders can read to identify the machine. In addition to being able to easily tell enemies apart from allies upon the battlefield, vehicles with transponders can ignore the cover friendly targets normally provide to foes like the Precise Attack advantage.

## CONSTRUCTS

What do super-villains do when they can't stand to be around other people? They create robots to do their bidding, of course!

## BODYGUARD ROBOT

This type of robot is programmed to be absolutely devoted to the protection of its charge, even at the expense of its own existence. A bodyguard robot is usually comprised of a sturdy humanoid frame that can easily be concealed within a bulky trench coat or the like. More advanced models are fitted with prosthetics that allow the machine to pass for human in poor lighting.

### BODYGUARD ROBOT PL9 • 107 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 4, Sta —, Agl 3, Dex 3, Fgt 6, Int —, Awe 2, Pre —

**Powers** **Armor:** Protection 8, Impervious 4; **Forearm Blaster:** Ranged Damage 10, Precise; **Radio:** Burst Area Communication 2 (Radio), Selective, Subtle; **Robot:** Immunity 30 (Fortitude Effects); **Robotic Strength:** Enhanced Strength 4, Limited to Lifting; **Software:** Enhanced Intimidation 2 (+6), Enhanced Perception 10 (+12), Enhanced Sense Motive 6 (+8), Enhanced Vehicles 4 (+7)

**Advantages** All or Nothing, Blaze of Glory, Fanatic, Power Attack, Strongarm

**Skills** Ranged Combat: Forearm Blaster 6 (+9)

**Offense** Initiative +3, Forearm Blaster +9 (Ranged Damage 10), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 4)

**Defense** Dodge 8, Parry 6, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 8, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities 6 + Powers 88 + Advantages 5 + Skills 3 + Defenses 5 = 107

**Threat Level:** Gamma

## DESTROYER MECH

A machine of pure devastation, the destroyer mech is designed as a combat robot with a wide array of weapons intended to take on heavily defended targets, including metahumans.

### DESTROYER MECH PL11 • 127 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 10, Sta —, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 4, Int —, Awe 0, Pre —

**Powers** **Armor:** Protection 8, Impervious 6; **Large:** Growth 4, Innate, Permanent; **Micro-Missiles:** Burst Area Ranged Damage 4, Multiattack, Reduced Area 2; **Plasma Blaster:** Ranged Damage 12, Penetrating 6, Diminished Range; **Radio:** Burst Area Communication 2 (Radio), Selective, Subtle; **Robot:** Immunity 30 (Fortitude Effects); **Robotic Strength:** Enhanced Strength 6, Limited to Lifting

**Advantages** Close Attack 4, Improved Critical 2 (Unarmed), Power Attack, Ranged Attack 7

**Skills** Stealth 0 (-3)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Micro-Missiles +8 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 4, Multiattack, Reduced Area 2), Plasma Blaster +8 (Ranged Damage 12, Penetrating 6, Diminished Range), Unarmed +8 (Close Damage 10, 18-20)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 4, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 12, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -6 + Powers 112 + Advantages 14 + Defenses 7 = 127

**Threat Level:** Gamma

## SERVANT ROBOT

This simple, multi-armed construct is intended to perform equally simple servile duties. It possesses enough mental capacity and ability to perform these tasks, but is relatively useless beyond these parameters.

A servant robot gets about on two rudimentary legs or a wheeled chassis that allows it to move in all directions upon a stable platform.

### SERVANT ROBOT

PL1 • 33 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 3, Sta —, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt 0, Int —, Awe 0, Pre —

**Powers** **Armor:** Protection 5; **Multi-Arms:** Extra Limbs 2; **Radio:** Burst Area Communication 2 (Radio), Selective, Subtle; **Robot:** Immunity 30 (Fortitude Effects); **Software:** Enhanced Expertise: Butler 4 (+4), Enhanced Expertise: Cook 4 (+4), Enhanced Expertise: Cleaner 4 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Unarmed +0 (Close Damage 3)

**Defense** Dodge 2, Parry 2, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 5, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -24 + Powers 53 + Defenses 4 = 33

**Threat Level:** Alpha

## SPIDERBOT

These multi-functional robots can act as attack or defense units, or perform rudimentary observation and security services. Their size and multiple legs make them ideally suited for getting into tight locations.

### SPIDERBOT

PL7 • 72 POINTS

**Abilities** Str -1, Sta —, Agl 3, Dex 3, Fgt 4, Int —, Awe 2, Pre —

**Powers** **Armor:** Protection 3, Impervious 1; **Laser Eye:** Ranged Damage 5, Accurate, Precise; **Radio:** Burst Area Communication 2 (Radio), Selective, Subtle; **Robot:** Immunity 30 (Fortitude Effects); **Sensors:** Senses 10 (Darkvision; Accurate Ranged Detect Vibration [Touch]; Direction Sense; Distance Sense; Infravision; Radio); **Small:** Shrinking 4, Innate, Permanent; **Sticky Legs:** Movement 1 (Wall-Crawling)

**Skills** Stealth 0 (+7)

**Offense** Initiative +3, Laser Eye +5 (Ranged Damage 5, Precise), Unarmed +4 (Close Damage -1)

**Defense** Dodge 8, Parry 6, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 3, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -6 + Powers 75 + Defenses 3 = 72

**Threat Level:** Beta

## SPYFLY

Only slightly larger than a normal housefly, this tiny robot is an expert of infiltration and surveillance.

### SPYFLY

PL1 • 92 POINTS

**Abilities** Str -5, Sta —, Agl 4, Dex 4, Fgt 0, Int —, Awe 0, Pre —

**Powers** **Armor:** Protection 1; **Flight:** Flight 3 (16 mph); **Fly-Sized:** Shrinking 20, Innate, Permanent; **Radio:** Burst Area Communication 2 (Radio), Selective, Subtle; **Robot:** Immunity 30 (Fortitude Effects); **Sensors:** Senses 8 (Darkvision; Direction Sense; Distance Sense; Infravision; Radio; Ultra-Hearing; Ultravision); **Sticky Legs:** Movement 1 (Wall-Crawling)

**Advantages** Close Attack 6

**Skills** Stealth 4 (+28)

**Offense** Initiative +4, Unarmed +6 (Close Damage -5)

**Defense** Dodge 14, Parry 10, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 1, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -14 + Powers 98 + Advantages 6 + Skills 2 = 92

**Threat Level:** Alpha

## WEAPON DRONE

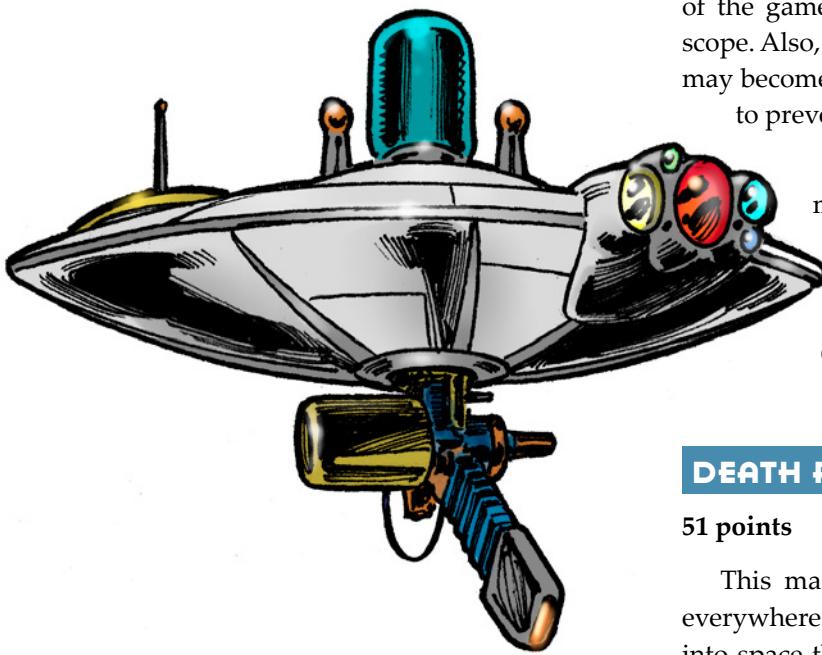
A weapon drone is a saucer-shaped robot that can be set to attack, patrol, or remain within a certain distance of a specified target it's been assigned to defend.

### WEAPON DRONE

PL5 • 75 POINTS

**Abilities** Str -2, Sta —, Agl 3, Dex 3, Fgt 0, Int —, Awe 0, Pre —

**Powers** **Armor:** Protection 5; **Blaster:** Ranged Damage 5, Accurate, Multiattack, Diminished Range; **Flight:** Flight 2 (8 mph); **Radio:** Burst Area Communication 2 (Radio), Selective, Subtle; **Robot:** Immunity 30 (Fortitude Effects); **Sensors:** Senses 8 (Darkvision, Direction Sense, Distance Sense, Infravision, Radio, Ultra-Hearing, Ultravision); **Software:** Enhanced Perception 6 (+6); **Tiny:** Shrinking 8, Innate, Permanent



**Skills** Stealth 0 (+8)

**Offense** Initiative +3, Blaster +5 (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Diminished Range)

**Defense** Dodge 7, Parry 5, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 5, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -18 + Powers 92 + Defenses 1 = 75

**Threat Level:** Beta

## WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION & SUPER-WEAPONS

As anyone who has ever read a comic book can tell you, super-villains have a nasty habit of trying to conquer, blackmail, or destroy nations (or even the entire world) using weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and super-weapons. Whether a conventional nuclear bomb or something off the wall, like a mile-wide cloud of flesh-eating insects, WMDs and super-weapons can easily represent the epitome of malicious calculation and wanton disregard for human life. It falls upon the heroes to stop these devastating weapons from being used.

In most cases, a WMD need be nothing more than a plot device—a concept to be presented without actual statistics because it is never meant to be used. However, sometimes having such devices presented in terms

of the game's mechanics helps visualize the danger's scope. Also, if the Gamemaster really feels nasty, WMDs may become necessary should the player characters fail to prevent their use.

That being said, it is up to the Gamemaster to decide how and when to use WMDs and super-weapons. The following examples should provide a basis of scope and scale from which the Gamemaster can develop more.

### DEATH RAY

**51 points**

This massive weapon is a staple of evil geniuses everywhere. The device fires a deadly ray of energy into space that is then directed to the target via a mirror-equipped satellite. The ray's point of focus is wide enough to encompass much of a city block.

**Death Ray:** Burst Area Ranged Damage 20, Extended Range 10, Indirect, (Satellite) Penetrating 2, Activation (Standard), Priming

### FLESH EATING VIRUS

**70 points (airborne) / 50 points (contact)**

Usually dispersed into the air by explosives (airborne version) or directly into a water system (contact version), this WMD can have devastating results if used in a population center.

**Flesh Eating Virus (Airborne):** Cloud Area 5 (250 ft.) Weaken Toughness 7, Contagious, Drawn Out, Progressive

**Flesh Eating Virus (Contact):** Weaken Toughness 10, Contagious, Drawn Out, Progressive

### Designing WMDs and Super-Weapons

When making one's own WMD or super-weapon, the Gamemaster must keep in mind the most important element: fear. If the WMD isn't powerful or devastating enough to cause fear, it will fail as a tool for evil. When being blackmailed with the threat of a WMD's design or use, governments and super-heroes alike must be terrified at the prospect of what would happen were the villain to use the device. If the WMD doesn't meet such criteria, both in concept and game mechanics, the Gamemaster needs to return to the drawing board.

## IDIOT BOX

### 45 points

The “idiot box” generates energy pulses that integrate themselves with television signals, requiring the device be spliced into a television broadcasting station in order to work. Anyone watching the piggybacking signal long enough will become increasingly dumber the longer they observe the mind-altering content.

**Idiot Box:** Ranged Weaken Intellect 8, Extended Range 10, Incurable, Indirect (TV), Progressive, Subtle, Sustained, Priming, Sense-Dependent (Visual)

## METAL-MUNCHER NANITES

### 92 points

Sometimes the quickest way to bring the enemy to its knees is by destroying its infrastructure.

This colony of metal-devouring nanites eats its way through metal—everything from railway tracks to building support struts or raw manufacturing materials. If released into a city, these nanites can rapidly render transportation dangerous, destroy structures and vital systems, and bring industry to a screeching halt.

Although actually a swarm of tiny machines that individually exist on a microscopic scale, for game purposes these minuscule robots are treated as a single construct. Collectively, they appear as a cloud of shimmering dust to the naked eye, and are extremely difficult to destroy by conventional means.

Gamemasters may wish to add Growth if they want the cloud of metal-eating nanites to be larger.

### Metal-Muncher Colony

### PL5 • 52 points

**Abilities** Str —, Sta —, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt 5, Int —, Awe 0, Pre —

**Powers** **Metal Eating:** Damage 8, Affects Only Objects, Incurable, Reaction, Limited to Metal; **Nanite Cloud:** Flight 1 (4 mph), Insubstantial 2; **Nanite:** Immunity 30 (Fortitude); **Resistance:** Protection 10, Not versus Magnetics

**Skills** Stealth 12 (+12)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Metal Eating +5 (Damage 8)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 5, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 10, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -30 + Powers 72 + Skills 6 + Defenses 4 = 52

## Self-Reproducing Metal-Munchers

If the Gamemaster likes, a procreation aspect can be added to the metal-munchers. For every ten minutes spent eating metal, add 1 rank of Growth. This indicates the nanites are not merely destroying the metal they munch upon, but are processing it to create more of themselves.

## MIND MELTER GENERATOR

### 210 points

Meant to be concealed within a population center in order to be activated at the desired moment, the mind melter generator releases invisible energy waves that affect the mind. This energy begins by causing dementia and confusion, followed by an attempt to destroy the mind of anyone exposed once the generator reaches full power.

The housing has a Toughness of 7.

**Mind Melter Generator: Dementia:** Burst Area 9 (1 mile) Affliction 10 (Resisted by Will; Dazed, Compelled, Controlled), Progressive, Sustained, Instant Recovery, Priming; **Mental Blast:** Burst Area 9 (1 mile) Damage 10 (Resisted by Will), Limited to Controlled Subjects, Priming

## NUCLEAR ICBM

### 328 points

An Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) is the most widely used destructive delivery system for nuclear warheads. The following is meant to approximate a 300-kiloton-apiece Multiple Independent Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs, meaning individual warheads that can be launched at separate targets) payload from above the overall target area.

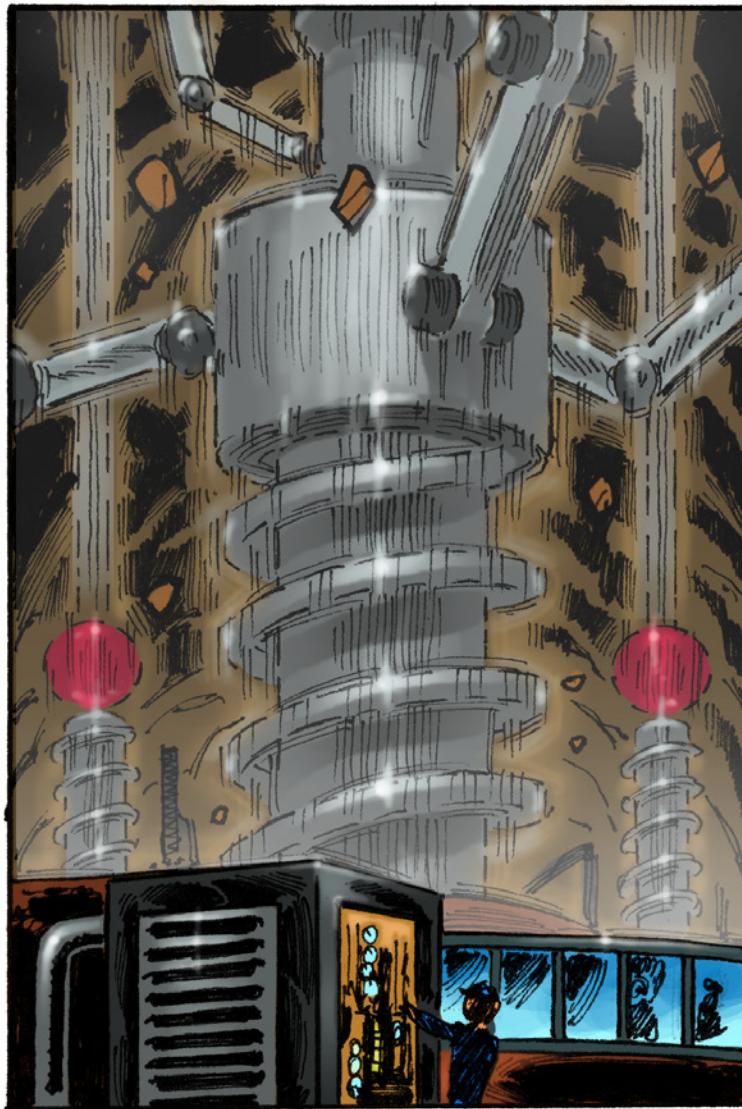
Because of its size and the fact that it houses ten MIRVs, this missile has been built as a construct, and the warheads as a Ranged Damage attack fired from the core missile. Only ten such attacks may be made.

### Nuclear ICBM

### PL14 • 323 points

**Abilities** Str 5, Sta —, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt —, Int —, Awe 0, Pre —

**Powers** **Guidance:** Feature 2 (Navigation System, Remote Control); **Huge Missile:** Growth 8, Innate, Permanent; **Machine:** Immunity 30 (Fortitude); **MIRV Nuclear Warheads:** Burst Area 10 (2 miles) Ranged Damage 20, Extended Range 6, Feature (Area becomes Radio-



active); **Rocket Engine**: Flight 10 (2,000 mph); **Stealth Systems**: Concealment 1 (Radar), Passive

**Advantages** Ranged Attack 8

**Skills** Stealth 0 (-8)

**Offense** Initiative +0, MIRV Nuclear Warheads +8 (Burst Area 10 Ranged Damage 20)

**Defense** Dodge 8, Parry -4, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 8, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -14 + Powers 317 + Advantages 8 + Defenses 12 = 323

**MIRVs**: The ICBM is limited to a maximum of ten attacks with its MIRV warheads.

## QUAKE MACHINE

240 points

Using vibration resonance or some similar method, this device manipulates tectonic plates in order to cause earthquakes in the targeted area. The Gamemaster may want to limit the maximum amount of ranks that may be applied in consideration of more stable tectonic situations in the target area or quake-proofing construction.

**Quake Machine**: Area Burst 10 (2 miles) Damage 10, Enhanced Knockback 10, Sustained, Limited to Ground Structures; Burst Area 10 (2 miles) Affliction 10 (Resisted by Dodge; Vulnerable, Prone), Sustained, Limited Degree, Limited to Ground Targets

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## TACTICAL NUCLEAR MISSILE

225 points

Like the ICBM (see previous), this vehicle is meant to simulate a nuclear missile, although this version is much smaller. Used for precise attacks, the tactical nuclear missile can be carried aboard and fired from bombers or larger navy vessels. The warhead is a 20-kiloton payload.

### Tactical Nuclear Missile

PL12 • 202 points

**Abilities** Str 4, Sta —, Agl 0, Dex 0, Fgt —, Int —, Awe 0, Pre —

**Powers** **Guidance**: Feature 2 (Navigation System, Remote Control); **Large Missile**: Growth 4, Innate, Permanent; **Machine**: Immunity 30 (Fortitude); **Nuclear Warhead**: Burst Area 8 (1/2 mile) Ranged Damage 15, Extended Range 2, Feature (Area becomes Radioactive); **Rocket Engine**: Flight 6 (120 mph); **Stealth Systems**: Concealment 1 (Radar), Passive

**Advantages** Ranged Attack 8

**Skills** Stealth 0 (-4)

**Offense** Initiative +0, Nuclear Warhead +8 (Burst Area 8 [1/2 mile] Ranged Damage 15)

**Defense** Dodge 9, Parry -2, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 4, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -24 + Powers 207 + Advantages 8 + Defenses 11 = 202

## WEATHER MACHINE

58 points

A mass of tubing, Tesla coils, gears, and dynamos, this machine manipulates the environment in its target area in order to control the weather. Villains will use the weather control device to destroy crops, flood streets, and generally cause havoc and destroy resources.

**Weather Machine**: Array (54 points)

**Snow Storm**: Ranged Environment 10 (Extreme Cold, Impede Movement, Visibility -5), Extended Range 4 • 54 points

**Heat Wave**: Ranged Environment 24 (Extreme Heat), Extended Range 6 • 1 point

**Fog**: Ranged Environment 24 (Visibility 2), Extended Range 6 • 1 point

• **Lightning**: Range Damage 16, Contagious, Extended Range 5, Indirect • 1 point

• **Tornado**: Burst Area Ranged Damage 10, Extended Range 4, Sustained • 1 point

## A GOOD DEFENSE—SECURITY SYSTEMS AND TRAPS

Villains—be they a solitary cad acting on his own or a mastermind commanding an entire nefarious organization—are known for defending what's theirs, especially their bases of operations. Defenses can be as simple as a security camera mounted outside their apartment door, or as complex as a sensor web extending for miles beyond the location's perimeter, controlling numerous anti-ground and anti-air weapon systems. Regardless of the particulars, the intent is always to keep the unwanted from getting in and the insidious secrets from getting out.

This section provides tips and guidelines for designing and implementing security and defensive measures, as well as tools and examples for building your own.

## DESIGNING DEFENSE AND SECURITY SYSTEMS

Some security systems are extremely straightforward, involving little more than adding a descriptor to an obvious power effect choice, such as Senses for sensors suites or Damage for traps and automated killing machines. Sometimes, however, you will want to think outside the box to come up with ideas your players won't automatically consider so you can catch them unawares.

Let's look at some important points to consider when designing security systems.

## THE ROLE OF PERCEPTION

As does a character, most security systems use Perception checks to notice what they are intended to perceive or they allow an operator to do so if the system is not automated. A basic security camera, for example, may allow an operator to make Perception checks without modifiers against anything caught in its scope of vi-

sion. An older model may apply penalties to the operator's skill check whereas a top-of-the-line camera may grant the benefits of greater clarity, granting a bonus.

### Automated Systems

Security systems that function automatically, sounding an alarm (or whatever) when they appropriately perceive something, are provided with a Perception skill rank when necessary. (Assume Awareness 0 unless attached to a construct with a higher Awareness value.)

If a security system or trap is controlled by some form of construct, such as a computer intelligence, build the construct normally and consider it to be the operator. This means such systems are considered operator-required systems rather than being automated.

### Operator-Required Systems

If a security system requires an operator in order to fulfill its function, no Perception skill rank is provided. Instead, the appropriate power effect is presented, and it is the operator's Perception skill that is used.

The Enhanced Perception effect indicates the system requires an operator, but improves the latter's ability to perceive via the security system.

## TRIGGERS

All automated traps and security systems require a trigger—something to set it off. The type of trigger can vary from one system to another, or even per trap, by indicating more than one trigger for each (a devilish way to trick heroes who think they've disarmed the obvious trigger only to learn the hard way there was another trigger waiting to be set off.)

In some instances, such as security systems that merely detect the presence of something, the trigger is little more than turning it on. The trigger will either detect what it is supposed to when exposed to the required stimulus or it won't, depending upon its Perception check's result. Other trap or security system designs require more detail, however.

Triggers usually fall into one of two categories: **reactive** or **operated**. A reactive trigger sits dormant until some form of direct, external stimulus causes it to activate the trap it is a part of. An operated trigger won't do a thing until a command is sent from an external source, be that source a hand detonator, computer keyboard, motion detector, artificial intelligence, etc. Such triggers

are typically built using the **Triggered** (obviously) extra, **Reaction** extra, or the **Limited** or **Check Required** flaws.

When devising a particular trap's mechanics and trigger to match its concept, be certain you are choosing the best balance between game mechanics and common sense. The path of least resistance when designing a trap's trigger—what is easiest to design and costs the fewest points—isn't necessarily what works best for your particular idea.

### The Check Required Flaw

This flaw is most often used to tie a Linked Senses power to a trap, effectively turning the Senses effect into the trigger. For example, a trap that is triggered by the presence of magic could have a trigger designed as follows:

**Example Check Required Trap:** Burst Area Damage 1, Perception Check to Detect Magic Required (DC 11); Senses 2 (Ranged Detect Magic [Mental]); Enhanced Perception 4 (+4) • 5 points

In this example, the Senses power provides the required sensory input for the trap by acting as an outlet for the Perception skill.

As the previous example illustrates, most cases of using the Check Required flaw as a trigger for an automated system will also require some manner of Linked effect (in this case, Enhanced Perception.) This is done to provide the means of making the check. If the system requires an operator, a Linked effect is not typically present because the operator performs the required check.

### The Limited Flaw

The **Limited** flaw is perhaps the most versatile and open-ended option when it comes to building a trigger mechanism. It can be adapted to suit just about any circumstance by applying it and indicating the trap's powers will only affect anyone who meets a required condition. "Only versus Intangible" or "Only versus Humans" are simple examples of how this flaw may be applied to act as a trigger.

Of course, more complex applications may be used, but you do not want to get too detailed or ramble on, or you risk bogging the game down in too much minutia.

### The Triggered Extra

Keeping in mind it can only be applied to an effect with an Instant duration, the **Triggered** extra is best

used when you want the trigger to be intrinsically related to the nature of the trap itself. This is because the ability to perceive the trigger or disarm it is determined by the power effect's ranks. So, the more potent the trap is, the more difficult the trap's trigger is to take note of and circumvent. This doesn't always make sense for the trap's concept, however.

For example, it would not make sense for a camouflaged pit trap that is deeper and lined with spikes to be more difficult to detect and disarm simply because it has more ranks of Damage than a shallower pit trap without spikes. The camouflage should determine the pit trap's ability to avoid detection, not its depth or how many spikes it contains.

#### *The Reaction Extra*

Much like Triggered, applying **Reaction** to a trap or security system can be ideal because the extra's very nature is to bring the power build's effect into play only in response to specific circumstances. This would be the ideal trigger for a jaw-like bear trap, for instance, using Reaction (Stepped Upon) as the trigger.

#### *Triggering as a Concept*

A trap or security system may also be triggered entirely as a matter of concept, common sense, and functionality. With a pit trap, for example, one may be better off purchasing linked ranks of Concealment to indicate it is camouflaged and that, inevitably, anyone stepping on it who fails to see through the façade will fall into the trap. Gravity and concept alone do the work for the trap designer without the need to indicate any other sort of trigger.

Consider what happens if we remove the importance of the trap concept: if the trap designer can build something as rudimentary as a pit but doesn't pay for a trigger covered by the rules' mechanics, what does that say about the trap? Is gravity suspended because we haven't shown how the Damage effect is triggered by means of the trap's game mechanics?

Hardly.

The very concept of what a pit trap is covers the bases, with any victim's actions (walking over it) doing the rest of the work for us.

The concept works much like a descriptor in this way. If a power effect has a fire-related descriptor, for example, it is not necessary to apply game mechanics that outline every way the effect can set something on

fire, spreading flame amongst flammable targets. Based on the flame descriptor alone, everyone in the game understands the power effect has some unspoken potential to set other things on fire after the effect is itself no longer directly applied. That's just how fire operates.

Ultimately, the most important rule when deciding how a trap or security system interacts with its environment—especially the sort of people they are supposed to notice, monitor, capture, harm, or kill—is always to use common sense.

## **SUPER-POWERS VERSUS SECURITY SYSTEMS**

Some power effects are especially useful for defeating or circumventing security systems, even though the power's description may not obviously be intended to counter or cope with situations created by the security systems described throughout this section. Certain power builds may be designed or conceived in such a way as to have immediate effects on the security systems, as the latter are themselves merely power concepts and descriptions. However, other power effects require more creativity or fudging on the Gamemaster's part to make sense of how such an interaction occurs between the two, and to what degree.

Concealment has rather obvious applications for bypassing security, as does some uses of Environment. A fog bank or field of darkness can conceal an intruder from a security camera, although anyone with common sense watching the camera's monitor would wonder where the fog or unusual darkness came from. Similarly, Concealment that muffles sound or scent can be used to circumvent microphones or pheromone sensors, respectively.

If the intruder is concerned with confusion and distraction rather than concealment and secrecy, an Affliction that is sense-specific (such as may be seen with the Dazzle sample power build) may be used to temporarily overload a sensor. An incredibly bright flash would cause a security camera to "white out," whereas a loud bang would fill a microphone with white noise and make recording voices impossible for a time, for instance. Of course, an appropriately built Nullify can be invaluable while defeating security—it can just turn off any sensors or security.

These are just some of the obvious choices, but other power effects have applications that require more imag-

ination to make use of. Consider how sufficient ranks of Speed may interact with a security system without the results being accounted for in the power's game mechanics, for example. With sufficient Speed, the person would be nothing more than a blur while running before a security camera. At the very least it would be incredibly difficult to accurately identify him or, if moving fast enough, the person would be on camera so briefly as to not be noticed at all. Against an air flow analyzer, however, someone moving at super-speed would disrupt the atmosphere so intensely as to grant the security device a Perception bonus.

## POWERS VERSUS SECURITY SYSTEM PERCEPTION

If the security system utilizes a Perception check to interact with intruders using powers, it is suggested a modifier be applied, as appropriate to whether or not the power is working in the user's benefit. This modifier should be  $+/-1$  or  $+/-2$  per operational rank of the power. A penalty is applied if using the power makes the character more difficult to perceive whereas a bonus indicates the power aids the system's ability to perceive the character.

Just how much of an adjustment should be applied in a given situation depends on how effective the Gamemaster considers the power to be within the circumstance's context. What's more, some situations may cause the Gamemaster to rule there is an effective threshold of required ranks in a power effect in order for a Perception modifier to be considered.

*Employing a Speed effect versus a basic security camera, the Gamemaster may rule that the power has no affect on the camera's ability to see the person if they are moving slower than 60 miles per hour (Speed 5.) This is where the Gamemaster sets his effectiveness threshold for this situation. A character with Speed 12 (8,000 mph) running past this security camera would apply a -7 penalty to the camera's Perception check (or that of its operator) to spot them (Speed 12 minus the threshold of Speed 5 = 7, which becomes a -7 penalty.)*

*If the same character were running through an area protected by infrared motion sensor beams, however, the Gamemaster may rule the chance of doing so undetected is more difficult. In this instance, the Gamemaster determines the effectiveness threshold*

*for the Speed power is 8 (500 mph) before the power benefits the character. As such, the infrared security system only suffers a -2 penalty against the character running by at Speed 10.*

*Against this same infrared security system, the Game-master indicates each and every rank of a fire-based power grants the device a +2 bonus to its Perception check.*

## SURVEILLANCE & PASSIVE SECURITY SYSTEMS

Not all security systems need to cause harm or even restrain or detain the subject. Most security systems (especially amongst civilians) are entirely passive in nature—that is to say they observe, detect, and report, and do not take any aggressive action of their own. Evil villains are also likely to use these devices extensively because they are generally much cheaper than active security devices and often act as eyes and ears (figuratively speaking) for active defenses and traps.

The mainstay of any attempt to secure a location, surveillance and passive security systems monitor an area for whatever it is they are designed to detect. How they act on the information they gather will vary. Perhaps the systems merely transmit and/or record the data for living attendants to act on, or maybe the information is used to guide the actions of countermeasures (see **Active Security and Defense Systems**, pg 170.)

The following are examples of passive security systems, many of which may be used as triggers for traps and/ or aggressive security systems. They can also be used as boilerplates that are easily modified by applying additional extras, flaws, and linked powers. If the sensor is pushing the threshold of the unbelievable, or is using experimental or untested technology, adding the Unreliable flaw may be in order. Furthermore, those systems with skills can be made less or more sensitive by increasing or decreasing the amount of ranks.

As one would expect, the Senses effect is often the primary element of most passive security systems. It can be made more effective by adding additional Senses ranks for increasing its radius or range, or by increasing the Perception ranks. Adding Accurate allows the sensor to act as a targeting sensor for a defense system.

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## AIR FLOW ANALYZER

### Automated; 6 points

When located within a duct system or similarly confined area, this automated sensor monitors the flow of air passing by its location. If the air flow drops or increases outside the sensor's safety threshold, the sensor sounds an alert (or activates a trap, if linked to such a device.)

The sensor is intended to detect intruders in the duct, the presence of which will decrease the flow of air, as will opening a nearby vent to another duct or the outdoors. Someone passing by quickly (Speed 2 or higher, typically) may also alter air flow sufficiently to trigger the sensor.

An air flow analyzer makes for a good trap or defense system trigger.

**Air Flow Analyzer:** Senses 2 (Radius Detect Air Flow Disruptions [Touch]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## ARCANE SENSOR

### Automated; 6 points

This device can sense the presence and use of magic around it. Because of the nature of magic in most games, this sensor is itself mystical in nature (e.g., a spell or artifact), or is a hybrid of the arcane and technological.

**Arcane Sensor:** Senses 2 (Radius Magical Awareness [Mental]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## ATMOSPHERIC MONITOR

### Automated; 6 points

This sensor tracks fluctuations in humidity and temperature, sounding an alert if either varies too much from the programmed norm for the target area. Without adequately controlling the sensor's environment, however, the alert will often give false reports.

The atmospheric monitor is practically useless in main corridors, outdoors, and the like because something as simple as opening doors and a change in the weather will throw the sensor off. Locating the sensor in a small, temperature-controlled room without windows (so the sun can't raise the temperature) is ideal. This allows the sensor to detect variances brought on by something as seemingly innocuous as an intruder's body temperature or the warmth of a computer that is turned on without authorization.

Weather control powers can be especially useful for countering this sensor or will certainly set it off if used to create atmospheric- or humidity-based effects, such as blasts of air or water.

**Atmospheric Monitor:** Senses 2 (Radius Detect Temperature and Humidity Variance [Touch]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## CHRONOMETRIC SENSOR

### Automated; 6 points

Requiring the use of super-science, magic, or something similar, this device monitors the flow of time. It will sound an alert if it senses a disruption, as may be caused by someone slowing down or speeding up time in order to bypass another part of the system, such as a security camera.

**Chronometric Sensor:** Senses 2 (Radius Temporal Awareness [Mental]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## GRAVIMETRIC SENSOR

### Automated; 6 points

The sensor monitors gravity, and sounds an alert if it senses a disruption, as may be caused by an intruder reducing gravity's affect in order to fly over a lattice of infrared beams or the like.

**Gravimetric Sensor:** Senses 2 (Radius Gravimetric Awareness [Tactile]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## INFRARED BEAM SENSOR

### Automated; 5 points

Infrared beams crisscross the designated area, activating an alert or the like when a beam is broken, such as may be caused by someone walking through it.

The beams are only visible to infravision or similar means of detecting infrared light. Someone who is sufficiently agile may be able to avoid the beams, depending upon how the system is set-up.

**Infrared Beam Sensor:** Senses 2 (Radius Detect Motion [Visual]), Noticeable (Infravision); Perception 8 (+8) • 5 points

## MAGNETOMETER

### Automated; 6 points

A magnetometer monitors magnetic fields and, having been set to the norm for the area, will sound an alert

should it detect sufficient variance. Most equipment requiring lots of power emits a noticeable magnetic field (even a cell phone does while in use), and such a field may be detected if the sensor's sensitivity threshold is lowered sufficiently. Someone more concerned with a metahuman manipulating magnetic fields to fly or the like will have the sensitivity threshold set higher so as not to be thrown off by any unavoidable fluctuations in nearby authorized equipment.

**Magnetometer:** Senses 2 (Radius Magnetic Awareness [Tactile]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## MICROPHONE

**Automated; 8 points**

Able to pick up sounds, microphones can be used on their own or in conjunction with other sensors (especially security cameras), although their primary purpose is usually surveillance and intelligence gathering rather than security.

Extended is often added to allow the microphone to pick up sounds at much greater distances, although doing so also increases the chance of an operator becoming confused as to a sound's source. This is because the possible locations for said source increase relative to the area covered. Adding Analytical allows the microphone to gather more details about the sounds it picks up.

**Microphone:** Senses 4 (Acute Ranged Radius Detect Sound [Normal Hearing]); Perception 8 (+8) • 8 points

## PHANTOMETER

**Automated; 5 points**

So named because this sensor is meant to detect incorporeal creatures passing through the surface it is attached to, a phantometer uses super-science, magic, or similarly extraordinary means to perform its function.

**Phantometer:** Senses 2 (Radius Detect Incorporeal [Touch]), Limited to Surface Contact; Perception 8 (+8) • 5 points

## PHEROMONE/SCENT SENSOR

**Automated; 6 points**

The sensor picks up on unusual odors in the air, allowing it to detect intruders by the presence of cologne, sweat, etc. When placed outdoors, a pheromone/scent

sensor can be extremely useful for helping to protect a perimeter. However, it can be thrown off by the presence of animals (especially if they are in heat or otherwise giving off a strong scent.)

The sensor's Perception DC should be determined by just how powerful the chemicals and pheromones of these scents are. Still, in their basic form these devices can only detect the scents but don't know what to make of them, nor can the sensor discriminate between what it should be standing guard against and other scents. Making sense of the information gathered requires an operator to check the data.

Analytical is an especially useful add-on for this sensor because it allows it to be more discerning by separating naturally occurring scents from those that have no business being present.

**Pheromone/Scent Sensor:** Senses 2 (Radius Detect Scent [Smell]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## PRESSURE PLATE

**Automated; 0 points**

The sensor sounds an alert or activates a system when weight, such as from an intruder's step, presses down upon it. More advanced varieties can be programmed to go off only when sufficient weight is detected while ignoring anything lighter. Just what this weight threshold is must be preset; although changing it doesn't generally require much effort, some anticipation and forethought is required. If the threshold is set too low, for instance, the sensor will go off if a small stone rolls onto it. If the sensitivity threshold is set too high, the sensor won't sound even if an overweight elephant were to sit upon it.

A pressure plate is a trigger concept, and does not require game mechanics to represent it unless it is added to a security system or the like in a suitable fashion. This sort of sensor doesn't require a check or the like of any kind, for instance—either the plate is being pressed down upon to a sufficient degree or it isn't. The situation is entirely binary in its simplicity.

## PSYCHIC SENSOR

**Automated; 6 points**

This device can sense the presence and use of psychic abilities and energies. Because many games consider psychic abilities to be a manifestation of an evolved

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state of being, it may be possible to detect its presence using normal—if advanced—technologies.

Adding Accurate allows the sensor to act as a targeting sensor for a defense system.

**Psychic Sensor:** Senses 2 (Radius Mental Awareness [Mental]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## SECURITY CAMERA

**Operated;** 5 points

The most prolific security device in the world aside from the lock, a basic security camera relays color video to a security station, typically an office where signals from this and other cameras rotate on display.

A security camera doesn't have any ranks in Perception because it merely provides an image an operator/viewer must apply their own Perception skill towards.

**Typical Security Camera Housing:** Toughness 5

**Security Camera:** Remote Sense 2 (Visual), Subtle • 5 points

The security camera can often be found with the following modifications and variations, on their own or combined:

- **Black and White:** Limited to Black and White • -1 point
- **High-Resolution:** A higher quality image allows greater detail to be discerned. Enhanced Perception 4, Limited to Visual • +1 point
- **Infrared:** Employed by high-end secure facilities for detecting intruders at night and/or through heavy foliage and the like. Senses 1 (Infravision) • +1 point
- **Low-Light:** The most common (and cheapest) night vision option, the camera's captured images are presented in degrees of green that represent the light being amplified as it reflects off various surfaces. Because of this, however, it can be temporarily overloaded by bright light and is useless under such conditions because it loses its ability to differentiate objects. Senses 1 (Low-Light Vision) • +1 point
- **Telephoto Lens:** The camera's range can be enhanced by adding different lenses. Senses (Normal Vision, Extended) • +1 point/rank

## VIBRATION MOTION SENSOR

**Automated;** 6 points

Capable of detecting vibrations through the surface they monitor (usually the ground or a floor, or underground to detect tunneling), these sensors activate an alert or the like when sufficient vibration is detected.

Just what this vibration threshold is must be preset—although changing the sensitivity threshold doesn't typically require much effort, some degree of forethought is required. If the threshold is set too low, for instance, the sensor will go off if a strong wind shakes a nearby tree. If the sensitivity threshold is set too high, the sensor won't sound even if an armored tank rattles by.

**Vibration Motion Sensor:** Senses 2 (Radius Detect Vibration [Touch]); Perception 8 (+8) • 6 points

## ACTIVE SECURITY AND DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Defense systems and active security are the fangs and claws of a headquarters or base of operations. These systems tie into some means of detection and observation, such as a passive security system, and react to stimulus in a fashion specific to their purpose and means, just as a person uses his five senses to direct attacks made with his own body.

An active security or defense system may be designed to capture, harm, or outright kill an intruder automatically, without discrimination or discernment. Alternatively, a system may be keyed to a chain of circumstances that makes its actions—by type and degree—very specific in how it will respond to various scenarios.

Regardless of how it works, why it is triggered, and what it is supposed to do, an active security system is designed to make itself known to its target in some way or another. Its effects are likely very obvious, and range from releasing a gas that will knock an intruder out to unleashing a storm of laser blasts that will burn through the target with ferocious efficiency. Such systems have but one purpose: stop people who are currently located where they do not belong or are engaged in something they shouldn't be doing.

## ADDING SIGHT TO BITE

The default condition of active security and defense systems is to be blind—they are merely operational sys-

## Attacking without an Attack Roll

Although it should be obvious that many active security systems and deathtraps use powers that, despite normally needing an attack roll, they are intended to function in such a way that results in an attack roll not making sense.

Lowering someone into a pit filled with a deadly substance built using the Damage effect would be a good example of a deathtrap that should not require an attack roll despite how the effect normally functions. In the case of the harmful pit trap, the Damage effect would usually require an attack roll, but this makes no sense for the trap's concept. What happens if the Damage effect's attack roll misses?

The person failed to drop into the yawning pit beneath them?

Gravity suddenly doesn't work?

The pit "missed" and moves across the room?

None of those explanations makes much sense, so an

This aspect of the deathtrap is largely a matter of the concept being employed, and so the attack roll should just be ignored. But, for those of you who absolutely **must** see all of a power's elements represented in the game statistics, we're providing you trap builders with a +0 extra, **No Attack Roll Required**. In game terms, this is the same as the attack rolling a natural 20 (but without obtaining a *threat*.) In some instances, the Additional Resistance (Dodge; replaces attack) flaw (pg 64) is a good way of handling this situation. The attack roll is replaced with a Dodge resistance check (essentially an attack without the roll) that is followed by the usual resistance check if the former fails.

tems waiting for something to tell it what to do. This means they must be tied into a means of detection and/or observation, such as those found in the **Surveillance and Passive Security** section found earlier in this work.

Think of the surveillance or passive security system as a module to be added to the active security or defense system. The latter is the weapon waiting to be fired and the former are the senses and finger that guide the weapon and pull the trigger. The most common way to create a pairing between a surveillance system and active security is by applying the Linked or Triggered extras, although other means certainly do exist. Another option is to add an operator to the mix, such as a guard in a centralized control room or an artificial intelligence that is tied into all the facility's systems.

## RANGED ACTIVE SECURITY

Whether the intention is to capture or kill, a ranged active security system strikes from a distance. It will likely be alerted by passive systems located far enough away as to give the former sufficient time to react rather than letting an intruder get in close.

**Dart Projector:** The system projects a small metal dart that, in and of itself, isn't very dangerous. However, it is often coated in a substance such as a poison or sleep drug, reducing the dart to a mere delivery system for a more potent security implement (add as

a linked power.) Some also have the Multiattack or Area extra, making them a far more offensive weapon that can pepper an area with darts.

**Flame Projector:** A flame-thrower shoots a stream of fire 5 feet wide and 30 feet long in front of the projector as an area attack. This device is ideal for clearing hallways and the like.

**Gas Jet, Nerve:** The jet's nozzles spew a cloud of gas that acts upon the subject's nervous system, rendering them unable to move. The gas must be inhaled.

**Gas Jet, Sleep:** The jet's nozzles spew a cloud of knock-out gas. The gas must be inhaled.

**Gas Jet, Toxin:** The jet's nozzles spew a cloud of poisonous gas. The gas must be inhaled.

**Glop Gun:** The nozzle projects large globules of a liquid that solidifies upon contact, constricting slightly in order to restrain the target.

**Gun, Heavy:** This gun turret fires a light ballistic round, and is typically used for anti-personnel purposes. The gun turret is often modified to use Accurate, Multiattack, or Penetrating to increase its effectiveness. A heavy gun is just as likely to be set in a fixed position (Limited to Facing) as not. Diminished Range is also commonly applied when there is a concern about close-quarters.

## Ranged Active Security

System	Effect	Critical	Cost
Dart Projector *	Ranged Damage 1	18-20	4
Flame Projector	Line Area Damage 6	—	12
Gas Jet, Nerve	Cloud Area Affliction 8 (Resisted by Fortitude; Hindered, Immobilized, Paralyzed)	—	16
Gas Jet, Sleep	Cloud Area Affliction 8 (Resisted by Fortitude; Fatigued, Exhausted, Asleep)	—	16
Gas Jet, Toxin	Cloud Area Damage 8, Drawn Out	—	24
Glop Gun	Cumulative Ranged Affliction 8 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Limited Degrees	—	24
Gun, Heavy	Ranged Damage 6	20	12
Gun, Light	Ranged Damage 4	20	8
Gun, Super-Heavy	Ranged Damage 10, Penetrating 10, Inaccurate	20	29
Sand Bagger	Ranged Affliction 6 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Incapacitated); Ranged Affliction 6 (Resisted by Dodge; Vulnerable, Prone), Limited Degrees	—	18
Tangle Line	Cumulative Ranged Affliction 6 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Limited Degrees, Diminished Range; Ranged Affliction 6 (Resisted by Dodge; Vulnerable, Prone), Limited Degrees, Diminished Range; Move Object 20, Limited to Towards the Tangle Line Launcher, Limited to Entangled Targets (must at least be hindered and vulnerable)	—	27
Taser, Metahuman	Cumulative Ranged Affliction 6 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Limited Degrees, Diminished Range; Ranged Affliction 6 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Incapacitated)	—	29

\* See the Item's Description for More Information

**Gun, Light:** A lighter version of the heavy gun, the light gun is more likely to be seen indoors within tight corridors and the like.

**Gun, Super-Heavy:** This gun fires a large shell intended to take down metahumans or vehicles.

**Sand Bagger:** This weapon fires small, cloth bags filled with sand. These non-lethal projectiles have a good chance of knocking someone over and/or rendering them unconscious.

**Tangle Line:** A weighted line is fired at the target with the intention of entangling, knocking down, and reeling them in.

**Taser, Metahuman:** An over-sized version of a common taser intended to take down targets with super powers.

## CLOSE-QUARTERS ACTIVE SECURITY

Whether the intention is to capture or kill, a close-quarters active security system strikes from up close. It will likely be alerted by passive systems located im-

mediately nearby, allowing the security system to react when the target moves into the target area.

**Bear Trap:** 'Bear trap' is a general term used to describe any sort of trap that uses clamping "jaws" that swing up when a pressure point between them is stepped on. Not only does the closing jaw cause harm, but it can also hold the subject in place. Such traps are often concealed.

**Blade, Small and Large:** A scything or probing blade ejects outward to strike at the target. The Reach extra is often added to make longer blades.

**Cage:** A metal cage (Toughness 10) drops down or springs up to encompass a predetermined area. The cage is large enough to contain a normal adult human (size rank -2.) The cage can be made to contain larger targets at a cost of 1 point per size rank increase.

A Dodge resistance check (DC 10) is needed to avoid being trapped. Every size rank the cage is above -2 increases this DC by +2 because the tar-

## Close-Quarters Active Security

System	Effect	Critical	Cost
Bear Trap	Damage 4, Triggered (pressure); Cumulative Affliction 6 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Limited Degrees, Triggered (successfully struck by trap jaws)	19-20	19
Blade, Large	Damage 5	19-20	6
Blade, Small	Damage 2	18-20	4
Cage *	—	—	1
Collapsing Stair *	Affliction 9 (Resisted by Dodge; Prone), Limited Degrees 2; Speed 3 [16 mph], Affects only Others, Limited to Down Slide and Prone People, Uncontrolled	—	4
Detonating Step	Burst Area Damage 10, Triggered (pressure), Reduced Area 2	—	19
Electrified Surface	Damage 10, Contagious	20	20
Laser Grid	Shapeable Area Damage 8, Additional Resistance (0 Damage if Dodge Succeeds)	20	8
Null Field	Shapeable Area Close Nullify 8 (Resisted by Fortitude), Broad, Effortless, Simultaneous	—	24
Press	Damage 10, Additional Resistance (Dodge; replaces attack)	20	10
Vertigo Field	Shapeable Area Cumulative Affliction 10 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Stunned, Incapacitated), Progressive	—	50

\* See the Item's Description for More Details

get has farther to go to get out of the way. Caught subjects are still able to move and perform normally within the cage, limited only by the size within.

**Collapsing Stair:** The stairs fold under, creating a downward slide. Anyone upon the steps when they collapse may be tripped. If rendered prone by the trip, they will begin sliding down the stairs (Speed 3; 16 mph) but may attempt an Athletics check (DC 30) to stop themselves. Climbing the stairs while collapsed also requires an Athletics check (DC 20.) If their sliding fall cannot be stopped, the subject will eventually find themselves at the bottom.

**Detonating Step:** Once activated, the explosives concealed within explode. This trap is usually triggered by a pressure plate that is deactivated during the facility's regular operations.

**Electrified Surface:** When the system is activated, anyone touching it will receive an electrical shock. This is often used on fences, walls, and floors, but can also be applied to door handles and the like. Add an appropriately shaped Area extra to cover a larger surface, Line for a fence, for example.

**Laser Grid:** The area, from floor to ceiling, is filled by a crisscrossing field of deadly lasers. Because the la-

sers are static, they do not use an attack roll, instead requiring anyone trying to move through the area make a Dodge resistance check to avoid them.

A truly devious Gamemaster will render the lasers invisible to the naked eye using Concealment or Subtle, often with the caveat that mists or infrared visuals can detect the beams.

**Null Field:** The area nullifies certain power descriptors. The version presented here is broad in its scope, requiring the system be set to a particular, broad descriptor.

**Press:** The ceiling and floor and/or walls slam together, crushing anything caught between. The surfaces are typically reinforced to be stronger than that used to construct the mundane surfaces surrounding them (Toughness +2 or +4.) If the press is made to stay in place, continuing to press in on anyone caught between its surfaces, the Gamemaster should add an Affliction effect to represent this result. For an exceptionally large press, add the Area extra.

**Vertigo Field:** Entering the area surrounding the projector causes disorientation and nausea, leaving the subject vulnerable.

## DEATHTRAPS

What villainous lair would be complete without a deathtrap or two? Although not always practical, deathtraps are a staple of the super-hero genre and are excellent tools for advancing a story and elevating events. Deathtraps also allow the Gamemaster to better control the game's pace—think of them as speed bumps that can grant a much-needed breather for players and Gamemasters alike.

There are far too many deathtrap types and variations to include them all within this humble work. Still, we'll do our best to help along your own fiendishness by providing you with some of the more sound and proven concepts, as well as some rather outlandish and outside-of-the-box designs to illustrate just how far the idea of deathtraps may be pushed.

Anyone familiar with deathtraps from comic books, movies, and television usually has one rather obvious question after seeing them almost certainly fail to kill the protagonist(s): why didn't the bad guy just kill the heroes outright? Why the big show, predictable monologue, and inevitable leaving to do something else as the hero is subjected to the deathtrap, thus giving the hero the time and opportunity he needs to escape?

A deathtrap communicates preparation and care on the villain's part—after all, they didn't just take the hero out back behind the woodshed and put a bullet in their head. The villain has put some thought into a way to kill their opponents in long, drawn out fashion. Such a death is intended to be epic in presentation, perception, and implementation (or perhaps campy and comical, depending upon the villain and circumstances.) The deathtrap is the villain's final slap in the face—it's their way of saying "sure, I could have killed you quick and easy, but this way will be tortuous and show you just how much you are in my mercy."

In other words, the deathtrap is an expression of the villain's contempt by means of silly, over the top showmanship.

Despite its name, so far as the Gamemaster is concerned, a deathtrap's role isn't to kill the heroes even if it is the purpose of the villain foolish or flamboyant enough to employ such a theatrical tool. Certainly, the heroes' demise is a possibility if they are not on the ball, but the deathtrap's true purpose is to communicate a sense of dread, danger, and looming, inevitable death so far as the story is concerned. Mechanically, however,

deathtraps are just another problem to be solved and challenge to be surmounted.

Ultimately, every deathtrap must have at least one "out"—one means of escape. If not, the deathtrap transforms from a problem with a solution to nothing more than the Gamemaster lording his power over the characters for a prolonged death scene that is certain to kill (no pun intended) the players' fun.

It is finding this available means of escape—intended or not by the villain to be a final tease rubbed in the heroes' faces—where the fun of utilizing deathtraps is to be found. Without the challenge of knowing there is a way to escape, if only the heroes are smart enough to figure it out, there's no point to employing such devices.

### DEATHTRAPS TAKE THEIR TIME

While reading the sample deathtraps, you've likely noticed many are somehow designed with an extended time between their activation and their deadly results. Certainly, this could be avoided—the villain pulls a lever and the chamber floods with water in seconds—but that would defeat the deathtrap's purpose. After all, if the intent was to kill the hero quickly, we again find ourselves asking why not just quickly put a bullet in their brain?

The extended timeframe is to allow the Gamemaster the opportunity to build suspense and grant the heroes a chance to plan and make good their escape (or, in the case of player characters used to punching their way through their problems, it gives them time to think about what went wrong as they fail to figure a way out.) In order for this aspect of a deathtrap to be truly effective, the Gamemaster should overlap a bit of reality to the situation. For example, use an actual timer in real life, stopping the timer only for instances where the players need to ask something out of character, otherwise forcing the players to think quickly and under duress.

