

- REVISED EDITION -

TRUE 20

TM

ADVENTURE
ROLEPLAYING



TM

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REVISED EDITION

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FOREWORD TO THE REVISED EDITION

Welcome to the latest incarnation of *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*, a set of rules intended to give you the tools you need to create fun and exciting heroes and tell stories of their adventures in genres from fantasy and science fiction to horror and modern action-adventure. As a product of the Open Game License, the basics of *True20* are fundamentally familiar to many, if not most, roleplaying gamers, but its approach is to simplify and consolidate. We hope you enjoy *True20*, as it is the result of years of design, development, game-play, and publishing. Indeed, it has been a long, and often winding, path.

THE ORIGINS OF TRUE20, TAKE II

In the original hardcover edition, Green Ronin President Chris Pramas talked about how *True20* got started. The story is similar from my side of things, although I wasn't involved until a bit later.

True20 started with *Blue Rose*, the RPG of Romantic Fantasy. The idea behind *Blue Rose* was to introduce new players to fantasy roleplaying with an untapped genre and a simpler, more self-contained system than currently available under the Open Game License (OGL) and associated System Reference Document (SRD). Shortly after I came on-board as a full-time developer with Green Ronin, the *Blue Rose* project ended up on my desk and I worked on redesigning the SRD material, stripping it down to a more essential game system, with the aid of series editor Jeremy Crawford.

As development on *Blue Rose* went forward, we decided we needed a name for its unique game system, which was no longer the familiar *d20 System*, although it shared many similar elements. Chris suggested “*True20*” (because the system used and required *only* a single d20, and no other dice, to play) and the name stuck.

The release of *Blue Rose* in 2005 met with success, and the *True20* system found many fans even among those who weren't interested in a Romantic Fantasy RPG. *Blue Rose* even won a silver EN World Award for Best Rules! Although we had discussed the potential for using *True20* as a basis for other stand-alone RPGs, we did not at the time have any plans for a stand-alone *True20* rulebook, without an associated setting.

As fans kept asking for one, we decided to go ahead with it. We first released a no-frills “beta” PDF edition, just the rules from *Blue Rose*. That simple PDF because our best-selling electronic product! Meanwhile, we began developing a full-featured *True20* core rulebook, adding material to expand the game to cover a wide range of genres. We also sponsored a setting search contest in conjunction with a new license for *True20* products. The hardcover edition of *True20 Adventure Roleplaying* released in 2006, followed by several support products like the *True20 Companion* and *Worlds of Adventure*.

After a successful run, as it came time to reprint the *True20* rulebook, we decided to take it to the next logical step. The *True20 Companion* greatly expanded the options for particular genres, so we removed the contest-winning sample settings (many spun off into their own successful lines) and added the entire contents of the *Companion* to the core rules. We also cleaned up unclear text and corrected all known errata, making this *Revised Edition* the most complete and up-to-date version of *True20* yet!

Although the game has come a long way in just a few short years, with this *Revised Edition* the *True20* story is really just beginning. It coincides with the creation of a free *True20* Trademark License, and even broader third-party support to ensure *True20* players and fans many adventures to come. There's never been a better time to enjoy all that *True20 Adventure Roleplaying* has to offer, and I look forward to seeing what lies ahead.

May all your adventures be true!

Steve Kenson
True20 designer and developer
 March, 2008



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to worlds of adventure! *True20 Adventure Roleplaying* is everything you need to create fun and fantastic storytelling adventures. It is a game of heroes, villains, action and excitement, where you choose the course the story takes! This **Introduction** provides you with an overview of what *True20* is and how it works. The later chapters show you how to create heroes and your own exciting adventures and then offer you several worlds in which to create them. Whether you are new to the world of adventure roleplaying games or this is your first, welcome! You have opened the door to whole new worlds of your imagination.

WHAT IS ROLEPLAYING?

A roleplaying game like *True20* uses imagination and a set of simple rules to allow a group of people to work together to create and tell stories through the medium of fictional characters. Let's look at these major factors of the game:

IMAGINATION

A roleplaying game takes place entirely in the imagination of the players and in their descriptions of the story. It's like an extended session of "let's pretend" that we played as kids. There is no board and no playing pieces to move about, although some players may choose to use maps, miniature figures, or other visual aids to help tell the story more clearly. Everything in the story—from the main characters to the plot to the events—exists in the players' imaginations, with guidance from the Narrator.

RULES

A roleplaying game has rules to serve both as a common vocabulary for describing things in the story and as guidelines for determining the outcome of different events in the story as it progresses. If the game is like a childhood session of "let's pretend," then the rules are there to help provide more of a framework and to avoid some of the inevitable disputes over what "really" happened when two or more players disagree.

COOPERATION

Roleplaying games are cooperative experiences: the players are not pitted against each other and the goal of the game isn't for one player to "win," it's for everyone to tell and share in a fun story. Even though the Narrator often portrays the villains of the story and puts obstacles in the heroes' path, it's not even about the players vs. the Narrator, but how the whole group works together to create an exciting adventure. How exciting would an adventure be without villains or obstacles to overcome?

STORIES

Telling a fun and exciting story is the point of a roleplaying adventure game. The Narrator comes up with a plot and supporting characters, the players come up with characters and play out their interaction with the plot, spinning off new events and outcomes, and the story develops with help and guidance from the rules and the Narrator. When the story is done, you have a complete tale to look back on, but the fun is making and experiencing the story as it happens.

CHARACTERS

The players create fictional characters as their vehicles for interacting with and experiencing the adventure. Part of the fun of roleplaying games is you can pretend to be someone else for a little while: a larger-than-life hero, a rough-and-tumble outsider, a tortured anti-hero, or whatever else you can imagine that fits the sort of story your group wants to tell.

AN EXAMPLE OF ROLEPLAYING

Let's take a look at a roleplaying adventure game session in progress. Andy is the Narrator, guiding the players through a story about a band of brave heroes exploring an ancient—and supposedly haunted—ruin in a fantasy world. The players are Kelly, Liz, Mike, and Sean.

Andy (Narrator): The antechamber is dark, lit only by thin shafts of moonlight slanting in through the broken windows and the light of your lantern. Broken glass and crumbled stone crunch loosely underfoot, and the dark doorways off this chamber loom pitch black, two off to either side of you.

Kelly: Let's go through the first doorway to our right and see what's there.

Sean: Maybe we should split up and look around.

Mike: No, it's better if we all stay together, just in case.

Andy: So, are you going through the first doorway?

(The players nod agreement.)

Andy: Who's going first?

Mike (playing the armored warrior Valin): I will.

Andy: Valin steps through the doorway and there's a sudden flurry of movement, a flapping of leathery wings! A dark cloud swirls out around you...

Liz: What is it?

Andy: ...then the swarm of bats rush past into the antechamber.

Sean: Bats!

Mike: Whew! Okay, I go in and see what's in there.

Andy: Mike, what's Valin's Notice bonus?

Mike (checking his character's sheet): It's a +5.

(Andy makes a die roll to determine what Mike's character can notice immediately upon entering the room. He doesn't tell Mike the result, since Valin would have no way of knowing that he failed to notice something.)

Liz: I'm going to keep an eye out for anything behind us.

Andy: Okay, Liz, Elspeth glances back into the room as Valin moves through the door. Mike, the room beyond looks like it might have been a library or something similar once. There are tall shelves lining most of the walls, or at least there were before they rotted and collapsed. Any books, scrolls, or other reading materials have long since decayed, but the heavy flagstone fireplace remains largely intact. Just then, a strange moaning comes from the cold, dark hearth.

Sean: The wind?

Kelly: A ghost?

Which is it? Our brave heroes will have to investigate and see! If it is a ghost, how will they deal with it and rid the house of its curse? What if it's not a ghost at all, but someone who wants others to think the ruin is haunted? Or, for that matter, what if it's just the wind, but there is actually a supernatural force at work? It's entirely up to you, with your imagination as the only limit.

THE BASICS

True20 provides a framework for your imagination. It has rules to describe your character's traits, help you decide what happens in your stories and resolve conflicts between the heroes and the challenges they face. With it, any adventure you can imagine is possible.

To play, you need a copy of the *True20* rules; a twenty-sided die, available at game and hobby stores; and a pencil and some paper. You might want copies of the *True20* character record sheet found in the **Appendix** as well.

THE CORE SYSTEM

True20 uses a core or central game system to resolve actions. Whenever your character attempts any action with a chance of failure, do the following:

1. Roll a twenty-sided die (abbreviated d20).
2. Add any relevant modifiers (for things like abilities, skills, and circumstances).
3. Compare the total to a number called the action's *Difficulty* (set by the Narrator based on the circumstances).

If the result equals or exceeds the *Difficulty*, the action succeeds. If the result is lower than the *Difficulty*, the action fails. This simple system is used for nearly everything in *True20*, with variations based on the modifiers added to a roll, the *Difficulty*, and the effects of success and failure.

THE NARRATOR

One of the players in a *True20* game takes the role of Narrator. The Narrator is responsible for running the game and is a combination of writer, director, and referee. The Narrator creates adventures for the heroes, portrays the villains and supporting characters, describes the world, and decides the outcome of the heroes' actions based on the guidelines given in the rules.

It's a big job, but also a rewarding one, since the Narrator gets to create the setting and the various characters in it, as well as inventing fun and exciting plots. If you're going to be a Narrator, you should read through this whole book carefully. You should have a firm grasp of the setting and rules, since you're expected to interpret them for the players.

IF YOU'RE A GAMER...

Then odds are you've seen a lot of the stuff in this **Introduction** before, in one form or another, possibly many times.

If *True20* is not your first roleplaying game, and you're already familiar with the whys and wherefores of the hobby, you might want to skip ahead to **The Basics** to see how the game is played. On the other hand, you might find it useful to read over the whole **Introduction** just to get a feel for some of the ideas behind *True20* and how it works.

For those experienced with other RPGs, *True20* is a "rules-lighter" game system aimed at creating fun stories. No doubt this will be a basis for some sort of critique, but the "purpose" of the game is neither to be "rules-light" nor to focus on "storytelling" as such, but to have fun with a group of friends. Wouldn't be much of a game otherwise, would it?

...OR IF YOU'VE PLAYED BEFORE

If you're familiar with earlier versions of the *True20* system, found in *Blue Rose* and the first electronic edition of *True20* published by Green Ronin, you'll still want to read this **Introduction** and the following chapters carefully, since there have been a number of minor corrections, updates, and changes in the rules to make them consistent, compatible, and playable overall.

Experienced *True20* players are going to want to start re-reading **The Basics**, then go on to the hero creation chapters, followed by **Chapter Six: Playing the Game** to get a good feel for how things work.

HEROES

The other players in a *True20* game create heroes—the main characters of their own adventure series, like an ongoing series of short stories or novels. As a player, you create your hero following the guidelines in this book, with the assistance and guidance of your Narrator, building the sort of hero you want to play. There are several components to creating a hero, outlined here and described in detail in the following chapters.

ABILITIES

All heroes have certain basic *abilities* that define what they are capable of doing. These abilities are Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. They each have a numeric *ability score*, averaging 0 for a normally capable human. Higher ability scores are bonuses (+1 to +5 or more), while lower ability scores are penalties (as low as -5). As part of creating your hero, you decide how strong, smart, and tough your hero is by choosing the appropriate ability scores. See **Chapter One: Hero Creation** for more information.

ROLE

Heroes fall into one of three *roles* that define the part they play in the story. *Adepts* are intellectual and knowledgeable heroes focused on supernatural powers. *Experts* are heroes specializing in various skills. *Warriors* are heroes specializing in fighting and combat. Your hero's role determines things like fighting ability, saving throw bonuses, and available feats.

SKILLS

Skills represent training in a particular sort of task or knowledge, everything from acrobatic maneuvers to negotiation, riding a horse, and ancient lore. Someone trained in climbing is able to climb faster and with more confidence than someone who isn't, for example. Skills are measured in *ranks*, reflecting how much training a character has in the skill. Skill ranks act as a bonus when a hero attempts an action related to a skill. You choose the skills your hero knows from a list of available skills. See **Chapter Two: Skills** for more information.

FEATS

Feats are special abilities, representing talents or special training. They allow your hero to do things others can't or give your hero some other advantage. You select your hero's feats based on what you want your hero to be able to do. Heroes acquire new feats as they improve. See **Chapter Three: Feats** for more information.

GAME PLAY

A session of *True20* resembles one or more chapters from a novel. The Narrator and the players get together and tell a story by playing the game. The length of the game session can vary, from an hour or two to four hours or more. Some adventures are completed in a single session, while others take many sessions. You can choose when to stop playing, and you can start up again anytime later.

Just like a story, a *True20* adventure consists of a series of *scenes*. Some scenes are fairly straightforward, with the heroes interacting with each other and the supporting cast. In these cases the Narrator generally just asks the players to describe what their heroes are doing and in turn describes how the other characters react and what they say and do.

When the action starts happening, such as when the heroes are staving off a disaster or fighting villains, time becomes more crucial and is broken down into *rounds*, each six seconds long, and the players generally have to make die rolls to see how well their heroes do.

DIE ROLLS

There are a number of different die rolls in *True20*, although they all follow the core system of a d20 roll plus modifiers versus a Difficulty. The three main die rolls in *True20* are checks, attack rolls, and saving throws.

CHECKS

To make a check, roll a d20 and add your modifier for the appropriate trait (ability, skill, and so forth). You always want to roll high. Rolling 20 before adding modifiers (called a natural 20) is not an automatic success, and rolling 1 before adding modifiers (a natural 1) is not an automatic failure, unlike attack rolls, which differ from checks (see Attack Rolls later in this Introduction and Chapter Six for more information).

Check = d20 + modifier versus Difficulty

DIFFICULTY

A check's Difficulty is a number set by the Narrator that you must equal or exceed with your check result to succeed. So, for a task with a Difficulty of 15, you must have a check result of 15 or better to succeed. In some cases, the consequences of a check vary based on how much higher or lower the result is than the Difficulty.

SAMPLE DIFFICULTIES

Difficulty	Example (Skill Used)
Very easy (0)	Notice something large in plain sight (Notice)
Easy (5)	Climb a knotted rope with a wall to brace against (Climb)
Average (10)	Hear an approaching guard (Notice)
Tough (15)	Rig a wagon wheel to fall off (Disable Device)
Challenging (20)	Swim in stormy water (Swim)
Formidable (25)	Pick an average quality lock (Disable Device)
Heroic (30)	Leap across a 25-foot chasm (Jump)
Superheroic (35)	Convince the guards that even though they've never seen you before, they should let you into the fortress (Bluff)
Nearly impossible (40)	Track an expert hunter through the woods on a moonless night after days of rainfall (Survival)

OPPOSED CHECKS

Some checks are opposed checks. They are made against the result of someone else's check. Whoever gets the higher result wins. An example is trying to bluff someone. You make a Bluff check, while the Narrator makes a Sense Motive check for your target. If you beat the target's Sense Motive check result, you succeed.

For ties on opposed checks, the character with the higher modifier wins. If the modifiers are the same, re-roll.

OPPOSED CHECK EXAMPLES

Task	Skill	Opposing Skill
Sneak up on someone	Stealth	Notice
Con someone	Bluff	Sense Motive
Hide from someone	Stealth	Notice
Win a horse race	Ride	Ride
Pretend to be someone else	Disguise	Notice
Steal a key chain	Sleight of Hand	Notice

TRYING AGAIN

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



CIRCUMSTANCE MODIFIERS

Some circumstances make a check easier or harder, resulting in a bonus or penalty to the modifier for the check or a change to the check's Difficulty.

The Narrator can alter the odds of success in four ways:

- Grant a +2 bonus to represent circumstances improving performance.
- Grant a -2 penalty to represent circumstances hampering performance.
- Reduce the Difficulty by 2 to represent circumstances making the task easier.
- Increase the Difficulty by 2 to represent circumstances making the task harder.

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

TIME AND CHECKS

Performing a particular task may take a round, several rounds, or even no real time at all. Most checks are move actions, standard actions, or full-round actions. Some checks are instant and represent reactions to an event, or are included as part of another action. Other checks represent part of movement. The distance the character jumps when making a Jump check, for example, is part of the character's move action. Some checks take more than a round to use, and the rules specify how long these tasks require. See The Combat Round later in this chapter for more information.

TOOLS

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

A character may be able to put together impromptu tools to make the check. If the Narrator allows this, reduce the penalty to -2 (instead of -4). It usually takes some time (several minutes to an hour or more) to collect or create a set of impromptu tools, and it may require an additional check as well.

CHECKS WITHOUT ROLLS

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

WHEN TO ROLL DICE

True20 provides systems to handle most situations likely to come up during a game, but these systems are just guidelines. Ultimately, it's up to the Narrator to decide exactly what happens in any given situation. The Narrator also decides when various checks and other die rolls are necessary to resolve a situation.

Generally speaking, it's possible to handle a lot of challenges and routine issues in the game using the guidelines given in this section, particularly the rules for taking 1, 5, 10 and 20, and comparison checks. For example, if you know a hero can simply take 10 and succeed at a task under routine circumstances, there's no reason to bother rolling dice; just assume the hero succeeds and move on. This helps to maintain the narrative flow of the game and makes the times when you *do* start rolling dice more dramatic, since all the focus is on the action.

TAKING 1

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

TAKING 5

Rather than rolling a check, you can choose to take 5. Calculate your result as if you had rolled a 5 on the die. Taking 5 is sufficient to automatically succeed on an easy (Difficulty 5) task, assuming a base modifier of +0. For more difficult tasks, you need a greater bonus (from higher abilities or skill ranks) to take 5 and succeed. Otherwise, you need to use one of the following options, or roll the die and take your chances.

TAKING 10

When you are not in a rush and not threatened or distracted, you can choose to take 10. Instead of rolling for the check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 10. For average (Difficulty 10) tasks, taking 10 allows you to succeed automatically, assuming a base modifier of +0. Unlike taking 1 or 5, you cannot take 10 if distracted or under pressure (such as in a combat or action situation). The Narrator decides when this is the case.

TAKING 20

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

COMPARISON CHECKS

In cases where a "check" is actually a simple test of one character's capabilities against another, with no luck involved, the one with the higher modifier or score wins. Just as you wouldn't make a "height check" to see who's taller, you don't need to make a Strength check to see who's stronger. The ability scores tell you that. When two characters arm wrestle, for example, the stronger character wins. In the case of identical bonuses or scores, just roll the die, with the highest roll winning.

CHALLENGES

Challenges reflect a capable character's ability to perform some tasks with superior panache and efficiency. They allow heroes to achieve greater results by making already difficult checks harder.

To take a challenge, increase a check's Difficulty by 5 or suffer a -5 penalty to the check result. In return, you gain an extra benefit in



addition to the normal effects of a successful check. If you fail due to the penalty or increased Difficulty, however, you suffer the normal results of failure. Note that, if failing by more than a certain margin imposes a particular outcome, you suffer that outcome as normal if you fail to meet your newly increased Difficulty. For example, a character who misses a Disable Device check by 10 or more accidentally sets off the device. If the standard Difficulty is 20 and your challenge increases it to 25, then you accidentally set off the device with a skill check result of 15 or less, instead of the usual 10 or less.

You can accept more than one challenge to a check. In some cases, you can take a challenge more than once to gain its benefits multiple times. These are noted in the challenge descriptions.

Generally, challenges allow you to gain added benefits when you face a relatively low Difficulty and have a high modifier. You can also use challenges to attempt heroic actions, even when faced with a high Difficulty. In these cases, spending a Conviction point can help ensure success with all the added benefits of the successful challenge.

STANDARD CHALLENGES

The challenges in this section apply to any ability or skill check. The Narrator has final say as to whether a challenge applies to a specific situation. Each challenge imposes either a +5 modifier to a check's Difficulty or a -5 penalty to the check result.

FAST TASK

You reduce the time needed to complete the check. If the check is normally a full-round action, it becomes a standard action. A standard action becomes a move action, while a move action becomes a free action. For checks requiring time in rounds, minutes, or longer, reduce the time needed by 25 percent per challenge. You cannot make a check as a free action via challenges if it normally requires a standard action or longer.

CALCULATED RISK

You can take a calculated risk on one check to make a follow-up check easier. For example, you could use Disable Device to overcome an initial

safeguard to make disarming the whole trap easier. If you succeed at this challenge, you gain a bonus on the second check equal to the total penalty you accepted on the first. The two checks must be related and the first, penalized, check must carry some consequence for failure (that is, it cannot be a check where you can take 20).

SIMULTANEOUS TASKS

You can accept a challenge in order to perform two checks simultaneously. To attempt simultaneous checks, make the challenge check, followed by a second check using the same or a different trait. Your secondary check suffers a -10 penalty or a +10 increase in Difficulty. The combined task requires the same time as the longest normal task, so if both tasks require a standard action, you accomplish the simultaneous use in a single standard action rather than two.

In addition to these standard challenges, various skills have specific challenges associated with them. These are given in the skill's description in **Chapter Two**.

AID

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

TYPES OF CHECKS

There are three main types of checks: skill checks, ability checks, and power checks.



SKILL CHECKS

A skill check determines what you can accomplish with a particular skill (sometimes whether you're trained in that skill or not). It is a roll of d20 + your rank in the skill and the skill's key ability score against a Difficulty. Skill checks sometimes have gradations of success and failure based on how much your total roll is above or below the Difficulty. For example, if you fail a Climb check, you don't make any progress. If you fail by 5 or more, you fall.

ABILITY CHECKS

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

EXAMPLE ABILITY CHECKS

Task	Ability
Forcing open a jammed or locked door	Strength
Tying a rope	Dexterity
Resisting injury, holding your breath	Constitution
Navigating a maze	Intelligence
Recognize a stranger you've seen before	Wisdom
Getting yourself noticed in a crowd	Charisma

POWER CHECKS

A power check measures a character's capability with a supernatural power. It is a roll of d20 + your power rank (adept level +3) plus the power's key ability score against a Difficulty. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for details on power checks.

ATTACK ROLLS

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

A roll of 20 on the die (called a *natural 20*) means the attack hits automatically and may be a *critical hit*. A roll of 1 on the die (a *natural 1*) means the attack automatically misses.

SAVING THROWS

Saving throws allow your hero to avoid different forms of danger, including injury, traps, poisons, tricks, and even supernatural powers. A saving throw is a d20 roll + the appropriate ability score (Constitution for Toughness and Fortitude saves, Dexterity for Reflex saves, and Wisdom for Will saves) and the appropriate save bonus, along with any bonuses from feats, special abilities, and the like.

Saving throw Difficulty is based on the potency of the hazard, such as the power of an attack or the strength of a disease or poison. Like skill checks, there are sometimes gradations to a saving throw's results. For example, a Toughness save may result in no damage at all if you beat the Difficulty, but could result in a glancing blow, a stunning blow, or an immediate knockout if you fail, depending on how much the roll misses the Difficulty.

THE COMBAT ROUND

When things really start happening in a *True20* game, time is broken down into six-second segments called *rounds*, or *combat rounds*, since they're most often used in fights. A round isn't very much time, just long enough for a hero to do something. The types of actions your hero can perform during a round are standard actions, move actions, full-round actions, free actions, and reactions. During a round you can do one of the following:

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

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

STANDARD ACTIONS

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

MOVE ACTIONS

A *move action* usually involves moving. You can move your speed in a single move action or twice your speed in a round by taking two move actions. You can take a move action before or after a standard action, so you can attack then move or move then attack. You cannot normally split your move action before and after your standard action. Move actions also include things like drawing weapons, standing up from being knocked down, and picking up objects.

FULL-ROUND ACTIONS

A *full-round action* occupies all your attention for a round, meaning you can't do anything else that round. Full-round actions include charging an opponent at full speed or moving as quickly as you can. Certain maneuvers require a full-round action to perform, as do some skills.

FREE ACTIONS

A *free action* is something so comparatively minor it doesn't take any significant time at all, so you can perform as many free actions in a round as the Narrator considers reasonable. Free actions include things like talking (heroes and villains always seem to find time to say a lot in the middle of a fight), dropping something, and so forth.

REACTIONS

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

DAMAGE

Characters may suffer damage during combat. Damage in *True20* uses a series of damage conditions, running from minor to serious and life threatening. The damage conditions (in increasing order of severity) are: bruised, hurt, dazed, wounded, staggered, disabled, unconscious, and dying.

Damage is determined by a Toughness saving throw: a roll of the die plus the hero's Toughness bonus against a Difficulty of 15, modified by the source of the damage: with more damaging attacks more difficult to save against. The result of the saving throw and whether the damage is non-lethal or lethal determines the damage condition: a successful save means no damage, a failure is a bruised (non-lethal) or hurt (lethal) result, failure by 5 or more a dazed or wounded result, failure by 10 or more a staggered or disabled result, and failure by 15 or more an unconscious or dying result. The first result is from non-lethal damage, the second from lethal damage.

CONVICTION

Heroes in *True20* have a trait called *Conviction*, representing their inner determination. Players can spend Conviction to improve heroes' abilities in various ways. You can spend Conviction to re-roll a bad die roll, bounce back from being hurt, and various other things. See **Conviction in Chapter One** for more information. Conviction helps give heroes an edge, but don't get overconfident, because many villains also have Conviction!

IMPORTANT TERMS

ability score: The numerical rating of an ability, applied as a bonus or penalty.

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

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

adventure: A story for players to experience.

aid: A check made to assist another character, with the result providing a bonus (see page 9).

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

attack roll: A roll to determine whether an attack hits. To make an attack roll, roll d20 and add the appropriate modifiers for the attack type. An attack hits if the result is equal to or greater than the target's Defense.

attack: Any of numerous actions intended to harm, disable, or neutralize an opponent.

bonus: A positive modifier to a die roll.

challenge: A challenge is either an increase in Difficulty or a penalty on a check. If successful, it provides some pre-determined benefit, such as completing a task faster or more efficiently.

character: A fictional individual in the game. The players control heroes, while the Narrator controls Narrator characters.

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

Conviction: A quality of heroic and villainous characters, used to enhance their abilities and actions in various ways.

critical hit (crit): An attack inflicting extra damage. To score a critical hit, an attacker must first score a *threat* (usually a natural 20 on an attack roll, depending on the attack being used), and then make another attack roll equal or greater than the target's normal Defense.

d20: A twenty-sided die, used to resolve all actions in *True20*.

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

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

Defense: The Difficulty to hit a target in combat. Defense equals 10 + any relevant modifiers.

Difficulty: The number a player must meet or beat for a check, attack roll, or saving throw to succeed.

dodge bonus: Bonus applied to Defense to determine how difficult a character is to hit. Characters lose their dodge bonus when they are flat-footed, stunned, or otherwise incapable of reacting to an attack.

dying: Near death and unconscious. A dying character can take no actions.

flat-footed: A character who has not yet acted during a combat is flat-footed, not yet reacting to the situation. A flat-footed character loses his dodge and parry bonuses to Defense.

free action: A minor activity, requiring very little time and effort.

full-round action: An action requiring all your effort in a round. Some skills, feats, and powers require a full-round action (or longer) to use.

hero: A character controlled by a player, one of the protagonists of an adventure or series.

initiative: A roll to determine the order in which characters act in action scenes. Initiative is a roll of d20 + initiative bonus, which is based on Dexterity.

lethal damage: Damage that can potentially disable or kill a target.

melee attack: A physical attack in close combat.

melee weapon: A handheld weapon designed for close combat.

modifier: Any bonus or penalty applied to a die roll.

move action: An action intended to move a distance or to manipulate or move an object. You can take up to two move actions per round.

Narrator character: Also *supporting character*. A character controlled by the Narrator (as opposed to a hero controlled by a player).

Narrator: The player who portrays characters not controlled by the other players, makes up the story and setting for the game, and serves as the referee.

natural: A natural result on a roll or check is the actual number appearing on the die, not the modified result obtained by adding bonuses or subtracting penalties.

non-lethal damage: Damage that can potentially stun or knock out a target, but does no permanent harm.

penalty: A negative modifier to a die roll.

percent chance: To roll a percent chance on 1d20, count each number on the die as 5 percent. An event with a 20 percent chance (such as the miss chance for concealment) happens on a roll of 17 or higher, a 50 percent chance on 11 or higher, and a 75 percent chance on 6 or higher.

power: A supernatural ability or trait. Powers are discussed in detail in [Chapter Four](#).

range increment: Each full range increment of distance between an attacker using a ranged weapon and a target gives the attacker a cumulative -2 penalty to the ranged attack roll. Thrown weapons have a maximum range of five range increments. Other ranged attacks have a maximum range of ten range increments.

ranged attack: Any attack made at a distance.

ranged weapon: A projectile or thrown weapon designed for attacking at a distance.

rank: A measure of a character's level of ability with a skill or other trait.

round: A six-second unit of game time used to manage actions, usually in combat.

saving throw (save): A roll made to avoid or reduce harm. The four types of saving throws are Toughness, Fortitude, Reflex, and Will.

scene: A variable length of time in which one major event or "chapter" of an adventure takes place. The Narrator determine the length of each scene.

series: A string of linked adventures.

stack: Combine for a cumulative effect. In most cases, modifiers to a given check or roll stack. If the modifiers of a particular roll do not stack, only the best bonus or worst penalty applies. Sometimes there is a limit to how high a stacked bonus or penalty can be.

standard action: An action intended to do something within about 3 seconds. You can perform a single standard action per round.

target (also subject): The intended recipient of an attack, action, or effect.

threat range: The natural die roll results constituting a critical hit threat when rolled for an attack. For most attacks, the threat range is a roll of 20.

threat: A possible critical hit.

trained: Having knowledge of, and therefore ranks in, a skill.

trait: Any of a character's game-defined qualities. Ability scores, skills, and feats are all traits.

unarmed attack: A melee attack made without a weapon.

untrained: Having no ranks in a skill. Some skills cannot be used untrained.

TRUE20 RESOURCES

True20 uses the Open Game License (OGL), allowing it to incorporate basic game systems and terms familiar to players of many popular roleplaying games. The OGL also allows *True20* Narrators to adapt material from other popular games to their own *True20* games, as detailed in the [Appendix](#) of this book. Using the guidelines given there, you can greatly expand the range of roleplaying game material you can use in conjunction with *True20*.

Green Ronin Publishing works in partnership with other game publishers to provide support and settings for *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*. The *True20* logo indicates a product licensed and approved by us for use with the game, so you know it's compatible with the rules in this book and other *True20* products.

While *True20* has many similarities to other games produced under the Open Game License, it is not necessarily 100% compatible with them. It is designed as a complete self-contained game system, with elements familiar to players of other roleplaying games. For more information on the Open Game License, consult the copy of the license in the back of this book, or visit www.opengamingfoundation.org.

Green Ronin provides support for *True20*, and all of our products, at our website, www.greenronin.com, where you can find complete product lists, errata and corrections, our online store, all the latest news, and discussion forums where you can ask questions and meet and talk with other *True20* players around the world. You can also find links to other *True20* resources online, including our publishing partners and their *True20* worlds of adventure for you to explore.



CHAPTER ONE: HERO CREATION

THIS CHAPTER TELLS YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN **TRUE20** HEROES, READY TO EMBARK ON EXCITING ADVENTURES.

IT COVERS BASIC ABILITIES, BACKGROUNDS, ROLES, AND THE VARIOUS DETAILS FOR DESCRIBING YOUR HERO. IT ALSO LOOKS AT THE TRAIT OF CONVICTION AND THE BENEFITS IT GRANTS IN THE GAME.



ABILITIES

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

Characters have six abilities: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution are called *physical abilities*, whereas Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma are *mental abilities*. Each above-average ability score provides a bonus on certain die rolls; below average abilities apply a penalty to some die rolls.

CHOOSING ABILITY SCORES

Ability scores have a numerical value, expressed as a penalty or bonus, from -5 (abysmal or disabled) to +5 or more (legendary, practically superhuman), with an average of +0. When ability scores are noted in this book, the score follows the ability's name, for example: Strength +2, Dexterity -1, and so forth.

You have 6 points to divide among your hero's abilities, which all start at 0, neither a bonus nor a penalty. This means you can have +1 in all six abilities; +3 in one ability, 0 in two others, and +1 in the remaining three; or any combination adding up to 6. The only limitation is you cannot put more than 5 points in a single ability score. (Scores can only go higher than +5 as a result of level advancement and a few other factors.)

Ability Scores = 6 points divided between six abilities.

If you choose to have a *negative* value in an ability, you gain bonus points to assign to your other ability scores. For example, if you give your hero Strength -1, you have 1 more point to assign to another ability (such as Intelligence). If your hero has Strength -2, you have 2 bonus points, and so on. Heroes cannot have abilities lower than -5, and abilities lower than -2 aren't recommended unless the hero is seriously deficient in that ability. Even with bonus points, you cannot put more than 5 points in a single ability score.

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

VARYING ABILITY POINTS

The starting amount of 6 points for abilities is intended to create fairly competent heroes who can be, at the least, above average at *everything*, or average at most things and really capable in one or two areas. However, that amount isn't set in stone and you can vary it if you like. In more low-key games, the Narrator may want to give the players fewer ability points, say 4, while in especially over-the-top epic games, you might want to give the players a couple more ability points, perhaps as many as 8–10, ensuring their heroes are capable. Most *True20* games should offer at least 3 points for abilities, otherwise the heroes aren't going to be all that heroic when compared to the average person.

ABILITY SCORE MAXIMUMS

Although abilities cannot be increased above +5 through the expenditure of ability points, background modifiers do allow an ability to exceed +5. You can use your level-based ability score increases to bring a base ability score (that is, the ability score without modifiers for background) above +5. If variable ability progressions are permitted, a ceiling of +5 (modified by background) should be imposed to help ensure the bonuses are spread out a bit more rather than focused entirely on one ability.

THE ABILITIES

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

STRENGTH (STR)

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

- Damage dealt by melee and thrown weapon attacks.
- Defense when parrying, blocking attacks in melee combat.
- Climb, Jump, and Swim checks.
- Your carrying capacity, how much you can lift and carry.
- Strength checks for breaking through doors, smashing things, and other deeds of strength when a specific skill doesn't apply.

DEXTERITY (DEX)

Dexterity is a measure of coordination, agility, and manual dexterity. Your Dexterity score applies to the following:

- Attack rolls.
- Defense when dodging, evading attacks in combat.
- Reflex saving throws, for avoiding danger with coordination and quick reflexes.
- Initiative checks.
- Acrobatics, Escape Artist, Ride, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth checks.
- Dexterity checks for tasks requiring agility and coordination when a specific skill doesn't apply.

CONSTITUTION (CON)

Constitution is a measure of endurance, health, and overall physical toughness. Constitution is important because it affects your hero's ability to resist damage. Your Constitution score applies to the following:

- Toughness saving throws, for resisting damage.
- Fortitude saving throws, for resisting disease, poison, fatigue, and other effects involving your hero's health.
- Constitution checks for recovering from damage.

INTELLIGENCE (INT)

Intelligence is a measure of reasoning, memory, and quick thinking. Your Intelligence score applies to the following:

- Your number of known skills at 1st level.
- The number of skill ranks you gain from successive levels.
- Craft, Disable Device, Knowledge, and Search checks.
- Intelligence checks to solve problems using sheer brainpower when a specific skill doesn't apply.

WISDOM (WIS)

While Intelligence measures reasoning, Wisdom is a measure of awareness, common sense, intuition, and strength of will. Your Wisdom score applies to the following:

- Will saving throws, for resisting attempts to influence you, whether by mundane or supernatural means.
- Concentration, Medicine, Notice, Sense Motive, and Survival checks.
- Wisdom checks to resolve matters of intuition when a specific skill doesn't apply.

CHARISMA (CHA)

Charisma is a measure of persuasiveness, force of personality, leadership ability, and attractiveness (not necessarily physical). Your Charisma score applies to the following:

- Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Handle Animal, Intimidate, and Perform checks.
- Charisma checks to use force of personality when a specific skill doesn't apply.
- Wealth at 1st level.

ALTERING ABILITY SCORES

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

- Some effects—including disease and poison—temporarily lower ability scores.
- Characters improve their ability scores permanently as they increase in level.

Whenever an ability score changes, all traits associated with the ability change as well. For example, if you increase your Dexterity, your attack bonus, Dexterity-based skills and Reflex saving throw modifier also increase. Likewise, if your Dexterity bonus decreases, your attack bonus, Dexterity-based skills and Reflex saving throws suffer.

DEBILITATED ABILITIES

There is no limit to how high an ability score can be raised, but there is a limit on how low it can drop. If one of your hero's ability scores drops below -5 for any reason, the score is debilitated. Your hero suffers serious effects, depending on the ability. Debilitated Strength or Dexterity means the hero is helpless and unable to move. Debilitated Constitution means the hero is dying (and suffers a -5 on checks to avoid death). Debilitated Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma means the hero is unconscious and incapable of waking until the score is restored to at least -5.

NONEXISTENT ABILITIES

Some things in *True20* actually lack a basic ability (having no score in it at all, which is not the same as having a debilitated ability). The effect of lacking a particular ability is as follows:

STRENGTH

Any creature capable of physically manipulating other objects has a Strength score. A creature with no Strength is incapable of exerting any physical force, either because it has no physical form (like an incorporeal ghost) or simply can't move (like a tree). The creature automatically fails Strength-based checks.

DEXTERITY

Any creature capable of movement has a Dexterity score. A creature with no Dexterity cannot move (like most plants) or take physical actions and automatically fails Dexterity-based checks.

CONSTITUTION

Any living creature has a Constitution score. A creature with no Constitution has no physical body (like a ghost) or no living metabolism (like an animated statue or other construct). It is immune to effects

MENTAL ABILITIES

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

INTELLIGENCE

A character with a high Intelligence score tends to be knowledgeable, clever, and prone to using big words. A character with a high Intelligence but a low Wisdom may be smart but absent-minded or easily distracted. A character with a high Intelligence and low Charisma may be knowledgeable but something of a know-it-all or lacking in social skills. Characters with high Intelligence and low Wisdom and Charisma tend to be social misfits. A character with a low Intelligence may be slow, poorly educated, or just not very cerebral.

WISDOM

High Wisdom characters are aware, sensible, and confident in themselves and their abilities. High Wisdom, low Intelligence characters are simple-minded but capable of surprising insights. High Wisdom, low Charisma characters are quietly confident and tend to work behind the scenes. Low Wisdom characters are indecisive, absent-minded, impulsive, or just gullible.

CHARISMA

Characters with high Charisma are outgoing, forceful, and often attractive. High Charisma, low Intelligence characters either manage to seem to know what they're talking about, or they attract people who find them endearing and want to help them. Characters with high Charisma and low Wisdom aren't very good at choosing their friends wisely. Low Charisma characters may be cold, aloof, rude, awkward, or simply plain and nondescript.

requiring Fortitude saving throws unless they work on inanimate objects. The creature always fails Constitution-based checks. Creatures with no Constitution do not recover from damage (since they can't make recovery checks). They must be repaired in some fashion. The same is true of objects.

INTELLIGENCE

Any creature that can think, learn, or remember has an Intelligence score. A creature with no Intelligence is an automaton, operating on simple instinct or pre-programmed instructions. It is immune to all mental effects and automatically fails Intelligence-based checks. Note that animals have low Intelligence scores (usually -4), but they *do* have Intelligence.

WISDOM

Any creature aware of its environment has a Wisdom score. Anything with no Wisdom also has no Charisma. It is an inanimate object, not a creature. Objects are immune to mind-influencing effects and automatically fail Wisdom-based checks.

CHARISMA

Any creature capable of interacting with others has a Charisma score. Creatures without Charisma cannot interact, are immune to interaction checks, and automatically fail Charisma-based checks.

Inanimate objects have no abilities other than their Toughness score. Animate but nonliving beings, like undead, have Strength and Dexterity. They might have Wisdom and Charisma, if they are aware of their environment and capable of interaction. They might have Intelligence, if they are capable of thought, but they never have Constitution, since they are not alive.

BACKGROUNDS

Although *True20* is about telling your hero's story, an important part of creating a hero is figuring out his or her background, and how that history affects the hero's traits in the present.

Background is an optional trait in *True20*, suitable for some games and allowing you to further differentiate heroes from each other. It provides extra detail as well as a few capabilities to give your hero an edge.

BACKGROUND FEATURES

Backgrounds have a number of features that influence and modify a character's traits. The features a background may have include:

Ability Adjustments: The background adjusts some of the hero's starting abilities from the normal baseline score of +0. Generally speaking, a background should only increase or decrease abilities by $+/-1$ and should decrease an ability for every increase in equal measure.

Note that these ability adjustments are to the *baseline* or starting ability scores. The player can spend the hero's ability points normally to raise the scores. However, the adjustment also affects the maximum score the hero can have, since players cannot put more than 5 of the hero's starting ability points into any one ability score.

Bonus Feat: A background either grants a bonus feat of the player's choice or two bonus feats that are part of the background and cannot be changed. The Narrator chooses the bonus feats in the latter case when creating a background for the setting. These bonus feats must be general feats or favored feats for the background (see the following).

Bonus Skill: A background either grants a bonus starting skill of the player's choice, two bonus starting skills that are part of the background, or one bonus feat that is part of the background. The latter two options are set by the Narrator and cannot be changed. The bonus skill(s) can be any available in *True20* and the hero's starting rank in the skill(s)

is 4 (level +3), as usual. Bonus skills from a hero's background do not provide an extra skill point per level.

Favored Feats: A background grants access to two *favored feats*. These are feats the hero can acquire regardless of role, even if they are not normally available to that role. Since general feats are available to any hero, they are never favored; favored feats are chosen from the adept, expert, and warrior feat lists. Optionally, a supernatural power can replace two feats for this purpose, using up both of the background's favored feats. The character does not have to acquire the background's favored feats; they're just strongly associated with the background and common to it, therefore always available as an option. If a player selects a favored feat that can be taken more than once (such as Tough), then he can do so as often as he wishes to expend feat slots on it and the Narrator sees fit to allow it. Favored feats use the character's total levels in lieu of role levels where role levels are a factor; for example if you choose Inspire as a favored feat, you use half your role levels instead of half your expert levels to determine how many subjects you can inspire. This also applies to adept levels; you use your role levels in place of your adept levels for any supernatural power chosen as a favored feat.

SAMPLE BACKGROUNDS

The following are some sample backgrounds for a classic fantasy setting that you can use as examples for creating your own *True20* backgrounds. You can find other sample backgrounds in the genre chapters later in this book.

HUMAN

This is the default background for *True20* heroes in a game using backgrounds. Human heroes may have cultural backgrounds in addition to their racial background to provide additional depth and options for the players. The traits of a human background are:



- **Ability Adjustments:** None.
- **Bonus Feat:** The hero gains one bonus feat at 1st level out of the list of feats available for the hero's role.
- **Bonus Skill:** The hero gains one bonus known skill at 1st level, in addition to those gained for the hero's role and Intelligence score.
- **Favored Feats:** Choose any two feats as the character's favored feats. These feats are available to the hero regardless of role. Favored feats for humans often vary by region and culture, and the Narrator may wish to come up with an appropriate list of favored feats for the human cultures in the setting.

DWARF

Dwarves are a race of stocky, taciturn humanoids that generally live underground and are known for their skill in stone- and metalworking. Dwarves have the following background traits:

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Constitution, -1 Charisma
- **Bonus Feats:** Great Fortitude, Night Vision, Talented (Craft and Search, only involving stonework)
- **Favored Feats:** Diehard, Favored Opponent (goblins or giants)

ELF

Elves are a race of slender humanoids with delicate features and pointed ears. They live in forest and sylvan environments and are known for their love of beauty and their skill with magic. Elves have the following background traits:

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Dexterity, -1 Constitution
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision, Talented (Notice and Search), Weapon Training
- **Favored Feats:** Choose one supernatural power (elves treat their total level as their adept level for this power).

GNOME

Gnomes are small humanoids (see the **Small Heroes** sidebar). They prefer to live in comfortable burrows in hillsides where animals abound, and they're well known for both their gregarious nature and as cunning tricksters and practical jokers.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Constitution, -1 Strength
- **Bonus Feats:** Iron Will, Night Vision, Talented (Craft [chemical] and Notice)
- **Favored Feats:** Choose Fascinate and Favored Opponent (goblins), or a supernatural power.