### THE PUZZLE VARIATION

Building suspense isn't a skill all Gamemasters possess, and their game shouldn't suffer for this fact. This means waiting for a deathtrap's timed trigger to tick down can be both frustrating and excruciatingly drawn out if the time is filled with something other than the players arguing over what to try next. A deathtrap can be more than just the sum of what is in place to be the heroes' ultimate demise—there can be more to it than avoiding death alone. This is where puzzles come in.

The villain's reason for leaving a puzzle can be as varied as the puzzles themselves. Some bad guys just can't leave well enough alone because puzzles are a part of their criminal theme (or insanity.) Others possess a screwed up sense of fair play that insists they leave their victims a way out. It's also possible the puzzle isn't intentional, such as the restraints holding the heroes in place being controlled by a computer that must somehow be hacked from where the heroes are being held in order to initiate the command that frees them.

A Gamemaster can devise puzzles of his own to suit the villain's particular penchants or he can scour any number of relevant websites for ideas. Keep in mind there must be an incentive for doing the puzzle, just as there should be a penalty for failure. The obvious reward is escape, just as the obvious penalty is death, but the latter isn't necessarily the best route to take. Instead, each failed attempt can have a different result, such as making the deathtrap more dangerous by adding new elements to the peril, causing other heroes or hostages to be subjected to the deathtrap, or it can speed up the deathtrap's timer.

Whatever the puzzle is and does, the consequences for failure will usually serve to enhance the game's suspense so long as it remains difficult enough to pose a challenge without merely adding a new layer of Gamemaster-imposed impossibility to the deathtrap's implementation.

## FILLING CHAMBER

**2/18 points**

Whether it is slowly filling with water, sand, or dense gas, this chamber is strong enough to contain the imprisoned heroes while the chamber does its job. The major difference between the various ways these possible substances are represented beyond their shared game mechanics is how the heroes will interact with their contained environment while trapped. Victims can swim through water and walk through gas, for instance, but sand would make movement much more difficult (possibly requiring an Affliction that limits movement be added, as per the alternate build to follow.)

**Filling Chamber:** Affliction 2 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Dazed, Incapacitated), Continuous, Priming • 6 points

**Filling Chamber (alternate):** Affliction 2 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Dazed, Incapacitated), Continuous,

Priming; Cumulative Affliction 8 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Limited Degrees • 22 points

## PRESS OF DEATH

**10 points**

The villain places the heroes in a room with walls of sufficient Toughness to prevent the captives from merely hammering their way out. This isn't the danger, however. The deathtrap aspect of this particular cell is the fact that the walls are slowly creeping towards each other with the inevitable result that anyone caught between will be crushed. Adding spikes to the press involves applying the Penetrating extra.

No attack roll is needed because there is no way the walls can miss without the subject entirely escaping the deathtrap.

**Press of Death:** Damage 30, No Knockback, Priming

• 10 points

## SUPER BATTERY DEATH RAY

**69 points**

Not merely a deathtrap, this is also a *super-weapon!* By stealing the life force from up to six metahumans (likely heroes) strapped to tables, sealed in unbreakable glass tubes, etc., the deathtrap powers a deadly, satellite beam weapon. This weapon will likely be capable of leveling entire city blocks once the heroes are dead and all their energy drained.

The restraints not only nullify the heroes' powers but will also necessarily be sufficiently strong and durable to hold the toughest metahuman in place, leaving it to the heroes to use their brains to get free.

**Life Force Battery & Restraints:** Weaken Stamina 4 (Resisted by Fortitude), Progressive, Limited to Retrained Metahumans; Close Nullify 8 (Resisted by Fortitude), Broad, Effortless, Simultaneous • 40 points

**Death Ray:** Burst Area Ranged Damage 20, Extended Range 10, Indirect, Penetrating 10, Activation, Fades, Fast Fade 10, Limited: Ranks Cannot be Higher than Current Stamina Ranks Drained by Battery • 29 points

## SWING N' SLICE

**17 points**

While strapped to a surface (assuming the restraints are designed to be strong enough), a large, heavy blade



is attached to a pendulum that slowly lowers towards where the hero is held in place. Another, common variation of this trap is the laser that slowly creeps along the floor towards the hero rather than using a gradually lowering blade.

No attack roll is needed because there is no way the blade can miss without the subject entirely escaping the deathtrap.

**Pendulum Blade:** Damage 14, Penetrating 10, Priming • 17 points

## “THE PIT”

Just about every variation of “the Pit” is an oldy but a goody when it comes to a villain’s deathtrap repertoire. The basic concept is incredibly simple: dangle the heroes over a pit (the same one or each with a pit to call their own), and then drop them to die at the mercy of whatever is found within.

Whether the villain chooses to slowly lower his captives into the pit or have some device or creature slowly cut through the rope or cable holding them is entirely a matter of taste. The means and timing is usually inconsequential to the ultimate end: the heroes fall down and become dead.

Following are some popular versions of this deathtrap:

### Molten Lava

**85 points**

The pit is filled with molten lava that will suffocate anyone it doesn’t first burn to death. Moving through the lava requires a successful (DC 20, +1 per consecutive round of being under the surface) Swim check.

No attack roll is needed because there is no way the lava can miss once the subject is immersed without the subject entirely escaping the deathtrap.

**Lava Pit:** Damage 20, Reaction (Contact/Immersion); Affliction 5 (Resisted by Fortitude; Impaired, Dazed, Incapacitated) • 85 points;

### Shark Tank

**6 points**

This water-filled pit wouldn’t be so frightening if it weren’t filled with hungry sharks. It would indeed make things worse if the villain first purposely inflicted one or more cuts that would then slowly drip into the

water as the heroes swayed above, awaiting their fate. If this is the case, a truly sadistic Gamemaster may want to rule the feeding frenzy this causes grants the sharks the benefit of the Rage power build (pg 55) for as long as the blood remains.

**Sharks:** Minion 6 (Eight Sharks \*, 31 points each) • 6 points

\* See the Minion advantage addendum, pg 38

### Stakes

**24 points**

Quite simply, the bottom of the pit is lined with long, sharp, pointy stakes or spikes.

**Stakes:** Damage 12, Penetrating 12, Additional Resistance (Dodge; Replaces Attack) • 24 points

## TIED UP AND TICKING

**30 points**

A somewhat old school and simple deathtrap, the heroes are restrained in a building or the like with timed bombs hidden throughout. A truly theatrical bad guy will even go so far as to put the heroes atop one of the bombs, underscoring the supposed inevitability of their rapidly arriving demise. The trick, then, is to escape the restraints and get out of the building before it goes boom and falls down around and upon the good guys.

Popular variations of this deathtrap place it within an important landmark or in an isolated section (a parking lot or steam tunnels, for instance) of a building that is otherwise packed with people. Perhaps it really is an otherwise abandoned building but hostages have likewise been restrained in various, out of the way and distant locations throughout the property. It is also possible the villain has sealed and booby-trapped the heroes’ own headquarters.

Regardless of how and where the heroes are trapped with the bombs, a villain can very easily make leaving without disarming the explosives an incredibly poor choice to make.

Each of the demolition packages in the Tied Up and Ticking deathtrap has the following game statistics, with the villain placing as many as are needed to suit the circumstances.

**Timed Bomb:** Burst Area 2 (60 ft.) Damage 12, Penetrating 6, Priming • 30 points

# CHAPTER 7

# THE MANY FACES

# OF EVIL

Super-hero comic books are not only known for presenting interesting villains that operate on their own or in small groups, but also for those that act on behalf of or head a massive, nefarious organization. Such organizations pursue sweeping and grandiose goals that rarely stoop to such petty interests as common thievery, but instead act out plots on a much larger scale. Nation-crumbing terrorism, genocide, and/or global domination are the sort of objective these organizations chase.

A single villain (or perhaps a few pooling their resources) can spend their available points on traits such as equipment, vehicles, headquarters, and minions in order to build an organization. This can be extremely limiting, however, because the contributing character's concept will still require a significant portion of his points be spent on himself, reducing what is available for the organization to draw upon. (Not to mention leaving the question of what happens to the organization if the character supplying the points is killed or otherwise removed from the picture. Does the organization have the ability to survive beyond the character that built it?)

In this chapter, you'll find a way to build villainous organizations as separate entities, using the same basic game mechanics used for creating characters. How the organization then interacts with the characters who rule it is handled in the same fashion as most interactions in role-playing games. It is a relationship to be played out rather than held to the confines of how points are spent. This not only allows the villains to be designed and grow on their own terms, but also lets the organization reach its full potential without being tied to how quickly characters can pump points into it.

Despite these new rules on building an organization, there's nothing to prevent a villain from purchasing minions, equipment, headquarters and the like separately from those of the organization. However, such things will be especially loyal to their creator due to the special bond of being purchased with the character's own points. Traits purchased using a character's points can represent personal guards, facilities that are kept secret even from the organization, and so on.

## EVIL ORGANIZATIONS, STEP-BY-STEP

Certain elements within the organization building rules are purposely similar or identical to other, existing rules so far as game mechanics are concerned. However, they are presented here with a different flavor to distinguish how their application and purpose will vary from the norm.

- An organization only has three abilities (Intellect, Awareness, Presence), but does not gain any points from those that are absent.
- Because the organization is a collection of people, places, and equipment rather than a single entity, it is immune to many effects and influences. Game-masters should use common sense to govern this, however, rather than representing these conditions with the Immunity effect. For example, you cannot use poison or disease against an organization (although you can against some of its members), nor can an organization die of old age or be suffocated.

## Organization Building without Points

Perhaps the most important part of running a game is working with the players to tell a story they participate in and help shape. Sometimes the story you wish to tell while in the role of the Gamemaster doesn't fit the clearly defined point structure laid out in the rules, so you need to fib a bit.

The need to play fast and loose with the rules may become outright necessary when surrounding your arch-villain with a terrifying organization, the scope of which may normally surpass the current PL's capacity to adequately accommodate. After all, you don't want your arch-villain spending too many points on his organization, leaving him weak and vulnerable in just about every other way. How would you justify the resulting pushover controlling such a daunting organization of evil?

In such cases, it's best to put the story first and fib, even if that means building the organization partly or even entirely based on the concept you want rather than the points your villain has available to spend. Don't feel guilty about doing this. So long as your motive is to enhance the story, your players will ultimately be grateful the story is being driven by the potential for a fun challenge rather than bean counting.

Organizations are restricted by the same PL limitations on powers, skills, abilities, advantages, etc. that apply to characters. When developing an organization, it may simplify matters to think of the process as one that is similar to designing a construct. Instead of an end result made of gears and bolts, though, the result will be comprised of political clout, manpower, and economic and material resources.

## STEP 1: STRUCTURE & LEADERSHIP

An organization needs leadership: someone to tell its members what to do and how to do it. A leader keeps the members in line, defines goals, and looks ahead at the big picture while ensuring everyone stays on track. Just who is in charge and how they lead is a significant element of defining an organization, even though it is purely a matter of plot and does not cost any points.

Following are some standard options regarding possible leadership styles, most of which may be combined as needed to suit the organization.

**Anarchy:** There is no real leadership in such an organization beyond whoever can seize temporary power at any given moment. Such a leadership has very little structure or ability to push onward towards goals that are more complex than destruction and terror.

**Co-Leadership:** Leadership duties are split between two people who have, in theory at least, equal power. Responsibilities and authority within the organization may be divided evenly between the two, creating a tendency towards a more equitable division of power, or each may be responsible for different aspects

of the organization's operations. The latter case is prone to unbalance the power structure to match the weights each assigned aspect carries.

**Council:** A board, panel, committee or similar group of elite members governs the organization. Council members collectively vote on decisions although each member's weight need not necessarily be equal. Some members' votes may have more influence because of their position and role in the organization, seniority, etc., especially when the council is departmentalized for the sake of expediency and efficiency. Such types of leadership—especially amongst villainous organizations—tend to suffer from political infighting.

**Democracy:** The organization's members have a vote in determining the organization's leadership. Each vote carries equal authority to that of every other vote, regardless of what position the member currently has within the organization.

**Dictatorship:** A single being leads the organization, regardless of the will or wishes of others. This does not necessarily mean the leader is evil, harsh, or in any other way bad for the organization, but merely indicates the leader answers to no one else and has total control. Force is, however, a frequent necessity of retaining control in a dictatorship.

**Inherited:** Whether a monarchy or aristocracy, there is a defined blood line or other defining trait that determining who commands, with power passing from one generation to the next regardless of actual competency.

**Meritocracy:** Authority is bestowed based upon one's abilities, placing the best-suited, most qualified person into the respective position of authority.

**Theocracy:** An individual or group commands in the name of religious ideals.

**Zealous:** Not a form of leadership on its own, zealotry describes any type of leadership that is dedicated to an ideal, person, dogma, or the like beyond reason. Logic becomes secondary (often a far second) to blind loyalty and utter devotion. Such an organization, regardless of leadership structure, is often easier to control so long as the zealotry is properly channeled and manipulated. Such a hierarchy almost always becomes resistant to change, however, because members are wholly behind the existing path. The Zealous organization advantage is necessity to be considered a zealous organization.

## STEP 2: BASIC TRAITS

An organization is rooted in its ability to interact with the world around it. Much of this interaction comes from the Gamemaster through the process of running the game, but it is founded within the organization's fundamental traits: its abilities, skills, advantages, etc.

### Basic Trait Costs

Trait	Cost
Ability Score	2 points per ability rank
Will Resistance check	1 point per +1 bonus
Skills	1 point per 2 ranks
Advantages	1 point per advantage or advantage rank
Powers	Power cost

## ABILITIES

Organizations only possess mental abilities—Intellect, Awareness, and Presence—each of which is purchased separately. These abilities represent the organization's overall capacity in the respective area. Although individual leaders may make the organization better or worse than this baseline in some or all regards in their particular sphere of control, an organization's ability score indicates what is typical of the collective organization as a whole.

**Intellect:** This ability represents how competent the organization is at managing and directing itself and its operations—activities that require order and rationale to be conducted efficiently and effectively. This ability is also used to determine what the organization

knows, but not necessarily how well it can employ that knowledge.

**Awareness:** This ability represents how well the organization can use the information and resources available to it while also representing its overall resolve and commitment. In short, it's how well it gets things done.

**Presence:** How well an organization can influence the world around it is a critical factor. Generally this ability is perceived as the appeal and coercive capacity of the organization's ideals and goals. It can also be thought of in terms of other resources the organization can bring to bear to sway others, as suits the game.

**Will Resistance Checks:** An organization uses its Will resistance check for any situation where the collective consciousness of its members may be affected. The most notable situation requiring an organization to make a Will resistance check would be for the purpose of morale (pg 187.)

## SKILLS

An organization's skills generally indicate how well it can perform certain functions on a macro scale rather than on a small, day-to-day operational scale that concerns individual characters. Such information is especially useful when a Gamemaster is measuring how capable the organization is at conducting operations that occur behind the scenes and out of sight. Skills are less useful to organizations up front while interacting with the player characters by means of the organization's NPC members, who will have their own skills.

Using one of its skills almost certainly requires an organization expend resources to achieve the desired result. Making a Deception check to bluff means having personnel in place, for instance, just as Stealth requires greasing palms, destroying records, and the like. An organization does not generally use skills as easily as does an individual.

Skills not mentioned here may be allowed at the Gamemaster's discretion if an organization-based use is explained. Otherwise, such skills have been left off the list because they are primarily or entirely related to an individual, and simply do not function on the scale discussed here.

Following is a list of skills organizations may take, accompanied with a description of how they should be employed in the game.

- **Deception (Pre):** Used to indicate how competent the organization is at subterfuge, covert infiltration, and the like. Deception is handy when determining if an organization can infiltrate undercover agents into another organization, society, or the like by means of disinformation, fraud, and misdirection.
- **Expertise (Varies):** Rather than merely representing the ability of individual members, a permitted Expertise skill illustrates the sort of relevant resources the organization has available and how capable they are at employing them.

In most cases, it can be assumed that an organization will be able to call on rudimentary information covered by most Expertise skills in some way due to the breadth of their diverse personnel and resources. As such, the skill is used to indicate specialized understanding and the ability to use it practically within the organization's operations.

Expertise skills are also useful as an indication of what sort of resources and tools an organization specializes in. An organization with many ranks of Expertise (Computers) can be expected to have a powerful network with a vast arsenal of versatile software, for example. Expertise (Computers) could also be used to oppose player characters seeking to crack the organization's network (if the particular situation doesn't place the characters in direct opposition to NPCs or specific equipment), as well as the organization's ability to infiltrate and access other, secure networks and databases.

- **Intimidation (Pre):** Sometimes diplomatic channels and sliding money across the right palm isn't enough. Intimidation indicates how skilled (and willing) the organization is, as a whole, at obtaining information using freezer room beatings, photos of loved ones asleep in their own beds, electroshock, and similar nasty tricks.

It is especially important to only employ this skill as a macro tool. When interacting directly with player characters, Gamemasters should always employ NPCs and use their specific skills rather than that of the organization.

- **Investigation (Int):** Most organizations survive as much on what they know as by how well they can defend themselves. Gather Information checks using Investigation represents how many ears to the ground an organization possesses and how well it utilizes them. This skill can represent everything from moles to snitches, wiretaps to email scans, depending upon the organization's nature and resources.

What's more, some organizations are better equipped to study data than others, be it due to the available resources or its members' general competency and training. The Investigation skill is especially handy for Gamemasters who want their players to understand just how real the threat of their secret identities can be, or who need an idea of how to otherwise gauge how easily the villain can use clues the characters leave behind against them.

- **Perception (Awe):** Perception represents how tied into the world around them and how attentive and perceptive the organization is. Rather than thinking of how this skill operates on a micro scale, such as noticing someone hiding in the shadows, think of it on the grand scale of the information age.

This skill would be used to determine if the organization is able to take note of strange behavior amongst its members (especially if they are spies), if funds are being skimmed, unusual data traffic on its computer network, an unexplained increase in the attention of law enforcement agencies, and the like.

- **Persuasion (Pre):** Useful for most groups, this skill determines how well the organization can use diplomatic and political channels, along with negotiations and similar social tools, to get what it wants. Persuasion is a good measure of an organization's ability to influence the world around it without having to resort to heavy-handed tactics (in other words, violence, blackmail, and the like.)
- **Stealth (Int):** Stealth lets the Gamemaster know how capable the organization is at hiding itself from those who seek it out. This use applies whether looking for a general idea at how competently the organization keeps its agents out of the public eye, how well it conceals its facilities from the police, or stays off the media's "radar." In the case of particular instances that cross paths with the characters, such as the heroes hunting down an individual agent or looking for a concealed base on a deserted island, one should

use the specific subject's and/or the headquarters abilities rather than that of the organization.

This skill uses Intellect rather than Agility because the nature of how an organization hides itself from the world is much more the result of careful planning and preparation than camouflage or the like. The organization's methods include record manipulation, layered shell corporations, and so on rather than hiding in a dumpster's shadow.

- **Technology (Int):** Although this skill should be used individually by member NPCs for most actual rolls related to making items or the like, Technology can be used as a general indication of how capable, resourceful, and dedicated the organization is to anything related to the skill's various aspects.

In practical terms, NPCs should still roll Technology checks related to the actual creation and repair of items that are utilized in the game. Instead, this skill should be employed by the Gamemaster as a guideline of the organization's capabilities on a macro scale, and should not be used for many, if any, actual skill rolls.

## ADVANTAGES

Because an organization is a collection of people, ideas, and purposes rather than an individual, many advantages simply are not appropriate.

Organizations cannot take any combat advantages, as most directly affect combat mechanics. Most other advantages are left up to the Gamemaster's approval to determine whether or not they may be used appropriately by an organization. Following are some of the most likely advantages an organization will employ, along with explanations of how this is done.

Organizations are also able to choose from their own new category of advantages, as seen earlier in this work.

- **Artificer:** The organization has the resources to manufacture magical devices on a large scale. This means it is likely agents will be employed with such items commiserate to the operative's function and abilities.
- **Benefit:** This advantage is especially useful for representing many facets of the organization and what sort of influence it can enforce. Wealth, diplomatic immunity, and status are prime examples of benefits an organization would have.

- **Connected:** Connections are another useful tool for identifying an organization's influence, especially if using the optional revised version of this advantage.
- **Contacts:** Contacts are another useful tool for identifying an organization's influence, especially if using the optional revised version of this advantage.
- **Ear to the Ground:** A handy advantage for representing especially useful intelligence sources in a particular social faction, especially if the organization is making good use of the Connected and Contact advantages.
- **Equipment:** See Step 4) Arsenal.
- **Favored Foe:** Organizations can have it out for a particular group, just as individuals may.
- **Invention Expertise:** Some organizations known for utilizing high-tech devices also have a reputation for employing a particular type far more effectively. This advantage is useful for representing such an affinity.
- **Inventor:** The organization has the resources to manufacture devices on a large scale. Its agents will likely employ items commiserate to the operative's function and abilities.
- **Minion:** See Step 3) Minions.
- **Ritual Expertise:** Some organizations known for utilizing arcane artifacts also have a reputation for employing a particular type far more effectively. This advantage is useful for representing such an affinity.
- **Ritualist:** The organization has the resources to perform and utilize magic rituals on a large scale. Its agents will likely employ rituals commiserate to the operative's function and abilities.
- **Sidekick:** Organizations do not gain sidekicks. Unique and important NPCs are added as needed and appropriate. This is done without expending the organization's points while all other noteworthy members are handled using the Minion advantage.
- **Specialization:** Some organizations are known for being far more competent and capable at a particular area covered by the organization's skills than in the skill's other aspects.
- **Well-Informed:** This advantage is incredibly useful to an organization that likes to stay on top of things.



## MINION ADVANTAGES

Minions are purchased using points gained from the Minion advantage. Many organizations have more than one group of notable minion, meaning multiple instances of this advantage are frequently used.

## POWERS

As groups of people, ideals, goals, and things, organizations do not normally have powers. Rather, it is up to the members and their resources to determine what manner of power-related traits are at the organization's disposal. There is the rare exception to this rule, however, as illustrated in **Step 6: Super-Weapons**.

There may be instances where the Gamemaster decides a power is appropriate to the organization as a whole. As a general rule, though, all such matters are

typically attributed to the individual members or their equipment, facilities, etc.

## HERO POINTS AND EXTRA EFFORT

Organizations cannot acquire, accumulate, or use hero points, nor may they use extra effort.

## STEP 3: PERSONNEL

Within an organization, minions represent the rank and file members. They are the nameless operatives and fodder who keep the headquarters running and throw themselves at the heroes with the hope of stalling the latter long enough for the more important villains to get the job done. Minions are the solid back upon which any organization worth its salt will be built.

It is the minion-level operative that heroic player characters will likely encounter most often, acting as a relatively minor impediment while moving the story along until the time comes to bring out the climax. They are the common face that makes the organization's more elite members stand out all the more.

An organization purchases minions normally, as per the Minion advantage, but bookkeeping is much easier if they are broken down into reasonable and related groups. Some example categories of minions where such a division might be made within a single organization include pilots, technicians, supersoldiers, foot soldier, and undercover agents. Each such category of operative would apply a separate instance of the Minion advantage.

## STEP 4: ARSENAL

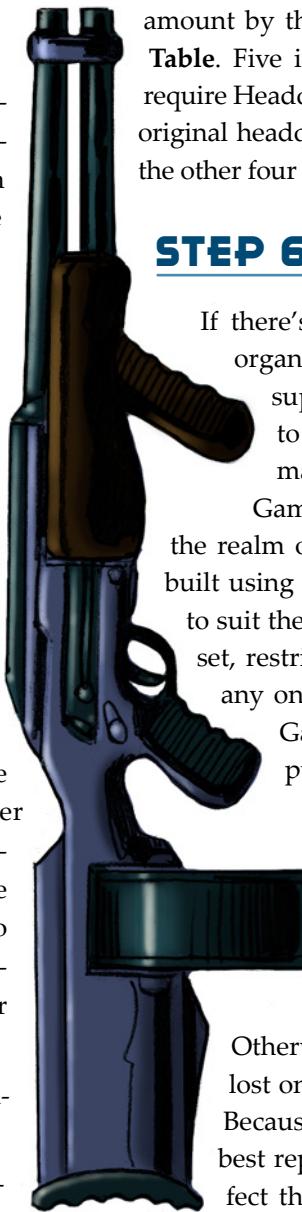
Because of the massive scope an organization is likely to attain, using the Equipment advantage normally to represent the organization's available equipment, weapons, and vehicles a member operative may employ will almost certainly be insufficient. As such, the organization uses the Equipment advantage in a fashion that resembles the updated Minion advantage.

Purchase as many ranks in the Equipment advantage as you'd like a given member to be able to draw upon as an arsenal's pool (in other words, supplies that do not cover from the minion's own point allotment.) Ranks may then be assigned to raise the amount of minions who may draw upon that type of equipment by moving one step up the **Amounts Table** (pg 77) per rank assigned in this manner.

Any lost equipment is replaced between adventures, at the Gamemaster's discretion.

Much like with the Minion advantage, bookkeeping an organization's arsenal is much easier if you do so in "packages."

*For example, an organization that wants half its 1,000 espionage operatives to be able to draw upon its 20 points espionage equipment package at any one time would purchase Equipment 14 (Espionage package; 20 points, x 1,000.)*



## STEP 5: HEADQUARTERS

An organization buys headquarters in the same fashion as does an individual character.

Because of an organization's nature, it is far easier to purchase additional facilities. As such, a single instance of a headquarters facility may be increased by applying additional ranks with each rank increasing the amount by the appropriate value on the **Amounts Table**. Five identical 50-point headquarters would require Headquarters 7, for example—5 ranks for the original headquarters and 2 more ranks to purchase the other four facilities.

## STEP 6: SUPER-WEAPONS

If there's one thing players expect from evil organizations in the super-hero genre, it's super-weapons (or the like) designed to conquer or destroy on a diabolically massive scale. To keep things simple, a

Gamemaster can keep such devices in the realm of plot elements. This means they are built using whatever amount of points is needed to suit the concept rather than siphoning from a set, restricted number of points (such as what any one character is able to provide), or the Gamemaster can decide they must be purchased using a limited resource.

If opting for the limited resource option, the super-weapon(s) may be purchased as a Device, but this usually only works once unless the super-weapon is supposed to be a reoccurring element in the game.

Otherwise, all points spent on the Device are lost once it has been defeated by the heroes. Because of this, super-weapons are perhaps best represented by employing a Variable effect that is open-ended enough to adapt to new ideas, but with power modifiers appropriate to the organization and what it is capable of.

Just how a Variable effect super-weapon should be built depends on several factors. Foremost, what sort of resources does the organization's concept account for? An organization intended to be a grass-roots terrorist movement likely won't have a Vari-

able effect with sufficient points for creating nuclear death ray satellites, for instance.

Within the limitation of available points, further think about any restrictions that would universally apply to the Variable effect based on the organization's concept. This includes (but is not limited to) just how many points each rank will cost based on what options are to remain available. Once that's been decided, begin applying power modifiers that will round out the boundaries that will frame all the organization's super-weapons.

For greater diversity, an organization may want to purchase two or more super-weapon Variable effects. This allows Gamemasters to represent things such as weapons operated by separate, rival divisions within a single organization, but also permits fielding more than one such weapon at a time.

## STEP 7: COMPLICATIONS

Like characters, organizations can also have complications. Gamemasters should freely devise their own organization complications if they think of something not covered by the following examples.

### CULTURAL PARIAH (TYPE)

Select a culture the organization just doesn't appeal to or work well with, be the "culture" a religion, ethnicity, organization, profession, or the like. All Interaction skill checks and other, similar attempts to gain favor, manipulate, or influence members of said culture suffer a penalty of -2 to -10, depending upon how severe the complication is. Other issues shall also arise, such as possibly being targeted for demonstrations or terrorist strikes (again, depending upon the complication's severity.)

### DISREPUTABLE

For some reason, the organization's Reputation isn't what it should be, for good or bad. For the purpose of the optional Reputation rules presented in the **Gamemaster's Guide**, the organization's Reputation is halved.

### EASILY DEMORALIZED

The organization's members lack the sort of cohesion or backbone typically needed to fully benefit from situations that should boost their morale. If using the mass

combat rules presented in the **Gamemaster's Guide**, a penalty is applied to any morale checks based on how easily demoralized the organization's members are.

### FAINT OF HEART

If the organization's members are engaged in battle using the mass combat rules from the **Gamemaster's Guide**, all failed morale check results are one degree worse than normal.

### LAX SECURITY (TYPE)

Choose one type of threat that places the organization's security at risk. Your Gamemaster has the final say on what qualifies or not, but some examples include arcane spying, mole operative, and physical infiltration.

Any attempt to defeat the organization's security measures of this type gain a bonus to do so, as determined by the Gamemaster based on how severe the security's weakness is.

### LEGALLY BOUND

The organization's nature is such that it remains subject to the law through the latter's usual channels. The organization is subject to government oversight, prohibitions, and regulation. It can be sued and charged with crimes.

### RESTRICTED GEOGRAPHY

Something restricts the organization to a particular region, be it as small as a single neighborhood or as large (or greater) as an entire hemisphere. There are detrimental (even dire) consequences for the organization should it try operating beyond these boundaries. For example, a street gang might be restricted to a few city blocks and faces death at the hands of other street gangs should they wander. A federal law enforcement agency can operate anywhere in the country, but not beyond its borders—any attempt to do so will see their case thrown out of court.

### RESTRICTED INFLUENCE

For some reason, the organization is unable to bring its full influence to bear on someone or something. This could be another organization, type of person, kind of situation, geographic region, and so on.

## STEP 8: INDIVIDUALS

Although not purchased with the organization's available points, one should consider and list the individual non-player characters that work for the organization. This is where you would list characters such as the organization's leader and elite members—its pack of super-villains or top agents.

## SAMPLE ORGANIZATIONS

The following are brief example capsules of generic organizations. A more complete, detailed organization, CORE, may be found on pg 228.

### DEMON WORSHIPPING CULT

#### 51 (55) points

Whether or not demons actually exist in the game setting, or whether the cult is just a bunch of wannabe losers or the real deal, is up to the Gamemaster. Regardless, the organization represented here does not include any actual demons or supernatural forces the cult may be able to call upon.

The cult will need somewhere secret to meet and conduct their rituals (successful or not.) This "sanctuary" is often a locale that takes other factors, such as providing mystical energy, into account when deciding where it shall be.

#### PL: 3

**Leadership:** Theocratic Dictatorship

**Intellect 1; Awareness 0; Presence 2**

#### Will 6

**Skills:** Deception 6 (+8), Expertise: Chemistry 1 (+2), Expertise: Current Events 2 (+2), Expertise: History 5 (+6), Expertise: Magic 6 (+7), Intimidation 4 (+6), Investigation 1 (+2), Perception 3 (+3), Persuasion 2 (+4), Stealth 6 (+7)

**Advantages:** Connected (Occult Underground), Contacts (Occult Underground), Equipment 2 (Headquarters; 4 ranks if capable of magic), Languages (Occult Tongue), Minion 12, Mole Network, Zealous 3

Add Artificer and Ritualist if actually capable of magic.

**Members:** Minion 12 (25-points, x 32 Cult Initiates)

**Gear & Weapons:** Individually provided.

**Vehicles:** Individually provided.

**Headquarters:** Ritual Warren • 10 points

*Size Small; Spaces 4 of 8; Tou 10; Features: Basic Concealed 2 (DC 25; 0), Escape Tunnel (0), Holding Cells (2), Isolated (0), Library (2), Mystic Locale 2 (0); Complications: Accessible Bowels*

Add the following features if the cult is actually able to access magic: Amplifier (One Magic Effect at a Time; 0), Artificer Lab (Any One Trait at a Time; 1), Ritual Chamber 2 (Any One Trait at a Time, 10 points; 2), resulting in 7 of 8 Spaces being used and a cost of 17 points.

**Cultural Pariah:** The cult's religion and belief in demonology make this group an outcast in a civilized society, especially in game settings wherein magic is real and such groups can work very real, serious harm.

**Totals** Abilities 6 + Advantages 21 (25 if capable of magic) + Skills 18 + Defenses 6 = 51 (55 if capable of magic)

### POLICE PRECINCT, URBAN

#### 79 (88) points

This organization represents a typical urban precinct house. Snitches and interrogations provide information, while efforts are made to build trust with the community through outreach and anti-crime programs. Friction and distrust exist between the officers and community, however, due to racial tensions and corruption on the Force.

Were it to better suit the game, the police force could be built in its entirety for the whole city, breaking it down into precincts with notations.

#### PL: 4 (5 with SWAT)

**Leadership:** Council if governed by a quorum or the like, or a Dictatorship otherwise

**Intellect 2, Awareness 2, Presence 2**

#### Will 6

**Skills:** Deception 6 (+8), Expertise: Business 1 (+3), Expertise: Current Events 2 (+4), Expertise: Electronics 1 (+3), Expertise: Law 6 (+8), Expertise: Mechanics 1 (+3), Expertise: Sociology 6 (+8), Expertise: Streetwise 8 (+10), Expertise: Tactics 6 (+8), Intimidation 6 (+8), Investigation 8 (+10), Perception 6 (+8), Persuasion 4 (+6), Technology 1 (+3)

**Advantages:** Benefit (Law Enforcement), Connected 4 (P: Police; S: Government, Federal Law Enforcement, Criminals), Contacts 4 (P: Police; S: Government, Federal Law Enforcement, Criminals), Equipment 7 (Headquarters), Favored Foe (Street Criminals), Minion 10 (or 19 with SWAT), Mole Network 3, Well-Informed

**Members:** Minion 10 (60-pt., x 50 police officers), Minion 9 (60-pt., x 25 SWAT officers) if a SWAT team is also stationed at the precinct

**Headquarters:** Precinct House • 33 points

**Size** Large; **Spaces** 32 of 32; **Tou** 10, **Features:** Armory 3 (Surveillance Gear, 15 points, 16 minions; 3), Armory 2 (Weapons, 10 points, 32 minions; 4), Basic Communications (0), Basic Computer (0), Demolitions Disposal 2 (Tou 14; 1) Fire Prevention System (0), Garage (16), Gym (1), Holding Cells (5), Kitchen (1), Crime Laboratory (1), Landmark 2 (0), Motor Pool 5 (Police Cruisers x 16), Security System 2 (DC 25; 0); **Complications:** Accessible Bowels, Security Gap (Public Entrance)

**Cultural Pariah:** An urban police precinct usually encounters difficulty gaining any acceptance or cooperation from ethnic minorities, youths, and other disenfranchised groups.

**Lax Security:** Aside from the problems that arise from trying to maintain total security (personnel for a facility that has a high degree of public accessibility, police corruption also poses a problem.

**Legally Bound:** The police are required to abide by the law.

**Restricted Geography:** Although there are allowances for some police operations, police officers are mostly confined to the areas assigned to their specific precinct. Beyond this, each police force is wholly limited to the larger area it oversees (i.e., a particular city or borough.)

**Restricted Influence:** A police precinct's influence is largely restricted to its designated district, and is limited to local law enforcement capabilities.

**Totals** Abilities 12 + Advantages 31 (or 40 with SWAT) + Skills 32 + Defenses 4 = 79 (88 with SWAT)

## TERRORIST BROTHERHOOD

**76 points**

The terrorists are devoted to their cause and ideals, which usually have strong roots in their ethnicity and/or faith. They operate out of the backrooms and

basements belonging to sympathizing citizens and businesses, striking at their enemy who is typically an (actual, historical, or believed) oppressing culture, ethnicity, or religion.

Representing a single, troublesome terrorist cell, the following organization may be expanded to represent the entire terrorist organization by adding new cell locations, or increasing the amount of members and their allotted equipment.

**PL:** 4

**Leadership:** Usually a Zealous Theocratic Dictatorship

**Intellect** 1, **Awareness** 2, **Presence** 2

**Will** 10

**Skills:** Deception 4 (+6), Expertise: Chemistry 4 (+5), Expertise: Current Events 1 (+3), Expertise: Electronics 2 (+3), Expertise: History 2 (+3), Expertise: Mechanics 2 (+3), Expertise: Tactics 4 (+5), Expertise: Theology & Philosophy (AWE/INT) 5 (+7/+6), Intimidation 6 (+8), Perception 2 (+4), Persuasion 2 (+4), Stealth 6 (+7)

**Advantages:** Connected 3 (P: Terrorists; S: Black Market, Related Ideology), Contacts 4 (P: Terrorists; S: Black Market, Related Ideology, Shared Ethnic/Ideological Population), Equipment 16, Favored Foe (Oppressors, etc.), Minion 9, Mole Network, Zealous 4

**Members:** Minion 9 (45 pt., x 50 militants)

**Equipment:** Equipment 9 (Small Arms; 20 pt., x 25), Equipment 7 (Explosives and Heavy Weapons; 15 pt., x 10)

**Vehicles:** Individually provided

**Headquarters:** Typically a series of "safe houses" comprised of nothing more than members' basements and the like.

**Cultural Pariah:** By association, terrorist groups usually bring negative attributes to any religion or ethnicity they share and champion. This brings about a degree of discrimination that can make operations difficult.

**Totals** Abilities 10 + Advantages 38 + Skills 20 + Defenses 8 = 76

## ORGANIZATION MORALE

The general state of mind and sense of well-being of an organization's members can have a very real affect on how that organization performs, grows, or possibly falls

# Chapter 7: The Many Faces of Evil

apart. Whenever events occur the Gamemaster rules as worthy of affecting the organization's overall morale, the organization must make a Will resistance check.

Unlike a normal, character-based Will resistance check, the organization's resistance check is not merely a pass or fail situation. Instead, the outcome is determined much like that of a Toughness resistance check in so far as the degree of failure impacts the results.

## Organization Will Resistance Check = DC 15 + Situational Modifier

Whenever an organization makes a Will resistance check for morale, consult the **Organization Morale Effect Table** to see what results.

## Morale Resistance Check DC Modifiers

Situation/Status	DC Modifier
Blind Devotion *	-2
Bolstered Morale Status	-3
Broken Morale Status	+5
Rallied Morale Status	-1
Shaken Morale Status	+3
Vitalized Morale Status	-5
Worried Morale Status	+1
Zealous	-2 per rank

\* To qualify, at least half of the members must have the Blind Devotion Minion advantage regarding the same leader. Furthermore, this modifier only applies to morale resistance checks directly related to that leader.

## Organization Morale Effect

Resistance Check	Effect
Succeeds (four degrees)	+3 Degrees *
Succeeds (three degrees)	+2 Degrees
Succeeds (two degrees)	+1 Degree
Succeeds (one degree)	No Change
Fails (one degree)	-1 Degree
Fails (two degrees)	-2 Degrees
Fails (three degrees)	-3 Degrees
Fails (four degrees)	-4 Degrees **

\* Morale Status Cannot Be Improved Beyond Vitalized

\*\* Morale Status Cannot Be Degraded Below Broken

## MORALE CONDITIONS

One of the following morale conditions will apply to an organization that has been forced to make a morale resistance check. Unless otherwise indicated, "Unmoved" is the default starting point for the organiza-

tion's morale. Improvements move towards "Vitalized" and loss of morale moves towards "Broken."

- **(+3) Vitalized:** The members have complete faith, not only in the organization's actions and goals, but also in their sureness that success is inevitable.
- **(+2) Bolstered:** Confidence runs high regarding the organization, its leadership, and its members. Things are definitely on the right track.
- **(+1) Rallied:** The troops are in good spirits and see bright times ahead.
- **(+/-0) Unmoved:** Everyone is neither especially hopeful or concerned—things are proceeding as per the status quo. This is the default status of a newly formed organization.
- **(-1) Concerned:** Members have a few doubts regarding the organization.
- **(-2) Worried:** The organization's leadership and recent decisions will be questioned in whispers and behind closed doors.

Members cannot use the following minion advantages so long as the organization's morale remains at this morale status or worse:

### *Hard as Nails, Heed the Call, Loyalty*

- **(-3) Shaken:** The members' faith in the organization is ready to crumble, with some members leaving. The Gamemaster can handle this arbitrarily or rule the organization's Minion advantage loses 1d20 ranks \*. Reducing the Minion advantage to the point where fewer than one member remains on the **Amounts Table** means no members remain.

Remaining members cannot use the following minion advantages so long as the organization's morale remains at this morale status or worse:

### *Against the Odds, Blaze of Glory, Create Opening, Hard as Nails, Heed the Call, Horde, Loyalty, Power of Many, Swarm, Wide Open.*

- **(-4) Broken:** The members' faith in the organization falls apart, causing many to quit and flee. The Gamemaster can handle this arbitrarily or rule the organization's Minion advantage loses (1d20 + 10) ranks \*. Reducing the Minion advantage to the point where fewer than one member remains on the **Amounts Table** means no members remain.

Remaining members cannot use any minion advantages so long as the organization's morale remains at this morale status.

\* If the organization has multiple instances of Minion, spread the loss out amongst them evenly

## RALLYING

When suffering from bad morale, an organization's members require someone to step forward and set a shining example to show them that all is not lost and things will get better. This boosts their spirits (or intimidate them into falling in line.) The specifics of who can rally the troops is open to the Gamemaster's discretion, but should be limited to leaders, individual NPCs that stand out from the flock (such as members of CORE's Elite), or possibly a lowly minion who is able to accomplish something spectacular, such as defeating a renowned hero on his own.

Rallying an organization, regardless of the Game-master approved circumstances involved, requires the person(s) doing the rallying roll either a successful Intimidation or Persuasion check, depending on how the rallying is to be done. The DC should be set to suit the conditions and will be modified by the organization's current morale status, adding the latter's appropriate modifier from the **Morale Resistance Check DC Modifiers** table. The Gamemaster should also adjust the DC to suit the skill used because there are some situations where the honeyed tongue of diplomacy will certainly work better than gruff bluster and threats.

Much as with a morale resistance check, the effects of a rallying check upon an organization's existing morale is not a pass/fail situation, but is represented by degrees of success or failure. Each degree of success improves the organization's morale standing by one degree, and every degree of failure similarly worsens it.

Rallying an organization is no simple feat, nor is it something that should be overly codified by the Game-master. It is also something that is not easily done, so the Gamemaster should be careful in deciding what constitutes a suitable rallying situation, as well as when they are possible. Otherwise, morale becomes meaningless.

Gamemasters shouldn't be afraid to rule that months or even years pass before a rallying check is allowed to see if an organization can build itself back up from the most devastating failures and defeats.

## CROWDS AND MOBS

Most of the time, a Gamemaster will likely wish to portray crowds as a plot element, using nothing more than common sense and storytelling. However, there are occasions where knowing just what game statistics collectively belong to a large group of creatures—be they a crazed mob, a horde of wild beasts, or a platoon of organized soldiers—is an excellent time-saving tool.

To meet this need, the following rules use the base game statistics of a typical member of a crowd, along with the amount of beings comprising that group, to arrive at an amalgamated stat block for the members. This single stat block is then used for creating them collectively as though acting as a single character known as a "crowd entity."

Not only do these new rules concerning mobs and crowds add a new depth to the game (especially when it comes to how bystanders will react), but they can also be used to save time by amalgamating NPCs rather than rolling for every individual NPC on its own. This is especially useful when the players are facing down swarming minions.

But what defines a single group or crowd, and how many creatures must there be to constitute a "crowd?"

Because the circumstances are so varied, the requirements are left in the Gamemaster's hands to suit the particular situation.

In some cases, such as attacking a festival filled with ordinary civilians packed together around several stages while listening to live bands, the Gamemaster may decide that mere proximity is enough. The Gamemaster decides anyone not around the stages have too many escape avenues available to them and are far enough away to not be considered a part of this particular crowd entity. So, in this example, the Gamemaster rules proximity and location are the determining factors of what constitutes the crowd entity.

Now, let us say that a detachment of police enters the previously defined crowd. Although they meet both the proximity and location guidelines outlined for the audience, the Gamemaster decides the police's armament, training, and intention to help the civilians sets them apart. These factors will be what decides who constitutes this second group.

## A Comment on Crowd Building

The rules on building a crowd entity are meant to be a guideline and can be tinkered with as the Gamemaster sees fit, either to suit the individual crowd entity or the particular circumstances.

While these rules are intended to allow a Gamemaster to calculate game statistics for a significant group of similar creatures, some shortcomings remain. These rules simply aren't going to be able to account for all the individuality that still exists between the lines, even in the case of characters that share identical statistics, purposely leaving these rules fairly arbitrary.

So, in our example, we now have a single mass of people made up of two crowd entities that would require two separate stat blocks using the following rules.

## CROWD ENTITY STATISTICS

When defining a crowd's capabilities, one need not worry about all the statistics of its component members, but only those that are relevant to the group's unified capabilities. These statistics include all resistance checks, attack and defensive powers, and combat statistics. A warning needs to be made, however:

Because these rules are intended to create a shorthand for a group of NPCs, there is some math involved that is a bit more complicated than one generally sees with the game's rule system. This is somewhat unavoidable because of the nature of what these rules are meant to accomplish, and because they are meant to let the Gamemaster handle crowds ranging up to millions of creatures as a single statistic block, if need be.

To keep things simple, examples are provided in most cases, as are other aids. Really, this makes it out to sound much worse than it is. Still, if the math does indeed prove too much for you, you are welcome to bypass these rules and keep track and roll for the NPCs individually (which may take a while if working with a lot of NPCs.)

It's up to each Gamemaster to decide what works best for them.

## CROWD SIZE

Roughly, a crowd entity's size is equal to the rank on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77) that covers the amount of members it has, +3.

*A crowd entity of 220 members would have a combined size of rank 6.*

## CROWD TOUGHNESS RESISTANCE CHECKS

Use the average Toughness resistance modifier for the crowd entity's member creatures (rounded down.) Next, increase this by the rank value of the number of members according to their value on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77), plus 4.

**(Sum of all Toughness modifiers / amount of members) + (Amounts value + 4)**

*A crowd entity with 64 members possessing an average Toughness of 2 would possess a collective Toughness of 7.*

If you are confused by how the math works, a shortcut for determining the resistance modifier has been provided in the accompanying **Crowd Calculations Table** (pg 192.)

### Other Crowd Resistance Checks

For Fortitude and Will resistance checks, use the average resistance modifier for the crowd entity's member creatures.

For Dodge and Parry resistance checks, average the member's Dodge and Parry resistance modifiers, respectively. Next, apply a -1 penalty per rank on the **Amounts Table** representing the crowd entity's overall size, starting with a -1 penalty at the -4 Amounts rank. Consult the **Crowd Calculations Table** for a quick reference regarding this penalty.

## CROWD ADVANTAGES

For a crowd entity to gain the benefits of any advantage, at least three-quarters (of its members 75%, rounded down) must possess it. If the advantage is ranked, but not all the crowd's members possess the advantage, halve the amount of ranks to a minimum of 1 rank.

Most advantages won't apply to a crowd entity because they simply won't make any sense in the sort of situations

one would need to know a crowd's game statistics for. For instance, although advantages such as Ranged Attack or Close Attack are likely going to be useful for crowd entities, neither Contacts or Benefit (Wealth) shall be.

Gamemasters must use their discretion when transferring advantages over from individual members to the amalgamated crowd entity.

## CROWD SKILLS

Most skills will be useless for the purpose of Game-mastering or interacting with crowd entities because most skills are employed with the design and intention of use in an individual capacity.

Interaction skills will especially be mostly ineffective, although the Gamemaster may find some creative ways to use them. Intimidation, for instance, can be used to represent a crowd's ability to cow others through sheer weight of numbers.

When calculating a crowd entity's skill ranks, first divide the crowd's members into smaller groups of those who have the skill, regardless of rank, and those who do not. Next, average the skill ranks of the first group (round down); do not concern yourself with the amount of beings in each group.

Round off the percentage of the overall crowd members without the skill in question represents to the nearest 10%, and compare that percentage to the **Crowd Members without Skill or Power Table**. Apply the indicated skill rank penalty to the average skill rank determined for those crowd members who possess the skill. The result is the crowd entity's skill rank.

Treat any results of 0 or fewer skill ranks as the crowd entity not possessing the skill after all.

### Crowd Members without Skill or Power

Crowd %	Rank Penalty
0%	None
10% or less	-1
20%	-2
30%	-3
40%	-4
50%	-5
60%	-6
70%	-7
80%	-8
90% or more	-9

*Consider a crowd of 1,000 people, 600 of which have Stealth +5 and 200 of which have Stealth +3. Averaging these together, we arrive at Stealth +4. However, there are 200 people who do not possess the Stealth skill at all. The latter 200 crowd members represent 20% of the overall crowd's size. Referencing the **Crowd Members without Skill or Power Table** for this 20% results in a -2 penalty.*

*According to the skill average of the crowd members with the skill and applying the penalty resulting from those who do not, we determine this crowd entity possesses Stealth +2.*

### Intimidation and Stealth Modifiers

A crowd gains a +2 bonus to Intimidation at each amounts rank of its members beyond -4. Similarly, every rank of amount beyond -4 results in a -4 Stealth penalty for the crowd.

## CROWD POWERS

As with skills, not all powers will apply to a crowd entity. Unless every member has Comprehend, for instance, this power will be relatively useless in situations where it becomes necessary to employ a crowd entity's statistics. This is so even beyond situations where individual members may find the power extremely useful.

In most instances, the amount of a power's ranks a crowd entity has access to is determined using the same method and formula used for determining skill ranks. See the **Crowd Members without Skill or Power Table**.

Gamemasters may want to bypass this in particular circumstances, such as a single member being the only one within the crowd entity possessing a power but the power alone is sufficiently potent to be applied to the crowd entity's stat block at its full rank. Another common instance of this situation is when an individual's power has an area that covers the space occupied by the crowd entity as a whole.

In such cases, these powers may only be used once per round by the crowd entity if they have an instant duration.

## Crowd Calculations

Amount	Members	Toughness / Damage	Dodge/Parry	Intimidation	Stealth	Amount of Attacks
-4	2	+0	-1	+2	-4	1
-3	4	+1	-2	+4	-8	2
-2	8	+2	-3	+6	-12	3
-1	16	+3	-4	+8	-16	4
0	32	+4	-5	+10	-20	5
1	64	+5	-6	+12	-24	6
2	125	+6	-7	+14	-28	7
3	250	+7	-8	+16	-32	8
4	500	+8	-9	+18	-36	9
5	1,000	+9	-10	+20	-40	10
6	2,000	+10	-11	+22	-44	11
7	4,000	+11	-12	+24	-48	12
8	8,000	+12	-13	+26	-52	13
9	16,000	+13	-14	+28	-56	14
10	32,000	+14	-15	+30	-60	15
11	65,000	+15	-16	+32	-64	16
12	125,000	+16	-17	+34	-68	17
13	250,000	+17	-18	+36	-72	18
14	500,000	+18	-19	+38	-76	19
15	1 million	+19	-20	+40	-80	20
16	2 million	+20	-21	+42	-84	21
Etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.

## HERO POINTS AND EXTRA EFFORT

Crowds cannot acquire, accumulate, or use hero points, but can use extra effort.

## AMOUNT OF CROWD ATTACKS

A crowd entity may effectively attack as many times per round as the number of members' rank on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77), plus 5. This doesn't mean only 11 people within a crowd entity comprised of 2,000 armed members are able to attack while the remaining 1,989 people sit on their hands, however. This number merely represents the amount of attacks that will give any other combatants something to worry about for that round. All other attacks made at that time remain the province of plot and storytelling, and are accounted for in the crowd's Damage modifier (see **Crowd Damage Modifier**).

## CROWD DAMAGE MODIFIER

Use the average Damage modifier(s) for the crowd entity's member creatures for every attack of the same sort. Next, increase this number by the rank value of

the amount of members who share the attack type according to their value on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77), rounded down and plus 4.

*A crowd entity with 1,500 unarmed civilians (rounded down to 1,000) possessing an average unarmed Damage modifier of +0 would collectively possess a Damage modifier of +9.*

In the case of attack powers that are not possessed by all members but remain usable, calculate this Damage modifier based on the amount of people who can use the power rather than on the overall size of the crowd (see **Crowd Powers**, earlier.)

If you are confused by how the math works, a shortcut for determining the Damage modifier has been provided in the accompanying **Crowd Calculations Table**.

## CROWD ATTACK AND INITIATIVE

Average the members' attack and initiative modifiers to arrive at those belonging to the crowd entity, calculating the attack modifier separately for each possible attack.

Unless the Gamemaster decides there is some reason why it should not apply, a crowd entity's component members are effectively always using aid actions to assist each other with regards to their attack capabilities. As such, further increase the crowd entity's attack modifier by +2.

The aid bonus is lost if the crowd entity's moral status is reduced to Shaken or worse (see pg 195.)

## CROWD MOVEMENT

To be in the same crowd entity, all members must possess the same form of movement or at least be in a circumstance that allows them to move together. For instance, a crowd entity could be made of two different races, one of which can only walk and one that can only fly, but only if the latter flew low and slow enough to mingle with the former. As soon as the flyers took to the air and moved far enough away, they would no longer qualify as members of the crowd entity.



## CROWD PL

Calculate a crowd entity's PL in the same fashion as you would for a regular NPC.

## CROWD ENTITY COMBAT

Although the basic principles of combat remain unchanged for a crowd entity, there are some differences that require mentioning.

## ATTACKING THE CROWD

Attacking a crowd is undertaken normally. Damaging more than one crowd member is accounted for by ruling that the close proximity of the members will cause attacks to strike multiple creatures at once, penetrate and keep on going to hit someone else, and so on.

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Area attacks are especially useful against crowd entities, gaining a +1 Damage bonus against the latter per 10 feet of the crowd entity covered, rounded down. Any part of an area effect that goes beyond the location filled by the crowd is not counted towards this bonus.

*A Burst Area Ranged Damage 6 power would have a 30-foot radius, meaning it is 60 feet across for a potential +6 Damage bonus against a crowd entity. If used against a crowd entity that is only 40 feet across, this power would have a +4 Damage modifier against the crowd if the entire crowd is covered. The remaining 20 feet of the burst is only hitting the empty space surrounding the target.*

Conversely, attacks without an area of affect suffer from a reduced Damage modifier by applying a -1 penalty per 10 feet of the crowd along its widest point.

*If using a Ranged Damage 8 power against the 40-foot wide crowd from our previous example, the power's effective Damage rank would be reduced to 4.*

Some powers that do not result in damage, such as Mind Control, may suffer reduced potency or be rendered useless against a crowd entity unless they possess sufficient area to cover all the crowd. If the power has an area of affect, its effective ranks for the sake of the power's potency is either increased or reduced as previously outlined for the Damage modifier. In most cases it is appropriate to use the power check against the crowd entity as though it were a Damage modifier, using the proper resistance check rather than Toughness.

## DAMAGING A CROWD

Instead of the usual Damage results, consult the **Damaging a Crowd** table when attacking a crowd entity.

### Damaging a Crowd

Resistance check	Effect
Succeeds	Negligible Damage
Fails (one degree)	Victims; -1 rank in size
Fails (two degrees)	Carnage; -2 ranks in size
Fails (three degrees)	Massacre; -3 ranks in size
Fails (four degrees)	Blood in the Streets; -4 ranks in size
Fails (per additional degree)	Minus an additional rank in size

### Crowd Entity Size Reduction Shorthand

Every size rank a crowd entity loses due to Damage results in the following changes to its statistics:

*-1 Toughness, -1 Damage modifier, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry,  
-2 Intimidation, +4 Stealth, -1 attack per round.*

- **Negligible Damage:** For the sake of plot and description, a few members of the crowd may be harmed or even killed, but not enough to affect the crowd entity's statistics.
- **Victims:** The crowd entity's cohesiveness has suffered, reducing its size by one rank on the **Amounts Table**.
- **Carnage:** The crowd entity's cohesiveness has suffered, reducing its size by two ranks on the **Amounts Table**.
- **Massacre:** The crowd entity's cohesiveness has suffered, reducing its size by three ranks on the **Amounts Table**.
- **Blood in the Streets:** The crowd entity's cohesiveness has suffered, reducing its size by four ranks on the **Amounts Table**. Every additional 5 points beyond 15 that the resistance check fails by reduces the crowd's size by yet another rank.

Keep in mind that Damage reducing the crowd entity's size in ranks also reduces its calculated values that rely upon the **Amounts Table**, such as its Toughness check and Damage modifier.

Reducing a crowd entity's size to -5 or fewer ranks on the **Amounts Table** "kills" it, effectively killing and/or dispersing all its members.

The Gamemaster determines the exact influence a power has on the crowd entity if that power doesn't cause actual Damage. In the case of Mind Control with an area of affect, for example, the amount of ranks the crowd entity's size would have been reduced by on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77) instead indicates how much of the crowd is now under the character's control.

In this particular instance, the crowd entity has been split into two crowd entities, one under the character's

control and one that remains independent, with the latter having a size equal to the remaining ranks.

*Using Mind Control on a crowd entity of 500 people (amount rank 4) suffers 50 people (amount rank 1) succumbing to mind controlled and told to disperse. This leaves a crowd of amount rank 3 in size.*

## CROWD MORALE

Crowds roll morale checks and make rally checks in much the same manner as do organizations (pg 187), although the effects are much more immediate. This is an optional system for determining crowd behavior, but Gamemasters need not use it if they feel more comfortable leaving issues of crowd morale entirely up to the whims of the plot and character actions.

When crowds make use of the morale rules, the resulting morale conditions change to the following:

- **Vitalized:** The crowd has complete faith in whatever it is attempting to do.
- **Bolstered:** Confidence runs high regarding the crowd's chances of success.
- **Rallied:** The crowd's members are in good spirits and see bright times ahead.
- **Unmoved:** The previous morale status remains unchanged. This is the default status of a crowd entity.
- **Concerned:** Members have a few doubts about what the crowd is doing and its chance of success.
- **Worried:** The crowd's actions and chance of survival will be questioned in whispers and muffled conversations.

Members cannot use the following advantages so long as the crowd's morale remains at this morale status or worse:

*Hard as Nails, Heed the Call, Loyalty.*

- **Shaken:** The members' faith in the crowd is ready to crumble, with some members leaving. The Gamemaster can handle this arbitrarily or rule the crowd loses an amount of members equal to 1 or 2 ranks on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77.) Reducing the crowd entity's amount to -5 ranks means no members remain and the crowd entity is no more.

Remaining members cannot use the following advantages so long as the crowd's morale remains at this morale status or worse:

*Against the Odds, Blaze of Glory, Create Opening, Hard as Nails, Heed the Call, Horde, Loyalty, Move as One, Power of Many, Swarm, Wide Open.*

The crowd entity also loses its inherent aid bonus to its attack modifier.

- **Broken:** The members' faith in the crowd falls apart, causing many to quit and flee. The Gamemaster can handle this arbitrarily or rule the crowd loses an amount of members equal to 1d20 ranks on the **Amounts Table**. Reducing the crowd entity's size to -5 ranks means no members remain.

Remaining members cannot use any minion advantages so long as the crowd entity's morale remains at this morale status. The crowd entity also loses its inherent aid bonus to its attack modifier.

## SAMPLE CROWDS

Note that all attack bonuses include the assumed +2 aid bonus. Remove this bonus in situations where it should not apply.

### CORE ASSAULT TEAM

**[PL 7]**

This crowd entity makes use of the CORE Field Agent supporting character archetype and is comprised of 16 members.

**Size:** 2

**Advantages:** Move as One, Ranged Combat 4, Swarm

**Skills:** Athletics 4 (+5), Expertise: Tactics 4 (+4), Intimidation 2 (+10), Perception 4 (+4), Stealth 2 (-13)

**Maximum Attacks/Round:** 4

**Offense:** Initiative +1, CLW-006 Grenade +7 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 8), CLW-006 Plasma +7 (Ranged Damage 10, 17-20, Multiattack), Unarmed +7 (Close Damage 4)

**Dodge** -2, **Parry** 1, **Fortitude** 3, **Toughness** +7 (+4 without bulletproof vest), **Will** 1

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## SOLDIERS, PLATOON

(PL 9)

This crowd entity makes use of the Soldier supporting character archetype and is comprised of 40 members, 4 of which have grenade launchers along with assault rifles.

**Size:** 4

**Advantages:** Ranged Attack 4

**Skills:** Athletics 4 (+5), Intimidation +2 (+14), Perception 2 (+2), Stealth 0 (-23)

**Maximum Attacks/Round:** 6 (max 2 w/ grenade launchers)

**Offense:** Initiative +1, Assault Rifle +7 (Ranged Damage 10, Multiattack), Grenade Launcher +7 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 6), Unarmed +7 (Close Damage 6)

**Dodge** -3, **Parry** -3, **Fortitude** 5, **Toughness** 10 (7 without body armor), **Will** 1

## STREET GANG

(PL 6)

This crowd entity makes use of the Thug supporting character archetypes and is comprised of 50 members.

**Size:** 4

**Skills:** Athletics 4 (+6), Intimidation 4 (+15), Stealth 2 (-21)

**Maximum Attacks/Round:** 6

**Offense:** Initiative +1, Light Pistol +3 (Ranged Damage 8), Unarmed +4 (Close Damage 7)

**Dodge** -4, **Parry** -4, **Fortitude** 4, **Toughness** 8 (7 without leather jacket), **Will** 0

## SWAT TEAM

(PL 6)

This crowd entity makes use of the Swat Officer supporting character archetype, and is comprised of 8 members.

**Size:** 1

**Advantages:** Close Attack 2

**Skills:** Athletics 3 (+5), Intimidation 4 (+11), Perception 2 (+3), Ranged Combat: Submachine Gun 4 (+6), Stealth 4 (-6)

**Maximum Attacks/Round:** 3

**Offense:** Initiative +2, SMG +8 (Ranged Damage 6, Multiattack), Tonfa +8 (Close Damage 5), Unarmed +8 (Close Damage 4)

**Dodge** 1, **Parry** 1, **Fortitude** 6, **Toughness** 8 (4 without riot gear), **Will** 3

# CHAPTER 8

# HEADQUARTERS

What is a villainous mastermind without a lair from which to plot and hide from his enemies, such as the heroic player characters?

Simple: just another bad guy waiting to be spotted and swept up off the street. That's why so many villains build headquarters from which to scheme and act (not to mention hide.)

There's nothing wrong with the existing system for building headquarters, especially if you wish to play things loose, easy and quick. However, some players and Gamemasters may be hoping for more detail than such rules offer. For the latter, we provide the following expanded and revised headquarters rules.

One of the most obvious changes is how many headquarters features are now ranked rather than keeping the degree of their ability directly tied to the headquarters' PL. This allows for a greater degree of customization and variance, but you'll find the added detail means headquarters can easily cost far more than before. We think you'll find the tradeoff for the added detail and improved control is worth it.

## **Headquarters and Environments**

This section details an alternative means for devising headquarters versus the default system presented in the core rules.

Headquarters are assumed to provide suitable life-support conditions for their inhabitants at no additional point cost. This is usually Earth-normal atmosphere, pressure, temperature, and gravity, regardless of where the installation is located (particularly important for things like orbiting satellites, moon-bases, and deep sea facilities, etc.)

Immunity to other effects often requires a Feature, and the headquarters' self-sustained environment does not generally prevent changes to the environment within the facility, such as someone capable of manipulating the temperature, atmosphere, etc. At the Gamemaster's

discretion, use of the headquarters' environmental systems may be able to counter some of these effects ("I'll use the ventilation fans to clear out this gas!") In such instances, substitute the installation's PL for an effect rank for the countering check when permitted.

## **HEADQUARTERS TRAITS**

Headquarters have two primary traits—Toughness and Size—and a number of possible features. Each of these costs equipment points to improve.

A headquarters' maximum Toughness value is twice the game's PL.

### **Headquarters Trait Cost**

Trait	Starting Value	Point Cost
Size	Small	1 point per size category
Toughness	6	1 point per +2 Toughness
Features	—	Varies (flat rate or per rank/Space)

## **HEADQUARTERS TOUGHNESS**

Nothing has changed with regards to a headquarters' Toughness or the benchmarks illustrated in the core rules.

## **HEADQUARTERS 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. This also indicates how much area is available inside for development, as represented by the "Spaces" column. Structures are measured on a different scale than characters or vehicles, however.

# Chapter 8: Headquarters

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	Points Cost	Spaces	Examples
Awesome	6	500+	Small town/village, sprawling installation
Colossal	5	250	City block, private estate
Gargantuan	4	125	Skyscraper
Huge	3	64	Castle
Large	2	32	Mansion, cave complex
Medium	1	16	Warehouse
Small	0	8	House
Tiny	-1	4	Townhouse
Diminutive	-2	2	Apartment
Fine	-3	1	Loft
Minuscule	-4	0 *	Room

\* A maximum of one Feature with a cost of 0 Spaces may be applied

## HEADQUARTERS 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 the indicated amount of equipment points, which sometimes appears as a flat rate, or as a cost per rank or Space purchased for the feature.

A feature also lists the amount of Space it uses within the headquarters. When all of the facility's Space (as

### Optional Rule: Cutting HQ Costs

The amount of points required to purchase a headquarters using the new rules can increase dramatically because of the enhanced details added. If the Gamemaster wants to counter this somewhat, they can utilize the following simple option.

*Points obtained from the Equipment advantage allow the character to spend 10 points on headquarters per rank instead of the usual 5 points, although only 5 points are gained for other types of gear.*

## Headquarters without the Space Rule

The concept of Space and building headquarters is meant to implement a degree of realism and detail into the game. There will certainly be Gamemasters and players who don't like this aspect of the new rules, however, and will prefer sticking with the old system that favors concept over mechanics.

If this is the case, drop the rule about 1 point equaling 1 equipment point, and buy all aspects of a headquarters normally, as per the core rules.

See the **Appendix** (pg 281) for versions of the new headquarters details written for the standard headquarters creation rules.

determined by its size) is used up nothing more can be fit into the structure without expanding it (although some Gamemasters may make accommodations for being built on adjacent land, open to the elements, if the Grounds feature is purchased.)

Some features may also demand other prerequisites from its builders to ensure that characters are only building features that are logically within their characters' capabilities and not just a simple matter of spending the requisite points.

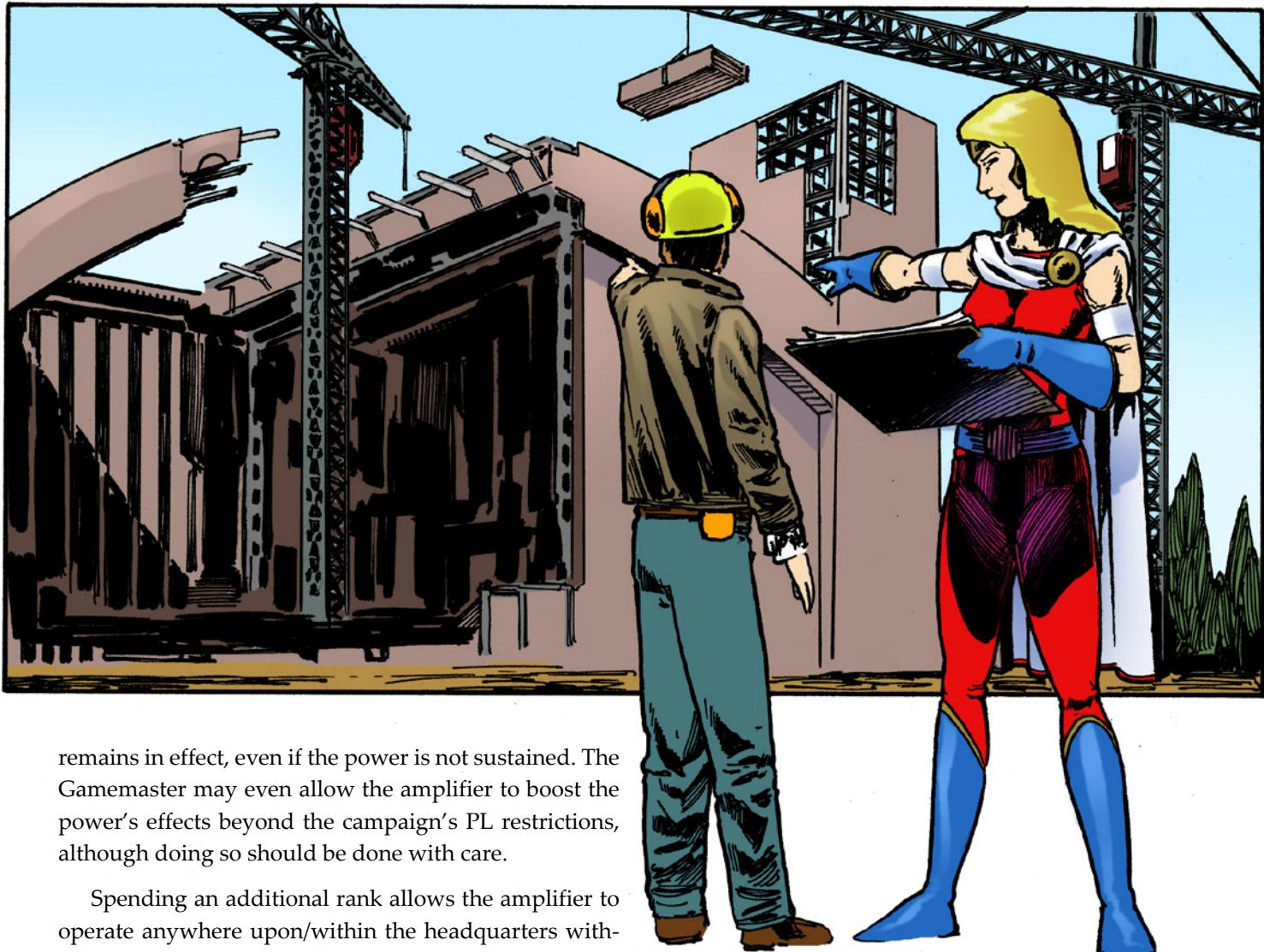
Gamemasters may allow some or all of a feature's prerequisites to be bypassed under certain conditions, such as hiring on someone to do the work or if the base has been inherited or otherwise taken over from someone else who built it. Otherwise, a Gamemaster should allow the feature to be added without meeting the prerequisites at double the point cost with the understanding that outside help had to be taken on to fill such needs. Alternatively, Gamemasters looking to play things far more loosely can do away with the prerequisites altogether (it's about having options, after all.)

### AMPLIFIER

### RANKED

A device that amplifies powers of a particular type by as many ranks as this feature possesses. Once selected, the power type(s) affected cannot be altered without some wondrous effort, as determined by the Gamemaster. Doing so should be no simple feat, and failure may result in losing the feature altogether.

Using the amplifier requires an appropriately empowered individual be in physical contact with the device, and spend a full round calibrating and activating it. As long as this contact is maintained, the amplifier



remains in effect, even if the power is not sustained. The Gamemaster may even allow the amplifier to boost the power's effects beyond the campaign's PL restrictions, although doing so should be done with care.

Spending an additional rank allows the amplifier to operate anywhere upon/within the headquarters without requiring direct contact with the amplifier (indicated by a Ranged notation.)

Similarly, making the amplifier selective so that only the headquarters owners (and people they approve) can utilize it without effort requires an additional rank. For others, an appropriate check (DC 5 + the headquarters' PL) is required with each attempt to access the amplifier's ability. This could be a Technology check if the amplifier is tech-based, Expertise: Magic if it is arcane, and so on.

Unless a hero point is expended when the character is finished using the amplifier, the character will become fatigued afterward.

**Prerequisites:** Technology 8, + 1 per feature rank beyond the first, Inventor. This skill can be substituted for another, more appropriate skill if the amplifier is not of a technological nature. Most will require the Power System feature (pg 216)

**Space:** Gamemasters should use their discretion. An amplifying device in a steampunk game could be massive and take up plenty of Spaces, whereas resting the headquarters on a pair of crossing ley lines to amplify a spell would use no space.

**Cost:** Varies according to the following:

- **1 point/rank:** One trait of a single type (ability scores, skills, advantages, or powers of a particular type or descriptor) at a time. So you could acquire any one skill at a time, for example, or any single appropriate power. The trait type must be specified when the Amplifier is purchased.
- **2 points/rank:** Any single trait at a time.
- **3 points/rank:** Multiple traits of a single type (ability scores, skills, advantages, or powers of a particular type or descriptor), so long as the total traits do not add up to more than the total available ranks pro-

# Chapter 8: Headquarters

## Headquarters Features

Feature	Prerequisites	Space	Points Cost
Amplifier *	Technology 8, +1 per additional rank, Inventor	Varies	1 to 5/rank
Armory *	—	Amount Rank + 4	1/rank
Artificer Lab *	Expertise: Magic 4, Artificer	1 per 2 people	1 to 5/rank
Automation *	Expertise: Electronics 8, Technology 8	0	1/rank
Barrier *	—	0	1/rank
Combat Simulator, Basic	Technology equal to half PL	1 per 4 people	1
Combat Simulator, Advanced	Basic combat simulator, Expertise: Electronics 12, Technology equal to PL	1 per 4 people	1 per 4 Spaces
Communications, Basic	—	0	1
Communications, Dimensional *	Movement (Dimensional Travel) or a similar power	0	Varies
Communications, Encrypted *	Any other Communications feature, Expertise: Electronics 8	0	1/rank
Communications, Global	Basic Communications, Expertise: Electronic 4	0	1
Communications, Space	Basic and Global Communications, Expertise: Electronics 12, Expertise: Physics 8, Technology 12	1	1
Computer, Basic *	Varies	0 or more	1/rank
Computer, Advanced *	Basic Computer, Expertise: Electronics 8, Technology 8 (and more)	0 or more	1/rank
Concealed, Basic *	Expertise: Engineering 4, Stealth 4	0	1/rank
Concealed, Cosmetic *	Expertise: Engineering 8, Stealth 8	0	1/rank
Concealed, Electronic *	Expertise: Electronics 8	0	1/rank
Defense System *	Expertise: Engineering 8	Varies	1/rank
Demolitions Disposal 8	Expertise: Demolitions 8, Expertise: Engineering 4	1	1/rank
Dimensional Capacity *	Expertise: Engineering 12 (and more), Inventor, Movement (Dimensional Travel) or a similar power	0	1/rank
Dimensional Portal *	Movement (Dimensional Travel) or a similar power, and more	0 or more	2/rank
Dock *	—	Varies	Varies
Drones	Varies	0 or more	1
Electronics-Counter Measures	Expertise: Electronics 8, and more	0	1/rank
Emergency Arresting System	Expertise: Engineering 10	0 or more	1
Emergency Floatation System	Expertise: Engineering 10	0 or more	1
Environmental Control *	Varies	0	Varies
Escape Tunnel *	—	0 or more	1/rank
Fire Prevention System *	—	0	1/rank
Food Supply	—	0+	1
Game Room	—	1 per 8 people	1
Garage *	—	Varies	Varies
Grounds *	—	Varies	1/rank
Gym	—	1 per 8 people	1
Habitat	—	1 per half acre	1
Hangar *	—	Varies	Varies

\* The feature is ranked

## Headquarters Features, Continued

Feature	Prerequisites	Space	Points Cost
Hero Point Bank *	—	0	1/rank
Holding Cells *	Expertise: Engineering 8, plus Technology 8 and Inventor if the Nullify effect is available	1 per 8 people	1/rank
Infirmary *	Varies	1 per 4 people	1/rank
Intelligent *	Varies	Varies	1/rank
Inventor Lab *	Technology 4, Inventor	1 per 4 people	1 to 5/rank
Isolated	Varies	0	1 to 3 points
Kennel/Pen *	—	Varies	Varies
Kitchen/Mess Hall	—	Varies	1
Laboratory, Basic *	None; 8 ranks if specialized	1 per 4 people	1/rank
Laboratory, Crime *	Expertise: Criminology 4	1 per 4 people	1/rank
Landmark *	—	0	1/rank
Library	—	1 per 8 people	1
Living Space, Barracks	—	1 per 20 people	1
Living Space, Basic	—	1 per 4 people	1
Living Space, Luxury	—	2 per 2 people	1
Motor Pool *	Garage, Hangar, or Dock	0	1/rank
Movable	Varies	Varies	1
Mystic Locale *	Expertise: Magic 12, +2 per additional rank	0	1/rank
Personnel	—	0+	1
Pool	—	1+	1
Power System	—	Varies	Varies
Remote Feature	Varies	0	1
Ritual Chamber *	Expertise: Magic 4, Ritualist	1 per 5 people	1 to 5/rank
Sealed	—	0	1
Security System *	Varies	Varies	1/rank
Self-Destruct	Expertise: Demolitions 8	0	1
Self-Repairing *	Expertise: Engineering 12, Expertise: Robotics 8	0	1/rank
Sovereign	—	0	1
Teleport Lock	Varies; relevant skill at 12 ranks	0 or 1	1
Temporal Warp *	Time Travel or the like	0	1/rank
Translocation *	Movement (Dimensional Travel) or a similar power	0	2/rank
Untraceable *	Expertise: Survival 8	0	1/rank
Vault *	Expertise: Engineering 12	0+	1/rank
War Room	—	1 per 8 people	1
Weakened Reality	Movement (Dimensional Travel) or a similar power	0	2
Workshop *	Selected Expertise skill 4 ranks, +2 per additional rank	1 per 4 people	1/rank

\* The feature is ranked

# Chapter 8: Headquarters

vided by the feature. The trait type must be specified when the Amplifier is purchased.

- **4 points/rank:** Multiple traits of a single type or descriptor at once, so long as the total traits do not add up to more than the total available ranks provided by the feature.
- **5 points/rank:** Any combination of traits adding up the total available ranks provided by the feature.

## ARMORY

## RANKED

The headquarters is equipped with an ample supply of weapons or gear, allowing minions to each draw up to 10 points worth of equipment per feature rank.

The Armory is limited to a particular sort of gear (weapons, spy gear, armor, mecha, etc.) that must be decided when built. Separate and/or conjoined armories may be purchased for each additional type of gear desired.

**Space:** Equal to 4 + the rank on the **Amounts Table** (pg 77) appropriate to the amount of minions to be supplied, with a minimum of 1 Space. For instance, supplies for 16 minions would use 3 Spaces. Double the number of require spaces per 50 points provided by the Armory.

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## ARTIFICER LAB

## RANKED

The Artificer Lab is equipped with all manner of arcane components, allowing residents to use it to provide unique, temporary magical inventions. The item is temporary because there is a maximum amount of items that may produced by the lab before the components must be replaced or returned in order to make new ones.

Using an Artificer Lab requires a design check, as normal for an artifact, but the Artificer advantage is not required. Construction checks and times are normal. If the character has the Artificer advantage, invention times are halved.

A single rank allows up to 5 points worth of magical inventions to be supplied from the Artificer Lab simultaneously. Additional ranks may be spent in any of several possible ways that must be specified upon purchasing and cannot be changed afterward:

- A total of 5 cumulative additional points may be spent on magical inventions simultaneously produced by the lab.

- Reduce the design time by one-quarter. This feature aspect may be purchased a maximum of three times (this cannot be reduced beyond one-quarter of normal.)
- Reduce the construction time by one-quarter. This feature aspect may be purchased a maximum of three times (this cannot be reduced beyond one-quarter of normal.)
- +2 cumulative bonus to design checks.
- +2 cumulative bonus to construction checks.

Once a magical invention is made from the pool of available points, those points cannot be used for anything else until the magical invention is disassembled and its components returned.

If the magical invention is lost, stolen, or destroyed, the Gamemaster may force the players to purchase the points again before they can be used or make them go through a process to replenish the lost supplies and components. Returning the points to the pool takes  $(15 \times \text{points spent on the magical invention})$  minutes once it is returned to the Artificer Lab.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Magic 4, Artificer

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 2 people

**Cost:** The cost per feature rank depends on the type of magical inventions that may be provided simultaneously.

- **1 point/rank:** One trait of a single type (ability scores, skills, advantages, or powers of a particular type or descriptor) at a time. So you could acquire any one skill at a time, for example, or any one power.
- **2 points/rank:** Any single trait at a time.
- **3 points/rank:** Multiple traits of a single type (ability scores, skills, advantages, or powers of a particular type or descriptor), so long as the total traits do not add up to more than the total available ranks provided by the feature.
- **4 points/rank:** Multiple traits of a single type or descriptor at once, so long as the total traits do not add up to more than the total available ranks provided by the feature.
- **5 points/rank:** Any combination of traits adding up the total available ranks provided by the feature.

**AUTOMATION****RANKED**

The headquarters is equipped with a slaved automation system that activates automatically under a specified set of parameters. Every additional feature to be automated or each new circumstance for the same feature that will act as a trigger requires a new rank. Automation can be used to represent something as simple as a computer recording keystrokes or as complex as robotic arms within a kitchen.

Conditions for Automation to activate must fit a single, brief sentence. These parameters *must* represent only conditions happening in the immediate vicinity of the headquarters, so you can't have an automated teleport function to pull people out of danger half a planet away.

Any Automation that requires a skill bonus, such as an "auto-doc" robot in an infirmary or an auto-targeting system for a weapons emplacement, must be built as a construct. 5 points are spent on the system per rank of that particular Automation feature.

Automated features can typically only activate once per round unless the power/function they are activating requires more than a one round to turn on. In such instances, use the normal activation time of the power/function.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Electronics 8, Technology 8

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

**BARRIER****RANKED**

A physical barrier, obstacle, or impediment surrounds the headquarters. It could be a moat, high wall, steep cliff, maze, or the like.

Surmounting or bypassing the barrier requires succeeding on as many appropriate (DC 10 + 2 per feature rank) skill checks (Athletics to swim a moat or climb walls, for example—Gamemasters use your judgment) as equals half the feature's ranks. Using an appropriate power (such as digging under a wall) without invitation or proper, permitted access may also get the job done.

The Gamemaster should only allow physical barriers appropriate to the headquarters' design and location.

Instead of spending ranks on increasing the skill check DC, you can spend the ranks on turning the bar-

rier into a Reaction Damage effect as well. This could be cliffs with razor sharp ledges, lava in the moat rather than water, and so on. Each rank spent in this fashion provides 1 rank of Reaction Damage effect—you can also spend ranks on applying the Reach extra.

**Space:** 0 (the barrier is outside the headquarters)

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

**COMBAT SIMULATOR, BASIC**

A combat simulator (or "danger room") is a special room equipped with various devices intended to test characters' powers and skills by allowing them to train in realistic combat situations.

Generally, a combat simulator has a suite of devices that can simulate any appropriate attack effect up to a maximum rank equal to the campaign's PL. A combat simulator normally has safety interlocks so its attacks are not lethal, but these can be disengaged so the simulator's attacks may cause severe harm or even kill.

Combat simulators are useful for training and short war games (pitting the characters against each other or simulated opponents.) Also, clever heroes 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.

**Prerequisites:** Technology equal to half PL

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 4 people

**Cost:** 1 point

**COMBAT SIMULATOR, ADVANCED**

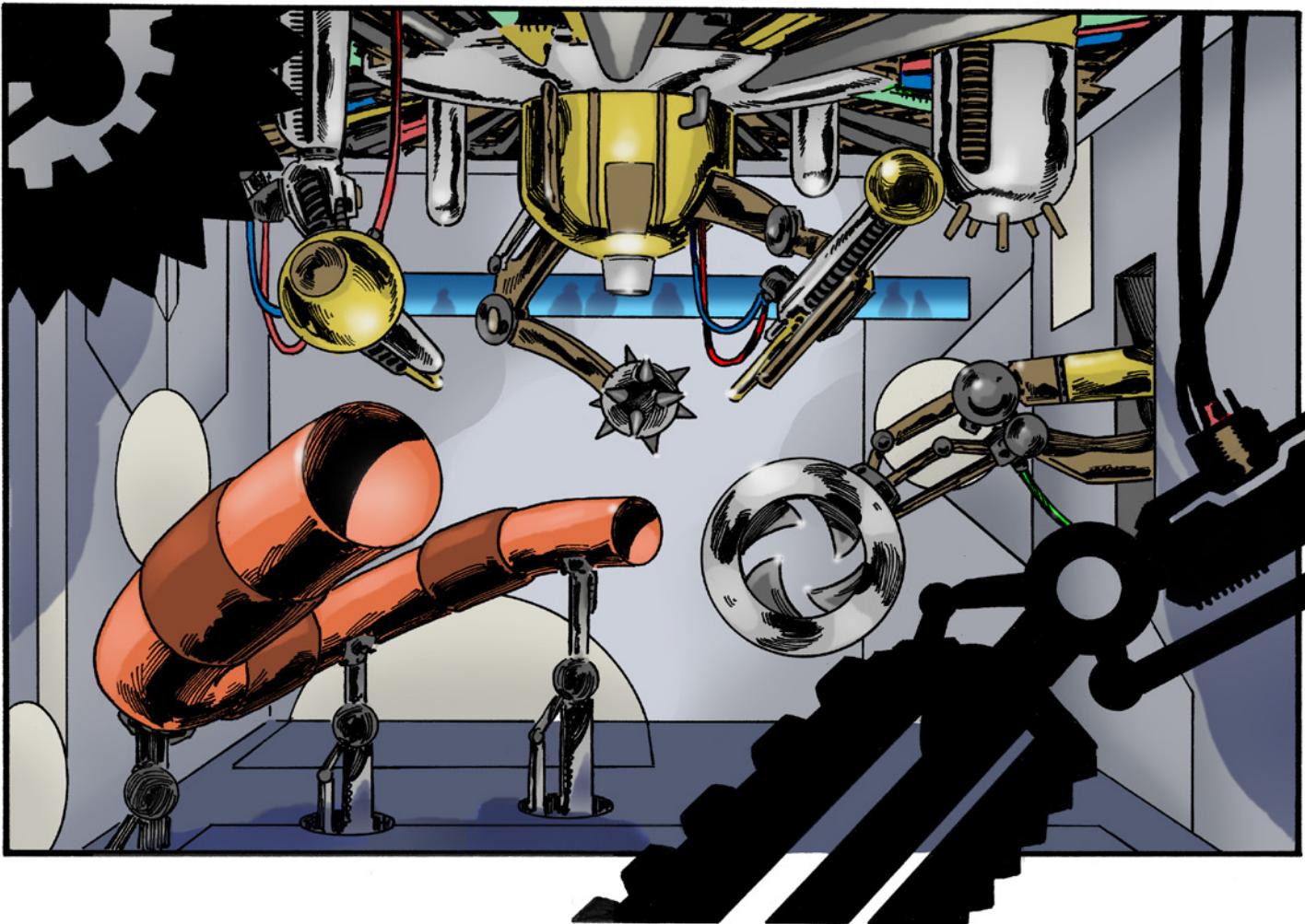
An advanced combat simulator is similar to the basic version but adds the ability to project realistic illusions, allowing it to recreate or simulate almost any environment.

You must purchase as much Space with the advanced combat simulator as you did for the basic version because the latter is essentially an ad-on to the basic variety.

**Prerequisites:** Basic combat simulator, Expertise: Electronics 12, Technology equal to PL

**Space:** Same as basic combat simulator

**Cost:** 1 point per 4 Spaces (rounded up, minimum of 1 point)



## COMMUNICATIONS, BASIC

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 Technology skill check (DC 25) can grant a user illegal access to restricted systems.

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point

## COMMUNICATIONS, DIMENSIONAL

This feature allows the headquarters to communicate with dedicated reception points in other dimensions. These receptors could be magic mirrors, enchanted phones, geomantic locations, and so on—it can be a roaming item or fixed location, as specified.

Each feature rank allows the headquarters to communicate with a single, specified dimension, and grants one dedicated receptor in that same dimension.

For a flat rate of 10 points, the headquarters can communicate with any dimension and gains ten dedicated receptors. Additional receptors dedicated to a specified dimension can be purchased for 1 point apiece, or for 2 points each if the receptor is mobile and works in any of dimensions the headquarters can communicate with.

The dedicated receptors automatically gained per feature rank may be improved to universal receptors for +1 point each.

**Prerequisites:** Movement (Dimensional Travel) or a similar power

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank or 10 points for universal communications; +1 point per additional dedicated receptor or +2 points per each universal receptor

## COMMUNICATIONS, ENCRYPTED RANKED

All the headquarters' inbound and outbound communications are scrambled against unauthorized use, meaning an intercepted signal must be decrypted. Cracking the code requires a Technology check (DC 25); increase the DC by +5 per additional rank.

Purchasing this feature once applies its protection to all other communications features in the headquarters.

**Prerequisites:** Any other Communications feature, Expertise: Electronics 8

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## COMMUNICATIONS, GLOBAL

This system works in much the same fashion as the Basic Communications feature except it is able to interact with communications devices on a global scale. This feature is all that's needed (rather than Space Communications) to communicate between Earth and something in orbit.

**Prerequisites:** Basic Communications, Expertise: Electronic 4

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point

## COMMUNICATIONS, SPACE

Possessing the same characteristics as the Basic and Global Communications systems, this feature allows communications through outer space from one planet and/or system to another. The exact distance should be determined by a combination of considering the overall resources of those who made the headquarters, along with the concept behind these characters and the overall campaign PL and design.

**Prerequisites:** Basic and Global Communications, Expertise: Electronics 12, Expertise: Physics 8, Technology 12

**Space:** 1

**Cost:** 1 point

## COMPUTER, BASIC

## RANKED

The entire headquarters is outfitted with a rudimentary network server with terminals found in typical locations (Living Space, War Room, etc.) This allows

characters to make untrained use of the Technology skill for computer-related purposes, although advanced purposes, such as *inventing* and *security* (for hacking and the like) using the computer suffer a -4 penalty.

The server runs conventional commercial software and has Internet access with a firewall, but there isn't much to it beyond what you'd expect of a computer network belonging to a mid-sized corporation.

Computers may have additional skills added, representing their database capabilities, gaining 4 ranks with a single skill per additional rank. A Gamemaster can rule that a particular skill isn't appropriate for this use, however. For example, many knowledge-based Expertise skills are highly appropriate for computer databases whereas Stealth would likely be inappropriate. Each additional rank purchased for this feature increases this skill's capabilities by 4 more ranks (as with constructs), or may add a new skill.

**Prerequisites:** None unless adding skills, in which case the programmer must have the same skill of at least as many ranks

**Space:** 0; +1 per 3 ranks (rounded down)

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## COMPUTER, ADVANCED

## RANKED

A state-of-the-art computer system services the entire headquarters (a mainframe or mini-frame system.) This allows characters to make use of the computer's Technology skill untrained without penalty with regards to computer-related purposes, and the computer can be programmed to handle routine base functions (including monitoring communications channels.)

Each additional rank grants users a +2 bonus to Technology checks solely for computer-related checks. Additional skills may also be added, as per the Basic Computer feature.

For an artificially intelligent computer system, build the computer as an immobile construct (see Constructs in the core rules.)

**Prerequisites:** Basic Computer, Expertise: Electronics 8, Technology 8; if adding skills, the programmer must have the same skill of at least as many ranks

**Space:** 0; +1 per 2 ranks (rounded down)

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

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## CONCEALED, BASIC

## RANKED

The headquarters is hidden from the outside world in some rudimentary 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 also applied. An isolated headquarters is difficult to reach, while a concealed headquarters is difficult to find in the first place.

Perception checks to locate/identify the headquarters by a visual or tactile search increases their DC by +5 per rank.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 4, Stealth 4

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

Skill checks to locate/identify the headquarters by use of an appropriate sensor have their DC increased by +10. Each additional rank applied to this increases the DC +5.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Electronics 8

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## CONCEALED, COSMETIC

## RANKED

The headquarters is equipped with sliding walls, hidden compartments, and other devices that, when engaged, allow the facility to appear to be something else. Typical uses include making a seemingly normal home's or office building's interior transform to reveal the headquarters' special features. Changing the headquarters' appearance requires a resident spend one round to change the interior or exterior appearance (or both.) While this feature is engaged, a Perception check (DC 20) is required to notice anything odd about it. Increase this DC by +5 per additional rank.

When this feature is added, the designer must determine how and from where the concealment can be manipulated. For instance, is the control voice activated through the owners' personal communicators or is there a single switch in a central control room that must be flipped?

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 8, Stealth 8

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## DEFENSE SYSTEM

## RANKED

A Defense System consists of various weapon emplacements defending the headquarters' exterior and interior. Heroic HQs usually have nonlethal weapons or defenses, such as a force field, while villainous defense systems are often out to do harm or kill.

Each feature rank provides the headquarters with 10 points to spend on any single active Defense System—be it a weapon or deathtrap. However, the actual number of defense systems is limited only by the headquarters' concept and the Gamemaster's opinion.

Gamemaster's should use their discretion when determining how much Space, if any, these defense systems will use.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 8. Gamemasters may demand other skills to suit a particular aspect of the defense system.

**Space:** Gamemaster's judgment

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## DEMOLITIONS DISPOSAL

## RANKED

This room is equipped with explosives detection equipment, **Senses 1** (Detect Explosives [Smell]), and an airtight sub-section with emergency venting for dealing with bio- and chemo-hazard explosives. The area's Toughness can be increased by +4 per additional rank.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Demolitions 8, Expertise: Engineering 4

**Space:** 1

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## DIMENSIONAL CAPACITY

## RANKED

Through dimensional warping, the headquarters' interior is larger than its exterior. Each feature rank increases the headquarters' available Space to that of

one size category larger. So, for one rank, a small headquarters would have as much Space as a medium-sized headquarters, as a large headquarters for 3 ranks, and so on. Beyond an awesome sized headquarters, each additional rank doubles the amount of Spaces.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 12, +2 per feature rank beyond the first; Inventor; Movement (Dimensional Travel) or similar power

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## DIMENSIONAL PORTAL

## RANKED

This feature introduces a permanent portal that accesses a specified dimension and allows passage to anything that enters the gateway. Each additional rank allows the Dimensional Portal to link to another specified dimension, or a flat fee of 10 ranks may be purchased to allow the gate to link to *any* dimension. In the latter case,

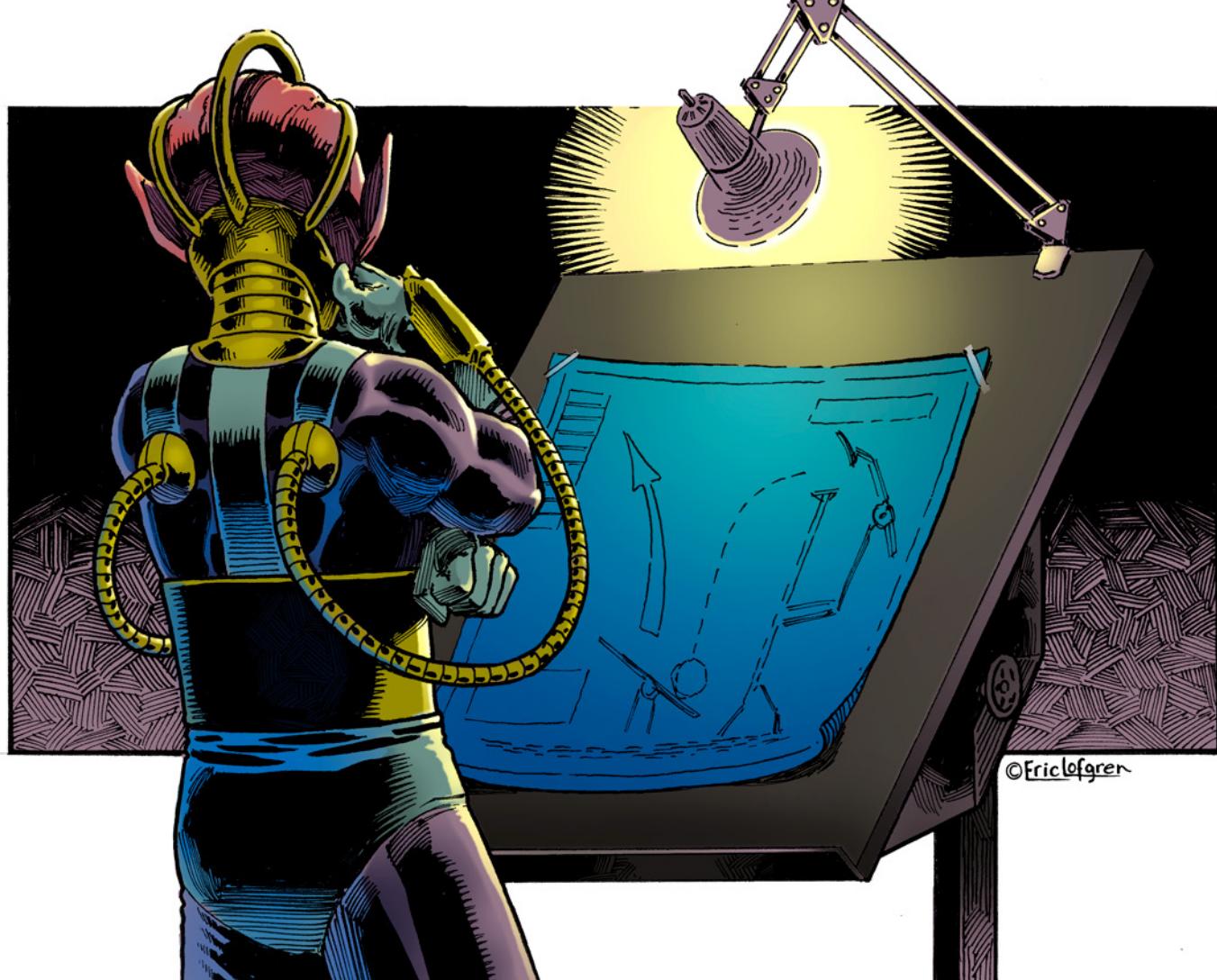
Gamemasters may place limitations on the gate's use, such as only being able to link to dimensions the gate's operator knows the quantum coordinates for.

At the Gamemaster's discretion, an appropriate skill check—typically Expertise or Technology—may be required to operate the portal.

**Prerequisites:** Movement (Dimensional Travel) or similar power. Must have access to another dimension and may vary beyond this; the Gamemaster may set other prerequisites to suit the type of gate. Most will require the Power System feature.

**Space:** 1 or more if designed to accommodate the passage of exceptionally large items. At the Gamemaster's discretion, this could use 0 Space if the concept suits it.

**Cost:** 2 point/rank (half this cost if the gate is one-way); 10 are necessary for a universal gateway



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# Chapter 8: Headquarters

## DOCK

## RANKED

A dock accommodates water vehicles and includes access to a nearby waterway, an airlock, or lock system for moving vehicles in and out of the dock. Dry-dock facilities for repairing and maintaining water vehicles are also available.

The Gamemaster may require the headquarters be located within a reasonable distance of a body of water in order to have this feature.

**Space & Cost:** Varies by vehicle size, see the **Vehicle Accommodations' Size and Cost** table. The Gamemaster may rule the necessary Space can be disregarded if the dock isn't built within the confines of the headquarters area itself, such as by building it upon expansive, otherwise-empty property surrounding the headquarters.

## DRONES

A fleet of small maintenance and cleaning drones occupy the headquarters. The "drones" may be small robots or living creatures, but either way they are non-combatants considered to be PL 1 minions. They have no skills beyond Expertise related to rudimentary knowledge and profession abilities related to appropriate tasks.

The headquarters houses up to as many drones as the HQ's total used and unused Spaces.

**Prerequisites:** Varies by Gamemaster's discretion to suit the drones' nature. Robots, for instance, may require 8 ranks of Expertise: Robotics.

**Space:** 0, +1 per 25 drones (rounded down)

**Cost:** 1 point

## ELECTRONIC COUNTER-MEASURES

## RANKED

Attempts using ordinary technology (infra-red sensors, laser microphones, bugs, etc.) to spy on the headquarters suffer a -2 penalty to do so per rank.

The Gamemaster may instead allow this penalty to apply to other forms of spying, such as arcane scrying or the like. Doing so means it won't apply to mundane technology without purchasing this feature separately for each such application. In such instances, replace the Expertise: Electronics prerequisite with an appropriate equivalent.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Electronics 8, +2 per feature rank beyond the first

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## Vehicle Accommodations' Size and Cost

Spaces Used	Point Cost	Amount of Appropriate Vehicles by Size *					
		Medium	Large	Huge	Gargantuan	Colossal	Awesome
0	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
1	2	2	1	—	—	—	—
2	3	4	2	1	—	—	—
4	4	8	4	2	1	—	—
8	5	16	8	4	2	1	—
16	6	32	16	8	4	2	1
32	7	64	32	16	8	4	2
64	8	125	64	32	16	8	4
125	9	250	125	64	32	16	8
250	10	500	250	125	64	32	16
500	11	1,000	500	250	125	64	32

\* The listings indicate the maximum amount of vehicles of any given size that may fit in the space simultaneously, given that all vehicles are of the same size. Mixing and matching vehicles of various sizes allows for extrapolating how many vehicles of either size may fit in the area by cross-referencing vehicle sizes on the table.

*It is clear 1 gargantuan vehicle (requiring 8 Spaces) uses twice the space of a huge vehicle (requiring 4 Spaces), which in turn takes up twice the space of a large vehicle (requiring 2 Spaces.) As such, the space normally reserved for a colossal vehicle area taking up 16 Spaces could otherwise hold, for example, 1 gargantuan vehicle, 1 huge vehicle, and 2 large vehicles.*

**EMERGENCY ARRESTING SYSTEM**

Usually only used in headquarters built as vehicles or that otherwise fly, the facility is equipped with an emergency system that will respond to the headquarters falling from its proper location by attempting to arrest such movement.

When falling, a parachute, retro engine, or the like (as appropriate to the headquarters' technology level and environment) deploys and slows its descent to a rate of 10 feet per round. Even at such a slower rate, damage may still be suffered because of the environment or other conditions.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 10

**Space:** 0, +1 per headquarters size category above Small

**Cost:** 1 point

**EMERGENCY FLOATATION SYSTEM**

The headquarters is equipped with a means of floatation (typically inflatable devices) or is inherently buoyant, even if it is not intended to be waterborne. It will easily float if placed in water or similar liquid, and will rise to the surface at the rate of 20 feet per round if forcibly submerged. Only damaging the floatation system will cause the headquarters to sink.

Headquarters developed specifically to operate on or under water, such as one built with the Swimming effect, do not require this feature to be seaworthy. However, they may run into problems without it if their usual means of floatation is denied.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 10

**Space:** 0, +1 per headquarters size category above Small

**Cost:** 1 point

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL** **RANKED**

Each room may be sealed off into a separate section so its conditions may be adapted to that of a single different environment. For instance, Living Space could be filled with water and adapted to house a visiting aquatic alien.

Generally, changing a room's environment takes a minute and can be performed from the room in question or any major computer terminal or control room within the headquarters. Every feature rank allows for the rooms to be independently altered to a different environment type. A flat rate of 10 ranks allows the rooms

to adapt to any reasonable environment, although the Gamemaster may disallow unusual environments such as those involving magic or the like.

If an environmental condition may be considered hazardous (such as if using the previous example to drown someone), regard the conditions an attack of the same rank as the headquarters' PL.

**Prerequisites:** Varies by Gamemaster's discretion to suit the additional environments' nature.

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank or 10 points for any environment

**ESCAPE TUNNEL**
**RANKED**

The headquarters has one escape tunnel (or like means of covert egress, such as an escape pod) into the surrounding area per PL of the headquarters. The tunnels (or whatever) may lead up to a mile away from the facility. A Perception check (DC 20), +5 per additional rank, is required to find such a hidden exit.

**Space:** 0 for a tunnel or the like. Something like escape pods would take up as much Space as half the rank of the people the pods are meant to accommodate, as per the **Amounts Table**. Treat any amounts rank of less than 1 as 1 Space.

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

**FIRE PREVENTION SYSTEM**
**RANKED**

The headquarters is equipped with an advanced, automatic system for detecting and extinguishing fires. Any large open flame sets the system off (beware, fire-using heroes!) It functions like the Nullify effect at rank 5 against fire—increase the power's ranks by +2 per additional feature rank.

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.)

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

**FOOD SUPPLY**
**RANKED**

The headquarters is capable of producing enough food and water for its residents, representing such things as a hydroponics farm or food replication ma-

# Chapter 8: Headquarters

chines. Every additional rank doubles the amount of people the feature can feed comfortably.

**Space:** 0 for less than Small; 1 for a Small headquarters, doubling per size category larger

**Cost:** 1 point

## GAME ROOM

A game room is filled with entertainment and recreational devices, be they televisions, video games, pool tables, pinball or the like. If large enough, it can even include a theater. This can be varied to suit individual tastes.

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 8 people

**Cost:** 1 point

## GARAGE

## RANKED

A garage houses ground vehicles, and includes a ramp or other access to move vehicles in and out, facilities for repairing and maintaining vehicles, and a sliding access door.

**Space & Cost:** Varies by vehicle size, see the **Vehicle Accommodations' Size and Cost** table on page 208. The Gamemaster may halve the necessary Space (round up, with a minimum of 1 Space) if the vehicles are not stored within the confines of the headquarters area itself, such as by building a parking lot upon expansive, otherwise-empty property surrounding the headquarters.

## GROUNDS

## RANKED

In addition to the headquarters' actual building(s), it has a considerable area of land surrounding it that is considered a part of its dominion. An HQ can have surrounding land equal to its size category at no cost, without having this feature. Possessing the feature provides grounds sized for a headquarters one size bigger per feature rank.

The Gamemaster may allow certain features to be placed upon the Grounds instead of being attached to the main facility, so long as the Grounds have sufficient Space. For instance, a Pool, Garage, Hangar, or Dock are ideal features to be added to the Grounds. Features deployed in this fashion are not directly attached to the headquarters, however, meaning open ground must be covered between the two.

If the headquarters has features like Defense System and Security System, they also extend over the grounds (with fences, sensors, weapon emplacements, and so forth.)

**Space:** Provides external space equal to +1 size per rank

**Cost:** 1/rank

## 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.

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 8 people

**Cost:** 1 point

## HABITAT

A portion of the headquarters is given over to an artificial environment suitable for certain plants or animals. It may be a greenhouse, arboretum, zoo, or even "living laboratory" with a self-contained ecosystem. The habitat may serve primarily as a place of rest and quiet contemplation, a home for pets or rare creatures, or have more practical uses. These may include generating oxygen (from plants) or growing food for the installation's inhabitants.

**Space:** 1 per half acre

**Cost:** 1 point

## HANGAR

## RANKED

A hangar houses air and/or space vehicles. It includes a hatch and/or runway for the vehicles to launch, and facilities for repairing and maintaining flying vehicles. For some HQs, the hangar's launch facilities may require a long tunnel or other means of access to the outside.

**Space & Cost:** Varies by vehicle size, see the **Vehicle Accommodations' Size and Cost** table on page 208. The Gamemaster may halve the necessary Space (round up, with a minimum of 1 Space) if the vehicles are not stored within the confines of the headquarters area itself, such as by building an airfield upon expansive, otherwise-empty property surrounding the headquarters, or by adding access umbilical tubes to the exterior of a space station.

## HERO POINT BANK

## RANKED

Every feature rank grants the headquarters a hero point to draw upon instead of using those of operators/owners (such as characters.) These points may only be spent in cooperation with the headquarters' own inherent features and traits (such as powers.) They cannot be spent on its residents, operators, or anyone else unless the feature or trait is specifically designed to affect such people, as is the case with the Amplifier feature.