HALF-ELF

The offspring of a human and an elf parent, half-elves exist between both cultures. Some feel alienated, while others feel welcome in both worlds. Half-elves combine some of the refinement of elves with the hardiness and adaptability of humans.

- **Ability Adjustments:** None
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision, Talented (Diplomacy and Gather Information), Talented (Notice and Search)
- **Favored Feats:** Choose two (based on the half-elf's home culture).

ROLES

Heroes in *True20* come in different types and from many walks of life. Your hero's *role* is the part he or she plays in the game. A role is like a character's part in a story; stories have different sorts of heroes, from brave and skilled warriors to cunning diplomats to wise wielders of the supernatural arts. The role you choose for your hero affects the other choices you make, including your hero's skills and feats. Still, roles in *True20* are broad enough to allow plenty of freedom of choice in creating your hero.

There are three roles in *True20*, in addition to heroes with mixed, or multiple, roles. The roles are:

FAVORED FEATS AND CULTURE

One use of favored feats in a background is to provide context for the hero's culture or social background. Since favored feats are merely the *opportunity* to acquire certain traits, rather than required as part of the background, they can represent inclinations of a culture. For example, perhaps dwarven culture offers the opportunity to acquire the Favored Opponent feat for goblinoids, because dwarves often fight them. A human raised among dwarves might have this favored feat as well, representing the cultural background. Likewise, a barbarian culture might have Rage as one of its favored feats, people from a particular planet or colony might have cultural feats, and so forth. The Narrator should feel free to create "packages" or lists of suitable favored feats for different cultures within the setting.

SMALL HEROES

Some backgrounds—such as gnomes and halflings—involve races smaller than humans. Such small heroes get a +1 to their Combat bonus due to their size (they're small targets, while normal-sized targets seem big to them), and a +4 bonus on Stealth checks. They suffer a -1 penalty on Toughness saves, however. A Small character's carrying capacity is three-quarters of that of a normal (medium-sized) character and a Small character generally moves about two-thirds as fast as a medium character. See **Size** in **Chapter Eight** for more on the effects of relative size on characters.

HALF-ORC

Born of a human and an orc parent, half-orcs are most often outcast from both cultures. They have great strength and tempers to match. Half-orcs make fierce warriors and usually become soldiers, mercenaries, or raiders.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Strength, -1 Intelligence
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision, Weapon Training
- **Bonus Skill:** Half-orcs have one bonus known skill (this balances out the one that they lose due to their lower natural Intelligence score).
- **Favored Feats:** Choose two of Cleave, Favored Opponent, Tough, or Rage.

HALFLING

Halflings are small humanoids, almost exactly half the height of humans (thus the name, see **Small Heroes**). They're clever and insist they have to be in a world of "big people." They're most often found living among other races, particularly humans.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Dexterity, -1 Strength
- **Bonus Feats:** Lucky, Talented (Climb and Jump), Talented (Notice and Stealth)
- **Favored Feats:** Evasion, Attack Specialization (thrown weapon or sling)

- **Adept:** Someone able to wield supernatural powers.

- **Expert:** Someone experienced in a wide range of skills.

- **Warrior:** Someone with training in many forms of combat.

- **Mixed-Role Heroes:** Heroes start out with only one role at 1st level. However, as your hero advances in level, you may choose levels in other roles, creating a mixed-role hero. This mixing of roles gives a hero a wider range of abilities at the cost of slowing advancement in any one role.

For example, a 1st-level warrior attaining 2nd level might choose to take the 1st level in adept instead of a 2nd level in warrior. The hero is now

a 1st-level warrior/1st-level adept, but still a 2nd-level character. The character's combat abilities are less than those of a 2nd-level warrior, but the character now has the abilities of a 1st-level adept.

The key difference for mixed-role heroes is that each role has a *core ability*, obtained *only* when a character starts out at 1st-level in that role. A mixed-role hero taking on a new role does not gain the new role's core ability, but does gain all of its other traits.

Guidelines for creating mixed-role heroes can be found at the end of this chapter.

LEVEL-DEPENDENT BENEFITS

Heroes improve in experience and power by advancing in level. This represents the progress of a hero's career during a long series, from novice to seasoned expert. As heroes advance in level, they gain additional bonuses and access to more skills and feats, improving and expanding their capabilities. After 1st level, heroes also get the opportunity to begin mixing roles to further expand their options and capabilities.

Certain benefits are based on a hero's overall level, regardless of role. The **Level-Dependent Benefits** table summarizes these. See each role description for the benefits specific to each.

MAXIMUM SKILL RANK

This column lists the maximum rank a hero can have in any known skill, equal to the hero's level + 3. This is also the hero's rank in any known supernatural powers. See **Chapter Two: Skills** and **Chapter Four: Powers** for details.

ABILITY INCREASE

Upon gaining any level divisible by six (6th, 12th, and 18th), heroes can increase an ability score by 1. You choose which ability you want to

LEVEL-DEPENDENT BENEFITS				
Level	Maximum Skill Rank	Ability Increase	Conviction	Feats
1st	4	—	3	4
2nd	5	—	3	1
3rd	6	—	4	1
4th	7	—	4	1
5th	8	—	5	1
6th	9	1st	5	1
7th	10	—	6	1
8th	11	—	6	1
9th	12	—	7	1
10th	13	—	7	1
11th	14	—	8	1
12th	15	2nd	8	1
13th	16	—	9	1
14th	17	—	9	1
15th	18	—	10	1
16th	19	—	10	1
17th	20	—	11	1
18th	21	3rd	11	1
19th	22	—	12	1
20th	23	—	12	1

improve, and the improvement is permanent. You can increase the same ability more than once or a different one each time. You can increase an ability score above +5 in this way.

CONVICTION

Heroes start out with 3 points of Conviction at 1st level and gain a point of Conviction every two levels thereafter (3rd, 5th, and so on). The number indicated at each level is a hero's maximum Conviction points at that level. See **Conviction** later in this chapter for details.

FEATS

Your hero gets a certain number of starting feats at 1st level (determined by role), plus an additional feat for each level beyond 1st. You choose feats from among those available to your hero's role(s).

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

The following sections describe the three roles in detail. Each provides an overall view of the role, the role's traits in game terms, and examples of different types of heroes who fit that particular role.

The role's traits are organized as follows:

ABILITIES

What ability scores are most important to the role and why? While you can certainly choose your hero's abilities as you wish, you might want to keep these important abilities in mind, if you want your hero to be effective in the chosen role.

CORE ABILITY

Each role has a *core ability*, which you only gain if you take your 1st level in that role. If you add a role later on (see **Mixed-Role Heroes**) you don't gain the new role's core ability, just the ability of your first role.

SKILLS

This is the number of skills you choose for a hero of that role at 1st level. You apply your hero's Intelligence modifier to this number, but it cannot be lower than 1, no matter how low a hero's Intelligence might be. The role also gains a number of additional skill ranks (also modified by Intelligence) for each additional level.

FEATS

These are the feats a hero starts with at 1st level. Each role allows you to choose some or all of these feats from lists of feats available to characters of that role.

Each role has a table indicating the role's other game abilities, all based on level:

COMBAT

A role's base combat bonus measures skill in all forms of fighting. It is used as the basis for a hero's attack rolls, modified by Dexterity. It is also used as the basis for a hero's Defense score, which is the Difficulty to strike that hero in combat. It is modified by the hero's Dexterity for dodging or evading attacks, and Strength for parrying them.

SAVE BONUSES

Roles have three save bonuses, measuring the ability to avoid certain kinds of harm when they make saving throws. The bonuses are improvements to Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves. Toughness saving throws do not improve by level, although some feats may improve them.

REPUTATION

Every hero has a reputation score based on role and level. See **Reputation**, later in this chapter, for details.

ADEPT

Intellectual, scholar, mystic, sorcerer, shaman, psychic, the adept specializes in the sciences and arts of the supernatural. Adepts are known and respected for their knowledge and insight as well as their command of various supernatural powers. Whether part of secret societies, hidden from the eyes of most, or as an accepted part of the social order, publicly flaunting their extraordinary abilities, adepts are a breed apart from normal beings.

Adepts fill many roles in the worlds of *True20*. Their supernatural powers range from subtle visions and insight into the psyche to overt manipulations of the physical world. Depending on the manifestation of the supernatural in the setting (see **Chapter Four**), adepts may be widely known and respected (or feared) for their powers, or operate entirely behind the scenes.

Adepts have the following traits:

ABILITIES

Mental abilities are usually more important to adepts than physical ones. In particular, adepts tend to require strong Wisdom scores, since using their powers depends on force of will to stave off fatigue. Intelligence is nearly as important, given the adept's emphasis on scholarship. Adepts also choose a mental ability as the key ability of their supernatural powers. Adepts also find a healthy Constitution helpful, especially if they plan to exercise their arts in the field rather than in the comfort of a college or hermitage.

THE TALENT (CORE ABILITY)

The adept can spend a Conviction point to make one use of a supernatural power they do not possess. This works much like spending a Conviction point to emulate a feat. An adept with the Talent can also spend a Conviction point to eliminate any accumulated modifiers to fatigue saving throws for using powers. See Chapter Four for more information on supernatural powers and later in this chapter for more on Conviction.

POWERS

Adepts can develop and use certain supernatural powers, described in detail in Chapter Four. An adept can choose to acquire a power in place of one of the adept's normal feats, either starting feats or those acquired by improving in level. So a starting adept can have up to four powers (at the cost of taking no starting feats), one power and three feats, two and two, or any combination adding up to the adept's starting number of feats. Each time the adept gains a level the player has a choice of taking a new feat or a new power.

SKILLS

Choose 4 + Intelligence score starting skills (minimum of 1). Adepts gain 4 + Int skill ranks per additional level (minimum of 1). Important skills for adepts include Concentration, Craft, Gather Information, Knowledge (particularly supernatural), Language, and Notice.

FEATS

Choose 4 starting feats from the General and Adept categories. An adept can also choose a power in place of a feat.



EXPERT



Experts range from diplomats and nobles to traveling storytellers and adventurous scholars or scientists, from merchants with an eye for profit to cunning thieves with an eye for an easy mark. Some experts choose to focus on the ability to handle any social situation, others emphasize physical skills allowing them to avoid unwanted entanglements, and some focus on scholarly skills, but for use “in the field” rather than solely in a laboratory or classroom.

Adventuring experts tend to combine different skills. They have to be able to endure long journeys yet be ready to negotiate with various parties when they reach the journey’s end, able to appraise and understand people, situations, and objects. Experts essentially handle everything adepts and warriors do not.

Experts have the following traits:

ABILITIES

Agility is the name of the game for experts, both physical agility (represented by Dexterity) and social agility (represented by Charisma), with a bit of mental agility (represented by Intelligence) thrown in for good measure. Nimble experts are often trained in skills like Acrobatics and Ride, while the personable and charming ones focus on interaction skills like Bluff and Diplomacy. Wisdom is useful to experts in avoiding danger, from traps to deception, and keen Intelligence can help an expert go far (and pick up a few extra useful skills).

EXPERTISE (CORE ABILITY)

An expert can spend a point of Conviction to gain 4 temporary ranks in any skill, including skills in which the expert is not currently trained or that cannot be used untrained. These temporary skill ranks last for the duration of the scene and grant their normal benefits.

SAVING THROWS

Experts vary in their Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save bonuses. Choose one of these three to be the expert’s good save, with the other two as normal saves, consulting the appropriate column on the table. For example, your expert’s Fortitude save might be good, while her Reflex and Will saves are normal. At 1st level, her base Fortitude save bonus would be +2, while her base Reflex and Will saves would be +0.

SKILLS

Choose 8 + Intelligence score starting skills (minimum of 1). Experts gain 8 + Int skill ranks per additional level (minimum of 1).

Virtually all skills are important to one sort of expert or another. Experts tend to pick certain areas where they specialize, such as athletic or outdoor skills (Acrobatics, Climb, Jump, and Survival, for example), interaction skills (Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform, and Sense Motive), or scholarly skills (such as Craft, Knowledge, and Notice).

FEATS

Choose 4 starting feats from the Expert or General categories.

WARRIOR

Flashing blades, roaring guns, or even bare fists are the tools of the warrior. Some fight for the safety of their homeland and their loved ones. For others it is religious zeal, wealth, or the simple joy of battle. Warriors include trained and disciplined soldiers, heroic knights, grizzled hunters, savage mercenaries, and daring swashbucklers. Although they don't command the mysterious powers of adepts or the breadth of knowledge of experts, warriors have courage, determination, and skill at arms, and for them, it's enough.

Warriors have the following traits:

ABILITIES

Warriors prize physical abilities over mental ones. Strength is important in striking a powerful blow. Dexterity allows warriors to evade incoming attacks and gives them accuracy with their own. Constitution may be a warrior's most important quality, granting them the endurance to sustain long marches and to fight on when others fall due to injury or fatigue.

DETERMINATION (CORE ABILITY)

A warrior can spend a point of Conviction to immediately erase all bruised and hurt damage conditions (and their associated penalties).

SKILLS

Choose $4 + \text{Intelligence score}$ starting skills (minimum of 1). Warriors gain $4 + \text{Int skill ranks}$ per additional level (minimum of 1).

Important skills for warriors tend to be physical, such as Climb, Jump, and Swim. They often acquire some type of vehicular skill (from Ride to Drive or Pilot, depending on the transportation available). and Utility skills like Concentration, Notice, and Sense Motive are common.

FEATS

All warriors have Firearms Training or Weapon Training as a starting feat. Choose 3 other starting feats from the General or Warrior categories.

ROLE ARCHETYPES

The three roles in *True20* are meant to capture certain heroic archetypes commonly found in mythology and fiction. Consider these archetypal characters when creating your own heroes and choosing appropriate roles for them.

ADEPTS

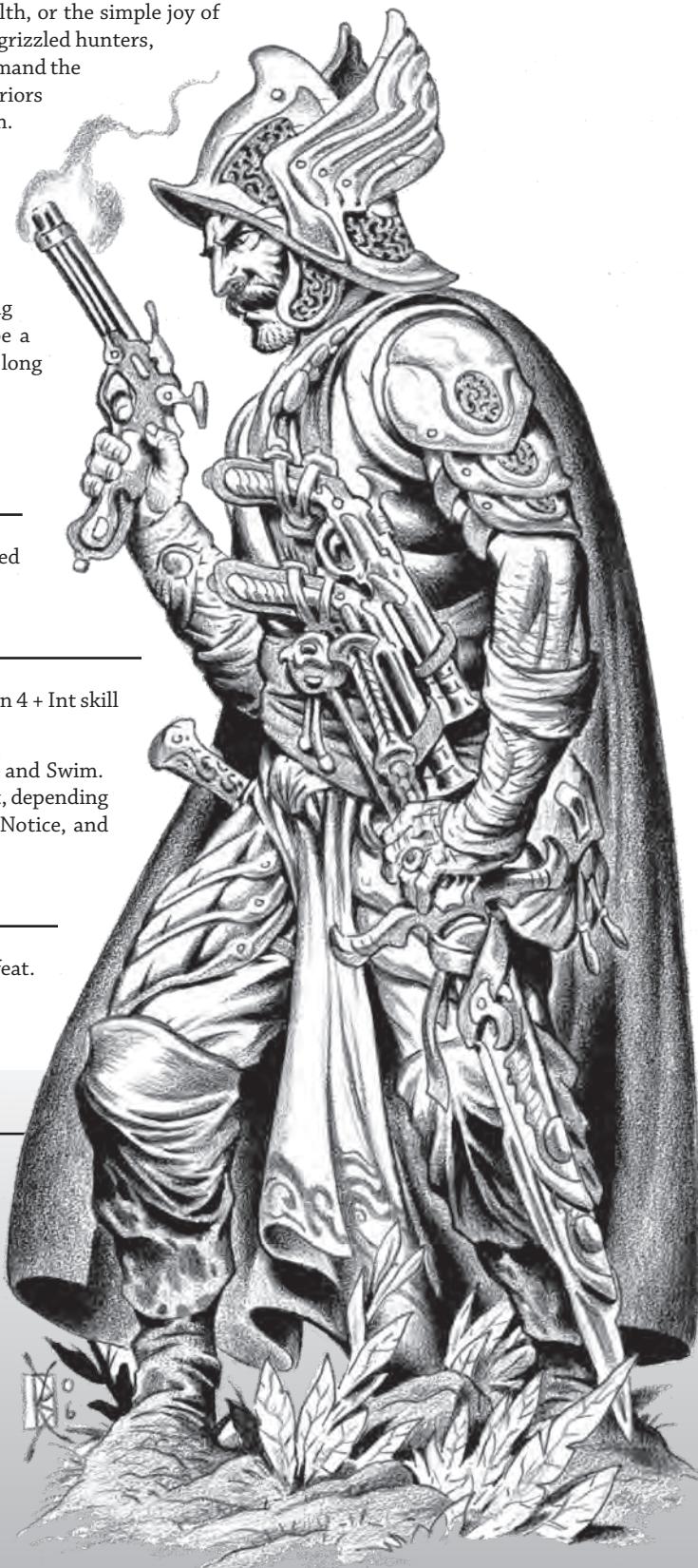
Examples of archetypal adepts include Merlin the Magician, the sorceresses Medea and Morgan LeFay, prophetic priests and miracle-workers, science-fiction psychics, and other wielders of supernatural power.

EXPERTS

Examples of archetypal experts include the inventor Daedalus, the Greek heroes Jason and Theseus, the cunning Robin Hood, Japanese ninja, fantasy thieves, and similar characters.

WARRIORS

Examples of archetypal warriors include Hercules, King Arthur and his knights, the Three Musketeers, Japanese samurai, and virtually all soldiers and professional fighters.



ROLE LEVEL ADVANCEMENT TABLES

THE ADEPT

Level	Combat	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Reputation
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+2
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+2
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+2
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	+3
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	+3
11th	+5	+3	+3	+7	+3
12th	+6	+4	+4	+8	+4
13th	+6	+4	+4	+8	+4
14th	+7	+4	+4	+9	+4
15th	+7	+5	+5	+9	+4
16th	+8	+5	+5	+10	+5
17th	+8	+5	+5	+10	+5
18th	+9	+6	+6	+11	+5
19th	+9	+6	+6	+11	+5
20th	+10	+6	+6	+12	+6

THE WARRIOR

Level	Combat	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Reputation
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	+0
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	+0
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	+1
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	+1
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	+2
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	+2
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	+2
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	+2
11th	+11	+7	+3	+3	+3
12th	+12	+8	+4	+4	+3
13th	+13	+8	+4	+4	+3
14th	+14	+9	+4	+4	+3
15th	+15	+9	+5	+5	+4
16th	+16	+10	+5	+5	+4
17th	+17	+10	+5	+5	+4
18th	+18	+11	+6	+6	+4
19th	+19	+11	+6	+6	+5
20th	+20	+12	+6	+6	+5

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

The Narrator will tell you when your hero advances in level. When this happens, do the following:

- Decide whether to add a level to your hero's existing role (or one of your hero's existing roles, for mixed-role heroes) or to add a level in a new role. See the next section, **Mixed-Role Heroes**, for details on this.
- Look at the **Level-Dependent Benefits** table and the level table for your hero's role(s). Note any increases to combat bonus, saving throws, skill ranks, and reputation.
- Pick a new feat for your hero from among the feats available for the new role level. Adepts may choose a new supernatural power in place of a new feat.
- If your hero's new total level is divisible by six (6th, 12th, or 18th), increase one of your hero's ability scores by 1.

MIXED-ROLE HEROES

Heroes may acquire other roles as they progress in level, becoming mixed-role heroes. The traits from a hero's different roles combine or mix, so a mixed-role hero has versatility at the expense of focus.

As a general rule, the traits of a mixed-role hero are the sum of the traits of each of the hero's roles, as follows:

LEVEL

Total level is a character's total number of levels in all roles. For example, a hero who is a 2nd-level warrior and 1st-level adept has a total level of 3rd. Total level is used to determine a hero's benefits on the **Level-Dependent Benefits** table.

Role level is a hero's level in a particular role. For a hero whose levels are all in the same role, total level and role level is the same thing. Role level is used to determine the hero's benefits from each particular role. For example, certain powers are dependent solely on adept level; levels in other roles don't count.

THE EXPERT

Level	Combat	Good Save	Normal Save	Reputation
1st	+0	+2	+0	+1
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+1
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1
4th	+3	+4	+1	+2
5th	+3	+4	+1	+2
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2
8th	+6	+6	+2	+3
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3
11th	+8	+7	+3	+3
12th	+9	+8	+4	+4
13th	+9	+8	+4	+4
14th	+10	+9	+4	+4
15th	+11	+9	+5	+4
16th	+12	+10	+5	+5
17th	+12	+10	+5	+5
18th	+13	+11	+6	+5
19th	+14	+11	+6	+5
20th	+15	+12	+6	+6

CORE ABILITY

Your hero's core ability is that of the hero's first role. So a hero who starts out as an expert, then later adds levels as a warrior, has the expert core ability, but not the warrior core ability. Characters cannot have more than one core ability.

COMBAT

Add the combat bonuses for each role together to get the hero's total combat bonus.

SAVING THROWS

The mixed-role hero's save bonuses equal the save bonuses for the hero's first role, plus the save bonuses for each additional role, subtracting 2 from the additional roles' good save(s). For example a 1st-level adept (Will save +2) who adds a level of warrior, does not gain any save bonuses (since the 1st level of warrior has no save bonuses greater than the +2 good Fortitude save). If the character adds another level of warrior upon becoming 3rd level, he gets a +1 Fortitude bonus (the warrior's +3 bonus for 2nd-level, minus 2). Ordinaries who gain heroic levels do not apply a penalty to their first heroic role, as they have no save bonuses to begin with..

REPUTATION

The hero's reputation bonus equals the reputation bonus for the hero's first role, plus the reputation bonuses for each additional role.

SKILLS

The hero gains the normal additional skill ranks for that role's level. So a warrior who adds a level of expert gains 8 skill ranks for that level. Conversely, an expert who adds a level of warrior gets only 4 skill ranks for that level (like a normal warrior does).

FEATS

A mixed-role hero gains one feat per level like everyone else. The role acquired at each level determines the feat list you choose from. For



example, if you add a level of adept to your hero, you choose the hero's feat for that level from the adept's list of available feats (General and Adept). Characters gaining a level of adept may choose a supernatural power in place of that level's feat, as usual.

CHARACTERISTICS

This section helps you round out your hero. Here you pick your hero's name, age, and other details. You'll choose a virtue and a vice for your hero's nature. This section also explains how heroes can go that extra mile when they need to pull out all the stops in order to succeed, using extra effort and the strength of their Conviction.

DETAILS

A lot of details go into making your hero more than just a collection of numbers; things like name, gender, age, appearance, and so forth help to define who he or she is. Take a moment, if you haven't already, to consider the following things about your *True20* character.

NAME

What is your character's name? You can give your hero any name you like, based on a real-world name, one from fiction, or a name entirely of your own creation. Appropriate names depend on the kind of character and the type of story you're telling, so consult with your group and your Narrator.

GENDER

Is your hero male or female? There's no requirement to play a character of the same gender as you. In fact, you may find it interesting to play a hero of a different gender, to experience a little of what life is like from another perspective.

AGE

How old is your character? Heroes tend to range from their teens to middle age, but some heroes are older, depending on a hero's background, possibly much older.

Consider the effects of age on the hero. A teenager on her first adventure away from home isn't likely to have the same views as a mature adult. A hero's age may influence the choice of certain traits. Older characters are likely to have lower physical ability scores, for example, while younger characters may have fewer Craft and Knowledge skills (having had less time to train in them).

APPEARANCE

What does your hero look like? Consider things like the character's race, sex, and other factors in appearance. Is the character short or tall? What about hair and eye color? Does the hero have any distinguishing marks or unique features?

PERSONALITY

How would you describe your hero's personality? While heroes tend to share a desire to use their powers for good and uphold the law, they show a diverse range of attitudes. One hero may be dedicated to the ideals of truth, justice, and equality, while another is willing to break the rules in order to ensure things get done. Some heroes are forthright and cheerful while others are grim and unrelenting.

CHARISMA VS. APPEARANCE

Although Charisma can be a measure of attractiveness, it isn't necessarily a reflection of a character's physical appearance. Charisma is much more about personality, affability, and similar traits, rather than looks. A high Charisma hero might be physically attractive, however they could also be fairly plain looking, but with a forceful and magnetic personality. Likewise, a low or average Charisma character might be good-looking, even striking, but with a bland or unpleasant personality. You're free to make up the details as best suits your character in the game, with the Narrator's help and guidance.

Consider your hero's attitudes and personality traits, particularly in light of the hero's nature.

NATURE

All intelligent creatures make moral choices, to live according to their better nature or to give in to immoral impulses. Many walk a difficult line between the two. Each character in *True20* has a particular nature, which is made up of a virtue and a vice.

During character creation, select a virtue and a vice to decide your character's nature. A list of examples is given below, but you can make up your own virtues and vices with the Narrator's permission. The key is to give your hero one good quality (virtue) and one bad quality (vice).

VIRTUES

Courageous, Free-Spirited, Bold, Generous, Gregarious, Hopeful, Daring, Thoughtful, Compassionate, Industrious, Honest, Fair, Kind, Determined.

VICES

Cowardly, Hidebound, Fearful, Miserly, Cynical, Impulsive, Selfish, Lazy, Capricious, Petty, Arrogant, Stubborn, Manipulative, Insensitive.

CHANGING NATURE

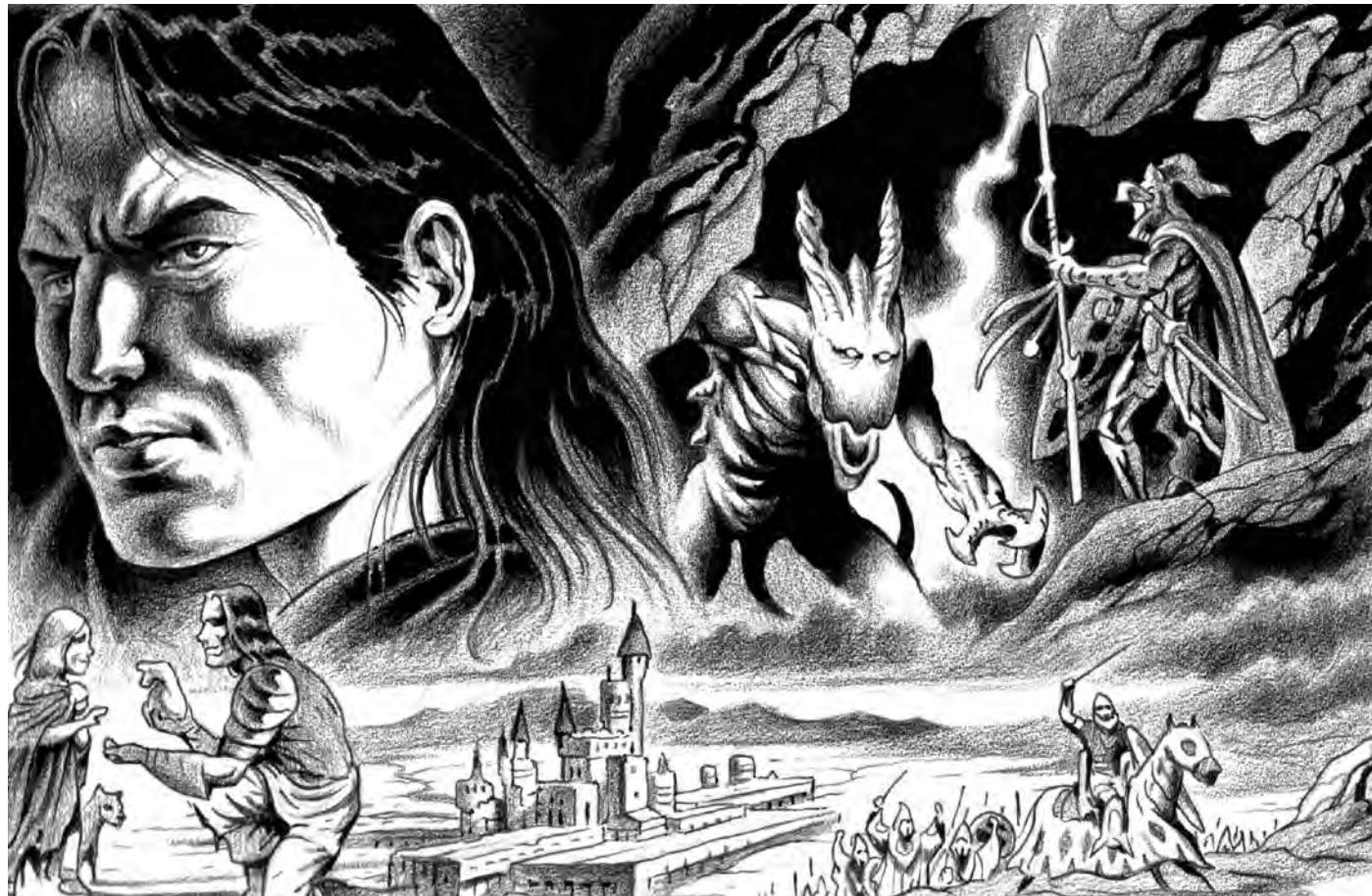
Generally speaking, a person's nature is fixed. Virtue and vice are deep-seated facets of the character's personality; some might say the halves of the soul. So changing one's true nature is difficult.

If the Narrator allows, you may change your hero's virtue or vice at the cost of a point of Conviction, which cannot be regained until the hero gains a new level. You can never *eliminate* either nature, as everyone must have both a virtue and a vice. Changing each one takes Conviction, so changing both requires two Conviction points.

At the Narrator's discretion, certain major events in a character's life can lead to a change in nature (either virtue or vice or both), but these events are largely beyond the players' control. The Narrator shouldn't allow changes in nature to happen lightly; they're pivotal events in an individual's life.

CONVICTION

Whether it's luck, talent, or sheer determination, heroes have something setting them apart from everyone else, allowing them to perform amazing deeds under the most difficult circumstances. In *True20*, that something is Conviction. Spending a Conviction point can make the difference between success and failure.



OPTION: CONVICTION AND CHARISMA

At the Narrator's option, there may be a connection between Conviction and a character's Charisma, representing force of personality, sense of self...a measure of a hero's conviction, in other words. This makes Charisma a somewhat more useful ability and encourages charming devil-may-care heroes with extraordinary luck and determination. On the other hand, it somewhat limits the use of Conviction for other characters.

In this option, a character's starting Conviction is equal to his or her Charisma score, plus 1. The character's starting Conviction increases by 1 every two levels as normal. This means someone with average (+0) Charisma starts with 1 point of Conviction. Negative Charisma means a "debt" of Conviction the hero must "pay off" until the Charisma score plus starting Conviction for level is a positive number. So a character with below average Charisma (-1) has *no* Conviction until reaching 3rd level (when the character has a starting Conviction of 1).

Tying Conviction to Charisma in this way makes the ability more valuable, even for heroes who don't emphasize social interaction or leadership qualities. Narrators may find it useful if players believe they can gain an unfair advantage by assigning a penalty to Charisma and using those ability points to make their heroes inordinately capable in other areas, with no corresponding drawbacks.

GAINING CONVICTION

Characters have Conviction based on their level (see **Level-Based Benefits**, earlier in this chapter). As heroes improve in level, their maximum Conviction increases.

USING CONVICTION

Unless otherwise noted, spending a Conviction point is a reaction, taking no time, and can be done at any time. You may spend only one Conviction point per round on any given benefit, but may otherwise spend as many points as you have available. You can spend Conviction for any of the following:

RE-ROLL

One Conviction point allows you to re-roll any die roll you make and take the better of the two rolls. On a result of 1 through 10 on the second roll, add 10 to the result; an 11 or higher remains as-is (so the second roll is always a result of 11-20). You must spend the Conviction point to improve a roll *before* the Narrator announces the result of your roll.

ACTIVATE CORE ABILITY

Activating your role's core ability costs one Conviction point. See the role descriptions in this chapter for details on their core abilities.

CHALLENGE

You can spend a Conviction point when performing a challenge (see **The Basics** in the **Introduction**). If you do so, you ignore up to a -5 penalty or +5 increase in Difficulty from the challenge. In essence, you perform the challenge as if it were a normal check. If the challenge imposes a greater Difficulty increase or penalty, you only ignore the first +/-5.

HEROIC FEAT

You can spend a Conviction point to gain the benefits of a feat your hero doesn't already have for one round. You must be capable of acquiring the feat normally, meaning it must be a feat available to your role(s) and you must meet all the prerequisites. For feats that can be acquired multiple times, you gain the benefit of one acquisition of the feat by spending a Conviction point. When a player spends a Conviction point for a Heroic Feat, the expenditure provides use of the feat for 1 round or the stated duration of the feat (if any), whichever is greater.

DODGE BONUS

You can spend a Conviction point whenever you are denied your dodge bonus, but are still capable of action (surprised, flat-footed, and so forth). In this case, you retain your dodge bonus until your next action.

SURGE

Gain an additional standard or move action, before or after your normal actions for the round (your choice). Using this extra action does

not change your place in the initiative order. You can use a standard action gained from a surge to start or complete a full round action in conjunction with your normal actions for the round.

CANCEL FATIGUE

Any time you would suffer fatigue (including the effects of using powers and extra effort), you can spend a Conviction point and reduce the amount of fatigue by one level (so you're only winded by a fatigued result, fatigued by an exhausted result, etc.).

RECOVER

If you have suffered damage, a Conviction point allows you an immediate recovery check for your worst damage condition (see **Recovery** in **Chapter Six**). The Conviction point just allows you to make the check immediately; it does not add any bonus to the check result. In some realistic game settings, the Narrator may wish to limit spending Conviction on recovery to non-lethal damage only.

While disabled, you can spend a Conviction point to take a strenuous action for one round without your condition worsening to dying.

A Conviction point also allows you to immediately shake off a stunned or fatigued condition.

ESCAPE DEATH

Spending a Conviction point automatically stabilizes a dying character (you or someone you are assisting) although this doesn't protect the character from further damage.

REGAINING CONVICTION

Heroes regain Conviction points in a few ways:

First, heroes regain one point of Conviction each day. The player chooses a time appropriate for the hero, such as in the morning, at midday, at sunset, or at midnight. By default, heroes regain Conviction in the morning (representing the renewed hope of a new day).

Second, heroes regain Conviction by acting in accordance with their nature. When a hero successfully does something in accordance with one of his natures that affirms his conviction, he regains a point of Conviction. The Narrator decides when an action is appropriate for the hero's natures and awards the Conviction point if the hero is successful.

Note that heroes can follow *either* of their natures, virtue or vice, to regain Conviction, and the Narrator may occasionally use this to put temptation in a hero's path. A good hero with a vice of Greed might have the opportunity to steal, for example, and regain Conviction. If the hero steals to further his goal, he gets a point of Conviction, but also has to deal with the consequences of his actions. Likewise, an otherwise amoral character who shows an unusual kindness or streak of honor may be following her virtue to regain Conviction. Which nature

OPTION: REPUTATION QUALITIES

Not all reputations are created equal. Some may have a reputation for honest dealings while another hard-bitten hero has a menacing reputation that leaves them quaking in their boots. Narrators wanting to differentiate between these sorts of reputations may implement the option of Reputation qualities. These are specialized feats associated with a character's Reputation. See **Chapter Three** for details on feats and how they apply to *True20* heroes.

CONVINCING (GENERAL)

You're known as trustworthy (whether that reputation is deserved or not). On a successful Reputation check, you can add half your Reputation bonus to your Bluff skill checks, although a failed Bluff check with a particular character may result in you losing this bonus against them in the future.

DIPLOMATIC (GENERAL)

You're known for your open and honest dealings. On a successful Reputation check, you can add half your Reputation bonus to your Diplomacy skill checks.

EXCELLENCE (GENERAL)

You're known for a particular skill, chosen when you acquire this feat. For every three ranks you have in the skill, you gain a +1 bonus on Reputation checks with people who may recognize your expertise.

INFLUENTIAL (GENERAL)

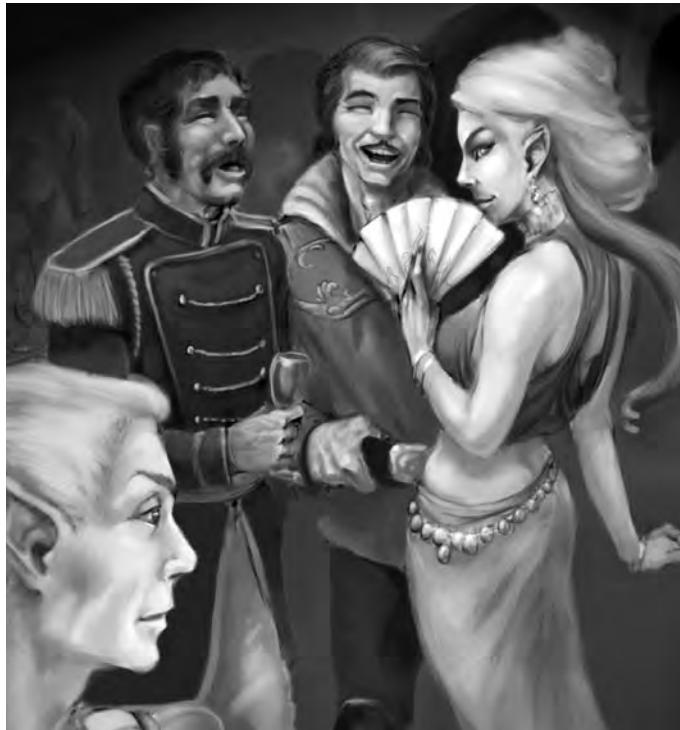
Your reputation opens doors. On a successful Reputation check, you can add half your Reputation bonus to your Gather Information skill checks.

MENACING (GENERAL)

Your reputation intimidates people. On a successful Reputation check, you can add half your Reputation bonus to your Intimidate skill checks.

RENNOWN (GENERAL)

You're especially well known (famous or infamous, depending on who you're dealing with). Each time you acquire this feat, increase your Reputation bonus by +3.



a character chooses to follow most often, tends to indicate what kind of person he or she is.

Third, the Narrator can award the heroes Conviction for a particularly impressive success or achievement in the adventure that renews confidence and faith. Overcoming a difficult challenge or solving a complex puzzle might give the heroes a burst of inspiration in the form of renewed Conviction. The Narrator chooses when to do this, but it should only happen once or twice in an adventure, and may not occur at all in some adventures.

REPUTATION

Reputation is used to determine whether a Narrator character recognizes a hero. Those who recognize the hero are more likely to help the hero, provided the hero has a positive reputation. A high Reputation bonus also makes it difficult for heroes to hide their identities and go unnoticed.

Most of the time, the Narrator decides when a hero's reputation is relevant to a scene. The Narrator makes a Reputation check for a Narrator character that might be influenced in some fashion due to the hero's fame or infamy.

FAME AND INFAMY

Whether reputation has a positive or negative connotation depends on the point of view of the person who recognizes the hero.

When a character has a positive opinion of a hero's reputation, the hero is considered *famous*. Fame, when recognized, provides a bonus to certain interaction skill checks.

When a character has a negative opinion of a hero's reputation, the hero is considered *infamous*. Also, at the Narrator's option, a hero might be considered infamous in certain situations due to events that have transpired in the past. Infamy, when recognized, provides a penalty to certain interaction skill checks.

USING THE REPUTATION BONUS

Whenever the Narrator decides a character's reputation is a factor in a scene, make a Reputation check (Difficulty 25) for the Narrator character involved. A Reputation check is $d20 +$ the hero's Reputation bonus + the Narrator character's Intelligence. (Some Knowledge skill modifiers might apply instead of the Intelligence score, if the hero would be well known in the field covered by a Knowledge skill.) Modifiers to the Reputation check depend on the hero and the Narrator character in question, as shown in the table. Note that if the Narrator character has no possible way of recognizing a hero, then the Reputation check isn't necessary (or even possible).

If the Reputation check succeeds, the Narrator character recognizes the hero. This provides a +4 bonus or a -4 penalty on checks involving interaction skills for the duration of the scene.

Situation	Reputation Check Modifier
The hero is famous, known far and wide with either a positive or negative connotation	+10
Narrator character is part of the hero's professional or social circle	+5
The hero has some small amount of fame or notoriety	+2

The Narrator must decide that a character's fame or infamy can come into play in a given situation to make a Reputation check necessary. A character that doesn't know, or know of, the hero can't be influenced by the hero's reputation.

CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS

HEROES SLIP UNSEEN PAST THE GUARDS OF A VILLAINOUS MASTERMIND. THEY TAME AND TRAIN THE BEASTS OF THE WILD. THEY PIECE TOGETHER CLUES TO A TYRANT'S LATEST PLOT. THEY RUN ALONG LEDGES IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT IN PURSUIT OF THEIR ENEMIES. THEY CHANGE MINDS AND WIN HEARTS.

THEY DO SO THROUGH THE USE OF VARIOUS SKILLS, DESCRIBED IN THIS CHAPTER.



SKILL BASICS

Skills are learned abilities acquired through a combination of training (skill ranks) and natural talent (an ability). These factors combine to form the parts of a skill check, which is a roll of the die, plus the skill's rank, key ability score, and any applicable modifiers.:

Skill check = d20 + skill rank + key ability score + modifiers

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

SKILL RANK

Your *rank* in a skill indicates how well trained you are with it. You assign ranks from your role and level to skills, and the maximum rank you can have in any skill is your level +3. You can use some skills even if you aren't trained in them (having no rank). This is known as using a skill *untrained*.

ABILITY SCORE

Each skill has a *key ability*, applied to the skill's checks. Each skill's key ability is noted in its description.

MODIFIERS

Miscellaneous modifiers to skill checks include favorable or unfavorable conditions, bonuses from feats, and penalties for not having proper tools, among others.

ACQUIRING SKILLS

You choose a certain number of skills your character knows at 1st level, based on your role and Intelligence score. For example, a warrior knows four skills at 1st level, plus or minus the character's Intelligence score, so a warrior with Intelligence +1 is trained in five skills at 1st level. A 1st-level character is always trained in at least one skill, regardless of Intelligence. These starting skills begin at four ranks, the maximum rank for 1st level.

IMPROVING SKILLS

As your hero advances in level, you gain additional ranks to assign to skills. You can assign these ranks to existing skills your hero knows, improving them up to the maximum rank of (level +3) or you can assign earned skill ranks to entirely new skills, making your hero trained with a rank in that skill.

Example: A 1st level adept has Concentration, Diplomacy, Knowledge (supernatural), and Stealth as her starting skills, all at rank 4. At 2nd level, the adept gains 4 more skill ranks. She may add one rank to each of her known skills, increasing them to 5 ranks each (the maximum rank for 2nd level), apply all 4 ranks to an entirely new skill, or split them up, perhaps adding a rank each to Concentration and Diplomacy, while applying the remaining 2 ranks to learning a new skill.

UNTRAINED SKILLS

Characters can perform some tasks without any training in a skill, using only raw talent (as defined by their ability scores), but trained characters tend to be better at such things. If a skill description doesn't include "Trained Only," you can attempt tasks involving that skill even if you have no training in it. Your bonus for the skill check is just the key ability score for that skill, with no ranks added in. Untrained characters can still hide or swim, for example; they're just not as good at it as those with training.

Skills that cannot be used untrained are designated as "Trained Only" in their descriptions. Attempts to use these skills untrained automatically fail. In addition to trained only skills, some skills given in this chapter may be inappropriate to certain settings, and the Narrator should feel free to limit access to those skills or ban them entirely. For example, a medieval knight isn't going to learn the Computers skill and while a peasant might pick up ranks in Drive for his ox-cart, he won't be using it to compete in the Indy 500.

HOW SKILLS WORK

When you use a skill, make a skill check to see how well you do. The higher the result, the better the outcome. Based on the circumstances, your check result must equal or beat a particular Difficulty number. The harder the task, the higher the number you need to roll. See Checks in the Introduction for more information.

INTERACTION SKILLS

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

First, you must actually be able to interact with the subject or subjects of the skill. That means the subject must be aware of you and able to understand you. If you don't speak the same language, or they can't hear you for some reason, that's the same as working without the proper tools, imposing a -4 on your skill check, since you have to convey your meaning through gestures, body language, tone, and so forth.