Whoever is in control of the headquarters decides how and when such hero points are used.

Spent hero points regenerate at a rate of 1 per week.

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## HOLDING CELLS

## RANKED

These are cells for holding prisoners, usually temporarily, although some headquarters might have more permanent containment facilities. For an additional 3 ranks, the cell can be equipped with Nullify 5 (state effect) devices—+2 ranks of Nullify per feature rank purchased for this feature for that particular purpose. The cell's basic Toughness can also be increased by +4 for an additional rank. Making the cells' Toughness Impervious requires 1 rank, as does transforming the cells into "Punishment" cells (add an Affliction effect at the installation's PL), or "Sleeper" cells (add an Affliction effect at the installation's PL that keeps prisoners incapacitated.)

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 8, plus Technology 8 and Inventor if the Nullify effect is available

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 8 people

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## INFIRMARY

## RANKED

An infirmary consists of hospital beds and equipment for the full use of the Expertise: Medicine and Treatment skills. It can be assumed to have the necessary facilities to handle any unusual physiology of the base's owner(s.) A -4 penalty (or more) is suffered for alien and unusual physiology, including that of animals.

The infirmary can provide advanced equipment that either provides a +2 bonus per additional rank to Expertise: Medicine and Treatment checks or cancels out penalties from alien or animal physiology.

**Prerequisites:** None unless additional ranks are purchased for the Expertise: Medicine skill or to counteract alien physiology penalties, in which case Expertise: Medicine 8, +2 per feature rank is required.

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 4 people

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## INTELLIGENT

## RANKED

The headquarters includes an intelligence of some sort, such as an artificial intelligence computer program or possessing spirit. Build the intelligence as a construct that is confined to the headquarters under the same restrictions as used for building HQ powers and special abilities. Every feature rank provides 15 points with which to build the intelligence construct.

**Prerequisites:** Varies by the intelligence's nature; the Gamemaster may require certain technology-oriented skills if it is a computer intelligence, for instance.

**Space:** 0; depending on the concept, time period, etc. the Gamemaster may require Space be spent on this feature

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## INVENTOR LAB

## RANKED

The Inventor Lab is equipped with all manner of technological components, allowing residents to use its resources to provide unique, temporary devices. They are temporary because there is a maximum amount of items that may be produced by the lab before the components must be replaced or returned in order to make new gadgets.

Using an Inventor Lab requires a design check, as normal for an invention, but the Inventor advantage is not required. Construction checks and times are normal. If the character has the Inventor advantage, invention times are halved.

A single rank allows for 5 points worth of gadgets simultaneously, with additional ranks being spent in any of several possible ways that must be specified upon purchasing and cannot be changed afterward:

- A total of 5 cumulative additional points may be spent on technological inventions simultaneously produced by the lab.
- Reduce the design time by one-quarter. This feature aspect may be purchased a maximum of three times

(this cannot be reduced beyond one-quarter of normal.)

- Reduce the construction time by one-quarter. This feature aspect may be purchased a maximum of three times (this cannot be reduced beyond one-quarter of normal.)
- +2 cumulative bonus to design checks.
- +2 cumulative bonus to construction checks.

Once a gadget is made from the pool of available points, those points cannot be used for anything else until the gadget is disassembled and its components returned.

If the gadget is lost, stolen, or destroyed, the Game-master may force the players to purchase the points again before they can be used or make them go through a process to replenish the lost supplies and components. Returning the points to the pool takes (15 x points spent on the invention) minutes once it is returned to the Inventor Lab.

**Prerequisites:** Technology 4, Inventor

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 4 people

**Cost:** The cost per feature rank depends on the type of gadgets that may be provided simultaneously.

- **1 point/rank:** One trait of a single type (ability scores, skills, advantages, or powers of a particular type or descriptor) at a time. So you could acquire any one skill at a time, for example, or any one power.
- **2 points/rank:** Any single trait at a time.
- **3 points/rank:** Multiple traits of a single type (ability scores, skills, advantages, or powers of a particular type or descriptor), so long as the total traits do not add up to more than the total available ranks provided by the feature.
- **4 points/rank:** Multiple traits of a single type or descriptor at once, so long as the total traits do not add up to more than the total available ranks provided by the feature.
- **5 points/rank:** Any combination of traits adding up the total available ranks provided by the feature.

## ISOLATED

Headquarters with this feature are situated somewhere out of the way. 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, rudimentary 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.

**Prerequisites:** Gamemasters use their discretion based on the location. For example, a headquarters located in space would certainly require 12 or more ranks in Expertise: Engineering and Technology, if not additional skills.

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** Varies; 1 point for isolated but not too unusual locations (e.g., a deserted island), 2 points for a moderately unusual location (e.g., atop a lonely mountain peak), or 3 points for an isolated location that also involves extreme environmental conditions (e.g., a base on the Moon or the bottom of the ocean.)

## KENNEL / PEN

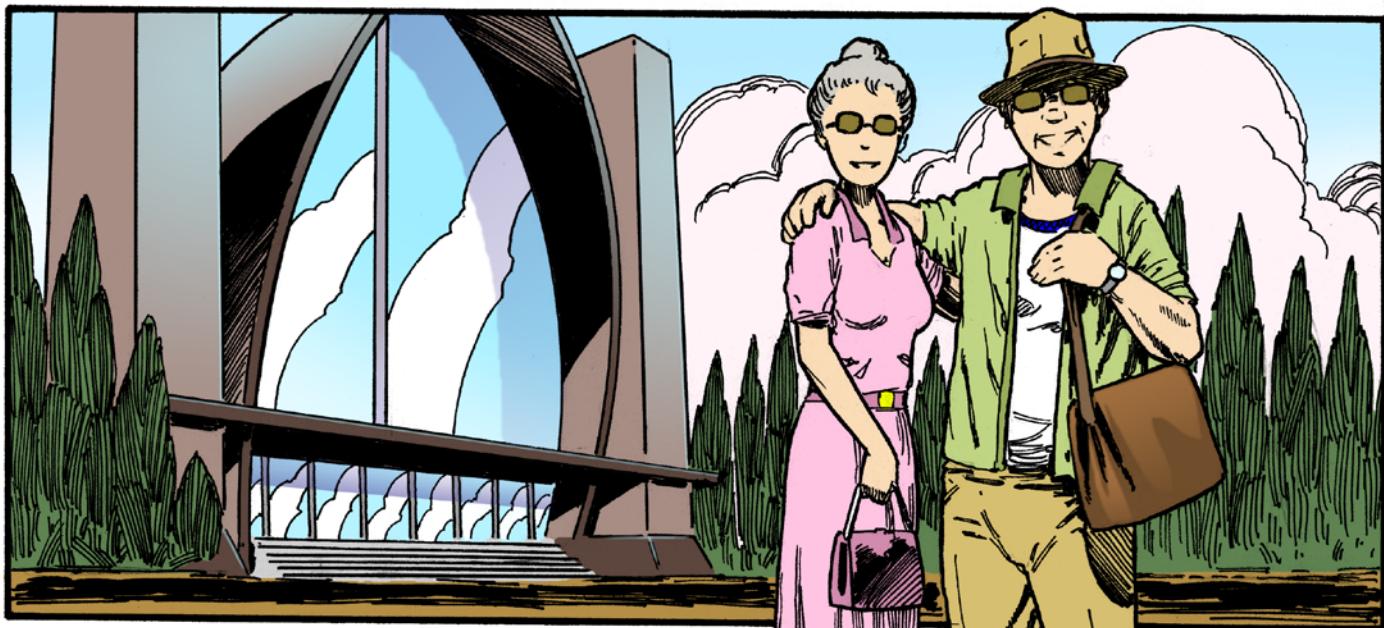
A kennel or animal pen contains and cares for the needs of animals. The area may be comprised entirely of, or in combination, stalls, cages, roosts, and dens, along with standard tools of animal husbandry. An infirmary feature may be purchased to care for animals by applying its full effects to animals instead of humans, with humans suffering a penalty if cared for within the facility.

**Space & Cost:** Varies by animal size in the same manner reserved for vehicles (see the **Vehicle Accommodations' Size and Cost** table on page 208.) The Game-master may halve the necessary Space (round up, with a minimum of 1 Space) if the animals are not stored within the confines of the headquarters area itself, such as by building a zoo outdoors upon expansive, otherwise-empty property surrounding the headquarters.

## KITCHEN / MESS HALL

A Kitchen provides the space, appliances, and other tools necessary for storing, preserving, and preparing food. Also included is the space required for serving the food in either a basic form (long tables with benches or simple chairs) or luxury form (fine dining.)

**Space:** 1 with area enough for 2 people to work, and ac-



commodes 15 people to eat (or 4 people to eat per Space for a luxury mess)

**Cost:** 1 point

## LABORATORY, BASIC

## RANKED

A Basic Laboratory is a facility for the use of particular science-based Expertise skills, or for performing scientific tests or experiments with other skills. Characters may use the laboratory to perform research, study unusual phenomena (including many super-powers), and so forth.

It contains much of the necessary scientific equipment, including dedicated and enclosed computer network (connecting it to the overall network is a free option if the headquarters has its own Basic or Advanced Computer feature.)

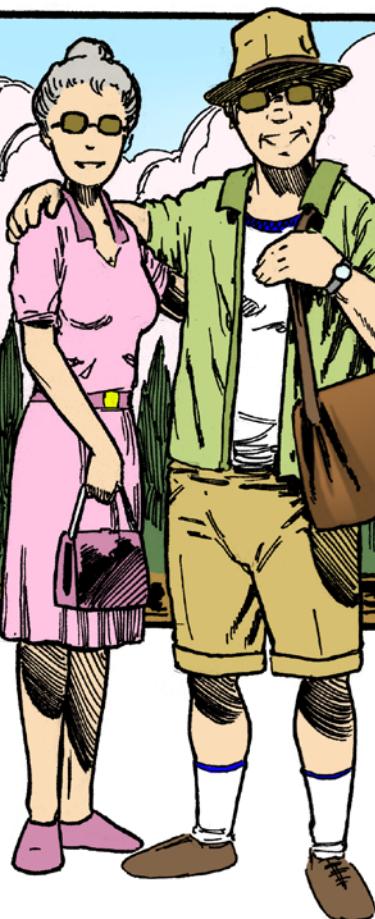
A +2 bonus per additional rank is bestowed to all relevant skills utilizing the lab.

Optionally, a Basic Laboratory can be dedicated to a particular skill. This grants a +5 bonus to any of those skill checks, but imposing a -5 penalty to all others due to the specialized nature of its equipment. Specialized Basic Laboratories must be purchased and expanded separate from other laboratories. Each additional rank provides the specialized skill an additional +2 bonus without increasing the penalty by a related degree.

**Prerequisites:** None; 8 ranks are required in the relevant skill if specialized in it.

**Space:** 1 with area enough for 4 people to work

**Cost:** 1 point/rank



The facility contains all the necessary scientific equipment, including dedicated and enclosed computer network (connecting it to the overall network is a free option if the headquarters has its own basic or advanced computer feature), needed to analyze clues and evidence using the Expertise: Criminology and Investigation skills. This includes ballistic and chemical testing.

A +2 bonus per additional rank is bestowed to Expertise: Criminology and Investigation utilizing the lab. An additional rank may also be spent to allow a Crime Laboratory to conduct DNA testing on evidence.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Criminology 4

**Space:** 1 with area enough for 4 people to work

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## LANDMARK

## RANKED

The headquarters is well known and carries a definite meaning and significance to those who live in the vicinity or interact with it in other ways (such as it being a tourist stop.)

# Chapter 8: Headquarters

To see how people will react to the landmark, the headquarters makes a Persuasion 4 check against them, +4 ranks per additional feature rank. A tyrant's headquarters would likely find the people around it to be "hostile" for the sake of their attitude on the Persuasion skill's Attitudes table because they see the place as a symbol of their slavery. The headquarters of heroes who regularly save the world and perform charity work, on the other hand, would likely consider their neighbors "favorable" or even "helpful," and so they may rush to help the heroes if the facility came under attack.

Gamemasters should use their best judgment and consider ongoing circumstances and recent events, as well as the people involved, when deciding what any given third-party's attitude towards the headquarters will be.

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## LIBRARY

A Library allows various knowledge-based Expertise skills to be utilized while doing research. It may consist of printed matter (books and periodicals), microfilm, computer databases, or a combination of all three.

A library allows characters to consider many appropriate Expertise checks to be considered routine, or may provide a circumstance bonus to related checks. It may also allow the character to use some skills untrained that are not usually allowed to be used untrained, unless the information being researched is particularly obscure (in the Gamemaster's judgment.)

**Space:** 1 with area enough for 8 people to work

**Cost:** 1 point

## LIVING SPACE, BARRACKS

This is a cramped living area where people have little space to call their own beyond a bed, small wardrobe/closet, and nightstand or footlocker. This feature is usually united through several purchases to create Barracks for common minions or crews who are not expected to enjoy much in the way of perks.

Characters can live in a headquarters lacking living space for a short-term, but they're not likely to be very comfortable. Reducing the already pitiful comfort level and changing the beds to bunk beds at no additional cost can double the amount of people accommodated.

**Space:** 1 with area enough for 20 people to live

**Cost:** 1 point

## LIVING SPACE, BASIC

The headquarters includes all the necessary amenities for people to live there full-time. It includes separate bedrooms, a small living area, and shared washroom.

**Space:** 1 with area enough for 4 people to live (or 2 people in greater comfort)

**Cost:** 1 point

## LIVING SPACE, LUXURY

Outfitted for up to two people to live together in comfort, this single living unit consists of a bedroom, living area, small dining area, and private washroom each. Other luxuries (hot tubs, private sauna, etc.) may be added, although a Gamemaster may require additional points be spent for the more expensive perks.

**Space:** 2 with area enough for 2 people to live (or 1 person in greater comfort)

**Cost:** 1 point

## MOTOR POOL

## RANKED

The headquarters is equipped with a supply of vehicles, all of which are ready from your headquarters at a moment's notice. You begin with one vehicle, and each additional rank increases the amount of vehicles by one step on the **Amounts Table**. This amount cannot exceed the storage capacity of the Garage, Dock, or Hangar, as appropriate.

Each vehicle has as many points to spend on designing as your headquarters' PL  $\times$  5. An additional rank may be spent to increase by 5 the headquarters' effective PL for this purpose.

You cannot have more or larger vehicles in your motor pool than the headquarters' Garage, Hangar, or Dock feature can accommodate, appropriately. If destroyed, a vehicle takes 1 week per PL of the headquarters to replace unless a character spends their own points to acquire replacements sooner.

A Motor Pool must be purchased separately for each general type of vehicle (land, air, or water) to be accommodated by the Hangar, Garage, and/or Dock feature, appropriately.

**Prerequisites:** Garage, Hangar, or Dock (as appropriate to vehicle type)

**Space:** 0; all vehicles are stored in the Garage, Hangar, or Dock

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

### MOVABLE

The headquarters is capable of relocating from one place to another, but it is not as capable as a vehicle in that regard. Generally speaking, moving the headquarters is a significant undertaking that can only occur (at most) once per game session, and probably less often than that. This may be due to the need to charge powerful batteries, make complex calculations, wait for the right alignment of mystic energies, or any number of other reasons.

The key point is that the headquarters isn't particularly useful for getting from place-to-place within the context of a single adventure, although it may move between adventures. It may serve as a primary means of conveying characters to adventures, such as a "Tower Beyond Time" that shifts from dimension to dimension, with each dimensional shift heralding a new locale and a new adventure.

As a 0-cost Feature, the headquarters moves about beyond the occupants' ability to control. This may require the occupants devise some special means of tracking it or even entering it.

**Prerequisites:** Varies; Gamemasters use their discretion based on the method of relocation.

**Space:** Varies; Gamemasters use their discretion based on the method of relocation.

**Cost:** 1 point

### MYSTIC LOCALE

A headquarters with this feature is built on a location of occult power and significance, granting extra arcane powers to anyone attuned to such energies.

Characters living in the headquarters will become attuned to the energies after one month per feature rank. Other characters may become attuned by first detecting or otherwise taking note of the energies, and then performing a ritual requiring 8 hours per rank and succeeding at an Expertise: Magic check (DC 10, +2 per rank).

Anyone attuned to the locale may spontaneously cast spells, as per using a hero point to perform a Power Stunt. No actual hero point is spent, however, and the character does not become fatigued by doing so. Each character may make use of his ability once per day per feature rank.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Magic 12, +2 per feature rank beyond the first

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

### PERSONNEL

The headquarters has a staff of personnel commensurate with its size and facilities. The staff is made up of characters created and controlled by the Gamemaster, and tasked with servicing the headquarters. As such, they shouldn't be considered all-purpose Minions of the occupant(s.)

A base's personnel may help defend it in case of attack, but they're not going to go out on missions or otherwise assist outside of their duties. This feature merely ensures there's someone taking care of the place while the owner isn't at home.

Note that a headquarters' personnel do not have to be ordinary humans. They could be service robots, magical golems, animated skeletons, enslaved aliens, trained apes, or just about anything else the Gamemaster chooses to fit with the theme of the base and its owner(s.)

- Personnel should always be considered minions. Non-minions should be regular non-player characters rather than personnel.
- Personnel should not be useful outside of the context of the headquarters for the most part. Underlings who accompany characters away from the headquarters should be acquired via Summon, Minions, or Sidekick.
- Personnel are subject to the PL limits of the headquarters and the game, and the Gamemaster may require them to be even lower level (6 or less, for example.)
- Personnel can create complications for the headquarters' owners of the installation, ranging from the need to protect them from potential harm (or rescue them from danger) to interpersonal conflicts or even betrayals.

**Space:** 0 or more; if they live on the premises, sufficient quarters and accommodations (e.g., Kitchen) must be supplied or they will not stay long

# Chapter 8: Headquarters

**Cost:** 1 point

## POOL

The headquarters has a temperature-controlled Pool. At the owner's discretion, a 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.

**Space:** Minimum of 1, although may be increased in size category to suit one's needs

**Cost:** 1 point

## POWER SYSTEM

A Power System makes the headquarters entirely independent of outside power supplies. It has its own source (which may be solar, gas, geothermal, nuclear, or anything else the designer wants) to provide for the HQ's power needs.

By increasing the feature's cost, and possibly also the Space required, the headquarters also has emergency backup power should the primary source fail. This generally lasts for a number of hours equal to the HQ's PL.

**Prerequisites:** None; the Gamemaster may decide unusual Power Systems have a requirement, such as an arcane Power System requiring Expertise: Magic 8 and Artificer

**Space:** See the **Power Needs** table to suit the headquarters' size

## Power Needs

Structure Size	Point Cost *	Spaces *
Awesome	4 (6)	32 (40)
Colossal	3 (4)	16 (20)
Gargantuan	3 (4)	8 (10)
Huge	2 (3)	4 (5)
Large	2 (3)	2 (2)
Medium	2 (3)	1 (1)
Small	1 (2)	0 (0)
Tiny	1 (2)	0 (0)
Diminutive	1 (2)	0 (0)
Fine	1 (2)	0 (0)
Minuscule	1 (2)	0 (0)

\* The amount in parenthesis is if a backup Power System is purchased

## Making Sense of Power Needs

Gamemasters should feel free to reduce or increase the point cost and/or Spaces used to suit headquarters that require very little or no power, or those that use incredible amounts of energy. If the Gamemaster and players want to avoid tinkering with the numbers, merely select an appropriate power source that meets the facility's concept.

*If the base is so high-tech that its conception seems to demand more power than one would think is typical for a headquarters of its size, the power source is defined as a cutting-edge thermal tap. This tap generates much more power than a mechanism of its size suggests.*

**Cost:** See the **Power Needs** table to suit the headquarters' size

## REMOTE FEATURE

One of the headquarters' features is separate from the primary structure, such as a laboratory in a remote area (for safety and security) or a hangar high in the mountains overlooking a facility in a valley far below. This feature is not typically necessary if the isolated feature is still upon the grounds (if that feature is also possessed) unless being at a remote location is highly unusual.

**Prerequisites:** Varies; Gamemasters use their discretion based on the means of relocation.

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point

## RITUAL CHAMBER

## RANKED

A Ritual Chamber is equipped with all manner of unusual components, allowing residents to use it to create temporary magical effects. They are temporary because there is a maximum amount of rituals that may be produced and put into effect by the chamber before the components must be replaced or returned in order to orchestrate new rituals.

Using a ritual chamber requires a design check, as normal for a ritual, but the Ritualist advantage is not required. Ritual performance checks and times are normal. If the character has the Ritualist advantage, the ritual's design and performance times are halved.

A single rank allows for 5 points worth of rituals simultaneously, with additional ranks being spent in any

of several possible ways that must be specified upon purchasing and cannot be changed afterward:

- A total of 5 cumulative additional points may be spent on rituals simultaneously produced by the chamber.
- Reduce the design time by one-quarter. This feature aspect may be purchased a maximum of three times (this cannot be reduced beyond one-quarter of normal.)
- Reduce the performance time by one-quarter. This feature aspect may be purchased a maximum of three times (this cannot be reduced beyond one-quarter of normal.)
- +2 cumulative bonus to design checks.
- +2 cumulative bonus to performance checks.

Once a ritual is made from the pool of points, those points cannot be used for anything else until the ritual's effects end and any required components returned

If the required components are destroyed or stolen, the Gamemaster may force the players to purchase the points again before they can be used or make them go through a process to replenish the lost supplies and components. Returning the points to the pool takes (15 minutes x points spent on the ritual) minutes once the ritual ends.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Magic 4, Ritualist

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 5 people

**Cost:** The cost per feature rank depends on the type of rituals that may be provided simultaneously.

- **1 point/rank:** One trait of a single type (ability scores, skills, advantages, or powers of a particular type or descriptor) at a time. So you could acquire any one skill at a time, for example, or any one power.
- **2 points/rank:** Any single trait at a time.
- **3 points/rank:** Multiple traits of a single type (ability scores, skills, advantages, or powers of a particular type or descriptor), so long as the total traits do not add up to more than the total available ranks provided by the feature.
- **4 points/rank:** Multiple traits of a single type or descriptor at once, so long as the total traits do not add up to more than the total available ranks provided by the feature.
- **5 points/rank:** Any combination of traits adding up the total available ranks provided by the feature.

## SEALED

This is similar to the Isolated feature, except the lair is sealed off from the outside world rather than isolated by geographic location. It may be a structure with no doors, windows, or other means of outside access. Only the lair's owner and designated guests may enter, although the Gamemaster should determine means by which trespassers might do so, including effects like Dimensional Travel, Insubstantial, Permeate, and Teleport.

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point

## SECURITY SYSTEM

## RANKED

Security Systems may be purchased once and considered to cover the entire headquarters (or a particular area if the Gamemaster feels that is more fitting) rather than purchasing for every single relevant location. For example, while designing a typical police station, the Gamemaster decides purchasing this feature means all doors have alarms and improved locks.

The security system may be tied into a defense System at no additional cost (if the headquarters is equipped with that feature), so triggering an alarm or the like activates the Defense System to respond appropriately. A DC 20 Technology (security) check is needed to circumvent these systems, +5 per additional feature rank. The greater the Technology (security) check's DC, the more sophisticated the security systems are generally understood to be.

**Prerequisites:** Varies; Gamemasters may demand certain skills to suit a particular aspect of the Security System.

**Space:** Gamemaster's judgment

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## SELF-DESTRUCT

This feature means the headquarters is equipped with explosives, a devastating power overload function, or something similar that will destroy the facility. The self-destruct requires a password, key, or similar precaution be activated to begin the countdown or immediate destruction.

It is up to the characters and the headquarters' concept whether the countdown will be audible throughout the facility.

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Upon self-destruct, the headquarters is destroyed and everyone within must make a Toughness check versus a Damage effect of  $(10 + \text{the headquarters' PL})$  ranks. Anyone within  $(5 \text{ feet} \times \text{PL})$  of the headquarters is attacked by an explosion with a Damage rank equal to the PL. This is half fire and half bludgeoning Damage, although the Gamemaster and player may agree to change it to something else.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Demolitions 8; this can be replaced by something else if the self-destruct's nature is something other than ordinary explosives

**Space:** 0; Gamemasters may rule the nature of the chosen form of self-destruct requires an assigned amount of Space, however

**Cost:** 1 point

## SELF-REPAIRING

## RANKED

The headquarters' structure "heals" any Damage done to it over time. Essentially, it recovers in the same fashion as does a character. A second rank indicates the structure will even rebuild itself in a week if it is destroyed! If it cannot rebuild in its original location, it reappears in the nearest suitable place.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 12, Expertise: Robotics 8; these skills may be replaced by appropriate alternatives if the repairing process is not technological in nature

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## SOVEREIGN

The headquarters is recognized as a sovereign nation or as belonging to a nation other than that of the soil upon which it rests. This feature may be used to construct embassies or the like, as well as small, independent nations.

Local law enforcement has no jurisdiction within the headquarters, but thwarting local authorities may have long-term disadvantages in terms of a lack of cooperation and trouble from higher levels of government.

Characters living in the headquarters require using the Benefit (Diplomatic Immunity) advantage to gain the same standing when not upon the facility's grounds.

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point

## TELEPORT LOCK

The headquarters emits a "beacon" or "lock" for certain Teleport effects, making the headquarters a "well-known location." This makes teleporting to it Accurate (as the extra) so long as the character is going to the headquarters, has the right Teleport descriptor(s), and is authorized. This is a common "escape hatch" for villains to quickly teleport back to their hidden lair, should plans go awry.

**Prerequisites:** Varies; Technology 12 if tech-based, Expertise: Magic 12 if arcane, etc.

**Space:** 0 or 1; Gamemaster's discretion.

**Cost:** 1 point

## TEMPORAL WARP

## RANKED

Time within the headquarters moves at a different rate than that of the world outside! Time within the structure is either slowed or sped up compared to the normal passage of time, passing at half or twice the normal rate. Each additional rank halves again doubles the ratio of time passage, as appropriate: one-quarter or four times, one-eighth or eight times, and so forth.

This time differential allows a character within an accelerated Temporal Warp to spend additional time planning, building, or recovering while little or no time passes outside, for example. Conversely, it allows characters in a slowed Temporal Warp to pass considerable amounts of time outside without aging, perhaps allowing for long periods of self-imposed exile or contemplation.

**Prerequisites:** Time Travel or similar power that allows control over time

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## TRANSLOCATION

## RANKED

Headquarters with this feature are special abnormalities that exist in multiple locations at once. The headquarters may exist simultaneously at up to one additional location per feature rank.

The headquarters may be interacted with normally at each location, and normally has the same appearance regardless of where it is, but this can be changed if desired (although the size remains unchanged.) Characters interacting with the outside world, including leaving

the headquarters, may mentally specify which location of the headquarters they seek to interact with. Alternatively, they may be required to exit in different ways to appear at the intended location.

**Prerequisites:** Movement (Dimensional Travel) or similar power; most will require the Power System feature

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 2 point/rank

## UNTRACEABLE

## RANKED

Attempts to track anyone coming to or directly leaving the headquarters within its immediate vicinity suffers a -4 penalty to do so per rank, regardless of the skill being used (typically Perception.)

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Survival 8

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## VAULT

## RANKED

This feature represents a reinforced, lockable container located somewhere within the headquarters. Picking the lock requires a Technology (security) check (DC 20, + 5 per additional rank.) The vault door and interior walls have a Toughness equal to that of the headquarters, plus 5 per rank of this feature spent on improving it.

Ranks to improve the lock DC or vault's Toughness are purchased separately.

Alternatively, the Gamemaster may allow the lock to be of a different sort, such as a voice recognition system. This would require a skill or ability check other than Technology (security) be designated as one that may circumvent it.

**Prerequisites:** Expertise: Engineering 12

**Space:** As much or as little as desired; minimum of 0 for something the size of a closet or wall safe

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## WAR ROOM

This room is fitted with strategy computers, whiteboards, wall screens or holographic emitters, and the like (depending on the technology level) needed to plan and monitor strategy and tactics for ongoing and current engagements.

The computers contain their own database that allows unskilled Expertise: Tactics checks. These systems may optionally be networked to the headquarters' overall computer feature (if it exists), although this may not be desired for security reasons.

**Space:** 1 per accommodations for 8 people

**Cost:** 1 point

## WEAKENED REALITY

The fabric of reality around the headquarters is especially weak, allowing certain powers to operate more effectively than normal. Reality warping or dimension-related powers receive a bonus to any power checks equal to the headquarters' PL. This bonus only applies to powers used inside the headquarters.

This feature attracts a wide variety of other-dimensional visitors and creatures to the headquarters, meaning the characters will regularly have unexpected visitors appearing on their doorstep.

**Prerequisites:** Movement (Dimensional Travel) or similar power

**Space:** 0

**Cost:** 2 points

## WORKSHOP

## RANKED

A workshop has all the facilities for use of various Expertise skills related to crafting, building, maintaining, and repairing weapons items, and gear. It includes tools, workbenches, supplies, and so forth.

Generally speaking, each workshop only applies to an individual appropriate Expertise skill while all other craft-related Expertise skills suffer a -4 penalty within the workshop. Other workshops need to be purchased to fully suit other craft-related Expertise skills, regardless of whether or not the workshops are physically combined into a single area.

Purchasing additional ranks provides a +2 bonus to the workshop's selected Expertise check, but does not offset the penalty imposed to other Craft skills.

**Prerequisites:** Selected Expertise skill 4 ranks, +2 per feature rank beyond the first

**Space:** 1 with area enough for 4 people to work

**Cost:** 1 point/rank

## HEADQUARTERS POWER EFFECT FEATURES

With the Gamemaster's approval, a headquarters may be equipped with any appropriate power effect (and possibly advantages as well), as a feature with a cost of 1 point each. The power cannot have a total cost greater than twice the campaign's PL, and its rank is similarly limited by PL. Such powers are assumed to affect either the headquarters itself or its occupants. If they do both, they count as two features.

**Space:** A headquarters power effect feature generally requires one-quarter its ranks (rounded up) in Space. However, this can be halved at the cost of an additional point, or may be ignored entirely if the implementing concept and Gamemaster permit.

## HEADQUARTERS POWER EFFECT EXTRAS

The following extras are applied to purchased headquarters power effects for an additional cost.

### ACCIDENT PROOFING (MOVE OBJECT: TELEKINESIS BUILD)

Flat • 1 point

When activated, the headquarters' Move Object effect automatically catches loose items that are dropped, grabs people who fall, etc.

### ANIMAL SECURITY FORCE (AFFLICTION: ANIMAL CONTROL BUILD)

Flat • 1 point

An army of small animals inhabits the headquarters and its surroundings, acting as a living surveillance system. Any intruders suffer a penalty to their Stealth checks equal to the headquarters' PL as the beasts act to warn the residents of unwanted guests.

### ASTRAL PRESENCE (REMOTE SENSING: ASTRAL PROJECTION BUILD)

Flat • 1 point

Instead of merely projecting its astral self into the astral plane, a headquarters with this feature exists simultane-

ously in the Astral and mortal realms. This prevents both physical and astral intruders from penetrating its defenses without first acting to defeat or circumvent them, as normal.

Applying Affect Others to the Astral Projection power build will mean anyone within the headquarters will similarly coexist on both planes simultaneously.

### CORROSIVE SURFACES (WEAKEN TOUGHNESS: CORROSIVE BUILD)

+1 cost per rank

Once activated, all the headquarters' interior and exterior surfaces (floors and walls) will manifest this power.

### DRAW POWER (AFFLICTION, DAMAGE, OR ENVIRONMENT: ELECTRICITY CONTROL)

Flat • 1 point

So long as a sufficient energy source is near enough to be tapped into, the headquarters doesn't need a power source of its own. Such an external power source must be large enough to feed the headquarters to be of any use. If it isn't also big enough to continue powering whatever it was intended to, the power source's owners will notice the energy is being diverted.

If the external power source is turned off or if the headquarters is otherwise cut off from the energy the former provides, the facility will find itself without power.

### Draw Power: Non-Electrical

Not all headquarters use electricity as a power source. In such instances, Gamemasters should allow this extra to be applied to any power that is an appropriate replacement to Electricity.

### EMERGENCY DOWNLOAD (AFFLICTION: MIND SWITCH)

Flat • 1 point

Usually only available to a headquarters possessing an intelligence of its own, this extra allows that artificial mind to download its personality and data to another location. To do so, there must be an accessible connection (e.g., Internet, sub-space signal) to the targeted location, which must have the capacity to store all the information. This is especially useful for a headquarters that has built other facilities as Alternate Effects.

## New Headquarters Extras

Name	Effect	Cost	Description
Accident Proofing	Move Object	1 flat	Catches all loose/falling objects/people
Animal Security Force	Affliction	1 flat	Animals act as warning system
Astral Presence	Remote Sensing	1 flat	Simultaneously exists on astral plane
Corrosive Surfaces	Weaken	+1 per rank	HQ surfaces covered with corrosive
Draw Power	Affliction, Damage, or Environment	1 flat	Taps into external power source
Emergency Download	Affliction	1 flat	Downloads HQ AI to alternate location
Expunge	Teleport	1 flat	Teleports nearby subjects within the HQ
Extinguish Light	Environment	1 flat	Extinguishes all internal light sources
Impart Sorcery	Any	1 flat per rank	Bestow HQ spells upon occupants
Insubstantial Protection	Insubstantial	1 flat	Blocks incorporeal objects and creatures
Interior Field	Protection	1 flat	Interior surfaces and portals can use force fields
Internal Stability	Varies	1 flat	Approved occupants are not impeded by the HQ's alternate form
Maze	Affliction	1 flat	Intruders become confused and wander in random directions
Mimic Database	Variable	1 flat per rank	Can temporarily store mimicked power effects to use later
Mobility	Summon	1 flat	Separated HQ sections can use movement powers
Plug	Protection	1 flat	Holes and the like are plugged with force fields
Repair Merge	Summon	1 flat	Absorb buildings to repair damage
Super-Firewall	Various	1 flat	Headquarters' computers are more difficult to breach
Visible Interior	Concealment	1 flat	Occupants can see the invisible HQ's interior
Weather System	Environment	1 flat	The HQ may maintain its own weather system
Worthy Passage	Mind Reading	1 flat	Only approved thought patterns are granted access to the HQ

### EXPUNGE

### (TELEPORT)

Flat • 1 point

The headquarters may turn its teleport ability inwards, but only to evacuate all residents within an area immediately adjacent to its own location. This requires twice the effect's usual action.

### EXTINGUISH LIGHT

### (ENVIRONMENT: DARKNESS CONTROL)

Flat • 1 point

Any light source within the headquarters is extinguished simultaneously. Those light sources that are able to resist, such as any generated by a character's powers, may be allowed an opposed power check.

### IMPART SORCERY

### (ANY EFFECT BUILT AS A MAGIC SPELL)

Flat • 1 point per rank

Somehow, any spells available to the headquarters may be temporarily bestowed to any of its residents who are also able to cast spells. Doing so requires the

resident spend a hero point and succeed at an Expertise: Magic check (DC 10 + spell's ranks.) Once this is done, the person may retain the spell, unused, for a duration equal to half the headquarters' PL on the **Measurements Table**, rounded down. If the spell isn't expended in that time, it is lost and the hero point spent is wasted.

Only one spell may be imparted at a time by the headquarters per rank.

### INSUBSTANTIAL PROTECTION

### (INSUBSTANTIAL)

Flat • 1 point

The headquarters walls and surfaces are treated as corporeal by incorporeal entities unless this feature is purposely turned off.

### INTERIOR FIELD

### (PROTECTION: FORCE FIELD)

Flat • 1 point

Interior walls, doors, hatches, and the like may also benefit from force fields. This includes those used to detain prisoners.

# Chapter 8: Headquarters

## INTERNAL STABILITY (VARIES: ALTERNATE FORM)

Flat • 1 point

When the headquarters exists in its alternate form, the interior remains largely stable and functional for occupants designated as residents and/or approved personnel. Just how this is handled depends on the facility's concept, although tools such as badges or wards are standard indicators.

Some functionality may be lost, such as differentiating color from a base in shadow form, but most of the facility may be still be used normally.

## MAZE

## (AFFLICTION: CONFUSE)

Flat • 1 point

Anyone entering the headquarters without proper authorization is subject to a the Affliction effect each round they move about within the facility. Failure results in becoming confused and moving in a random direction other than the one intended.

## MIMIC DATABASE

## (VARIABLE: MIMIC)

Flat • 1 point per rank

Each rank allows the headquarters to recall one trait it has mimicked and later released within the past 24 hours. Alternatively, additional ranks may be paid to increase the amount of time the trait may be stored in the database by moving up the **Measurements Table** by one step per rank spent in this manner.

## MOBILITY

## (SUMMON: ANATOMIC SPLIT)

Flat • 1 point

This extra grants every disgorged section of the headquarters access to any of its movement powers.

## PLUG

## (PROTECTION: FORCE FIELD)

Flat • 1 point

Holes in walls, opened doors, and so on will almost immediately be sealed by a force field so long as this power is activated. Breaching such a seal requires the force field fail a Toughness resistance check against that particular area.

## REPAIR MERGE

## (SUMMON: COMBINE)

Flat • 1 point

The headquarters may merge with other, independent buildings to repair Damage to itself.

Repairing a -1 Toughness check penalty due to Damage requires merging with buildings at least one-quarter the headquarters' size.

A -2 Toughness check penalty due to Damage penalty means the headquarters must absorb buildings equal to at least half its own size to reduce the penalty to -1.

Removing penalties higher than this require the headquarters absorb buildings equal to at least three-quarters its own size per -1 until at least a -2 penalty is achieved.

## SUPER FIREWALL

## (VARIOUS: TECH CONTROL/INTERFACE)

Flat • 1 point

Increase the DC to hack into the headquarters' computer systems by the headquarters' PL.

## VISIBLE INTERIOR

## (CONCEALMENT: INVISIBILITY)

Flat • 1 point

The headquarters' exterior can be made invisible while leaving the facility's interior visible to those within.

## WEATHER SYSTEM

## (ENVIRONMENT: WEATHER CONTROL)

Flat • 1 point

The headquarters may continually maintain a localized weather system over itself and the immediately surrounding area, constructing a pattern of weather within its usual means. Doing so prevents the headquarters from using its Weather Control effect in any other fashion unless its own weather system is dropped for the duration, returning it to nature's control.

## WORTHY PASSAGE

## (MIND READING)

Flat • 1 point

Only someone who meets a particular, pre-determined type of thought process may enter the headquarters without defeating its security systems or without

those systems being overridden by someone who is approved and knows how.

What qualifies as worthy can vary from someone possessing unshakable bravery, uncompromising contempt for human life, or the individual brain scans of the headquarters' residents.

## HEADQUARTERS COMPLICATIONS

Much like characters, a headquarters may possess complications. Instead of granting hero points, however, a headquarters complication that comes into play provides some other benefit to the HQ or its occupants, as the Gamemaster decides.

### ACCESSIBLE BOWELS

The ductwork, plumbing, and other similar passageways in your headquarters are all large enough for a man-sized creature to crawl through without difficulty. These passageways connect the rooms of your headquarters, al-

lowing infiltrators to move about your facility without being seen.

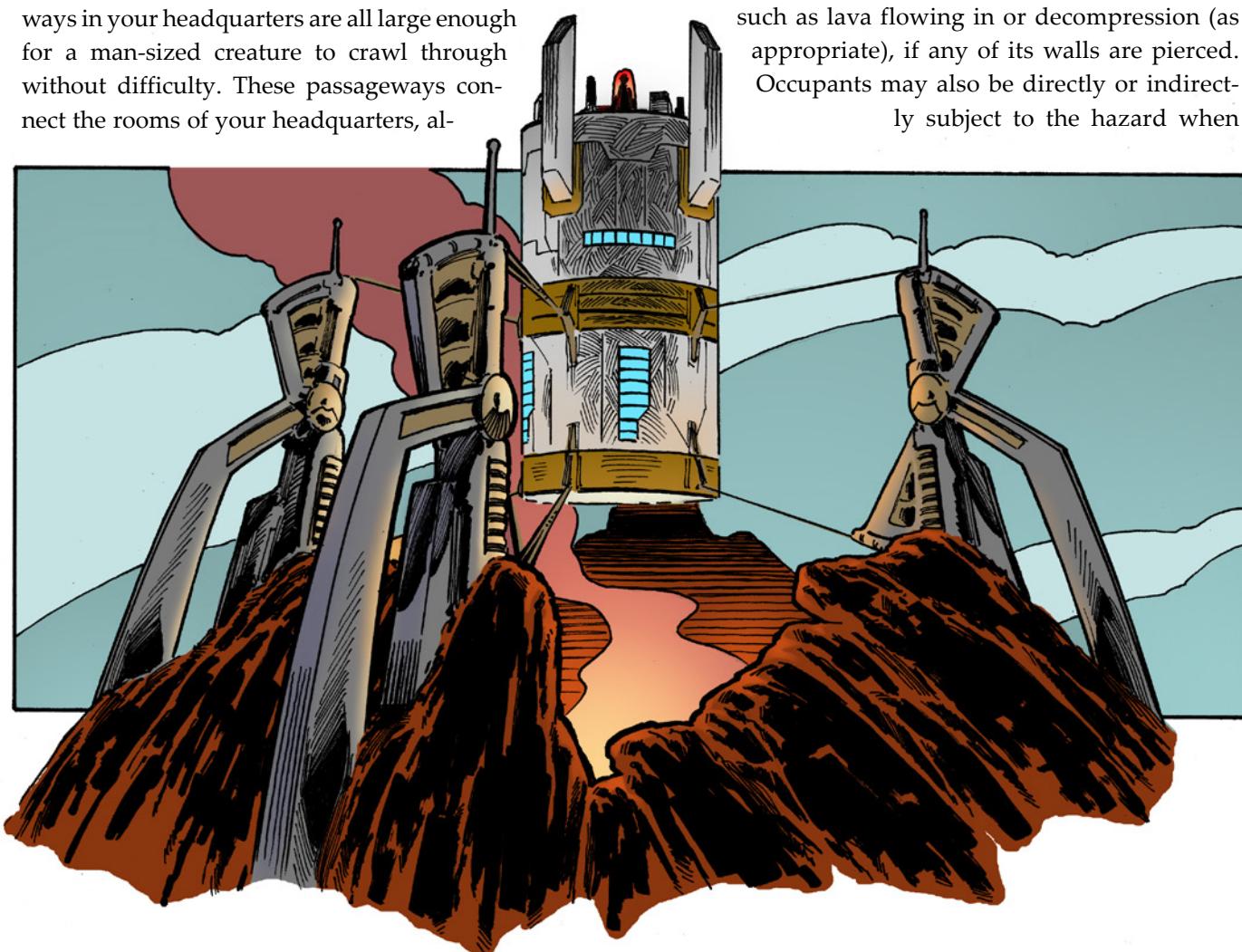
### APPROPRIATED

The headquarters didn't initially belong to the current owners—it was appropriated from someone else by hook, crook, or conquest. However, the facility was acquired, the original owners (or someone who otherwise feels they are more deserving of the headquarters' legacy) will want the place back.

### DANGEROUS LOCATION

The headquarters' location is innately dangerous, even to its occupants. This includes locating the facility in areas such as inside volcanoes and deep space. Any-one exposed to the hostile environment around the base is subjected to the risks inherent to this environment.

Although the headquarters itself is immune to its surrounding's hazards under normal circumstances, the hostile environment will affect the headquarters, such as lava flowing in or decompression (as appropriate), if any of its walls are pierced. Occupants may also be directly or indirectly subject to the hazard when



# Chapter 8: Headquarters

leaving the facility, such as having to deal with the poisonous gasses that can be released by volcanic activity.

## EXPOSED

It is normally assumed that a headquarters is a closed environment, keeping out all reasonable exterior environmental conditions and hazards. An exposed headquarters, however, offers no such protection. The weather (entirely or only partially), humidity, gasses, airborne pathogens, etc. are all able to infiltrate the headquarters, although individual rooms within (e.g., a vault) may be sealed.

## FAMOUS

The headquarters is well known, and must contend with a steady stream of people who come to see it and want inside. This feature is especially appropriate to headquarters that also have the Landmark feature. Tourists constantly surround the headquarters and guided tours may also occur at regular intervals throughout the day, creating a constant security risk as well as putting the tours at risk should the headquarters come under attack.

Applying this complication is almost certainly not appropriate if the headquarters is extremely difficult (or even dangerous) to get to.

## FUEL DEPENDENT

Your headquarters depends on an unusual fuel to sustain itself, such as a space station kept in orbit by psychic energy or an extradimensional space that requires massive infusions of mystic power to keep the pocket dimension stable.

The required energy must be continually gathered by equipment in the headquarters. This requires 1 hour a week of calibration per 5 Spaces used by the headquarters (minimum of 1 hour) to keep the headquarters functional. If the calibration is missed for one week, the headquarters' PL is reduced by one until the calibration is performed, continuing to worsen per additional week without the calibration being performed. The Game-master determines which Spaces are affected. If the headquarters' PL reaches 0, it is destroyed.

The calibration requires advanced knowledge of the headquarters, and cannot be performed by minions without the Game-master approval.

## HAUNTED

An unfriendly spirit of some sort dwells within the headquarters. It could be a specific ghost, many spirits, or a generally malevolent entity that possesses the entire facility. The haunting could manifest in annoying ways—things get moved, distracting sounds and half-seen manifestations occur—but nothing dangerous. Alternatively, there is a risk of being harmed as events start small and begin to escalate with time; the Game-master may even wish for one or more ghosts to appear and attack at some point.

Getting rid of the spirits is no simple matter; some greater act must be performed to exorcize the entities from the headquarters.

## OCCUPIED

Someone (or more than one being) occupies the headquarters along with the player characters. Unlike minions, servants, or the like, these occupants have no interest in the heroes' activities, and just want to go about their own lives unhindered by trouble or the player characters. This could be a colony of faeries living in the walls, the heroes' extended family, or a small village on the grounds (if the headquarters is large enough.)

It could be that the occupant(s) occasionally get in the way and likely resent the heroes' presence in their lives, although the latter is not necessarily so. It is also possible the occupants and heroes are often at odds over who gets to use what in the headquarters. Defining anything as off limits is extremely problematic—everyone is always tripping over everyone else at the worst possible times.

Unlike the Personnel or Drones features, inhabitants represented by this complication do not contribute to the headquarters' regular functions, and do not help out in any notable way. Sure, they may keep the grounds tidy as a matter of going about their own lives, but they cannot help run the facility offer significant aid to the heroes. They are a liability.

## SECURITY GAP

There is a particular point in the headquarters' secure perimeter where the Security System doesn't operate at its best. At this gap, any skill check DC to defeat security, or the ranks of a security power build, is halved, as appropriate. Alternatively, there could be no Security System presence at all at this particular location.

A chronically malfunctioning motion sensor, a blind spot in a security camera's field of vision, or an unprotected air vent that is supposed to be concealed are examples of this complication in operation. The nature of the weakness must be indicated when this complication is applied.

Obviously, a headquarters must have the Security System feature to select this complication.

## SPARTAN

The headquarters is not equipped with some or all of the basic amenities (doors, windows, power outlets, utilities, etc.) normally gained for free.

## STAFF DEPENDENT

Although it's not uncommon for a facility to utilize staff to regularly maintain its workings and operate its various features, headquarters with this complication require crew or staff around the clock just to keep it functioning. This complication is most often used to represent a headquarters that is incredibly fragile or volatile for reasons such as shoddy workmanship, age, complexity, or the unavoidable hazards of its nature and/or location.

The repercussions for being understaffed depend on what fraction of the staff is missing.

Understaffed By ...	Problem Status
None	Everything is running smoothly
25% or less	Minor problems
26% to 50%	Major problems
51% to 75%	Severe problems
76% to 99%	Catastrophic problems
100%	Total disaster!

- Minor Problems:** Features will begin experiencing minor problems, such as any bonus given to the operator being reduced by 1, effects having their efficiency (range, speed, etc.) reduced by 10%, and so on. This condition won't worsen if the available staff remains at its current amount.
- Major Problems:** Features will begin experiencing major problems, such as any bonus given to the operator being reduced by half, effects having their efficiency (range, speed, etc.) reduced by 25%, and so on. This condition won't worsen if the available staff remains at its current amount.
- Severe Problems:** Features will begin experiencing serious problems, such as any bonus given to the operator being negated, effects having their efficiency

(range, speed, etc.) reduced by half, and so on. Some features will even begin to randomly become inoperable, on and off, for the duration or rebel against their former masters in the case of features such as security devices. Gamemasters should assign a chance of this happening to each feature to suit the circumstances. This situation will worsen into a devastating problem if the available staff doesn't increase from its current amount within a day.

- Catastrophic Problems:** Features will begin experiencing catastrophic problems, such as any bonus given to the operator actually imposing penalties, effects having their efficiency (range, speed, etc.) reduced by 75%, and so on. Some features will entirely shut down for the duration or rebel against their former masters in the case of features such as security devices. Gamemasters should assign a chance of this happening to each feature to suit the circumstances.

This condition will worsen into a complete disaster if the available staff doesn't increase from its current amount within a few hours (if not sooner.)

- Total Disaster!**: All features will become inoperable and the headquarters will essentially be nothing more than a hazardous danger zone to its occupants. If the situation is not rectified, the headquarters will suffer the equivalent of an attack equal to the campaign's PL every 5 minutes (or more), representing the facility falling apart.

## TERRIFYING

Headquarters with this complication are regarded with fear and repulsion by those who live in the vicinity. They will not willingly go near it and have no love for the structure. If given the chance, such as the owner of the headquarters being away or a rabble-rouser whipping up an angry mob, the locals will attempt to destroy the headquarters. Also, they will take no steps to defend the headquarters and may aid those who come to destroy it.

Heroes with good reputations who have such headquarters are likely to suffer if anyone knows where they live and may be forced by the locals to seek better accommodations.

Headquarters with the Landmark feature and this complication cannot inspire attitudes more favorable than "indifferent."

## UNPOPULAR

Whereas Terrifying headquarters spur on those nearby to attempt to destroy it, facilities with this complication instead simply inspire derision and mockery. These locations are the subject of public ridicule due to ugliness of architecture, emission of bad smells, or because it is the home of a particularly repugnant character.

Unpopular headquarters will be avoided by most people, and heroes known to be based out of them are likely to be heavily mocked for their poor choice of real estate.

Headquarters with the Landmark feature and this complication cannot inspire attitudes more favorable than "indifferent."

## WEAK DEFENSES

There is a particular point in the headquarters' perimeter where the Defense System doesn't operate at its best. At this gap, any skill check DC to defeat a defensive measure, or the ranks of a defense system power build, is halved, as appropriate. Alternatively, there could be no Defense System presence at all at this particular location.

A hole in a field of fire is a common example, as are environmental conditions that offer concealment or diffuse the defenses' effects. The weakness' nature must be indicated when this complication is applied.

Obviously, a headquarters must have the Defense System feature to select this complication.

## SAMPLE HEADQUARTERS (REVISED)

Gamemasters can use the following sample headquarters as ready-made lairs for super-villains, while players can use them as bases for their heroes. Space used by a feature is indicated in parenthesis.

### Abandoned Warehouse • 15 points

**Size** Medium; **Spaces** 12 of 16; **Tou** 8, **Features:** Basic Communications (0), Basic Computer (1), Basic Concealed (0), Garage (4), Gym (2), Basic Living Space x 2 (2 each; 4), Power System (Generator; 1), Security System (DC 20; 0)

### Moon-Base • 82 points

**Size** Awesome; **Spaces** 348 of 500; **Tou** 20, **Features:** Armory 3 (Armor, 30 points, 64 minions; 5), Armory 3 (Weapons, 30 points, 64 minions; 5), Basic Combat Simulator (4), Advanced Combat Simulator (4), Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 2 (DC 30; 0), Space Communications (1), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 5 (Technology +8; 2), Defense System 10 (50 points, Lethal and Non-Lethal; 5), Food Supply (64), Fire Prevention System 3 (Nullify 9; 0), Gym (5), Hangar x 2 (32 each; 64) Holding Cells 4 (Nullify 5; 4), Infirmary 2 (+2; 4), Isolated (Moon; 0), Basic Laboratory (16), Barracks Living Space (80), Kitchen (16), Pool (4), Power System (Nuclear w/Backup, 40), Security System 2 (DC 25; 0), Workshop (Expertise: Electronics; 10), Workshop (Expertise: Mechanics; 10); **Powers:** **Teleporter:** Teleport 18 (Affect Others Only, Easy, Extended, Limited to Extended; 5); **Complications:** Accessible Bowels, Dangerous Location (Moon), Security Gap (Hangar Doors)

### Orbiting Satellite • 74 points

**Size** Colossal; **Spaces** 215 of 250; **Tou** 20, **Features:** Basic Combat Simulator (4), Advanced Combat Simulator (4), Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 2 (DC 30; 0), Space Communications (1), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 5 (Technology +8; 2), Defense System 10 (50 points, Lethal and Non-Lethal; 5), Emergency Arresting System (5), Fire Prevention System 3 (Nullify 9; 0), Food Supply (32), Gym (5), Hangar x 2 (32 each; 64), Holding Cells 6 (Tou 24, Nullify 7; 12), Infirmary 2 (+2; 4), Isolated (Orbit; 0), Basic Laboratory (8), Barracks Living Space (36), Kitchen (12), Power System (Solar; 16), Security System 3 (DC 30; 0); **Powers:** **Scanners:** Senses 3 (Accurate Radio), **Teleporter:** Teleport 18 (Affect Others Only, Easy, Extended, Limited to Extended; 5); **Complications:** Dangerous Location (Orbit), Security Gap (Hangar Doors)

### Pocket Universe • 42 points

**Size** Small; **Spaces** 8 of 8; **Tou** 6, **Features:** Dimensional Communications 10 (Any Dimension, 10 Receptors; 0), Dimensional Portal 10 (Universal; 1), Drones (8; 0), Environmental Control 10 (Any; 0), Game Room (2), Kitchen (1), Library (2), Basic Living Space x 2 (1 each; 2), Power System (Dimensional; 0), Security System (DC 20; 0), Untraceable 2 (-8; 0), Weakened Reality (0)

## Sanctum Sanctorum • 56 points

**Size** Medium; **Spaces** 11 of 16; **Tou** 10, **Features:** Amplifier 3 (Multiple Magic Traits; 1), Artificer Lab 2 (Any Combination up to 10 points; 1), Basic Concealed 2 (DC +10; 0), Drones (Golems, 16; 1), Electronic Countermeasures 4 (Versus Magic, -8; 0), Hero Point Bank 4 (0), Library (3), Luxury Living Space x 2 (2 each; 4), Mystic Locale 2 (0), Ritual Chamber 3 (Any Combination up to 15 points; 1), Security System 3 (Arcane, DC 30; 0)

## Sea-Base • 42 points

**Size** Gargantuan; **Spaces** 114 of 128; **Tou** 14, **Features:** Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 2 (DC 30; 0), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 4 (Technology +6; 2), Basic Concealed (DC +5; 0), Electronic Concealed 2 (DC +15; 0), Dock (32), Electronic Countermeasures 3 (-6; 0), Environmental Control (Water; 0), Fire Prevention System (0), Food Supply (32), Isolated (Submerged; 0), Barracks Living Space (30), Basic Living Space (4), Kitchen (4), Power System (Turbine; 8), Security System 3 (DC 30; 2)

## Skyscraper (5 Floors) • 26 points

**Size** Large; **Spaces** 32 of 32; **Tou** 10, **Features:** Basic Communications (0), Basic Computer 2 (Technology +0; 0), Defense System 2 (20 points, Non-Lethal; 0), Fire Prevention System 2 (Nullify 7; 0), Gym (1), Hangar (16), Infirmary (2), Basic Laboratory (2), Library (3), Basic Living Space (4), Power System (Generator; 2), Security System (DC 20; 0), Workshop (Select Type; 2); **Complications:** Accessible Bowels

## Stately Manor • 77 points

**Size** Huge; **Spaces** 62 of 64; **Tou** 10, **Features:** Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 2 (DC 30; 0), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 4 (Technology +6; 2), Cosmetic Concealed (DC 20; 0), Electronic Concealed 2 (DC +15; 0), Dock (8), Electronic Counter-Measures 4 (-8; 0), Escape Tunnel (0), Garage (8), Grounds 2 (250 external **Spaces**), Gym (3), Hangar (16), Infirmary 4 (+6; 1), Inventor Lab 3 (Multiple Traits of Any Type up to 15 points; 2), Basic Laboratory (1), Crime Laboratory 3 (+4; 1), Library (2), Luxury Living Space x 5 (2 each; 10), Power System (Generator; 4), Security System 5 (DC 45; 0), Workshop 4 (Select Type, +6; 4); **Complications:** Accessible Bowels

## Underground Lair • 87 points

**Size** Huge; **Spaces** 37 of 64; **Tou** 14, **Features:** Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 2 (DC 30; 0), Basic Computer (1), Advanced Computer 4 (Technology +6; 2), Cosmetic Concealed 4 (DC 35; 0), Electronic Concealed 3 (DC +20; 0), Defense System 5 (50 points, Lethal and Non-Lethal; 2), Electronic Counter-Measures 6 (-12; 0), Escape Tunnel 2 (0), Garage (16), Holding Cells 4 (Tou 26; 2), Inventor Lab 3 (Any Combination up to 15 points; 1), Isolated (Subterranean; 0), Basic Laboratory 4 (+6; 1), Crime Laboratory 4 (+6; 1), Library (1), Luxury Living Space x 2 (2 each; 4), Motor Pool 3 (Garage; 0), Power System (Generator; 4), Security System 4 (DC 35; 0), Untraceable 4 (-16; 0), Vault 2 (DC 25; 2); **Complications:** Accessible Bowels

## Urban Fortress • 50 points

**Size** Large; **Spaces** 32 of 32; **Tou** 12, **Features:** Basic Combat Simulator (2), Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 2 (DC 30; 0), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 2 (Technology +2; 1), Cosmetic Concealed 4 (DC 35; 0), Defense System 6 (60 points, Lethal and Non-Lethal; 2), Fire Prevention System 3 (Nullify 9; 0), Garage (16), Gym (2), Holding Cells 3 (Tou 20; 1), Infirmary 2 (+2; 2), Basic Living Space x 3 (1 each; 3), Power System (Generator; 2), Security System 5 (DC 40; 0), Workshop 3 (Select Type, +4; 1); **Complications:** Accessible Bowels

## Volcano Lair • 77 points

**Size** Gargantuan; **Spaces** 106 of 125; **Tou** 14, **Features:** Armory 2 (Weapons, 10 points, 32 minions; 4), Barrier 3 (Lava Moat, DC 16; 0), Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 3 (DC 35; 0), Global Communications (0), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 2 (Technology +2; 1), Electronic Concealed 3 (DC +20; 0), Defense System 5 (50 points, Lethal and Non-Lethal; 5), Electronic Counter-Measures 4 (-8; 0), Escape Tunnel (Escape Capsules; 5), Fire Prevention System 2 (Nullify 7; 0), Food Supply (16), Garage (16), Hangar (16), Holding Cells 3 (Tou 18; 4), Isolated (Volcano; 0), Kitchen (5), Basic Laboratory 4 (+6; 4), Barracks Living Space (10), Luxury Living Space x 2 (2 each; 4), Power System (Geothermal; 8), Security System 4 (DC 35; 0), Self-Destruct (Lava Flood; 0), Sovereign (0), War Room (4), Workshop 2 (Select Type, +2; 4); **Complications:** Accessible Bowels, Dangerous Location (Volcano), Security Gap (Lava Tunnels)

# CHAPTER 9

# EVIL TO THE UTMOST

Now that you've had a taste of the new materials behind creating villains, it is time to have a detailed look at some full-blown villain organizations. This includes their respective leaders, super-powered members of note, minions, vehicles, weapons, and headquarters—the whole nine yards.

Between the two example groups found herein, you'll be provided with enough specifics to illustrate the many ways **Better Mouse-trap's** contents may be used when designing opponents to throw against your players. However, the content remains generic enough to fit in most super-hero settings.

## CORE

### International Terrorists, Warmongers, and Would-Be Conquerors

Human civilization has always been infested with people who feel they, for one reason or another, are better suited to rule than everyone else. These people have caused untold misery and death in pursuit of their goals, some even resulting in the annihilation of the very society they sought to command. And yet, such men and women shall always be a part of the tumultuous story that is human history.

The organization that calls itself CORE (Cooperative Order for the Ruling of Earth) fully intends to write itself an entire chapter into that story.

Founded by the enigmatic being known to the world only as Center (for what purpose other than uniting the globe under his heel is anybody's guess), CORE promises a better economic, political, and moral society under its rule and doctrines. Center has combed the third world and countries under the command of fascists for his re-



cruits, swelling CORE in the past thirty years from a few hundred political exiles and refugees to a powerful, dedicated army of thousands of "freedom fighters." CORE now also enjoys the full support of ingenious scientists and (ironically) the ambitious wealthy to back their cause.

The many crimes CORE is currently suspected of being involved with include smuggling cheap knock-offs of their own weapons into war-torn and embargoed regions, channeling funds into certain South American countries with loose regulations regarding genetic experimentation, escalating friction between Russia and several of its surrounding ex-soviet states, and supporting the slave trade in Africa and the Philippines. They are also suspected of buying cheap nuclear weapons from ex-soviet powers (though none have yet to be used), planting harmful mutagens into African water supplies, terrorist insurrections against global powers, and collaborating with hostile alien races.

This list is by no means complete, but does provide an idea of the range of depravity with which this insidious organization involves itself. CORE is the embodiment of what every regular Joe fears about metahumans and those who would ally with them. They are evil, power mad, and totally lacking of any conscience, making CORE one of the greatest threats to world peace ever known.

CORE will do anything from trying to destroy a country's economy by taking over its industries and either running them into the ground or laundering profits out of civil coffers, to directly assaulting their cities and military bases. They do so in the attempt to conquer through might what they cannot through Machiavellian guile.

The general public knows about CORE and will usually recognize one of their vehicles or uniformed agents on sight. Many world governments have conducted media blitzes on these terrorists and have done their best to

PL: 17

**Leadership:** Dictatorship (Center)

**Intellect 5, Awareness 6, Presence 9**

**Will 10**

**Skills:** Deception 8 (+17), Expertise: Business 7 (+12), Expertise: Chemistry 6 (+11), Expertise: Current Events 5 (+11), Expertise: Electrical 12 (+17), Expertise: Engineering 8 (+13), Expertise: History 4 (+9), Expertise: Law 7 (+12), Expertise: Mechanics 12 (+17), Expertise: Science 10 (+15), Expertise: Sociology 5 (+10), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+10), Expertise: Tactics 12 (+17), Intimidation 10 (+19), Investigation 8 (+13), Perception 8 (+14), Persuasion 4 (+13), Stealth 10 (+15), Technology 12 (+17)

**Advantages:** Benefit 5 (Wealth), Connected 8 (P: Criminal; S: Business, Espionage, Justice System, Law Enforcement, Military, Terrorist, World Governments), Contacts 8 (P: Criminal; S: Business, Espionage, Justice System, Law Enforcement, Military, Terrorist, World Governments), Equipment 29 (Gear), Equipment 117 (Headquarters), Equipment 169 (Vehicles), Invention Expertise, Inventor, Minion 48, Mole Network 6, Reinforcements 12 (250 minions, 30 minutes), Secure (Mole Operatives), Well-Informed

**Members:** Minion 13 (45-pt. Field Agents and Pilots, x 50,000), Minion 18 (120-pt. Champions, x 1,000), Minion 17 (120-pt. Ghost Operatives, x 500), The Elite (individuals; no cost)

**Equipment:** Equipment 13 (Espionage; 20 pt., x 500), 16 Equipment (Heavy weapons; 30 pt., x 1,000)

Detect Collision [Radio]; Detect Radar [Radio]; Infravision, Extended; Normal Vision, Extended]

**Vehicles:** Equipment 25 (Devilwing; 83 pt., x 250), Equipment 40 (Firststrike; 168 pt., x 64), Equipment 24 (Vyper; 69 pt., x 1,000), Equipment 23 (Hornet; 73 pt., x 500), Equipment 32 (Armadillo; 130 pt., x 64), Equipment 12 (Conventional Aircraft; 20 pt., x 250), Equipment 13 (Conventional Vehicles; 15 pt., x 1,000); this tally does not include the vehicles contained within CORE's Citadel Air Fortresses

**Headquarters:** Citadel Air Fortress (146 x 4) 146 pts

**Powers:** Variable 6 (WMDs) • 42 points

**Totals** Abilities 40 + Powers 42 + Advantages 406 + Skills 76 + Defenses 4 = 568

warn the citizenry about trusting CORE's lies. The problem with this is that not all people believe everything they see on the television or read in the newspaper (as hard as this may be to believe.) Many grassroots weapons and political rights, militia, and racial supremacist groups fall into this category, and have overtly or covertly joined CORE. However, many have signed on without knowing whom they are really working for.

Using terrorist tactics and inventive propaganda, CORE has caused more trouble for the various governments of the world than any other entity or group now still in existence. Even countries that are considered (relatively speaking) politically and economically stable, such as the U.S. and Canada, must regularly deal with militant and covert operations meant to sow unrest on their native soil. Such nations also frequently suffer actions against their interests abroad.

To make matters worse, some European countries must deal with anarchist political parties that are secretly or even openly fronts for CORE! And it does not help knowing that CORE has managed to plant agents into various levels of law enforcement, metahuman control, and intelligence organizations the world over.

This fanatical organization will do whatever it must, whenever it may, to bring the world to its knees.

## CENTER, SHADOW RULER OF A DARK EMPIRE

Revealing himself (?) only as a computer modulated voice broadcast through a radio or across a blackened video monitor, CORE's leader is as much a mystery to the organization's own members as he is to the world's varied law enforcement agencies.

Here are some sample DCs for using Expertise: Metahuman (or an otherwise appropriate skill) to indicate what an individual may know of CORE.

## CORE Expertise: Metahuman Checks

DC	Example
10	Being able to recognize a CORE vehicle or operative in uniform.
15	Being able to name the Elite's members.
20	Knowing which countries CORE has been publicly known to operate in.
25	Seeing subtle patterns in the countries CORE operates in, as well as their common economic, military, and political strategies.

No one is sure who Center may be—if he is really another well-known villainous mastermind, if “he” is really a male at all, or if CORE’s leader is more than one person acting from behind the safety of an amalgamate, anonymous identity. What is known is Center (or someone using the title) has commanded CORE since the beginning and seems to be leading the organization towards the ultimate goal of global domination.

In recent years alone, dozens of law enforcement agents and intelligence operatives have lost their lives unsuccessfully attempting to uncover the secret of Center’s identity. If anyone were to miraculously come by the truth, that person would find himself the target of every CORE agent and independent bounty hunter on the planet (and perhaps beyond.) They probably die before they could pass the information along.

## CORE EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

The following equipment is typical of CORE’s arsenal. The Gamemaster is encouraged to add their own weapons, vehicles, and equipment as desired.

### BODY ARMOR

CORE combat agents usually wear armor-plated tactical vests, and intelligence agents either go without or are restricted to undercover vests. Only the best operatives are assigned the EBA-1.

### EBA-1 EXOSKELETAL BODY ARMOR

#### 41 points

CORE’s Exoskeletal Body Armor is designed to protect the organization’s best warriors while also providing them with a modicum of heavy firepower (a small chaingun mounted on the forearm and a miniature missile launcher upon the opposite shoulder) for facing down police and low-powered metahumans. Guards assigned to high-priority tasks and areas within a CORE facility are also often assigned the EBA-1.

#### EBA-1 Exoskeletal Body Armor Removable (-11 points)

**Armor:** Protection 4 • 4 points

**Enhanced Reflexes:** Enhanced Improved Initiative

- 1 point

**Forearm Chaingun:** Ranged Damage 4, Multiattack

- 12 points

**Integrated Jet Pack:** Flight 4 (30 mph) • 8 points

**Life Support:** Immunity 2 (Suffocation) • 2 points

**Missile Launcher:** Burst Area Ranged Damage 6

- 18 points

**Power Lifting:** Enhanced Strength 1, Limited to Lifting • 1 point

**Sensors:** Senses 6 (Normal Vision, Extended 2; Infravision, Extended 2; Radio) • 6 points

### CSS-PX001 “PHANTOM” ARMOR

#### 19 points

The phantom suit is employed by CORE’s elite Ghost units. Although it provides the user with slight performance enhancements and minor weaponry, its primary benefit is its stealth capabilities. The stealth capabilities render the armor’s wearer invisible to all visuals, and muffle all sounds the wearer and armor make.

#### Phantom Armor Removable (-5 points)

**Armor:** Protection 3 • 3 points

**Cloaking:** Concealment 4 (All Visual), Blending • 4 points

**Enhanced Reflexes:** Enhanced Improved Initiative • 1 point

**Finger Blades:** Strength-Based Damage 3, Penetrating • 4 points

**Sensors:** Senses 6 (Normal Vision, Extended 2; Infravision, Extended 2; Radio) • 6 points

**Silent Running:** Enhanced Stealth 9, Limited to Auditory • 3 points

**Super-Movement:** Array (2 points)

**Leg Boosters:** Leaping 2 • 2 points

- **Wall-Crawling:** Movement 1 (Wall-Crawling) • 1 point

## WEAPONS

### CLW-002 PLASMA PISTOL

16 points

This weapon fires a highly concentrated plasma energy pulse that is capable of melting steel.

**CLW-002:** Ranged Damage 5, Improved Critical 3, Multiattack, Diminished Range 2

### CLW-006 PLASMA RIFLE

24 points \*

This rifle is the primary weapon of CORE field agents. It is commonly equipped with an under-barrel grenade launcher add-on, and all come with a telescopic sight and integrated laser targeting system.

**CLW-006:** Ranged Damage 7, Improved Critical 3, Multiattack, Diminished Range 2; Senses 1 (Visual, Extended); AE: Burst Area Ranged Damage 5, Indirect

\* Increase the cost by 1 per additional type of grenade carried as an Alternate Effect



### CLW-010 PLASMA SQUAD SUPPORT WEAPON

25 points

Built to fill the role of a support weapon, much as is done in the conventional military by the M60 and M240 SAW. A heavy energy drum makes this an awkward weapon to handle.

**CLW-010:** Ranged Damage 8, Improved Critical 3, Multiattack, Bulky, Diminished Range

### CLX-XX5 POWER NEGATOR

20 points

A dangerous weapon to be in the possession of such evil men and women, the "Triple X" can temporarily deny a target the use of all super-powers (but not magic or psionics.) Fortunately for all super-heroes, the weapon is bulky, slow firing, inaccurate, and has not yet had all of the bugs worked out.

**CLX-XX5:** Nullify 10 (Resisted by Fortitude; Super-Powers), Broad, Effortless, Simultaneous, Reload 10 (1 round, self-reload, 1 use), Unreliable

## VEHICLES AND MECHA

### CLT-99 JET PACK

3 points

Designed so it can be fit over most common body armors, the gasoline powered CLT-99 allows CORE to deploy its agents from low-flying helicopters or from rooftops onto targets at ground level.

**CLT-99:** Flight 3 (16 mph), Vehicles Check Required 3 (DC 13)

### CORE DEVILWING EXOSKELETON

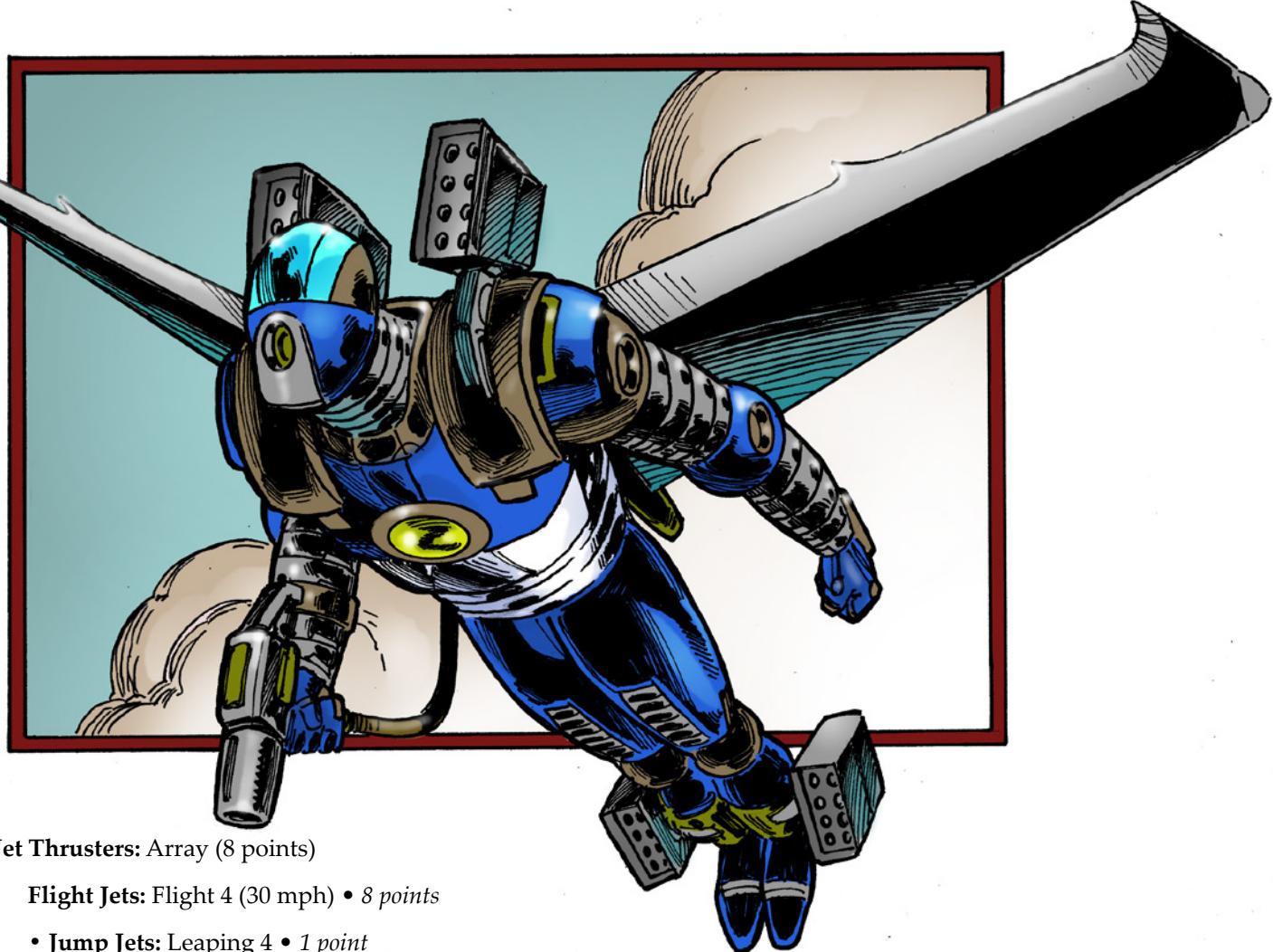
83 points

The Devilwing is a nuclear powered, heavy exoskeleton that is often assigned to CORE's shock troopers. They are perfect for lightning-quick raids, often in tandem with Hornets and Vypers, and are especially useful for assassination, kidnapping, and battling troublesome super-heroes.

Armed with a plasma machine gun fed by the exoskeleton's mini-fusion reactor, the Devilwing also sports missile launchers on each shoulder and lower legs. Besides supplying directional control in flight, the exoskeleton's razor-sharp wings can be used to slice targets or to wrap around the suit to act as a protective shield.

**Devilwing** Removable (-28 points), Self-Destruct (Destroys Suit & Kills Operator; -28 points)

**Armored Chassis:** Enhanced Improved Initiative; Enhanced Strength 6; Cone Environmental Control 1 (Light; Chest Spotlight); Immunity 4 (Cold, High Pressure, Suffocation); Protection 7 • 25 points



**Jet Thrusters:** Array (8 points)

**Flight Jets:** Flight 4 (30 mph) • 8 points

- **Jump Jets:** Leaping 4 • 1 point

- **Aqua Jets:** Swimming 2 (8 mph) • 1 point

**Missile Launcher:** Burst Area Ranged Damage 6, Multiattack • 24 points

**Plasma Machine Gun:** Ranged Damage 9, Multiattack • 27 points

**Self-Destruct:** Burst Area Damage 12, Triggered (Countdown or Instant) • 25 points

**Suit Senses:** Senses 13 (Accurate Radio; Ranged Detect Collision [Radio]; Detect Radar [Radio]; Detect Radiation [Tactile]; Infravision, Extended 2; Normal Hearing, Extended; Normal Vision, Extended 2) • 13 points

**Wings:** Array (14 points)

**Razor Wings:** Damage 10, Penetrating 2, Reach 2 • 14 point

- **Wing Shield:** Enhanced Dodge 6, Enhanced Parry 6, Activation (Move), Limited to Not While Flying • 1 point

## CORE FIRSTSTRIKE

## [MECHA]

**168 points**

The Firststrike is designed for one purpose: the complete annihilation of CORE's enemies.

Heavily armored and decked out with a frighteningly impressive weapons array, the Firststrike is a humanoid mecha capable of taking on an entire platoon of main battle tanks and coming out on top. They are expensive, bulky, and slow, however, so they are seldom sent into battle on their own. Typically, a Firststrike is guarded by a detachment of infantry whose job it is to ensure no one destroys the walking artillery piece.

The Firststrike has a stubby, broad frame, giving it a dwarfish appearance despite its height. Its sensor head has a wide angle lens and segmented face, granting it the semblance of a knight's helm. Adding to this image is a massive metal shield slung upon its off-hand's arm for the purpose of blocking incoming physical attacks and small arms fire.

Concealed beneath the armor plating of its bulbous shoulders and squat lower legs is an impressive store of missiles for hammering down even the most resilient of opponents. Add this to the Firststrike's daunting multi-rifle and the 81mm mortar mounted upon its back, and this mecha truly becomes an opponent to be feared by even the bravest heroes.

The tubular mortar is mounted behind the left shoulder and is aimed by bracing and tilting the mecha's body while its primary weapon, the gun pod, is hand held. The gun pod is a combination clip-fed 90mm cannon with a drum-fed chaingun mounted beneath for close work. It is also fitted with a bayonet.

### CORE Firststrike PL10 • 168 points

**Abilities** Str 10, Sta —, Agl 2, Dex 5, Fgt 4, Int —, Awe 5, Pre —

**Powers** **81mm Mortar** (Burst Area Ranged Damage 10, Extended Range, Indirect, Limited to Forward, Reload 10 [1 round, self-reload, 1 use]); **Armor** (Impervious Protection 2, Impervious Toughness 8); **Chest Spotlights** (Cone Area Environmental Control 4 [Light, 2 points/rank]); **Concussion Missiles** (Burst Area [6 ft.] Ranged Damage 6, Enhanced Knockback 4, Multiattack, Heavy Recoil 2, Reduced Area 2, Reduced Penetration 2); **Construct** (Immunity 30 [Fortitude Effects]); **Forearm Shield** (Enhanced Dodge 6, Enhanced Parry 6); **Huge** (Growth 8, Innate, Permanent); **Multi-Rifle** (28 point Array, Bulky 2, Easily Removable —12 points), **90mm Cannon** (Burst Area [6 ft.] Ranged Damage 10, Reduced Area 2), **AE: Chaingun** (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack), **AE: Bayonet** (Damage 10, Penetrating 2); **Powered Legs** (Leaping 2, Speed 2 [8 mph; 3 Total]); **Sensors** (Senses 13 [Accurate Radio; Ranged Detect Collision [Radio]; Detect Radar [Radio]; Detect Radiation [Touch]; Infravision, Extended 2; Normal Hearing, Extended; Normal Vision, Extended 2])

**Offense** Initiative +2, 81mm Mortar (Burst Area Ranged Damage 10); Bayonet (Close Damage 10); Concussion Missiles (Burst Area [6 ft.] Ranged Damage 6, Enhanced Knockback 4, Multiattack, Reduced Penetration 2); Multi-Rifle 90mm (Burst Area [6 ft.] Ranged Damage 10); Multi-Rifle Chaingun (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack); Unarmed (Close Damage 10)

**Defense** Dodge 11 (5 without Forearm Shield), Parry 11 (5 without Forearm Shield), Fortitude Immune, Toughness 10, Will Immune

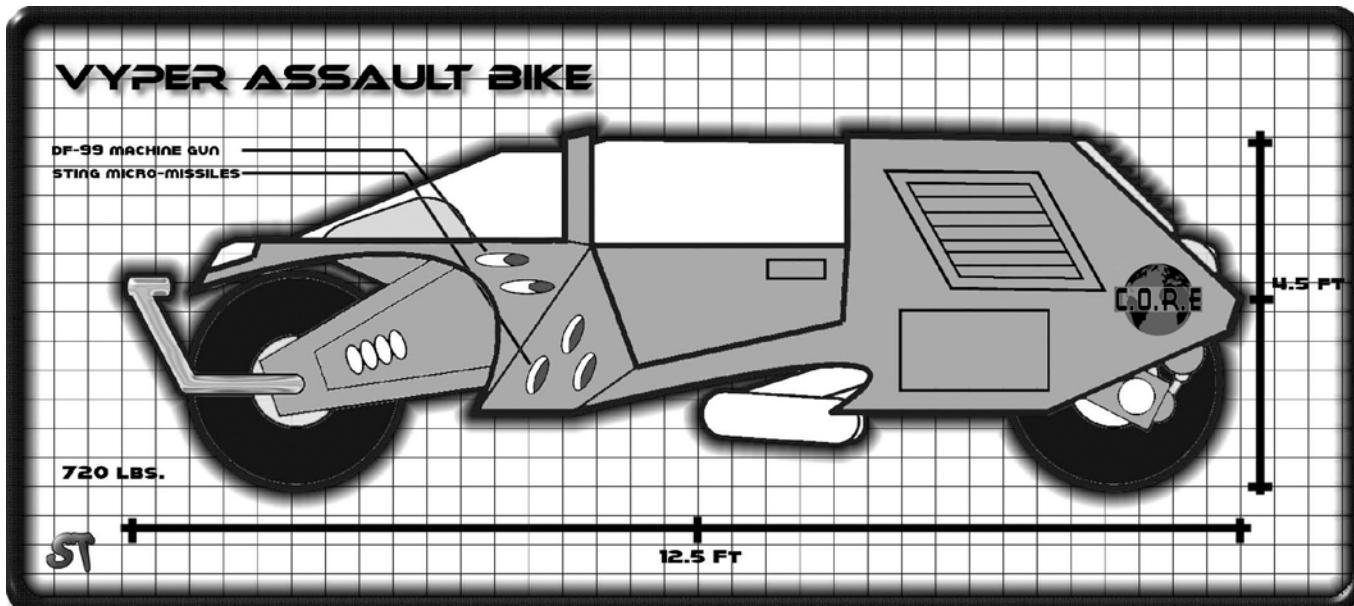
**Totals** Abilities 6 + Powers 150 + Defenses 12 = 168

### VYPER ASSAULT BIKE

69 points

The Vyper is the mainstay of CORE's mobile assault capabilities, providing its rider with a moderate amount of both armament and armor.





Although not capable of holding their own one-on-one against most metahumans, Vyper riders typically operate in unison, using pack and swarm tactics to overwhelm the enemy. This vehicle uses small maneuvering thrusters which, when combined with its low center of gravity, grants it enhanced handling and cornering abilities—the jets even allow it to perform short, thrusting jumps. To provide a speedier availability of combat data to the pilot, all information from the onboard computer is projected to a translucent LCD HUD system built into the entire windshield.

Unlike with conventional motorcycles, a Vyper rider does not sit back in a seat. The rider leans forward, resting their chest on the “seat” in an extreme racer position that grants greater control at high speeds. A butterfly, wing-style door allows access to the elongated cycle’s cockpit and lowers to seal the rider within a protective cocoon. The small missile tubes are mounted to either side of the rider while the narrow channels for the machine gun appear two per side, behind the forward wheel.

Large; Crew 1, Str 5, Speed 6, Leaping 2, Def 9, Tou 9, Features: Alarm, Improved Handling, Navigation System, Oil Slick, **Concussion Missiles** (Burst Area [6 ft.] Ranged Damage 6, Enhanced Knockback 4, Multiattack, Heavy Recoil 2, Reduced Area 2, Reduced Penetration 2), **Quad Machine Gun** (Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack, Limited to Forward), **Sensor Suite** (Senses 9 [Accurate Radio; Ranged Detect Collision [Radio]; Detect Radar [Radio]; Infravision, Extended; Normal Vision, Extended])

## HORNET STRIKE CRAFT

73 points

The Hornet is a relatively small, one man, open cockpit hover vehicle meant to provide air support for Vyper and foot soldier ground assaults. It also performs outstandingly as a patrol craft. Powerful, twin VTOL engines, mounted one per wing, grant this vehicle its darting speed and an ability to weave in between towering buildings as easily as it does the clouds.

The Hornet’s minigun is mounted in a ball turret in its nose, with a missile pod located beneath each stubby wing.

Large; Crew 1, Str 7, Speed Flight 6 (120 mph), Ground 1, Def 9 (13 vs missiles), Tou 7, Features: Alarm, Chaff, Ejection System, Improved Handling, Navigation System, **Concussion Missiles** (Burst Area [6 ft.] Ranged Damage 6, Enhanced Knockback 4, Multiattack, Heavy Recoil 2, Reduced Area 2, Reduced Penetration 2), **Minigun** (Ranged Damage 6, Multiattack), **Missile Avoidance** (Enhanced Dodge 4, Only versus Missiles), **Sensor Suite** (Senses 9 [Accurate Radio; Ranged Detect Collision [Radio]; Detect Radar [Radio]; Infravision, Extended 2; Normal Vision, Extended 2])

## ARMADILLO HOVER TROOP TRANSPORT

130 points

A well-armored, airborne carrier that keeps aloft by means of a powerful hover jet system, the Armadillo is recognized around the world as a tool of this despicable organization.

Armadillos commonly come in at a high altitude and drop suddenly into a landing zone, rapidly deploying its cargo out of side and rear armored doors. As it does so, it razes the area with its impressive armaments: an independent minigun mounted on each side with an additional turret on the top, a nose laser and grenade launcher turret, and two missile pods located beneath the chassis.

The Armadillo is crewed by a pilot, co-pilot, and three gunners. It carries up to twelve troops in body armor, six wearing EBA-1s, four Devilwings, or two First-strike robots (crouched low.)

Gargantuan; Crew 5, Str 15, Speed Flight 4 (30 mph), Def 6 (10 vs missiles), Tou 15, *Features*: Alarm, Chaff, Ejection System, Navigation System, **Concussion Missiles** (Burst Area [6 ft.] Ranged Damage 6, Enhanced Knockback 4, Multiattack, Heavy Recoil 2, Reduced Area 2, Reduced Penetration 2), **Laser Turret** (Ranged Damage 8, Accurate 2, Extended Range 2), **AE: Grenade Launcher** (Burst Area Ranged Damage 6, Extended Range, Indirect), **Minigun x 3** (Ranged Damage 6, Multiattack), **Sensor Suite** (Senses 11, [Accurate Radio; Ranged Detect Collision [Radio]; Detect Radar [Radio]; Infravision, Extended; Normal Vision, Extended 2; Normal Hearing, Extended])

## HEADQUARTERS

CORE generally likes to keep its forces decentralized within largely autonomous cells of various sizes. Each cell acts according to the individual designs of its commander from whatever facility best suits their needs while staying off law enforcement's radar. Still, CORE's globe-spanning plans require the cells maintain at least a few unified points from which to rally their plans and formulate goals that stretch beyond each cell's immediate goals.

## MAIN BASE OF OPERATIONS

CORE's decentralized nature and global fluidity means they do not have a primary headquarters (that anyone knows of, that is.) The organization's Citadel Air Fortresses (see following) are the nearest thing they have to such a location, but even these massive staging points always remain mobile. Still, rumors persist within law enforcement circles (and amongst those heroes that make a habit of fighting CORE) that this global threat-level terrorist organization maintains a permanent facil-

ity tucked away at some remote location where its key personnel and data are kept.

As such unsubstantiated tales tell it, Center rules from this hidden headquarters like a spider at the core (excuse the pun) of his web. From there, Center feels the vibrations rippling back to him through countless strands and acting accordingly. No interrogated CORE agent has ever verified the site's existence, but some people just can't fathom such a large and dangerous organization operating without a central point from which to gather their forces and pounce.

## CITADEL AIR FORTRESS (MOBILE HEADQUARTERS)

Glorious achievements in the field of vehicular engineering, the Citadels (of which there are known to be four (a fifth was destroyed a few years ago) are massive hover vehicles capable of carrying thousands of men and dozens of vehicles. Held aloft by a half-dozen turbines, each of which is bigger than a large home, a Citadel Air Fortress allows CORE to sweep its greedy hand from one hot spot to the next, evading or destroying almost anything that would dare try to attack it.

Because of their slow speed and relative vulnerability to ground-based missile assaults, the Citadel Air Fortresses are kept in constant movement around the world. They never stay in one place too long, and carefully being used so as to not risk squandering them recklessly. The Citadels are perhaps CORE's greatest tool in its war against global order and peace.

Somewhat box-like, but tapering downwards towards its bottom, a Citadel's hull is ringed by its immense hover jets. Sitting in the giant aircraft's mid-section, on its upper shell, is the conning tower. It is from here that the Citadels are piloted, and its vehicles and troops are monitored and directed. Along the air fortress' long axis, with two doors per side, are the cavernous aircraft hangars that contain deadly Hornet craft and Armadillo troop carriers.

Also peppering the craft's outer skin are sixteen smaller doors used to disembark flying soldiers in Devilwings, jet packs, or EBA-1s deployed from those same internal hangars. These vehicles and troops help defend the Citadel or can assault ground targets, doing so with the knowledge that the many weapon emplacements bristling the air fortress' surface will offer them covering fire. Adding to this arsenal are top-of-the-line sensors,

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countermeasures, and a stealth system that cloaks the Citadel against visual detection by allowing it to blend into the sky.

Two Phalanx turrets apiece are located on the Citadel's top and bottom, and one per each side, providing a nearly complete field of anti-aircraft fire. Not only can these powerful and accurate guns shoot down incoming aircraft, but they are also effective against missiles and flying super-heroes.

The main weapons are huge turrets that mount three naval guns apiece. They rotate slowly and take too long to aim to be very effective against small targets or aircraft. Two turrets are found each on both the Citadel's top and bottom.

Six laser turrets are mounted on the craft's top hull (three of which are close to the conning tower to offer it a solid defense), while the other six are on the bottom. The laser cannons are used to bombard ground targets (mostly armored vehicles and light buildings) and to attack relatively slow moving aircraft.

Rounding out the Citadel's armaments are eight retractable missile launchers scattered around the craft's hull, hidden in sealed compartments.

This massive vehicle weighs in at roughly 86,000 tons (not including additional weight from other vehicles, crew, supplies, etc.) It is a little over 1,300 feet long, 115 feet high, and 130 feet wide (nearly 200 feet wide including its massive turbines.)

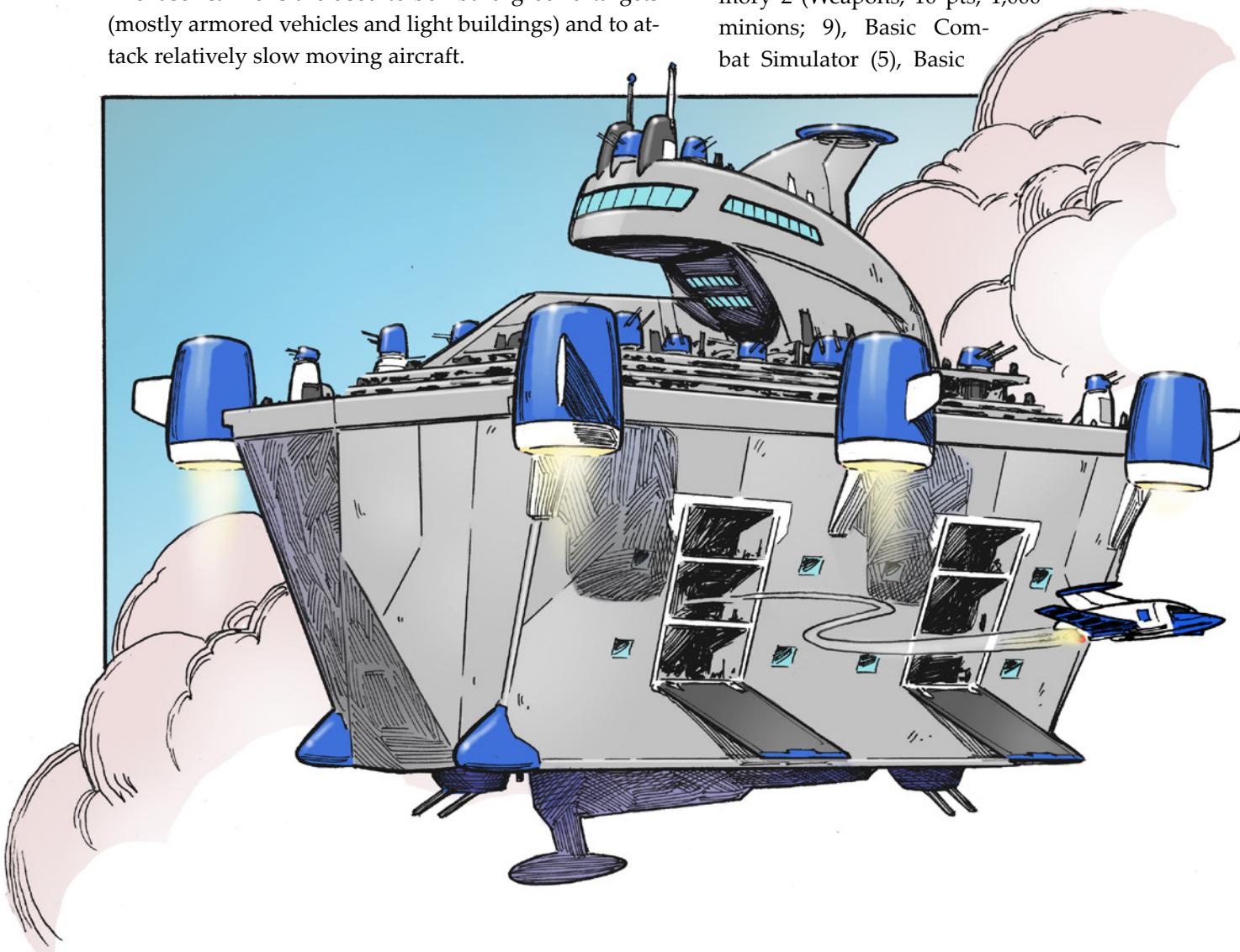
**Crew:** 1,500 total; Personnel (1,000 crewmembers), Minion 11 (250 45-pt air assault wing), Minion 11 (250 45-pt ground assault troops)

**Garage Compliment:** 12 Vypers, 5 Firststrikes, 20 EBA-1s

**Hangar Compliment:** 4 Armadillos, 20 Hornets, 12 Devilwings, 5 Helicopters, 4 Military Helicopters

**Headquarters:** Citadel Air Fortress • *146 points*

**Size** Colossal; **Spaces** 248 of 250; **Tou** 14, **Features:** Armory 2 (Weapons, 10 pts, 1,000 minions; 9), Basic Combat Simulator (5), Basic



Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 3 (DC 35; 0), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 2 (+2; 1), Electronic Concealed 2 (+15; 0), Defense System 10 (100 points, Lethal and Non-Lethal Systems; 0), Electronic Counter-Measures 2 (-4; 0), Escape Tunnel (Escape Pods; 6), Fire Prevention System 3 (Nullify 9; 0), Game Room (10), Garage (32), Gym (5), Hangar (64), Holding Cells 3 (Tou 22; 2), Infirmary 2 (+2; 5), Inventor Lab 3 (Any Combination of Traits up to 15 points; 2), Kitchen (4), Basic Laboratory 2 (+2; 3), Barracks Living Space x 2 (29 each; 58), Basic Living Space x 4 (1 each; 4), Luxury Living Space x 2 (2 each; 4), Garage Motor Pool 10 (PL +15; 0), Hangar Motor Pool 11 (PL +20; 0), Movable (0), Personnel (0), Power System (Nuclear w/Backup; 20), Security System 3 (DC 35; 0), Self-Destruct (Power Plant Overload; 0), War Room (2), Workshop (Expertise: Electronics; 6), Workshop (Expertise: Mechanics; 6); **Powers:** Chaff 2 Vehicle Feature [Feature 1]; **Cloak** (Concealment 2 [Normal Vision], Blending); **Laser Turret x 6** (Ranged Damage 8, Penetrating 2, Diminished Range); **Missile Launchers x 8** (Burst Area Ranged Damage 10, Accurate, Homing); **Naval Guns x 4** (Burst Area Ranged Damage 13, Extended Range 2, Activation 2 [Standard], Inaccurate 4); **Phalanx AA Turret x 6** (Ranged Multiattack Damage 7, Extended Range), **AE: Anti-Missile** (Deflect 14, Extended Range, Limited to Physical Attacks); **Sensor Suit** (Senses 9 [Accurate Radio, Extended 3; Detect Radar (Radio); Normal Vision, Extended 3]); **Compli-cations:** Accessible Bowels

## CORE RANK AND FILE

CORE recruits only those people with the drive and raw ability to suit the organization's goal of global conquest. Many of CORE's foot soldiers are taken from impoverished countries and then trained from scratch or are hired mercenaries who have proven their loyalty to the cause.

CORE's lowly cannon fodder, although bent on carrying out the organization's foul and dastardly plots, are not necessarily evil—the world does not exist solely in terms of black and white. Rather, they could be doing what they feel is right for the world's current environmental and/or political circumstances, even if their commanders are acting out of purely selfish reasons.

<b>DRIVER/PILOT</b>	<b>PL4 • 35 POINTS</b>
---------------------	------------------------

CORE employs skilled pilots and drivers to direct their war machines into combat. As with the organization's foot soldiers, many of these men and women come from poor or disenfranchised nations where their talents likely wouldn't be supported or permitted by the local infrastructure or culture.

**Abilities** Str 0, Sta 1, Agl 2, Dex 2, Fgt 0, Int 1, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Armored jumpsuit (+3), knife, light pistol

**Advantages** Ace (appropriate vehicle), Equipment 4, Great Endurance, Ranged Attack 3

**Skills** Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 2 (+2), Expertise: Survival 2 (+2), Expertise: Tactics 4 (+5), Perception 4 (+4), Vehicles 4 (+6)

**Offense** Initiative +2, Knife +0 (Close Damage 1), Light Pistol +5 (Ranged Damage 3), Unarmed +0 (Close Damage 0)

**Defense** Dodge 4, Parry 2, Fortitude 2, Toughness 1 (4 armored jumpsuit), Will 1

**Totals** Abilities 12 + Advantages 9 + Skills 8 + Defenses 6 = 35

**Threat Level:** Beta

<b>FIELD AGENT</b>	<b>PL5 • 45 POINTS</b>
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Field agents are typically armed with a concealable pistol and submachine gun when undercover or CLW-006 when acting openly. A Vyper or Hornet, or possibly a souped-up undercover car or jetpack, may be assigned if the mission warrants it.

All body armor and uniforms are blue and white—CORE's colors.

**Abilities** Str 1, Sta 1, Agl 1, Dex 1, Fgt 5, Int 0, Awe 0, Pre 0

**Equipment** Light pistol, submachine gun, undercover shirt (20 points) OR CLW-006, bulletproof vest (26 points)

**Advantages** Equipment 6, Move as One, Ranged Attack 4, Swarm

**Skills** Athletics 3 (+4), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+4), Expertise: Streetwise 2 (+2), Expertise: Tactics 3 (+3), Intimidation 2 (+2), Perception 4 (+4), Stealth 2 (+3), Vehicles 2 (+3)

**Offense** Initiative +1, CLW-006 Grenade +5 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), CLW-006 Plasma +5 (Ranged Damage 7, Multiattack, 17-20), Light Pistol +5 (Ranged

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Damage 3), Submachine Gun +5 (Ranged Damage 4, Multiattack), Unarmed +5 (Close Damage 1)

**Defense** Dodge 2, Parry 5, Fortitude 3, Toughness 1 (3 undercover shirt or 4 bulletproof vest), Will 1

**Totals** Abilities 18 + Advantages 12 + Skills 11 + Defenses 4 = 45

**Threat Level:** Beta



**CHAMPION**

**PL7 • 111 POINTS**

Amongst its ranks, CORE has a number of champions who stand out from the crowd. Such minions are a bit tougher, slightly smarter, and more dangerous than a typical field agent. A champion is a good choice for representing a competent CORE officer or just someone who has the guts to make a stand against the player characters.

**Abilities** Str 2 (3 \*), Sta 2, Agl 2, Dex 2, Fgt 6, Int 1, Awe 1, Pre 1

**Powers** **EBA-1 Exoskeletal Body Armor** Removable (-11 points): **Armor** (Protection 4); **Enhanced Reflex**

**es** (Enhanced Improved Initiative); **Forearm Chain-gun** (Ranged Damage 4, Multiattack); **Integrated Jet Pack** (Flight 4; 30 mph); **Life Support** (Immunity 2 [Suffocation]); **Missile Launcher** (Burst Area Ranged Damage 6); **Power Lifting** (Enhanced Strength 1, Limited to Lifting); **Sensors** (Senses 6 [Normal Vision, Extended 2; Infravision, Extended 2; Radio])

**Equipment** EBA-1 suit, knife, light pistol, submachine gun, OR knife, CLW-006 w/grenade launcher, bulletproof vest

**Advantages** Equipment 4, Hard as Nails, Improved Initiative, Ranged Attack 4, Power of One, Swarm

**Skills** Acrobatics 4 (+6), Athletics 4 (+6/+7 \*), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+5), Expertise: Streetwise 2 (+3), Expertise: Tactics 4 (+5), Intimidation 4 (+5), Perception 4 (+5), Stealth 4 (+6), Vehicles 2 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +5 (+9 \*), CLW-006 Grenade +6 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), CLW-006 Plasma +6 (Ranged Damage 7, Multiattack, 17-20), Forearm Chaingun \* +6 (Ranged Damage 4 Multiattack), Knife +6 (Close Damage 3), Light Pistol +6 (Ranged Damage 3), Missile Launcher +6 (Burst Area Ranged Damage 5), Submachine Gun +6 (Ranged Damage 4, Multiattack), Unarmed +6 (Close Damage 2)

**Defense** Dodge 6, Parry 6, Fortitude 4, Toughness 2 (6 EBA-1, 5 vest), Will 3

**Totals** Abilities 34 + Powers 41 + Advantages 12 + Skills 16 + Defenses 8 = 111

\* In EBA-1 suit

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**GHOST**

**PL9 • 120 POINTS**

CORE employs several small, elite units of commandos known as Ghosts for their armor's extraordinary stealth capabilities. A Ghost's primary duties include sabotage, assassination, subversion, and intrusion operations against metahuman, government, and military targets. They are masters of "sneaking and slashing," as the saying goes.

**Abilities** Str 2, Sta 3, Agl 4, Dex 2, Fgt 5, Int 1, Awe 2, Pre 0

**Powers** **Phantom Armor** Removable (-5 points): **Armor** (Protection 3); **Cloaking** (Concealment 4 (All Visual), Blending); **Enhanced Reflexes** (Enhanced Improved Initiative); **Finger Blades** (Strength-Based Damage 3, Penetrating); **Sensors** (Senses 6 [Normal Vision, Extended 2; Infravision, Extended

2; Radio]); **Silent Running** (Enhanced Stealth 8, Limited to Auditory); **Super-Movement** Array (2 points): **Leg Boosters** (Leaping 2); **AE: Wall-Crawling** (Movement 1 [Wall-Crawling])

**Equipment** Assault carbine, grenades, CSS-PX001

**Advantages** Chokehold, Equipment 6, Fast Grab, Hard as Nails, Improved Grab, Improved Initiative, Lucky Shot, Power of Many, Power of One, Ranged Attack 6

**Skills** Athletics 8 (+10), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 5 (+7), Expertise: Survival 7 (+9), Expertise: Tactics 7 (+8), Intimidation 5 (+5), Perception 4 (+6), Stealth 8 (+12/+20 versus Auditory \*), Technology 8 (+9)

**Offense** Initiative +8, Assault Carbine +8 (Ranged Multi-attack Damage 5), Finger Blades +5 (Close Damage 5, Penetrating \*), Grenades +8 (Effect Varies), Unarmed +5 (Close Damage 2)

**Defense** Dodge 10, Parry 8, Fortitude 8, Toughness 3 (6 \*), Will 6

**Totals** Abilities 38 + Powers 18 + Advantages 20 + Skills 26 + Defenses 18 = 120

\* In CSS-PX001 suit

**Threat Level:** Gamma

## THE ELITE

A simple name used to encompass all the metahumans working with CORE, the Elite are as experienced, dangerous, and powerful as the title suggests. CORE is not above hiring other super-villains for a single mission or a short term of service, but only those who are willing to join for the long haul (and are considered acceptable) are ever granted the title of "Elite."

Most of the Elite choose to work on their own or in pairs (Major Minor in particular), and have difficulty overcoming their personal differences when Center demands they all work together. Such collaboration is a rare event that signals something big and bad is in the air.

## ANNEX

## PL9

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	2	<b>Fighting</b>	6
<b>Stamina</b>	1	<b>Intellect</b>	3
<b>Agility</b>	4	<b>Awareness</b>	6
<b>Dexterity</b>	5	<b>Presence</b>	10

## The Elite

**Base:** Mobile

**Current Members:** Annex, Erratic, Heartache, Jaundice, Magma, Major, Minor, Ramrod, Regulator

**Former Members:** None

## The Elite Expertise: Metahuman Checks

DC	Example
10	Knowing the Elite are CORE's metahuman enforcers.
15	Being able to name the Elite's members.
20	Knowing a given Elite member's preferred role and assignments for the team.
25	Being aware of how two or more Elite members feel about each other.

### Powers

**Assume Identity:** Morph 2 (Roughly Same Mass) • 10 points

### Equipment

Varies, but typically at least an undercover shirt, blaster pistol, and knife.

### Advantages

Agile Feint, Assessment, Benefit 3 (Wealth), Connected 3 (P: Espionage; S: Wealthy, World Governments), Contacts 5 (P: Espionage; World Governments, International Police, Military, Wealthy), Daze (Deception), Ear to the Ground 3 (Espionage, Wealthy, World Governments), Eidetic Memory, Equipment 8, Hide in Plain Sight, Languages 4 (Arabic, Cantonese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish), Well-Informed

### Skills

Acrobatics 12 (+16), Athletics 8 (+10), Close Combat: Knife 2 (+8), Deception 16 (+26), Expertise: Actor 10 (+20), Expertise: Business 8 (+11), Expertise: Chemistry 6 (+9), Expertise: Espionage 12 (+15), Expertise: Science 8 (+11), Expertise: Sociology 8 (+11), Expertise: Streetwise 7 (+13), Expertise: Survival 4 (+10), Insight 14 (+20), Investigation 12 (+15), Perception 12 (+18), Persuasion 12 (+22), Sleight of Hand 13 (+18), Stealth 14 (+18), Technology 14 (+17), Vehicles 4 (+9)

### Offense

Initiative +4

## Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost



Blaster Pistol +5	Ranged Damage 5
Knife +8	Close Damage 3, 19-20
Unarmed +6	Close Damage 2

## Defense

Dodge	12	Fortitude	8
Parry	8	Toughness	3/1 *
		Will	15

\* Without undercover shirt.