Interaction skills work best on intelligent subjects, ones with Intelligence -3 or higher. You can use them on creatures with lower Intelligence (-4 or -5) but with a -8 penalty on your check; they're just too dumb to get the subtleties of your point. You can't use interaction skills at all on subjects lacking a mental ability. (Try convincing a rock to be your friend—or afraid of you—sometime.)

Some interaction skills last a particular amount of time. Using Intimidate to demoralize an opponent, for example, lasts for only a few seconds (one round). In these cases, the time is always measured from the subject's point of view. If you successfully demoralize an opponent, the effect lasts one full round starting on the target's initiative and ending on the target's place in the initiative order on the following round.

You can use interaction skills against groups, but you must be trying to influence the entire group in the same way. You can use Diplomacy, for example, to sway a group of people and improve their attitude toward you, but you must be trying to convince all of them about the same thing. Everyone in the group must be able to hear and understand you. You make one interaction skill check and the Narrator compares it against each person in the group (or against an average value for the group, to speed things up).

SPECIALTY SKILLS

Some skills cover a wide range of knowledge or techniques. These skills are actually groups of similar skills, called *specialty skills*. When learning one of these skills, you must choose a specialty or a particular aspect of the skill your character is trained in. For example, you might choose the history specialty of Knowledge or the leatherworking specialty of Craft. Skill ranks in one specialty do not provide training in the skill's other specialties.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes each skill, including its common uses. You may be able to use skills for tasks other than those given here. The Narrator sets the Difficulty and decides the results in those cases.

The format for skill descriptions follows. Items that don't apply to a specific skill are left out of its description.

SKILL NAME

KEY ABILITY, TRAINED ONLY, INTERACTION, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION, REQUIRES TOOLS

The skill name line and the line below it contain the following information:

Skill Name: What the skill is called.

Key Ability: The ability applied to the skill check.

Trained Only: If “Trained Only” is included, you must be trained in the skill in order to use it. If “Trained Only” is absent, characters may use it untrained.

Interaction: If “Interaction” is included, the skill is an interaction skill.

Requires Specialization: If “Requires Specialization” is included, you must choose a specialty for the skill.

Requires Tools: If “Requires Tools” is included, you need to have the proper tools to use the skill. Not having the proper tools results in a -4 penalty to the skill check.

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

Check: How to make a check for the skill, what the results of the check are, and the basic Difficulty.

Challenges: Any specific challenges associated with the skill and their effects.

Try Again: Conditions on retrying a check with the skill. If this section is absent, the skill can be retried an unlimited number of times.

Action: The type of action required to use the skill, how long it takes.

Special: Any extra information about the skill.

SKILLS

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

An “—” entry in the **Action** column means the skill takes longer than a full round. See the skill description for details.

ACROBATICS**DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY**

You can flip, dive, roll, tumble, and perform other acrobatic maneuvers.

Check: You can make an Acrobatics check (Difficulty 5) to lessen the damage from a fall. Subtract the amount your roll exceeds the Difficulty (in feet) from the distance of a fall before determining damage. For example, an Acrobatics check of 20 (15 more than the Difficulty) reduces the effective distance of a fall by 15 feet. A fall reduced to 0 feet does no damage. You can make an Acrobatics check (Difficulty 25) to move through a space occupied by an opponent or obstacle (moving over, under, or around). A failed roll means you don't get past the obstacle.

Balancing: You can walk on a precarious surface. A successful check lets you move half your speed along the surface as a move action. A failure indicates you spend your move action just keeping your balance and do not move. A failure by 5 or more indicates you fall. The Difficulty is based on the surface. You lose your dodge bonus to Defense while balancing. If you take any damage while balancing, you must make another Acrobatics check to avoid falling.

Surface	Difficulty
More than 12 inches wide	5
7–12 inches wide	10
2–6 inches wide	15
Less than 2 inches wide	20
Uneven or angled	+5
Slippery	+5

Avoiding Being Tripped: You can make an Acrobatics check in place of the normal Strength or Dexterity check to avoid a trip attack (see **Trip** in **Chapter Six**). You cannot use Acrobatics to make trip attacks, however.

Instant Up: You can make an Acrobatics check (Difficulty 20) to stand up from a prone position as a free action rather than a move action.

Performance: You can use Acrobatics as if it were the Perform skill to impress an audience. See **Perform** later in this chapter.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Acrobatics:

Accelerated Acrobatics: You can try to cross a precarious surface faster than normal. If you increase the Difficulty by 5, you can move your full speed as a move action. Moving twice your speed in a round requires the penalty plus two skill checks, one for each move action. You can also accept this penalty to charge across a precarious surface; this requires one skill check per multiple of your speed (or fraction thereof) that you charge.

Perfect Balance: In return for increasing the Difficulty of your Acrobatics check by 5, you move with such grace and agility that you maintain your dodge bonus while balancing.

Perilous Balance: You can shake or disturb the surface on which you are balancing (e.g., swaying on a tightrope). If your check succeeds after increasing the Difficulty by 5, you keep your balance and impose a +5 modifier on the Difficulty of all Acrobatics checks others must make on the surface until the next round.

Try Again: No.

Action: You can try to reduce damage from a fall as a reaction once per fall. Balancing while moving one-half your speed is a move action. Accelerated movement, allowing you to balance while moving your full speed, is also a move action.

Special: The balancing aspects of Acrobatics can be used untrained.

BLUFF**CHARISMA, INTERACTION**

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

Check: A Bluff check is opposed by the target's Bluff or Sense Motive check, whichever is higher (it's harder to bluff someone who knows all the tricks). Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. Two circumstances can work against you: the bluff is hard to believe, or the action the bluff requires goes against the target's self-interest, nature, or orders.

If it's important, the Narrator can distinguish between the two. For instance, if the target gets a +10 bonus because the bluff demands something risky, and the target's Sense Motive check succeeds by 10 or less, then the target didn't see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. If the target's Sense Motive check succeeds by 11 or more, he sees through the bluff, and would have even if it had not placed any unusual demands on him (that is, even without the +10 bonus).

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

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

Diversion: You can use Bluff to help you hide. A successful Bluff check gives you the diversion needed to attempt a Stealth check while people are aware of you.

Feint: You can use Bluff to mislead an opponent in combat. If your Bluff check succeeds, the next attack you make against the target ignores his dodge or parry bonus to Defense.

Innuendo: You can use Bluff to send secret messages while talking about other things. The Difficulty for a basic message is 10. Complex messages have Difficulties of 15 or 20. The recipient of the message, and anyone listening in, makes a Bluff or Sense Motive check against the same Difficulty to understand your message. Whether trying to send or understand a message, a failure by 5 or more points means the receiver misinterprets the message in some fashion.

Seduction: You can use Bluff to convince someone else you are a potential romantic partner, provided they could possibly be attracted to you (in the Narrator's judgment). Make a Bluff check against your target's Sense Motive check. Success improves the target's attitude like a use of the Diplomacy skill. Seduction is a one-time modification of the target's attitude, not a long-term change.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Bluff:

Conversational Paralysis: In return for a -5 penalty to your Bluff check, a successful check dazes your target for one round. Your claims are so outlandish the target can do nothing but sputter or reel in confusion. This skill challenge does not work in combat situations. Each additional -5 check penalty you accept increases the duration of the effect by one round.

Durable Lie: In return for a -5 penalty on your check, your target believes your bluff longer than usual. The target continues to act as you wish for an additional round. You can apply another -5 penalty to extend this to two rounds. This challenge does not work with the feint use of Bluff.

Try Again: Generally, a failed Bluff check makes the target too suspicious to try again in the same circumstances. For feinting in combat, you may try again freely.

Action: A bluff takes at least a full round, but can take much longer if you try something elaborate. Using Bluff as a feint in combat is a standard action, as is using Bluff to create a diversion to hide.

CLIMB

STRENGTH

You're skilled in scaling angled and uneven surfaces.

Check: With each successful Climb check, you can move up, down, or across a slope, wall, or other steep incline at one-quarter your normal speed. The Difficulty of the check depends on the conditions of the climb. If the climb is less than 10 feet, reduce the Difficulty by 5.

A failed Climb check means you make no progress, and a check that fails by 5 or more means you fall from whatever height you attained (unless you are secured with some kind of harness or other equipment).

If you fall, make a Climb check (Difficulty equal to climb's Difficulty + 20). Success means you arrest your fall about halfway and suffer no damage.

It's somewhat easier to catch someone else who falls, assuming they are within arm's reach. Make a Climb check (Difficulty equal to climb's Difficulty + 10) to do so. If you fail the check, you do not catch the other person. If you fail by 5 or more, you fall as well.

Difficulty	Example Wall or Surface or Task
0	A slope too steep to walk up. A ladder.
5	A knotted rope with a wall to brace against.
10	A rope with a wall to brace against. A knotted rope. A surface with sizable ledges to hold on to and stand on, such as a rugged cliff-face.
15	Any surface with adequate handholds and footholds (natural or artificial), such as a rough natural rock surface or a tree. An unknotted rope. Pulling yourself up when dangling by your hands.
20	An uneven surface with just a few narrow handholds and footholds, such as a coarse masonry wall or a sheer cliff face with a few crevices and small toe-holds.
25	A rough surface with no real handholds or footholds, such as a brick wall.
25	Overhang or ceiling with handholds but no footholds.
—	A perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface can't be climbed.
-10	Climbing inside a chimney, or other location where you can brace against two opposite walls (reduces normal Difficulty by 10).
-5	Climbing a corner where you can brace against perpendicular walls (reduces normal Difficulty by 5).
+5	Surface is slippery (increases normal Difficulty by 5).

Fighting While Climbing: Since you can't easily avoid attacks, you are flat-footed while climbing (losing your dodge bonus to Defense). Any time you take damage while climbing, make a Climb check against the Difficulty of the climb. Failure means you fall.



Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Climb:

Accelerated Climb: You can try to climb more quickly than normal. By accepting a +5 Difficulty modifier to your check, you can move half your speed instead of one-quarter your speed while climbing. You can accept this challenge twice, for a total Difficulty modifier of +10, to move at your normal speed while climbing.

Fighting Climb: You can accept a +5 Difficulty modifier to a Climb check to maintain your dodge bonus to defense while climbing.

Secured Climb: If you take a +5 Difficulty modifier to your Climb check, you do not have to make a Climb check to maintain your position if you take damage. You climb in such a way as to brace yourself for any attacks.

Action: Climbing is a move action.

Special: Someone using a rope can haul a character up (or lower a character down) by sheer strength. Use a character's carrying capacity to determine how much weight he can lift in this way (see **Carrying** in **Chapter Six: Playing the Game**).

COMPUTERS

INTELLIGENCE, TRAINED ONLY

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

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

Find File: The Difficulty and the time required to locate a file on an unfamiliar system are determined by the size of the site, from 10 for a personal computer to 25 for a massive network. Finding public information on the Internet does not fall under this category; this only pertains to finding files on unfamiliar computer systems.

Defeat Computer Security: The Difficulty of the check is determined by the quality of the security installed to defend the system, from 20 for minimal security to 40 for the best-defended systems. If the check fails by 5 or more, the system immediately alerts its administrator that there has been an unauthorized entry. An alerted administrator may attempt to identify you or cut off access to the system.

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

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

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

To identify the intruder, make an opposed Computers check. If the check succeeds, you learn the site from which the intruder is operating (if it's a single computer, you learn the name of the computer's owner). Identifying the intruder requires 1 minute and is a separate check from cutting off access. This check can only be made if the intruder is accessing your site for the entire length of the check—if the intruder's session ends before you make the Computers check, your attempt fails.

Degrade Programming: You can destroy or alter programs on a computer to make it harder or impossible to use. Crashing a computer with a Difficulty 10 check simply shuts it down. Its user can restart it without a skill check, although restarting takes at least 1 minute. Destroying programming with a Difficulty 15 check makes the computer unusable until the programming is repaired. Damaging programming with a Difficulty 20 check imposes a -4 penalty on all checks made with the computer (sometimes this is preferable to destroying the programming, since the user might not know anything is wrong, and won't simply decide to use a different computer).

Fixing damaged programming requires an hour and a Computers check against a Difficulty equal to the Difficulty for damaging it + 5. Destroyed programming must be re-installed.

Write Program: You can create a program to help with a specific task. Doing so grants a +2 bonus to the task. A specific task, in this case, is one type of operation with one target. The Difficulty to write a program is 20; the time required is one hour.

Action: Computers requires at least a full-round action, usually a minute or more.

Special: You can take 10 when using the Computers skill. You can take 20 in some cases, but not those involving a penalty for failure. You cannot take 20 to defeat computer security or defend security, for example.

CONCENTRATION

WISDOM

You can focus your mind and concentrate despite distractions.

Check: Make a Concentration check whenever you might be distracted (by damage, harsh weather, and so on). If the check succeeds, you may continue

what you are doing. If the check fails, the action you're attempting also fails. The check Difficulty depends on the nature of the distraction.

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

Concentrating on Powers: Using or maintaining various supernatural powers often requires Concentration checks, particularly when distracted. See **Chapter Four** for more information.

Try Again: Yes, though a success doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failure, such as the disruption of an action you were concentrating on.

Action: Making a Concentration check doesn't require an action; it is either a reaction (when attempted in response to a distraction) or part of another action (when attempted actively).

CRAFT

INTELLIGENCE, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION, REQUIRES TOOLS

Craft is actually a number of separate skills involving arts and crafts. You must choose a specialty, such as chemical, electronic, mechanical, pharmaceutical, structural, or visual art, or others, as chosen by the Narrator. Training in one Craft specialty does not provide skill in other specialties.

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

Making Items: The Difficulty, time, and resources required to make an item depend on its complexity. Make a Wealth check against the Wealth Difficulty to acquire the necessary raw materials, and then make your Craft check. (Example Difficulties are given in the table.) If your Craft check succeeds, you make the item. If the Craft check fails, you do not produce a usable end result, and any raw materials are wasted.

Complexity	Craft Difficulty	Wealth Difficulty	Time	Examples
Simple	15	5	1 hr.	garment, household item
Moderate	20	10	12 hrs.	fine garment, lock, weapon
Complex	25	15	24 hrs.	plate armor, mechanism
Advanced	30	20	60 hrs.	building, vehicle

Repairing: You can use Craft skills to repair damaged items. In general, simple repairs have a Difficulty of 10 to 15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex repair work has a Difficulty of 20 or higher and can require an hour or more to complete. The repairs have a cost 5 lower than making the item (negligible for simple items).

Forgery: Characters can use Craft to produce forgeries in their areas of specialty. The result of the Craft check becomes the Difficulty for a Notice check to detect the forgery. The Narrator can modify either the Craft or Notice check based on the conditions and the characters' familiarity with the original subject.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Craft:

Fast Craft: You may add +5 or +10 to the indicated Difficulty to craft an item. This increase allows you to make the item faster than usual, reducing the time to half or one-quarter normal, respectively.

Masterwork: By increasing Difficulty and cost by +5, you can make a masterwork item. These items are especially well made and provide a +1 bonus when used. For making masterwork weapons and armor, see **Chapter Five: Equipment**.

Try Again: Yes, although in some cases the Narrator may decide a failed attempt to repair an item has a negative effect, preventing further attempts.

Action: The time to make something varies depending on its complexity, as shown in the table. The Narrator may increase or decrease the time for a particular Craft project as necessary.

Special: Generally, you can take 10 when using a Craft skill, but can't take 20 since doing so represents multiple attempts, and you use up raw materials with each attempt. You can take 10 or take 20 on repair checks.

If you don't have the proper tools, you take a -4 penalty on Craft checks.

DIPLOMACY

CHARISMA, INTERACTION

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

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

Diplomacy can influence a character's attitude. The Narrator chooses the character's initial attitude based on circumstances. Most of the time, people the heroes meet are indifferent toward them, but a specific situation may call for a different initial attitude. The Difficulties given on the **Influence** table in **Chapter Six** show what it takes to change someone's attitude with a use of Diplomacy. You don't declare a specific outcome; instead, make the check and compare the result to the table to see what you've accomplished. For more information, see **Social Actions** in **Chapter Six: Playing the Game**.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Diplomacy:

Combat Diplomacy: You can make a Diplomacy check in combat as a full-round action by accepting a +10 modifier to the Difficulty. Opponents in combat with you are considered hostile. An unfriendly opponent doesn't attack you unless you give him reason to do so. Indifferent foes stop fighting altogether, while a helpful one actually joins your side, even turning against former allies.

Try Again: Generally, trying again doesn't work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be persuaded so far. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly committed to his position, and trying again is futile. At the Narrator's discretion, you can try again when the situation changes in some way: you find a new approach to your argument, new evidence appears, and so forth.

Action: Diplomacy is at least a full-round action. The Narrator may determine some negotiations require a longer period of time, perhaps much longer.

DISABLE DEVICE

INTELLIGENCE, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

You can disarm or sabotage various devices, including locks and traps.

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

Open Lock: You can pick locks. You must have thieves' tools. The Difficulty depends on the quality of the lock.

Lock Quality	Difficulty
Simple	20
Average	25
Good	30
Amazing	40

Traps and Sabotage: Disabling a simple mechanical device has a Difficulty of 10. More intricate and complex devices have higher Difficulties. The Narrator rolls the check. If the check succeeds, you disable the device. If the check fails by 4 or less, you have failed but can try again. If you fail by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If it's a trap, you set it off. If it's some sort of sabotage, you think that the device is disabled, but it's not. You can rig simple devices to work normally for a while and then fail later, if you choose.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Disable Device:

Hide Tampering: If you add +5 to your Difficulty, you can conceal any tampering with a device. Anyone who inspects the device must make a check against your Disable Device check result to notice your tampering. On a failed check, it goes unnoticed.

Try Again: Yes, though you must be aware you have failed in order to try again.

Action: Disabling a simple device is a full-round action. Intricate or complex devices require multiple rounds at the Narrator's discretion.

Special: You can take 10 when making a Disable Device check. You can take 20 to open a lock or to disable a device, unless trying to prevent your tampering from being noticed, or if there is a consequence for failure (such as setting off a trap).

If you do not have the proper tools, you take a -4 penalty on your check.

DISGUISE

CHARISMA, REQUIRES TOOLS

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

Check: Your Disguise check determines the effectiveness of your disguise. It is opposed by others' Notice checks. Make one Disguise check even if several people make Notice checks. The Narrator makes



the Disguise check secretly so you are not sure exactly how well your disguise will hold up under scrutiny.

If you don't draw any attention to yourself, however, others don't get to make Notice checks. If you come to the attention of people who are suspicious, they get to make a Notice check. (The Narrator can assume suspicious observers take 10 on their Notice checks.)

The effectiveness of your disguise depends in part on how much you attempt to change your appearance.

Disguise	Modifier
Minor details only	+5
Appropriate uniform or costume	+2
Disguised as different sex	-2
Disguised as different age	-2

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

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

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

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Disguise:

Face in the Crowd: With a -5 penalty to your check result, you can craft a disguise that is less likely to draw attention. Only people who specifically single you out and try to notice your deception receive Notice checks to do so. Guards and other passive observers take no special notice of you unless you draw attention to yourself or interact directly with them.

Quick Change: You can adopt a disguise as a full-round action by taking a -5 penalty to your check. However, anyone who comes within one visual range increment of you (usually 10 feet) automatically sees through your disguise due to its makeshift nature.

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

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

Special: If you don't have any makeup, costumes, or props, you take a -4 penalty on Disguise checks.

DRIVE

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

Use this skill to operate any ground or water vehicle. Vehicles that move through the air or space are covered by the Pilot skill.

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

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

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Drive:

One Hand on the Wheel: By taking a +5 Difficulty increase to your Drive check, you can perform a standard action in the same round as your Drive check with no penalty.

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

Action: A Drive check is a move action. You can perform a standard action during the same round, but suffer a -4 penalty due to the distractions involved in driving.

Special: Routine tasks, such as ordinary movement, don't require a skill check and may be done untrained.

ESCAPE ARTIST

DEXTERITY

You're trained in escaping from bonds and other restraints.

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

Restraint	Difficulty
Ropes	Opponent's Dexterity bonus +20
Tight space	30
Grapple	Opponent's grapple check

Tight Spaces: For a tight space, a check is only called for if your head fits but your shoulders don't. If the space is longer than your height, such as a chimney, the Narrator may call for multiple checks. You can't fit through a space your head doesn't fit through. You can also reach through a tight space that your hand fits through but your arm normally does not by making an Escape Artist check.

Escaping Grapples: You can make an Escape Artist check opposed by an opponent's grapple check to get out of a grapple or out of a pinned condition (so you are just being grappled). Doing so is a standard action, so if you escape the grapple you can move in the same round.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Escape Artist:

Conceal Efforts: In exchange for a +5 to the Difficulty, you can conceal your efforts to escape. Anyone who inspects your bindings must make a Notice check with a Difficulty equal to your Escape Artist check result. If the Notice check fails, they do not notice your efforts to escape. So, for example, you could leave your bonds apparently in place so a villain doesn't realize that you're actually free.

Try Again: You can make another check after a failed check if you are squeezing through a tight space. If the situation permits, you can make additional checks as long as you are not being actively opposed.

Action: Making a check to escape from being bound by ropes or other restraints requires 1 minute. Escaping a grapple is a standard action. Squeezing or reaching through a tight space takes at least 1 minute, maybe longer, depending on the distance.

GATHER INFORMATION

CHARISMA, INTERACTION

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

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

Information	Difficulty
General	10
Specific	15
Restricted	20
Protected	25

General information concerns local happenings, rumors, gossip, and the like. Specific information usually relates to a particular question. Restricted information includes facts that aren't generally known and require you to locate someone who has access to such information. Protected information is even harder to come by and might involve some danger, either for the one asking the questions or the one providing the answers.

There's a chance someone takes note of anyone asking about restricted or protected information. The Narrator decides when this is the case. In some situations, opposed Gather Information checks are appropriate to see if someone else notices your inquiries (and you notice theirs).

Challenges: You can take these challenges with Gather Information:

Discretion: While seeking out news and information, you keep a low profile. You increase your Gather Information check Difficulty by +5, but you avoid leaving any clues about the information you seek. If your check fails, you may be detected as normal, but you still avoid spreading clues about what you seek.

Try Again: Yes, but it takes additional time for each check, and you may draw attention to yourself if you repeatedly pursue a certain type of information.

Action: A Gather Information check takes at least an hour, possibly several, at the Narrator's discretion.

HANDLE ANIMAL

CHARISMA

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

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

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

Handle an Animal: This means to command an animal to perform a task or trick it knows. If the animal's condition is something other than normal (it's fatigued or injured, for example), the Difficulty increases by +5. If the check is successful, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.

"Push" an Animal: Pushing an animal means getting it to perform a task or trick it doesn't know but is physically capable of doing. If the check is successful, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.

Teach an Animal a Trick: You can teach an animal a specific trick, such as "attack" or "stay," with one week of work and a successful Handle Animal check (Difficulty 15 for simple tricks, 20 or more for complex tricks). An animal with an Intelligence of -5 can learn a maximum of three tricks, while an animal with an Intelligence of -4 can learn a maximum of six tricks.

Train an Animal: Rather than teaching an animal individual tricks, you can train an animal for a general purpose, like combat, guarding, riding, and so forth. This requires a Difficulty 20 skill check. Essentially, an animal's purpose represents a set of tricks fitting a common scheme. An animal can be trained for one purpose only.

Try Again: Yes.

Action: See above.

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

INTIMIDATE

CHARISMA, INTERACTION

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

Check: Your Intimidate check is opposed by the target's modified level check (d20 + target's total level + target's Wisdom score + target's modifiers on saves against fear). If your check succeeds, you may treat the target as friendly for 10 minutes, but only for purposes of actions taken while in

your presence. That is, the target retains his normal attitude, but will talk, advise, offer limited help, or advocate on your behalf while intimidated. Your target will only cooperate so much, and won't necessarily obey your every command or do anything that would directly endanger himself.

If you perform some action that makes you more imposing, you gain a +2 bonus on your Intimidate check. If your target clearly has a superior position, you suffer a -2 penalty on your Intimidate check.

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

Demoralizing: You can use Intimidate in combat to demoralize an opponent, shaking their confidence. Make an Intimidate check as a standard action. If it succeeds, your target is shaken (-2 on all attack rolls, checks, and saving throws, except Toughness saves) for one round.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Intimidate:

Mass Intimidate: You can attempt to intimidate more than one subject at a time. You suffer a -2 penalty to your check per opponent beyond the first.

Power Intimidate: In return for a -5 penalty to your Intimidate check, you can increase the penalty you inflict for demoralizing a foe by -1 or force your subject to take an action that is against his interests (but not life threatening). You can take this challenge multiple times to increase the demoralize penalty. However, you can't use Intimidate to force someone to accept a life-threatening order.

Try Again: No. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be intimidated so much, and trying again doesn't help. If the initial check fails, the other character has become more firmly resolved to resist, and trying again is futile. You can make Intimidate checks to demoralize an opponent in combat until you fail, after which the target is no longer intimidated by you.

Action: An Intimidate check is a full-round action. Demoralizing in combat is a standard action.

Special: You add a +2 bonus to your Intimidate check for every size category you are larger than your target. Conversely, you take a -2 penalty to your check for every size category you are smaller than your target (see **Size** in **Chapter Eight**).

JUMP

STRENGTH

You can jump further than usual.

Check: Distance moved by jumping, which is a move action, is counted against your maximum movement in a round. You can start a jump at the end of one turn and complete the jump at the beginning of your next turn.

PLAYER VERSUS CHARACTER KNOWLEDGE

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

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

Long Jump: This is a horizontal jump. At the midpoint of the jump, you attain a vertical height equal to one-quarter the horizontal distance. The Difficulty of a long jump is 5 plus the distance in feet.

High Jump: This is a vertical leap, made to jump up to grasp something overhead, such as a tree limb or ledge. The Difficulty of a high jump is 10 plus twice the distance in feet.

Hop Up: You can jump up onto an object of half your height or less with a Difficulty 10 Jump check. Doing so counts as 10 feet of movement.

Try Again: No.

Action: Jump is a move action.

KNOWLEDGE

INTELLIGENCE, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION

This skill encompasses several specialties, each of them treated as a separate skill. These specialties are defined below.

Check: Make a Knowledge check to see if you know something. The Difficulty for answering a question is 10 for easy questions, 15 for basic questions, and 20 to 30 for difficult questions. The Narrator sets the difficulty for a particular question. Knowledge specialties, and the topics each one encompasses, are as follows:

- **Art:** Fine arts and graphic arts, including art history and artistic techniques. Antiques, modern art, photography, and performance art forms such as music and dance, among others.
- **Behavioral Sciences:** Psychology, sociology, and criminology.
- **Business:** Business procedures, investment strategies, and corporate structures. Bureaucratic procedures and how to navigate them.
- **Civics:** Law, legislation, litigation, and legal rights and obligations. Political and governmental institutions and processes.
- **Current Events:** Recent happenings in the news, sports, politics, entertainment, and foreign affairs.
- **Earth Sciences:** Geology, geography, oceanography, and paleontology.
- **History:** Events, personalities, and cultures of the past. Archaeology and antiquities.
- **Life Sciences:** Biology, botany, genetics, medicine, and forensics.
- **Physical Sciences:** Astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, physics, and engineering.
- **Popular Culture:** Popular music and personalities, genre films and books, urban legends, and trivia.
- **Streetwise:** Street and urban culture, local underworld personalities and events.
- **Supernatural:** The supernatural, whatever it may encompass in the setting (and regardless of whether it is true or not).
- **Tactics:** Techniques and strategies for disposing and maneuvering forces in combat.
- **Technology:** Current developments in cutting-edge devices, as well as the background necessary to identify various technological devices.
- **Theology and Philosophy:** Liberal arts, ethics, philosophical concepts, and the study of religious faith, practice, and experience.

Try Again: Usually no. The check represents what a character knows; thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let you know something you didn't know before. The Narrator may allow another Knowledge check if a character gets access to a better source of information. For example, a hero who doesn't know the answer to a particular question on his own might get another check with access to a library (and could take 20 on that check, depending on the circumstances).

Action: A Knowledge check can be a reaction, but otherwise requires a full-round action. Taking 20 on a Knowledge check requires at least an hour, longer if the Narrator decides the information you're looking for is particularly obscure or otherwise restricted.

Special: An untrained Knowledge check is simply an Intelligence check. Without actual training, a character can only answer easy or basic questions about a topic.

You can take 10 when making a Knowledge check. You can take 20 only if you have access to the appropriate research materials (such as a library).

LANGUAGE

TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION

Languages are unusual skills. They are not based on an ability score and do not require checks. Instead, your rank in Language measures how many languages you can speak, read, and write. Unskilled characters can speak, read, and write their native language, plus one additional language per point of Intelligence. Your Narrator will tell you what languages your hero can learn.

Literacy: Characters are assumed to be literate in their native language and any other language they know. At the Narrator's discretion, characters may have to spend an additional rank or bonus language to be literate in a language that uses a different alphabet or style of writing from the character's native language (such as Japanese *kanji* or Greek for an English speaker).

Retry: No, because there are no Language checks. You either know a language, or you don't.

MEDICINE

WISDOM, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

You're trained in understanding the body and treating injuries and illness.

Check: The Difficulty and effect depend on the task attempted.

Diagnosis (Difficulty 10): You can diagnose injuries and ailments with an eye toward providing treatment. At the Narrator's discretion, a successful diagnosis can provide a +2 bonus on Medicine checks for treatment. This takes at least a full-round action, if not longer.

Provide Care (Difficulty 15): Providing care means treating a wounded person for a day or more or providing routine medical care, such as assisting in the delivery of a baby. If successful, the patient adds your Medicine rank to any recovery rolls (see **Recovery** in **Chapter Six**). You can tend up to your skill rank in patients at one time.

Revive (Difficulty 15): With a medical kit, you can remove the dazed, stunned, or unconscious condition from a character. This check is a standard action. A successful check removes the condition. You can't revive an unconscious character who is dying without stabilizing the character first.

Stabilize (Difficulty 15): With a medical kit, you can tend to a character who is dying. As a standard action, a successful Medicine check stabilizes the dying character.

Treat Disease (Difficulty 15): You can tend to a character infected with a treatable disease. Every time the diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects (after the initial contamination), you can first make a Medicine check requiring 10 minutes. If your check succeeds, you provide a bonus on the diseased character's saving throw equal to your Medicine rank.

Treat Poison (Difficulty 15): You can tend to a poisoned character. When a poisoned character makes a saving throw against a poison's secondary effect, you first make a Medicine check as a standard action. If the check succeeds, you provide a bonus on the poisoned character's saving throw equal to your Medicine rank.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Medicine:

Heal Thyself: Taking a -5 penalty on your check, you can use the Medicine skill on yourself to diagnose, provide care, or treat disease or poison.

Try Again: Yes, for reviving dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters, and stabilizing dying characters. No, for all other uses of the skill.

Action: Medicine checks take different amounts of time based on the task at hand, as described above.

Special: You can take 10 when making a Medicine check. You can take 20 only when giving long-term care or attempting to revive dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters.

If you do not have the appropriate medical equipment, you take a -4 penalty on your skill check.

NOTICE

WISDOM

You use this skill to notice and perceive things.

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

The Narrator might make Notice checks secretly so you don't know whether there was something to notice. The most common sorts of Notice checks are as follows:

Listening: Make a check against a Difficulty based on how loud the noise is or against an opposed Stealth check.

Difficulty	Sound
-10	A battle
0	People talking
10	A person walking at a slow pace, trying not to make any noise
30	A bird flying through the air
+5	Through a door
+10	Listener asleep
+15	Through a solid wall

Spotting: Make a check against a Difficulty based on how visible the object is. Spot is often used to notice a person or creature hiding from view. In such cases, your Notice check is opposed by the Stealth check of the character trying not to be seen. Spot is also used to detect someone in disguise (see the Disguise skill) or to notice a concealed weapon on another person.

Other Senses: You can make Notice checks involving smell, taste, and touch, as appropriate. Use the same guidelines as listen and spot checks above. Noticing something obvious is Difficulty 0. Subtle things are around Difficulty 10, hidden things Difficulty 20 or more. Noticing subtle supernatural phenomena requires special powers (see **Chapter Four: Powers** for details).

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Notice:

Locate Noise: For a -5 penalty on a Notice (listen) check, you can attempt to pinpoint the source of a sound. A successful check tells you the exact location. The source still gets the benefits of total concealment, but you can attack it even if you can't see it. Among other things, this allows you to attack while blinded or fighting an invisible foe. If your check fails, you become confused as to the location of the source of the sound.

Try Again: You can make a Notice check every time you have the opportunity to notice something new. As a move action, you can attempt to notice something you failed (or believe you failed) to notice previously.

Action: A Notice check is either a reaction (if called for by the Narrator) or a move action (if you actively take the time to try to notice something).

Special: When several characters are trying to notice the same thing, the Narrator can make a single d20 roll and use it for all the characters' skill checks.

You can take 10 or take 20 when making a Notice check. Taking 20 means you spend 1 minute attempting to notice something that may or may not be there.

PERFORM

CHARISMA, INTERACTION, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION

This skill encompasses several types of performance, each treated as a separate skill.

Check: You are accomplished in some type of artistic expression and know how to put on a performance. The quality of your performance depends on your check result.

The Perform specialties are as follows:

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

Furthermore, since the Perform skill requires specialization, Narrators and players shouldn't feel restricted to the instruments on the list provided. New specialties can be created as required by the campaign setting.

Check Result Performance

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

Try Again: Not for the same performance and audience.

Action: A Perform check usually requires at least several minutes to an hour or more.

Special: If you don't have an appropriate instrument, you automatically fail any Perform check requiring it. At the Narrator's discretion, impromptu instruments may be employed, but you take a -4 penalty on the check.

PILOT

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

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

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

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

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Pilot:

One Hand on the Wheel: By taking a +5 Difficulty increase to your Pilot check, you can perform a standard action in the same round as your Pilot check with no penalty.

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

Action: A Pilot check is a move action. You can perform a standard action during the same round, but suffer a -4 penalty due to the distractions involved in piloting.

RIDE

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

Use this skill to ride a mount, like a horse or even a dolphin or griffon.

Check: Routine tasks, such as ordinary movement, don't require a skill check. Make a check only when some unusual circumstance exists (such as inclement weather or an icy surface) or when you are riding in a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked, for example, or trying to reach a destination in a limited amount of time). While riding, you can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts. Easy riding maneuvers, like staying in the saddle in a fight or guiding a mount with your knees, have a Difficulty of 5. An average maneuver, like a full gallop or dodging around an obstacle, has a Difficulty of 10. Difficult maneuvers, like using your mount as cover, jumping, or suffering no harm in a fall, have a Difficulty of 15. Challenging maneuvers, like a fast mount or dismount (as a free action) or controlling a panicking mount, have a Difficulty of 20.

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

Action: A Ride check is a move action.

Special: If you lack the appropriate saddle, tack, and harness for your mount, you suffer a -4 penalty on your Ride checks.

SEARCH

INTELLIGENCE

You can search an area looking for clues, hidden items, traps, and other such details. The Notice skill allows you to notice things immediately, while Search allows you to pick up on details with some effort.

Check: You generally must be within 10 feet of the area to be examined. You can examine up to a 5-foot-by-5-foot area or a volume of goods 5 feet on a side with a single check.

A Search check can turn up individual footprints, but does not allow you to follow tracks or tell you which direction the creature or creatures went or came from (see the Track feat).

Difficulty Task

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

Finding Concealed Objects: The Difficulty for a Search check to find a deliberately concealed object is usually based on the Stealth or Sleight of Hand check of the character who hid it. The Narrator can assume that characters with the time take 20 on their check to hide the object.

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

SENSE MOTIVE

WISDOM

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

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

Evaluate: You can use this skill to make an assessment of a social situation. With a successful check (Difficulty 20), you can get a feeling when something is wrong. You can also tell if someone is trustworthy and honorable (or not) with an opposed Sense Motive and Bluff check.

Notice Influence: You can make a Sense Motive check to notice someone acting under supernatural influence. The Difficulty is 10 + the power's rank.

Notice Innuendo: You can use Sense Motive to detect a hidden message transmitted via the Bluff skill (Difficulty equal to the Bluff check result). If your check result beats the Difficulty, you understand the secret message. If your check fails by 5 or more, you misinterpret the message in some fashion. If you are not the intended recipient of the message, your Difficulty increases by 5.

Resist Interaction: Make a Sense Motive check to resist or ignore the effects of certain interaction skills, such as Bluff or Intimidate. If the result of your check exceeds your opponent's check result, you are unaffected.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Sense Motive:

Read Situation: For every +5 you increase the Difficulty of your Sense Motive check, you learn one fact about the situation at hand when evaluating a situation or individual. The Narrator may tell you things like someone's apparent goal(s), the nature of an interaction, and so forth.

Try Again: No, though you can make a Sense Motive check for each interaction attempt against you.

Action: A Sense Motive check may be made as a reaction to notice or resist something. (When that's the case, the Narrator may roll the Sense Motive check in secret, so you don't know if there's something to notice or not.) Using Sense Motive to evaluate a person or situation takes at least 1 minute.



SLEIGHT OF HAND

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

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

Check: A check against Difficulty 10 lets you palm a coin-sized, unattended object. When you perform this skill under close observation, your skill check is opposed by the observer's Notice check. The observer's check doesn't prevent you from performing the action, just from doing it unnoticed. If using Sleight of Hand to do tricks to impress an audience, you can treat it as a Perform specialty.

Thievery: When you try to take something from another person, your opponent makes a Notice check to detect the attempt. To obtain the object, you must get a result of 20 or higher, regardless of the opponent's check result. The opponent detects the attempt if his check result beats your character's check result, whether you take the object or not.

Planting: You can make a Sleight of Hand check to plant a small object on a person, slip something into their pocket, drop something into their drink, and so forth. This has the same Difficulty and Notice check as thievery.

Concealment: You can use Sleight of Hand to conceal a small weapon or object on your body, making your check result the Difficulty of a Search check to find the object.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Sleight of Hand:

Quicker Than the Eye: In melee combat, you can make a Sleight of Hand check as a move action to slip past an opponent's defenses. Your foe opposes this check with a Notice or combat bonus check. If you succeed, your opponent loses his dodge bonus against your next attack. If you fail, you suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls for the next round. The Quicker than the Eye challenge does not have a -5 challenge penalty. This is intentional; it's intended to work like a feint. If the Narrator wants to keep the challenge less common, imposing a challenge penalty should do it.

Try Again: A second Sleight of Hand attempt against the same target, or when being watched by the same observer, has a Difficulty 10 higher than the first check if the first check failed or if the attempt was noticed.

Action: A Sleight of Hand check is a standard action.

Special: You can make an untrained Sleight of Hand check to conceal a weapon or object, but must always take 10 when doing so, so you can't do it while under stress.

STEALTH

DEXTERITY

You're skilled in moving about unseen and unheard.

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

Size Modifiers: Apply the modifier from your size category to your Stealth checks to represent the difficulty and ease of noticing smaller and larger targets, respectively: Fine +16, Diminutive +12, Tiny +8, Small +4, Medium +0, Large -4, Huge -8, Gargantuan -12, Colossal -16.

Hiding: If others have spotted you, you can't use Stealth to remain unseen. You can run around a corner so you are out of sight and then use Stealth to hide, but others then know at least where you went. Note you can't hide if you have no cover or concealment (since that means you're standing out in the open).

Creating a Diversion to Hide: You can make a Bluff check to gain the momentary diversion needed to attempt a Stealth check while people are aware of you. When the others turn their attention from you, you can make a Stealth check if you can get to a hiding place of some kind. (As a general guideline, the hiding place has to be within 1 foot for every rank you have in Stealth.) This check, however, is at a -5 penalty because you have to move fast.

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

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Stealth:

Accelerated Stealth: You can move up to your normal speed in exchange for a -5 penalty to your Stealth check. In return for a -20 penalty to your check, you can move faster than your normal speed, such as by running or charging.

Slip Between Cover: You can make a Stealth check at a penalty to quickly cross an area lacking cover or concealment without automatically revealing yourself. For every 5 feet of open space you cross, you take a -5 penalty to your Stealth check. You also take the normal Stealth penalties for moving faster than half your normal speed and such. So, you can slip past a 5-foot open doorway without being seen, for example, or duck from shadow to shadow.

Vanishing: You can "disappear" when no one is watching you. This is essentially a use of Stealth to hide when the character has concealment or a distraction (no one looking directly at him, essentially). It requires a Stealth check with a -5 penalty, and the character must be

within a normal move action of an exit, or some cover or concealment (a window, skylight, ventilation duct, etc.). A successful check means the character seems to disappear; an observer turns around only to discover that he is gone. Characters can use Bluff or Intimidate to gain the momentary distraction needed to vanish in this way.

Action: Stealth is a move action.

SURVIVAL

WISDOM

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

Check: You can keep yourself and others safe and fed in the wild.

Difficulty Task

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

Try Again: No.

Action: Survival checks occur each day in the wilderness or whenever a hazard presents itself.

SWIM

STRENGTH

You can swim and maneuver underwater.

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

Condition	Difficulty
Calm water	10
Rough water	15
Stormy water	20

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

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Swim:

Accelerated Swim: For a +5 Difficulty increase, you increase your swimming speed by one-quarter your normal speed. You can take this challenge up to three times to increase your swimming speed up to your normal speed. You suffer the normal effects of failing your Swim check.

Rescuing: Rescuing another character who cannot swim (for whatever reason) increases the Difficulty of your Swim checks by +5, but allows both of you to remain afloat.

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

CHAPTER THREE: FEATS

WHILE ABILITIES, BACKGROUNDS, ROLES, AND SKILLS DEFINE A GREAT DEAL ABOUT HEROES, WHAT REALLY MAKES THEM HEROES ARE FEATS, SPECIAL ABILITIES ALLOWING YOUR HERO TO DO THINGS MOST OTHER PEOPLE CAN'T.

FEATS ALLOW HEROES TO "BREAK THE RULES" IN CERTAIN WAYS OR PROVIDE THEM ACCESS TO CERTAIN GIFTS OR TALENTS.

FEATS ALSO ALLOW YOU TO CUSTOMIZE YOUR HERO'S CAPABILITIES.



ACQUIRING FEATS

Heroes start out with a certain number of feats, based on their role. They acquire a new feat each time they gain a level (either in that role or in a new role). Each role has access to the general feats, as well as its own list of feats. Players choose new feats for their heroes from these lists.

TYPES OF FEATS

Some feats are *general*, meaning no special rules govern them as a group and they are available to everyone. Other feats are restricted to heroes of particular roles and related to performing those roles. *Expert* feats

are limited to experts, *warrior* feats are limited to warriors, and *adept* feats are limited to adepts. A feat's type is listed after its name in the feat's description.

PREREQUISITES

Some feats have prerequisites. Your hero must have the indicated ability score, feat, skill, combat bonus, or other requisite trait(s) in order to acquire or use that feat. A hero can gain a feat and its prerequisites at the same time. If you ever lose a feat's prerequisites for any reason, you also lose the ability to use that feat.

FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

Each description lists the feat's name and its type, followed by any prerequisites. The description goes on to specify the feat's effects.

ACCURATE ATTACK (GENERAL)

You can lessen your attack's damage to make a wider, more sweeping attack with a better chance to hit. Subtract a number up to 5 from your attack's damage bonus and add the same number to your attack roll. You cannot lower your damage bonus below 0 nor more than double your attack bonus.

ACROBATIC BLUFF (EXPERT)

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

ALL-OUT ATTACK (GENERAL)

With an All-out Attack, you ignore defense in favor of accuracy. Subtract a number up to 5 from your dodge and parry bonus and add the same number to your attack roll. You cannot lower your bonus below 0 nor more than double your attack bonus.

ANIMAL EMPATHY (GENERAL)

You have a special connection with animals. You can use the Handle Animal skill like Diplomacy to change the attitude of an animal by interacting with it. Unlike a normal use of Diplomacy, you do not have to speak a language the animal understands, and Animal Empathy affects creatures with Intelligence -4 or less normally. You can also use the Bluff and Gather Information skills normally on animals. You don't actually need to speak to the animals; you communicate your intent through gestures and body language and learn things by studying animal behavior.