## Power Points

Abilities	74	Skills	98
Powers	10	Defenses	26
Advantages	32	Total	240

## Complications

**Who Am I?**: Based on some of the things this faceless villain has said, and how he reacts periodically, it is believed he has lost all attachment to his original identity and sense of self. He now seems only capable of functioning within the context of a blank slate operative and the identities he assumes.

**Real Name:** Unknown

**Aliases:** Too many to list

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** Unknown

**Height:** 5 feet, 10 in.

**Weight:** 180 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** Did you really think your secrets were safe from me? How naïve.

**Occupation:** CORE operative, espionage agent

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Annex likes to wear the finest, most expensive clothing he can get his hands on while not on the job. When not assuming a disguise, Annex keeps his face entirely hairless and devoid of features, and his fingers free of fingerprints. This is to make it virtually impossible for anyone (including his allies) to determine his true identity. (It is also possible his “blank slate” appearance is a manifestation of his seeming tenuous hold on who he truly is.)

## Personality

While not assuming someone else's personality, Annex is cold, emotionless, and without apparent feeling. He reacts with calm reason and unflappable tact. Once he dons someone else's face, however, he acts within that person's behavior patterns at all times as closely as possible without compromising his objectives.

## Powers & Abilities

Though fully capable of handling himself in combat, Annex's strength is found in his expansive knowledge and superb ability to create false identities for himself in order to infiltrate places where he does not belong.

If a fight seems imminent, Annex will use his head first and his pistol second, trying to talk or bluff his way out of the situation. More often than not, his unshakeable cool and confidence sees him through the dilemma and safely away before anyone realizes what he has done. The epitome of professionalism, Annex never loses his cool in a tight situation and cannot be goaded into acting rashly or doing something stupid. He is always all business and never allows his pleasure to get in the way—probably because, for him, business *is* pleasure.

## Allies

A true mercenary, Annex will ally himself with whoever is willing and able to pay his fees. At the moment, he is solely contracted to CORE.

CORE uses him to gather information and sow the seeds of dissension among the planet's governments, a task for which he is ideally suited and all too happy to be employed at. Annex is easily CORE's most valuable and skilled intelligence operative.

## Enemies

Many of the opponents Annex has previously faced off against (no pun intended) consider him to be their foe, including entire governments. For his part, however, Annex holds no such animosities. To him, everything he does is merely a job.

## Background

Nobody knows who Annex really is except, it is rumored, the equally enigmatic Center. Before joining CORE, the person now calling himself Annex was a spy-for-hire (one of the best) who worked both sides of the fence during the Cold War. Now this mysterious agent has offered his skills exclusively (at a very high price) to CORE.

# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Annex into their game.

### Higher Office

CORE has kidnapped or killed (or is in the process of planning to do so) a candidate for high office in a country where great political upheaval and divisions create incomparable opportunity to gather power unto whomever is in charge. They plan to do so seamlessly so that Annex can slide in and take control in CORE's name. Somehow the heroes get wind of this and must act quickly to either save the real candidate or reveal the truth if they are too late for the former.

### When the Mirror Cracks

Annex's psyche has cracked, resulting in an amalgamated personality comprised of components from all the varied identities he has assumed through the years. The ultimate split personality, Annex is now out of control, acting in a fashion that partially pursues courses of action similar to previous missions associated with those identities, walking away from the plots whenever a new identity can assert control long enough to begin a new course of action.

If the heroes cannot locate Annex and stop him, there is no limit to the amount of unpredictable havoc he can cause during the course of his random pursuit of previous, disparate objectives.

## ERRATIC

PL14

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	2	<b>Fighting</b>	4
<b>Stamina</b>	3	<b>Intellect</b>	0
<b>Agility</b>	4	<b>Awareness</b>	0
<b>Dexterity</b>	4	<b>Presence</b>	1

### Powers

**Flying:** Flight 4 (30 mph) • 8 points

**Power Mimicry:** Variable 20 (Powers Possessed by Catalyst), Limited to Catalysts in Perception Range, Quirk 2 (Mimics Catalyst's Power-Related Complications), Unreliable • 98 points

### Advantages

Diehard, Great Endurance, Improved Initiative, Languages 2 (Berber, English), Seize Initiative, Taunt

## Skills

Athletics 4 (+6), Expertise: Flute 2 (+6), Expertise: Mechanics 4 (+4), Expertise: Streetwise 10 (+10), Sleight of Hand 10 (+14), Stealth 6 (+10), Vehicles 4 (+8)

## Offense

Initiative +8

Unarmed +4      Close Damage 2

## Defense

Dodge	8	Fortitude	8
Parry	6	Toughness	3
		Will	5

## Power Points

Abilities	36	Skills	20
Powers	106	Defenses	16
Advantages	7	Total	185

## Complications

**Self-Interest:** Erratic is totally incapable of putting the interests of anyone or anything else ahead of himself. He is the epitome of selfishness, and his behavior is entirely unpredictable when his self-interests are concerned, beyond knowing he will do what is necessary to protect what he feels is best for him.

**Real Name:** Jamol Melbatut

**Aliases:** Jamol Shaheen, Ashiq Ramdial

**Threat Level:** Delta

**Age:** 19

**Height:** 5 feet, 8 in.

**Weight:** 180 lbs

**Native Language:** Arabic

**Typical Quote:** Taste some of your own medicine, rich boy.

**Occupation:** Criminal

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Erratic is a plain looking young man with dark blue skin, long black hair usually tied in a ponytail, and pure white, disinterested eyes. His costume is entirely black,

allowing him to ply his trade as thief whenever he isn't needed by CORE.

## Personality

Jamol is selfish and conniving, willing to do just about anything to get what he wants. CORE has taught him that he has the power to take what he desires, and he intends to do so. He despises the wealthy or those who even look like they may have money or fame. This often puts him at odds with Annex, who, for his part, sees Erratic as jumped up street trash.

## Powers & Abilities

Since joining CORE, Jamol has received as much training in his unpredictable powers as is possible. He is a wild card in any battle, and CORE makes sure to use this unknown element to their best advantage. When doing battle with annoying super-heroes, Erratic will try to stay close to the most powerful good guy with the hope of copying their abilities. Of course, this is a dangerous venture because this also makes Jamol an easy target while doing so.

## Allies

Erratic is as loyal to anyone as is required to serve his own, selfish needs. What's best for him drives everything in his life, including who he is willing to side with in any given situation.

## Enemies

This former thief considers himself in opposition to anything resembling established authority and figureheads of wealth. He has also acquired the animosity of a number of super-heroes (and villains) after mimicking their powers to use against them and their allies.

## Background

An orphan from Cairo's dirty back streets, Jamol began his criminal career as a petty thief, stealing from street vendors in order to survive. Each day, Jamol would go to the more prosperous areas of the city and watch the powerful citizens in their big cars and fancy clothes, always dreaming of one day taking all their money for himself. When he became a teenager and his mutant powers manifested, Jamol seized the opportunity to do just that.

It did not take long for CORE to take notice of the youth and recruit him for their battle to "bring the world's rich to their knees."

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Erratic into their game.

### *The Crack in the Armor*

A powerful hero with a reputation for being unstoppable and indestructible has interfered with CORE's plans for the last time. The evil organization has concocted a plot to use the rest of the Elite as a distraction to lure the hero out by staging a crime the hero is ideally (or only) suited to handle.

When the hero arrives, Erratic shall be hiding nearby and plans to mimic the former's powers. This shall either afford CORE the opportunity to learn what the hero's vulnerabilities are by experimenting on Erratic or to use the do-gooder's own abilities against them via Erratic. Either way, the hero is in grave danger (whether he is a player character or an ally to be saved.)

### *The Overflowing Sponge*

While mimicking another metahuman, something went wrong—Erratic was exposed to some form of radiation or similar catalyst that caused his unique cellular memory to activate without shutting off. This has caused him to randomly manifest super-powers and complications he has previously mimicked, mixing them in unpredictable and unnatural combinations.

This unforeseen effect of the exposure has also affected the villain's mind, causing it to flood with flashes of memory and thoughts from his previous metahuman victims. These flashes are causing Erratic incredible pain and making it impossible for him to focus long enough to control his rampaging powers. As such, he is lashing out at everything around him, inflicting incredible devastation upon his surroundings.

## HEARTACHE

PL10

### Abilities

Strength	-1	Fighting	5
Stamina	1	Intellect	0
Agility	0	Awareness	7
Dexterity	0	Presence	9

### Powers

**Force Field:** Protection 9, Sustained • 9 points

**Heartbreak Blast:** Perception Range Damage 10 (Resisted by Fortitude), Concentration, Limited to Males • 30 points

# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

**Psychic Blast:** Perception Range Damage 5 (Resisted by Will) • 15 points

**Psychic Camouflage:** Concealment 2 (Mental) • 4 points

**Psychic Senses:** Senses 7 (Danger Sense [Mental]; Mental Awareness, Radius; Psychometry) • 7 points

**Psychic Shields:** Impervious Enhanced Will 10 • 20 points

## Advantages

Attractive 2, Daze 2, Fascinate 2 (Deception, Persuasion)

## Skills

Athletics 2 (+1), Deception 8 (+17), Expertise: Current Events 1 (+8), Expertise: Dancing 13 (+13), Expertise: Geology 4 (+4), Expertise: Makeup 6 (+6), Expertise: Model 6 (+15), Expertise: Riding 2 (+2), Expertise: Science 4 (+4), Expertise: Singing 2 (+11), Insight 6 (+13), Persuasion 8 (+17), Vehicles 2 (+2)

## Offense

Initiative +0

Heartbreak Blast Perception Range Damage 10, Resisted by Fortitude

Psychic Blast Perception Range Damage 5, Resisted by Will

Unarmed +5 Close Damage -1

## Defense

Dodge	5	Fortitude	4
Parry	5	Toughness	10/1*
		Will	23/13 **

\* Without force field.

\*\* Without psychic shields.

## Power Points

Abilities	42	Skills	32
Powers	85	Defenses	14
Advantages	6	Total	179

## Complications

**Persecution Complex:** Heartache believes men are out to get her—to keep her down and suppress her superiority—for no other reason than because she is a woman. She filters her interactions and relationships

through this perception, which can easily and quickly drive her to anger and vengeance.

**Real Name:** Claire Dawn

**Aliases:** Stephanie Raymond

**Threat Level:** Gamma-P

**Age:** 24

**Height:** 6 feet

**Weight:** 132 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** Surely a big, strong, handsome man wouldn't stoop so low as to hurting a defenseless woman, would you?

**Occupation:** Model

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Tall, buxom, blue-eyed and blonde, to say that Heartache is stunningly beautiful would be to do her an injustice. Her costume displays the standard blue and white of CORE, but she has added some red highlights and lining "for color."

## Personality

Claire is a vindictive woman who will do whatever it takes to get what she wants, holding little remorse for anyone who stands in her way. She resents the way men tend to view her, as a sex object while at the same time acknowledging the power that her charm and beauty grant her. She detests chauvinism and will give a great deal of her attention to such men.

## Powers & Abilities

Although possessing common psychic abilities such as mental defenses, a psychic force field, and psychic blast, Heartache's primary attack her ability to psychically induce cardiac arrest in men.

Heartache will try to use her beauty and "innocent, weak woman" routine to get male opponents to lower their guard long enough for her to use her psychic talents on them. She will use every bit of her beauty and feminine guile to gain what she wants, including the advantage in combat, all the while despising the people it works upon because of how they clearly reduce her to the role of sex object.

Besides the edge that she brings to the battlefield, her beauty, skill with makeup, and intense charm also makes Heartache a natural for covert intelligence operations.

## Allies

Heartache is (mostly) loyal to CORE, a relationship that is justifiable in her mind because she believes Center hides their identity because it is truly a woman (and thus would not be able to retain the organization's allegiance were the truth known.) She will take orders from whoever is put in charge of a mission, but only reluctantly if it is a man (which is usually the case.)

## Enemies

Animosity tends to spring up between Heartache and female superheroes with strong, public ties to men, such as those in male-led groups or in romantic relationships with male super-heroes.

## Background

Once a New York-based model whose star was rapidly rising, that star fell when she was blacklisted under a veil of secrecy (it was rumored that she used sex to help negotiate contracts, something not all that strange for the modeling world, but she apparently took it to extremes.) Claire used the powers she had always hidden from her friends and family to get even with her hypocritical accusers, making her a fugitive. CORE found her soon after, and gave her a chance to strike back at a world that had set out the rules of the game and then punished her for getting caught.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Heartache into their game.

### Heartbreak City

Something has enabled Heartache to drastically boost her abilities, enabling her to use her Heartbreak power over an entire city block. As time goes on, the power continues to get more powerful, allowing this villain to use it over an increasingly wider area. In another 24 hours or so, she will be able to use it over a whole city!

If this was not of concern enough, the strain on Heartache mounts as her abilities become more potent. This makes her increasingly prone to uncontrollable fits of rage, headaches (and eventually, nose bleeds), and an inability to control her own powers. Something has to be done, and quick, before an insane Heartache gives all the city's men heart attacks.

## Only a Fool Gives Away Her Heart

Heartache has ignored her own rule, and fallen in love. This could be a good thing, possibly undermining her motivation to be a man-killer, but there is one catch: she has fallen for a hero (ideally one of the player characters.) After an act of kindness from the hero, this villain's cynical worldview was stripped from her eyes long enough to become enamored of her benefactor.

The Gamemaster may use this opportunity to cultivate a "star-crossed lovers" scenario, or things could play out that neither is able to fully cast aside the rest of who they are, leaving their love to idle in limbo. Worse yet, however, would be a situation where the hero does not return Heartache's feelings (or does, but a tragic breakup results), an outcome that would certainly send Heartache on a rampage.

## JAUNDICE PL12

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	0	<b>Fighting</b>	6
<b>Stamina</b>	3	<b>Intellect</b>	4
<b>Agility</b>	1	<b>Awareness</b>	2
<b>Dexterity</b>	1	<b>Presence</b>	1

### Powers

**Fearsome Presence:** Perception [Visual] Area Affliction 4 [Resisted by Will; Impaired, Disabled, Paralyzed], Selective • 12 points

**Infection:** Array (40 points)

**Crippling Disease:** Weaken Stamina 8, Contagious, Drawn Out, Progressive • 40 points

• **Nauseating Disease:** Weaken Agility 4, Contagious, Drawn Out, Progressive; Weaken Dexterity 4, Contagious, Drawn Out, Progressive • 1 point

**Patient Zero:** Immunity 1 (Disease) • 1 point

**Plague Carrier:** Weaken Stamina 15, Drawn Out, Reaction (Contact) • 75 points

### Equipment

Undercover shirt, boot knife, 2 light pistols

### Advantages

Close Attack, Defensive Attack, Equipment 5, Fearless, Languages 3 (Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, Swahili), Skill

# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

Adept 3 (Treatment, DC 8), Specialization (Expertise: Physician, Pathology)

## Skills

Athletics 2 (+2), Expertise: Biology 12 (+16), Expertise: Electronics 6 (+10), Expertise: Mechanics 6 (+10), Expertise: Physician 10 (+14), Expertise: Science 12 (+16), Expertise: Survival 6 (+8), Intimidation 4 (+5), Investigation 4 (+8), Perception 4 (+6), Ranged Combat: Pistol 6 (+7), Technology 4 (+8), Treatment 10 (+14), Vehicles 4 (+5)

## Offense

Initiative +1

Crippling Disease +7	Weaken Stamina 8
Knife +7	Close Damage 1, 19-20
Light Pistol +7	Ranged Damage 3
Nauseating Disease +7	Weaken Agility 4, Weaken Dexterity 4
Unarmed +7	Close Damage 0, Infection

## Defense

Dodge	9	Fortitude	9
Parry	6	Toughness	5/3 *

Will 8

\* Without undercover shirt.

## Power Points

Abilities	36	Skills	45
Powers	129	Defenses	20
Advantages	15	Total	245

## Complications

**Antibiotic Vulnerability:** Each dose of antibiotics acts as a Weaken Stamina 1 effect Jaundice is not capable of making a resistance check against. Especially potent antibiotics will have more ranks, or may act as a poison.

**Real Name:** Dr. Larry Smythe.

**Aliases:** Larry Smith, Lenny Smits.

**Threat Level:** Delta

**Age:** 37

**Height:** 5 feet, 10 in

**Weight:** 145 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** You do not look at all well. As a doctor, I'd prescribe eternal rest.

**Occupation:** Pathologist, criminal

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Jaundice's very pale, yellow skin is tightly stretched across his gaunt figure, which he hides beneath a trench coat. His eyes are all white except for the tiny, pure black irises that stare out from beneath the fedora that is always pulled low over his face, concealing his frightening features until he is ready to strike.

## Personality

Larry Smythe of old is gone, and all that remains is the maniacal Jaundice personality. This man enjoys inflicting suffering almost as much as he enjoys watching it.

Jaundice's real passion lies in watching big, strong super-heroes wither, become weak, and then die at his touch.

## Powers & Abilities

To merely touch Jaundice is to have one's life force sapped by a quick-acting, wasting disease, whether the villain desires this outcome or not (which is partly responsible for his insanity.) He can also purposefully infect others with a touch, passing on a weaker variation of this ailment that is highly contagious, or a mutated strain that robs its victims of their coordination.

This villain is typically deployed to sow disorder among urban centers, his diseases causing widespread panic and keeping the police occupied prior to CORE operations.

## Allies

After taking on his new identity as Jaundice, this sadistic villain was recruited into CORE. His dark desires (not to mention his touch) have gained him no friends, however. Other CORE operatives will work with Jaundice, but none of them trust him or consider him anything more than an ally of necessity.

## Enemies

Jaundice has acquired numerous enemies over the years because of the many thousands of deaths his powers have wrought. Many superheroes with healing abili-

ties would go to great lengths to see this walking disease imprisoned and contained.

### Background

Once a volunteer pathologist with the Red Cross, Dr. Larry Smythe, MD was called to an African war zone to investigate an outbreak of a strange malady killing refugees by the hundreds. It turned out the guerrillas had released a stolen biological agent against the oppressive government forces, heedless of the civilian casualties they knew would result.

Smythe's examinations revealed the epidemic had spread beyond the refugees. He had himself been exposed to the pathogen prior to putting on his NBC protection suit after realizing what he was dealing with.

But Larry didn't die like everyone else.

An undiscovered genetic anomaly in the pathologist's blood turned the kind-hearted pathologist into a walking plague—a metahuman Typhoid Mary. Becoming the human embodiment of the diseases to which he had devoted his life to fighting broke his mind and spirit. When his shattered sanity once more found a semblance of order, it had been rearranged into the opposite of what it had previously been.

### Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Jaundice into their game.

### Outbreaks

Jaundice has spent a great deal of time collecting samples of especially potent diseases and viruses, and CORE is now ready to use them to their advantage. Under Jaundice's supervision, CORE plans on releasing a number of deadly, difficult to counter diseases in large population centers all around the world. As each targeted country scrambles to both contain and cure the outbreaks, CORE will spring into action.

With their police, military, and civil resources stretched thinly in order to cope with the epidemics, creating quarantines and helping gather, treat, and (when necessary) give solace to the victims and their families, these nations are extremely vulnerable. CORE will go after each target country's infrastructure, and wealthy and political elite. It will take a globally coordinated, super-heroic effort to stop them.

### Plague Beasts

Jaundice has been conducting experiments, the results of which have resulted in crazed beasts of just about every stripe—from urban to wild animals—that carry a wide range of diseases. This has also made them crazed to the point that they will attack people on sight.

On his own or as part of a larger, CORE plot, Jaundice has released the diseased animals into both rural and urban areas. His plan is to let the creatures spread his highly contagious diseases, to what end is up to the Gamemaster to decide (it could be for little more than to have some fun or watch how the contagion trajectories develop.)

MAGMA		PL11	
<b>Abilities</b>			
<b>Strength</b>	12	<b>Fighting</b>	5
<b>Stamina</b>	10	<b>Intellect</b>	0
<b>Agility</b>	2	<b>Awareness</b>	-1
<b>Dexterity</b>	2	<b>Presence</b>	0
<b>Powers</b>			
<b>Magma Balls:</b> Ranged Damage 10, Ricochet, Diminished Range 3 • 18 points			
<b>Magma Form:</b> Damage 6, Reaction [Contact], Permanent; Feature 1 (Suffers No Detriments to Movement within Magma/Lava); Immunity 11 (Fire Effects, Volcanic Gas); Impervious Toughness 10 • 58 points			
<b>Power Lifting:</b> Enhanced Strength 4, Limited to Lifting • 4 points			
<b>Advantages</b>			
Close Attack 5, Favored Environment (Extreme Heat), Great Endurance, Languages (Polish), Interpose			
<b>Skills</b>			
Athletics 2 (+14), Expertise: Chemistry 6 (+6), Expertise: Electronics 4 (+4), Expertise: Mechanics 4 (+4), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+3), Expertise: Survival 4 (+3), Expertise: Tactics 8 (+8), Ranged Combat: Magma Balls 8 (+10), Stealth 4 (+6), Technology 4 (+4), Treatment 2 (+2), Vehicles 2 (+4)			
<b>Offense</b>			
Initiative +2		Magma Balls +10	Ranged Combat 10

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Magma Form	Close Damage 6
Unarmed +10	Close Damage 12, plus Magma Form

## Defense

Dodge	8	Fortitude	14
Parry	5	Toughness	10
		Will	3

## Power Points

Abilities	60	Skills	26
Powers	80	Defenses	14
Advantages	9	Total	189

## Complications

**Burning Touch:** Everything Magma touches burns unless protected, meaning he wears special boots to walk around without leaving smoldering footprints, and must even use special utensils to eat.

**Real Name:** David Tremmor

**Aliases:** Big Dave

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** 24

**Height:** 6 feet, 2 in

**Weight:** 840 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** Do not you know who I am? You've messed with the wrong guy this time, pal.

**Occupation:** Criminal

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Magma's body is shaped from plates of burnt stone with rivers of glowing, molten rock flowing between.

## Personality

Magma has an ego problem. Like most bullies, he is constantly trying to prove his worth to those around him, especially the other Elite, but is in truth a coward. He blusters, booms, and flaunts his strength in front of "normals" because somewhere inside he knows that he isn't a match for most competent super-beings.

The inability to be intimate or so much as touch someone without burning them has made Magma extremely hot tempered and mean.

## Powers & Abilities

The experiment has permanently altered Tremmor's body into one of living magma. His new form is incredibly strong and durable, but constantly emits incredible heat. This heat allows him to scoop up earth, concrete, metal, and so on in his hand and then toss the molten results at his opponents

## Allies

Magma's combination of plenty of power and not enough brains doesn't really bring anything of great value to the team. However, his eagerness to prove his value and joy at bullying those weaker than him has convinced the other Elite to keep him around for now—for his entertainment value if nothing else.

## Enemies

This burning bully has acquired a number of enemies through the years, including both heroes and villains he has been especially outspoken or violent towards. He draws the ire of people he felt they needed to be taken down a peg or two, or couldn't help himself from terrorizing them.

## Background

As a lowly grunt in the great CORE war machine, David Tremmor saw far more competent warriors than he promoted up the ranks past him, embittering him and creating a need to be noticed. To attain the fame and recognition he so desperately sought, Tremmor signed on for a "volunteers only" project conducted by the organization's brain boys.

Tremmor was the only survivor of the hundred or so test subjects.

Now possessing the strength and power he has always desired, Magma has joined the Elite as one of its more common enforcers and all-around thugs.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Magma into their game.

### Blowing Up This Town!

Magma has somehow (additional CORE experimentation?) obtained the ability to excite volcanic activity.

He can now draw magma up from the earth's depths to increase existing volcanic activity or create it where there was none before (doing the latter merely takes more time than the former.)

CORE has opted to exploit this ability to hold a vital city hostage. By hiding Magma somewhere in a prepared location within that city, and building volcanic activity to the point of eruption, CORE threatens to cause multiple volcanoes to form and wipe out the city if their demands are not met.

### Maximum Magma

Magma and CORE have had a falling out, causing him to leave. The thing is, CORE didn't exactly approve of the villain's absence. Magma is on the run.

Desperate to get away, Magma has been causing quite a bit of mayhem by burning and destroying anything in his way. Heroes may engage him, believing he is on some sort of purposeful rampage, but his rage at being impeded and desperation to get away before "they" show up will quickly become apparent. This is when CORE will arrive on the scene.

CORE has created a new super-weapon that will allow them to cause deadly volcanic activity anywhere they want in the world, but there is a catch: it needs Magma to power and direct it. This means fitting Magma into the device and slowly draining his life force, a torturous process that will make the criminal wish for death long before it happens.

So, the heroes find themselves in a position where they must both protect Magma and locate and destroy the super-weapon.

### MAJOR MINOR, A DUO

These identical twin brothers used to work as strong men in Europe before their circus train collided with an unscheduled train hauling radioactive waste along the same tracks. Only the two Jackman brothers survived.

The twins soon learned—once their extremely long hospital stay was over—that the radioactive sludge they had lain in for hours while waiting to be rescued had altered their genetic structures. Unfortunately, the burning toxins, forever ending their careers, also horribly disfigured them.

CORE had heard of the distraught Jackman brothers through one of their many moles in the medical com-

munity and approached them with an offer. Desperate for money to pay their enormous medical expenses, and looking for a way to vent the anger they felt towards the world for what it had done to them, the twins joined up under the collaborative name of Major Minor.

MAJOR	PL16
<b>Abilities</b>	
<b>Strength</b>	8 / 20 *
<b>Stamina</b>	6 / 18 *
<b>Agility</b>	0
<b>Dexterity</b>	0
<b>Fighting</b>	7
<b>Intellect</b>	-1
<b>Awareness</b>	0
<b>Presence</b>	-3
<b>Powers</b>	
<b>Fearsome Presence:</b> Perception (Visual) Area Affliction 5 (Resisted by Will; Impaired), Selective, Limited Degree 2 • 5 points	
<b>Immovable:</b> Enhanced Athletics 18, Limited to Resisting Push, Trip, or Throw Attempts • 6 points	
<b>Major Size:</b> Growth 12 (Size 1) • 24 points	
<b>Power Lifting:</b> Enhanced Strength 5, Limited to Lifting • 5 points	
<b>Thick Skinned:</b> Impervious Toughness 6 • 6 points	
<b>Advantages</b>	
All-Out Attack, Improved Defense, Interpose, Languages 3 (English, Italian, Polish, Russian), Teamwork	
<b>Skills</b>	
Expertise: Art 4 (+3), Expertise: Metahuman 4 (+3), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+4), Expertise: Survival 4 (+4), Intimidation 12 (+9/+15 *), Sleight of Hand 4 (+4), Stealth 4 (+4/-8 *), Vehicles 4 (+4)	
<b>Offense</b>	
Initiative +0	
Unarmed +7	Close Damage 8/20 *
<b>Defense</b>	
Dodge	10/4 *
Parry	8/2 *
Fortitude	12/24 *
Toughness	6/18 *
Will	4

# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

## Power Points

Abilities	34	Skills	20
Powers	46	Defenses	21
Advantages	7	Total	128

\* Size 1

## Complications

**Brotherly Rage:** Should Minor be hurt or otherwise get into trouble, Major will madly rush to his rescue. He will not stop fighting until he is himself defeated or Minor's attacker is a bleeding, ruined mass of flesh.

**Dyslexic:** Major suffers from severe dyslexia, the results of which can infuriate him and lead to problems of following directions while carrying out a plan.

**Real Name:** Jack Jackman

**Aliases:** Jack Trade

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** 26

**Height:** 6 feet, 4 in

**Weight:** 230 lbs

**Native Language:** German

**Typical Quote:** Do not worry, shorty, zis von't hurt. Much.

**Occupation:** Circus strongman, criminal

**Base:** None

## Appearance

With no hair on his head or body, and a face that was horribly scarred and disfigured by the accident, it is little wonder that Major almost never removes his mask. His costume is a dark blue with white highlights, arms and legs. A white symbol for Alpha rests in the middle of his otherwise entirely blue mask.

## Personality

Jack takes great pleasure in destroying property and bullying others. He will, however, not accept anyone making fun of someone (himself or anyone else) for being ugly, regardless of who that person may be. If he overhears any comments such as this, he will likely fly into a blind rage and pummel the person.

## Powers & Abilities

The eldest of the twins by almost three minutes, Major uses his height and incredible strength to pound his enemies into submission. He will do what he must to see his assignment fulfilled, and he hates retreating.

One of his favorite tactics is to cause as much collateral damage as possible to the area surrounding a battle, especially by using heroes as human baseballs.

## Allies

This villain's only real friend is his brother. Although he is loyal to CORE, he doesn't get along with the rest of the Elite (he knows they consider him to be nothing more than dumb muscle.) Major also feels a kinship for anyone afflicted with a mutilated appearance. If opponents, Major will actually try taking it easy on them, and only fight as much as is necessary to win.

## Enemies

Major makes a point of being especially aggressive towards exceptionally attractive heroes.

## MINOR

## PL13

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	7	<b>Fighting</b>	7
<b>Stamina</b>	4	<b>Intellect</b>	0
<b>Agility</b>	2	<b>Awareness</b>	0
<b>Dexterity</b>	2	<b>Presence</b>	-3

### Powers

**Minor Size:** Shrinking 16 (Size -6), Normal Strength  
• 48 points

**Power Lifting:** Enhanced Strength 5, Limited to Lifting  
• 5 points

**Shrink Item:** Shrinking 16 (Size -6; Resisted by Fortitude), Affects Only Objects, Attack • 32 points

**Thick Skinned:** Impervious Toughness 4 • 4 points

### Advantages

Close Attack, Defensive Attack, Evasion 2, Improved Initiative 2, Languages 3 (English, Italian, Polish, Russian), Monkeywrencher, Teamwork

### Skills

Acrobatics 6 (+8), Athletics 1 (+7), Expertise: Engineering 2 (+2), Expertise: Mechanics 4 (+4), Expertise: Piano

1 (+3), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+4), Intimidation 0 (-3/-11 \*), Perception 3 (+3), Sleight of Hand 2 (+4), Stealth 3 (+5/+21 \*), Vehicles 4 (+6)

## Offense

Initiative +8

Unarmed +8 Close Damage 7

## Defense

Dodge	10/18 *	Fortitude	8
Parry	7/ 15 *	Toughness	4

Will 4

## Power Points

Abilities	38	Skills	15
Powers	89	Defenses	16
Advantages	11	Total	169

\* Size -6

## Complications

**Brotherly Rage:** Should Major be hurt or otherwise get into trouble, Minor will madly rush to his rescue. He will not stop fighting until he is himself defeated or Major's attacker is a bleeding, ruined mass of flesh.

**Real Name:** Jerry Jackman

**Aliases:** Jerry Sign

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** 26

**Height:** 6 feet, 4 in

**Weight:** 280 lbs

**Native Language:** German

**Typical Quote:** Try picking on someone your own size!

**Occupation:** Circus strongman, criminal

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Minor's costume is the same as Major's except the blue and white are reversed, and he has the symbol for Omega on his mask. Despite still having his body hair, Minor's face and skin are as mutilated as his brother's, so he too rarely removes his mask.

## Personality

Jerry enjoys the devastation of a well-planned sabotage more than simple, wanton destruction. He almost views it as art. Unlike Jack, Jerry lets comments about his own ugliness roll harmlessly off of him, but will not allow anyone to attack his brother, either verbally or physically.

## Powers & Abilities

The smarter of the two brothers (which is not saying much), Minor usually directs their actions in the field. Minor uses the combination of being able to shrink and his extraordinary might to move about a fight virtually unseen, striking with surprise.

He enjoys sneaking up on gadget-using and weapon-wielding foes embattled by his allies in order to suddenly shrink their equipment, rendering it unusable. This is an especially devastating (and potentially deadly) strategy against heroes wearing battlesuits.

## Allies

Minor's best friend is his brother, Jack. He also works well with the rest of the Elite (except Heartache), and doesn't care much about what they may think of him or say behind his back.

## Enemies

Anyone who makes a point of giving Major a hard time will make Jerry's "list," earning his undying enmity.

## Caper Ideas (Major Minor)

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Major Minor into their game.

### Minor Major

Following an unpredictable accident while engaged with some super-heroes (possibly the player characters), the powers possessed by both Jackman brothers have been altered. Now, both brothers have the ability to shrink and grow, giving them a dangerous degree of unpredictability in a fight.

How long this may continue is up to the Gamemaster, but it should stretch across several incidents that create problems for the authorities.

### The Minor Bank Job

Major Minor have decided to do some moonlighting without CORE's knowledge (the organization would not

# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

approve.) The plan is surprisingly clever for the Jackman brothers, as it involves Minor shrinking down and being deposited by his brother (in plain clothes) in a bank's safety deposit vault. After the bank closes, Minor breaks out and opens the vault from within via the vault door's relatively exposed inward-facing mechanisms. Once this is done, Major shows up and uses his growth (and resulting strength) to help quickly loot the valuables.

Major does not appear in his own costume, so security cameras at the victimized banks only capture an oversized metahuman removing the goods. Major even makes an impotent gesture at the vault door before Minor opens it to make it look as though he has some manner of additional power that grants him access, covering up Minor's involvement.

It will take an especially skilled group of investigators to go over the crime scenes without any preconceptions in order to see through the charade and uncover the truth.

## RAMROD

PL12

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	8	<b>Fighting</b>	8
<b>Stamina</b>	2	<b>Intellect</b>	0
<b>Agility</b>	4	<b>Awareness</b>	1
<b>Dexterity</b>	4	<b>Presence</b>	0

### Powers

**Enhanced Body:** Immunity 2 (Chemical), Impervious Protection 6 • 14 points

**Immovable:** Enhanced Athletics 18, Limited to Resisting Push, Trip, or Throw Attempts • 6 points

**Power Lifting:** Enhanced Strength 5, Limited to Lifting • 5 points

**Ramrod Baton:** Array (11 points), Easily Removable (-6 points)

**High-Speed Slam:** Strength-Based Damage 7, Reach 4 • 11 points

• **High-Speed Clothesline:** Affliction 7 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Incapacitated), Reach 4 • 1 points

• **High-Speed Pole Vault:** Leaping 4, Limited to While at Speed 3 or More • 1 point

• **High-Speed Trip:** Cumulative Affliction 7 (Resisted by Dodge; Vulnerable, Prone), Reach 4, Limited Degree • 1 points

**Super-Running:** Speed 6 (120 mph) • 6 points

### Advantages

Great Endurance, Evasion 2, Gambler 2, Improved Critical 3 (High-Speed Slam), Improved Initiative 2, Instant Up, Move-By Action, Takedown

### Skills

Acrobatics 10 (+14), Athletics 2 (+10), Expertise: Electronics 4 (+4), Expertise: Gambling 6 (+6), Expertise: Science 4 (+4), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+5), Stealth 6 (+10), Technology 4 (+4), Vehicles 2 (+6)

### Offense

Initiative +12

High-Speed Clothesline +8 Affliction 7, Reach 4

High-Speed Slam +8 Close Damage 15, Reach 4

High-Speed Trip +8 Affliction 7, Cumulative, Reach 4

Unarmed +8 Close Damage 8

### Defense

Dodge 12 Fortitude 7

Parry 8 Toughness 8

Will 4

### Power Points

Abilities	54	Skills	21
Powers	39	Defenses	16
Advantages	13	Total	143

### Complications

**There Can Be Only One!**: Ramrod cannot abide the existence of other speedsters. He will go to extraordinary lengths (including those that put his mission in jeopardy) to remove them from the situation (preferably by killing them) by any means required.

**Real Name:** Unknown

**Aliases:** None

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** Unknown, but looks to be in his early 30s

**Height:** 5 feet, 8 in

**Weight:** 220 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** Woohoo! It's like bowling for wimps!

**Occupation:** Really fast criminal

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Slightly handsome and sporting a shaven head, Ramrod is an African-American with rippling muscles. His relatively short height gives him a squat appearance despite his lean runner's legs. His full-body costume is in CORE's standard blue and white.

## Personality

Ramrod has your typical tough-guy attitude and believes he can take on just about anything. Unlike most bullies, however, he is not easily intimidated by other strongmen, even those who are stronger than himself. He also considers himself quite the lady's man and frequently hits on Heartache, a course of action that probably won't go at all that well for him, ultimately.

Ramrod won't admit it to anyone, but he does not remember his life before joining CORE. Even trying to think about it causes his mind to become cloudy and lose focus. As such, he very much lives in the now.

## Powers & Abilities

The high-tech staff of unknown origin from which Ramrod gains his name is never far from hand. The staff is collapsible to about the size of a short flashlight. It can be made to be completely rigid for combat or, with the flip of a switch, it extends to become a little over twenty feet long and surprisingly flexible for use in pole vaulting (an especially handy thing to do while moving at super-speed.)

In combat, this aggressive speedster likes to bounce himself off of weaker opponents, or will "clothesline" them with his deadly ramrod staff as he makes a high-speed pass. He also enjoys using his staff to joust with other speedsters, to trip up strongmen, and to pole vault his enemies only to land behind them for a surprise, rear attack.

Ramrod is a very imaginative combatant and usually takes the point in any mission.

## Allies

Ramrod jokes around with most other Elite members, but usually in a very aggressive way. Aside from CORE, however, he does not seem to make contact with anyone at all.

## Enemies

This villain is offended by the existence of any other speedsters for some reason, and will go out of his way to remove them from the fight as soon as possible.

## Background

Nobody knows for certain who Ramrod is or how he got his powers—sometimes it seems even he doesn't know, although he claims that it simply a matter of nobody's business but his own. Ramrod was only recently hired into CORE's ranks, seemingly out of the blue without anybody having previously heard of him. This leads many to believe he may have been sent by Center to keep an eye on the organization's other metahumans.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Ramrod into their game.

### *I Remember it All!*

Somehow, this villain has regained all his lost memories. What this entails for the criminal is entirely up to the Gamemaster. Is he an artificially created, living weapon? Is he the clone of a deceased speedster who has now regained his progenitor's memories? Is he a brainwashed former hero? Was he someone taken off the street and experimented on?

### *Slow the World Down*

Ramrod has found some sort of ancient, arcane object, other-dimensional gadget, or similar item that allows him to rob other speedsters of their abilities and give it to them. Over weeks and months, the rest of the world's speedsters, regardless of where they are, have been incrementally getting slower. At first it was not perceptible, but now they are beginning to take notice.

Despite this occurring, these other speedsters will remain super-fast for quite some time if the slowing of their abilities continues at its current rate (roughly losing 1 rank of their respective Movement power effects every three months.) This is not the real problem, however. Approximately every three months, Ramrod's Super-Running power increases by 1 rank and will continue to do so until no more speedsters retain their power unless the process can be stopped.

# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

REGULATOR		PL11	
<b>Abilities</b>			
<b>Strength</b>	10	<b>Fighting</b>	10
<b>Stamina</b>	6	<b>Intellect</b>	0
<b>Agility</b>	2	<b>Awareness</b>	0
<b>Dexterity</b>	2	<b>Presence</b>	-1
<b>Powers</b>			
<b>High Density Body:</b> Immunity 1 (Disease); Impervious Protection 6, Limited to Energy; Impervious Toughness 6 • 13 points			
<b>Kinetic Absorption:</b> Array (28 points)			
<b>Kinetic Boost:</b> Enhanced Strength 8, Reaction (Sustains Kinetic Impact), Fades, Limited by Absorbed Physical Effect Rank, Slow Fade 4 • 28 points			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Healing Boost:</b> Regeneration 8, Persistent, Reaction (Sustains Kinetic Impact), Sustained, Fades, Limited by Absorbed Physical Effect Rank, Slow Fade 4 • 1 point</li> </ul>			
<b>Super-Strength:</b> Array (20 points)			
<b>Shockwave:</b> Burst Area 2 [60 ft.] Affliction 10 (Resisted by Dodge, Overcome by Fortitude; Dazed and Vulnerable, Stunned and Prone), Extra Condition, Limited Degree, Limited to Targets on the Ground • 20 points			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Power Lifting:</b> Enhanced Strength 8, Limited to Lifting • 1 point</li> <li>• <b>Thunderclap:</b> Burst Area Affliction 10 (Resisted by Fortitude, Overcome by Fortitude; Dazed and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Stunned), Extra Condition, Limited Degree • 1 point</li> <li>• <b>Cracking the Whip:</b> Line Area 2 [60 ft.] Affliction 9 (Resisted by Dodge, Overcome by Fortitude; Dazed and Vulnerable, Prone and Stunned), Extra Condition, Limited Degree, Limited to Targets on an Appropriate Surface • 1 point</li> </ul>			
<b>Advantages</b>			
All-Out Attack, Diehard, Great Endurance, Power Attack, Taunt			
<b>Skills</b>			
Acrobatics 2 (+4), Athletics 4 (+14), Deception 8 (+7), Expertise: Business 2 (+2), Expertise: Chemistry 6 (+6),			

Expertise: Metahuman 4 (+4), Expertise: Soldier (AWE) 4 (+4), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+4), Expertise: Tactics 4 (+4), Technology 6 (+6), Vehicles 2 (+4)

## Offense

Initiative +2

Cracking the Whip Line Area Affliction 9

Shockwave Burst Area Affliction 10

Unarmed +10 Close Damage 10

## Defense

Dodge	7	Fortitude	14
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Parry	10	Toughness	12 */6
		Will	5

\* Versus Energy.

## Power Points

Abilities	58	Skills	23
Powers	65	Defenses	18
Advantages	5	Total	169

## Complications

**High Density:** Regulator's abilities arise from his much-enhanced density, giving him a mass 4 ranks higher than is the norm for a person his size. For every 4 ranks his Strength increases via his Kinetic Boost power, his mass increases by 1 rank.

**Vulnerable to Psionics:** Increase all ranks for powers with the Psychic descriptor used against Regulator by half.

**Real Name:** Robert O'Sheanne

**Aliases:** Rodney Burns

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** 32

**Height:** 6 feet, 3 in

**Weight:** 610 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** You've been warned, now you'll be regulated.

**Occupation:** None

**Base:** None

## Appearance

O'Sheanne has a finely-cropped, red mustache with shoulder length, fiery hair. His green eyes stare out from deep sockets set above hard, angular cheekbones that enhance the menacing aura of this huge figure. His costume is styled in the blue and white of CORE.

## Personality

He is a vicious man who delights in hurting and bullying others. He has no problem with harming or killing innocents, and will do so readily to suit his needs. He prefers to act alone, and vocally considers the other metahumans in CORE's employ to be inferior second stringers.

## Powers & Abilities

Already extremely strong, Regulator absorbs kinetic energy from physical blows (e.g., explosions, punches, bullets), alternatively increasing his own might or healing himself by 1 rank per rank of the kinetic effect used against him.

When fighting a band of super-heroes, Regulator will immediately seek out any fellow muscle heads and taunt them into attacking him, allowing him to absorb their blows and boost his own strength or heal himself. He will avoid any magic users and foes with long ranged attacks, usually tossing nearby cars and rubble at them to keep them at bay. His primary targets are always known psychics, which he will attempt to kill as quickly as possible.

## Allies

A real loner, Regulator considers no one to be his friend. His loyalty extends only so far as his employer's bank accounts will allow, and no further.

## Enemies

Regulator considers all psychics to be his enemies, even those who work for CORE. The way he figures it, even a current ally is a potential opponent, so they are not to be trusted, and he doesn't even permit them to get any closer than absolutely necessary.

This villain is known to hold grudges, and will typically seek revenge on anyone who defeats him in a fight, especially if he perceives the victor to be a weakling.

## Background

A muscular powerhouse and ex-soldier, Robert O'Sheanne was an up-and-coming (if notoriously bru-

tal) underground pit fighter struck by tragedy. An unlucky punch during a match caused him to suffer a severe concussion and brain hemorrhage that nearly killed him. When he pulled through the ordeal, Robert found his surgeon had used him as a guinea pig to test experimental brain surgery techniques and pharmaceutical treatments, resulting in the unexpected side-effect of Robert's new powers. He immediately thanked both the doctor and, later, the opponent who had landed the ill-fated blow to his head, with super-strength driven killing blows.

Now a wanted criminal in his native Scotland, Robert destroyed two full teams of British anti-metahuman agents before being found and recruited by CORE. It did not take long for the organization to harness O'Sheanne's anger and violent tendencies, shaping him into their chief enforcer.

Regulator is now undisputedly one of the most physically dangerous super-villains in the world and has thousands of deaths on his hands, a few dozen of which are super-heroes that got in his way.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Regulator into their game.

### *Unregulated Powerhouse*

Something has happened to Regulator, destabilizing the pharmaceutical cocktail that gave him his powers and still flows through his blood. As a result, his powers are increasingly spinning out of control, making him uncontrollably strong and incredibly heavy. Now, it seems, he cannot so much as walk without the kinetic energy resulting from his foot hitting the ground being absorbed and channeled into his might. What's more, his ability to heal himself automatically activates with each impact!

As he keeps getting stronger and heavier, he becomes a deadlier weapon—his mere steps crack roads and crumble bridges. Not knowing what to do with him, CORE has pointed Regulator at the capitol and told him to have fun. Will the heroes find a way to stop this villain and uncover a way to reverse his power mutations?

### *The Metahuman Fighting League*

Having grown bored, Regulator has signed on to a recent, highly illegal operation: the Metahuman Fighting League.

The MFL arranges one-on-one fights between super-powered combatants, sometimes to the death, as part of illegal webcasts. Secure, dynamic websites host the broadcasts and take online bets. Much like their websites, the MFL's operation is constantly on the move, never hosting a fight in the same place twice as a matter of security.

Since Regulator has joined, numerous fights that were not meant to be death matches have resulted in his opponent's final appearance. The uproar and cry for something to be done about this brutal, illegal sport has become so loud that politicians are scrambling to jump on the bandwagon of outrage. They are all quick to blame the outclassed police for not finding and stopping the underground organization. As such, a police contact approaches the heroes to go undercover, find and stop the MFL, and bring in Regulator.

## MASTERS, INC.

Masters Inc., an international conglomerate owned by the paradoxical Maxwell Masters, is a corporation with a checkered past. Although it and its many subsidiaries are often lauded for their many scientific breakthroughs and charitable donations—much to mankind's benefit—the name, Masters Inc. is equally referred to when the topic of corporate corruption, industrial abuse and misconduct, and unethical pursuits are spoken of.

The good this web of companies does is usually attributed to the parent company and its chairmen and founder, Masters himself. A very tidy paper trails always leave responsibility for its misdeeds and shame at someone else's feet. After all, how can someone as busy as Maxwell Masters keep an eye on all his tens of thousands of employees and hundreds of companies? That's why he hires managers and the like. Can he be blamed if the people he employs sometimes turn out to be untrustworthy?

According to the courts and voice of popular opinion, the answer is "no," time and again.

Aside from its above-board, legitimate operations, Masters Inc. is the heart of a criminal empire. This organization employs bureaucracy and legal loopholes to get the work done like gangsters of old used to employ broken legs and Tommy guns. Masters would never dirty his hands with anything so petty as racketeering or other illegitimate endeavors that occupy the Mafia's

### Masters Inc. Expertise: Business / Metahuman Check

DC	Example
10	Knowing Maxwell Masters owns Masters Inc.
15	Being able to identify one of Master Inc.'s well-known subsidiaries.
20	Being able to identify one of Master Inc.'s lesser-known subsidiaries.
25	Knowing Masters Inc. is involved with criminal activity.

time, though—such crimes are beneath his goals and capabilities. Instead, Masters utilizes his vast resources to influence global political and social changes that favor his businesses and long-term goal of being the faceless power behind as many thrones as possible.

The sort of crimes Maxwell Masters undertakes through the many strands of his corporate web include, but are not limited to, starting brushfire wars to peripherally increase the value of his rare commodities (such as oil and diamonds), selling weapons to these same warring parties for profit and to field test new designs (including those of a biological and chemical nature), financially supporting tyrannical and even genocidal governments that enact policies in his favor, conducting inhumane and illegal experiments on and to create metahumans, and so on.

Masters is himself carefully insulated from all such activities, of course.

Some of Masters Inc.'s more notable subsidiaries that have been known to become entangled with the law and various super-heroes include:

### ASTROXENO CORP.

Publicly, Astroxeno Corp., based out of Houston, is a research and design company with labs around the country operating in the aerospace industry, especially with regards to working with NASA and private space agencies. Some of their more notable projects include exploring new (and often theoretical) types of propulsion, designing new space shuttles, satellites and probes, and astronomical studies.

Secretly, this company is also the government's "go-to" civilian contractor when it comes to dealing with alien relations. The company employs linguists, psychologists, and sociologists who specialize in alien

The presented organization statistics are for Masters, Inc., as an independent corporation. Any one of its varied subsidiaries may (and almost certainly will) have very different statistics that suit their nature and purpose.

**PL:** 18

**Leadership:** Dictatorship (although nominally a council)

**Intellect 7, Awareness 10, Presence 10**

**Will 15**

**Skills:** Deception 12 (+22), Expertise: Business 12 (+19), Expertise: Current Events 7 (+17), Expertise: Electronics 12 (+19), Expertise: Engineering 10 (+17), Expertise: History 6 (+13), Expertise: Law 14 (+21), Expertise: Mechanics 12 (+19), Expertise: Tactics 10 (+17), Intimidation 8 (+18), Investigation 10 (+17), Perception 12 (+22), Persuasion 15 (+25), Technology 14 (+21), Stealth 10 (+17)

**Advantages:** Benefit 5 (Wealth), Connected 8 (P: Business; S: Criminal, Espionage, Justice System, Law Enforcement, Military, Terrorist, World Governments), Contacts 8 (P: Business; S: Criminal, Espionage, Justice System, Law Enforcement, Military, Terrorist, World Governments), Equipment 10 (Headquarters), Equipment 10 (Vehicles), Minion 47, Mole Network 4, Secure 2 (Hostile Takeover, Whistle Blowing), Well-Informed

**Members:** Minion 15 (5-pt Uh Huh Employees, x 16,000), Minion 15 (25-pt Scientist, x 1,000), Militant 17 (45-pt Security Guard, x 250)

**Vehicles:** Equipment 10 (10-pt Fleet Vehicles, x 250)

**Headquarters:** Equipment 10 (30-pt, x 16)

**Legally Bound:** Masters, Inc. is (supposedly) bound by the laws of the various nations within which the company and its subsidiaries operate.

**Totals** Abilities 54 + Advantages 95 + Skills 82 + Defenses 5 = 236



cultures (both real and theoretical). Astroxeno has also created and maintains a paramilitary team (known as AASPs—Alien Assessment Strike Personnel) of ready-response personnel with training and equipment for tackling and containing alien threats, preferably without public knowledge.

The company is also often tapped to examine and reverse engineer alien technology the government acquires. Even the government is not aware of all of Astroxeno's activities, however.

Masters has held back data from the government when examining alien technology, filtering such findings to his other companies, which then claim to make breakthrough discoveries that can be patented for millions. Astroxeno has also sought out and contained aliens in secret, without government knowledge, which they have then experimented on and even killed in order to dissect. Several times this has resulted in break-outs that put civilian lives in jeopardy.

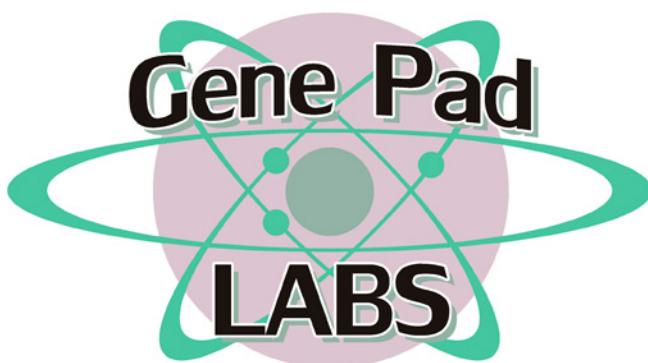
## Astroxeno Corp. Expertise: Business / Metahuman Check

DC	Example
10	Knowing Astroxeno Corp. is owned by Masters Inc.
15	Being able to name a project Astroxeno was publicly involved with.
20	Knowing Astroxeno contracts to the government regarding projects involving extraterrestrials.
25	Being aware that Astroxeno operates the AASP teams.

## GENEPAD LABS

Genepad Labs owns several cutting-edge genetics labs around the country, with a few lesser known sites in South American and African countries with less restrictive scientific ethic regulations. Publicly, the company is conducting medical research for the betterment of mankind through gene therapy, but in the past decade it has been charged well over a dozen times with conducting illegal experiments pertaining to metahumans. There were only ever two convictions.

Aside from projects employing various approaches to creating (mostly illegal) metahumans in the lab for military use (and not always for friendly militaries), Genepad Labs has undertaken government contracts to study metahumans in order to develop ways to counter such beings. The results have ranged from restraints and cells designed to negate powers or superhuman strength to developing weaponized biological agents that target mutant metahuman genes.



### Genepad Labs Expertise: Business / Metahuman Check

DC	Example
10	Knowing Genepad Labs is owned by Masters Inc.
15	Being able to identify a medical breakthrough Genepad Labs is publicly known for.
20	Knowing Genepad Labs has been fined and otherwise sanctioned for illegal experiments.
25	Knowing Genepad Labs' experiments have resulted in metahuman criminals.