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

ARMOR TRAINING (GENERAL)

You're trained to move and fight while wearing armor. There are two versions of this feat: light and heavy. The heavy version covers both medium and heavy types of armor. Each is considered a separate feat, and you must be trained in wearing light armor before you can acquire training in heavy armor. Characters without Armor Training apply their armor's check penalty (see **Armor** in **Chapter Five**) to all physical rolls and checks while wearing it, including attack rolls. Characters with Armor Training only apply the armor's check penalty to Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, and Swim checks.

ASSESSMENT (GENERAL)

You're able to size up someone's combat capabilities by observing them carefully. As a move action, choose a subject and make a Sense Motive check opposed by the subject's Bluff check result. If you succeed, the Narrator tells you the subject's combat bonus relative to yours (lower, higher, or equal). You don't know the subject's exact bonus unless it equals your own, only a rough estimate of relative ability. In cases of a 5-point or greater difference, the Narrator may choose to tell you the subject's bonus is *considerably* more or less than yours. If you lose the opposed roll, the Narrator should over- or under-estimate the subject's bonus.

ATTACK FOCUS (GENERAL)

You have unusual prowess in one particular kind of attack. Choose one attack: unarmed, grapple, a type of weapon, or a supernatural power. You gain a +1 bonus on all attack rolls you make using the selected attack. You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a new attack.

ATTACK SPECIALIZATION (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: ATTACK FOCUS WITH THE CHOSEN ATTACK.

Choose an attack for which you have already selected the Attack Focus feat. You deal +1 damage when using this attack. You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a new attack.

ATTRACTIVE (GENERAL)

You're particularly attractive, giving you a +4 bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks to deceive, seduce, or change the attitude of anyone who might find you appealing.

BENEFIT (GENERAL)

You have some significant perquisite or fringe benefit. The exact nature of the benefit is for you and the Narrator to determine. As a rule of thumb it should not exceed the benefits of any other feat. A license to practice law or medicine, for example, should not be considered a benefit; it's simply a part of having enough ranks in the appropriate skill(s) and has no significant game effect.

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

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

GENERAL FEATS

General Feats	Summary	General Feats	Summary
Accurate Attack	You can sacrifice damage for accuracy.	Improved Trip	+2 bonus to trip opponents.
All-out Attack	You can sacrifice defense for accuracy.	Iron Will	+2 bonus on Will saving throws.
Animal Empathy	You can use interaction skills on animals.	Leadership	You acquire a number of followers.
Armor Training	You know how to move and fight while wearing armor.	Light Sleeper	No penalty on Notice checks while sleeping.
Assessment	You can get an idea of an opponent's combat bonus.	Lightning Reflexes	+2 bonus on Reflex saving throws.
Attack Focus	+1 on attack rolls with a chosen attack.	Low Profile	Subtract 3 from your Reputation score.
Attractive	+4 on Bluff and Diplomacy checks from your appearance.	Lucky	Add your Cha score to your saving throws.
Benefit	Gain some minor, but significant, benefit.	Move-by Action	Move both before and after your standard action.
Blind-Fight	Half miss chance while in melee combat.	Night Vision	See twice as far in low-light conditions.
Canny Dodge	Add your Int or Wis score to your dodge bonus.	Overrun	You can overrun more effectively while mounted or in a vehicle.
Challenge	Perform a particular challenge with no modifier.	Point Blank Shot	+1 attack and damage with ranged weapons at 30 ft. range.
Connected	You can call in favors from time to time.	Precise Shot	You can make ranged attacks into melee with no penalty.
Contacts	You can make Gather Information checks faster.	Prone Fighting	No penalties while fighting prone.
Dedicated	+4 bonus for checks involving the object of your devotion.	Quick Draw	Draw or reload a weapon as a free action.
Defensive Attack	You can sacrifice accuracy for defense.	Ranged Pin	You can pin an opponent with a ranged weapon.
Dodge Focus	+1 to your dodge bonus.	Run	You run at five times your normal speed.
Eidetic Memory	Total recall and +4 bonus on checks to remember things.	Second Chance	You get a second save against a particular hazard.
Endurance	+4 bonus on stamina-related Con checks and Fort saves.	Set-up	Transfer an interaction bonus in combat to an ally.
Exotic Weapon Training	You're trained in a particular exotic weapon.	Shield Training	You're trained in the proper use of shields in combat.
Far Shot	Increase range increment by one-half (double for thrown weapons).	Skill Focus	+3 bonus with a chosen skill.
Firearms Training	You are trained in the proper use of firearms.	Skill Training	+4 skill ranks.
Great Fortitude	+2 on Fortitude saving throws.	Startle	Use Intimidate in place of Bluff to feint in combat.
Improved Critical	Your threat range with a particular attack is doubled.	Talented	+2 bonus with two related skills.
Improved Defense	+2 bonus when taking the total defense action.	Taunt	Make a Bluff check to shake a target's confidence.
Improved Disarm	+2 bonus when attempting to disarm an opponent.	Tireless	Suffer no penalties from fatigue.
Improved Grab	You can follow an unarmed attack with a free grapple.	Track	You can find and follow tracks.
Improved Initiative	You get a +4 bonus on initiative checks.	Trackless	You leave no trail in natural surroundings.
Improved Pin	Opponents suffer a -4 penalty on grapple checks against you.	Trailblazer	You can move through natural surroundings freely.
Improved Precise Shot	No penalty for less than total cover or concealment.	Two-Weapon Defense	Your two-weapon fighting style improves your Defense.
Improved Ranged Disarm	No penalty when making a ranged disarm attempt.	Two-Weapon Fighting	You can skillfully fight with a weapon in each hand.
Improved Speed	+10 feet movement speed.	Uncanny Dodge	You retain your dodge bonus when flat-footed.
Improved Strike	You do lethal damage unarmed.	Vehicular Combat	Substitute Drive, Pilot, or Ride check for vehicle or mount's Defense.
Improved Sunder	+4 to hit when striking held objects.	Wealthy	+4 Wealth bonus.
Improved Throw	Choose whether an opponent uses Str or Dex against a trip.	Weapon Training	You're trained in the use of martial weapons.

- Status:** By virtue of birth or achievement, you have special status. Examples include nobility, knighthood, aristocracy, being a *samurai* in medieval Japan, and so forth.

The Narrator is the final arbiter as to what does and does not constitute a Benefit in the campaign. Keep in mind some qualities may constitute Benefits in some campaigns, but not in others, depending on whether or not they have any real impact on the game.

BLIND-FIGHT (GENERAL)

In melee combat, you suffer half the usual miss chance due to concealment (see **Concealment**, in **Chapter Six**). If you spend a Conviction point

before rolling the miss chance, you *automatically* ignore it for that attack (you gain no other benefit from the Conviction point).

You take only half the usual penalty to speed for being unable to see; darkness and poor visibility reduce your speed to three-quarters rather than half.

CANNY DODGE (GENERAL)

When unarmored and unencumbered, add your Intelligence or Wisdom score as a dodge bonus to your Defense. Choose which bonus applies when you acquire this feat. The bonus from this feat is in addition to the standard dodge bonus granted by your Dexterity. You lose your

ADEPT FEATS

Adept Feats	Summary	Adept Feats	Summary
Empower	You can increase the effective rank of your powers.	Shield Penetration	+2 bonus to overcome a target's Psychic Shield.
Erase Signature	You can erase supernatural signatures.	Subtle Power	You can mute the signature of your powers.
Familiar	You have a supernatural bond with a special animal companion.	Supernatural Focus	+3 bonus with a chosen power.
Imbue Item	You can craft supernatural items.	Supernatural Talent	+2 bonus with two chosen powers.
Mind Over Body	Substitute your Wisdom score for Constitution checks.	Widen Power	Affect an area with your powers.
Quicken Power	Reduce the time required to use your powers.		

EXPERT FEATS

Expert Feats	Summary	Expert Feats	Summary
Acrobatic Bluff	Use Acrobatics in place of Bluff to feint and trick.	Jack-of-All-Trades	You can use any skill untrained.
Crippling Strike	Your surprise attacks inflict 1 point of Str damage.	Mass Suggestion	Make a suggestion to an entire group.
Defensive Roll	+1 bonus on Toughness saves.	Master Plan	Gain a bonus when you have a chance to prepare.
Deflect Arrows	You can deflect one ranged attack against you per round.	Redirect	Redirect a missed attack against another target.
Elusive Target	Double normal penalties for ranged attacks against you while you're in melee.	Skill Mastery	Choose four skills you can take 10 with even under pressure.
Evasion	No damage from area attacks if you make your Reflex save.	Slow Fall	You can slow your fall by 10 ft. per two expert levels.
Fascinate	You can capture and hold someone's attention with an interaction skill.	Snatch Arrows	You can catch ranged weapons.
Hide in Plain Sight	Make Stealth checks without cover or concealment.	Sneak Attack	+2 damage with a surprise attack.
Improved Evasion	Suffer only half damage on a failed Reflex save.	Stunning Attack	You can make a stunning attack in melee.
Improvised Tools	No penalty for using a skill without the proper tools.	Suggestion	You can plant suggestions into the minds of others.
Inspire	You can inspire others with your presence.	Well-Informed	Make a Gather Information check immediately upon meeting someone.

WARRIOR FEATS

Warrior Feats	Summary	Warrior Feats	Summary
Attack Specialization	+1 damage with a chosen attack.	Greater Attack Specialization	+1 damage with a particular attack.
Chokehold	Cause a pinned opponent to suffocate.	Rage	You can go into a rage in combat.
Cleave	Get an extra melee attack when you take out an opponent.	Seize Initiative	Spend a Conviction point to go first in the initiative order.
Critical Strike	Score critical hits normally against favored opponents.	Smite Opponent	You can inflict additional damage on your favored opponent.
Diehard	You automatically succeed on Con checks to stabilize.	Spirited Charge	Deal +3 damage with a melee weapon while charging.
Favored Opponent	+2 bonus against a particular type of opponent.	Stunning Attack	You can make a stunning attack in melee.
Grappling Finesse	Use Dex in place of Str to grapple.	Tough	+1 bonus on Toughness saves.
Great Cleave	Like Cleave, but usable an unlimited number of times.	Weapon Bind	Free disarm attempt after successful parry.
Greater Attack Focus	+1 attack bonus with a particular attack.	Weapon Break	Free attack against an opponent's weapon after a successful parry.

Canny Dodge bonus if you are wearing armor or carrying more than a light load.

CHALLENGE (GENERAL)

Choose a specific challenge (see **Challenges** in the **Introduction**). You can pick a standard challenge or one from a skill's individual description in **Chapter Two**. For standard challenges, the challenge only applies to a specific task. So, for example, if you choose the Fast Task challenge, you need to specify a task, such as the feint application of Bluff, or making an item with Craft. If you take Calculated Risk, you need to specify the two checks (and the skills used for them), and if you take Simultaneous Tasks, you need to specify the two tasks. Once specified, these things do not change.

You can perform the challenge chosen under this feat with a 5-point lesser modifier than usual. So, for challenges with a -5 penalty or a +5

Difficulty, you perform them like normal checks. For challenges with a greater modifier, you reduce the modifier accordingly. So a hero with Fast Feint, as an example, can feint in combat as a move action with no Bluff check modifier (since the normal modifier is -5).

You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a different challenge.

CHOKEHOLD (WARRIOR)

If you pin an opponent while grappling, you can apply a chokehold, causing your opponent to begin suffocating for as long as you maintain the pin. See **Chapter Six** for details on grappling and suffocation. When pinned with the Chokehold feat, the victim must start making Difficulty 10 Con checks the round after failing the grapple check (see the rules for **Suffocation** on Page 112).

CLEAVE (WARRIOR)

If you knock out, disable, or kill an opponent with a melee attack, you get an immediate extra melee attack against another opponent within reach. You can't move before making this extra attack. The extra attack is with the same weapon and attack bonus as the attack that downed your previous opponent. You can use this feat once per round.

CONNECTED (GENERAL)

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

CONTACTS (GENERAL)

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

CRIPPLING STRIKE (EXPERT)**PREREQUISITE: SNEAK ATTACK.**

You can sneak attack opponents with such precision that your attacks weaken them. Anyone suffering lethal damage from one of your sneak attacks also takes 1 point of Strength damage. Lost Strength returns at a rate of 1 point per day.

CRITICAL STRIKE (WARRIOR)**PREREQUISITE: FAVORED OPPONENT.**

You can score critical hits normally on favored opponents that are immune to critical hits. This benefit only affects your favored opponent(s).

DEDICATED (GENERAL)

You are deeply dedicated to a person or cause (and should roleplay this). You have a +4 bonus on saving throws and checks against effects that would sway you from your dedication. Whenever you spend a Conviction point to re-roll a die roll directly concerning your dedication, the roll is treated as a 20 (but not a natural 20). The Narrator decides when this is appropriate.

If you fail or waver in your dedication, you lose the benefits of this feat. You can only regain them by renewing your dedication.

DEFENSIVE ATTACK (GENERAL)

A defensive attack is more cautious, trading accuracy for protection. Subtract a number up to 5 from your attack bonus and add the same number to your dodge or parry bonus for the round. You cannot lower your attack bonus below 0, nor more than double your dodge or parry bonus.

DEFENSIVE ROLL (EXPERT)

You can evade damage through agility and “rolling” with an attack. You receive a +1 bonus to your Toughness saving throws, but lose your Defensive Roll bonus whenever you are denied your dodge bonus or unable to take a free action. You can take this feat multiple times and its benefits stack.

DEFLECT ARROWS (EXPERT)

You can bat arrows and similar ranged weapons (such as thrown objects) out of the air. You must have at least one hand free to use this feat. Once per round, when you would normally be hit with a ranged weapon, you may deflect it as a reaction so you take no damage from it. You must be aware of the attack and not flat-footed. You cannot deflect bullets, energy beams, or similar ranged attacks.

DIEHARD (WARRIOR)

When your condition is reduced to dying, you automatically succeed on the Constitution check to stabilize on the following round. Further damage can still kill you.

DODGE FOCUS (GENERAL)

Your dodge bonus increases by +1. This additional dodge bonus is lost in the same way as your regular dodge bonus, when you are flat-footed and so forth. You can acquire this feat multiple times and its benefits stack.

EIDETIC MEMORY (GENERAL)

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

ELUSIVE TARGET (EXPERT)

You are expert at dodging and weaving around your foes, making you an elusive target while you're engaged in a melee. When you are fighting in melee combat, others attempting to target you with ranged attacks are at a -8 penalty rather than the usual -4 penalty for shooting into melee combat.

EMPOWER (ADEPT)

You can increase the effective rank of your powers, putting more of your energy and will behind them. For each effective rank you add to a power, increase the fatigue Difficulty of using it by +2. You cannot empower a power by more than +5 ranks (for +10 to the fatigue Difficulty).

ENDURANCE (GENERAL)

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

ERASE SIGNATURE (ADEPT)**PREREQUISITES: SECOND SIGHT POWER.**

You can erase supernatural signatures, eliminating evidence of them. You must first be able to sense a signature. It then takes a full-round action to erase it. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information.

EVASION (EXPERT)

If you make your Reflex save against an area effect, you suffer *no* damage. See **Chapter Six** for more information on area effects.

EXOTIC WEAPON TRAINING (GENERAL)

You're trained in the use of a particular exotic weapon. Each exotic weapon requires a separate feat. For a list of exotic weapons, see **Chapter Five: Equipment**.

FAMILIAR (ADEPT)

You have a supernatural bond with a special animal companion. Choose a 1st-level animal as your familiar (see **Chapter Eight** for animal descriptions).



FAMILIAR

Adept Level	Abilities	Tricks	Special
1st-2nd	+0	1	Link, Share Powers
3rd-5th	+0	2	Evasion
6th-8th	+1	3	Dedicated
9th-11th	+1	4	Speak
12th-14th	+2	5	
15th-17th	+2	6	Improved Evasion
18th-20th	+3	7	

Your familiar is an enhanced version of the chosen animal, referred to as the base animal. The **Familiar** table indicates how the base animal is enhanced.

Adept Level: Enhancements to the familiar's traits are based on your adept level. A familiar's combat bonus is the same as an expert of your adept level, and a familiar has good Fortitude and Reflex saves and normal Will saves like an expert of your adept level.

Abilities: This is a bonus to the base animal's Strength, Dexterity, and Intelligence scores.

Bonus Tricks: The number in this column is the total number of tricks the familiar knows, in addition to any you might choose to teach it using the Handle Animal skill. These bonus tricks don't require any training time or Handle Animal checks, and they don't count against the normal limit of tricks known by the animal. You select these bonus tricks, and once chosen, they can't be changed.

Link: You have a psychic link with your familiar. The two of you are always in mental contact (like a use of the Mind Touch power). If some outside force, such as the Ward power, interferes, you can make a power check to overcome it. If your psychic link is broken, it is automatically reestablished as soon as possible. Because of your link,

you can handle your familiar as a free action and push it as a move action, even if you aren't trained in the Handle Animal skill. You get a +4 bonus on interaction checks involving your familiar.

Share Powers: You can choose to have any power you use on yourself also affect your familiar. This includes powers like Body Control and Psychic Shield, which normally only affect the user. The familiar must be within 5 feet of you when the power is used to receive its effects. If the power has a duration other than instantaneous, it stops affecting the familiar when the familiar moves farther than 5 feet away from you and does not affect it again, even if it returns while the power is still in effect.

Evasion: Your familiar gains the Evasion feat.

Dedicated: Your familiar gains the Dedicated feat towards you.

Speak: Your familiar can speak verbally with you as if you shared a common language. Others cannot understand your communication without the use of powers.

Improved Evasion: Your familiar gains the Improved Evasion feat.

FAR SHOT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: POINT BLANK SHOT.

When you use a projectile weapon, such as a bow or firearm, its range increment increases by half (multiply by 1.5). When you use a thrown weapon, its range increment doubles (multiply by 2).

FASCINATE (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN THE CHOSEN INTERACTION SKILL

One of your interaction skills is so effective you can capture and hold someone's attention with it. Choose Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Perform. Use a standard action and make a check using the interaction skill against your target's Sense Motive check or Will saving throw result (whichever has the higher bonus).

If you succeed, the target pays no attention to anyone other than you. You may maintain the effect by taking a standard action each round, for a maximum number of rounds equal to your skill rank. Any potential threat, such as an ally sneaking up on a fascinated target, grants a new Sense Motive check or Will save. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, automatically breaks the fascination. The fascination ends when you stop maintaining it or the target overcomes it.

You may take this feat more than once. Each time, it applies to a different interaction skill.

FAVORED OPPONENT (WARRIOR)

You have a particular type of opponent you've studied or are especially effective against. It may be a type of creature, like animals or the undead; a profession, like soldiers or thieves; or any other category the Narrator approves. Especially broad categories, like "all humanoids" or "all villains," are not permitted. You get a +2 bonus on Bluff, Intimidate, Notice, Sense Motive, and Survival checks when dealing with your favored opponent, as well as +1 damage on all attacks against them. You may take this feat multiple times, either choosing a different favored opponent or stacking with your existing bonus to a maximum of +6 on skills checks and +3 damage.

FIREARMS TRAINING (GENERAL)

You are trained in the proper use of firearms. Characters lacking Firearms Training have a -4 penalty to attack rolls with firearms. See **Chapter Five** for details on various types of firearms.

GRAPPLING FINESSE (WARRIOR)

You can use your Dexterity bonus, rather than your Strength bonus, to make grapple checks. You retain your dodge bonus to Defense against all opponents while grappling. See **Chapter Six** for more on grappling.

GREAT CLEAVE (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: CLEAVE.

This feat works like Cleave, except you can use it an unlimited number of times per round, until you miss an attack or there are no more opponents within range.

GREAT FORTITUDE (GENERAL)

You get a +2 bonus on all Fortitude saving throws.

GREATER ATTACK FOCUS (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: ATTACK FOCUS.

You gain an additional +1 attack bonus with the chosen attack. The benefit of this feat stacks with Attack Focus.

GREATER ATTACK SPECIALIZATION (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: ATTACK SPECIALIZATION

You gain an additional +1 damage bonus with the chosen attack. The benefit of this feat stacks with Attack Specialization.

HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: STEALTH RANK 13

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

IMBUE ITEM (ADEPT)

You can craft supernatural items, including weapons, armor, and charms. It takes the normal time to make the item, but its cost is increased. See **Supernatural Items** in **Chapter Five** for details.

IMPROVED CRITICAL (GENERAL)

Your critical threat range with a particular attack is doubled. An attack that normally threatens a critical on a natural 20 instead threatens a critical on a 19 or 20, an attack that normally threatens a critical on a 19 or 20 instead threatens a critical on 17–20, and so forth. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time it applies to a different attack.

IMPROVED DEFENSE (GENERAL)

When you take a total defense action in combat you gain a +6 bonus rather than the usual +4 bonus. You can take this feat a second time, giving you a +8 bonus when you take a total defense action.

IMPROVED DISARM (GENERAL)

You have a +2 bonus on attack rolls when attempting to disarm an opponent, who does not get an opportunity to disarm you if you fail (see **Disarm** in **Chapter Six**).

IMPROVED EVASION (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: EVASION.

This works like Evasion except you only take half damage from an area effect even if you *fail* the Reflex save, and no damage if you succeed.

IMPROVED GRAB (GENERAL)

When you hit with an unarmed attack, you can immediately make a grapple check against that opponent as a free action. Your unarmed attack counts as the initial attack roll required to start grappling. The opponent must be no larger than your size category. See **Grapple** in **Chapter Six** for details.

IMPROVED INITIATIVE (GENERAL)

You get a +4 bonus on initiative checks.

IMPROVED PIN (GENERAL)

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

IMPROVED PRECISE SHOT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: PRECISE SHOT

While using a ranged weapon, you ignore the Defense bonus provided by anything less than total cover and the miss chance from anything less than total concealment. A target's own Defense still applies. You can make finesse attacks with ranged weapons (see **Finesse Attack** in **Chapter Six**).

IMPROVED RANGED DISARM (GENERAL)

You have no penalty to your attack roll when making a ranged disarm attempt (see **Disarm** in **Chapter Six**).

IMPROVED SPEED (GENERAL)

Your speed increases by 10 feet while wearing no armor, light armor, or medium armor and not carrying a heavy load. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time it increases your speed by 10 feet, to a maximum increase of +30 feet.

IMPROVED STRIKE (GENERAL)

You can inflict lethal damage with your unarmed strikes. Normally, unarmed attacks only inflict non-lethal damage. Your unarmed attacks are also more effective than normal. Increase your unarmed striking (but not grappling) damage by +1 for every four total levels, rounding up (+1 at levels 1–4, +2 at levels 5–8, and so forth).

IMPROVED SUNDER (GENERAL)

You have +4 to hit when you attempt to strike an object held by another character.

IMPROVED THROW (GENERAL)

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

IMPROVED TRIP (GENERAL)

You have a +2 bonus on Strength and Dexterity checks to trip an opponent, and they do not get an opportunity to trip you if you fail. See **Trip** in **Chapter Six** for details.

IMPROVISED TOOLS (EXPERT)

You can make do with whatever tools you have at hand. You ignore the -4 penalty for using a tool-dependent skill without proper tools.

INSPIRE (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: CHARISMA +1 OR HIGHER.

You can inspire others with your presence. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, you acquire a new type of inspiration. Using any Inspire effect requires a standard action and is considered a use of an interaction skill, even though no skill check is required. This means your subjects have to be able to hear and understand you.

You can affect a number of subjects equal to half your expert level (with a minimum of one), and the effects last for a number of rounds equal to your expert level. Unwilling targets make a Will saving throw (Difficulty 10 + half your expert level + your Charisma). You can use any combination of Inspire effects a total of once per day per two expert levels with a minimum of one (so a 6th-level expert can Inspire three times per day). You can spend a point of Conviction for an additional use of Inspire that day.

Each time you take this feat, choose one of the following effects:

Awe: The subjects are overcome with your presence. They are dazed (taking no action, but defending normally) for one round. On each of the following rounds, subjects can make a Will save (with a cumulative +1 bonus for each save) to shake off their awe and act normally.

Competence: Subjects are better able to focus on the task at hand, gaining a +2 bonus on all skill checks.

Complacency: The subjects let down their guard. They suffer a -5 penalty on Notice and Sense Motive checks. This also counts as a distraction sufficient to hide using Stealth.

Courage: The subjects overcome fear and doubt. They gain a +1 bonus on saves against fear and doubt and a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage. This bonus increases to +2 when you are an 8th level expert, +3 at 14th, and +4 at 20th.

Fear: Subjects are overcome with fear and anxiety. They are shaken and suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls, checks, and saving throws (except Toughness saves). If the save fails by 5 or more, they are panicked and flee from you as quickly as possible.

Fury: Subjects gain the benefits of the Rage feat but also the normal fatigue when the rage wears off. The rage lasts for the duration of your inspiration (rounds equal to your expert level) rather than its normal duration, but so does the fatigue.

IRON WILL (GENERAL)

You get a +2 bonus on all Will saving throws.

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES (EXPERT)

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

LEADERSHIP (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: 6TH LEVEL

You attract loyal companions and devoted followers, subordinates who assist you. See the tables for what sort of companion and how many followers you can recruit, based on your leadership score.

Several factors can affect your Leadership score, causing it to vary from the base score, which is equal to your total level plus your Charisma:

Leader's Reputation	Modifier
Great renown	+2
Fairness and generosity	+1
Special power	+1
Failure	-1
Aloofness	-1
Cruelty	-2

Other modifiers may apply when you try to attract a companion:

The Leader ...	Modifier
Has a familiar	-2
Caused the death of a previous companion	-2

Followers have different priorities from companions. When you try to attract followers, the following modifiers apply to your leadership score:

The Leader ...	Modifier
Has a stronghold, base of operations, guildhall, etc.	+2
Moves around a lot	-1
Caused the death of other followers	-1

Cross-reference your final leadership score with the table to determine the level(s) of a companion or any followers you attract.

Leadership Score	Companion Level	Number of Followers by Level					
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1 or lower	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	1st	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	2nd	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	3rd	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	3rd	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	4th	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	5th	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	5th	—	—	—	—	—	—
9	6th	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	7th	5	—	—	—	—	—
11	7th	6	—	—	—	—	—
12	8th	8	—	—	—	—	—
13	9th	10	1	—	—	—	—
14	10th	15	1	—	—	—	—
15	10th	20	2	1	—	—	—
16	11th	25	2	1	—	—	—
17	12th	30	3	1	1	—	—
18	12th	35	3	1	1	—	—
19	13th	40	4	2	1	1	—
20	14th	50	5	3	2	1	—
21	15th	60	6	3	2	1	1
22	15th	75	7	4	2	2	1
23	16th	90	9	5	3	2	1
24	17th	110	11	6	3	2	1
25 or higher	17th	135	13	7	4	2	2

Leadership Score: Your base leadership score is your total level plus your Charisma. In order to take into account negative Charisma scores, this table allows for very low Leadership scores, but you must still be 6th level or higher to acquire the Leadership feat. Outside factors can affect leadership score, as detailed above.

Companion Level: You can attract a companion of up to this level. Regardless of your leadership score, you can only recruit a companion two or more levels lower than your level. You can try to attract a companion of a particular background and role, if you wish. At the Narrator's option, you can also attract a creature as a companion, particularly if you have the Animal Empathy feat.

Number of Followers by Level: You can lead up to the indicated number of characters of each level. Followers are similar to a companion, except they are minions (see [Chapter Six](#)). When your hero attains a new level, consult the leadership table above to determine if the hero acquires more followers, some of which may be higher level than existing followers. Again, no follower can be higher than two levels lower than your level.

LIGHT SLEEPER (GENERAL)

You do not suffer the +10 Difficulty modifier to Notice checks for being asleep. This means you're much less likely to be caught by surprise while sleeping. You can also act normally immediately upon waking. Other characters are normally dazed for one round after waking (taking no actions, but defending normally).

LIGHTNING REFLEXES (GENERAL)

You get a +2 bonus on all Reflex saving throws.

LOW PROFILE (GENERAL)

You're less well known than you might be. Reduce your Reputation score by 3 each time you acquire this feat. Your Reputation cannot decrease below +0.

LUCKY (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: CHARISMA +1.

The universe just seems to like you. Add your Charisma score as a bonus to your Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws.

MASS SUGGESTION (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: SUGGESTION.

You can make the same suggestion simultaneously to any number of subjects you have already fascinated (see the **Suggestion** feat). You must make the same suggestion to everyone.

MASTER PLAN (EXPERT)

If you have the opportunity to prepare for an encounter, you can formulate a plan to deal with it. This requires at least a few minutes, longer at the Narrator's discretion. Make an Intelligence check (Difficulty 10). If successful, you and your allies gain a bonus on all skill checks and attack rolls in the scene depending on the result of your check: +1 for a roll of 10–14, +2 for 15–24, and +3 for 25 or higher. You choose when during the scene to initiate your master plan. The bonus lasts for 3 rounds, then begins decreasing at a rate of 1 per round until it is gone. You can only use this feat when you have the opportunity to prepare for an encounter in advance, not when dealing with sudden or unexpected encounters.

MIND OVER BODY (ADEPT)

You can exert great mental control over your body. When you make Constitution checks, you can substitute your Wisdom score for your Constitution score, so long as you are conscious. You can also apply your Wisdom bonus rather than your Constitution bonus to your Fortitude saving throws.

MOVE-BY ACTION (GENERAL)

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

NIGHT VISION (GENERAL)

You can see twice as far in low-light conditions as a normal human. Your vision is still hindered normally by total darkness.

OVERRUN (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: VEHICULAR COMBAT.

When you attempt to overrun an opponent while mounted or in a vehicle, your target may not choose to avoid you. A successfully-tripped target suffers +1 damage per 10 MPH of your vehicle's speed or your mount's normal melee damage (if you are riding a mount).

POINT BLANK SHOT (GENERAL)

You get a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage with all ranged weapons at ranges of up to 30 feet.

PRECISE SHOT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: POINT BLANK SHOT.

You can make ranged attacks on an opponent engaged in melee with your allies without the usual -4 penalty. When attacking an opponent with the *Elusive Target* feat, you suffer a -4 penalty rather than -8.

**PRONE FIGHTING (GENERAL)**

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

QUICK DRAW (GENERAL)

You can draw or load a weapon as a free action, rather than a move action. You can only do one of these things as a free action each round; the other remains a move action, as normal. So you could draw a weapon as a free action, then load it as a move action, for example, but not draw and load it as a free action. Taking this feat a second time allows you to both draw and load a weapon in the same round as free actions.

QUICKEN POWER (ADEPT)

Once per round, you can use a power that normally requires a full-round action as a standard action, or a power that normally requires a standard action as a move action. You can't use powers more quickly than a move action using this feat. The fatigue Difficulty of the quickened power increases by +8.

RAGE (WARRIOR)

You can fly into a berserk rage as a free action, gaining +2 Strength, +2 to your Fortitude and Will saves, and a -2 penalty to Defense. While raging you can't use skills or powers requiring concentration or patience, and you can't take 10 or take 20 on checks. Your rage lasts five rounds, after which you are fatigued for five rounds (see **Fatigue** in **Chapter Six**). You can use Rage once per day at 1st level and an additional time per day for every four warrior levels (twice at 4th level, three times at 8th level, and so on). You can spend a point of Conviction to use Rage an additional time that day.

You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, you gain an additional +1 Strength and +1 Fortitude and Will save bonus to a maximum of +4 Strength and +4 to saves total (the -2 penalty to Defense and other effects remain the same). Instead of increasing your Rage benefits, taking the Rage feat an additional time can extend the duration of your rage by 5 rounds (to a maximum of 20 rounds). This extends the duration of your post-rage fatigue by the same amount.

RANGED PIN (GENERAL)

You can pin an opponent using a ranged weapon to nail a bit of clothing to a nearby surface. The target must be within 5 feet of a wall, tree, or similar surface. Make a normal attack roll against the target. If your attack is successful, the target is pinned. To break free, the victim must take a move action and make a successful Strength or Escape Artist check (Difficulty 15).

REDIRECT (EXPERT)

You can redirect a missed attack against you from that opponent at another target. Make a Bluff check against your opponent as a standard action. If the Bluff succeeds, and the opponent's next attack against you misses, you can redirect it as a reaction. The new target must be adjacent to you and within range of the attack. The attacker makes a new attack roll with the same modifiers as the first against the new target. If there are no other targets in range, you cannot redirect the attack; it simply misses.

RUN (GENERAL)

When running, you move five times your normal speed (if wearing medium, light, or no armor and carrying no more than a medium load) or four times your speed (if wearing heavy armor or carrying a heavy load). If you make a jump after a running start, you get a +4 bonus to your Jump check.

SECOND CHANCE (GENERAL)

Choose a particular hazard, such as falling, being tripped, triggering traps, being mentally controlled (or affected by another specific power), or a particular skill with consequences for failure. If you fail a saving throw against that hazard or a check with that skill, you can immediately make another roll and use the better of the two results. Unlike spending a Conviction point, you do not add 10 to rolls of 10 or less. You only get one second chance against any given save or task, and the Narrator decides if a particular hazard or skill is an appropriate focus for this feat.

You can acquire this feat multiple times. Each time it applies to a different hazard or skill.

SEIZE INITIATIVE (WARRIOR)

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

SET-UP (GENERAL)

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

SHIELD PENETRATION (ADEPT)

You're proficient at overcoming the resistance of Psychic Shields. You get a +2 bonus on checks to overcome a target's Psychic Shield. See **Chapter Four** for more information.

SHIELD TRAINING (GENERAL)

You're trained in the proper use of shields in combat. You can use a shield and take only the standard penalties. Characters lacking Shield Training take a penalty on attack rolls and on Strength- and Dexterity-based checks equal to the shield's bonus.

SKILL FOCUS (GENERAL)

Choose a known skill. You get a +3 bonus on all checks involving that skill. You can acquire this feat multiple times. Each time you do, it applies to a different known skill.

SKILL MASTERY (EXPERT)

Choose four of your known skills. When making checks with those skills, you can take 10 even when distracted or under pressure. This feat does not allow you to take 10 with skills that do not normally allow you to do so. You can acquire this feat multiple times. Each time you do, choose four other known skills to master.

SKILL TRAINING (GENERAL)

Each time you take the Skill Training feat, you gain 4 additional skill ranks. You may apply these ranks in any manner that you wish, although they do not allow any of your skills to exceed the maximum rank for your level.

SLOW FALL (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: JUMP RANK 5.

You can slow a fall if within arm's reach of a wall or similar structure. Subtract 10 feet from the fall per two expert levels before determining damage, with falls of 0 or less doing no damage. At 20th level expert, you can use a nearby surface to slow your descent and fall any distance without harm.

SMITE OPPONENT (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: FAVORED OPPONENT.

You can charge a blow with the power of your determination. You can use Smite Opponent once per day per four warrior levels, rounded up. When you strike a favored opponent in melee, you can activate this feat: add your Charisma score to your attack roll and half your warrior level to your damage. If you smite an opponent who is not actually a favored foe, there is no additional effect, but the smite use is wasted.

SNATCH ARROWS (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: DEFLECT ARROWS.

When using the Deflect Arrows feat, you may catch the weapon instead of just deflecting it. Thrown weapons can immediately be thrown back at the original attacker (even though it isn't your turn) or kept for later use.

SNEAK ATTACK (EXPERT)

When you make a surprise attack (see **Surprise Attack** in **Chapter Six**), you do +2 damage. You cannot surprise attack an opponent you cannot perceive (due to concealment or some other effect), and opponents immune to critical hits suffer no additional damage. Opponents who cannot be surprise attacked are also immune. You can take this feat multiple times, increasing your damage bonus by +1 each time, to a maximum of +5.

SPIRITED CHARGE (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: VEHICULAR COMBAT.

When mounted or on a vehicle and using the charge action, you deal +3 damage with a melee weapon (+4 damage with a lance).

STARTLE (GENERAL)

You can make an Intimidate check rather than a Bluff check to feint in combat. Targets can resist with Intimidate, Sense Motive, or Will and gain a +1 bonus on their resistance check per each additional startle attempt against them in the same encounter.

STUNNING ATTACK (EXPERT/WARRIOR)

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

SUBTLE POWER (ADEPT)

You can use your powers with less chance of notice. When using powers, you can mute their supernatural signature. Characters using Second Sight cannot detect your power use nor can its use be detected later using Second Sight. A subtle power use increases fatigue save Difficulty by +2.

SUGGESTION (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: FASCINATE (FOR THE SAME SKILL).

You can use an interaction skill to plant a suggestion in the mind of a subject you have fascinated (using the Fascinate feat). This works like a use of the Suggestion power (see **Chapter Four**), except you must interact with the target. The Difficulty of the target's Will save is 10 + half your expert level + your Charisma score.

If you take this as a favored feat and have no expert levels, you use your total levels instead. Likewise, the Suggestion power lasts for 30 minutes per power rank; use your expert levels + 3 in lieu of the power rank for the feat (or your total levels + 3, if you acquired it as a favored feat).

SUPERNATURAL FOCUS (ADEPT)

Choose one of your powers. You gain a +3 bonus to power checks with that power. You can take this feat more than once. Each time, it applies to a different power.

SUPERNATURAL TALENT (ADEPT)

Choose two powers you possess. You gain a +2 bonus to power checks with those powers. You can take this feat more than once. Each time, it applies to a different pair of powers.

TALENTED (GENERAL)

Choose two known and related skills, such as Survival and Stealth or Acrobatics and Climb, or two specialties from a specialty skill, such as Craft or Knowledge. You gain a +2 bonus with both skills. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time it applies to two different skills.

TAUNT (GENERAL)

You can shake an opponent's confidence with clever taunts. Use a standard action and make a Bluff check against your target's Sense Motive check or Will saving throw, whichever has the higher bonus. If you succeed, your target is shaken for one round (-2 to attack rolls, checks, and saving throws, but not Toughness saves). If you fail, you may try again on the following round. Targets get a +1 on their resistance roll per each additional Bluff attempt against them in the same scene (successful or not).

TIRELESS (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: CONSTITUTION +1, ENDURANCE

You have tremendous energy reserves. You suffer no penalties from being winded or fatigued, although you still gain fatigue levels

normally. This feat has no effect on exhaustion or unconsciousness due to fatigue.

TOUGH (WARRIOR)

Your Toughness save bonus increases by +1. You can take this feat multiple times and its benefits stack, up to a maximum +5 bonus to your Toughness saves. This bonus stacks with any worn armor or other protection.

TRACK (GENERAL)

You can find and follow tracks left by other creatures. To find tracks or to follow them for one mile requires a successful Survival check. You must make another Survival check each time the tracks become difficult to follow. You move at half your normal speed while tracking (or at your normal speed with a -5 penalty on the check, or at up to twice your normal speed with a -20 penalty on the check). The Difficulty depends on the surface, as given on the **Surface** table.

Surface	Difficulty
Very soft ground	5
Soft ground	10
Firm ground	15
Hard ground	20

Very Soft Ground: Any surface (fresh snow, thick dust, wet mud) that holds deep, clear impressions of footprints.

Soft Ground: Any surface soft enough to yield to pressure, but firmer than wet mud or fresh snow, in which a creature leaves frequent but shallow footprints.

Firm Ground: Most normal outdoor surfaces (such as lawns, fields, woods, and the like) or exceptionally soft or dirty indoor surfaces (thick rugs and dirty or dusty floors). The creature might leave some traces (broken branches or tufts of hair), but it leaves only occasional or partial footprints.



Hard Ground: Any surface that doesn't hold footprints at all, such as bare rock or an indoor floor. Most streambeds fall into this category, since any footprints left behind are obscured or washed away. The creature leaves only traces (scuff marks or displaced pebbles).

Several modifiers may apply to the Survival check, as given on the condition table.

Condition	Difficulty Modifier
Every three creatures in the group being tracked	-1
Size of the largest creature being tracked:	
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium	+0
Large	-1
Huge	-2
Gargantuan	-4
Colossal	-8
Every 24 hours since the trail was made	+1
Every hour of rain since the trail was made	+1
Fresh snow cover since the trail was made	+10
Poor visibility (apply the largest modifier)	
Overcast or moonless night	+6
Moonlight	+3
Fog or precipitation	+3
Tracked party hides trail and moves at half speed	+5

If you fail a Survival check, you can retry after 1 hour (outdoors) or 10 minutes (indoors) of searching.

Without this feat, you can use Survival to find tracks, but you can follow them only if the Difficulty is 10 or lower. You can use the Search skill to find a footprint or similar sign of a creature's passage using the Difficulties given above, but you can't use Search to follow tracks.

TRACKLESS (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN STEALTH AND SURVIVAL.

If you choose, you leave no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

TRAILBLAZER (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN SURVIVAL.

You can move through any sort of natural surroundings at your normal speed, unimpeded by things like undergrowth, difficult terrain, snow, mud, and similar difficulties. You're still affected by wind, rain, and other weather conditions, however.

TWO-WEAPON DEFENSE (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING.

Your two-weapon fighting style improves your Defense. When wielding two weapons (but not while unarmed) and using parry defense, you gain a +1 bonus to your Defense. When using total defense, this bonus increases to +2.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING (GENERAL)

You're more effective fighting with two weapons. You reduce the penalty for doing so by 4 for your primary hand and 6 for your off hand.

UNCANNY DODGE (GENERAL)

You are especially attuned to potential danger, whether through training, experience, or some innate supernatural talent. You retain your dodge bonus to Defense when surprised, flat-footed, or surprise attacked, so long as you are able to react (are not helpless, bound, unconscious, and the like).

VEHICULAR COMBAT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN DRIVE, PILOT, OR RIDE.

You know how to maneuver a vehicle or mount in combat. Once each round, if your vehicle or mount would be hit by an attack, you can make a check using the relevant vehicle skill as a reaction to negate the hit. The skill check result must exceed the result of the opponent's attack roll. You can also make a check using the relevant vehicle skill as a full-round action (including the normal operation of the vehicle), in which case the skill result becomes the vehicle or mount's effective Defense for the entire round against all attacks. This feat applies to all vehicular skills in which you are trained.

WEALTHY (GENERAL)

You are endowed with significant material resources. Each time you select this feat, increase your Wealth bonus by +4.

WEAPON BIND (WARRIOR)

If you are using a parry defense and an opponent misses you with an armed melee attack, you can make a disarm attempt immediately as a free action. The disarm attempt is carried out normally, including the attacker getting the opportunity to disarm you (unless you have the Improved Disarm feat).

WEAPON BREAK (WARRIOR)

If you are using a parry defense and an opponent misses you with an armed melee attack, you can make an attack against your opponent's weapon immediately as a free action. This requires a normal attack roll and inflicts normal damage to the weapon if it hits (see **Sunder** in **Chapter Six** for details).

WEAPON TRAINING (GENERAL)

You're trained in the proper use of martial weapons. Characters lacking Weapon Training suffer a -4 penalty on attack rolls with martial weapons.

WELL-INFORMED (EXPERT)

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

WIDEN POWER (ADEPT)

You can broaden the effect of one of your powers. When using powers that normally affect a single target, you can affect an area with a radius of up to twice your adept level in feet. The power affects all targets in the area normally. You must still meet any requirements for range, including mental contact, that the power requires. Make a single check and compare the results to each target in the area. Targets save individually against the power's effects. The widened power's fatigue Difficulty increases by +6.

CHAPTER FOUR:

SUPERNATURAL POWERS

THE WORLDS OF HEROIC ADVENTURE ARE PLACES OF WONDER, AND PART OF THE WONDER IS THE SUPERNATURAL, POWERS BEYOND THE MUNDANE AND ORDINARY.

POWERS ARE THE PROVINCE OF ADEPTS IN **TRUE20**, WHO CAN EXCHANGE FEATS FOR THE ABILITY TO ACQUIRE AND WIELD VARIOUS POWERS.



ACQUIRING POWERS

Adepts acquire powers like other heroes acquire feats. In fact, an adept can choose to exchange a feat to learn a power instead. Also like feats, some powers have prerequisites that must be met in order to acquire them. An adept can meet a power's prerequisites and acquire it at the same level.

POWER RANK

Adepts have a power rank that operates much like a skill rank, measuring the overall effectiveness of the adept's powers. An adept's power rank is their adept level +3, so a 1st-level adept has power rank 4. Mixed role characters use only their adept levels, not their total levels, for determining their power rank; it requires dedication to achieve true mastery of the supernatural arts.

SAVE DIFFICULTY

Adepts also have a Difficulty used when subjects make saving throws against their powers. The base save difficulty is half the adept's level (rounded up), plus 10. So a 1st-level adept has a power save Difficulty of 11 (1/2, rounded up to 1 + 10).

KEY ABILITY

Choose a mental ability score (Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma) as the key ability for your adept's powers. A hero's total power bonus with any known power is their power rank + key ability score. Total save Difficulty is the base save Difficulty + key ability. So a 6th-level adept with Wisdom +4 as the key ability for her powers has a power bonus of (6 + 3 + 4) or +13 and a power save Difficulty of (10 + 3 + 4) or 17.

In some *True20* settings, a particular key ability for powers has a certain meaning. For example, Intelligence-based powers may be arcane or magical, Wisdom-based powers spiritual, divine or holy (or unholy, as the case may be), and Charisma-based powers psychic or psionic. These distinctions (and their game effects, if any) are up to the Narrator as best suits the setting and story.

In some settings, the Narrator may also choose a single key ability for all supernatural powers, or assign specific key abilities to specific powers, as best suits the style of the setting.

See the genre chapters in this book for examples of how to tailor adepts and supernatural powers to suit a particular style of play.

USING POWERS

There are a wide variety of powers that characters can wield in *True20* games, but they all share certain common rules. Unless stated otherwise (in the power description, for instance) all powers follow these guidelines for use.

ACTION

Wielding powers is primarily an act of will. Adepts often gesture or speak when using their powers, but this is not required. An adept can use powers with nothing more than intense concentration.

Using a power takes a particular amount of time, given in the power's description. Most powers require a standard or move action in combat. Others require a full-round action or longer. Powers are subject to the normal rules regarding actions (see **Chapter Six**).

POWER CHECKS

Some powers call for a check using the bonus of the power. This is the same as any other type of check: a die roll plus the power's bonus against a Difficulty. The check result often determines the effectiveness of the power. Some powers do not require checks; they operate automatically. The power's rank or bonus usually determines its effectiveness in these cases.

TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

An adept not rushed or under pressure can take 10 on a power check, unless the power's description specifies otherwise. If the check carries no penalty for failure, the adept can take 20 as well. Taking 20 with a power check increases the power's fatigue save Difficulty by +20.

WHAT ARE POWERS?

In *True20*, "power" is a general term for supernatural traits that characters and creatures may possess. Depending on the nature of the setting, powers could be magical, divine, technological, psychic, or psionic in nature. Perhaps even all or none of these! The key point is that powers are supernatural abilities not found in the ordinary world, and there are people (adepts) skilled in using them. The Narrator decides exactly which powers are available and appropriate in any given setting, and some powers may be restricted solely to Narrator characters.

POWERS AND ADEPTS

The ability to wield powers is the key advantage of the adept role. If you're running a *True20* game with *no* supernatural powers whatsoever (or at least no access to powers for the heroes), consider removing the adept role as an option for heroes as well, since players will find it considerably underpowered otherwise.

Note that you might find "adepts" in surprising places, however. A science-fiction setting, for example, might have psionic adepts with mental powers, but also "technomancers" able to interface with "miracle" nanomachines or hackers whose powers operate solely in the confines of a virtual reality computer network.

DABBERS

If you want to create a hero who just "dabbles" in the supernatural, having only one or two specialized powers, take just a level or two of adept for your hero for the powers, but focus primarily on another role. Experts and warriors with just a few levels of adept can have some interesting surprises up their sleeves.

however, since it counts as twenty uses of a fatiguing power. This is virtually certain to fatigue most adepts. Additional notes on taking 10 and 20 with powers are included in the specific power descriptions.

A non-fatiguing power becomes fatiguing with a +20 bonus when you take 20 on the power check only if it says so under the power's description. Otherwise assume taking 20 with a non-fatiguing power remains non-fatiguing. Taking 20 on a power check takes 20 times as long, just as with skills.

ATTACK ROLLS

Some powers require an attack roll to affect a target, particularly in the midst of combat. Any ability requiring an attack roll also takes at least a standard action and counts as the adept's attack for that round. Powers requiring attack rolls are subject to the normal combat modifiers and can benefit from feats like Attack Focus.

SAVING THROWS

Powers affecting other creatures allow a saving throw against the adept's Save Difficulty to reduce or overcome the power (see **Save Difficulty**, previously).

Adepts can choose to deliberately lower the save Difficulty of a power by reducing their effective adept level to as low as 1. This generally makes the power less effective (also lowering its rank), but makes it easier to resist any fatigue it may cause (see **Fatigue** later in this section).

Subjects of powers can choose to forego the saving throw, willingly accepting the power's effects. This choice is made *before* the subject knows what that effect is! Be careful about allowing people to use their powers on you, unless you know and trust them...

RANGE

Specific limitations on the range of a power are noted in its description.

Some powers transcend space, and even time, as we understand them; they can affect targets anywhere. However, using powers against targets out of sight and unfamiliar to the adept is difficult, effectively limiting the range of most powers to somewhat familiar targets or things in the adept's line of sight.

If a power's description doesn't specify a range, assume it is line of sight.

FAMILIARITY

An important factor for some powers is how familiar the subject is to the adept. In power descriptions mentioning a familiarity modifier, determine the relationship between the adept and the target on the **Familiarity** table and apply the appropriate modifier to the Difficulty of the power check. For example, using the Mind Touch power on a somewhat familiar target increases the Difficulty by +15.

MENTAL CONTACT

Some powers refer to the adept being in *mental contact* with the subject. This involves the use of the Mind Touch power, allowing the adept to contact another character's mind. Subjects in mental contact are considered present to the adept in terms of familiarity, regardless of the physical distance between them (no increase in Difficulty). Mental contact does not count as line of sight for powers requiring it.

Powers that require mental contact also require it to maintain the power (unless the power description says otherwise). That means if the adept loses mental contact with the subject for any reason, the dependent power stops working as well.

FAMILIARITY		
Familiarity	Difficulty	Definition
Present	+0	A subject visible to the naked eye or in physical or mental contact with the adept.
Very Familiar	+5	A subject currently seen or sensed through another power, a close friend or relative, an item made by the adept or owned and used for at least a year, a place where the adept spent at least a year's time.
Familiar	+10	A subject the adept has been acquainted with for at least three months, a casual friend.
Somewhat Familiar	+15	A subject the adept has been acquainted with for at least a week, reading someone else's memory of a familiar subject.
Casually Familiar	+20	A subject the adept has been acquainted with only briefly, reading someone else's memory of a somewhat familiar subject.
Slightly Familiar	+25	A subject the adept has only seen briefly or had described in detail.
Unfamiliar	—	A subject totally unfamiliar and unknown to the adept and out of the adept's line of sight or physical contact. Powers cannot be used on unfamiliar subjects.





MULTIPLE SUBJECTS

Although it is easiest to use a power on a single subject at a time, an adept can affect multiple subjects with the same power at once: lifting multiple objects, making mental contact with multiple minds, and so forth. This requires time, skill, and effort to achieve.

A character attempting to use a power on more than one subject at once increases the power and fatigue check Difficulties by +2 for every additional target. So, affecting three subjects at once is +4 on the power and fatigue check Difficulties. If the power does not require a check, then reduce the power's saving throw Difficulty by 2 per additional subject. Additionally, the power requires a full-round action to use. If the power normally requires a full-round action or more, then it requires an additional full-round action.

The various subjects must all be within range. If the power requires mental contact, then the user must be in mental contact with all subjects. The Narrator has the final say on whether a power can affect more than one subject at a time and, if so, how many.

The Widen Power feat also allows an adept to affect more than one target with a power at once.

FATIGUE

Some powers are fatiguing, putting a strain on the adept's mind and body. When an adept uses a fatiguing power, make a fatigue save. This is a Will saving throw against Difficulty equal to the power's base save Difficulty, or 10 plus half the adept's level, rounded up. (Note the power's key ability is not added to this Difficulty, unlike the power's saving throw Difficulty.)

A successful save results in no ill effect on the adept. A failed save means the adept suffers a level of fatigue. See **Fatigue** in **Chapter Six**.

Rapid use of powers in a short period of time takes a toll on an adept, and makes it harder and harder to stave off fatigue. Every time an adept uses a fatiguing power within an hour's time, the Difficulty of any successive fatigue save for using powers (of any type) increases by 1. For example, an adept uses a fatiguing power, making a fatigue save against the normal Difficulty. A minute later, the adept uses another fatiguing power. This time the Difficulty of the fatigue save is 1 higher. Use of certain powers in rapid succession can tire out even the most powerful adepts.

To eliminate the cumulative fatigue save modifier, an adept must refrain from using *any* fatiguing powers for at least an hour. The adept doesn't need to physically rest during that time, just avoid any further uses of fatiguing powers. At the end of the hour, the accumulated penalty is removed.

An adept can also use the role's core ability to spend a Conviction point at any time to eliminate the cumulative fatigue save modifier, setting it back to +0.

MAINTAINING POWERS

Some powers can be maintained; that is, their effects can continue at the same level achieved by the initial use. This *maintenance* requires at least a modicum of concentration on the adept's part. Maintaining an effect is a free action each round.

Using another power (or another application of the same power) while maintaining other powers increases the Difficulty of the power check and the fatigue save by +2 (regardless of the total number of powers maintained).

An adept distracted while maintaining powers must make a Concentration check with Difficulty 10 + 2 per maintained power.

FATIGUE SAVE OPTIONS

You can modify how powers work in your *True20* game by changing how fatigue saving throws work.

For example, by basing fatigue saves on Fortitude rather than Will, you make it more difficult for adepts, since they generally have lower Fortitude save bonuses. This emphasizes Constitution and physical endurance over willpower and mental strength. It means adepts tire more easily and will be cautious about using fatiguing powers, especially adepts who are frail or otherwise in poor health.

You can also vary the cumulative penalty to fatigue saves for using powers in succession. If you eliminate it altogether, adepts can more reliably use powers in succession. By lowering a power's fatigue save Difficulty, some adepts can even reliably use fatiguing powers almost indefinitely (although only higher-level adepts have Will save bonuses high enough to ensure success on even a Difficulty 11 save). The shorter the time frame where power fatigue penalties accumulate, the more freedom adepts have to use their powers.

Conversely, the longer the time where fatigue penalties accumulate, the more conservative adepts will be. For example, if each fatiguing power used within a day's time (rather than an hour) increases fatigue save Difficulty by +1, then adepts will be careful about using fatiguing powers. They will try to conserve their strength as much as possible for those times when they really need it, and will take precautions after exercising their powers to allow them time to recover.

Additional modifiers may apply for damage and other distracting conditions (see the **Concentration** skill). A failed check means the adept stops maintaining all the powers. Optionally, the Narrator may rule that the adept stops maintaining one power for every two points the Concentration check missed the Difficulty (rounding up). Keep in mind that powers requiring mental contact require the adept to maintain both that and power the Mind Touch power at the same time. An adept unable to take free actions (due to being stunned, for example) cannot maintain powers.

CONCENTRATION

Some powers require intense *concentration* to maintain. The adept must devote a standard action each round to concentrate and maintain the ability rather than a free action. Concentration checks and Difficulties remain the same as maintenance.

You can maintain a concentration power as a move action rather than a standard action with a Concentration check (Difficulty 10 + power rank) once per round. A failed check means the power lapses.

POWER DESCRIPTIONS

The powers in this section follow the general format for skill descriptions in **Chapter Two**, with a few modifications. Powers cannot be used untrained. If a power causes fatigue, it's listed as fatiguing after the power name. If it requires maintenance or concentration, this is noted. Powers requiring mental contact have this listed on the line after the power's name.

A description of what the power does follows, along with the game rules for the power.

Some powers have a **Try Again** section, describing whether or not it is possible to attempt a failed use of the power again and the conditions for doing so. If this section is absent, assume the power use may be attempted again without restriction.

Each description ends with the time it takes to use the power. In some cases, this varies depending on the conditions when the power is used.

APPORT

FATIGUING

You can teleport objects and creatures to different locations. The Difficulty of the power check is based on the object's mass, modified by its familiarity to you, and the familiarity of the destination (see **Familiarity** previously in this chapter).

APPORT

Difficulty	Mass
10	2 lb.
15	5 lb.
20	10 lb.
25	25 lb.
30	50 lb.
35	100 lb.
40	200 lb.
+5	x2 mass

For example, apporting a 2 lb. object (Difficulty 10) in your line of sight (+0 modifier) to a destination in your line of sight (+0 modifier) is Difficulty 10. Apporting the same object in your line of sight to a somewhat familiar destination (+15 modifier) is Difficulty 25.

Unwilling creatures get a Reflex saving throw to resist apportion of themselves or any object in their possession. A successful save means there is no effect. You must apport an entire object, not just part of it, although unattached materials may be left behind. For example, you can apport a rope or set of manacles without affecting the creature bound by them. Targets cannot be apported inside other objects: attempts to do so simply fail.

Time: Apport is a standard action.

BEAST LINK

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION

You can forge a mental connection with an animal, allowing you to perceive what it perceives, using its senses. Make a power check with a Difficulty of 10, modified by familiarity. If successful, you can perceive with the animal's senses and communicate with it mentally. The animal is not under your command, although you may be able to convince it, using your other skills and powers, to do things for you.

Time: Beast Link is a move action.

BLINK

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can teleport rapidly over a short distance to avoid attacks, appearing and disappearing for a number of rounds equal to your adept level. Attacks have a 50% miss chance against you and you only suffer half damage from area attacks. You can make surprise attacks while blinking, negating your opponent's dodge and parry bonuses to Defense.

You can renew your Blink power's duration when it expires by making a new fatigue saving throw (with the cumulative modifier for successive fatigue saves).

POWERS

Name	Summary	Name	Summary
Apport	Transport creatures or objects to different locations.	Mind Probe	Probe a subject's mind for information.
Beast Link	Perceive through an animal's senses.	Mind Reading	Sense a subject's surface thoughts.
Blink	You can teleport rapidly to avoid attacks.	Mind Shaping	Alter a subject's memories or behavior.
Bliss	Project blissful feelings to daze a subject.	Mind Touch	Establish mental contact with another mind.
Body Control	Exert mental control over your body.	Move Object	Life and move objects at a distance.
Calm	Drain intense emotion from others.	Nature Reading	Sense the flows and signs of the natural world.
Cold Shaping	Create intense cold.	Object Reading	Read psychic impressions from place and objects.
Combat Sense	Gain a temporary Combat bonus.	Pain	Inflict stunning pain on a subject.
Computer Link	Make mental contact with computers.	Phase	You can become incorporeal.
Cure	Heal injuries by touch.	Plane Shift	You can transport yourself to other dimensions.
Cure Blindness/Deafness	Remove blindness or deafness.	Plant Shaping	Shape living plants and wood and direct their growth.
Cure Disease	Remove a disease, preventing further harm.	Psychic Blast	Inflict mental damage on a target.
Cure Poison	Remove a poison, preventing further harm.	Psychic Reflection	Send a psychic attack back at the attacker.
Dominate	Control a subject's actions.	Psychic Shield	Shield your mind from psychic influences.
Drain Vitality	Drain vital energy by touch.	Psychic Trap	Counterattack an attempt to bypass your Psychic Shield.
Earth Shaping	Shape and direct masses of earth and stone.	Psychic Weapon	Create a melee weapon out of psychic energy.
Elemental Aura	Surround yourself with a damaging aura.	Scrying	Sense distant events as if you were present.
Elemental Blast	Strike a foe with a focused blast of elemental force.	Second Sight	Sense the use and lingering effects of supernatural powers.
Elemental Resistance	Resist the effects of a particular element.	Self-Shaping	Reshape your body into different creatures.
Elemental Weapon	Imbue a weapon with damaging elemental energy.	Sense Minds	Sense the presence and location of other minds.
Energy Shaping	Shape and direct the flow of electromagnetic energy.	Severance	Remove the powers of others temporarily.
Enhance Ability	Temporarily boost your Strength or Dexterity.	Sleep	Put a target into a deep sleep.
Enhance Other	Temporarily boost someone else's Strength or Dexterity.	Suggestion	Implant suggestions in the minds of others.
Enhance Senses	Temporary bonus to Notice, Search, and Sense Motive checks.	Supernatural Speed	Move at great speed in short bursts.
Fire Shaping	Shape and direct fire.	Supernatural Strike	Overcome the damage reduction of supernatural creatures.
Flesh Shaping	Shape and mold flesh like clay into other forms.	Supernatural Weapon	Imbue weapons to overcome damage reduction.
Ghost Touch	Touch and affect incorporeal creatures as if they were solid.	Teleport	You can move instantly from place to place.
Harm	Inflict injury with a touch.	Truth-Reading	Sense when someone is lying to you.
Heart Reading	Sense the emotions of other creatures.	Visions	See visions of the future.
Heart Shaping	Impose emotional conditions on others.	Ward	Create interference with supernatural powers or creatures.
Illusion	Create illusions that fool the senses.	Water Shaping	Shape and direct the flow of water.
Imbue Life	Restore life to the recently dead.	Weather Shaping	Shape and direct weather conditions.
Imbue Unlife	Create undead creatures.	Wind Shaping	Shape and direct the force of the wind.
Light Shaping	Shape and direct light and illumination.	Wind Walk	Walk on air.
Manipulate Object	Manipulate and handle objects at a distance.		

Blink is a random jump to a safe, open space, roughly a maximum distance of your power rank in feet. You can't control the destination, although you won't blink to somewhere inherently more dangerous. At the Narrator's discretion, a power challenge could permit the character to control the destination of a blink, with failure meaning the power doesn't work at all that round.

Time: Blink is a free action, and lasts for 10 rounds or until the adept stops maintaining it.

BLISS

FATIGUING, MENTAL CONTACT

While in mental contact with another creature, you can project blissful feelings of pleasure. The creature must make a Will saving throw or be dazed for 1 round, taking no action, but defending normally. Since Mind Touch is a move action, you can make mental contact and use Bliss in the same round.

Try Again: Yes, but the target gets a cumulative +1 bonus to their Will save for each new attempt in the same scene.

Time: Bliss is a standard action.

BODY CONTROL

MAINTENANCE

You have great mental control over your body. You can make a Body Control check for a number of different tasks summarized on the following table.

BODY CONTROL TASKS	
Task	Difficulty
Sleep normally despite distractions	5
Sleep normally despite difficult distractions	10
Slow breathing to half normal rate	10
Ignore pain or injury	15
Body awareness	15
Resist fear	15
Speed recovery	15
Slow breathing to one-quarter normal rate	15
Willpower	15
Feign death	20
Overcome disease	Disease's Save Difficulty
Overcome poison	Poison's Save Difficulty

Sleeping: A successful Body Control check allows you to sleep in difficult conditions, including bad weather, noise, buzzing insects, and so forth.

Slow Breathing: You can deliberately slow your rate of breathing so that you consume less air, vital in situations where there is a limited amount of breathable air available.

Ignore Pain or Injury: You can ignore the effects of pain or injury while awake or asleep. If you choose, nothing can wake you, as long as you make a successful Body Control check. Using the Body Control power to ignore the effects of injury only applies to the -2 penalty to attacks and saves that comes from the wounded condition. All other effects of injury still apply.

Body Awareness: You can become very aware of your body while asleep or concentrating. This allows you to sense if you are touched or moved in any way while using Scrying, for example. If you are damaged, subtract the attack's damage bonus from the Difficulty of the Body Control check.

Resist Fear: You can override your body's natural response to fear. With a successful Body Control check, you gain a new saving throw against any fear effect, with a +4 bonus.

Speed Recovery: You can speed your natural healing process, gaining a recovery check in half the normal time, so long as you spend that time in a deep, healing trance.

Willpower: With a Difficulty 15 Body Control check, you can continue to act while disabled without your condition worsening to dying. You still suffer additional damage normally.

Feign Death: By exerting supreme control over your body, you can enter a deep trance almost indistinguishable from death. A Notice check with a Difficulty equal to your Body Control check is required to determine whether you are still alive. Effects that detect life still work on you. While in this state, you also suspend the effects of any disease or poison in your system for as long as you remain in the trance.

Overcome Disease or Poison: By concentrating for a full round, you can substitute your Body Control check for your Fortitude saving throw against a disease or poison in your system. This usually means you can only use Body Control against the secondary effects of a disease or poison, unless it is slow acting and you are warned soon enough to use Body Control to resist the initial effects (in the Narrator's judgment).

Time: Body Control is a full-round action.



CALM**MAINTENANCE, MENTAL CONTACT**

You can drain intense emotion from others, calming them. The target must make a Will saving throw or be drained of all extremes of emotion. The subject is calm and incapable of taking violent action (although it can defend itself) or doing anything else destructive. Any aggressive action or damage against the subject breaks the effect. A successful Will save means the subject continues to act normally. This power suppresses (but does not dispel) powers relying on emotion, such as Heart Shaping. While the Calm effect lasts, the suppressed power has no effect, but it returns once the Calm effect lapses.

Time: Calm is a standard action. It lasts for 1 round per rank after you stop maintaining it.

COLD SHAPING**FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE**

You can freeze things with the power of your mind. With a Difficulty 15 Cold Shaping check, you can lower the temperature of an area about a foot across, enough to deal cold damage. A targeted creature makes a Fortitude save against your power, with a failed save resulting in a level of fatigue, just like exposure to a cold environment. Protective clothing has no effect.

You can freeze roughly a gallon of water into solid ice in a round. For every 2 points your check exceeds the Difficulty, you affect an additional cubic foot (or gallon of liquid).

You can also decrease the size and damage potential of a fire by 1 point and 1 square foot for every 2 points your Cold Shaping check exceeds Difficulty 10. A fire reduced to a size or damage potential of 0 or less goes out. This requires a Cold Shaping check with Difficulty 12 for a normal square foot flame. Otherwise, the reduction in the fire requires maintenance.

Time: Cold Shaping is a standard action.

**COMBAT SENSE****FATIGUING**

You can improve your ability in combat by sensing the flow of events around you. A Combat Sense check grants you a bonus to your base Combat bonus (see the accompanying table). Each round you can split the bonus between attack and defense as you see fit. You can select a bonus lower than the result you get on the table to reduce fatigue. Difficulty, which is $10 + \text{the Combat bonus gained}$.

COMBAT SENSE

Result	Combat Bonus
Up to 4	+1
5–14	+2
15–24	+3
25–34	+4
35+	+5

Time: Activating Combat Sense is a move action. The bonus lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute) per use.

COMPUTER LINK**MAINTENANCE**

You can make mental contact with computers. Make a Computer Link check. The base Difficulty is 10, modified by familiarity. Once you are in mental contact with a computer, you can make Computers skill checks as if you were accessing that computer normally. Whenever you need to make a Computers check, you can use your Computer Link power instead, but then each check causes fatigue (so it's generally easier on yourself to have training in Computers).

When dealing with sentient computers or robots, this power functions like Mind Touch (described later in this section) and counts as mental contact for using other powers requiring it on those subjects.

Special: You can take 10 on Computer Link checks. In cases where there is no penalty for failure, you can also take 20. Obviously, Computer Link is only useful in settings that have digital computers. In other settings, it doesn't exist (or it does and is never used).

Time: Computer Link is a move action.

CURE**FATIGUING**

You can heal injuries by touch. With a full-round action, you can grant a subject an immediate recovery check using your Cure check result in place of their Constitution check. If the recovery check fails, you must wait the normal recovery time for that condition or expend a level of fatigue before trying again. You can stabilize a dying character with a Difficulty 10 Cure check.

You can use Cure on yourself. You can't cure your own staggered or unconscious conditions or stabilize yourself while dying, since you have to be conscious and able to take a full-round action to use Cure. You can use Cure on your own disabled conditions, but doing so is a strenuous action. If your recovery check is successful, you suffer no ill effects. If it is not, however, your condition worsens to dying.

Try Again: See above. Otherwise you can retry freely.

Time: Cure is a full-round action.

CURE BLINDNESS/DEAFNESS**FATIGUING**

You can remove blindness or deafness with a Difficulty 15 power check. If a subject is both blind and deaf, curing both requires two checks.

Try Again: You get one attempt to cure a subject's blindness or deafness. If it fails, you cannot try again until your power rank improves.

Time: Cure Blindness/Deafness is a full-round action.

CURE DISEASE

FATIGUING

You can cure a subject of disease, eliminating any further effect. The Difficulty of the power check is the disease's saving throw Difficulty.

Try Again: You get only one attempt to cure any given patient of a particular disease. If you fail, you must suffer a level of fatigue to try again.

Time: Cure Disease is a full-round action.

CURE POISON

FATIGUING

You can cure a subject of poison, eliminating any further effect. The Difficulty of the power check is the poison's saving throw Difficulty.

Try Again: You get only one attempt to cure any given patient of a particular poison. If you fail, you must suffer a level of fatigue to try again.

Time: Cure Poison is a full-round action.

DOMINATE

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION, MENTAL CONTACT

You can mentally control another creature's actions. The target makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, you control the target's actions while you concentrate and maintain mental contact. You can force the subject to perform any action you wish, within the limits of his abilities. You're generally aware of what the subject experiences via your mental link, but you do not receive direct sensory impressions from him. Subjects forced to take actions against their natures receive a new saving throw with a bonus of +1 to +4, depending on the nature of action. A successful save breaks your control.

Time: Dominate is a full-round action.

DRAIN VITALITY

You can drain someone's vital energy by touch. This requires a melee attack roll to touch the target. Make a Drain Vitality check against the result of the target's Will save. If you win, the target suffers a level of fatigue, while you regain a level of fatigue (if you are currently fatigued). You cannot drain targets further once they are unconscious.

Special: You can only take 10 on a Drain Vitality check if the target is helpless.

Time: Drain Vitality is a standard action.

EARTH SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can shape and move earth and stone. An Earth Shaping check can have one of the following effects:

Move Earth (Difficulty 10): You move dirt (soil, clay, loam, sand), possibly collapsing embankments, moving hillocks, shifting sand dunes, and so forth. However, in no event can rock formations be collapsed or moved. The area to be affected determines the time required and the Difficulty. A 150-foot by 150-foot square (up to 10 feet deep), takes 10 minutes and is Difficulty 10. Each additional such square adds 10 minutes and +5 Difficulty.

Earth Shaping does not violently break the surface of the ground. Instead, it creates wavelike crests and troughs, with the earth reacting with glacier-like fluidity until the desired result is achieved. Trees,

structures, rock formations, and such are mostly unaffected except for changes in elevation and topography. This effect cannot be used for tunneling and is too slow to trap or bury creatures unless they are helpless the entire time the earth is moved.

Soften Earth (Difficulty 10): All natural, undressed earth or stone softens. Wet earth becomes thick mud, dry earth becomes loose sand or dirt, and stone becomes soft clay that is easily molded. You affect a 10-foot square area to a depth of 1 to 4 feet, depending on the Toughness or resilience of the ground at that spot. Each +5 increase in Difficulty affects another 10-foot square. Dressed or worked stone cannot be affected. Earth and stone creatures are not affected either.

A creature in mud must succeed on a Reflex save against your power or be caught helpless for one round. A creature that succeeds on its save can move through the mud at half speed. Loose dirt is not as troublesome, but all creatures in the area move at only half their normal speed and can't run or charge. Stone softened into clay does not hinder movement, but does allow characters to cut, shape, or excavate areas they may not have been able to affect before.

While this power does not affect dressed or worked stone, cavern ceilings or vertical surfaces such as cliff faces can be affected. Usually, this causes a moderate collapse or landslide as the loosened material peels away from the face of the wall or roof and falls.

A moderate amount of damage can be dealt to a structure by softening the ground beneath it, causing it to settle. However, most sturdy structures are only damaged by this, and not destroyed.

Stonecrafting (Difficulty 10): You can mold stone into any shape you wish. You can affect 10 cubic feet of stone. Each additional cubic foot increases the Difficulty by 1 (so at Difficulty 30 you can affect 30 cubic feet). The Narrator may require a Craft (sculpting or stonecutting) check to achieve precise results. You perform Craft checks involving stone in minutes instead of the hours of normal Craft projects. A complex project, which normally takes 24 hours, would therefore take 24 minutes.

Earthquake (Difficulty 30): An intense but highly localized tremor rips the ground. The shock knocks creatures down, collapses structures, opens cracks in the ground, and more. The effect lasts for 1 round, during which time creatures on the ground can't move or attack. An adept must make a Concentration check (Difficulty 20) to use any powers that round. The earthquake affects all terrain, vegetation, structures, and creatures in an area with a radius of adept level times 10 feet. The specific effects depend on the nature of the terrain.

- **Cave, Cavern, or Tunnel:** The roof collapses, inflicting +16 damage to any creature caught under the cave-in (Difficulty 15 Reflex save for half damage) and pinning them beneath the rubble.
- **Cliffs:** Cliffs crumble, creating a landslide that travels horizontally as far as it fell vertically. Any creature in its path suffers +16 damage (Difficulty 15 Reflex save for half damage) and is pinned beneath the rubble.
- **Open Ground:** Each creature standing in the area must make a Difficulty 15 Reflex save or fall down. Fissures open in the earth, and every creature on the ground has a chance (16 or higher on a d20 roll) to fall into one (Difficulty 20 Reflex save to avoid a fissure). On the round after the quake, all fissures grind shut, crushing and killing any creatures trapped within them.
- **Structure:** Any wooden or masonry structure standing on open ground is destroyed. Heavier stone buildings are damaged. Anyone caught inside a collapsing structure takes +16 damage (Difficulty 15 Reflex save for half damage) and is pinned beneath the rubble.
- **River, Lake, or Marsh:** Fissures open underneath the water, draining it away from that area and forming muddy ground. Soggy marsh or swampland becomes quicksand for the duration of the spell,

sucking down creatures and structures. Anyone in the area must make a Difficulty 15 Reflex save or sink down in the mud and quicksand. At the end of the round, the rest of the body of water rushes in to replace the drained water, possibly drowning those caught in the mud.

- **Pinned beneath Rubble:** Any creature pinned beneath rubble takes +2 non-lethal damage per minute. Unconscious characters make a Difficulty 15 Constitution check each minute to avoid +2 lethal damage.

Time: Move Earth takes from 10 minutes or more, depending on the size of the area. Stonecrafting depends on the project in question. Soften Earth and Earthquake are standard actions.

ELEMENTAL AURA

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

PREREQUISITE: COLD, ENERGY, FIRE, WATER, OR WIND SHAPING

As a standard action, you can surround your body with a damaging elemental aura, causing no harm to you or anything you are wearing or carrying. Anyone touching you while your elemental aura is active suffers +2 damage, with the type of damage determined by the element: cold (Cold Shaping), fire (Fire Shaping), acid (Water Shaping), or electricity (Energy or Wind Shaping). Adepts trained in more than one Shaping power may choose the type of aura when activating it. Elemental Aura is fatiguing, with a fatigue save Difficulty of 14.

Time: Elemental Aura is a standard action.

ELEMENTAL BLAST

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: COLD, EARTH, ENERGY, FIRE, WATER, OR WIND SHAPING

You can strike a foe with a focused blast of elemental force. Your Elemental Blast is a normal ranged attack with a range increment of



adept level x 10 feet and a maximum range of ten increments (adept level x 100 feet).

An Elemental Blast has a damage bonus equal to your adept level. Water and Wind Shaping strikes inflict non-lethal damage. If you have Weather Shaping, you can call lightning from storm clouds as an Elemental Blast. If you apply the Widen Power feat to an Elemental Blast, it affects all targets within a radius of adept level x 2 feet from the target point. Targets of a Widened Elemental Blast can make a Reflex saving throw. If successful, the blast only inflicts half damage on that target.

Time: Standard action.

ELEMENTAL RESISTANCE

PREREQUISITE: COLD, EARTH, ENERGY, FIRE, WATER, OR WIND SHAPING

You can resist the effects of an element you're able to shape. Choose a Shaping power you possess. You have a bonus on all saving throws against harm from its element equal to your adept level, and suffer only non-lethal damage from the element so long as you are conscious and capable of exerting the minimum will required to resist the element's effects. Water Shaping also grants Acid Resistance, and Wind Shaping also grants Electrical Resistance.

You may acquire this power multiple times. Each time, it affects a different element.

Time: Elemental Resistance is a reaction; it functions continually as long as you are conscious and capable of exerting the minimum will required to resist the element's effects.

ELEMENTAL WEAPON

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

PREREQUISITE: COLD, ENERGY, FIRE, WATER, OR WIND SHAPING

As a standard action, you can imbue a melee weapon you wield with damaging elemental energy, without harming either the weapon or yourself. The weapon does +2 damage, in addition to its normal damage, with the type of damage determined by the element: cold (Cold Shaping), fire (Fire Shaping), acid (Water Shaping), or electricity (Energy or Wind Shaping). Adepts trained in more than one Shaping power may choose the type of energy when activating this power. Elemental Weapon is fatiguing, with a fatigue save Difficulty of 14.

Elemental Weapon adds +2 damage of its elemental type, but forces only one Toughness save for all the damage. If a creature has Resistance to the weapon's elemental damage, subtract the Resistance from the elemental damage bonus, down to a minimum of +0, meaning the elemental portion of the damage doesn't affect the creature at all but the normal weapon damage still does. If the creature has Immunity to that type of damage, then the elemental bonus doesn't count, just the normal weapon damage.

Time: Elemental Weapon is a standard action.

ENERGY SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can shape and direct the flow of electromagnetic energy. You can direct electricity, drain power sources, and focus magnetism to affect metallic objects.

Direct Electricity: You can direct electricity from a free-flowing power source in your line of sight, including outlets, generators, or even storm clouds. The target makes a Reflex saving throw to avoid being struck. If the save fails, the target takes +2 damage, +1 point for every

5 points your power check exceeds Difficulty 15. So a check result of 32 inflicts +5 damage, for example.

Drain Power: You can drain a power source of its energy. Unattended power sources are automatically drained, while creatures receive a Will saving throw for power sources in their possession. The power check and fatigue Difficulties are based on the size of the power source: 12 for a simple source such as a battery, 14 for a car battery or larger power pack, 18 for a powerful fuel cell or similar high-power storage device, and 22 for a generator. A generator is only drained as long as you concentrate. You can also direct drained power as above, using drain power to fuel an electrical attack the following round.

Magnetism: You can manipulate magnetic fields, allowing you to move metallic objects as if you were using the Move Object power (later in this chapter), with the same Difficulty and fatigue, based on the object's mass. You can also create a magnetic pulse that erases magnetic storage media (such as videotapes and computer disks) with a Difficulty 20 power check. The pulse affects a radius of 20 ft., +1 ft. per point the power check exceeds the Difficulty.

Special: You can take 10 on Energy Shaping checks, but you can't take 20. Energy Shaping is less useful (and poorly understood) in settings without electrical technology. In these settings, it is primarily used to direct electricity from storms and to affect metallic objects.

Time: Directing electricity and magnetism are standard actions. Draining power is a full-round action.

ENHANCE ABILITY

FATIGUING

You can improve your Strength or Dexterity for a short time. A successful Enhance Ability check adds a bonus to either your Strength or Dexterity score for 1 minute (10 rounds). The result of the check indicates the amount of the bonus. If desired, you can split a bonus of +2 or greater between Strength and Dexterity.

ENHANCE ABILITY

Difficulty	Bonus
15	+1
20	+2
25	+3
30	+4
35	+5

Time: Enhance Ability is a standard action. The bonus lasts 10 rounds (1 minute). If you take 20 when making this check, you spend 2 minutes and suffer a +20 increase in the fatigue Difficulty.

ENHANCE OTHER

FATIGUING

This works like Enhance Ability, except you can enhance others' abilities by touch, and cannot enhance your own abilities with it.

Special: The subject of this power must also make a Fortitude saving throw against fatigue (same Difficulty as the adept) when its duration runs out, to represent the strain placed on the subject's body.

ENHANCE SENSES

You can enhance your normal sensory abilities. An Enhance Senses check adds a bonus to your Notice, Search, and Sense Motive checks. It also adds to skill checks made to find or follow tracks. The result of the check indicates the amount of the bonus.

ENHANCE SENSES	
Difficulty	Bonus
10	+2
15	+4
20	+6
25	+8
30	+10
35	+12

Time: Enhance Senses is a move action. The bonus lasts for 10 minutes. The Enhance Senses power is not normally fatiguing; it is only fatiguing when you take 20 with it.

FIRE SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can mentally start and control fires. You can make a Fire Shaping check to ignite a fire, to increase the size of an existing fire, or to create light but not heat.

Ignite Fire: You can set any flammable object in your line of sight on fire as a standard action with a successful Fire Shaping check (Difficulty 15). Targets must make a Reflex saving throw (Difficulty 15) to avoid taking +2 fire damage. The target must save each round. A successful save means the fire goes out. You can reignite it with another standard action and successful Fire Shaping check. A character on fire can automatically extinguish the flames by dousing in water (or other flame-retardant material). Spending a full round rolling on the ground grants a +4 bonus on the Reflex saving throw. In addition to using it as an attack, you can use this power to light candles (up to a dozen candles in a 5-foot square with a single skill check), torches, hearth fires, and so forth. At the Narrator's discretion, lighting small fires, like candles, is not fatiguing.

Increase Fire: You can increase the size and intensity of a fire. The Difficulty of the Fire Shaping check is $10 + 1$ per square foot of increase. Every two square feet increase the fire's damage potential by +1. The fire maintains its increased size and damage as long as you concentrate, and it can even burn in the absence of fuel; smothering, however, still puts it out. While you maintain an increased flame, a victim does not get a Reflex saving throw to put the fire out (although it can still be extinguished by dousing with water), and the fire does additional damage based on your Fire Shaping check. So, an adept who makes a Difficulty 16 Fire Shaping check can spread a fire over an additional 6 square feet and it does +3 damage.

Light: You can create a glowing spot of supernatural fire that sheds light but no heat, illuminating a 20-foot radius. This requires a move action and a Difficulty 5 Fire Shaping check. You can increase the radius of the illumination by increasing the Difficulty of the check; each +5 Difficulty increases the radius of the illumination by 10 feet. The point of light moves where you direct it within your line of sight, as a move action. Creating light is not fatiguing.

Time: Igniting fires and increasing flames are standard actions. Creating or moving light is a move action.

FLESH SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can shape and mold flesh as if it were clay in your hands. The subject must be either willing or helpless for the entire duration of your work (and you can use Flesh Shaping on yourself). You make Flesh Shaping checks to alter a subject's physical features. You cannot change body mass or size, other than a few feet more or less in height by resizing the subject's bones. You can sculpt physical features largely at will. The Difficulty and time required for Flesh Shaping is shown in the table.

FLESH SHAPING		
Difficulty	Time	Task
15	1 min.	Alter facial features or other minor cosmetic features.
20	10 min.	Alter extensive cosmetic features or overall shape.
30	1 hr.	Extensive alterations to shape, duplicating exact appearance.

Treat your Flesh Shaping check result like a Disguise check for purposes of determining if someone notices the change. Among other things, Flesh Shaping can provide alterations in eye, hair, and skin color, even creating tattoo-like patterns of pigmentation in the skin. It can greatly enhance or diminish physical appearance and attractiveness as well. Any alterations made with Flesh Shaping are permanent, unless reversed through this power or the Cure power, either of which must exceed the original check result.

Time: See table.

GHOST TOUCH

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can use your power to combat usually untouchable beings. As a standard action, you can focus supernatural power to imbue yourself, or a weapon you wield, with the power to touch and affect incorporeal creatures as if they were solid. Ghost Touch is fatiguing, with a fatigue save Difficulty of 14.

Time: Ghost Touch is a standard action.

HARM

FATIGUING

You can inflict injury with a mere touch, disrupting the body's natural energy and balance. You must touch the target as a standard action. Success means the target must make a Fortitude saving throw against your power save Difficulty, with failure per the **Damage Track** for lethal damage. So a failed save results in a hurt condition, failure by 5 or more means the target is wounded, and so forth. This damage is cumulative with, and treated the same as, damage from failed Toughness saves. Because Harm requires a Fortitude save, armor and other bonuses to Toughness have no effect against it.

Time: Harm is a standard action.

HEART READING

You can sense and read the emotions of others. A successful Heart Reading check allows you to determine the subject's emotional state. The target gets a Will save to resist. Use of this power is not immediately obvious. Whether you succeed or fail, the subject does not know you are reading his emotions.

If the target's save fails, you get a general idea of his emotions and mood (not precise thoughts). This grants you a bonus on the next interaction skill check you make against the subject within the next 10 rounds (1 minute). The bonus is based on your Heart Reading check result.

HEART READING	
Result	Interaction Bonus
Up to 4	+1
5–14	+2
15–24	+3
25–34	+4
35+	+5

Try Again: You can only use Heart Reading on a subject once during the same scene.

Time: Heart Reading is a free action. The bonus lasts 10 rounds (1 minute) or until you make an interaction skill check against the target, whichever comes first.

HEART SHAPING

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION

With this power, you can impose emotions on others. The target makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, you can impose any one of the following emotional states on them:

Despair: As a weight of negative emotion floods them, the target suffers a -2 penalty on saving throws, attack rolls, checks, and damage. Despair dispels the effects of hope.

Fear: The target flees from the object of its fear (chosen by you). Fear dispels the effects of rage. It also immediately ends a use of the Rage feat.

Friendship: The target's attitude shifts to the next more positive attitude (hostile to unfriendly, unfriendly to indifferent, and so forth). See **Social Actions** in **Chapter Six**. Creatures involved in combat continue to fight back normally, however. Friendship dispels the effects of hatred.

Hatred: The target's attitude shifts to the next more negative attitude (indifferent to unfriendly, unfriendly to hostile, and so forth). See **Social Actions** in **Chapter Six**. Hatred dispels the effects of friendship.

Hope: The target gains a +2 bonus on saving throws, attack rolls, checks, and damage. Hope dispels the effects of despair.

Rage: The target gains the effects of the Rage feat from **Chapter Three**. They are compelled to fight, heedless of danger. Rage does not stack with the Rage feat or with itself. Rage dispels the effects of fear.

Time: Heart Shaping is a standard action.

ILLUSION

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION, MENTAL CONTACT

You can fool the senses of others. Make an Illusion check with a Difficulty based on the complexity of the illusion, consulting the table. If successful, the illusion appears to the subject. The illusion exists solely in the subject's mind, so it can be of any size; creating the illusion of something small is just as easy as creating the illusion of something huge.

ILLUSION	
Complexity	Difficulty
Illusion affects a single sense	10
Illusion affects two senses	15
Illusion affects all senses	20
Simple (random noise, static image, and the like)	+0
Complex (coherent sound, moving images, and the like)	+5
Very Complex (multiple overlapping sounds or images)	+10

Since the illusion isn't real, it cannot produce any real effects. It cannot cause damage, support weight, provide nutrition, illuminate darkness, or provide protection from the elements. Thus, characters fall through

an illusory bridge or floor if they try to walk on it, and although they can appear to eat, and taste, illusory food, it has no nutritional value.

Characters encountering an illusion do not get a saving throw against it until they study it carefully or interact with it in some fashion. For example, if characters encounter a section of illusory floor, they would receive a saving throw if they stopped and examined the floor, poked at it, and so forth. Likewise, if an illusory monster attacks the characters, they get a saving throw because they are interacting with the illusion.

A successful saving throw against an illusion reveals it to be false, but a translucent after-image remains. For example, a character making a successful saving throw against an illusory section of floor knows the floor isn't real and isn't safe to walk on, and can see what lies below it, but he can still note where the illusion is.

A failed Will saving throw means the character fails to notice anything is amiss. A character faced with incontrovertible proof that an illusion isn't real needs no saving throw. Someone who falls through an illusory floor knows something is amiss. A character who communicates this information to others gives them a +4 bonus on saving throws against the illusion.

Try Again: No. You can attempt to affect the same character after some time has passed, but not in the same scene.

Time: Illusion is a full-round action.

IMBUE LIFE

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: CURE RANK 12

You can restore the dead to life! The subject cannot have been dead for longer than your adept level in minutes, and you must make a Difficulty 25 power check, taking a minute of intense concentration. If the check succeeds, the subject's condition becomes unconscious and disabled (from which the subject may heal normally). An Imbue Life attempt is fatiguing, with Difficulty 20 + half your power rank.

Try Again: No.

Time: One minute.

IMBUE UNLIFE

FATIGUING

You can lend animation to the dead, creating a mockery of life. Imbue Unlife may create two kinds of undead: mindless or intelligent.