## LEGION DEFENSE DESIGNS

Holding many defense contracts, LDD is an up and coming designer and manufacturer of high-tech weapon systems, ranging from hand-held energy small arms to WMD satellites.

Headquartered in Nevada, LDD made its name by designing several "brick-buster" weapons. These devices were used by the military in arresting (and, in one case, killing) several notorious super-villains known for their brute strength and ability to soak up punishment.

Unbeknownst to its legitimate clientele, LDD also works hard at developing deadly and cheap weapons that are funneled to warring, embargoed nations for testing and profit. Several times, investigations and heroes have found ties between LDD and such illicit activity, but nothing has ever stuck.



### LDD Expertise: Business / Metahuman Check

DC	Example
10	Knowing LDD is owned by Masters Inc.
15	Identifying a publicly known project LDD has worked on for the government.
20	Identifying a project LDD has worked on for the government that is not widely known to the public.
25	Being aware of LDD's illegal weapons dealing activities.

## ZERO SOLUTIONS

A think tank that draws on the best and the brightest from the world over, Zero Solutions contracts to governments and corporations alike from its base of operations in London, England.

Most of Zero Solutions' contracts involve politics and social issues ranging from longitudinal crime statistic trend projections for the purpose of developing law enforcement strategies to examining medical data in anticipation of humanity's next evolutionary step. Zero Solutions has received many awards and accolades for its professional achievements and strides to better humanity. Behind the curtain, Zero Solution has a far more lucrative—if illegal—trade in the works.

By sectioning projects so no one group is able to grasp the big picture (or go to the authorities), Zero Solutions offers its services to unethical global powers, criminal organizations, and super-villains. Projects commonly undertaken for such customers include developing plans for conquest, devising how to undertake a masterful crime and get away with it, or to calculate the defeat of an especially troublesome hero.



### Zero Solutions Expertise: Business / Metahuman Check

DC	Example
10	Knowing Zero Solutions is owned by Masters Inc.
15	Knowing Zero Solutions is a think tank that works for governments, as well as private citizens and corporations.
20	Being able to name a project Zero Solutions publicly contributed to.
25	Knowing Zero Solutions has worked upon illegal and illicit projects.

### MAXWELL MASTERS

PL10

#### Abilities

Strength	0	Fighting	3
Stamina	0	Intellect	7
Agility	1	Awareness	4
Dexterity	1	Presence	7

#### Powers

**Super-Device:** Variable 10 (Tech Devices), Device Design and Construction Checks Required \*, Slow • 50 points

\* The super-device is not otherwise limited in the manner normal devices are

#### Advantages

Benefit (Alternate Identity), Benefit 5 (Wealth), Connected 3 (P: Business; S: Criminal Underworld, Politics), Contacts 3 (P: Business; S: Criminal Underworld, Politics), Ear to the Ground 3 (Business, Criminal Underworld, Politics), Jack-of-all-Trades, Languages 3 (Cantonese, Greek, Japanese, Latin), Organization 16, Teamwork, Well-Informed

#### Skills

Deception 10 (+17), Expertise: Business 10 (+17), Expertise: Current Events 8 (+12), Expertise: Electronics 10 (+17), Expertise: History 8 (+15), Expertise: Law 10 (+17), Expertise: Tactics 12 (+19), Expertise: Theology & Philosophy (AWE/INT) 6 (+10/+13), Insight 8 (+12), Investigation 4 (+11), Perception 4 (+8), Persuasion 10 (+17), Technology 6 (+13)

#### Offense

Initiative +1

Unarmed +3      Close Damage 0

#### Defense

Dodge	7	Fortitude	4
Parry	7	Toughness	0

Will 10

#### Power Points

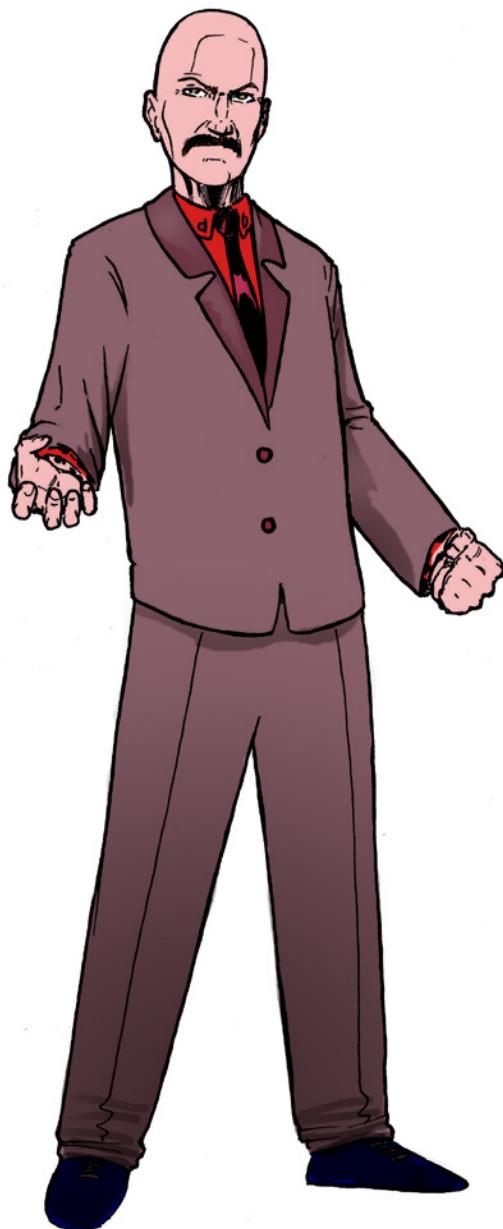
Abilities	46	Skills	53
Powers	50	Defenses	20
Advantages	37	Total	206

# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

## Complications

**Egomaniacal:** Maxwell Masters possesses an incorporeal ego. Granted, his feelings about himself are typically reinforced by his many successes and overall competency, but it also leads him to frequently underestimate opponents.

**Megalomaniac:** No matter how soft a façade this man assumes, to his core he is a power-hungry dictator who craves world domination. Cautious and careful though he may be to conceal this fact, the truth still leaks out to those observant enough to know how to spot it.



**Real Name:** Maxwell Masters

**Threat Level:** Alpha (Epsilon as head of Masters, Inc.)

**Aliases:** None

**Age:** 38

**Height:** 6 feet, 1 in

**Weight:** 185 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** To truly be a master of one's fate, one must be a master of all one sees.

**Occupation:** Multinational CEO

**Base:** Various corporate headquarters

## Appearance

Maxwell Masters looks like the man he is: powerful. He stands tall and straight, and always adorns himself in "power" business suits of the finest and most expensive kind. He exudes the sort of confidence that can only come with the power Masters wields.

## Personality

Masters is a power-mad megalomaniac whose sole goal is control over the planet, first by being the man behind the power and eventually by openly lording over all he surveys. He is careful to maintain the false face of a law-abiding, socially conscious businessman who believes in giving back to the community. Behind this facade, he is a selfish egomaniac with no qualms about stepping over (or on) anyone to get what he wants.

## Powers & Abilities

This incomparable businessman has no metahuman abilities, but possesses enough wealth to hire villains (or even armies) to do his bidding, if need be. He does, however, have a habit of tinkering with powerful devices he hides somewhere reachable as part of his contingency against failure.

## Allies

Countless government agencies, politicians, corporate heads, non-profit organizations, and other private citizens believe they can count Maxwell Masters as their friend (or at least a contact to be called upon if need be.) This has enabled Masters to collect a great many favors from extremely powerful men and women.

## Enemies

Not everyone is fooled by Masters and the façade he maintains for the public. Some people—both ordinary and extraordinary—have taken note of the evil his companies have done or realize who is behind the disappearance of loved ones. The problem is, always, proving it.

## Background

A globe-spanning conglomerate, Masters Inc. is chaired by one of the world's richest, most powerful men: Maxwell Masters. Although a ruthless businessman, Masters is also a well-known philanthropist who purchases the world's good will with properly sized donations to the correct charity at just the right time.

To the average person, Maxwell Masters is a paradox. He is a driven, vicious businessman who lets nothing get in the way of sealing the deal, who will then turn around and sponsor medical research, open orphanages, and so on. He's also been known to put the full weight of his many corporations to pressure political powers to step back from the brink of war.

But it is all a carefully crafted façade.

Born from poverty in London's back alleys and now one of the planet's most influential people, Maxwell Masters is both a bane and inspiration to millions of people. Since a child, Masters has clawed his way up from the bottom rungs of society, burying or buying off anyone who knows where the bodies were kept. Now, only those who are too deep in his pocket to dare do anything and himself know the full, sordid truth of his life's story.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Maxwell Masters and Masters, Inc. into their game.

### *Evil Eye in the Sky*

Legion Defense Designs has recently completed a project it undertook on behalf of the US Air Force. The purpose? To create the ultimate spy satellite that would intercept and decipher the electrical transmission that ultimately represent people's thoughts rather than capturing anything so mundane as photos or radio transmissions.

Soon after the satellite's launch (which was secret—it wouldn't do for the world to know what the US military

was up to), the satellite's controls were somehow hacked and taken over by an unknown third party. Equally mysterious is how this unknown party has managed to alter the satellite's technology. It now not only receives thought patterns, but can project them, granting the offenders the ability to control minds from space!

The satellite's broadcast is capable of spanning entire city blocks at a time, allowing the device's new owners to command average citizens going about their lives to wreak havoc upon their homes and neighbors. There is no telling where the satellite will focus this devastating power if it is not stopped and the perpetrator discovered.

### *The One That Got Away*

An alien life form that had been captured by an Astroxeno Corp AASP team at the American government's request has escaped from the facility where it was under observation. Depending on what is going on in the game at the time, the player characters may encounter this fugitive as it rampages across the countryside, or may help hide the innocent being (perhaps creating an opportunity to introduce a new character.)

### *A Sovereign Corporation*

An opportunity has arisen for Masters, Inc. to finally step out from behind the curtain somewhat and move to the next stage of the company's primary shareholder's plans. A small, island nation struggling under the weight of its impoverishment has taken the extraordinary step of offering itself up for sale.

Currently, Masters, Inc. is the top contender to make the purchase.

If Masters, Inc. manages to buy its own country, it will be able to create and enforce laws by means of corporate vote rather than a just, democratic process. The company will also enjoy the benefits of the protection afforded by international laws, and will legally be able to begin forming its own army.

As heroes who have come to learn of the evil this company represents, and of its head's nefarious goal of world domination, it is up to the player characters to ensure this does not happen.

## SOLO VILLAINS

This section's purpose is simple: to provide you with some villains that make use of what this product has to offer. This includes the new game mechanics and archetypes, or merely the many suggestions on building interesting bad guys.

THE CRAFTSMAN		PL3
<b>Abilities</b>		
<b>Strength</b>	0	<b>Fighting</b> 3
<b>Stamina</b>	1	<b>Intellect</b> 11
<b>Agility</b>	1	<b>Awareness</b> 3
<b>Dexterity</b>	1	<b>Presence</b> 3

### Equipment

Various tools and weapons, as needed. Always wears a bulletproof vest in public or when with clients.

**Headquarters:** The Shop • 104 points

**Size** Huge; **Spaces** 33 \* of 64; **Tou** 14, **Features:** Automation (Maintenance; 0), Basic Communications (0), Encrypted Communications 3 (DC 35; 0), Global Communications (0), Basic Computer (0), Advanced Computer 6 (+10; 1), Cosmetic Concealed 4 (DC 35; 0), Electronic Concealed 4 (DC +25; 0), Defense System 10 (100 points, Lethal and Nonlethal; 1), Drones (Robots; 1), Electronic Counter-Measures 10 (-20; 0), Escape Tunnel 2 (DC 25; 0), Fire Prevention System 3 (Nullify 9; 0), Garage (Contains 16 Spaces worth; 14), Holding Cells 3 (Tou 26; 1), Intelligent 3 (Cobbler AI, pg 265; 1), Inventor Lab 5 (Any Combination of Traits up to 25 points; 1), Isolated (Island; 0), Basic Laboratory 4 (+6; 1), Library (1), Luxury Living Space (1), Motor Pool 2 (0), Power System (Geo-Thermal w/Backup; 3), Security System 4 (DC 35; 0), Self-Destruct (0), Untraceable 3 (-12; 0), Vault 7 (DC 35, Tou 29; 1), Workshop 4 (Expertise: Engineering +6; 6); **Complications:** Accessible Bowels

\* This includes the benefits of Micro-Architect; leftover Space represents open caverns where pre-fabricated building units may be constructed

### Advantages

Benefit 3 (Wealth), Connected 3 (P: Criminal; S: Government, Super-Hero), Contacts 3 (P: Criminal; S: Government, Super-Hero), Equipment 4, Headquarters 21 (The

Shop), Inventor, Jack-Of-All-Trades, Languages 3 (Cantonese, English, Italian, Spanish), Micro-Architect 2, Minion 14 (150-pt BuildBots; x 16), Rapid Builder 3 (Expertise: Engineering), Skill Adept 3 (Expertise: Engineering)

### Skills

Deception 8 (+11), Expertise: Architect 15 (+26), Expertise: Chemistry 10 (+21), Expertise: Electronics 15 (+26), Expertise: Engineering 15 (+26), Expertise: Mechanics 15 (+26), Expertise: Robotics 8 (+19), Expertise: Science 14 (+25), Expertise: Visual Arts (DEX/INT) 8 (+9/+19), Persuasion 10 (+13), Technology 10 (+21), Vehicles 4 (+5)

### Offense

Initiative +1/-3

Tool +3 Close Damage 1

Unarmed +3 Close Damage 0

### Defense

Dodge	6	Fortitude	5
Parry	5	Toughness	4/1*

\* Without Bulletproof Vest.

### Power Points

Abilities	46	Skills	66
Powers	0	Defenses	14
Advantages	61	Total	187

### Complications

**Incompetent (Strength):** The Craftsman is not able to use Strength skills unskilled, and cannot make a routine check when using any Strength skill.

**Indecisive:** The Craftsman has difficulty making decisions and acting earnestly in a confrontation, requiring a Will resistance check whenever initiative is to be rolled (the Gamemaster determines the DC based on the situation.) Failure imposes a -4 penalty to initiative.

**Real Name:** William Grosser

**Aliases:** The Blacksmith

**Threat Level:** Beta

**Age:** 56

**Height:** 5 feet, 4 in

## Craftsman Expertise: Metahuman Checks

### DC Example

- 10 Knowing the Craftsman makes headquarters and lairs for metahumans.
- 15 Knowing the Craftsman doesn't work for villains alone.
- 20 Knowing how to get in touch with the Craftsman to take on project.
- 25 Recognizing similarities between the Craftsman's technology and that of Blacksmith.

**Weight:** 194 lbs

**Native Language:** German

**Typical Quote:** I told Dr. Deathdealer the subatomic negator doorbells would have paid for themselves in dead heroes, but would the cheapskate listen to me? Nope. That's why he's in jail.

**Occupation:** Criminal Architect

**Base:** The Shop

### Appearance

Grosser is a short, balding man with a bushy peppered mustache below tiny, round glasses. If one didn't know of his dark past, he could easily be described as having a kind, portly "teddy-bearish" look about him. As the Craftsman, Grosser doesn't even want his clients knowing his real identity, so he typically wears a simple workman's jumpsuit with a face-mask and voice modulator.

### Personality

A true "old fart," as he likes to refer to himself, the fact that the Craftsman is now in his twilight years has not mellowed his "down-to-business" nature when it comes to getting a job done. Nor has his age lessened his greed. Incredibly wealthy though he already may be, he continues to seek work to grow his "retirement fund."

Despite enjoying playing the role of the crotchety, sometimes-forgetful

old man (and being a former super-villain), the Craftsman is not truly evil. Still, he will freely turn a blind eye to it so long as a customer pays him appropriately. In his own way, the Craftsman is an honorable and loyal man who will not betray a trust or go back on his word (although he is not beyond going around it sideways.)

### Powers & Abilities

The Craftsman has no metahuman abilities, but has an incomparable capacity for architecture, design, and construction when it comes to developing and building structures ideally suited to metahumans. This goes for villains and heroes alike, as long as their money is good.

With his trademark "BuildBots," the Craftsman travels the world (and sometimes beyond) constructing headquarters to meet his clients' needs. Total confidentiality is assured, and nothing short of mind control can force Grosser to betray a client's trust, even in the face of his own death.

He carries out his designs and contracts from deep under his island home from a massive facility he has simply named "the Shop." The Shop is also where the Craftsman builds and tests his latest inventions before manufacturing them for distribution to clients.

### Allies

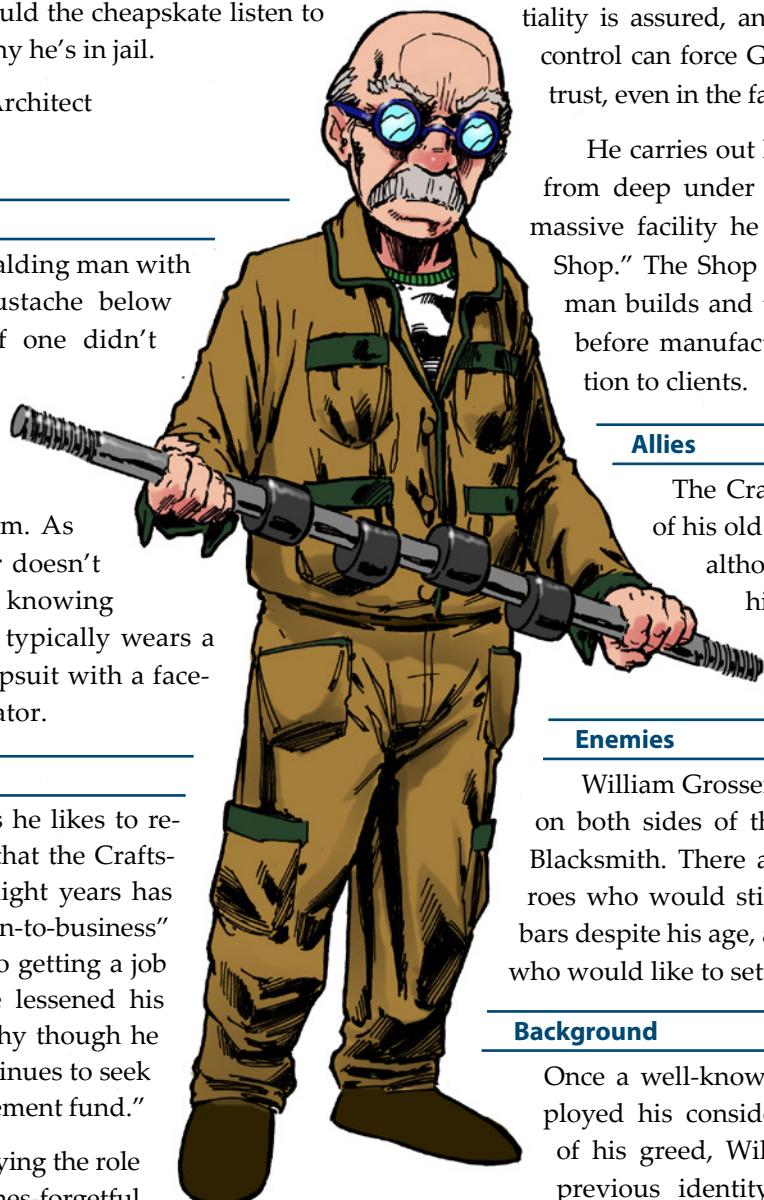
The Craftsman still counts some of his old criminal friends as allies, although none are aware of his new identity—they all believe he, the Blacksmith, has retired.

### Enemies

William Grosser still has several enemies on both sides of the law from his days as Blacksmith. There are governments and heroes who would still like to see him behind bars despite his age, and there are also villains who would like to settle old scores.

### Background

Once a well-known super-villain who employed his considerable genius in pursuit of his greed, William Grosser retired his previous identity of Blacksmith over a



decade ago. So far as international law enforcement is concerned, has retired to a small, private island in the Caribbean from which he cannot be extradited. In truth, however, William has merely shifted the focus from being an active villain to a facilitator while operating under the new nom de plume, Craftsman.

Although law enforcement agencies the world over know the Craftsman has been offering his services to any villain (or hero) who can pay the prices he demands for his services, none have yet to draw a connection to the retired Blacksmith. A combination of body doubles, beyond state-of-the-art holograms, and the like are all used to convince anyone keeping an eye on William Grosser that the supposedly reformed criminal is always at home whenever the Craftsman is suspected of operating elsewhere.

And just what is it that the Craftsman does that has law enforcement and intelligence agencies turning over every stone to find him? He supplies other villains with high-tech gear and weapons, but specializes in constructing made-to-specifications headquarters, all for a fee matching his top-notch services.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Craftsman into their game.

### *Blacksmith II*

Most people believe the original Blacksmith to be retired, not knowing William Grosser has set up shop as the Craftsmen. In his days as Blacksmith, Grosser committed many crimes using his ingenious gadgets, but he had rules. For example, he never used more violence than was necessary, and he was wary of collateral damage and bystanders—especially when children were involved. Someone has now come along to pick up his legacy, but does not seem to share his thief's code, however.

Using devices that appear to be updated and improved versions of Blacksmith's original gadgets, a new villain has come onto the scene using the same name and wearing a costume that is undeniably an evolution of Grosser's original getup. Unlike his predecessor, though, this second Blacksmith has no compunctions about harming the innocent during the course of his crimes. Indeed, this exceedingly violent criminal seems to put bystanders' safety in jeopardy as part of his strategies.

Grosser is infuriated that anyone would take up his mantle and commit atrocities while using his former name. He cannot abide the association to himself or his previous deeds. As such, his Craftsman persona has reached out to the heroes to stop the criminal (perhaps because they are former clients?), although he cannot say why without giving away his true identity.

In exchange for their aid, the Craftsman promises to provide some additions to the heroes' headquarters for free (or build them a basic one if they do not yet possess such a facility.)

### *The Shopping List*

The Craftsman has been hired to construct an incomparable element for a villain's headquarters. Just what this may be is up to the Gamemaster, but it does not bode well for the world if it is completed. The heroes catch on to the installation's ongoing construction because of a rash of crimes around the world that seem unrelated except for the fact that they all involve one or more unbelievably rare (or even unique) materials or artifacts.

The reason no other similarities exist between the crimes is because the Craftsman has outsourced stealing the materials he needs to complete the project to freelance villains, each of which has their own methods of operation. However, the heroes should begin to notice a pattern in what is being taken that will lead them to the conclusion that something insidious is being built somewhere. This realization should be enough to put them on the right track to figuring out what else is needed to finish the project, and perhaps safeguard the last components before they too are stolen.

### *The Little Black Book*

The Craftsman's infamous "little black book" (in actuality, an unbelievably encrypted computer tablet) contains all the details on his dealings with previous and existing clients. This means all information regarding delivery dates, account numbers, build locations, and facility schematics of who knows how many supervillains (and heroes) is found within its memory.

Unfortunately, someone has stolen this invaluable treasure from the Craftsman's vault. Now, the installations he has built are mysteriously being destroyed the world over—their weaknesses easily exploited and security effortlessly circumvented—often with the occupants still inside. Not only is the Craftsman horrified that someone has stolen and then accessed his most

confidential records, but the damage being done to his reputation (not to mention his customer base) shall be irreparable if something is not done fast.

Through an intermediary, the heroes are somehow put onto the scent of this unknown party who is killing heroes and villains alike. The Craftsman will covertly keep an eye on their progress, waiting for the moment where the perpetrator's identity is uncovered so he can enact his revenge and recover his prized possession.

## COBBLER A.I.

### PL5 MINIONS • 45 POINTS

**Abilities** Str —, Sta —, Agl —, Dex 0, Fgt 0, Int 4, Awe 2, Pre 0

**Powers** Software: Immunity 30 (Fortitude Effects)

**Advantages** Eidetic Memory, Fearless

**Skills** Expertise: Architect 8 (+12), Expertise: Electronics 10 (+14), Expertise: Engineering 10 (+14), Expertise: Mechanics 8 (+12), Technology 10 (+4)

**Defense** Dodge Immobile, Parry Immobile, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 0, Will 10

**Totals** Abilities -18 + Powers 30 + Advantages 2 + Skills 23 + Defenses 8 = 45

## BUILDBOTS

### PL9 MINIONS • 148 POINTS

**Abilities** Str 7, Sta —, Agl 1, Dex 0, Fgt 2, Int -5, Awe 1, Pre 1

**Powers** Armor (Protection 8); Construct (Immunity 60 [Fortitude Effects, Will Effects]); Digging (Burrowing 4); Heavy Lifter (Enhanced Strength 8, Limited to Lifting); Large (Growth 4, Innate, Permanent); Laser Welder (Line Area Damage 10, Precise, Sustained)

**Skills** Expertise: Electronics 11 (+6), Expertise: Engineering 13 (+8), Expertise: Mechanics 12 (+7)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Laser Welder +2 (Line Area Damage 10), Unarmed+2 (Close Damage 7)

**Defense** Dodge 1, Parry 2, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 12, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -4 + Powers 130 + Skills 18 + Defenses 4 = 148

## THE GAMEMASTER

PL8

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	0	<b>Fighting</b>	5
<b>Stamina</b>	1	<b>Intellect</b>	8
<b>Agility</b>	2	<b>Awareness</b>	5
<b>Dexterity</b>	2	<b>Presence</b>	4

### Powers

**Dungeon Shadows:** Concealment 2 (Normal Vision), Limited to in the Dungeon • 2 points

**Gamemaster's Cloak:** Concealment 8 (All Visual), Blending; Teleport 3, Easy, Extended, Removable (-4 pts) • 16 points

**Spontaneous Traps:** Variable 5 (Traps), Activation (Move Action), Limited to the Dungeon, Slow • 24 points

### Equipment

A variety of weapons and gear comprised of inventions this criminal refers to as his Gamemaster's Gear (see sidebar.)

**Headquarters:** The Dungeon • Up to 100 points

Configuration varies. See sidebar.

### Advantages

Benefits 3 (Wealth), Contacts 2 (P: Criminal Underworld; S: Mercenaries), Distract (Deception), Enduring Inventions 6, Equipment 15, Equipment 20 (Headquarters), Favored Environment (Headquarters), Inventor, Master Trap-Maker, Rapid Builder (Expertise: Engineering

### Skills

Deception 4 (+8), Expertise: Chemistry 12 (+20), Expertise: Electronics 12 (+20), Expertise: Engineering 15 (+23), Expertise: Mechanics 16 (+24), Expertise: Metahumans 12 (+20), Expertise: Popular Culture (AWE) 12 (+17), Expertise: Robotics 8 (+16), Expertise: Science 13 (+21), Expertise: Tactics 8 (+16), Expertise: Traps 8 (+16), Perception 4 (+9), Persuasion 8 (+12), Technology 8 (+16)

### Offense

Initiative +1

Death Dice +2 Burst Area Ranged Damage 6

Lightsword +5 Close Damage 10, Penetrating

Unarmed +5 Close Damage 0

# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

## Defense

Dodge	10/6 *	Fortitude	5
Parry	10/6 *	Toughness	1
		Will	8

\* Without Gamemaster's Screen

## Power Points

Abilities	54	Skills	70
Powers	42	Defenses	12
Advantages	51	Total	229

## Complications

**Awkward:** When placed in social situations he cannot control or define within the fabricated boundaries of his “games,” the Gamemaster is incredibly inept and tongue-tied. He must assume an identity of his own devising (even if only that of the master assassin role-player) if he is to interact with people with any degree of confidence and effectiveness.

**Need for Control:** The Gamemaster views control over himself and his environment as the most valuable things possible. As such, removing control from him—be it by turning a situation of his creation on its head and back at him, or more literally by ensnaring or trapping him—will drive him into a rage and compel him to take revenge.

## Sample Gamemaster Gear

The Gamemaster always carries a number of his geek culture themed inventions upon him for use against his targets and meddling heroes. The following are examples of such items.

**Death Dice:** When rolled or thrown, these twenty-sided dice always come up “20” and then explode immediately thereafter. Burst Area (6 ft.) Ranged Damage 6, Diminished Range -2, Reduced Area -2 • 14 points

**Gamemaster's Screen:** Enhanced Dodge 4, Enhanced Parry 4 • 8 points

**Lightsword:** Damage 10, Penetrating 10 • 20 points

**Real Name:** Gerald Dimsby

**Aliases:** Lucas Skywalker, Elminster Gygax, Clark Wayne, Jim Kirk

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** 42

**Height:** 6 feet, 1 in

**Weight:** 282 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** Oops, was that door trapped? Feeble heroes, as you enter my darkened ten-foot by ten-foot room you see the skeletons of those who came before you. That's when the darkness attacks you, and you seem to be all out of fireballs.

## The Dungeon

A highly-adaptable, modular facility that is intended to kill the Gamemaster's targets in an entertaining way, and can be moved around the world, the Dungeon may be modified to resemble just about any environment. Its master favors configurations taken from iconic “geek culture” television shows, movies, role-playing and video games, and comic books.

When adapting the Dungeon for the needs of killing a particular target, the Gamemaster will always include luxury living quarters, game room, and kitchen for himself. If using living creatures and henchmen, he'll also see to their needs by providing a barracks, mess hall, etc. The rest of the headquarters' Space will be left to the scenario's needs, especially with regards to security and defense systems, and deathtraps.

## Dungeon Inhabitants

The Gamemaster employs a number of henchmen and/or robots disguised as characters, creatures, and items taken from popular geek culture. These servants can include robot dragons, thugs dressed as comic book villains, and so on, deployed as fits the Dungeon's current configuration.

A simple shortcut is to use monster stats, and apply Immunity 30 (Fortitude Effects) and similar abilities to represent them being robotic constructs instead of the actual monsters upon which they are based.

## Gamemaster Expertise: Metahuman Checks

### DC Example

- 10 Knowing the Gamemaster bases his crimes on geek culture.
- 15 Knowing the Gamemaster's real name.
- 20 Being able to name all the Gamemaster's more common items of gear.
- 25 Knowing the Gamemaster is lactose intolerant.

**Occupation:** Assassin

**Base:** The Dungeon

### Appearance

Overweight and sporting a dated, comb-over hairstyle, the Gamemaster usually adorns himself in items and clothing referring popular “geek” culture. These items could be as mundane as a T-shirt related to a popular science-fiction show or as deadly as a movie prop replica that actually works!

### Personality

The Gamemaster is an egomaniacal sociopath who needs to both prove his superiority to and control over others. He does so by creating his imaginary world and drawing others into it as unwilling participants. Despite his need for power over other people, the Gamemaster is actually a gracious loser (“it’s part of playing the game”) if he is beaten properly (although no one says he has to make things easy or play fair—he is a big fan of what he refers to as “Gamemaster’s fiat” to swing things his way.)

### Powers & Abilities

This criminal has no metahuman powers or abilities, but possesses an exceptional intellect and imagination, coupled with an impressive capacity for invention and the skills to go with it. He creates devices, robots, and facilities that suit his idea of a deadly live action role-playing game in order to pursue his objectives. The endless possibilities this opens up makes predicting the Gamemaster’s arsenal difficult.

### Allies

The Gamemaster works alone, except for hiring mercenaries when necessary or robots of his own creation. He has preferred customers—corporations, organized crime bosses, super-villains, and even governments—

who use his services, but that is as close as he comes to having any allies.

### Enemies

This assassin does not have many enemies, per se, so much as he has targets.

His actions are driven by his status as a professional (if extravagant) killer-for-hire, so he rarely takes things personally. However, there are some individuals—heroes and villains alike—who have managed to insult him to the point of gaining his animosity. Furthermore, there are some people and organizations that would like to get their hands on the Gamemaster for killing people who were important to them.

### Background

Having suffered from being noticeably overweight since a young child, Gerald had few friends and was of-



ten singled out to be every bully's favorite target. His torment only got worse once the socially inept youth's startling intelligence became evident. It surprised no one that Gerald turned to the escape provided by pen and paper role-playing games wherein he was afforded the chance to be the strong, handsome hero everyone admired.

As an adult, Gerald's love for acting out the role of someone else—someone whose life was incredibly fantastic, especially when compared to his own—continued to grow. He often organized immense game nights and conventions for local gaming and live-action RPG clubs. He would usually use these opportunities to showcase the amazing robots (often modeled after popular fantasy and science-fiction creatures) he built in his spare time as a robotic engineer for a local toy company.

He became something of a figurehead and folk-hero amongst geek culture. However, when a live-action event he'd arranged in a number of abandoned buildings within a dilapidated neighborhood went horribly wrong, resulting in a pair of accidental deaths, Gerald's life was turned upside down.

Charged with negligence resulting in death and manslaughter, Gerald found himself in jail, once more subjected to a social structure that left him at the bottom and at the whims of bullies. Rather than teaching him any sort of lesson, Gerald's prison time first broke and then hardened him. Upon his release a few years later for good behavior, Gerald constructed a number of highly-advanced robots modeled to appear as a horde of ferocious orcs and goblins. In a single night, they besieged the prison where he'd been locked up and slaughtered everyone within, inmate and guard alike.

Donning the moniker, 'the Gamemaster,' Gerald is now a globetrotting assassin who uses his incredible mind and advanced understanding of engineering to live out his role-playing fantasies in a much darker, deadlier way. Within his Dungeon facility, the Game-master constructs elaborate deathtrap scenarios usually modeled after popular fantasy, science fiction, and comic book stories and characters. Doing so allows him to play out the ultimate role-playing game with real lives hanging in the balance.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate the Gamemaster into their game.

### *The Grand Experiment*

Whether during the course of their own adventures or by tracking news reports, the heroes have noticed people have begun disappearing off the streets. The homeless, middle class, and social elite and wealthy are all being victimized, across all ethnic, geographic, gender, and age demographics. There is no recognizable pattern except all the victims are taken from areas where the architecture protects the kidnappings from being monitored, and when all local CCTV cameras are mysteriously down.

It turns out the Gamemaster has been hired by another villain to conduct an ongoing experiment upon people of all demographics in order to gain the most accurate possible data. All subjects are forced to enter the Gamemaster's current Dungeon configuration and attempt to complete a number of tests and trials that, despite being dressed up to resemble a role-playing game come to life, serve a scientific purpose. The survivors are being kept for further testing, whereas those who fail are studied (even dissected?) and disposed of.

The nature of these experiments depends on the nature of the villains that exist in the game. The client villain could be testing a new fear gas because his abilities rely upon such chemicals. He wants to see how subjects are able to act and reason while under its effects, or the victims may be hunted throughout the Dungeon by the client's latest lab-grown monstrosities.

### *Deadly Delusions*

Something has finally snapped in the Gamemaster's mind, and he has come to believe that he is actually a god with the ability to manipulate and control the fate of lesser beings. He has taken the metaphor of a role-playing game's storyteller and moderator to its ultimate extreme. To this end, the Gamemaster has been slowly transforming the city to suit his ends. Although there may have been subtle clues something has been going on (to be subtly seeded throughout previous game sessions), such as minor seismic activity, gas leaks, suspicious construction projects and renovations, and the like, the city has been none the wiser.

Until now.

One morning, the city's inhabitants awaken to find every morning show on the television and radio hijacked by the Gamemaster. He unleashes a speech about his divinity and the role of all citizens as his mortal subjects. As he makes this proclamation, streets and bridges will flip and crumble, leaving no means of escape across rivers,

and surrounding the city with a massive wall from which a force field dome shall arise. The dome will encase the entire metropolis beneath its impenetrable surface.

The Gamemaster's modifications have transformed the entire city into an enormous variation of his Dungeon headquarters, giving him the ability to manipulate just about every aspect of the metropolis' construction, architecture, and operations. All citizens are forced to comply to this villain's wishes lest he unleash his role-playing game inspired nightmares upon them, even as his hirelings and robots walk the streets dressed as monsters and the like, keeping their master's peace.

Somehow, the heroes will need to find the Gamemaster (no simple thing considering he refuses to appear in public—after all, gods are above the people.) They must stop him before too many deaths result, and the city is irreparably damaged.

#### Amusement Park of Doom

A new amusement park has opened up in the city and quickly becomes popular due to its various fantasy and science-fiction themes. After several weeks of operations, attendance is peaking as word gets out regarding how amazing the park's facilities and attractions are. This culminates in incredibly long lines within which people wait for up to six hours to get in. The entire park is part of a ploy, however, and nothing is as it seems.

One sunny Saturday, the park ignores all city regulations regarding its maximum capacity and lets everyone in at once. As the police on hand scramble to make sense of what's going on and call their supervisors and the fire marshal, the park is suddenly sealed off within high metal walls that spring out of the ground.

At this point, the Gamemaster notifies the city that he is the amusement park's true owner, and the whole thing was staged to gather as many people as possible within a location he controls. He assures the police that any attempts to penetrate the park's perimeter will result in hostages dying unless his demands are met (a threat he will follow through on.) Despite the degree of planning and preparation required for the plan being in line with the Gamemaster's usual methods of operation, his motives are extremely out of character.

Has he grown tired of his occupation and is planning one final, massive payout before he retires, or is he serving some other agenda? Is he acting as a distraction by drawing the city's police force and attention to the amusement park while something far more sinister is happening?

## GUNPUNK

PL14

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	2	<b>Fighting</b>	6
<b>Stamina</b>	3	<b>Intellect</b>	2
<b>Agility</b>	7	<b>Awareness</b>	1
<b>Dexterity</b>	5	<b>Presence</b>	0

### Powers

**Marksman:** Ranged Damage 6, Limited to Ranged Weapons; Enhanced Ranged Attack 6; Feature 3 (Extra Effort, Long Shot, Trick Shot) • 15 points

**Multipistols:** Array (22 points), Easily Removed (-10 points)

**Single Shot:** Ranged Damage 10, Accurate 2 • 22 points

• **Autofire:** Ranged Damage 7, Accurate, Multiattack • 1 point

• **Explosive Slug:** Burst Area (15 ft.) Ranged Damage 7, Accurate 2, Reduced Area • 1 point

• **Heavy Slug:** Ranged Damage 7, Accurate, Enhanced Knockback 7 • 1 point

### Equipment

A wide variety of pistols are hung and hidden about his person. He also wears a bulletproof vest.

### Advantages

Agile Feint, Benefit (Ambidexterity), Contacts 3 (P: Assassins; S: Anarchists, Mercenaries), Diehard, Equipment 10, Evasion, Fearless, Improved Aim, Improved Critical 3 (Pistols), Improved Initiative, Precise Attack 2 (Ranged; Cover, Concealment), Quick Draw, Ranged Attack 4, Tracking, Uncanny Dodge

### Skills

Acrobatics 10 (+17), Athletics 10 (+12), Deception 10 (+10), Expertise: Chemistry 8 (+10), Expertise: mechanics 10 (+12), Expertise: Streetwise 8 (+9), Expertise: Survival 8 (+9), Expertise: Tactics 6 (+8), Intimidation 12 (+12), Perception 10 (+11), Sleight of Hand 6 (+11), Stealth 6 (+13), Technology 6 (+8), Vehicles 2 (+7)

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## Offense

Initiative +11	
Autofire +19	Ranged Damage 7, Multiattack, 17-20
Explosive Slug +21	Burst Area Ranged Damage 7, 17-20
Heavy Slug +19	Ranged Damage 7, Enhanced Knockback 7, 17-20
Single Shot +21	Ranged Damage 10, 17-20
Unarmed +6	Close Damage 2

## Defense

Dodge	12	Fortitude	9
Parry	8	Toughness	6/3*
		Will	5

\* Without Bulletproof Vest

## Power Points

Abilities	52	Skills	56
Powers	30	Defenses	17
Advantages	32	Total	187

## Complications

**Anarchist:** Gunpunk has totally given up on any idea of social authority and finds it to be entirely untrustworthy. He believes the only type of social order worth having is a total lack of authority, meaning he cannot abide people in such positions. He will go out of his way to attack symbols of government authority, and will go to great excesses during jobs involving political figures and the like.

**Trigger Happy:** This pistol-wielding assassin has difficulty controlling his impulses when an opportunity presents itself for him to “get his gun on,” as he puts it. If there is an opportunity for gunplay, a Will resistance check is required for Gunpunk to maintain control of himself; the Gamemaster should set the DC based on how strong the temptation is.

**Real Name:** Felix Gallagher

**Aliases:** Frank Gun

**Threat Level:** Beta

**Age:** 24

**Height:** 5 feet, 2 in

**Weight:** 182 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** Did ya see ‘is brains splatter when that .50 hit? That was WICKED COOL!

**Occupation:** Assassin

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Felix is a rather plain, redhead young man with a freckle-covered face. As Gunpunk, he wears a dark body glove fitted with all manner of bandoliers and holsters for his weapons, with a fluorescent anarchy symbol on the chest. His face is entirely covered with a form fitting mask that allows his fiery hair to stick out from the top in its punk-spiked style.

## Personality

Considering his unorthodox and violent upbringing and childhood, it should be no surprise that Felix turned out to be such a sadistic psychopath. He not only enjoys killing, looking at it more like a hobby or game than a job, but also takes great pride in his ability. As such, he welcomes opportunities to show off, although he rarely lets his pride interfere with a job.

Despite his obviously cracked mind, Gunpunk is very professional when it comes to planning a job. He heavily favors loud noises (as in explosions) and peripheral carnage as a means of creating a distraction away from his real targets.

## Powers & Abilities

Although the diminutive mercenary has only made his services available on the global market for a few years, Gunpunk has already garnered a reputation as one of the world’s best shots and deadliest men.

His weapon of choice is a pair of custom multipistols. These weapons appear to be normal heavy caliber

## Gunpunk Expertise: Metahuman Checks

DC	Example
10	Knowing Gunpunk is a gun for hire—a paid assassin.
15	Knowing Gunpunk’s favored weapons are his custom multipistols.
20	Knowing Gunpunk used to be an IRA assassin.
25	Naming Gunpunk’s favorite beer.



weapons at first glance. Upon closer inspection, one will notice the adapting barrel, enlarged magazine, and additional selector switch. This is because each multipistol is capable of firing standard bullets, or explosive or concussive rounds with the flip of a switch.

Although he prefers his multipistols, Gunpunk believes in the right tool for the job and has no problem using other weapons better suited to his immediate needs. He also prepares beforehand, researching his target and plan of attack as much as time allows while always readying several escape routes should things go sideways.

## Allies

Gunpunk still has several friends from the old guard IRA—people who, like him, have not yet given up the fight against British tyranny. He also gets along well with several violent anarchist groups and terrorists around the world, and can count on them for a place to hold over during trouble.

## Enemies

The British would love to get their hands on Gunpunk, making him a prime target for many of the UK's more prominent super-heroes. He also bounces around the top spots of Interpol's most wanted list, and has numerous bounties on his head from governments and loved ones of previous victims.

## Background

Born to parents deeply involved with the IRA's guerrilla actions against the occupying British forces, Felix learned to wield firearms with great skill at an early age. Indeed, his talent soon had his father sending him off to the local brigade commander for sniper training. The teen then used his talents to great effect against occupying patrols and even against VIPs who thought themselves secure in their own territory, such as London itself.

When the IRA declared itself open to peace efforts, Felix turned away from his former brothers-in-arms (even his parents, who welcomed the chance to put up their weapons.) Instead, he cast an eye towards the private sector. His beliefs shattered, Felix is no longer capable of taking on a cause beyond his own needs and greed, and so he took on the cool (to him, anyway) moniker, Gunpunk, and entered the world stage as an assassin and gun for hire.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Gunpunk into their game.

### *Anarchy in the UK*

Ultimately fed up with Britain's role in Ireland, Gunpunk has decided to teach the Brits a lesson.

He has set up a number of explosive devices around London, all set to go off on Commonwealth Day. While the police and local super-heroes are scrambling around dealing with the mess and casualties these detonations

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create, Gunpunk plans to intercept the Royal Family as they are (predictably) sped away to a safe place. He intends to assassinate the entire family.

## Blowing Off the Head of State's Head

Gunpunk has been hired to kill the President (or comparable nation's leader.) Just what leads the heroes to learn of this varies, as does the target and why they are selected. Is the President being targeted by terrorists or elements within a rogue state? Is it a political rival around campaign time, or is it the Vice-President looking for a promotion?

The characters could learn of the plot after stumbling upon some of its preliminary events, such as coming across victims who were killed because of their ties to the President and their awareness of his activities or protocols. It could be the heroes have to try and save the President even as suspicion turns to them, and the Secret Service and other super-heroes are told to apprehend them. This is all as part of Gunpunk's plan to create a distraction so he can get close enough to do the job.

## Gunplay Games

Word has gotten out that a criminal mastermind has an incomparably risky (and thus unbelievably high-paying) need for an assassin, so he is holding auditions. He insists the assassin be capable of attacking from a considerable distance with unerring accuracy, so the villain has selected a remote location to conduct a series of events that will put all applicants' skill to the test under a variety of circumstances.

The heroes somehow catch wind of the tryouts and, being long-standing foes of Gunpunk (and perhaps several other assassins likely to show up), decide to use the situation to their advantage. Whether they try and sneak in, assume an assassin's identity, or just storm the gates, so to speak, the heroes must first find the event's location, which will be no simple task.

## SCARLET JESTER

## PL12

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	2	<b>Fighting</b>	8
<b>Stamina</b>	1	<b>Intellect</b>	3
<b>Agility</b>	6	<b>Awareness</b>	1
<b>Dexterity</b>	6	<b>Presence</b>	5

### Powers

**Death Rattle:** Strength-Based Damage 10, Enhanced Knockback 8, Easily Removed (-8 points) • 10 points

**Fearsome Presence:** Perception (Visual) Area Affliction 8 (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Disabled, Paralyzed) • 16 points

**Gag Gadgets:** Array (40 points), Removable (-8 points)

**Goofy Gas Bombs:** Cloud Area Ranged Affliction 9 (Resisted by Fortitude, Overcome by Will; Dazed, Compelled, Controlled), Compact Range 7; Cloud Area Ranged Weaken Stamina 9, Compact Range 7 • 40 points

• **Bozo Bombs:** Burst Area (6 ft.) Ranged Damage 8, Compact Range 6, Reduced Area 2 • 1 point

• **Buzz Killer:** Contagious Damage 12 • 1 point

• **Goofy Gas Wrist Spray:** Cone Area (15 ft.) Affliction 9 (Resisted by Fortitude, Overcome by Will; Dazed, Compelled, Controlled), Reduced Area 2; Cone Area (15 ft.) Weaken Stamina 9, Reduced Area 2 • 1 point

• **Screamers:** Cumulative Burst Area Ranged Affliction 12 (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Disabled, Unaware), Auditory Dependent, Limited Effects to Auditory, Compact Range 10 • 1 point

**Jester's Bound:** Leaping 2 • 2 points

**Power-Lifting:** Enhanced Strength 4, Limited to Lifting • 4 points

### Equipment

In addition to her various jester gadgets (see "powers"), she also carries a number of mundane items such as smoke pellets, caltrops, and so on.

**Vehicle:** Clipper • 65 points

Size Medium; Str 20, Speed 5, Def 9, Tou 10, Features: Caltrops, Hidden Compartments, Navigation System, Remote Control, Smokescreen; **Machineguns:** Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack

### Advantages

Ace (Clipper), Close Attack, Banter 4 (No Penalties), Daze (Deception), Fascinate 2 (Deception, Expertise: Comedy), Equipment 15, Evasion, Fearless, Inventor, Startle, Taunt, Throwing Mastery 4

**Bozo Bombs:** These jester-faced grenades are a mainstay of Scarlet Jester's arsenal.

**Buzz Killer:** A joy buzzer with a kick used for close combat to deliver a dangerous electrical shock.

**Goofy Gas Wrist Spray:** Concealed in the wrist, behind the palm, is a gas spray that confuses victims, driving them to act unpredictably and out of control while weakening them.

**Goofy Gas Bombs:** These specialized grenades contain the same mind-warping gas as Scarlet Jester's wrist spray.

**Screamers:** Small, thrown devices made to look like screaming jester faces.

## Skills

Acrobatics 12 (+18), Deception 8 (+13), Expertise: Acting 8 (+13), Expertise: Art 6 (+9), Expertise: Chemistry 8 (+11), Expertise: Comedy (INT/PER) 12 (+15/+17), Expertise: Dancing (AGI/INT) 6 (+12/+9), Expertise: Electronics 6 (+9), Expertise: Mechanics 6 (+9), Expertise: Popular Culture 8 (+11), Intimidation 4 (+9), Perception 6 (+7), Sleight of Hand 8 (+14), Stealth 8 (+14), Technology 2 (+5), Vehicles 4 (+10)

## Offense

Initiative +6

Bozo Bombs +6	Burst Area Ranged Damage 8
Buzz Killer +6	Contagious Ranged Damage 12
Death Rattle +9	Close Damage 12, Enhanced Knockback 8
Goofy Gas Bombs +6	Cloud Area Ranged Affliction 9; Cloud Area Ranged Weaken Stamina 9
Goofy Gas Wrist Spray	Cone Area Affliction 9; Cone Area Weaken Stamina 9
Screamers +6	Burst Area Cumulative Ranged Affliction 12
Unarmed +9	Close Damage 2

## Defense

Dodge	12	Fortitude	8
Parry	8	Toughness	1

Will 9

## Power Points

Abilities	64	Skills	56
Powers	68	Defenses	21
Advantages	33	Total	242

## Complications

**Dark Humor:** This mad villain has a witty sense of humor, although it mostly tends towards the darker (and frequently deadlier) side of comedy. She has a weakness for jokes and those who can make her laugh, which has been known to unpredictably change her moods and intentions.

**Madness:** Scarlet Jester is entirely insane, a fact that makes her unpredictable and irrational. She enjoys chaos and anarchy for its own sake rather than it being a means to an end.

**Real Name:** Sasha Kubric

**Aliases:** Sara Cubic, Sara Rounder

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** 31

**Height:** 5 feet, 4 in

**Weight:** 125 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** Want to hear a joke? A blinded superhero walks into a bar ... [said as she throws her foe into a metal bar of some kind] Teeheehee! Watch out for that punch line—it's a killer.

**Occupation:** Criminal

**Base:** Various

## Appearance

Scarlet Jester wears a red and white checkerboard suit reminiscent of a medieval jester's costume. Her scar-

## Scarlet Jester Expertise: Metahuman Checks

DC	Example
10	Knowing Scarlet Jester's real name.
15	Being able to name all of Scarlet Jester's gear.
20	Identifying an event as a primary target for Scarlet Jester's sense of humor.
25	Being able to recognize Goofy Gas following a chemical analysis

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let hair is tied back away from her face, which is powdered white with bright red lips, as well as eye makeup and red diamonds painted on her cheeks.

## Personality

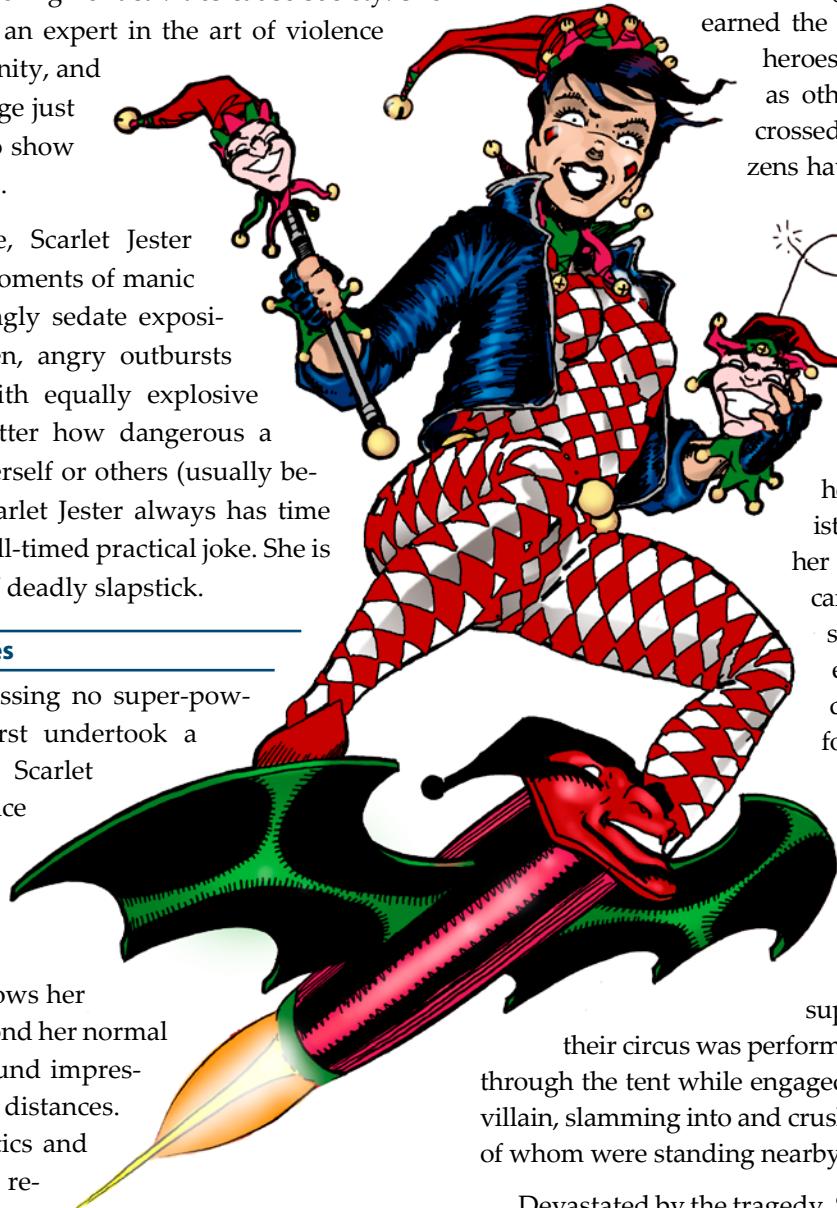
Scarlet Jester is not very interested in traditional petty or grand crimes such as meager theft or global conquest. To her, “grand” is defined by the degree of showmanship and suffering her activities cause society. She considers herself an expert in the art of violence and comedic insanity, and the world is a stage just waiting for her to show her ultimate opus.