Mindless: You turn the bones or bodies of dead creatures into undead skeletons or zombies, which obey your spoken commands (see **Chapter Eight**). They remain animated until destroyed. A destroyed undead creature can't be imbued with unlife again.

A skeleton can be created only from a mostly intact corpse or skeleton. The corpse must have bones. If a skeleton is made from a corpse, the flesh falls from the bones when it is created. A zombie can be created only from a mostly intact corpse. The corpse must be that of a creature with a true anatomy.

Regardless of the type you create, you can't make more mindless undead than twice your adept level with a single use of Imbue Unlife.

The skeletons or zombies you create remain under your control indefinitely. No matter how many times you use this power, however, you can control only four times your adept level in levels of mindless undead. If you exceed this, all newly created creatures fall under your control, and any excess from previous castings become uncontrolled. You choose which creatures are released from your control.



Intelligent: You transform a corpse into an intelligent undead creature. Unlike the mindless undead, this creature is *not* under your control; although, you can use other means, including other powers, to command it. You can create a ghost or vampire using this power (see **Chapter Eight**). Creating an intelligent undead creature has a Difficulty of 18.

If you fail an Imbue Unlife check to animate a corpse, that corpse is permanently immune to any further attempts by you to imbue it with unlife.

Time: One minute.

LIGHT SHAPING

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can mentally control light. With a successful check, you can make your outline blurred and indistinct, or even become invisible.

You can create realistic three-dimensional images of light occupying up to a 10-foot cube. Each additional 10-foot cube that the image occupies increases the Difficulty by 5. Subjects seeing the image get a Will saving throw to realize it is not real if they have any reason to suspect it, such as the fact that the image makes no noise.

You can also create a point of light illuminating a 20-foot radius, which you can move at will anywhere in your line of sight as a move action. For each 10 feet you add to the radius of illumination, the Difficulty increases by 5.

You can create light effects anywhere in your line of sight, and they last as long as you maintain them. Creating multiple effects at once (such as becoming invisible while also creating the illusion that you are elsewhere) counts as maintaining multiple powers.

LIGHT SHAPING

Task	Difficulty
Illuminate	5 (+5 per additional 10-foot radius)
Visual Illusion	10 (+5 per additional 10-foot cube)
Blur (20% miss chance)	15
Blur (50% miss chance)	20
Invisibility	25

Special: The basic level of illuminate (Difficulty 5) is not fatiguing.

Time: Light Shaping is a standard action.

MANIPULATE OBJECT**FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE**

You can manipulate objects at a distance as if with a pair of invisible, intangible hands. Your power has the same Dexterity as you, while lifting the object has the same Difficulty as Move Object, except you cannot increase the weight lifted by suffering fatigue (Manipulate Object's fatigue comes from the extra precision required).

You can use your normal skills via Manipulate Object, but you are at a -2 penalty for having to operate remotely, and you can't perform tasks at all if you can't see your target, since your power has no sense of touch.

Remotely Wielding Weapons: An adept can wield a weapon using Manipulate Object. Picking up the weapon is a move action. Attacking with it is a standard action. Concealment is determined by the attacker and defender's positions, not the weapon's, while cover is determined by the defender and weapon's positions. The attacker makes a normal attack roll, but with a -4 penalty for the difficulty in controlling the weapon from afar, and adds his Intelligence score to the attack roll, rather than Dexterity. The weapon deals its normal damage with no modification for Strength (as if wielded by a Str 0 attacker). An adept can take the Exotic Weapon Training feat in remotely wielded weapons to eliminate the -4 penalty to hit.

A remotely wielded weapon can be struck normally by sunder attacks (see **Sunder** in **Chapter Six**). Attempts to disarm the adept by knocking the weapon out of his supernatural "grasp" are resolved by opposed attack rolls as normal or an opposed attack roll and Manipulate Object check, if the adept's Manipulate Object bonus is greater than his attack bonus.

Time: Manipulate Object is a move action. The power use lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute).

MIND PROBE**FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION, MENTAL CONTACT**

You can mentally probe a subject's mind for information. Make a Mind Probe check against the result of the target's Will save.

If successful, you can ask any one question and receive the answer from the target's mind. If the target doesn't know the answer, then you know that. Especially personal or guarded information grants the target a +1 to +5 bonus on the Will save, while information the subject doesn't consciously know (because it is subconscious or forgotten due to amnesia, for example) grants a +5 to +10 bonus on the Will save.

You can continue to ask questions, one per round, for as long as you maintain your Mind Probe. Each question requires a new skill check, an additional Will save, and another fatigue save (with an increasing fatigue save Difficulty).

Try Again: Yes, but the target gets a cumulative +1 bonus to the Will save for each new attempt in the same scene.

Time: Mind Probe is a full-round action.

MIND READING**MAINTENANCE, MENTAL CONTACT**

You can read another creature's thoughts. Make an opposed check against the result of the target's Will save. If successful, you can read the target's surface thoughts (whatever the target is presently thinking). Mind Reading transcends language; you comprehend the target's thoughts whether or not you share a language. If you fail your Mind Reading check, you cannot read the target's mind.

If you can interact with your subject, a successful Bluff check against the target's Sense Motive check causes the subject to think consciously about a particular piece of information you're looking for, such as a password or name, allowing you to pluck it from the subject's surface thoughts.

Try Again: Yes, but the target gets a cumulative +1 bonus to the Will save for each new attempt in the same scene, and retries with Mind Reading are fatiguing.

Time: Mind Reading is a standard action.

MIND SHAPING**FATIGUING, MENTAL CONTACT**

Mind Shaping allows you to remove psychic influence or to alter memories and behavior. Make a Mind Shaping check, with the Difficulty determined by the task.

Remove Mental Influence: Make a Mind Shaping check with a Difficulty equal to the check result of a mind-affecting power. If you succeed, that power no longer affects the subject. Note this only removes the effects of ongoing powers, not permanent aftereffects.

This means you could use Mind Shaping to remove a Dominate or Illusion effect, but not to restore damage caused by a psychic attack (for that, use the Cure power). You can undo the effects of Mind Shaping used to alter the subject's mind by equaling or exceeding the Mind Shaping check used to make the alterations.

Alter Psyche: You can make changes in the subject's mind. The Difficulty is based on the extent of the change you wish to make. False or altered memories can cause dissonance within the subject's mind, depending on how well they fit into the subject's other memories. If the subject notices a conflict between the false and true memories (Narrator's discretion), she gets an additional Will save to shake off the effect and regain her true memory. She gains a bonus of +1 to +4 on the save depending on how strong the dissonance is between the true and false memories.

ALTER PSYCHE

Difficulty	Alteration	Time
15	Alter a single unimportant fact or brief recollection, about 5 minutes worth of memory.	1 full round
20	Alter a single fact or an hour's worth of memory.	1 min
25	Alter a single significant fact, such as the name of the subject's spouse, or a day's worth of memory.	10 min
30	Alter a deeply personal fact, such as the subject's name, or a week's worth of memory.	1 hour
35	Alter up to a month's worth of memory.	6 hrs
40	Alter up to a year's worth of memory. Give the subject an entirely new personality, complete with false memories, or erase the subject's entire memory, causing total amnesia.	10 hrs

Special: Taking 20 requires twenty times the usual time. Generally, this means the subject must be cooperative, unconscious, or restrained in some way. Taking 20 increases the fatigue check Difficulty by +20 as well.

Try Again: If you fail a Mind Shaping check, you must wait at least 24 hours before attempting the same task on the same subject.

Time: Removing psychic influence is a full-round action. For altering a person's psyche, see the table.

MIND TOUCH

MAINTENANCE

You can establish contact with another mind. The base Difficulty is 10, modified by familiarity. If the subject has a Psychic Shield, you have to make a separate Mind Touch check to overcome it. An unwilling subject also gets a Will saving throw to avoid contact. If the save is successful, no contact is made.

If you do not want the subject to know you are making mental contact, you can make a separate opposed Mind Touch check against the subject's Sense Motive, Second Sight, or Psychic Shield check (whichever has the highest bonus). If you win, the subject is unaware of your attempt. If the subject wins, she is aware of your attempt (whether you succeed or fail in actually establishing contact).

While you are in mental contact with another being, the two of you can communicate at the rate of normal speech, hearing each other's thoughts. You can also send a single visual image each round instead of speaking. Both you and the subject can choose to lie or omit information; you're "speaking" to each other mentally, not reading each other's thoughts. Mind Touch is two-way, meaning you are in mental contact with the subject for purposes of her powers and vice versa.

If a friendly mental contact turns hostile, the subject can make a Will saving throw or Psychic Shield check to break contact. Once the subject has failed an attempt to eject the intruder from her mind, she can't break the contact.

If your Mind Touch is broken, any other powers you are maintaining requiring mental contact are also broken.

Mentally Aiding Others: While in mental contact with another character, you can use the aid action (a standard action) to grant that character a +2 bonus on Will saving throws or on any skill check where your skill rank is equal to or greater than the subject's.

Mental Rapport: Two or more characters with Mind Touch can enter a *mental rapport* with each other, a deep and very intense state of mental contact. Each character establishes mental contact with the other, each of whom must be a willing participant. Characters in rapport are like one mind, each instantly aware of everything that the other thinks and experiences and able to share information instantly. Characters in rapport cannot deliberately lie to or deceive each other.

Deathcry: If a creature you are in mental contact with dies, you must make a Will saving throw or Psychic Shield check (Difficulty 20) to avoid being dazed for 1 round by the psychic feedback and trauma. Since mental contact is a two-way phenomenon, this applies to any creature in mental contact with another, including all the creatures involved in a Mental Rapport. A creature can deliberately avoid letting out a deathcry when it dies by making a Will saving throw (Difficulty 20).

Try Again: You can retry Mind Touch freely, but retries on the same subject within an hour's time are fatiguing.

Time: Mind Touch is a move action.

MOVE OBJECT

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can move objects with the power of your thoughts. A Move Object check allows you to move an object in your line of sight. The Difficulty of the Move Object check is based on the mass of the object you want to move and whether or not you choose to risk fatigue. A fatiguing use of Move Object can move ten times the mass listed on the table (so 20 pounds at Difficulty 10, up to 2,000 pounds at Difficulty 40) and doubles the listed damage.

MOVE OBJECT		
Difficulty	Mass	Damage
10	2 lb.	+1
15	5 lb.	+2
20	10 lb.	+3
25	25 lb.	+4
30	50 lb.	+5
35	100 lb.	+6
40	200 lb.	+7

You can move the object a distance of 5 feet times your Move Object rank per move action.

If two adepts vie for control of an object, use opposed Move Object checks. The winner controls the object for that round. If a creature is holding the object, make a Move Object check opposed by the creature's Strength check.

Grappling Creatures: You can use Move Object to grapple a creature (see **Grappling** in **Chapter Six**). Resolve this as a normal grapple, using the result in the Damage column of the Move Object table in place of the adept's Strength. If you successfully pin your target, you can treat them as an ordinary object for purposes of moving them with this ability.





Striking with Objects: You can hurl objects at opponents. This requires a ranged attack roll and the object deals damage based on your Move Object skill check, as shown on the table. Since using Move Object is a move action, you can move an object and strike with it (as a standard action) in the same round.

Moving Multiple Objects: As a full-round action, you can attempt to move multiple objects at once. Use the Difficulty of the heaviest object, then add +2 for each additional object and increase the fatigue check Difficulty by +2 for each additional object. You cannot strike a target with multiple objects as part of the same action.

Time: Move Object is a move action. The power use lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute). To maintain it for another minute, make another fatigue save.

NATURE READING

You are attuned to the flows of the natural world, able to read certain signs from it. You can learn the following:

- With a Difficulty 10 power check, you can immediately (as a reaction) identify any animal or plant, or tell if water in a natural environment is safe to drink.
- With a minute of observation and a Difficulty 15 check, you can accurately predict the weather for one day for every 5 points you exceed the Difficulty.
- Once per day with 10 minutes of meditation, you can learn any three facts about the following: the ground or terrain, plants, minerals, bodies of water, people, general animal population, presence of animals, presence of powerful unnatural creatures, or the general state of the natural setting. This covers a 1-mile radius for every 5 points your power check exceeds Difficulty 10.

Time: See the description.

OBJECT READING

You can read psychic impressions from places and objects, getting images of their pasts, as if you were actually present at a particular past event.

Active Object Reading: You can attempt to see the past of a particular place or object. You must be able to touch the object. This requires a full-round action and an Object Reading check. Active Object Reading is fatiguing.

Spontaneous Visions: Your ability may also spontaneously activate at the Narrator's discretion when you are in contact with an object with particularly strong psychic impressions. This requires an Object Reading check.

The Narrator should make Object Reading checks secretly so the player doesn't necessarily know if a particular vision was accurate or not. Consult the table below for the results of a vision, based on the Object Reading check.

OBJECT READING	
Difficulty	Result
10	A vague vision that may not be accurate.
15	A brief and accurate vision of the events.
20	A longer vision of the events, encompassing everything that took place in a particular place and time.
25	The ability to move the vision backward or forward in time to review the event.
30	The ability to track the vision backward through time and space to trace an event to its origin.
35	Near-complete knowledge of a particular past event and everything involving it.

Impressions read from objects generally count as slightly familiar for the purposes of determining familiarity for other powers, possibly more if the vision was long or extremely accurate (in the Narrator's opinion).

Time: Object Reading is a full-round action.

PAIN

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION, MENTAL CONTACT

(SEE DESCRIPTION)

You can inflict terrible pain on a target. You must touch or be in mental contact with the target, who makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, the target is stunned. So long as you maintain concentration, the effect continues. The victim gets a new Will save each round to overcome the pain. A successful Will save means your Pain power stops working. You must use it again to affect the target (with the usual increase in fatigue save Difficulty for successive use). A target gets a +2 Will save bonus for each successive use of Pain in the same scene.

Time: Pain is a standard action.

PHASE

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can shift yourself "out of phase" with the material world. You gain the incorporeal subtype for the power's duration (see **Incorporeal** in **Chapter Eight**). You can use powers affecting the mind or spirit on material beings, but not powers affecting physical things, such as Move Object.

You remain out of phase for one round per adept level. If the power's duration ends while you are inside a material object, you are shunted

into the nearest open space and must make a Toughness saving throw against +1 damage per 5 feet you travel in this manner. You can also renew your power's duration with a new fatigue save (including the modifier for repeated power use).

Time: Phase is a move action.

PLANE SHIFT

FATIGUING

You can transport yourself (and perhaps others) to different dimensional planes. You make a power check to move to another plane of existence. The Difficulty is 10, modified by your familiarity with the other plane (see **Familiarity** previously in this chapter). If you carry additional mass along with you, the Difficulty is based on the amount, as follows:

PLANE SHIFT	
Difficulty	Mass
10	up to 20 lb.
15	50 lb.
20	100 lb.
25	250 lb.
30	500 lb.
35	1,000 lb.
40	2,000 lb.

Generally, alternate dimensions are considered only slightly familiar unless you have visited before. You can also acquire knowledge of another plane using Object Reading or Mind Probe; the plane is then considered somewhat familiar to you. If you choose to visit a random plane, the familiarity modifier is only +5, but this is quite dangerous as your destination is up to the whim of the Narrator. Of course, once you have visited another plane, you can become more familiar with it.

The Narrator may limit this power based on the alternate planes of existence in the setting. If there are none, then Plane Shift isn't available as a power.

Time: Plane Shift is a full-round action.

PLANT SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can shape living plants and, to a degree, dead wood and other plant materials.

Plant Healing: You can heal injured or diseased plants. This requires you to touch the plant and make a Difficulty 15 Plant Shaping check. If you succeed, the plant is restored to health. Plants must be living and reasonably intact in order for this power to heal them.

Plant Growth: You can promote rapid growth in plants, causing an area to become filled with thick undergrowth (see **Hampered Movement** in **Chapter Six**). This affects a radius equal to your adept level times 40 feet. You can also focus the power on a specific area with a 40-foot radius. Plants there become so overgrown they entangle anyone in the area, who must make a Reflex saving throw. A failed save means the target is bound and helpless, needing a Difficulty 20 Strength or Escape Artist check to get free. A successful save means the target isn't trapped, but must still contend with the thick undergrowth created by the tangled plants. Finally, you can use plant growth to enrich an area with a radius equal to your adept level times 400 feet, increasing the yield and growth of crops there by 50 percent for the season.

Woodcrafting: You can use Plant Shaping like a Craft skill to shape objects out of wood. This takes minutes instead of the hours of a normal Craft project. You can therefore complete a simple woodcraft project in a minute and an advanced one in an hour. See **Craft** in **Chapter Two** for details.

Time: Plant healing is a full-round action. Plant growth is a standard action. Woodcrafting requires time based on the project (as noted above).

PSYCHIC BLAST

FATIGUING

You can focus your power to psychically assault a target's mind. You can affect any target in your line of sight or in mental contact. The target makes a Will saving throw against your power's save Difficulty, with the results noted on the **Damage Track** (see **Chapter Six**) as non-lethal damage. So a failed Will save results in a bruise, failure by 5 or more in a daze, and so forth. This damage is cumulative with, and treated the same as, damage from failed Toughness saves. Psychic Blast cannot cause damage past unconsciousness.

Time: Psychic Blast is a standard action.

PSYCHIC REFLECTION

PREREQUISITE: PSYCHIC SHIELD

By invoking this power, you can reflect powers blocked by your Psychic Shield back at their originator (see **Psychic Shield** elsewhere in this chapter). When your Psychic Shield successfully blocks a power directed at you, you can make a Psychic Reflection check against the same Difficulty.

If you succeed, the power directed at you affects the attacker instead, using the attacker's bonus. You do not suffer fatigue for the reflected power (the attacker does), but you are in control of the effect. You must maintain the power yourself (if it can be maintained), and it has its normal effect and duration. The attacker may defend and save against the reflected power normally but cannot also reflect it using Psychic Reflection. Any attempt to do so simply causes the power's effect to dissipate.

Time: Psychic Reflection is a reaction.

PSYCHIC SHIELD

You can shield your mind from psychic influences. When you are the target of a power granting a Will saving throw, make a Psychic Shield check. The attacker must make a power check using the attacking power. If your check result is higher, the power fails. If the attacker's result is higher, the power affects you normally, but you still get your normal saving throw.

You may choose to voluntarily lower your Psychic Shield if you wish. This is a free action, and you can raise it up again as a free action. Otherwise, your shield is always active, even if you are unconscious or sleeping.

Shields and Maintained Powers: Once a power has overcome your Psychic Shield, it continues to affect you as long as the user maintains it. You're still entitled to your normal saving throws, if any, but your shield no longer protects you from that power. Once the attacker needs to make a new power check, however, your shield comes into play again and must be overcome again. For powers requiring mental contact, so long as the other adept remains in mental contact with you (inside your shield), he can use those powers freely without worrying about your shield.

Overcoming Psychic Shields: An attacker can choose to suffer a fatigue result to gain a +5 bonus to overcome your Psychic Shield. This is in addition to any fatigue caused by the power used against you. If you also choose to suffer a fatigue result, the attacker loses the bonus and must roll normally to overcome your shield. This process takes no actual time; it happens as part of the check to overcome the Psychic Shield. An attacker trying to avoid notice cannot use this option, since it makes it immediately apparent that you are under psychic attack.

Time: Using Psychic Shield as a defense is a reaction; raising or lowering your shield is a free action.

PSYCHIC TRAP

PREREQUISITE: PSYCHIC SHIELD

You can psychically act against anyone who tries to overcome your psychic defenses. When an opponent attempts to use a power against you and fails to overcome your Psychic Shield, you get an immediate power use against the attacker as a reaction. This can be any power you can use as a standard or move action, but not a full-round action. If the power requires mental contact, you are considered in mental contact with your opponent for the purposes of using it. You only get one free power use per opponent per round, regardless of the number of attempts to overcome your Psychic Shield. The reactive power has its normal Difficulty and fatigue.

Time: Psychic Trap is a reaction.

PSYCHIC WEAPON

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can create a melee weapon out of psychic energy. Take a move action to create the psychic weapon in your hand. The appearance



of the weapon is up to you; its effects are the same regardless. You wield a psychic weapon like a normal melee weapon, except you are automatically considered trained with it.

The psychic weapon inflicts +1 damage per 4 power ranks. Add your key ability for Psychic Weapon rather than your Strength to the weapon's damage. This damage ignores physical armor. You can score a critical hit with your Psychic Weapon on a natural roll of 20, inflicting +3 damage.

A psychic weapon is immaterial and only affects creatures with an Intelligence score. It has no effect on non-intelligent creatures or objects, meaning it cannot sunder or even block a material weapon. Two psychic weapons affect each other normally. If your psychic weapon is somehow knocked from your grasp or sundered by another psychic weapon, you can recreate it by taking a move action to do so.

Creating a psychic weapon requires a fatigue save with a Difficulty of 10 + the weapon's base damage bonus (not including your key ability). The weapon lasts for one minute (10 rounds) after you summon it. To maintain it for another minute, make another fatigue save. Your psychic weapon disappears if you are stunned or unconscious.

Time: Psychic Weapon is a move action. The power use lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute). To maintain it for another minute, make another fatigue save.

SCRYING

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION

You can sense distant events as if you were physically present at them. Make a Scrying check to sense a particular place, creature, or thing known to you. The base Difficulty is 10, modified by familiarity. If successful, you can observe the subject as if you were present. The vision lasts for as long as you maintain it, but your ordinary senses are overridden, so you are unaware of what is happening near you while you are observing events elsewhere. A subject observed via Scrying is considered present in terms of familiarity, but not in your actual line of sight.

The act of Scrying creates a psychic disturbance, which creatures with Intelligence 0 or better can sense. Any such creature under observation can make a Sense Motive or Second Sight check, opposed by your Scrying check. Creatures with no supernatural abilities get the intense feeling of being watched. Adepts see a glowing or shadowy image of you. You also have a present familiarity for any creature that senses you for the purposes of that creature's powers, meaning they may affect you in return.

Time: Scrying is a full-round action.

SECOND SIGHT

You can sense the use and lingering effects of supernatural powers. Make a Second Sight check to detect powers in use in your vicinity, to sense an attempt at mental contact, or to detect and read the supernatural "signature" left behind by powers.

Sense Powers: The Narrator makes a Second Sight check for you in secret as a reaction whenever supernatural powers are used in your general area. The base Difficulty is 10 or the user's Psychic Shield check result, whichever is greater, and the Difficulty increases by +1 for every 10 feet between you and the user or subject of the power (whichever is closer). A successful result means you sense the power use. You also know the general direction and distance to the source of the power and its target. If you succeed by 5 or more, you know which power was used. If you succeed by 10 or more, you also recognize the user, if known to you.

Sense Mind Touch: You make a Second Sight check against the other adept's Mind Touch check to know when someone is trying to secretly get into mental contact with you. If you win the check, you sense the attempt, but you might not be able to avoid it (depending on the results of your Psychic Shield check and Will save).

Sense Supernatural Signature: If you also have the Object Reading power, you can sense old uses of supernatural powers in an area. The base Second Sight Difficulty is 15 to detect that powers were used in the area in the past, and 20 to determine what power was used and roughly when. It is Difficulty 25 to know exactly what or whom the power was used on. Sensing supernatural signatures is fatiguing.

Try Again: No.

Time: Sensing power use and mental contact are reactions, taking no time. Sensing signatures requires a full-round action.

SELF-SHAPING

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITES: BODY CONTROL RANK 8

You can reshape your body to assume the form of another creature. The new form must be a humanoid or animal, with a level no greater than your total level.

If you are slain or knocked unconscious while using this ability, you revert to your original form. You gain the Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores of the new form, but retain your own Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. You also gain the new form's speed and qualities, and you retain your own base combat bonus, saving throws, and skills (modified by your new ability scores).

You can freely designate the new form's cosmetic qualities (such as hair color, hair texture, and skin color, for example) within the normal ranges for a creature of that type. The new form's significant physical qualities (such as height, weight, and gender) are also under your control, but must fall within the norms for the new form's species. You are effectively disguised as an average member of that species. If you use this ability to create a disguise, you get a +10 bonus on your Disguise check.

Your equipment is not affected by the transformation. Any clothing or equipment that cannot be worn by your new form drops off. Likewise, when you return to your normal form, you have only what you are carrying or wearing. This usually leaves you naked if you were in animal form. At the Narrator's discretion, some supernatural items may disappear into your changed form, reappearing when you assume your normal form.

Self-Shaping is fatiguing, with a fatigue save Difficulty of 15. It requires a full-round action to undergo a transformation, during which you can do nothing else. The transformation lasts for one hour per level, but you can make an additional fatigue save to maintain a form for another hour per level.

Assuming a shape with an average species Intelligence lower than your species poses an additional danger: each hour you must make a Will saving throw (Difficulty 15) or lose a point of Intelligence. If your Intelligence score drops to the natural level for that species, you become that creature in mind, as well as body. The effect of your Self-Shaping becomes permanent, and your normal identity is lost. You remain trapped until someone else achieves a Difficulty 30 Mind Touch to reach and reawaken your normal self, allowing you to return to normal form.

Time: Self-Shaping is a full-round action, during which you can do nothing else. The power use lasts for 1 hour per level. To maintain it for another hour per level, make another fatigue save.

SENSE MINDS

You can determine the presence and location of other minds. Make a Difficulty 15 Sense Minds check to sense the presence of any creature with an Intelligence score within 30 feet of you. For every factor of 10 you extend your sensing radius, the Difficulty increases by 5.

SENSE MINDS	
Difficulty	Radius
15	30 feet
20	300 feet
25	3,000 feet (about one-half mile)
30	30,000 feet (about 5 miles)
35	300,000 feet (about 50 miles)
40	3,000,000 feet (about 500 miles)

With a successful check, you sense the presence of other minds, their approximate number, their general type (animal, humanoid, and so forth), and their approximate location. The larger the number of minds, the more general the information tends to be. Psychic Shield opposes Sense Minds. A Psychic Shield check greater than your Sense Minds check allows a creature to go unnoticed.

You can focus your attempt to Sense Minds on a particular place you can see, such as a building or island within range, for example, or even a planet seen from the bridge of a spaceship.

Time: Sense Minds is a move action.

SEVERANCE

FATIGUING, MENTAL CONTACT

PREREQUISITES: WARD RANK 13

You can remove another creature's supernatural powers. You must be in mental contact with the subject. Make a Ward check (Difficulty 30) as a full-round action to deprive the subject of powers. The target makes a Will saving throw against your power save Difficulty. If the check succeeds and the Will save fails, the subject loses use of all supernatural powers, while retaining knowledge of those abilities. The target gets an additional Will save each day to regain lost powers, and a use of Mind Shaping or another use of this power can reverse the effect (Difficulty 30). You can only take 10 or 20 on the Ward check if the target is helpless.

Time: Severance is a full-round action.

SLEEP

FATIGUING, MENTAL CONTACT

You can psychically put a target into a deep sleep. The target gets a Will saving throw. Success negates the effect. If the Will save fails, the creature falls instantly asleep and remains so for 1 minute per rank. Sleeping creatures are helpless. Slapping or any damage awakens them, but normal noise does not. Awakening the creature requires a standard action (an application of the aid action). Creatures that do not normally sleep are unaffected by this power.

Time: Sleep is a standard action. It lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute) per rank.

SUGGESTION

FATIGUING

You can implant suggestions into the minds of others. The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the activity sound reasonable. Asking a creature to shoot or stab itself, immolate itself, or do some other obviously harmful act automatically fails. However,



a suggestion that a pool of acid is actually pure water and that a quick dip would be refreshing is another matter.

If the target's Will saving throw fails, the suggested course of action is followed for up to 30 minutes per power rank, or until the course of action is complete, whichever comes first. You can also specify conditions that trigger a particular course of action, in which case the duration is counted from when the triggering event occurs. A very reasonable suggestion may impose a saving throw penalty of -1 or -2, at the Narrator's discretion.

Try Again: No. You can attempt to affect the same character after some time has passed, but not in the same scene.

Time: Suggestion is a full-round action. It lasts for 30 minutes per rank.

SUPERNATURAL SPEED

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: BODY CONTROL.

You can move at great speed in short bursts. When you use this feat, your movement speed is multiplied by your adept level for 1 round (6 seconds). This is considered running movement (a full-round action), and it is fatiguing (Difficulty 12). Supernatural speed also multiplies your jumping distances by half your adept level.

Time: Supernatural Speed is a free action.

SUPERNATURAL STRIKE

PREREQUISITE: IMPROVED STRIKE.

With this power, your unarmed attacks are considered supernatural weapons for overcoming the defenses of creatures vulnerable to such weapons.

Time: Supernatural Strike is always active.

SUPERNATURAL WEAPON

PREREQUISITE: WEAPON TRAINING OR COMBAT +3 OR GREATER

You can imbue any weapon you wield with supernatural power. The weapon is considered supernatural for overcoming the defenses of creatures vulnerable to such weapons. You must personally wield the weapon for it to gain this benefit.

Time: Supernatural Weapon is always active.

TELEPORT

FATIGUING

You can move instantly from one place to another without crossing the distance in between. Make a Teleport power check. The base Difficulty is 10, plus the familiarity of your destination. If you carry additional mass along with you, the Difficulty is based on the amount, as follows:

TELEPORT	
Difficulty	Mass
10	up to 20 lb.
15	50 lb.
20	100 lb.
25	250 lb.
30	500 lb.
35	1,000 lb.
40	2,000 lb.

You choose whether objects you are touching are carried along or left behind (allowing you to teleport out of things such as rope or manacles, or your clothes, for example). You cannot teleport only part of an object or creature. All the material must be touching you or another solid object that is touching you in order to be carried along. Creatures that do not wish to be teleported can make a Will save, with success meaning they're left behind. A failed power check means you don't go anywhere, but still suffer normal fatigue.

Time: Teleport is a move action.

TRUTH-READING

FATIGUING (SEE BELOW)

You can sense when someone is lying to you. When interacting with a creature of Intelligence -3 or higher, you automatically sense when the creature tells you a deliberate lie. You can do this a number of times equal to your Wisdom score in any given conversation. Detecting further lies in the same conversation is fatiguing (Difficulty 10, +1 per additional statement you verify; make the fatigue save at the end of the encounter). You do not detect half-truths, lies of omission, or things the creature believes are true (even if they are not).

An adept must activate this power as a free action before a given conversation in order to receive its benefit. Truth-Reading does not count towards the "1 hour time limit" for the cumulative modifier to the fatigue saves unless the adept pushes it to the point of fatigue.

VISIONS

You can get visions of the future, as if you were actually present at a particular future event. The visions you receive are by no means assured; the future can be changed by the actions of those in the present.

Spontaneous Visions: At the Narrator's discretion, you may receive a vision when you are in contact with a subject or when there is a momentous event approaching in the future. This vision can occur

while you are awake, yet spontaneous visions often take the form of dreams. You know when a dream is actually a vision, although you may not necessarily know what the vision means.

Danger Sense: Whenever you would normally be surprised in combat, you can make a Visions check (Difficulty 15). If successful, you receive a split-second warning; you are not surprised and can take an action during the surprise round.

The Narrator should make Visions checks secretly so the player doesn't know if a particular vision is accurate or not. Consult the table for the results of a vision, based on the Visions check, or choose a suitable result, based on the hero's Visions rank and the requirements of the story.

TRUTH READING

Difficulty	Result
10	A vague vision of the future that may be accurate.
15	An accurate glimpse of the future.
20	Awareness of how long before an event occurs.
25	Awareness of the people involved in a future event.
30	Awareness of the time, subjects, and location of a future event.
35	Near-complete knowledge of a future event and everything involving it.

Things seen in visions count as slightly familiar in terms of familiarity, possibly more if the vision was long or extremely accurate (in the Narrator's opinion).

Time: Visions is a full-round action (at least).

WARD

CONCENTRATION

You can create interference with other supernatural powers and even creatures. You can affect an area around you with a radius equal to your adept level times 5 feet. Alternatively, you can choose to focus your Ward against a single creature in your line of sight.

Anyone affected by your Ward must make an opposed check against the result of your Ward check to successfully use any powers. Powers with results less than yours fail; although, the users of the failed powers still suffer fatigue, if any. Adepts can choose to suffer a fatigue result, in addition to the normal fatigue of the power used, to gain a +5 bonus to overcome your Ward. If so, you can choose to suffer a fatigue result to reinforce your ward, forcing the subject to make a normal check to overcome it (without the bonus). This takes no actual time; it happens as part of the check to overcome the Ward.

When using the Ward power, an adept is not affected by his own Ward. Powers that are already in effect when an adept uses the Ward power require an opposed Power check to remain active.

Creature Ward: You can also use Ward to "hedge out" or ward off certain supernatural creatures. The Narrator decides what type of creatures you may ward, depending on the setting. Examples include undead, fey creatures, elementals, psychic or energy beings, demons (or other extraplanar entities), and so forth. Different types of supernatural powers may ward against different types of creatures. Any creature affected by your Ward must make a Will save against the result of your Ward check to pass the boundary of the ward (a radius of adept level x 5 feet). A creature that fails the save cannot cross the boundary so long as the ward is maintained, nor can it directly affect or influence anything within the bounds of the ward.

Time: Ward is a move action.

WATER SHAPING

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can shape and direct the flow of water.

Splash: You can cause as much as 10 gallons of water per Water Shaping rank to leap in an arc up to 10 feet per adept level. Hitting a creature with this watery arc requires a ranged attack roll. The creature must make a Fortitude save or be dazed for one round (taking no actions but defending normally). The splash also douses flames with a damage bonus less than your Water Shaping rank.

Shape Flow: You can direct the flow of currents, increasing or decreasing the speed of water vessels by 20 percent for every 5 points your check exceeds Difficulty 10 (at Difficulty 35 you can stop water vessels entirely or double their speed).

Lower Water: Waters lower by as much as 1 foot for every point your Water Shaping check exceeds Difficulty 10. The water lowers within an area with a 10-foot radius per adept level (a 5th-level adept can lower an area of water with a 50-foot radius). In extremely large and deep bodies of water, such as an ocean, this power creates a whirlpool that sweeps ships and similar craft downward, putting them at risk and making them unable to leave by normal movement for the duration.

Raise Water: Waters rise by as much as 1 foot for every point your Water Shaping check exceeds Difficulty 10. The water rises within an area with a 10-foot radius per adept level (a 5th-level adept can raise an area of water with a 50-foot radius). Boats raised in this way slide down the sides of the watery hump created. If the area includes riverbanks, a beach, or other nearby land, the water can spill over onto dry land, causing floods.

Time: Water Shaping is a standard action.

WEATHER SHAPING

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: WATER AND WIND SHAPING

You can shape the complex forces controlling the weather. More than just commanding the winds, you can change the weather to suit your will. A use of Weather Shaping affects an area with a diameter in miles equal to your adept level, centered on you.

It takes (30 - power bonus) minutes for the effects of Weather Shaping to manifest, with a minimum of one round (at power bonus +30). You can call forth weather appropriate to the climate and season of the area you are in.

WEATHER SHAPING

Season	Possible Weather
Spring	Tornado, thunderstorm, sleet storm, or hot weather
Summer	Torrential rain, heat wave, or hailstorm
Autumn	Hot or cold weather, fog, or sleet
Winter	Frigid cold, blizzard, or thaw
Late winter	Hurricane-force winds or early spring (coastal area)

You control the general tendencies of the weather, such as the direction and intensity of the wind. You cannot control specific effects of the weather—where lightning strikes, for example, or the exact path of a tornado. The weather continues as you left it for up to a number of hours equal to your adept level +4, or until you use a standard action to designate a new weather condition (which fully manifests 30 - power bonus minutes later). Weather Shaping can do away with weather conditions (naturally occurring or otherwise) as well as create them.

There is no power check Difficulty to achieve different weather effects. This is intentional, as the specific effects of the weather are not under your control.

WIND SHAPING

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can shape and direct the wind. You can make the wind blow in a certain direction and change its speed. The new wind direction and speed last as long as you choose to maintain them. Changing them requires another use of this power. You can affect the winds in a 40-foot radius per adept level. You can create an area of calm air, up to 80 feet in diameter, at the center of the winds, if you wish, and you can limit the winds to an area less than the maximum for your level.

Wind Direction: You may choose one of four basic wind patterns to function over the area.

1. A downdraft blows in all directions, from the center outward.
2. An updraft blows from all directions, from the outer edges toward the center.
3. A rotation causes winds to circle the center (clockwise or counterclockwise, as you wish).
4. A blast causes the winds to blow in one direction across the entire area, from one side to the other.

Wind Speed: With a Wind Shaping check, you can increase or decrease the wind's speed by one level for every 5 points you exceed Difficulty 10. Each round, on your turn, anyone in the area must make a Fortitude save or suffer the effects of the current wind speed. There are seven wind speed levels:

- *Light Wind:* A gentle breeze, having no game effect.
- *Moderate Wind:* A steady wind that extinguishes small, unprotected flames, like candles, on a d20 roll of 11 or higher.
- *Strong Wind:* Gusts that automatically extinguish unprotected flames (candles, torches, and the like). Such gusts impose a -2 penalty on ranged attack rolls and Notice checks for sounds. Strong winds knock down Tiny and smaller creatures. Flying creatures are blown backwards a short distance. A strong wind can speed or slow sailing vessels by 50 percent.
- *Severe Wind:* In addition to automatically extinguishing any unprotected flames, winds of this magnitude cause protected flames (such as in lanterns) to dance wildly and have a chance (11 or higher on a d20 roll) of

extinguishing them. Ranged weapon attacks and Notice checks are at a -4 penalty. Severe winds blow Tiny and smaller creatures back a short distance and knock down Small creatures. Medium creatures are unable to move forward against the force of the wind.

- *Windstorm:* Powerful enough to bring down branches, if not whole trees, windstorms automatically extinguish unprotected flames, and blow out protected ones on a d20 roll of 6 or higher. Ranged weapon attacks are impossible, and even siege weapons have a -4 penalty on attack rolls. Notice checks to listen are at a -8 penalty due to the howling wind. Windstorms blow away Small and smaller creatures, knock down Medium ones, and check the forward movement of Large creatures.
- *Hurricane-Force Wind:* All flames are extinguished. Ranged attacks are impossible (except with siege weapons, which have a -8 penalty on attack rolls). Notice checks to listen are impossible; all anyone can hear is the roaring of the wind. Hurricane-force winds often fell trees. These winds blow away Medium and smaller creatures, knock down Large ones, and check Huge creatures.
- *Tornado:* All flames are extinguished. All ranged attacks are impossible (even with siege weapons), as are Notice checks to hear anything. Instead of being blown away, Large and smaller creatures who fail their Fortitude saves are sucked toward the tornado. Those who come in contact with the actual funnel cloud are picked up and whirled around for 1-10 rounds (d20/2), taking +12 damage per round, before being violently expelled (falling damage may also apply). Huge creatures are knocked down, and Gargantuan creatures are checked and unable to move forward. While a tornado's rotational speed can be as great as 300 miles per hour, the funnel itself moves forward at an average of 30 miles per hour (roughly 250 feet per round). A tornado uproots trees, destroys buildings, and causes other similar forms of devastation.

Time: Wind Shaping is a full-round action.

WIND WALK

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

PREREQUISITES: WIND SHAPING

You can "walk" on air at a speed of 5 feet times your power rank, with perfect maneuverability. The effect ends when your feet touch the ground. Wind Walk is fatiguing (make the fatigue save when your use of this ability ends). If you stop maintaining the power for any reason, you fall.



CHAPTER FIVE: EQUIPMENT

THIS CHAPTER DESCRIBES THE VARIOUS WEAPONS, ARMOR, TOOLS, AND OTHER EQUIPMENT **TRUE20** HEROES USE IN THEIR ADVENTURES.

IT ALSO LOOKS AT HANDLING WEALTH AND SPENDING FOR HEROES, AND AT VARIOUS SORTS OF SUPERNATURAL EQUIPMENT, WHICH WORKS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SUPERNATURAL POWERS FROM CHAPTER FOUR AND DEALS WITH SOME CREATURE ABILITIES IN CHAPTER EIGHT.



WEALTH

Heroes have a *Wealth score*, a trait reflecting their buying power, a composite of available cash, credit, and income. The Wealth score serves as the basis for Wealth checks, used to purchase goods and services. Assume a *True20* hero owns at least one outfit of normal clothes, if not several. Other items and equipment are acquired using the character's Wealth score.

A hero's starting Wealth score is +5 plus the hero's Charisma score. The Wealthy feat grants a +4 bonus to Wealth.

Wealth Score = 5 + Charisma (+4 per Wealthy feat)

WEALTH SCORE

Over the course of play, the hero's Wealth score may decrease as the hero purchases expensive items and increase as the hero gains levels. A hero's Wealth score can never fall below +0, but there is no limit to how high the Wealth score can increase.

Since Wealth is an abstract concept, it's sometimes difficult to determine how financially well off a character is. To get a general sense of how wealthy a hero is, check the **Wealth Score** table.

WEALTH SCORE	
Wealth Score	Financial Condition
+0	Impoverished or in debt
+1 to +4	Struggling
+5 to +10	Middle class
+11 to +15	Affluent
+16 to +20	Wealthy
+21 to +30	Rich
+31 or higher	Very rich

MAKING PURCHASES

Wealth bonus reflects your buying power. Every item and service has a cost, which is the Wealth check Difficulty; the higher the cost, the more expensive the item. To purchase something, make a Wealth check against the purchase Difficulty. The Narrator sets the Wealth check Difficulty for any particular purchase.

SAMPLE WEALTH DIFFICULTIES	
Item	Cost
Common household item	4-5
Casual clothing	8
Cell phone	9
Expensive clothing	12-15
Tool kit	7-14
Plane ticket	14
New computer	22
New car	26+
House	30
Mansion	36

THE WEALTH CHECK

A Wealth check is a d20 roll plus your current Wealth bonus. Wealth bonus is fluid; it increases as you gain Wealth and decreases as you make purchases.

- If you succeed on the Wealth check, you purchase the item. If you fail, you can't afford the item at this time.
- If your current Wealth bonus is equal to or greater than the Difficulty, you automatically succeed.
- If you successfully purchase an item with a purchase Difficulty higher than your current Wealth bonus, your Wealth bonus decreases by 1 point for every 5 points the purchase Difficulty is higher than your current Wealth bonus (1 point for 1-5 points higher, 2 points for 6-10 points higher, etc.).

TRY AGAIN

You can try again if you fail a Wealth check, but not until the character has spent an additional number of hours shopping equal to the purchase Difficulty of the object or service.

TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

You can take 10 or take 20 when making a Wealth check. Taking 20 requires twenty times longer than normal. (You're shopping around for the best price.)

SHOPPING AND TIME

Buying less common items generally takes a number of hours equal to the purchase Difficulty of the item, reflecting the time needed to locate the item and close the deal. Getting a license or buying a legally restricted item also increases the time needed to make purchases.

FINANCIAL AID

You can make an aid attempt (Difficulty 10) to help someone else purchase an item. If the attempt is successful, you provide the purchaser with a bonus on the Wealth check. If you aid a Wealth check for an item with a purchase Difficulty higher than your current Wealth bonus, it decreases as normal.

LOSING WEALTH

Any time you purchase something with a cost greater than your current Wealth score or something with a cost of 15 or higher, your Wealth score decreases. How much the Wealth score is reduced depends on how expensive the item is. Your Wealth score only goes down if you successfully buy something. If you attempt to buy something and fail, your Wealth score is unaffected.

Item Cost	Wealth Score Decrease
15 or higher	-1
1-10 points higher than current Wealth score	-1
11-15 points higher than current Wealth score	-2
16 or more points higher than current Wealth Score	-3

If you successfully purchase an item with a purchase Difficulty higher than your current Wealth bonus, your wealth bonus decreases by 1 if the Difficulty is 1-10 points higher than your Wealth bonus, by 2 if the Difficulty is 11-15 points higher, and by 3 if the Difficulty is 16 or more points higher..

GAINING WEALTH

A hero typically gains Wealth when advancing in level, using his professional skill to earn it, or as a reward for accomplishing some task or quest.



PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Characters use their skills to earn a living. A skill used to earn Wealth is called a *professional skill*. The particular skill depends on the character's trade or profession. For example, a diplomat or courtier uses Diplomacy as a professional skill, while a smith or carpenter uses Craft, a con artist uses Bluff, a minstrel uses Perform, and so forth. Discuss with the Narrator what skill would be appropriate for your hero's profession, which can change, at the Narrator's discretion, as your character moves from one profession to another.

Characters use professional skills to improve their Wealth. You make a professional skill check to improve your Wealth score every time you attain a new level. The Difficulty is your current Wealth score. If you succeed, your Wealth score increases by +1. For every 5 points the check result exceeds the Difficulty, your Wealth score increases by an additional +1. You can't take 10 or 20 when making a professional skill check to improve your Wealth score.

Your rank in your current professional skill also automatically adds to the Wealth score increase you receive upon gaining a new level. See the accompanying table for details. (This bonus is accounted for in a character's starting Wealth score of +5.)

PROFESSION-BASED WEALTH

Ranks	Wealth Score Increase
1–5	+1
6–10	+2
11–15	+3
16–20	+4
21–23	+5

Example: Lady Aris is a negotiator (and 3rd-level expert) with Wealth +13 and Diplomacy +6 (her professional skill). When she reaches 4th level, her Diplomacy increases to +7, and she makes a Diplomacy check to see if her Wealth improves from all her careful negotiation. The

Difficulty is 13, her current Wealth score. On a result of 13 or more, her Wealth increases to +16 (+1 for succeeding on the check, +2 for having 7 ranks in her professional skill). For every 5 points the check exceeds 13 (at 18, 23, and so forth), her Wealth increases an additional +1.

WEALTH AWARDS

Adventuring may result in characters finding valuable items or receiving financial rewards. In such cases, the benefit translates into a Wealth award determined by the Narrator. Generally, Wealth awards are limited to no more than a +4 increase to Wealth, and are usually less, around +1 or +2. The **Selling Things** rules (following) can also be used, if the reward's exact Cost is known.

EQUIPPING YOUR HERO

When buying your hero's starting equipment, you may wish to follow these basic guidelines to simplify matters. List all the equipment you want your hero to have. Purchase all the items that won't reduce your hero's Wealth score. Then purchase the remaining items, starting with the most expensive (highest purchase Difficulty) to the least expensive. This ensures your hero's Wealth will go as far as possible.

SELLING THINGS

To sell something, determine its sale value. Assuming the item is undamaged and in working order, the sale value is equal to the item's purchase cost (as if bought new) minus 3.

Selling something can provide an increase to your Wealth score. The increase is the same amount as the Wealth score loss you would experience if you purchased an object with a cost equal to the sale value.

Regardless of your current Wealth score, your Wealth increases by 1 whenever you sell an object with a sale value of 15 or higher. If you sell something with a sale value less than or equal to your current Wealth score, and the sale value is 14 or lower, you gain nothing (the income from the sale is negligible).

HIGHER LEVEL CHARACTERS AND WEALTH

When creating characters above 1st-level, the Narrator may wish to simply assign the new character the base starting Wealth score with a +1 bonus per additional level to reflect overall skills, success, and accumulation of resources. So a higher-level character's starting Wealth would be $4 + \text{Charisma} + \text{level}$ (+4 per Wealthy feat). Once the character enters play, this Wealth score increases or decreases normally.

Selling objects illegally usually requires contacts in the black market and reduces the sale value by an additional 3. This takes a number of hours equal to the normal cost of the item.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

The Narrator may rule some items are simply not available to characters or they must pay more (increasing the Wealth check Difficulty). This may include certain kinds of weapons, vehicles, and anything else the Narrator feels should be limited in the campaign.

MASTERWORK ITEMS

Some items are especially well-made, custom-built, or otherwise superior to normal equipment. These masterwork items grant a bonus greater than a normal item, usually a +1 with an attack roll or +2 with a check made with the item. Masterwork quality adds +5 to the item's cost. At the Narrator's discretion, superior masterwork items may grant higher bonuses, with a correspondingly greater cost.

CONCEALED ITEMS

Characters may attempt to conceal items on their person. It's assumed the character is wearing clothing offering places to conceal things. To conceal a weapon or other object, make a Sleight of Hand check. If you conceal an object before heading out into public you can usually take 10 unless you are rushed, trying to conceal it when others might see, or under other unusual constraints. Sleight of Hand can be used untrained in this instance, but you must take 10 to do so.

SIZE AND CONCEALMENT

The object's size affects the check result, as shown on the **Concealing Weapons and Objects** table. The type of holster used or clothing worn, and any attempt to make a weapon easier to draw, can also affect the check.

CONCEALING WEAPONS AND OBJECTS

Condition	Sleight of Hand Modifer
Size of Weapon or Object	
Fine	+12
Diminutive	+8
Tiny	+4
Small	+0
Medium-size	-4
Large	-8
Huge or larger	can't conceal
Clothing is tight or small	-4
Clothing especially loose or bulky	+2
Clothing specifically modified for concealing object	+2
Weapon in a concealed holster	+4
Weapon can be drawn normally	-2
Weapon can be drawn as free action with Quick Draw feat	-4

NOTICING CONCEALED ITEMS

Detecting a concealed weapon or other object requires a Notice check. The Difficulty varies: If the target made a roll when concealing an object, the Difficulty of the check is the target's Sleight of Hand check total. If the target made no effort to conceal the object, then the base Difficulty is 10, modified normally. An observer attempting to Notice a concealed object receives a -1 penalty for every 10 feet distance to the target, and a -5 penalty if distracted.

Putting someone down for a concealed object requires a similar check. However, the skill employed is Search, and the searcher gets a +4 bonus for the hands-on act of frisking the target. Searchers typically take 10 or take 20 for pat-down searches. Some equipment may also offer bonuses under certain circumstances (a metal detector offers a bonus to Search checks to find metal objects, for example).

NOTICING CONCEALED ARMOR

Concealable armor can be worn under clothing if the wearer wants it to go unnoticed. Don't use the modifiers from the **Concealing Weapons and Objects** table when wearing concealable armor. Instead, anyone trying to notice the armor must make a Notice check (Difficulty 20).

GENERAL EQUIPMENT

Apart from what an item is actually for, equipment in *True20* is primarily defined by its size and cost, as shown on the **General Equipment** table.

- Size:** The size of a piece of equipment helps to determine how easy it is to conceal, and also indicates whether using the object requires one hand or two. In general, a character needs only one hand to use any objects of his size category or smaller.
- Cost:** This is the purchase Difficulty of the Wealth check to acquire the item. Masterwork equipment of the same type has an increased cost (see **Masterwork Equipment** in this chapter).

Some of the equipment found on the **General Equipment** table is described in the following pages, along with any special benefits it confers on the user.

ADVENTURING GEAR

These include items you would use while camping or exploring and are limited to equipment available in a fairly low-tech (i.e., medieval) setting. Modern adventuring gear is made from modern materials (e.g., backpacks and tents made of nylon rather than leather and canvas, lanterns burning kerosene rather than lamp oil, etc.).

CANDLE

A candle dimly illuminates a 5-foot radius and burns for 1 hour.

CROWBAR

A crowbar grants a +2 bonus on Strength checks for tasks using it. If used in combat, treat a crowbar as a one-handed improvised weapon that deals bludgeoning damage like a club.

ADVENTURING GEAR							
Adventuring Gear	Size	Cost	Weight	Adventuring Gear	Size	Cost	Weight
Backpack (empty)	Med	4	2 lb.	Lantern, hooded	Small	8	2 lb.
Bedroll	Med	1	5 lb.	Rations, trail (per day)	Small	1	1 lb.
Blanket, winter	Small	2	3 lb.	Rope, hempen (50 ft.)	Med	2	10 lb.
Candles, dozen	Diminutive	1	—	Rope, silk (50 ft.)	Small	9	5 lb.
Canvas (sq. yd.)	Small	1	1 lb.	Spyglass	Diminutive	25	1 lb.
Crowbar	Small	3	5 lb.	Tent	Med	9	20 lb.
Grappling hook	Small	2	4 lb.	Toolkit, basic	Small	7	1 lb.
Hammer	Small	1	2 lb.	Toolkit, masterwork	Small	14	1 lb.
Ladder, 10-foot	Large	1	20 lb.	Torch	Small	0	1 lb.
Lantern, bullseye	Small	10	3 lb.	Waterskin	Small	2	4 lb.
ELECTRONICS				SURVEILLANCE GEAR			
Electronics	Size	Cost	Weight	Surveillance Gear	Size	Cost	Weight
Camera	Tiny	14	1 lb.	Binoculars	Small	7	2 lb.
Cell Phone	Diminutive	9	—	Concealable Microphone	Fine	13	—
Commlink	Fine	7	—	Mini-Tracer	Fine	11	—
Computer				Night Vision Goggles	Small	17	3 lb.
Desktop	Large	22	10 lb.	Parabolic Microphone	Small	17	2 lb.
Laptop	Med	23	5 lb.	LODGING			
PDA	Tiny	16	.5 lb.	Lodging	Size	Cost	Weight
Digital Audio Recorder	Tiny	10	1 lb.	Simple	—	7	—
Video Camera	Small	16	2 lb.	Moderate	—	9	—
SURVIVAL GEAR				Upscale	—	11	—
Survival Gear	Size	Cost	Weight	TRANSPORTATION			
Camo Clothing	Medium	9	5 lb.	Transportation	Size	Cost	Weight
Flash Goggles	Tiny	15	.5 lb.	Ship's passage	—	3	—
Flashlight	Tiny	4	1 lb.	Airfare	—	14	—
Gas Mask	Small	13	5 lb.	Car rental	—	6	—
GPS Receiver	Tiny	15	1 lb.	MOUNTS AND RELATED GEAR			
Multi-tool	Tiny	9	.5 lb.	Mounts and Related Gear	Size	Cost	Weight
Rebreather	Tiny	13	2 lb.	Barding			
SCUBA Gear	Large	17	20 lb.	Medium creature	Med	+2	x1
CLOTHING				Large creature	Large	+4	x2
Clothing	Size	Cost	Weight	Bit and bridle	Small	4	1 lb.
Casual clothing	Medium	8	2 lb.	Dog, guard (see page 136)	Small	13	
Fine clothing	Medium	12	3 lb.	Donkey or mule	Large	9	
Formal clothing	Medium	15	3 lb.	Feed (per day)	Small	0	10 lb.
MEALS				Horses (see page 138)			
Meals	Size	Cost	Weight	Horse	Large	20	
Simple	—	2	—	Pony	Med	13	
Restaurant	—	4	—	Warhorse	Large	22	
Upscale	—	7	—	Saddle			
CRIMINAL GEAR				Military	Med	12	30 lb.
Criminal Gear	Size	Cost	Weight	Pack	Med	7	15 lb.
Caltrops	Small	5	2 lb.	Riding	Med	10	25 lb.
Handcuffs	Tiny	7	1 lb.	Saddlebags	Med	6	8 lb.
Lock release gun	Tiny	12	.5 lb.	Stabling (per day)	—	1	

GRAPPLING HOOK

Throwing a grappling hook successfully requires a Climb check or ranged attack roll (Difficulty 10, +2 per 10 feet of distance thrown).

HAMMER

If a hammer is used in combat, treat it as a one-handed improvised weapon that deals bludgeoning damage equal to brass knuckles.

LANTERN, BULLSEYE

A bullseye lantern provides clear illumination in a 60-foot cone and shadowy illumination in a 120-foot cone. A cone emanates from a point to the listed distance, where it is as wide as the cone is long. It burns for 6 hours on a pint of oil. You can carry a bullseye lantern in one hand.

LANTERN, HOODED

A hooded lantern clearly illuminates a 30-foot radius and provides shadowy illumination in a 60-foot radius. It burns for 6 hours on a pint of oil. You can carry a hooded lantern in one hand.

ROPE, HEMPEN

This rope has Toughness 3.

ROPE, SILK

This rope has Toughness 4. It is so supple it provides a +2 bonus on checks to use it.

SPYGLASS

Objects viewed through a spyglass are magnified to twice their size.

TOOLKITS

Various skills require tools. Disable Device requires lockpicking and electronics tools, for example, while Medicine requires a medical kit. Characters attempting a task without the proper tools have a -4 penalty on their skill check. Masterwork toolkits cost more but provide a +2 bonus on skill checks using them.

TORCH

A torch burns for 1 hour, clearly illuminating a 20-foot radius and providing shadowy illumination out to a 40-foot radius. If a torch is used in combat, treat it as a one-handed improvised weapon that deals +0 bludgeoning damage, plus the possibility of setting the target on fire (see **Chapter Six**).

ELECTRONICS

Computers and electronics are common in the modern world. Narrators should note that most of these devices are fairly delicate (Toughness 5 or less) and vulnerable to electricity, radiation, and powerful magnetic fields, which can short them out entirely.

CAMERA

A digital or film camera is used for taking still images. Most cameras have a capacity of 24 or 36 images and you can use one in conjunction with the Craft (visual art) skill.

CELL PHONE

A small handheld or headset unit used for communication. The battery lasts for approximately 24 hours before it needs to be recharged.

COMMLINK

A commlink is a tiny, button-sized device for radio communication with an effective range of about a mile (longer if patched into the cellular network or a similar network). Many hero (and villain) teams use commlinks.

COMPUTER

A computer includes keyboard, mouse, monitor, CD drive, printer, modem, and other standard peripherals, and may include things like a scanner at the Narrator's discretion. You need a computer to make Computers skill checks and do things like searching the Internet (to take 20 on a Knowledge skill check). Masterwork computers represent upgrade packages with faster processors, better software, and so forth.

DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDER

These tiny recorders, about the size of a deck of playing cards, can record up to eight hours of audio and can be connected to a computer to download the digital recording. Digital audio recorders don't have extremely sensitive microphones; they only pick up sounds within 10 feet.

PDA

Personal digital assistants or "palmtops" are handy tools for storing data. They can be linked to a notebook or desktop computer to move files back and forth.

VIDEO CAMERA

This is a hand-held camera that records video and audio on tape or digitally, with a capacity of about 6 hours of footage.

CRIMINAL GEAR

This equipment is most often used by criminals or to catch criminals.

CALTROPS

Caltrops are four-pronged metal spikes designed so one prong points up when the caltrop rests on a surface. You can scatter caltrops on the ground to injure opponents, or at least slow them down. One bag of twenty-five caltrops covers up to a 5-ft.-by-5 ft. area. Each time someone moves through an area containing caltrops at any rate greater than half speed, or each round someone spends fighting in such an area, the caltrops make an attack roll (attack bonus +0). If hit, the character must make a Toughness saving throw (Difficulty 15). Any injury forces the character to move at half speed on foot until the damage is eliminated.

HANDCUFFS

Handcuffs are restraints designed to lock two limbs—normally the wrists—of a prisoner together. They fit any medium or small humanoid. Handcuffs can only be placed on a pinned, helpless, or unresisting target. Steel cuffs have Toughness 10 and require a Disable Device check (Difficulty 25) or Escape Artist check (Difficulty 35) to remove without the key.

LOCK RELEASE GUN

This small, pistol-like device automatically disables cheap and average mechanical locks operated by standard keys (no Disable Device check necessary). It does not affect other locks.

SURVEILLANCE GEAR

Heroes often use surveillance gear to keep tabs on criminals and their activities.

BINOCULARS

Standard binoculars reduce the range penalty for visual Notice checks to -1 for every 50 feet (instead of -1 for every 10 feet). Using binoculars for Notice checks takes five times as long as making the check unaided.

CONCEALABLE MICROPHONE

This tiny receiver is usable as a listening device. It has a broadcast range of about a mile. It requires a Search check against the results of the Stealth or Sleight of Hand check used to conceal the microphone to find it. Assume character hiding it took 20 on the check under most circumstances.

MINI-TRACER

This tiny radio transmitter has an adhesive backing. It requires a successful attack roll to plant a tracer on a target (or a Sleight of Hand check to plant it without the target's knowledge). Noticing the tracer is a Difficulty 20 Notice check (or the results of the character's Sleight of Hand check, whichever is higher). The tracer has a transmission range of about 2 miles.

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

Night vision goggles use passive light gathering to improve vision in near-dark conditions. They grant the user darkvision (see **Darkvision**, page 131)—but because of the restricted field of view and lack of depth perception these goggles provide, they impose a -4 penalty on all Notice and Search checks made while wearing them.

Night vision goggles must have at least a little light to operate. A cloudy night provides sufficient ambient light, but a pitch-black cave or a sealed room doesn't. For situations of total darkness, the goggles come with an infrared illuminator that, when switched on, operates like a flashlight visible only to the wearer (or anyone else with IR vision).

PARABOLIC MICROPHONE

This apparatus has a gun-like microphone with an attached set of headphones. A parabolic mike reduces the range penalty for Notice checks to -1 for every 50 feet (instead of -1 for every 10 feet). Using a parabolic microphone for Notice checks takes five times as long as making the check unaided.

SURVIVAL GEAR

CAMO CLOTHING

Clothing in the right camouflage pattern for the environment grants a +5 bonus on Stealth checks in that environment. Patterns include foliage, desert, urban, and arctic.

FLASH GOGGLES

These darkly-tinted eye-coverings provide optic protection against blinding light, granting a +5 save bonus against attacks involving bright light.

FLASHLIGHT

Flashlights negate penalties for darkness within their illuminated areas. The standard flashlight projects a beam 30 feet long and 15 feet across at its end.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

This portable apparatus uses a chemical spray to extinguish small fires. The typical fire extinguisher ejects enough extinguishing chemicals to put out a fire in a 10-by-10-foot area as a move action. It contains enough material for two such uses.

GAS MASK

This apparatus covers the face and connects to a chemical air filter canister to protect the lungs and eyes from toxic gases. It provides total immunity to eye and lung irritants. The filter canister lasts for 12 hours of use. Changing the filter is a move action.



GPS RECEIVER

Global positioning system (GPS) receivers use signals from GPS satellites to determine the receiver's location to within a few dozen feet. A GPS receiver grants its user a +5 equipment bonus on Survival checks to navigate, but because the receiver must be able to pick up satellite signals, it only works outdoors.

MULTI-TOOL

This device contains several different screwdrivers, a knife blade or two, can opener, bottle opener, file, short ruler, scissors, tweezers, and wire cutters. The whole thing unfolds into a handy pair of pliers. A multi-tool can lessen the penalty for making Craft (mechanical), Craft (electronic), or Craft (structural) checks without appropriate tools to -2 instead of the normal -4. The tool is useful for certain tasks, as determined by the Narrator, but may not be useful in all situations.

REBREATHER

This is a small cylinder that fits over the mouth and provides two minutes (20 rounds) of oxygen, during which the character does not need to make suffocation checks.

SCUBA GEAR

This is a back-mounted oxygen cylinder and facemask, used for diving. SCUBA (Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus) gear provides two hours of oxygen, and characters using it do not need to make checks for suffocation unless the gear is damaged or disabled.

CLOTHING

Generally, you don't have to worry about outfitting your hero with normal, everyday clothing. Fine attire consists of high-quality clothing suitable for business, the sort worn by a higher-class, such as designer attire, or court clothes for a medieval setting. Formal attire is that worn by the wealthy and well-to-do for formal occasions.



MOUNTS AND RELATED GEAR

BARDING, MEDIUM AND LARGE CREATURE

Barding is a type of armor covering the head, neck, chest, body, and possibly legs of a horse or other mount. Barding made of medium or heavy armor provides better protection than light barding, but at the expense of speed. Barding can be made of any of the armor types found on the **Armor and Shields** table.

Armor for a mount costs the same as regular armor, +2 for a medium mount, +4 for a large one. Medium or heavy barding slows a mount wearing it, as shown on the following table.

A barded animal cannot carry any load other than a rider and normal saddlebags.

Base Speed			
Barding	(40 ft.)	(50 ft.)	(60 ft.)
Medium	30 ft.	35 ft.	40 ft.
Heavy*	30 ft.	35 ft.	40 ft.

* A mount wearing heavy armor moves at triple its normal speed when running, instead of quadruple.

DONKEY OR MULE

Donkeys and mules are stolid in the face of danger, hardy, surefooted, and capable of carrying heavy loads over vast distances. Unlike a horse, a donkey or a mule is willing (though not eager) to enter dungeons and other strange or threatening places.

FEED

Horses, donkeys, mules, and ponies can graze to sustain themselves, but providing feed for them is much better.

HORSE

A horse is suitable as a mount for a Medium rider. Warhorses can be ridden easily into combat. Other horses are hard to control in combat because they're not trained for it. It requires a move action and a Difficulty 20 Ride check each round to control a horse that's not trained for combat. If the check succeeds, you can take a standard action normally. If it fails, the move action becomes a full-round action and you cannot do anything except keep the horse under control until your next round.

PONY

A pony is suitable as a mount for a Small rider (generally only a child). They're more commonly used as beasts of burden in mountainous regions.

SADDLE, MILITARY

A military saddle braces the rider, providing a +2 bonus on Ride checks related to staying in the saddle. If you're knocked unconscious while in a military saddle, you have a 75 percent chance to stay in the saddle (a 6 or higher on a d20 roll, compared to 11 or higher for a riding saddle).

SADDLE, PACK

A pack saddle holds gear and supplies, not a rider. It holds as much gear as the mount can carry.

SADDLE, RIDING

The standard riding saddle supports a rider.

WEAPONS

Heroes often need weapons to get the job done, and warriors, in particular, are masters of various forms of combat. The weapons in this section range from fairly primitive blades and bludgeons found in low-tech settings to firearms, tasers, and futuristic beam weapons. The Narrator should set availability of weapons according to the setting.

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage. Melee weapons have the following traits:

- **Category:** Melee weapons are categorized as simple, martial, and exotic.
- **Damage:** This is the damage dealt by the weapon on a successful hit. Melee and thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength to this damage.

• **Critical:** The entry in this column notes how the weapon is used with the rules for critical hits. When your character scores a critical hit, increase the damage as indicated.

+3: The weapon deals +3 damage on a critical hit.

+4: The weapon deals +4 damage on a critical hit.

+5: The weapon deals +5 damage on a critical hit.

19-20/+3: The weapon scores a threat on a natural roll of 19 or 20 (instead of just 20) and deals +3 damage on a critical hit.

18-20/+3: The weapon scores a threat on a natural roll of 18, 19, or 20 (instead of just 20) and deals +3 damage on a critical hit.

• **Damage Descriptor:** Melee weapon damage is classified as bludgeoning (weapons with a blunt striking surface, like a club), piercing (weapons with a sharp point), and slashing (weapons with a sharp edge). Some foes may be resistant or immune to some types of damage.

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Cost
Simple Weapons							
Brass knuckles	+1	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Tiny	1 lb.	5
Club	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Med	3 lb.	4
Knife	+1	19-20/+3	Piercing	10 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	7
Pepper spray	—	—	Chemical	—	Tiny	—	5
Quarterstaff	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Large	4 lb.	4
Sap	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Small	3 lb.	2
Stun gun	Stun	—	Electricity	—	Tiny	1 lb.	5
Tonfa	+1	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Med	2 lb.	6
Martial Weapons							
Battleaxe	+3	20/+4	Slashing	—	Med	6 lb.	9
Lance*	+3	20/+4	Piercing	—	Large	10 lb.	9
Sword	+3	19-20/+3	Slashing	—	Med	4 lb.	11
Spear*	+3	19-20/+4	Piercing	20 ft.	Large	6 lb.	6
Warhammer	+3	20/+4	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Med	5 lb.	6
Exotic Weapons							
Chain	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Large	10 lb.	5
Chainsaw	+6	20/+4	Slashing	—	Large	10 lb.	9
Nunchaku	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Small	2 lb.	3
Whip*	+0	20/+3	Bludgeoning	15 ft.	Small	2 lb.	4

Weapons marked with an asterisk (*) can be used to strike an opponent up to 10 feet away. The exception is the whip, which can be used to strike an opponent up to 15 feet away.

- **Range Increment:** Melee weapons designed for throwing can also be used to make ranged attacks. Thrown weapons have a range increment just as other ranged weapons do—but the maximum range for a thrown weapon is five range increments. Any attack at less than the given range increment is not penalized for range. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative -2 penalty on the attack roll.
- **Size:** Size categories for weapons and other objects are defined differently from the size categories for creatures. The relationship between a weapon's size and its wielder's size defines whether it can be used one-handed, if it requires two hands, and if it's a light weapon. A Medium or smaller weapon can be used one-handed or two-handed. A Large weapon requires two hands.
- **Cost:** This is the weapon's purchase Difficulty.

attack hits, the target makes a Reflex save (Difficulty 15). Failure means the target is blinded. A blinded target makes a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15) each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per save. A target blinded by pepper spray must also make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15). On a failure, the target is stunned. Characters get a new Fortitude save each round to recover from both effects, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

QUARTERSTAFF

This is any fighting staff between four and six feet long, including the bo staff used in martial arts.

SAP

A sap is a bludgeoning weapon intended to knock out targets without permanently injuring them. Saps inflict non-lethal damage.

STUN GUN

A stun gun hits its target with a powerful charge of electricity, requiring a Fortitude save (Difficulty 17) to avoid being stunned. Stunned characters get a new Fortitude save each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

TONFA

Police officers often carry and use a tonfa to subdue criminals. It's also a common martial arts weapon.

MARTIAL MELEE WEAPONS**BATTLEAXE**

This is a heavy-bladed axe that can be wielded with one or two hands.

SWORD

A sword is a blade between 18 and 30 or more inches in length, single or double-edged. It includes longswords, katanas, sabers, scimitars, and similar weapons.

SIMPLE MELEE WEAPONS**BRASS KNUCKLES**

Pieces of molded metal fitting over the fingers, brass knuckles allow you to do +1 damage with your unarmed strikes. They include similar items like armored gauntlets.

CLUB

A number of blunt weapons used to strike, including nightsticks, batons, light maces, and similar bludgeoning weapons are classified as clubs.

KNIFE

A knife is a bladed weapon with a length less than 18 inches or so. This includes daggers, stilettos, sais, switchblades, bowie knives, and hunting knives, among others.

PEPPER SPRAY

This is a liquid sprayed in a target's face at close range to blind them. Pepper spray combines a visual Dazzle effect with a Stun effect. If the

SPEAR

A spear is a bladed pole-arm. Most spears can also be thrown.

WARHAMMER

A warhammer is a heavy hammer or mace that can be wielded with one or two hands. Warhammers can also be thrown.

EXOTIC MELEE WEAPONS

CHAIN

You can wield a weighted chain to strike a target up to 10 ft. away. You can use it to make trip attacks and to disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats (and its benefits stack if you already have those feats).

CHAINSAW

A chainsaw is a tool that sometimes sees use as a weapon, particularly against zombies and other slasher-flick monsters. Since the damage is done by the powered chain, you do not add your Strength bonus to a chainsaw's damage.

NUNCHAKU

This is a popular martial arts weapon, made of two wooden shafts connected by a short length of rope or chain.

WHIP

A whip can strike targets up to 15 ft. away. You can use it to make trip attacks and to disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats. Its benefits stack if you already have those feats.

RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged weapons include both thrown weapons and projectile weapons. Thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage. A thrown weapon has a maximum range of five increments. Projectile weapons include bows, crossbows, and guns, as well as energy weapons.

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Many projectile weapons (machine pistols, submachine guns, and assault rifles in particular) are capable of automatic fire. See **Autofire** in **Chapter Six** for details on how this works in combat.

HOLDOUT PISTOL

This is a low-caliber, easily concealed pistol, typically used as a back-up or secondary weapon.

LIGHT PISTOL

A common handgun, light pistols are found in the hands of police officers and criminals alike.

HEAVY PISTOL

A high-caliber handgun, heavy pistols are usually used by those who want a lot of stopping power.

MACHINE PISTOL

A small automatic weapon, machine pistols are usable in one hand. Machine pistols are autofire weapons.

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage Bonus	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Cost
Projectile Weapons (Firearms)							
Hold-out pistol	+2	20/+3	Ballistic	20 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	14
Light pistol	+3	20/+3	Ballistic	30 ft.	Small	2 lb.	16
Heavy pistol	+4	20/+3	Ballistic	40 ft.	Medium	3 lb.	18
Machine pistol	+3	20/+3	Ballistic, Autofire	30 ft.	Medium	4 lb.	17
Submachine gun	+4	20/+3	Ballistic, Autofire	40 ft.	Medium	6 lb.	19
Shotgun	+5/+6*	20/+3	Ballistic	40 ft.	Large	5 lb.	15
Assault rifle	+5	20/+3	Ballistic, Autofire	50 ft.	Large	8 lb.	16
Sniper rifle	+5	19-20/+4	Ballistic	250 ft.	Large	30 lb.	22
Energy Weapons (Firearms)							
Blaster pistol	+5	20/+3	Energy	50 ft.	Small	4 lb.	16
Blaster rifle	+8	20/+3	Energy	80 ft.	Large	6 lb.	19
Heavy Weapons (Exotic)							
Flamethrower	+6	—	Fire	—	Large	50 lb.	17
Grenade launcher	+5	—	Explosive	70 ft.	Large	7 lb.	14
Rocket launcher*	+10	—	Explosive	150 ft.	Large	5 lb.	15
Other Ranged Weapons							
Bolo (Exotic)	—	—	—	40 ft.	Small	2 lb.	3
Boomerang (Exotic)	+2	20/+4	Bludgeoning	20 ft.	Small	2 lb.	2
Bow (Martial)	+3*	20/+4	Piercing	40 ft.	Large	3 lb.	10
Crossbow (Simple)	+3	19-20/+3	Piercing	40 ft.	Medium	8 lb.	11
Javelin (Simple)*	+2	20/+3	Piercing	30 ft.	Medium	2 lb.	4
Shuriken (Martial)	+1*	20/+3	Piercing, Autofire	10 ft.	Tiny	—	3
Taser (Simple)	Stun	—	Electricity	5 ft.	Small	2 lb.	7

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

SUBMACHINE GUN

Compact automatic weapons that fire pistol ammunition, submachine guns are common military weapons, and are also used by criminals with access to more serious firepower. Submachine guns are Autofire weapons.

SHOTGUN

A shotgun can fire shot, which does +5 damage with a +2 bonus to hit due to the spread, but it does only +3 damage against targets with any increase in their natural Toughness save bonus (from worn or natural armor). A shotgun can also load solid slugs, which inflict +6 damage, with no attack bonus.

ASSAULT RIFLE

These rifles are designed for military-use, with both single-fire and autofire options. It is a move action to switch between modes.

SNIPER RIFLE

Sniper rifles are designed for long-range use, typically in conjunction with a powerful scope or targeting system.

ENERGY WEAPONS

Energy weapons are usually found in futuristic settings, although some fantasy settings might have supernatural equivalents such as “blaster wands” or the like.

BLASTER PISTOL

This is a pistol that fires a coherent bolt of energy.

BLASTER RIFLE

This is a rifle-sized weapon that fires a more powerful bolt of energy.

HEAVY WEAPONS

FLAME-THROWER

A flame-thrower shoots a stream of fire 5 feet wide and 25 feet long in front of the attacker as an area attack (see **Area Attack** in **Chapter Six** for further information).

GRENADE LAUNCHER

A grenade launcher fires various types of grenades, generally fragmentation grenades.

ROCKET LAUNCHER

A rocket-launcher is generally an anti-tank weapon, although they make useful anti-personnel weapons as well. It is an area attack. Most rocket launchers can fire only one or two shots before they must be reloaded as a full-round action.

OTHER RANGED WEAPONS

BOLO

A bolo is a set of weighted cords intended to entangle an opponent. If the bolo hits, the target makes a Reflex save (Difficulty 14). A failed save means the target is entangled. See the **Condition Summary** in **Chapter Six** for the effects of entanglement.

BOOMERANG

A thrown boomerang that misses returns to the thrower's hand, ready to be thrown again on the next round. A boomerang that hits does not return. Boomerang wielders with the Exotic Weapon Training feat can throw the weapon so it hits the target on the return arc as a surprise attack (see **Chapter Six**).

BOW

Although archaic, some heroes favor the bow as a weapon even in modern settings, and it can be quite effective in the right hands. Bows



add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage, although most bows are only designed to add up to a +5 Str bonus at best.

CROSSBOW

A crossbow is similar to a bow, and used for the same reasons. A crossbow does not add the user's Strength bonus to its damage.

JAVELIN

This is a light, flexible spear intended to be thrown. Javelins can also be used in melee combat.

SHURIKEN

These are flat metal stars or spikes for throwing. Shuriken can be thrown in groups (making them autofire weapons). Although they are thrown weapons, shuriken do not add the thrower's Strength bonus to damage due to their lightness. A character can draw up to 3 shuriken with a single move action. He can then throw them one at a time each as a separate standard action, or all at once as an autofire attack. The purchase Difficulty is for a group of 3.

MASTERWORK WEAPONS

A masterwork weapon is a finely crafted version of a normal weapon. Wielding it provides a +1 bonus on attack rolls.

You can't add the masterwork quality to a weapon after it is created; it must be crafted as a masterwork weapon. The masterwork quality increases the cost of a normal weapon by +5.

Masterwork ammunition is damaged (effectively destroyed) when used. The masterwork bonus of masterwork ammunition does not stack with any bonus from the weapon firing it.

Even though some types of armor and shields can be used as weapons, you can't create a masterwork version of such an item conferring a bonus on attack rolls. Instead, masterwork armor and shields have lessened armor check penalties.

WEAPON ACCESSORIES

Item	Weight	Cost
Laser Sight	—	15
Ammo (clip)	.5 lb.	4
Arrow (20)	3lb.	2
Bolt (10)	1 lb.	2
Silvered	—	+6
Stun ammo (clip)	.5 lb.	4
Suppressor	—	12
Targeting scope	—	11

TASER

This is a compressed-air weapon that fires a pair of darts. On impact, they release a powerful electrical charge, requiring a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15) to avoid being stunned. Stunned characters get a new Fortitude save each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

WEAPON ACCESSORIES

The following accessories can be added to the weapons in this section.

LASER SIGHT

A laser sight projects a non-damaging laser beam showing where the weapon is aimed. This grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls with that weapon.

SILVERED

A weapon (or its ammunition) can be coated with silver to overcome the damage reduction of some supernatural creatures (see **Chapter Eight**). A silvered weapon has a +6 modifier to its cost.

STUN AMMO

Ballistic weapons can fire rubber bullets while bows can fire blunt-tipped arrows or quarrels. This ammunition is intended to inflict non-lethal rather than lethal damage. Switching between ammo types is a move action (or a free action for a character with the Quick Draw feat).

SUPPRESSOR

A suppressor muffles the noise of a ballistic weapon, making it Difficulty 10 for normal hearing to detect it. Normally, hearing a firearm is Difficulty 0, modified by distance.

TARGETING SCOPE

When you take a full action to aim a ranged weapon with a targeting scope, double the normal benefits of aiming: a +4 attack bonus, or +8, if you're aiming at a stationary object.

GRENADES & EXPLOSIVES

Most grenades and explosives are area attacks, affecting all targets in a given area. See **Area Attacks** in **Chapter Six** for details. All thrown grenades and explosives have a range increment of 10 feet and a maximum range of five increments. Explosive damage decreases by 1 per 10 ft. from the center of the blast.

Grenades are generally high-tech items, but some settings may have supernatural equivalents that work the same way: "thunderstones" in place of flash-bangs, "bags of noxious mist" in place of tear gas, and so forth.

FRAGMENTATION GRENADE

This is a common military grenade that sprays shrapnel in all directions.

SMOKE GRENADE

A smoke grenade fills an area with thick smoke (colored as desired) providing total concealment (see **Concealment** in **Chapter Six**).

FLASH-BANG GRENADE

A flash-bang grenade gives off a bright flash and a loud bang that can render targets temporarily blind and deaf (targets save separately against each effect, Reflex Difficulty 14). Affected targets receive a Fortitude save each round against the same Difficulty to recover, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

SLEEP GAS GRENADE

This grenade fills a 40-ft. area with a fatigue-inducing gas (Fortitude save, Difficulty 14). Targets save each round they are in the gas cloud (which lasts for 10 rounds) and recover normally from any fatigue suffered.

TEAR GAS GRENADE

This type of grenade releases a cloud of gas that irritates the eyes and lungs, causing temporarily blindness and nausea (targets save separately against each effect, Fortitude Difficulty 14). Affected targets get a Fortitude save each round against the same Difficulty to recover, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

DYNAMITE

This is a common explosive. The damage on the table is for a single stick of dynamite. Each doubling of the amount of explosive increases damage by +1.

PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE

Another common explosive, this type can be worked into different shapes. The damage listed is for a 1-lb. block. Each doubling of the amount of explosive increases damage by +1.

GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

Item	Effect	Radius	Range Increment	Reflex Save	Size	Weight	Cost
Grenades							
Fragmentation	+5 damage explosion	50 ft.	10 ft.	15	Tiny	1 lb.	15
Smoke	visual cover	10 ft.	10 ft.	—	Small	2 lb.	4
Flash-bang	blinding/deafening	20 ft.	10 ft.	14	Tiny	2 lb.	16
Sleep gas	fatigue	40 ft.	10 ft.	14	Tiny	2 lb.	12
Tear gas	blinding/nauseating	40 ft.	10 ft.	14	Small	2 lb.	18
Explosives							
Dynamite	+5 damage explosion	50 ft.	—	15	Tiny	1 lb.	15
Plastic explosive	+10 damage explosion	100 ft.	—	20	Small	1 lb.	30

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

ARMOR

With so many weapons around, characters may need armor to protect them. Some heroes are innately tough enough to stand up to a lot of punishment, while others rely on their high Defense. Others choose to wear armor, ranging from ancient metal armors to modern composites. Armor provides a bonus on Toughness saving throws.

ARMOR CHECK PENALTY

Heavy or bulky armor (which is also the most protective) can slow or hinder the wearer. This is reflected by an *armor check penalty* that applies to Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Stealth, and Sleight of Hand checks. Double the normal armor check penalty also applies to Swim checks.

The armor check penalty is equal to the armor's Toughness bonus, unless its description specifies otherwise. Modern armor has an armor check penalty one lower than usual, as does masterwork armor. Supernatural armor has an armor check penalty two lower than usual (which includes the masterwork bonus). These modifiers all stack, so modern supernatural armor has an armor check penalty three lower than normal.

Wearers lacking the necessary Armor Training feat (see **Chapter Three**) suffer an additional penalty: they apply the armor check penalty to all Strength- and Dexterity-based checks as well as attack rolls.

Shields also impose an armor check penalty, equal to the shield's bonus, if the wielder lacks the Shield Training feat (see **Chapter Three**).

ARCHAIC ARMOR

Heroes in low-tech settings still wear armor of leather or metal to protect them, and may carry wooden or metal shields.

LEATHER

This armor is made of heavy leather plates covering the torso and other vital areas.

STUDED LEATHER

This is leather armor augmented with metal studs and rivets.

ARCHAIC ARMOR

Armor	Toughness Bonus	Weight	Cost
Leather (light)	+1	15 lbs.	12
Studded leather (light)	+2	20 lbs.	13
Chainmail (medium)	+3	40 lbs.	18
Breastplate (medium)	+4	30 lbs.	19
Plate-mail (heavy)	+5	50 lbs.	21
Full plate (heavy)	+6	50 lbs.	23

MODERN ARMOR

Armor	Toughness Bonus	Other Traits	Weight	Cost
Leather jacket (light)	+1	—	4 lb.	10
Undercover shirt (light)	+2	Subtle	2 lb.	13
Undercover vest (medium)	+3	Subtle	3 lb.	14
Tactical vest (medium)	+4	—	10 lb.	17
Armored jumpsuit (medium)	+3	—	15 lb.	15

CHAINMAIL

This is a shirt of heavy metal chain, often with a hauberk (hood) to cover the wearer's head.

BREASTPLATE

This armor includes chainmail augmented with a metal breastplate.

PLATE-MAIL

This is chainmail augmented with a metal breastplate, greaves (leg-guards) and arm-guards.

FULL PLATE

This is a full (and heavy!) suit of articulated metal plates, like that worn by medieval knights.

MODERN ARMOR

Modern body armor is generally only worn by people like police officers, soldiers, criminal agents, and so forth, except for the most concealable and subtle types of armor.

LEATHER JACKET

A heavy leather jacket (like that worn by motorcyclists) provides a measure of protection.

UNDERCOVER SHIRT

A thin shirt of ballistic armor that can be worn under street clothes.

UNDERCOVER VEST

This is a somewhat heavier vest worn by undercover police officers and others in need of discrete protection.

TACTICAL VEST

This heavy bulletproof vest is worn by police officers and soldiers.



MASTERWORK ARMOR

Just as with weapons, you can purchase or craft masterwork armor and shields. Such a well-made item functions like the normal version, except that its armor check penalty is 1 less than normal.

A masterwork suit of armor or shield increases the item's cost by +3.

The masterwork quality of a suit of armor or shield does not provide a bonus on attack or damage, even if the armor or shield is used as a weapon.

You can't add the masterwork quality to armor or a shield after it is created; it must be made as a masterwork item.

SHIELDS

Shield	Bonus	Blocking	Weight	Cost
Archaic Shields				
Small metal	+1	Slow projectiles	6 lb.	5
Small wooden	+1	Slow projectiles	5 lb.	5
Medium metal	+2	Slow projectiles	15 lb.	8
Medium wooden	+2	Slow projectiles	10 lb.	8
Large metal	+3	Slow projectiles	25 lb.	12
Large wooden	+3	Slow projectiles	15 lb.	12
Modern Shields				
Small composite	+1	Fast projectiles	3 lb.	9
Medium composite	+2	Fast projectiles	7 lb.	12
Large composite	+3	Fast projectiles	12 lb.	16

ARMORED JUMPSUIT

This is a full-body suit of ballistic cloth and padded armor.

SHIELDS

Shields provide a bonus to Defense, much like the bonus provided by cover, since shields are basically a form of mobile cover. This may take

the form of a dodge bonus versus ranged attacks, or a dodge or parry bonus versus melee (player's choice). The dodge bonus is based on the size of the shield, while the shield's composition determines the types of attacks it can block. Wooden or metal shields can block melee weapons and slow projectiles like arrows and thrown weapons. Modern composite shields can also block fast projectiles like bullets and—at the Narrator's discretion—futuristic shields can block even energy weapons.

VEHICLES

Sometimes heroes make use of various vehicles to get around. Vehicles are used primarily for transportation, although they may come with additional capabilities—including weapons—making them useful in other situations as well.

- Strength:** A vehicle's Strength, much like a character's, determines its carrying capacity. Vehicles have a base Strength of +0. Each increase in size category increases the vehicle's base Strength by +5. A vehicle can move at normal speed carrying up to its medium load, 2/3 speed with a heavy load. It can also pull up to five times its heavy load at 1/2 speed (up to ten times, if equipped with the proper hauling equipment and given an unobstructed area in which to move).
- Speed:** This is the vehicle's (approximate) top movement speed.
- Defense:** A vehicle's Defense is 10 + its size modifier.
- Toughness:** This is the vehicle's Toughness rating, which starts out at 5. Each increase in size category also increases a vehicle's Toughness by +2. Armored vehicles have an additional bonus to Toughness of up to +3.
- Size:** A vehicle's size is measured like that of a character, as shown on the **Vehicle Size Categories Table**.
- Cost:** Each vehicle has a purchase Difficulty for Wealth checks to acquire that vehicle. Large (and therefore expensive) vehicles more often belong to governments, corporations, or similar organizations, provided to people who work for them, from soldiers to ship captains. Individual ownership is rare (and may be restricted). Such vehicles have an asterisk (*) listed for their cost, which is left to the discretion of the Narrator, since owning or using such a vehicle is more of a plot device than a use of character Wealth.

GROUND VEHICLES

Most cars include such standard features as air conditioning, air bags, antilock brakes, cruise control, keyless entry, and an AM/FM radio

with CD player. Luxury (masterwork) vehicles often also include extras such as power seats, leather upholstery, and a sunroof. Such amenities depend greatly on the setting and time period.

WAGON

This is a four-wheeled, open vehicle for transporting heavy loads. In general, two horses (or other beasts of burden) draw it, and it moves at their speed. A wagon comes with the harness needed to pull it.

TANK

This is a heavily armed and armored vehicle. The standard tank comes equipped with a cannon (+10 explosion damage) and a heavy machine gun (+6 autofire damage). It takes a full-round action to get into or out of a tank, and another full-round action to start it up.