Totally insane, Scarlet Jester slides between moments of manic ranting, surprisingly sedate expositions, and sudden, angry outbursts often marked with equally explosive violence. No matter how dangerous a situation is for herself or others (usually because of her), Scarlet Jester always has time for a quip and well-timed practical joke. She is especially fond of deadly slapstick.

## Powers & Abilities

Initially possessing no super-powers when she first undertook a criminal career, Scarlet Jester has since used artificial means to give herself limited enhanced strength. This allows her to lift objects beyond her normal means and to bound impressive heights and distances. Her acrobatic antics and deadly gadgets remain her most impressive tools, however.

In a fight, she will use her Clipper's machineguns and thrown bombs to deal with weaker foes. This tactic is also meant disperse the sturdier ones long enough for her to get close (preferably with a rapid fly-by) so she can knock them for a loop with her Death Rattle.



## Allies

She will rarely ally herself with others because she feels no one else “gets” her. Scarlet Jester believes that if you don’t understand the joke, you are only worthy of being its target.

## Enemies

Scarlet Jester has accumulated an expansive gallery of enemies throughout her career. She has earned the vengeful hatred of many heroes she has fought, as well as other super-villains she has crossed. Even a number of citizens have put prices on her head for what she has done to their loved ones.

## Background

Sasha grew up in a wandering circus of some repute, her father a clown and her mother a high-wire artist and tumbler, allowing her to learn the ways of both careers. As a young teen, she signed on to the act as a talented trapeze artist who quickly became renowned for her comedic shows.

This talented young woman's bright star came crashing to earth, however, when her parents were accidentally killed by a superhero local to the area their circus was performing. The hero was thrown through the tent while engaged in combat with a supervillain, slamming into and crushing Sasha's parents, both of whom were standing nearby, watching her act.

Devastated by the tragedy, Sasha blamed the hero for the deaths and began sending dark, threatening jokes to him via the local police. This anger continued to build within her until finally she snapped and ambushed the hero, killing him in a spectacular explosion detonated from within a giant Jack-in-the-Box she had created and left along his patrol route to find. What little was left of Sasha's morality and sanity died with that hero, leaving only Scarlet Jester.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Scarlet Jester into their game.

### Scarlet Jester TV

The Scarlet Jester has kidnaped a popular investigative reporter known for their sensationalistic, lopsided reporting methods and aggressive techniques. She will force the news crew to film and narrate a deadly game show she has decided to host from a hidden location using civilian hostages as the contestants. If the reporter's TV station cuts the broadcast, the Scarlet Jester has threatened to immediately kill the news team and all the hostages.

### It Must Have Been Something They Ate

People all over the city have begun displaying unpredictable, crazy behavior suddenly and without warning that can best be described as deluded and insane. These people rarely get violent, but their irrational actions have led to many deaths already—and not just their own. Sufferers behind the wheel of their car, a city bus, heavy machinery, air traffic control instruments, etc. have all contributed to additional carnage.

Solid detective work will reveal Scarlet Jester is behind the madness, but how she is doing it and why is up to the Gamemaster to determine.

### The Blood Circus

In a rare example of esprit de corps, the Scarlet Jester has organized a group of circus-themed villains into a team she has named the Blood Circus. This group of criminals, with Scarlet Jester in the lead, will go on a murderous crime spree without any regard for collateral damage and civilian casualties.

## TARANTULA

PL13

### Abilities

<b>Strength</b>	6	<b>Fighting</b>	10
<b>Stamina</b>	4	<b>Intellect</b>	3
<b>Agility</b>	10	<b>Awareness</b>	1
<b>Dexterity</b>	8	<b>Presence</b>	2

### Powers

**Power-Lifting:** Enhanced Strength 4, Limited to Lifting  
• 4 points

**Sticky Touch:** Enhanced Acrobatics 9, Limited to Resisting Knockback and Trips; Movement 1 (Safe Fall), Limited to Near Surfaces; Movement 2 (Wall-Crawling) • 8 points

**Tarantula's Nimbleness:** Leaping 3; Movement 4 (Sure-Footed) • 11 points

**Tarantula Senses:** Senses 1 (Danger Sense [Mental])  
• 1 point

**Webbing:** Array (26 points)

**Entangle:** Cumulative Affliction 8 (Resisted by Dodge, Overcome by Damage; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobilized), Extra Condition, Reach 10, Limited Degree  
• 26 points

**Suffocate:** Cumulative Affliction 8 (Resisted by Fortitude, Overcome by Damage; Impaired, Dazed, Incapacitated), Reach 10 • 1 point

**Swinging:** Movement 1 (Swinging) • 1 point

**Trip:** Affliction 8 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Prone), Extra Condition, Reach 10, Limited Degree • 1 point

### Advantages

Banter 6 (No Penalties), Benefit (Ambidextrous), Favored Environment (Vertical Surfaces), Evasion, Improved Initiative, Instant Up, Inventor, Languages (English), Precise Attack (Close, Concealment), Takedown 2, Taunt

### Skills

Acrobatics 12 (+22), Athletics 4 (+10), Close Combat: Webbing 2 (+12), Deception 8 (+10), Expertise: Biology 8 (+11), Expertise: Chemistry 10 (+13), Expertise: Electronics 10 (+13), Expertise: Mechanics 10 (+13), Expertise: Science 10 (+13), Intimidation 4 (+6), Investigation 6 (+9), Perception 10 (+11), Sleight of Hand 4 (+12), Stealth 6 (+16)

### Offense

Initiative +14	
Entangle Webbing +12	Close Cumulative Affliction 8, Reach 10
Suffocate Webbing +12	Close Cumulative Affliction 8, Reach 10
Trip Webbing +12	Close Affliction 8, Reach 10
Unarmed +10	Close Damage 6

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## Defense

Dodge	15	Fortitude	8
Parry	10	Toughness	4
		Will	7

## Power Points

Abilities	88	Skills	52
Powers	53	Defenses	15
Advantages	17	Total	225

## Complications

**Immature:** Despite his age, Tarantula is incredibly socially and emotionally immature. He has trouble dealing with social situations and his own emotions, leading him to start rattling off quips or allow any such situation to descend into unbelievable awkwardness.

**Violent Outbursts:** Tarantula is prone to losing his temper, especially in the presence of (even perceived) bullies and "muscular types." He uses violence as a way of proving to the world how tough he has become, and is so unaccustomed to reigning in his temper that he is now largely unable to do so without considerable effort (possibly requiring a Will resistance check.)

**Real Name:** Pierre Pokér

**Aliases:** Peter Poker

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** 24

**Height:** 5 feet, 10 in

**Weight:** 185 lbs

**Native Language:** French

**Typical Quote:** Like a fly in my web, it's time to squish you.

**Occupation:** Criminal

**Base:** None

## Appearance

A thin-if-muscular young man with closely cropped brown hair, Tarantula's costume is a black body glove covered in silver and red spider- and web-pattern designs.

## Tarantula Expertise: Metahuman Checks

### DC Example

10	Knowing Tarantula's real name.
15	Knowing Tarantula's webs are technology based.
20	Being able to quote little-known facts of Tarantula's wrestling career.
25	Recognizing a subject likely to be targeted by Tarantula due to the latter's hatred of bullies.

## Personality

Tarantula likes to talk as he fights or conducts a crime, insulting his opponents and cracking jokes. He is also incredibly rash and loves taking risks, often to the point of being reckless. While not especially cruel in most other regards, Tarantula enjoys pulping anyone who considers himself a tough guy or "brick," especially if they are a bully or thug.

## Powers & Abilities

The mutagen he was exposed to provided Tarantula with the ability to stick to vertical surfaces, and even ceilings and the like. He also possesses superior strength, incredible reflexes, and the ability to perceive when he is in jeopardy.

Tarantula compliments his extraordinary powers with a talent for invention and an impressive mind. He has used these to design and produce his wrist-mounted webbing sprayers. Controlled by flexing his forearm muscles in a particular way, the sprayers are capable of emitting web lines that can entangle or trip a target, wrap about their head to deprive them of air, or enable him to swing from web lines.

## Allies

Because of his temper and distrust of other people, Tarantula does not work well with others. Still, he will periodically join a team of villains temporarily as his desire to be noticed and fill the loneliness that has been with him most of his life takes hold. Such team-ups rarely last long due to Tarantula's independent nature and abrasive personality, however.

## Enemies

Interpol and many international law enforcement agencies would certainly like to get their hands on Tarantula, as will many of their local counterparts once Tarantula becomes more established in his new home.

## Background

A science geek orphan living with his elderly uncle and aunt in Paris' outskirts, Pierre was often the victim of his classmates' bullying until a spider infused with a biological mutating agent bit him while on a school trip to pharmaceutical lab. The spider's bite gifted him with remarkable powers.

At first Pierre thought to use his powers to turn a profit, so he joined the European wrestling circuit under the nom de plume of Tarantula, quickly rising in popularity because of his amazing agility and strength. The violence inherent to the sport, coupled with the rush of power his abilities gave him, soon began to influence young Pierre's behavior. It wasn't long before he was turning the tables on the kids who once bullied him at school.

Exulting in his new strength, Pierre inevitably pushed things too far.

After savagely beating the worst of his former bullies, Pierre found himself the subject of a police investigation and at the receiving end of a very haughty sermon from his beloved uncle concerning the responsibility of great power. In a fit of rage, Pierre lashed out at his uncle, accidentally killing him.

Now on the run from the law, much of Pierre's empathy died with his uncle—he has since wholly embraced his Tarantula identity and turned to crime. Pierre quickly became one of Europe's most wanted criminals.

Despite the often unnecessarily brutal nature of his crimes, Pierre's bold grandstanding and witty

banter worked to expand the fan base he had first developed as a wrestler into a strong following, especially amongst society's pariahs and outcast youth. In fact, his popularity with Europe's counterculture and notoriety with its law enforcement agencies grew to the extent that he was recently forced overseas to begin anew.

## Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Tarantula into their game.

### *Haunted by the Past*

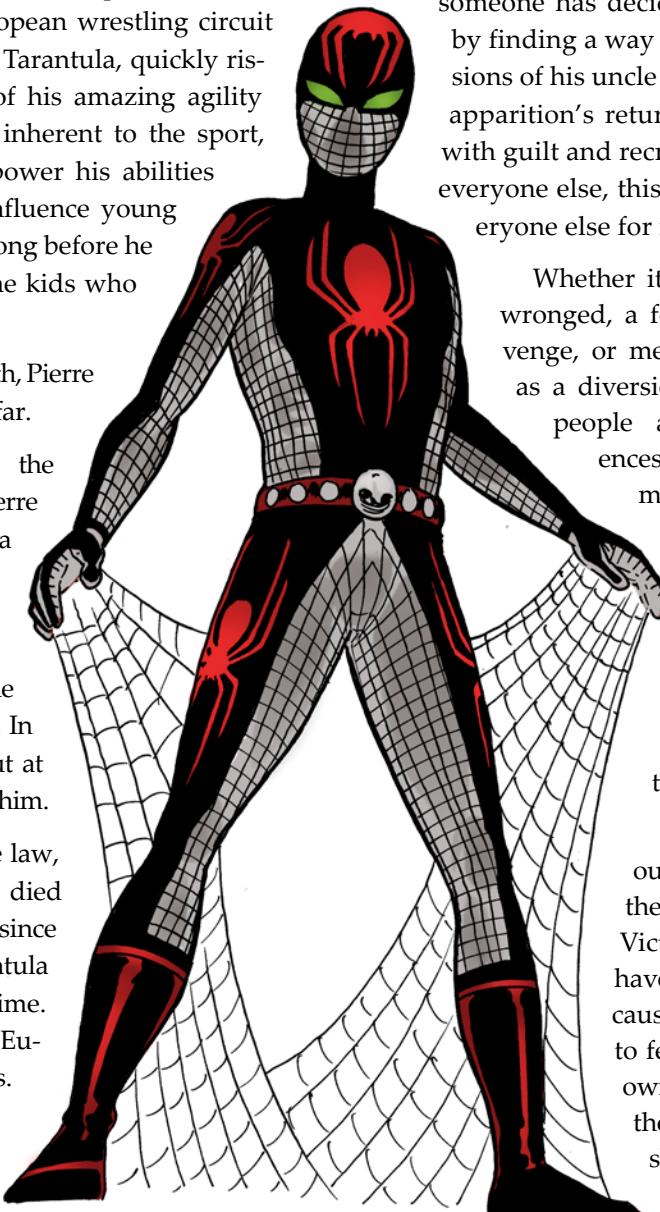
Despite Tarantula's gruff demeanor and violent, tough guy attitude, he has many regrets about his past, including his uncle's death. As it turns out, someone has decided to turn this against him by finding a way to force Tarantula to have visions of his uncle come back to haunt him. The apparition's return is driving the villain mad with guilt and recrimination. Unfortunately for everyone else, this effect is also influencing everyone else for miles around.

Whether it is another villain Tarantula wronged, a former victim looking for revenge, or merely a plot to use Tarantula as a diversion for something else, other people are having similar experiences. Regardless of whether it is magic (possibly meaning the delusions aren't delusions after all!), super-science, or some manner of mind-altering drug causing the effect, how it influences people varies, so the city is going mad at a varied pace that is beginning to speed up.

The heroes will have to find out what is going on, tracing the effect back to its source or to Victim X: Tarantula. They don't have a lot of time, though, because they will themselves begin to feel the effect's tug upon their own regrets and guilt, breaking their ability to act with emotion-shattering visions and haunting visitations.

### *The Spider's Web*

At some previous point in time, the heroes have crossed Tarantula's path and gotten in his way or insulted him in some way that has earned his enmity. As such, he has crafted an ingenious frame up that blames the heroes for a disaster that occurs during one of their conflicts with other villains.



# Chapter 9: Evil to the Utmost

If the heroes cannot uncover the truth behind the plot to blame them for the tragic loss of life and property, they will become total pariahs at best, or even wanted criminals at worst.

## Metamorphosis

It would seem the mutagen that gave Tarantula his abilities remained in his system more active than anyone thought. Either due to the passage of time or recent exposure to some manner of catalyst, the mutagen has reactivated, initiating further changes in the criminal. He is slowly transforming into a man-spider, including his skin hardening, growing extra arms and eyes, poisoned mandibles, and so on.

As the change continues to take hold, Tarantula loses increasingly more of his humanity and mind, becoming a predator driven by instinct. If he is not captured and contained immediately, it is only a matter of time before the mutating villain's violent attacks against civilians escalate into hunting people for food.

## THE TERMITE

PL10

Abilities	
Strength	5 */1
Stamina	2
Agility	3 */1
Dexterity	1
<b>Fighting</b>	6 */4
<b>Intellect</b>	1
<b>Awareness</b>	3
<b>Presence</b>	1

## Powers

**Termite Sabotage-Suit:** Removable (-13 points)

**Armor:** Impervious Protection 5; Immunity 1 (Termite Suit Acid) • 11 points

**Flight Jets:** Flight 2 (8 mph) • 4 points

**Fluidic Muscles:** Enhanced Strength 4; Enhanced Agility 2, Speed 2 (8 mph) • 14 points

**Sensor Suite:** Senses 9 (Darkvision; Detect Structural Flaw, Ranged [Infravision]; Direction Sense; Distance Sense; Infravision; Time Sense; Ultra Hearing) • 9 points

**Tactical Computer:** Enhanced Improved Initiative; Enhanced Dodge 4; Enhanced Fighting 2 • 9 points

**Termite Acid:** Array (13 points)

**Organic Acid:** Weaken Stamina 12, Incurable • 13 points

- **Inorganic Acid:** Weaken Toughness 12, Affects Only Objects, Incurable • 1 point
- **Tunneling:** Burrowing 1 • 1 point

## Advantages

Banter, Evasion, Improved Defense, Improvised Tools, Inventor, Monkeywrencher 2, Specialization (Expertise: Engineering, sabotage), Taunt, Well-Informed

## Skills

Athletics 4 (+5/+9 \*), Expertise: Chemistry 10 (+11), Expertise: Demolitions 10 (+11), Expertise: Engineering 10 (+11), Expertise: Mechanics 6 (+7), Insight 4 (+7), Stealth 4 (+5/+7 \*), Technology 10 (+11)

## Offense

Initiative +7 \*/+1

Inorganic Acid +6 Weaken Stamina 12, Incurable

Organic Acid +6 Weaken Toughness 12, Incurable

Unarmed +6 Close Damage 5 \*/1

## Defense

Dodge	10 */4	Fortitude	8
Parry	8 */6	Toughness	7 */2

## Power Points

Abilities	28	Skills	29
Powers	49	Defenses	13
Advantages	10	Total	129

\* Termite Sabotage-Suit

## Complications

**Compulsive:** The Termite is compelled to destroy property and the like. The longer he goes without doing so, the more agitated and aggressive he becomes.

**Real Name:** Jeremy Dorfe

**Aliases:** Jim Doe

**Threat Level:** Gamma

**Age:** 31

**Height:** 6 feet, 1 in.

**Weight:** 190 lbs

**Native Language:** English

**Typical Quote:** Time to bring down the house.

**Occupation:** Saboteur

**Base:** None

## Appearance

Jeremy keeps himself in good shape, but doesn't otherwise enjoy spending time on his unkempt appearance. He has rough, sandy hair with an uneven cut, and a droopy mustache above a scraggly beard. He has altered the sabotage-suit to have an insect appearance to suit his termite motif but has left its dark green paint job.

## Personality

The Termite is abrasive and cannot help himself when it comes to insulting his opponents. A definite sociopath, he feels superior to most other people—the law doesn't apply to him because he doesn't believe in the morals that bind it together.

Although he is more interested in causing property damage than hurting anyone, the Termite doesn't lose any sleep about any collateral loss of life from one of his "projects."

## Powers & Abilities

The Termite possesses advanced knowledge of explosives and engineering, enabling him to discern the best points in a structure to attack in order to bring it down. This knowledge is complimented by the armored suit he wears—its hands may emit one of two possible powerful acids, one of which works on inorganic materials while the others work only on organics.

## Allies

The Termite has few friends, but may be acquainted and infrequent colleagues with other villains in your game who likewise work as mercenaries with similarly destructive specializations.

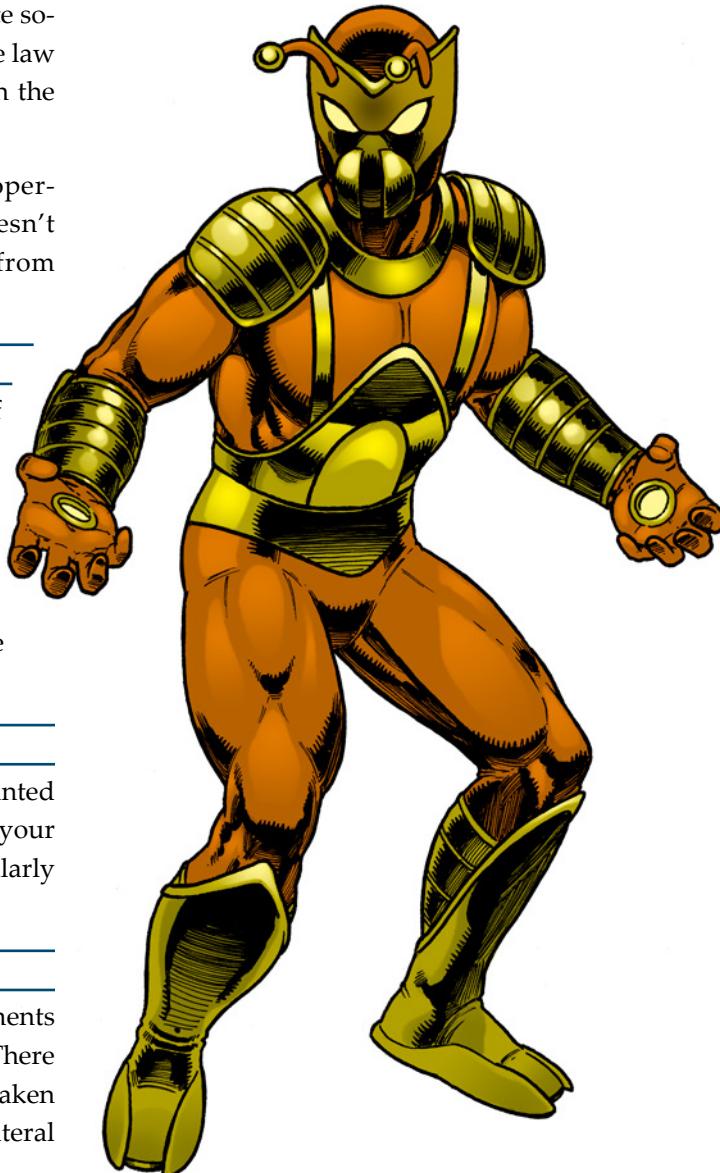
## Enemies

This saboteur is wanted by a variety of governments and law enforcement agencies around the world. There are also private contracts on his life that have been taken out by family members of people who were collateral victims of his work.

## Background

A native New Yorker, Jeremy always had a knack for math and chemistry, but he was also sadistic. All through school, he was known to torment those he considered weaker than him, often pestering them with homemade booby traps made of rudimentary (and largely harmless) explosives and the like. This got him into no end of trouble, but eventually he graduated high-school, went to MIT, and entered the private sector.

Seeking a way to make the most of his proclivity for destruction, Jeremy found no trouble finding work in the demolitions industry. Little effort was required to find this bored—but talented—demolitions expert jobs all over the world. He even discovered ways to often employ chemicals other than explosives to undertake



## Termite Expertise: Metahuman Checks

DC	Example
10	Knowing Termite's real name.
15	Knowing Termite's powers come from the armor he wears.
20	Realizing Termite must have a history in engineering after examining his handiwork.
25	Recognizing Termite's destructive handiwork after the fact.

incredibly tricky jobs. Indeed, his services were much in demand. It was said that if you needed something blown up properly, you called Jeremy Dorfe.

It took several years for people to put two and two together and realize Jeremy was frequently working a job in the vicinity of many tragic and unexpected structural failures of some sort, whether it was a highway bridge collapsing, killing dozens, or a tenement crumpling in upon itself. It seemed that Jeremy's youthful pleasures has not been left behind, but rather expanded to taking human life as a consequence of his compulsive need to see property destroyed.

Luckily for Jeremy, his extracurricular activities were discovered while he was on the job for a military contract to test a new battlesuit for the US Army. Intended to infiltrate behind enemy lines, it would enable the wearer to sabotage vital infrastructure. He fled with the suit before he could be captured and, after modifying it a bit, he has since used it to assume the guise of the Termite, globe-trotting saboteur for hire.

### Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate the Termite into their game.

#### *King of the Termites*

After a lot of experimentation, this villain-for-hire has added a new ability to his sabotage-suit's arsenal: the ability to control actual termites. Although this may seem like a useless power, just imagine the destruction a mass of these creatures could cause if they were forced to binge themselves at an unnatural pace. They could also be used to create distracting havoc amongst crowds while the Termite is engaged in a fight.

Depending upon how the Gamemaster decides this power operates, it may be possible for the heroes to

counter it or even render it entirely inoperable for the future if it is only intended to spice up one adventure. Alternatively, it could be a new ability that will end up sticking around.

#### *The Hostage City*

Using carefully placed explosive charges, the Termite contacts a city's government to demand a massive ransom. If the demands are not met, this mercenary will detonate his many packages.

Normally, such a threat would be worrisome in its own right, but the threat is all the more severe because of the Termite's choice of targets. The city being held for ransom is one that is built upon a previous city (e.g., Seattle), atop a massive sewer and cistern system (e.g., Manhattan), or some other vulnerable foundation (e.g., Venice.) If the explosives are all detonated, the outcome won't merely be a matter of buildings blowing up. Large portions of the city will actually sink into the ground irreparably, ruining the city for generations (if not entirely.)

Whether the Termite is acting on his own or has been hired by someone else is for the Gamemaster to determine. Regardless, the heroes will have to act quickly to find the Termite or otherwise neutralize the explosives. There are just too many bombs for them all to be found and individually disarmed before the deadline.

#### *Opening Day*

It is the first day of operations for a new building in the heroes' city—a marvel of modern architecture—and everyone is looking forward to the accompanying festivities. Whether the new structure is a government building, tourist attraction, or something else entirely, it is of great importance to the city. This, means government officials, celebrities, and other noteworthy people are all on hand to participate in the ceremony and celebrations to follow.

The heroes learn the Termite plans to destroy the building (whether for its own sake or as part of a job is for the Gamemaster to decide), but officials are not going to evacuate. Whether the heroes are themselves pariahs or vigilantes who are not taken seriously by the city's officials or if sounding an alarm is otherwise impossible doesn't matter. The building is full of people, so if Termite is allowed to destroy it, hundreds if not thousands of innocent people would be hurt or killed.

# APPENDIX: ORIGINAL FORMAT HEADQUARTERS DESIGN

For those of you who do not wish to use the new headquarters design system presented in **Better Mousetrap**, here following are the new design elements presented in the core rules' original format.

## AMPLIFIER

## RANKED

A device that amplifies powers by 1 rank per instance of selecting this feature. Affected powers are limited to a single power type (e.g., attack or control powers) or descriptor (e.g., weather, flame), as determined when the feature is added. It is also possible to apply this feature more than once, building multiple amplifiers that affect different power types or descriptors. Once selected, the power and its descriptor cannot be altered without some wondrous effort, as determined by the Gamemaster. Doing so should be no simple feat, and failure may result in losing the feature altogether.

Using the amplifier requires an appropriately empowered individual be in physical contact with the device, and spend a full round calibrating and activating it. As long as this contact is maintained, the amplifier remains in effect, even if the power is not sustained. The Gamemaster may even allow the amplifier to boost the power's effects beyond the campaign's PL restrictions, although doing so should be done with care.

Spending an additional rank allows the amplifier to operate anywhere upon/within the headquarters without requiring direct contact with the amplifier (indicated by a Ranged notation.)

Similarly, making the amplifier selective so that only the headquarters owners (and people they ap-

prove) can utilize it without effort requires an additional rank. For others, an appropriate check (DC 5 + the headquarters' PL) is required with each attempt to access the amplifier's ability. This could be a Technology check if the amplifier is tech-based, Expertise: Magic if it is arcane, and so on.

Unless a hero point is expended when the character is finished using the amplifier, the character will become fatigued afterward.

## ARMORY

The headquarters is equipped with an ample supply of weapons or gear, allowing minions to each draw up to (10 points x HQ PL) worth of equipment.

The Armory is limited to a particular sort of gear (weapons, spy gear, armor, mecha, etc.) that must be decided when built. However, separate and/or conjoined armories may be purchased for each type of gear desired.

## ARTIFICER LAB

An Artificer Lab has all the facilities for making various magical inventions. It includes tools, workbenches, supplies, and so forth. The Gamemaster may rule certain projects require a dedicated Artificer Lab of their own (which is an additional feature.) This replaces the ability to use a Workshop to create magical inventions, as per the core rules.

The user does not require the Artificer advantage to create artifacts within this lab. However, if the character does possess this advantage, the artifact's construction time is halved.

Once a magical invention is made within the Artificer Lab, another cannot be created until the magical invention is disassembled and its components returned. If the magical invention is lost, stolen, or destroyed, the Gamemaster may force the players to purchase the feature again before the Artificer Lab can be used or make them go through a process to replenish the lost supplies and components.

## AUTOMATION

The headquarters is equipped with a slaved automation system that activates automatically under a specified set of parameters. Every additional feature to be automated or each new circumstance for the same feature that will act as a trigger requires another instance of this feature be purchased. Automation can be used to represent something as simple as a computer recording key-strokes or as complex as robotic arms within a kitchen.

Conditions for Automation to activate must fit a single, brief sentence. These parameters *must* represent only conditions happening in the immediate vicinity of the headquarters, so you can't have an automated teleport function to pull people out of danger half a planet away.

Any Automation that requires a skill bonus, such as an "auto-doc" robot in an infirmary or an auto-targeting system for a weapons emplacement, has as many skill ranks or an attack modifier equal to half the headquarters' PL, rounded down.

Automated features can typically only activate once per round unless the power/function they are activating requires more than one round to activate, using the standard activation time of the power/function in such cases.

## BARRIER

A physical barrier, obstacle, or impediment surrounds the headquarters. It could be a moat, high wall, steep cliff, maze, or the like.

Surmounting or bypassing the barrier requires succeeding on as many appropriate (DC 10 + 1/2 HQ PL) skill checks (Athletics to swim a moat or climb walls, for example—Gamemasters use your judgment) as equals half the headquarters' PL, rounded down. Alternatively, the use of an appropriate power (such as digging under a wall) can obtain access without invitation or proper means.

The Gamemaster should only allow physical barriers appropriate to the headquarters' design and location.

You may also purchase power effects as features that are linked to the Barrier, such as razor sharp rocks on a cliff.

## COMBAT SIMULATOR

## RANKED

A combat simulator 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 equipment that can simulate any appropriate attack effect at a rank up to the HQ PL. For an additional rank, the combat simulator 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.) Also, clever heroes 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, BASIC

The communications feature 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 Technology skill check (DC 25) can grant a user illegal access to restricted systems.

## COMMUNICATIONS, DIMENSIONAL

## RANKED

This feature allows the headquarters to communicate with dedicated reception points in other dimensions. These receptors could be magic mirrors, enchanted phones, geomantic locations, and so on—it can be a roaming item or fixed location, as specified.

Each application of this feature allows the headquarters to communicate with a single, specified dimension, and grants one dedicated receptor in that same dimension. A flat rate of 10 applications allows the headquarters to communicate with any dimension and gains a dedicated receptor in each.

## COMMUNICATIONS, ENCRYPTED RANKED

All the headquarters' inbound and outbound communications are scrambled against unauthorized use, meaning an intercepted signal must be decrypted. Cracking the code requires a Technology check (DC 25); increase the DC by +5 per additional rank.

Purchasing this feature once applies its protection to all other communications features in the headquarters.

## COMMUNICATIONS, SPACE

Possessing the same characteristics as the Basic Communications systems, this feature allows communications through outer space from one planet and/or system to another. The exact distance should be determined by a combination of considering the overall resources of those who made the headquarters, along with the concept behind these characters and the overall campaign PL and design.

## COMPUTER

A state-of-the-art computer system serves the entire headquarters. This allows characters to make full use of the Technology skill untrained, and the computer can be programmed to handle routine base functions (including monitoring communications channels.) An artificially intelligent computer system should be created as an immobile construct via the Minion or Sidekick advantage, perhaps with the cost shared among members of a team.

## CONCEALED, BASIC RANKED

The headquarters is hidden from the outside world in some way. It may be camouflaged behind a false facade, buried underground, or something similar. Note this is in addition to the Isolated 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 have their DC increased by +10. Each additional rank applied to this increases the DC +5, to a maximum of +30.

## CONCEALED, COSMETIC RANKED

The headquarters is equipped with sliding walls, hidden compartments, and other devices that, when engaged, allow the building to appear to be something else. Typical uses include making a seemingly normal home's or office building's interior transform to reveal the head-

quarters' special features. Changing the headquarters' appearance requires a resident spend one round to change the interior or exterior appearance (or both.) While this feature is engaged, a Perception check (DC 20) is required to notice anything odd about it. Increase this DC by +5 per additional application of this feature.

When this feature is added, the designer must determine how and where from the concealment can be manipulated. For instance, is the control voice activated through the owners' personal communicators or is there a single switch in a central control room that must be flipped?

## CONCEALED, ELECTRONIC RANKED

The headquarters is proofed against electronic searches; its electro-magnetic signature, outbound communications, and similar electronics signals are masked. Masking communications is not the same as encryption because the former hides the signal's origins but does not encrypt it whereas the latter encrypts but does not conceal where the signal comes from or where it's going.

Skill checks to locate/identify the headquarters by use of an appropriate sensor have their DC increased by +10. Each additional application of this feature increases the DC +5.

## DEATHTRAPS

A villainous version of the Defense System feature is deathtraps: the villain's lair has one or more fiendish traps suitable for disposing of those pesky heroes. Some deathtraps are designed as security systems to keep heroes out: concealed auto-guns, walls of flames, sealing rooms that fill with water or sand, and so forth. Others are intended for the slow elimination of captured heroes.

Note that not having this feature does not mean a villain cannot jury-rig a deathtrap within the lair—say, by chaining heroes beneath a rocket counting down to launch, or slowly lowering them into a volcano's caldera. It just means there's no part of the base specifically designed as a deathtrap.

Also note that, in spite of the name, not all "deathtraps" are necessarily lethal. Some may be intended to merely incapacitate and capture intruders (more along the lines of a nonlethal Defense System), allowing the villain to interrogate them ... and then perhaps put them into a *real* deathtrap!

## DEFENSE SYSTEM

A defense system consists of various weapon emplacements defending the exterior and interior of the head-quarters. A defense system can have any attack effect with a cost no greater than twice the HQ PL. Their attack bonus is equal to the PL.

## DEMOLITIONS DISPOSAL

## RANKED

This room is equipped with explosives detection equipment, **Senses 1** (Detect Explosives [Smell]), and an airtight sub-section with emergency venting for dealing with bio- and chemo-hazard explosives. The area's Toughness can be increased by +4 per additional application of this feature.

## DIMENSIONAL CAPACITY

## RANKED

Through dimensional warping, the headquarters' interior is larger than its exterior. Each feature rank increases the headquarters' interior area to that of one size category larger. So, for one rank, a small headquarters would be as big on the inside as a medium-sized headquarters, as a large headquarters for 3 ranks, and so on. Beyond an awesome sized headquarters, each additional rank doubles the amount of interior space.

## DIMENSIONAL PORTAL

The headquarters has a portal or gateway to another dimension or dimensions. This can range from an otherwise innocuous-looking door to a humming high-tech portal surrounded by support equipment and monitors. The portal provides two-way travel to and from the other dimension, and it may even reach a number of related dimensions. At the Gamemaster's discretion, an appropriate skill check—typically Expertise or Technology—may be required to operate the portal.

## DOCK

## RANKED

A dock houses water vehicles 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 headquarters should be located within a reasonable distance of a body of water to have this feature.

## DRONES

A fleet of small maintenance and cleaning drones occupy the headquarters. The "drones" may be small

robots or living creatures. Either way, they are non-combatants considered to be PL 1 minions with no skills beyond Expertise related to rudimentary knowledge and profession abilities related to appropriate tasks.

## DUAL SIZE

## RANKED

The headquarters has two separate Size categories: its interior category (purchased normally), which determines the structure's interior space, and an outside category, one or more size categories smaller. In essence, the head-quarters is larger on the inside than on the outside! So a small house, for example, might contain the space of a huge castle on the inside. The Gamemaster may even allow size categories beyond Awesome, with each additional category doubling size; expensive HQs could be pocket universes! Pay the cost of the larger size, plus this feature, which lets you set the exterior size at any smaller category.

In general, the exterior dimensions of the HQ cannot be smaller than a minuscule structure, about the size of a closet or phone booth (or, say, a wardrobe or police box.) It must be large enough for an adult human to pass through whatever serves as the base's entrance. Headquarters that have no "exterior" structure, such as an extra-dimensional fortress accessed by a magical talisman, do not have this feature, but instead have things like Dimensional Portal, Isolated, and the like.

## ELECTRONIC COUNTER-MEASURES

## RANKED

Attempts using mundane technology (infra-red sensors, laser microphones, bugs, etc.) to spy on the headquarters suffer a -2 penalty to do so per rank of this feature.

The Gamemaster may instead allow this penalty to apply to other forms of spying, such as arcane scrying or the like. Doing so means it won't apply to ordinary technology without purchasing this feature separately for each such instance.

## EMERGENCY ARRESTING SYSTEM

Typically only used in headquarters built as vehicles or that otherwise fly, the facility is equipped with an emergency system that will respond to the headquarters falling from its proper location by attempting to arrest such movement.

When falling, a parachute, retro engine, or the like (as appropriate to the headquarters' technology level

and environment) deploys and slows its descent to a rate of 10 feet per round. Even at such a slower rate, damage may still be suffered because of the environment or other conditions.

## EMERGENCY FLOATATION SYSTEM

The headquarters is equipped with a means of floatation (typically inflatable devices) or is inherently buoyant, even if it is not intended to be waterborne. It will easily float if placed in water or similar liquid, and will rise to the surface at the rate of 20 feet per round if forcibly submerged. Only damaging the floatation system will cause the headquarters to sink.

Headquarters built specifically to operate on or under water, such as one built with the Swimming effect, do not require this feature to be seaworthy. However, there may be problems without it if their usual means of floatation is denied.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Each room may be sealed off into a separate section so its conditions may be adapted to that of various different environments. For instance, Living Space could be filled with water and adapted to house a visiting aquatic alien.

Typically, changing a room's environment takes a minute and can be performed from the room in question or any major computer terminal or control room within the headquarters. In general, any somewhat normal environment can be made—one filled with common elements, gasses, or extreme temperature conditions—the Gamemaster may disallow unusual environments such as those involving magic or the like.

## ESCAPE TUNNEL

## RANKED

The headquarters has one escape tunnel (or like means of covert egress, such as an escape pod) into the surrounding area per PL of the headquarters. The tunnels (or whatever) may lead up to a mile away from the facility. A Perception check (DC 20), +5 per additional rank, is required to find such a hidden exit.

## FIRE PREVENTION SYSTEM

## RANKED

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 as a Nullify Fire 5 effect—increase

the power's ranks by +2 per additional feature rank. 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.)

## FOOD SUPPLY

## RANKED

The headquarters is capable of producing enough food and water for its residents, representing such things as a hydroponics farm or food replication machines. Every additional rank of this feature doubles the amount of people the feature can feed comfortably.

## GAME ROOM

A game room is filled with entertainment and recreational devices, be they televisions, video games, pool tables, pinball or the like. If large enough, it can even include a theater. This can be varied to suit individual tastes.

## GARAGE

A garage houses ground vehicles, and includes a ramp, elevator, or other access to move vehicles in and out, facilities for repairing and maintaining vehicles, and a sliding access door.

## GROUNDS

## RANKED

In addition to the actual building(s) of the headquarters, it has a considerable area of land surrounding it. An HQ can have surrounding land equal to its size category at no cost, without having this feature. Possessing the feature provides grounds sized for a headquarters one size bigger per feature rank.

If the headquarters has features like Defense System and Security System, they also extend over the grounds (with fences, sensors, weapon emplacements, and so forth.)

## 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.

## HABITAT

A portion of the headquarters is given over to an artificial environment suitable for certain plants or animals.

# Appendix: Original Format Headquarters Design

It may be a greenhouse, arboretum, zoo, or even “living laboratory” with a self-contained ecosystem. The habitat may serve primarily as a place of rest and quiet contemplation, a home for pets or rare creatures, or have more practical uses. These may include generating oxygen (from plants) or the growth of food for the inhabitants of the installation.

## HANGAR

A hangar houses air and space vehicles. 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 means of access to the outside.

## HERO POINT BANK

## RANKED

Every rank of this feature grants the headquarters a hero point to draw upon instead of using those of operators/owners (such as characters.) These points may only be spent in cooperation with the headquarters’ own inherent features and traits (such as powers.) They cannot be spent on its residents, operators, or anyone else unless the feature or trait is specifically designed to affect such people, as is the case with the Amplifier feature.

Whoever is in control of the headquarters decides how and when such hero points are used.

Spent hero points regenerate at a rate of 1 per week.

## HOLDING CELLS

## RANKED

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 HQ PL) or their basic Toughness is increased by 50%, which option should be agreed upon by both player and Gamemaster (both options may be purchased for two ranks.) Making the cells’ Toughness Impervious requires 1 rank, as does transforming the cells into “Punishment” cells (add an Affliction effect at the installation’s PL), or “Sleeper” cells (add an Affliction effect at the installation’s PL that keeps prisoners incapacitated.

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 death-trap.

## INFIRMARY

An infirmary consists of hospital beds and equipment for the full use of the Treatment skill. An infirmary can provide treatment for a number of characters equal to the base’s PL at one time. It can be assumed to have the necessary facilities to handle any unusual physiology of the base’s owner(s.)

## INTELLIGENT

The headquarters includes an intelligence of some sort, such as an artificial intelligence computer program or possessing spirit. Build the intelligence as a construct that is confined to the headquarters under the same restrictions as used for building HQ powers and special abilities. This construct is built with as many points as are provided by half the headquarters’ PL.

## INVENTOR LAB

An Inventor Lab has all the facilities for making various devices. It includes tools, workbenches, supplies, and so forth. The Gamemaster may rule certain projects require a dedicated Inventor Lab of their own (which is an additional feature.) This replaces the ability to use a Workshop to create inventions, as per the core rules.

## 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 doesn’t provide characters with the means to get to the base or travel back. They need the appropriate powers, a vehicle, or a separate base feature.

## KENNEL / PEN

A kennel or animal pen contains and cares for the needs of animals. The area may be comprised entirely of, or in combination, stalls, cages, roosts, and dens, along with standard tools of animal husbandry. An infirmary feature may be purchased to care for animals by applying its full effects to animals instead of humans, with humans suffering a penalty if cared for within the facility.

## KITCHEN / MESS HALL

A Kitchen provides the space, appliances, and other tools necessary for storing, preserving, and preparing food. Also included is the space required for serving the food in either a basic form (long tables with benches or simple chairs) or luxury form (fine dining.)

## LABORATORY, BASIC

A Basic Laboratory is a facility for 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 a Basic Laboratory to perform research, study unusual phenomena (including many super-powers), and so forth. A Basic Laboratory may be required for certain Expertise or Technology skill checks, or provide a circumstance bonus to those checks.

Optionally, a Basic Laboratory can be dedicated to a particular skill. This grants a +5 bonus to any of those skill checks, but imposes a -5 penalty to all others due to the specialized nature of its equipment. Specialized Basic Laboratories must be purchased and expanded separate from other laboratories.

## LABORATORY, CRIME

A Crime Laboratory contains all the necessary scientific equipment, including dedicated and enclosed computer network (connecting it to the overall network is a free option if the headquarters has its own basic or advanced computer feature) needed to analyze clues and evidence using the Expertise: Criminology and Investigation skills. This includes ballistic and chemical testing, and may provide a circumstance bonus.

## LANDMARK

The headquarters is well known, and carries a definite meaning and significance to those who live in the vicinity or interact with it in other ways (such as it being a tourist stop.)

To see how people will react to the landmark, the headquarters makes a Persuasion check of as many ranks as the headquarters' PL. A tyrant's headquarters would likely consider the people around it to be "hostile" for the sake of their attitude on the Persuasion skill's Attitudes table because they see the place as a symbol of their slavery. The headquarters of heroes who regularly

save the world and perform charity work, on the other hand, would likely consider their neighbors "favorable" or even "helpful," and so they may rush to help the heroes if the facility came under attack.

Gamemasters should use their best judgment and consider ongoing circumstances and recent events, as well as the people involved, when deciding what any given third-party's attitude towards the headquarters will be.

## LIBRARY

A library allows for use of various knowledge-based Expertise skills when doing research. A library may consist of printed matter (books and periodicals), microfilm, digital files, or a combination of all three. A library may facilitate certain Expertise skill checks and provide a circumstance bonus for them, or allow them to be made as routine checks. The Library may also allow the character to use untrained some skills that are not normally allowed to be used untrained, unless the information being researched is particularly obscure (in the Gamemaster's judgment.)

## LIVING SPACE, BARRACKS

This is a cramped living area where people have little space to call their own beyond a bed, small wardrobe/closet, and nightstand or footlocker. This feature is usually united through several purchases to create Barracks for common minions or crews who are not expected to enjoy much in the way of perks.

Characters can live in a headquarters lacking living quarters for a short-term, but they're not likely to be very comfortable. Reducing the already pitiful comfort level and changing the beds to bunk beds at no additional cost can double the amount of people accommodated.

## LIVING SPACE, BASIC

The headquarters includes all the necessary amenities for people to live there full-time. It includes separate bedrooms, a small living area, and shared washroom.

## LIVING SPACE, LUXURY

Outfitted for occupants to live in comfort, this single living unit consists of a bedroom, living area, small dining area, and private washroom each. Additional luxuries (hot tubs, private sauna, etc.) may be added, although a Gamemaster may require additional points be spent for the more expensive perks.

## MOTOR POOL

## RANKED

The headquarters is equipped with a supply of vehicles, all of which are ready from your headquarters at a moment's notice. You begin with one vehicle with each additional vehicle requiring another rank in this feature (essentially buying them as Alternate Effects.)

Each vehicle has as many points to spend on designing as your headquarters' PL  $\times 5$ .

You cannot have more or larger vehicles in your motor pool than the headquarters' Garage, Hangar, or Dock feature can accommodate. If destroyed, a vehicle takes 1 week per PL of the headquarters to replace unless a character spends their own points to acquire replacements sooner.

A Motor Pool must be purchased separately for each general type of vehicle (land, air, or water) to be accommodated by the Hangar, Garage, and/or Dock feature, appropriately.

## MOVABLE

The headquarters is capable of relocating from one place to another, but it is not as capable as a vehicle in that regard. Generally speaking, moving the headquarters is a significant undertaking that can only occur (at most) once per game session, and probably less often than that. This may be due to the need to charge powerful batteries, make complex calculations, wait for the right alignment of mystic energies, or any number of other reasons.

The key point is that the headquarters isn't particularly useful for getting from place-to-place within the context of a single adventure. However, it may move between adventures, and even serve as a primary means of conveying characters to adventures, such as a "Tower Beyond Time" that shifts from dimension to dimension, with each dimensional shift heralding a new locale and a new adventure.

As a 0-cost Feature, the headquarters moves about beyond the occupants' ability to control. This may require the occupants devise some special means of tracking it or even entering it.

## MYSTIC LOCALE

A headquarters with this feature is built on a location of mystic power and significance, granting extra arcane powers to anyone attuned to such energies.

Characters living in the headquarters will become attuned to the energies after as many weeks as the HQ's PL. Other characters may become attuned by first detecting or otherwise taking note of the energies, performing a ritual requiring  $(8 \times \text{HQ PL})$  hours, and then succeeding at an Expertise: Magic check (DC 10, + HQ PL.)

Anyone attuned to the locale may spontaneously cast spells, as per using a hero point to perform a Power Stunt. No actual hero point is spent, however, and the character does not become fatigued. Each character may make use of his ability as many times per day as the headquarters' PL.

## PERSONNEL

The HQ has a staff of personnel commensurate with its size and facilities. The staff is made up of characters created and controlled by the Gamemaster, and tasked with servicing the headquarters. As such, they shouldn't be considered all-purpose Minions of the occupant(s.)

A base's personnel may help defend it in case of attack, but they're not going to go out on missions or otherwise assist outside of their duties. This feature simply ensures there's someone taking care of the place while the owner isn't at home.

Note that a headquarters' personnel do not have to be ordinary humans. They could be service robots, magical golems, animated skeletons, enslaved aliens, trained apes, or just about anything else the Gamemaster chooses to fit with the theme of the base and its owner(s.)

The following guidelines may be helpful in describing and defining installation Personnel in game terms.

- Personnel should always be considered minions. Non-minions should be regular non-player characters rather than personnel.
- Personnel should not be useful outside of the context of the headquarters for the most part. Underlings who accompany characters away from the headquarters should be acquired via Summon, Minions, or Sidekick.
- Personnel are subject to the PL limits of the headquarters and the game, and the Gamemaster may require them to be even lower level (6 or less, for example.)
- Personnel can create complications for the headquarters' owners of the installation, ranging from the need to protect them from potential harm (or rescue them from danger) to interpersonal conflicts or even betrayals.

## POOL

The headquarters has a temperature-controlled Pool. At the owner's discretion, a 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 SYSTEM

A power system makes the headquarters entirely independent of outside power. It has its own generators (which may be solar, geothermal, nuclear, cosmic, or anything else the designer wants) that provide for the facility's entire power needs. The headquarters also has emergency back-up power should the generators fail. The backup power generally lasts for a number of hours equal to the HQ's PL.

## REMOTE FEATURE

One of the headquarters' features is separate from the main structure. For example, a laboratory in an isolated area (for safety and security) or a hangar high in the mountains overlooking a facility in a valley far below. This feature is not typically necessary if the isolated feature is still upon the grounds (if that feature is also possessed) unless being at a remote location is highly unusual.

## RITUAL CHAMBER

A Ritual Chamber has all the facilities for creating and casting magic rituals. It includes tools, supplies, and so forth. The Gamemaster may rule certain rituals require a dedicated Ritual Chamber of their own (which is an additional feature.)

## SEALED

This is similar to the Isolated feature, except the lair is sealed off from the outside world rather than isolated by geographic location. It may be a structure with no doors, windows, or other outside access. Only the lair's owner and designated guests may enter, although the Gamemaster should determine means by which trespassers might do so, including effects like Dimensional Travel, Insubstantial, Permeate, and Teleport.

## SECURITY SYSTEM

Various locks and alarms protect the headquarters from unauthorized access. A Technology check (DC 20) overcomes these systems. Each additional feature rank

increases the DC by +5, to a maximum of DC 40. 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.)

## SELF-DESTRUCT

This feature means the headquarters is equipped with explosives, a devastating power overload function, or something similar that will destroy the facility. The self-destruct requires a password, key, or similar precaution be activated to begin the countdown or immediate destruction.

It is up to the characters and the headquarters' concept whether the countdown will be audible throughout the facility.

Upon self-destruct, the headquarters is destroyed and everyone within must make a Toughness check versus a Damage effect of  $(10 + \text{the headquarters' PL})$  ranks. Anyone within  $(5 \text{ feet} \times \text{PL})$  of the headquarters is attacked by an explosion with a Damage rank equal to the PL. This is half fire and half bludgeoning Damage, although the Gamemaster and player may agree to change it to something else.

## SELF-REPAIRING

## RANKED

The structure of the headquarters "heals" any Damage done to it over time. Essentially, it recovers like a character does. For two ranks, the structure will even rebuild itself in a week if it is destroyed! If it cannot rebuild in its original location, it reappears in the nearest suitable place.

## SOVEREIGN

The headquarters is recognized as a sovereign nation or as belonging to a nation other than that of the soil upon which it rests. This feature may be used to construct embassies or the like, as well as small, independent nations.

Local law enforcement has no jurisdiction within the headquarters, but thwarting local authorities may have long-term disadvantages in terms of a lack of cooperation and trouble from higher levels of government.

Characters living in the headquarters require using the Benefit (Diplomatic Immunity) advantage to gain the same standing when not upon the facility's grounds.

# Appendix: Original Format Headquarters Design

## TELEPORT LOCK

The headquarters emits a “beacon” or “lock” for certain Teleport effects, making the headquarters a “well-known location.” This effectively makes teleporting to it Accurate (as the extra) so long as the character is going to the headquarters, has the right Teleport descriptor(s), and is authorized. This is a common “escape hatch” for villains to quickly teleport back to their hidden lair, should plans go awry.

## TEMPORAL WARP

Time within the headquarters actually moves at a different rate than that of the world outside! Time within the structure is either slowed or sped up compared to the normal passage of time, passing at half or twice the normal rate. Each additional rank of this feature halves again or doubles the ratio of time passage, as appropriate: one-quarter or four times, one-eighth or eight times, and so forth.

This time differential allows a character within an accelerated Temporal Warp to spend additional time planning, building, or recovering while little or no time passes outside, for example. Conversely, it allows characters in a slowed Temporal Warp to pass great amounts of time outside without aging, perhaps allowing for long periods of self-imposed exile or contemplation.

## TRANSLOCATION

## RANKED

Headquarters with this feature are special abnormalities that exist in multiple locations at once. The headquarters may exist simultaneously at up to one additional location per rank of this feature.

The headquarters may be interacted with normally at each location, and normally has the same appearance regardless of where it is, but this can be changed if desired (although the size remains unchanged.) Characters interacting with the outside world, including leaving the headquarters, may mentally specify which location of the headquarters they seek to interact with. Alternatively, they may be required to exit in different ways to appear at the intended location.

## UNTRACEABLE

## RANKED

Attempts to track anyone coming to or directly leaving the headquarters within its immediate vicinity suffers a -10 penalty to do so, regardless of the skill being used (typically Perception.)

## VAULT

This feature represents a reinforced, lockable container located somewhere within the headquarters. Picking the lock requires a Technology (security) check (DC 20.) The vault door and interior walls have a Toughness equal to that of the headquarters, plus 50%. Each additional rank of this feature increases the Technology check DC by +5.

Alternatively, the Gamemaster may allow the lock to be of an alternative sort, such as a voice recognition system. This would require a skill or ability check other than Technology (security) be designated as one that may circumvent it.

## WAR ROOM

This room is fitted with strategy computers, whiteboards, wall screens or holographic emitters, and the like (depending on the technology level) needed to plan and monitor strategy and tactics for ongoing and current engagements.

The computers contain their own database that allows unskilled Expertise: Tactics checks. These systems may optionally be networked to the headquarters' overall computer feature (if it exists), although this may not be desired for security reasons.

## WEAKENED REALITY

The fabric of reality around the headquarters is especially weak, allowing certain powers to operate more effectively than normal. Reality warping or dimension-related powers receive a bonus to any power checks equal to the headquarters' PL. This bonus only applies to powers used inside the headquarters.

This feature attracts a wide variety of other-dimensional visitors and creatures to the headquarters, meaning the characters will regularly have unexpected visitors appearing on their doorstep.

## WORKSHOP

A workshop has all the facilities for making various things. It includes tools, workbenches, supplies, and so forth. The Gamemaster may rule certain projects require a dedicated workshop of their own (which is an additional feature.)

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