APCs

Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs), are designed for carrying troops. They come with a smaller cannon (+6 explosion damage), and are set up so soldiers on board can fire their personal weapons from behind the cover of the APC's armor.

WATER VEHICLES

Water vehicles range from small boats and outboards to massive sea-going ships.

ROWBOAT

This 8- to 12-foot-long boat holds two or three Medium passengers. It moves about 1-1/2 miles per hour.

GALLEON

This larger, seaworthy ship is 75 to 90 feet long and 20 feet wide, and has a crew of 20. It can carry 150 tons of cargo. It has square sails on its two masts and can make sea voyages. It moves about 2 miles per hour.

VEHICLE SIZE CATEGORIES

Vehicle Size	Modifier	Size	Examples	Str	Toughness	Defense
Awesome	-12	128—250 ft.	Space transport	+25	15	-2
Colossal	-8	64—128 ft.	Passenger jet	+20	13	2
Gargantuan	-4	32—64 ft.	Semi, yacht, fighter jet	+15	11	6
Huge	-2	16—32 ft.	Stretch limo, SUV, tank	+10	9	8
Large	-1	8—16 ft.	Car, truck	+5	7	9
Medium	+0	4—8 ft.	Motorcycle	+0	5	10

GROUND VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	Cost
Wagon	+5	—	9	7	Large	5
Motorcycle	+0	150 MPH	10	5	Medium	23
Compact Car	+5	150 MPH	9	7	Large	26
Midsize Car	+10	150 MPH	8	9	Huge	32
Full-size Car	+10	135 MPH	8	9	Huge	34
Sports Car	+5	180 MPH	9	7	Large	34
Limousine	+10	135 MPH	8	9	Huge	36
Pickup Truck	+10	120 MPH	8	9	Huge	34
SUV	+10	120 MPH	8	9	Huge	38
Van	+10	120 MPH	8	9	Huge	34
Small Truck	+10	100 MPH	8	9	Huge	34
Bus	+15	100 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	48
Semi	+15	100 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	34
Armored Car	+10	120 MPH	8	12	Huge	34
Police Cruiser	+10	180 MPH	8	9	Huge	32
Tank*	+10	80 MPH	8	12	Huge	*
APC*	+10	100 MPH	8	12	Huge	*

WATER VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	Cost
Rowboat	+5	1.5 MPH	9	7	Large	7
Jet-Ski	+0	80 MPH	10	5	Medium	24
Speedboat	+10	80 MPH	8	9	Huge	28
Yacht	+15	25 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	32
Galleon	+20	2 MPH	2	13	Colossal	32
Galley	+25	4 MPH	-2	15	Awesome	35
Cutter*	+25	50 MPH	6	12	Gargantuan	*
Destroyer*	+20	50 MPH	2	15	Colossal	*
Battleship*	+25	50 MPH	-2	18	Awesome	*
Submarine*	+20	30 MPH	2	13	Colossal	*

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

GALLEY

This three-masted ship has seventy oars on either side and requires a total crew of 200. A galleon is 130 feet long and 20 feet wide, and it can carry 150 tons of cargo or 250 soldiers. This ship cannot make sea voyages and sticks to the coast. It moves about 4 miles per hour when being rowed or under sail.

CUTTERS

These are used by the Coast Guard and the Navy. They're often equipped with light machine guns (+6 autofire damage).

DESTROYERS

These are main naval ships, with heavy guns (+10 explosion damage).

BATTLESHIPS

These ships have massive gun batteries (+13 explosion damage) and heavy armor.

SUBMARINES

These are equipped with torpedoes (+8 explosion damage) and often ballistic missiles (+15 explosion damage, higher if the missile has a nuclear warhead).

AIR VEHICLES						
Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	Cost
Helicopter	+10	100 MPH	8	9	Huge	39
Military helicopter*	+15	125 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	*
Private Jet	+15	400 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	40
Jumbo-jet	+20	500 MPH	2	13	Colossal	*
Fighter Jet*	+15	1500 MPH+	6	11	Gargantuan	*
Bomber*	+20	1000 MPH+	2	13	Colossal	*

SPACE VEHICLES						
Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	Cost
Space Shuttle	+20	10,000 MPH	2	13	Colossal	*
Space Fighter*	+15	50,000 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	*
Space Cruiser*	+20	50,000 MPH	2	15	Colossal	*
Space Battleship*	+25	250,000 MPH	-2	18	Awesome	*

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

AIR VEHICLES

Air vehicles are all capable of flight, some of them at very high speeds.

MILITARY HELICOPTERS

These are equipped with machine guns (+6 autofire damage) and rockets (+9 explosion damage).

FIGHTER JETS

These planes have machine guns (+6 autofire damage) and air-to-air missiles (+11 explosion damage).

BOMBERS

These planes may have machine guns and missiles, but they also have powerful bombs (+12 or higher explosion damage) that they can drop on targets. Bombers are also capable of carrying nuclear weapons and similar payloads.

SPACE VEHICLES

Space vehicles are intended for use outside the atmosphere, some of them for interplanetary or even interstellar travel, with some sort of faster-than-light (FTL) drive. Generally space vehicles are found in futuristic settings or in the possession of alien civilizations.

SPACE FIGHTERS

These are armed with blasters (+10 damage).

SPACE CRUISERS

These have larger beam weapons (+12 damage) and often energy torpedoes (+12 explosion damage).

SPACE BATTLESHIPS

These have the most massive weapons: blaster cannons (+15 damage) and high-powered energy torpedoes (+15 explosion damage).

SUPERNATURAL ITEMS

In addition to the mundane equipment that characters can get, there are various items with supernatural properties. Such equipment is rare and usually expensive, but sometimes found in the hands of heroes and villains. Creating supernatural items requires the **Imbue Item** feat.

SUPERNATURAL WEAPONS

A masterwork weapon can be imbued with supernatural power, making it a supernatural weapon. Supernatural weapons have the usual properties of masterwork weapons, plus they can overcome the damage reduction of certain creatures. Since supernatural trumps all other means of overcoming damage reduction, if a creature's damage reduction can be overcome at all, a supernatural weapon will do so. See **Chapter Eight** for details on damage reduction.

The supernatural property increases a weapon's cost by +10. This includes the masterwork quality of the weapon.

SUPERNATURAL ARMOR

Masterwork armor can be imbued with supernatural power, making it extraordinarily light and comfortable. Supernatural armor has its armor check penalty reduced by 2 (including the benefits of being masterwork).

The supernatural property increases the armor's cost by +6, which includes the masterwork quality.

CHARMS

A *charm* is a small item containing a single use of a supernatural power. Common charms include potions, candles, small pouches of herbs, crystals, and similar items. In high tech settings, they may also include computer programs, slap-patches, plastic pouches, and whatever other items the Narrator sees fit. When a charm is activated (a standard action), it discharges the power it contains and then is rendered useless.

Creating a charm requires the **Imbue Item** feat as well as the power the charm will contain. It has a cost to make of 10 + the charm's bonus with the power, which cannot exceed its maker's bonus.

OTHER SUPERNATURAL ITEMS

The Narrator should feel free to introduce other supernatural or unusual items in the game as desired. See **Chapter Ten** for more detailed and extensive guidelines for creating and using supernatural items in your *True20* game.

CHAPTER SIX:

PLAYING THE GAME

IN TRUE20, HEROES ATTEMPT MANY DEEDS, FROM WOOING HEARTS TO FELLING MONSTERS. THIS CHAPTER—JOINED WITH THE CHAPTERS ON SKILLS, FEATS, AND POWERS—GIVES RULES FOR DOING THINGS, WHETHER MUNDANE OR HEROIC, IN THE GAME.

THE CHAPTER FOCUSES ON KINDS OF ACTION: PHYSICAL ACTIONS, SOCIAL ACTIONS, AND FIGHTING. THE CHAPTER CLOSES WITH AN OVERVIEW OF VARIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS HEROES MAY ENCOUNTER.



PHYSICAL ACTIONS

Ability scores, skills, and feats define characters' physical capabilities in *True20*. They affect the ability to move, carry loads, and throw things, three topics discussed in this section. Heroes can also push past their physical limitations using *extra effort*.

MOVING

Heroes move around a lot, especially when the action gets going. The Narrator moderates the pace of a game session, and so determines when movement is important enough to be worth measuring. During casual scenes, you usually won't have to worry about movement rates. If a character arrives somewhere and takes a stroll around, there's no need to know exactly how fast the character goes; it just happens. During action scenes, however, it may be important to have an idea how fast and how far a hero can move.

MOVEMENT PACE

Characters generally move at a normal, accelerated, or all-out pace. Most characters' base speed is 30 feet, meaning a character can walk 30 feet as a move action every round. The following movement paces modify base speed:

NORMAL

A normal pace represents unhurried but purposeful movement at the character's normal speed, which is usually 30 feet per round (about 3 miles per hour). This is the equivalent of walking for a normal unencumbered human.

ACCELERATED

An accelerated pace, sometimes called a hustle or double move, is twice the character's normal speed, usually 60 feet per round (about 6 miles per hour). This is the equivalent of jogging for a normal

unencumbered human. Taking two move actions in a round is accelerated movement.

ALL OUT

Moving four times your base speed is an all-out pace, the equivalent of running or sprinting, usually 120 feet per round (about 12 miles per hour). All-out movement is a full-round action, and you lose any dodge bonus to Defense, since you're not easily able to avoid attacks.

You can move all out for 10 rounds, plus twice your Constitution score (so 8 rounds for Constitution -1, 16 rounds for Constitution +3, and so forth). After that you must succeed at a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) to continue moving at this pace. You must check again each round you continue to move all out, and the Difficulty of this check increases by 1 for each check you have made. When you fail a check, you become fatigued and must drop to an accelerated or normal pace. The winded fatigue level is skipped if you fail a fatigue save while moving all out.

HAMPERED MOVEMENT

Obstructions, bad surface conditions, and poor visibility can hamper movement. The Narrator determines the category into which a specific condition falls (see the **Hampered Movement** table). When movement is hampered, multiply the standard distance by the movement penalty (a fraction) to determine the distance covered. For example, a character who can normally cover 60 feet with a double move can cover only 30 feet if moving through thick undergrowth.

If more than one condition applies, multiply the normal distance covered by *all* movement penalty fractions that apply. For instance, a character who normally could cover 60 feet with a double move could cover only 15 feet moving through thick undergrowth in heavy fog (one-quarter his double move).



HAMPERED MOVEMENT

Condition	Examples	Movement Penalty
Obstruction		
Moderate	Undergrowth	x3/4
Heavy	Thick undergrowth	x1/2
Surface		
Bad	Steep slope, mud	x1/2
Very bad	Deep snow, slick ice	x1/4
Poor visibility		
	Darkness, heavy fog	x1/2

CARRYING

Strength determines how much weight heroes can lift and how much any additional encumbrance slows them down. See the Carrying Capacity table for how much characters can lift based on their Strength score. (The figures in the Carrying Capacity table are for medium creatures. Larger and smaller creatures can carry more or less depending on their size category. See Size in Chapter Eight for details.)

Carrying more than a light load imposes penalties to Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, and Swim checks. The penalty is doubled for Swim checks.

LIGHT LOAD

Characters can lift and carry up to a light load without any penalties or difficulties.

MEDIUM LOAD

Characters carrying a medium load have a maximum dodge bonus of +3 and a -3 check penalty. They move at 2/3 normal speed.

HEAVY LOAD

Characters can lift up to a heavy load overhead. They have a maximum dodge bonus of +1 and a -6 check penalty. They move at 2/3 normal speed.

MAXIMUM LOAD

Characters can lift up to the maximum load off the ground, but can only stagger around with it. While overloaded in this way, characters lose any dodge bonus to Defense and can move only 5 feet per round as a full-round action. You cannot take any other actions while supporting a maximum load.

PUSH/DRAG

Characters can push or drag up to five times their heavy load weight, moving at 1/2 normal speed. Favorable conditions (smooth ground, dragging a slick object) double these numbers, and bad circumstances (broken ground, pushing an object that snags) can reduce them to one-half or less.

THROWING

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

The distance you can throw an object is based on its weight and your Strength. You can throw your heavy load 5 feet. For every 2 points of Strength you have over the minimum required to lift an object as a heavy load, double the distance you can throw it. This means a Strength +5 character has 5 points more Strength than needed to lift 100 pounds as a heavy load and can therefore throw a 100-pound object up to 20 feet (5 feet \times 2).

CARRYING CAPACITY

Strength	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load	Maximum Load	Push/ Drag
-5	3 lb.	6 lb.	10 lb.	20 lb.	50 lb.
-4	6 lb.	13 lb.	20 lb.	40 lb.	100 lb.
-3	13 lb.	26 lb.	40 lb.	80 lb.	200 lb.
-2	20 lb.	40 lb.	60 lb.	120 lb.	300 lb.
-1	26 lb.	53 lb.	80 lb.	160 lb.	400 lb.
+0	33 lb.	66 lb.	100 lb.	200 lb.	500 lb.
+1	43 lb.	86 lb.	130 lb.	260 lb.	650 lb.
+2	58 lb.	116 lb.	175 lb.	350 lb.	875 lb.
+3	76 lb.	153 lb.	230 lb.	460 lb.	1,150 lb.
+4	100 lb.	200 lb.	300 lb.	600 lb.	1,500 lb.
+5	133 lb.	266 lb.	400 lb.	800 lb.	2,000 lb.
+6	173 lb.	346 lb.	520 lb.	1,040 lb.	2,600 lb.
+7	233 lb.	466 lb.	700 lb.	1,400 lb.	3,500 lb.
+8	306 lb.	613 lb.	920 lb.	1,840 lb.	4,600 lb.
+9	400 lb.	800 lb.	1,200 lb.	2,400 lb.	6,000 lb.
+10	532 lb.	1,064 lb.	1,600 lb.	3,200 lb.	8,000 lb.

CARRYING LOADS

Load	Max Dex	Check Penalty	Speed	All-out Move
Light	None	0	Normal	Normal
Medium	+3	-3	2/3	Normal
Heavy	+1	-6	2/3	-1 multiple
Maximum	+0	—	5 ft.	—

EXTRA EFFORT

Heroes are often called upon to perform feats beyond their normal limits. This calls for extra effort. Players can use extra effort to improve a hero's abilities in exchange for the hero suffering some fatigue from the effort.

Extra effort is a free action and can be performed at any time during a hero's turn, but is limited to once per round. A hero using extra effort can gain one of the following benefits:

- Check bonus:** +2 bonus on a single check.
- Increase carrying capacity:** The hero's carrying capacity doubles for one round.
- Increase movement:** The hero's movement speed doubles for one round (this includes jumping distances).
- Willpower:** Gain an additional Will saving throw against an ongoing effect that allows for Will saves, including various supernatural powers.

At the beginning of the round immediately after extra effort, the hero suffers a level of fatigue (see **Fatigue** later in this chapter). A fatigued hero becomes exhausted, and an exhausted hero becomes unconscious, the round after using extra effort. If you spend a Conviction point at the start of the round following extra effort to shake off the fatigue, the hero suffers no adverse effects.

Other specific uses of extra effort (usually involving supernatural powers) are specified in the text.

SOCIAL ACTIONS

There's more to adventures than just fighting and feats of daring. Characters also interact in various ways. Heroes try to negotiate agreements between disputing parties or go on diplomatic missions. Villains taunt and threaten or even try to sway heroes to their side. People get into disagreements or debates. Whole adventures may hinge on convincing the right person of the right thing at the right time.

INFLUENCING ATTITUDES

The Narrator determines the starting attitude of any character that the heroes encounter during the game. The heroes can then try to influence the character's attitude using Charisma and various interaction skills, such as Diplomacy and Intimidate. The Influence table shows the effects of character attitudes and the Difficulty of attempting to change someone's attitude with a check. Note that a particularly bad influence check can actually make a character's attitude worse. For example, getting less than 5 on a Diplomacy check makes an unfriendly character turn hostile. In general, a hero can attempt to influence another character only once in any given scene.

Example: Detective Carlson is questioning a local shopkeeper about a suspect. The Narrator decides the shopkeeper's attitude toward the detective is Indifferent and that Carlson needs to make him Friendly in order to get any real cooperation out of him. Carlson's player decides to make nice, using Diplomacy to find out what he wants to know (rather than trying to Intimidate the shopkeeper), so the player acts out the detective asking questions and makes a Diplomacy check, using Carlson's +8 bonus. He needs a total of 15 to equal the Difficulty of getting a Friendly attitude, or a roll of 7 or better. He rolls a 9 and succeeds, and the shopkeeper tells the detective he has seen the suspect around a neighboring apartment building.

Note in the previous circumstances, since Carlson's Diplomacy bonus was within 10 of the Difficulty, and there was no real pressure on him, the Narrator could have just decided the detective would automatically succeed by taking 10 and forgone the check, helping speed along play.

SOCIAL INTERACTION

The various social actions heroes may wish to accomplish are governed by interaction skills. Note that these skills are all usable untrained, so anyone can attempt these actions. Naturally charismatic people tend to be good at them, but those with real talent or training (reflected by ranks in the appropriate interaction skills) are the best.

BLUFF

Bluff is ultimately the skill of getting what you want by misleading, or at least exaggerating. Completely honest social interactions should use another skill (usually Diplomacy). Bluff is opposed by itself or Sense Motive; it's difficult to trick an expert liar, and some people just have a sense of when someone is trying to pull the wool over their eyes.

FAST-TALK

The basic use of Bluff is lying and getting away with it. Make opposed Bluff checks, or Bluff versus Sense Motive, to see if someone gets caught in a lie. If the liar wins, then the story is believable. Heroes or Narrator characters who successfully fast-talk other Narrator characters can convince them to do things based on the success of the Bluff check, and the believability of their story.

HAGGLING

Haggling for a price or a similar deal is likewise an opposed check to see who bluffs best. The seller uses Bluff, while the buyer uses Bluff or Sense Motive, whichever is better. If the seller wins, the sale is made, with a +1 increase in cost per 5 points the check exceeds the opposing result. If the buyer wins, then the price doesn't go above market value (the price listed in **Chapter Five**) and is negotiated -1 cost per 5 points the check exceeds the opposing result. However, the buyer still has the option to say no if the final price is too much.

SEDUCTION

The subtle dance of seduction involves using Bluff to get someone to do what you want with promises (implied or explicit) of sexual favors. The seducer makes a Bluff check, while the prey makes a Bluff or Sense Motive check, whichever is better. The seducer's Difficulty increases if his suggestions go against the target's personality in some way. Use the modifiers in the Bluff skill description in **Chapter Two** as a guideline. For example, attempting to seduce someone in a monogamous relationship entails a risk to the target, for a +5 to +10 bonus on the target's check. Trying to seduce a target with a different sexual orientation gives them a +20 bonus on their Bluff or Sense Motive check.

DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy is the gentle art of persuasion, debate, discussion, and etiquette. It is the premier interaction skill for those interested in dealing with others in social situations.

INFLUENCE

Attitude	Means	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to oppose you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, insult
Indifferent	Doesn't care either way	Socially acceptable interaction
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to aid you	Protect, back up, heal, aid, support

New Attitude Result

Starting Attitude	Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	less than 20	20	25	35	50
Unfriendly	less than 5	5	15	25	40
Indifferent	—	less than 1	1	15	30
Friendly	—	—	less than 1	1	20

HERO ATTITUDES

While heroes can influence the attitudes of Narrator characters, note that heroes and Narrator characters generally cannot use interaction skills to change the attitudes of the heroes themselves. Players choose the attitudes of their heroes and when they change. Only things like supernatural powers can directly influence a hero's overall attitude. Heroes are affected by applications of some interaction checks, such as attempts to deceive them using Bluff or shaking their confidence with Intimidate, but their overall attitudes remains under the control of the players.

The Narrator may wish to *suggest* changes in attitude toward a particularly charming or influential supporting character, but shouldn't take control of the heroes' attitudes and behavior away from the players without some sort of supernatural force being involved.

NEGOTIATION

Negotiating an agreement with another party is a Diplomacy check, with the Difficulty based on the other party's attitude. The outcome of the negotiation is based on the other party's final attitude. An indifferent war chief may become a friendly ally, while a potential ally could become unfriendly or even hostile if negotiations don't go well.

PERSUASION

Convincing someone of the rightness of your view is a Diplomacy check. The Narrator evaluates the subject's attitude toward your viewpoint or the subject at hand (rather than you personally), and your check can improve that attitude.

MAKING FRIENDS

Make Diplomacy checks to favorably dispose someone toward you. A friendly or helpful result means you have a potential new friend, if you choose to maintain the relationship over time.

FOREIGN CUSTOMS

When your hero is dealing with unusual or foreign customs, the Narrator may ask for a Diplomacy check for you to avoid making any faux pas. The Difficulty is based on how obscure the custom is: Difficulty 10 for slightly obscure customs, Difficulty 15 for moderately obscure ones, and Difficulty 20 to 30 for very obscure ones. A failed check means a potentially embarrassing social blunder, which may worsen the attitude of your hosts, apply a penalty to further interaction checks, or both.

GATHER INFORMATION

Of all the interaction skills, Gather Information deals most with social groups, whether it's finding things out or spreading rumors through certain social circles.

ASSESSING SOCIAL SITUATIONS

You can make a Gather Information check to get a feel for any social situation. It's Difficulty 15 to get a general idea of the mood of a situation, as well as the prevailing attitude (so you have an idea of the Difficulty of using other interaction skills). Picking up on subtle undercurrents may require a higher check result, at the Narrator's discretion.

BUREAUCRACY

Gather Information can help cut through red tape and navigate through bureaucracies. The Difficulty of the Gather Information check depends on the challenge, from 10, for navigating simple bureaucratic procedures, to 20 or more, for dealing with particularly complex or hidebound bureaucracies.

SPREADING RUMORS

You can also use Gather Information to put information out where others will find or hear of it. The trick is to ensure the rumors are not traced back to you. This is an opposed check of Gather Information. If you win, then you successfully pass on whatever information you want. If you lose, then the other party traces the rumors back to you, and reacts accordingly.

INTIMIDATE

Although intimidation is not the approach for polite society, sometimes a forceful approach is called for, and the Intimidate skill covers all sorts of forceful social interactions, not just threats.

COMMAND

Make an Intimidate check when you bark a command or issue an order to someone and want it obeyed *now*. The Narrator can grant bonuses for circumstances; a noble issuing a command to a commoner has a clear advantage, while a king making the same command has a major one! A check is only necessary in cases where there's some question about whether or not the subject will obey the order. A loyal subject or retainer, for example, will carry out routine orders without need for a check, but a command to leave a comrade behind on the battlefield may require one, for example.

INTERROGATION

To get information out of someone by exerting pressure, make an Intimidate check against the result of the subject's Sense Motive check or Will saving throw, whichever has the greater bonus. The Narrator can modify the check using the modifiers for the Bluff skill (see **Chapter Two: Skills**), so it's harder to get subjects to give up information that compromises them or their allies. A successful Intimidate check gets the information. Modifiers may apply for the use of interrogation techniques ranging from sleep deprivation to torture, and a successful Intimidate check for interrogation can provide a +2 bonus on a Mind Probe check.



PERFORM

Perform is an interaction skill aimed at an audience rather than an individual, but it can still influence the audience's attitude overall, so long as the Narrator feels the performance is appropriate and the performer is trying to shift everyone's attitude in the same way. A character might use Perform specialties, like comedy or stringed instruments, to warm up an audience and improve their attitude before attempting skills like Diplomacy and Gather Information.

SENSE MOTIVE

Sense Motive is the catchall skill for resisting social interactions. While each interaction skill typically opposes itself (it's harder to trick someone

who's skilled in Bluff, for example), Sense Motive covers a general social shrewdness and awareness of the ins and outs of interaction.

Sense Motive checks are passive, in that they're only made to resist other interactions. At the Narrator's discretion, someone who makes a successful Sense Motive check to avoid a particular interaction can make another check with a Difficulty 10 as an aid action. The character must be able to communicate with the subjects and point out the flaws in the interaction to give them the aid bonus to resist it. This can range from an expert debater poking holes in someone's argument to an impassioned plea to a crowd not to listen to a rabble-rouser. Note that this is only to aid others against particular interaction checks. If the character is also trying to sway them to his point of view, then it's more likely an opposed interaction check between the two parties.

FIGHTING

Sometimes heroes must fight to achieve their goals. This section details the rules for fights, starting with the basics and then looking at some of the more unusual strategies heroes can employ.

COMBAT SEQUENCE

Combat in *True20* is cyclical. Everybody acts in turn in a regular cycle called a round. Generally, combat runs in the following way:

1. Each combatant starts the battle flat-footed. Once a combatant acts, she is no longer flat-footed.
2. The Narrator determines which characters are aware of their opponents at the start of the battle. If some but not all combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. The combatants aware of their opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take a standard action or move action—not both—during the surprise round. Unaware combatants do not get to act in the surprise round. If no one or everyone starts the battle aware, there is no surprise round.
3. Any remaining combatants roll initiative. All combatants are now ready to begin their first regular round.
4. Combatants act in initiative order.
5. When everyone has had a turn, the combatant with the highest initiative total acts again, and steps 4 and 5 repeat until combat ends.

COMBAT STATISTICS

Several traits determine how well you do in combat: your attack bonus, defense bonus, damage bonus, and saving throws. This section summarizes these traits and how to use them.

ATTACK BONUS

An *attack* represents the attempt to strike a target with an attack. When you make an attack, roll d20 and add your total attack bonus. If your result equals or exceeds the target's Defense, you hit and may deal damage. Your attack bonus is equal to the following:

$$\text{Attack Bonus} = \text{Combat Bonus} + \\ \text{Dexterity} + \text{Size Modifier} + \\ \text{Miscellaneous Modifiers} - \text{Range Penalty}$$

COMBAT BONUS

Your skill in combat, based on your role(s) and level, determines your basic ability to successfully strike a target.

DEXTERITY

DEXTERITY

Speed, agility, and accuracy make it easier to hit the target. You add your character's Dexterity score to your combat bonus to reflect this.

SIZE MODIFIER

Smaller targets are harder to hit, while larger targets are easier. A modifier to combat bonus is used to reflect this. See the table **Size Modifier to Combat Bonus**. Since the same size modifier applies to two opponents of the same size, they strike each other normally.

SIZE MODIFIER TO COMBAT BONUS

Size	Modifier
Colossal	-8
Gargantuan	-4
Huge	-2
Large	-1
Medium	0
Small	+1
Tiny	+2
Diminutive	+4
Fine	+8

MISCELLANEOUS MODIFIERS

The circumstances of your attack may involve a modifier to your attack bonus. Attacking while prone, for example, imposes a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls. See **Combat Modifiers**, later in this chapter, for a detailed list of modifiers.

RANGE PENALTY

The range penalty with a ranged attack depends on the attack you're using and the distance to the target. All ranged attacks have a range increment. Any attack at a distance of one range increment or less carries no penalty for range, so an attack with a range increment of 50 feet can strike at enemies up to 50 feet away with no penalty. However, each full range increment thereafter causes a cumulative -2 penalty to the attack roll. For example, a character firing the same attack at a target 120 feet away suffers a -4 attack penalty (because 120 feet is over two range increments, but not three increments). Generally, projectile weapons have a maximum range of 10 increments. Thrown weapons have a maximum range of 5 increments.

AUTOMATIC MISSES AND HITS

A natural 1 (the d20 comes up 1) on the attack roll is *always* a miss. A natural 20 (the d20 comes up 20) is *always* a hit, regardless of the opponent's Defense. A natural 20 is also a *threat*, a possible critical hit.

DEFENSE BONUS

Your *Defense* represents how hard it is for opponents to hit you, the Difficulty for an opponent's attack roll. Your Defense is equal to the following:

Defense Bonus = 10 + Combat Bonus + Dodge or Parry Bonus + Size Modifier + Miscellaneous Modifiers

COMBAT BONUS

Your skill in combat allows you to avoid attacks, so you add your combat bonus to your defense. If you can't move, you can't use your combat bonus. For example, you lose your bonus if you're bound or unable to move.

DODGE BONUS

Your *dodge bonus* represents your ability to actively dodge attacks. It's equal to your Dexterity score, and may be modified by feats and circumstances. If you can't react to an attack, you can't use your dodge bonus. For example, you lose your dodge bonus if you're bound or when you're caught flat-footed at the beginning of combat. Most situational bonuses to Defense are dodge bonuses.

PARRY BONUS

Your *parry bonus* represents your ability to deflect attacks. It's equal to your Strength score, and may be modified by feats and circumstances. You can only use parry bonus against melee attacks, and only if you are armed (having the Improved Strike feat counts as being armed) or have a shield. If you can't react to an attack, you can't use your parry bonus.

SIZE MODIFIER

Smaller targets are harder to hit, while larger targets are easier. See the table **Size Modifiers to Combat Bonus**. Since the same size modifier applies to opponents of the same size, they strike each other normally.

MISCELLANEOUS MODIFIERS

The circumstances may also apply miscellaneous modifiers to your dodge bonus or Defense.

DAMAGE BONUS

When you hit with an attack, you may deal damage. Each attack has a *damage bonus*. This is typically a weapon's damage modified by your Strength. However, some attacks have a fixed damage.

Damage Bonus = Weapon Damage + Strength

WEAPON DAMAGE

Weapons have a damage modifier, showing how much damage they inflict. Most projectile weapons inflict a fixed damage bonus. Melee and thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength score to their damage.

STRENGTH

Your Strength measures how hard you can hit, so your Strength score applies to damage when you attack unarmed or with a melee or thrown weapon.

LETHAL AND NON-LETHAL DAMAGE

Damage comes in two types: lethal and non-lethal. Lethal damage does lasting injury and can kill. Non-lethal damage can stun and cause unconsciousness, but causes no serious injury.

CRITICAL HITS

When you make an attack roll and get a natural 20 (the d20 actually shows 20), you have scored a *threat*. The hit might be a critical hit



(sometimes called a crit). To find out whether it's a critical hit, make another attack roll, using the same attack bonus. If this second roll equals or exceeds the target's Defense, the attack is a critical hit. If not, the attack still hits, but as a normal attack, not a critical hit. A critical hit increases the attack's damage according to the type of weapon or attack. If unspecified, a critical hit increases damage by +3.

INCREASED THREAT RANGE

Characters with the Improved Critical feat can score a threat on a natural result less than 20. Some weapons have higher multipliers or threat ranges; see **Chapter Five**. Any attack roll that doesn't result in a hit is not a threat. Only natural 20s always hit.

SAVING THROWS

When you're subjected to a potentially harmful effect, you get a *saving throw* to avoid or reduce it. Like an attack roll or check, a saving throw is a d20 roll plus a bonus based on an ability score and other modifiers. Your saving throw is equal to the following:

Saving Throw = d20 + Base Save Bonus + Ability Score + Miscellaneous Modifiers

The Difficulty for a save is based on the attack itself.

The four different kinds of saving throws are the following:

TOUGHNESS

Toughness is your ability to resist physical punishment and direct damage. Your Toughness saving throw equals your Constitution score, modified by feats like Defensive Roll and Tough, plus any armor you are wearing.

FORTITUDE

Your ability to resist attacks against your vitality and health, such as poison and disease is your Fortitude. You apply your Constitution score to your Fortitude saving throws.

REFLEX

This is your ability to avoid harm through reaction time and agility, including dodging explosions and crashes. You apply your Dexterity score to Reflex saving throws.

WILL

Will is your resistance to mental influence and domination as well as certain powers. You apply your Wisdom score to your Will saving throws.

INITIATIVE

Every round, each combatant gets to do something. The combatants' initiative checks determine the order in which they act, from highest to lowest. At the start of a battle, each combatant makes an initiative check. The players each roll for their heroes while the Narrator rolls for everyone else. An initiative check is a Dexterity check.

Initiative Check = d20 + Dexterity + Miscellaneous Modifiers

The Narrator finds out in what order heroes act, counting down from highest total to lowest. Each character acts in turn, with the check applying to all rounds of the combat. Usually, the Narrator writes the names of the characters down in initiative order to move quickly from one character to the next each round. If two combatants have the same initiative check result, they act in order of highest Dexterity first. If there is still a tie, roll a die, with the highest roll going first.

FLAT-FOOTED

At the start of a battle, before you have had a chance to act (specifically, before your first regular turn in the initiative order), you are flat-footed. You can't use your dodge or parry bonus, if any, while flat-footed. The Uncanny Dodge feat allows you to retain your dodge and parry bonus to Defense while flat-footed.

OPPONENT INITIATIVE

Typically, the Narrator makes a single initiative check for opponents. That way, each player gets a turn each round and the Narrator also gets one turn. At the Narrator's option, however, he can make separate initiative checks for different groups of opponents or even for individual foes. For instance, the Narrator may make one initiative check for a villain and another for all of his minions.

JOINING A FIGHT

If characters enter a fight after it's begun, they roll initiative and act whenever their turn comes up in the existing order.

SURPRISE

When a combat starts, if you are not aware of your enemies but they are aware of you, you're surprised. If you know about your opponents but they don't know about you, you surprise them.

DETERMINING AWARENESS

Sometimes all combatants on a side are aware of their enemies, sometimes none are, and sometimes only some of them are. Sometimes a few combatants on each side are aware and other combatants on each side are unaware.

The Narrator determines who is aware of whom at the start of a battle. The Narrator may call for Notice checks or other checks to see how aware the characters are of their opponents. Some examples:

- The heroes enter a seedy tavern and immediately spot members of a notorious gang. The gang members notice the heroes at the same

time. Both sides are aware; neither is surprised. The heroes and the gang members make initiative checks, and the battle begins.

- The heroes are tracking an assassin who flees down a dark alley. They follow, unaware the assassin is hidden in the shadows. When the assassin springs out to attack, the heroes are surprised and do not get to act in the surprise round.
- The heroes infiltrate a sorcerer's stronghold wearing the uniforms of his guards. When they reveal themselves and attack, they surprise their opponents. The heroes act during the surprise round, but the villains do not.

THE SURPRISE ROUND

If some, but not all, of the combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. The combatants aware of their opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take a standard or move action, not both. If no one or everyone is surprised, a surprise round doesn't occur.

UNAWARE COMBATANTS

Combatants unaware at the start of battle do not get to act in the surprise round. Unaware combatants are flat-footed because they have not acted yet. Because of this, they lose any dodge bonus to Defense.

ACTIONS

The things characters can do during combat are broken down into actions, described in this section.

THE COMBAT ROUND

Each round represents about 6 seconds of time in the game world. In the real world, a round is an opportunity for each character to take an action. Anything a person could reasonably do in 6 seconds, your hero can do in 1 round.

Each round begins with the character with the highest initiative result and then proceeds, in descending order, from there. Each round uses the same initiative order. When a character's turn comes up in the initiative order, that character performs his entire round's worth of actions.

For almost all purposes, there is no relevance to the end of a round or the beginning of a round. The term "round" works like the word "week." A week can mean either a calendar week or a span of time from a day in one week to the same day the next week. In the same way, a round can be a segment of game time starting with the first character to act and ending with the last, but it usually means a span of time from one round to the same initiative number (initiative count) in the next round. Effects lasting a certain number of rounds end just before the same initiative number where they began.

One Round = Span of time from one initiative count to the same initiative count in the next round

ACTION TYPES

The five types of actions are standard, move, full, free, and reaction. In a normal round, you can perform a standard action and a move action (or two move actions; you can always take a move action in place of a standard action), or you can perform a full action. You can also perform as many free and reaction actions as your Narrator allows.

In some situations (such as in the surprise round), you may be limited to taking only a standard or move action, not both.

STANDARD ACTION

A standard action allows you to do something. You can make an attack, use a skill, feat, or power (unless it requires a full action to perform; see below), or perform other similar actions. During a combat round, you can take a standard action and a move action. You can take the move action before or after, but not during, the standard action.

MOVE ACTION

A move action allows you to move your speed or perform an action taking a similar amount of time, such as climb one-quarter of your speed, draw or stow a weapon or other object, stand up, pick up an object, or perform some equivalent action (see the **Actions in Combat** table).

You can take a move action in place of a standard action. For example, rather than moving your speed and attacking you can stand up and move your speed (two move actions), draw a weapon and climb one-quarter your speed (two move actions), or pick up an object and stow it in a backpack (two move actions).

If you move no actual distance in a round (usually because you have traded a move action for an equivalent action like standing up), you can take a 5-foot “step” before, during, or after the action. For example, you can stand up (a move action), take a 5-foot step, and attack (a standard action).

FULL ACTION

A full action requires all your attention during a round. The only movement you can take during a full action is a 5-foot step before, during, or after the action. Some full-round actions do not allow you to take a 5-foot step. You can also perform free actions (see below) as the Narrator allows.

FREE ACTION

Free actions consume very little time and, over the span of the round, their impact is so minor they are considered to take no real time at all. You can perform one or more free actions while taking another action. However, the Narrator puts reasonable limits on what you can do for free. A good rule of thumb is your Dexterity or Intelligence bonus +1 in free actions per round, with a minimum of one. For instance, dropping an object, dropping to a prone position, speaking a sentence or two, and ceasing to concentrate on maintaining a power are all free actions.

REACTION

A reaction is something that happens in response to something else, like a reflex. Like free actions, reactions take so little time they’re considered free. The difference between the two is a free action is a conscious choice made on the character’s turn to act. A reaction is a reflex or automatic response that can occur even when it’s not your turn to act. Characters can react even while unable to take normal actions, such as while stunned. A saving throw is an example of a reaction, something you instinctively do to avoid danger. Some powers and other traits are usable as reactions.

ACTION DESCRIPTIONS

The most common actions and their game effects are described here.

AID (STANDARD ACTION)

If you are in position to attack an opponent, you can attempt to aid a friend engaged in melee with that opponent as a standard action. Make an attack roll against Defense 10. If you succeed, you don’t actually damage the opponent—but your friend gains either a bonus on an attack roll against that opponent or a bonus to Defense against that opponent (your choice) on the friend’s next turn. Multiple aid bonuses stack. See **Aid**, page 9



AIM (FULL ACTION)

By taking a full action to aim and line up an attack, you get a bonus to hit when you make the attack. If you’re making a melee or unarmed attack, or a ranged attack at melee range, you get a +5 bonus on your attack roll. If you’re making a ranged attack from a greater distance, you get a +2 bonus on your attack roll. If you aim to hit an immobile object, you hit automatically with a melee attack and get a +4 bonus on a ranged attack.

However, while aiming you lose your dodge bonus, and if you are struck or distracted in any way before your attack, you have to make a Concentration check to maintain your aim. This tends to make aiming melee attacks—or ranged attacks while adjacent to an enemy—extremely unwise.

Once you aim, your next action must be to make the attack. Taking another standard or move action spoils your aim and you lose the aiming bonus.

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

Free Actions

Delay, Drop an Item, Drop Prone, Speak

Move Actions

Command, Manipulate an Object, Move, Stand Up

Standard Actions

Aid, Attack, Begin/Complete Full Action, Combined Attack, Concentrate, Demoralize, Disarm, Feint, Grapple, Mental Grapple, Overrun, Ready, Rush, Startle, Taunt, Total Defense, Trip

Full Actions

Aim, Charge, Move All Out, Recover



ATTACK (STANDARD ACTION)

With a standard action, you can make an attack against any opponent within the attack's range.

Example: *Indrus the archer draws a bead on the evil Lord Grasin across a battlefield. Indrus is Combat +4 and his Dexterity +3. He and Grasin are the same size, so no size modifier applies, but he is between one and two range increments away for his bow, which is a -2 modifier. Since Grasin is in melee with Indrus' ally Maygold, a -4 penalty would normally apply. However, Indrus has the Precise Shot feat, which negates this penalty. His total attack bonus is therefore (4 + 3 - 2) or +5. Lord Grasin is Combat +5 but Dexterity +0, so Indrus needs an attack roll of (10 + 5) or 15 or better to hit. His player rolls an 11, for a 16 total, success!*

SHOOTING OR THROWING INTO MELEE

If you make a ranged attack against an opponent engaged in melee with an ally, you take a -4 penalty on your attack roll because you have to aim carefully to avoid hitting your ally. Two characters are engaged in melee if they are opponents and adjacent to one another. (An unconscious or otherwise immobilized character is not considered engaged unless he or she is actually being attacked.)

If the target is two or more size categories larger than any allies in melee, you ignore the -4 penalty. If you have the Precise Shot feat, you also ignore the penalty for shooting or throwing into melee.

ATTACKING OBJECTS

Objects are harder or easier to hit depending on several factors:

- **Held Objects:** An object held by a character has a base Defense equal to the holder's Defense + 5 + the object's size modifier.
- **Carried or Worn Objects:** Objects carried or worn by a character have a base Defense equal to the character's Defense + the object's size modifier.
- **Immobile Objects:** Immobile objects have a Defense of 5 + the object's size modifier. Adjacent attacks get a +4 bonus to hit immobile objects. (If you take a full action to aim, you get an automatic hit with an adjacent attack, or a +5 bonus with a ranged attack.)

BEGIN/COMPLETE FULL ACTION (STANDARD ACTION)

This action lets you start a full action (such as those listed on the **Actions in Combat** table) at the end of your turn, or complete a full action by using a standard action at the beginning of your turn the round after starting the action.

If you start a full action at the end of your turn, the next action you take *must* be to complete it.

CHARGE (FULL ACTION)

Charging allows you to move more than your speed and attack as a full action. You must move at least 10 feet and may move up to twice your speed. You must stop as soon as you are within striking range of your target (you can't run past the target and attack from another direction).

During the surprise round, you can use the charge action, but you are only allowed to move up to your speed (instead of up to twice your speed). This is also true in other cases where you are limited to a single attack or move action per round.

After moving, you may make a single melee attack. You get a +2 bonus on the attack roll and also take a -2 penalty to your Defense for 1 round (until the beginning of your action the following round).

COMBINED ATTACK (STANDARD ACTION)

Multiple attackers can attempt to combine their attacks to overwhelm an opponent's defenses. The attackers must all delay to the same point in the initiative order (that of the slowest character). Each attacker makes a normal attack roll against the target. Take the largest damage bonus of the attacks that hit, and for each other attack within 5 points of that attack's bonus that hits, add +2. Although a combined attack is similar to aiding someone, it is not the same, and bonuses applying to aid do not apply to combined attacks.

Example: Having determined that the alien predator stalking them is too tough for simple sidearms, the Imperial Marines decide to concentrate their fire the next time they get a shot at it. During the next encounter, the marines delay their actions to the initiative of the slowest member of their squad, then let loose on the alien with all they've got. The alien has a defense modifier of +6, making the Difficulty of the attack 16. The marines are using assault rifles doing +5 damage. Three out of the five in the squad hit the target. The Narrator adds +4 to the weapons' base damage (for the two extra hits) and makes a Toughness save for the alien against +9 damage (+5 base, +4 for combined attacks). The creature disappears into the shadows, leaving behind spatters of hissing acidic blood; it can be hurt!

COMMAND (MOVE ACTION)

Issuing a command to a minion or a character under the effects of a power like Dominate requires a move action. If you want to issue different commands to different groups of minions, each one requires a move action (so you can issue two commands per round as a full action).

CONCENTRATE (STANDARD ACTION)

Concentrating to maintain a particular effect, or focusing intently on a task, counts as a standard action, meaning you cannot attack while concentrating, although you can still take move actions and free actions. If anything happens that may disrupt your concentration, you have to make a Concentration check to maintain it. See the **Concentration** skill in **Chapter Two** for details.

DELAY (FREE ACTION)

By choosing to delay, you act at a later point in the initiative order than your rolled initiative. When you delay, you voluntarily reduce your initiative for the rest of the combat. When your new, lower initiative count comes up later in the same round, you can act normally. You can specify this new initiative total or just wait until some time later in the round and act then, fixing your new initiative at that point.

Delaying is useful if you need to see what your friends or enemies are going to do before deciding what to do yourself. The price you pay is lost initiative. You never get back the time you spent waiting to see what was going to happen.

DELAYING LIMITS

The lowest you can voluntarily lower your initiative is -10 minus your initiative bonus. When the initiative count reaches that point, you must act or forfeit any action for the round. For instance, a character with an initiative bonus of 3 could wait until the initiative count reached 0, then wait for it to reach -10, but would have to act on -13 or forfeit any action for the round. This is primarily an issue when multiple characters delay.

MULTIPLE CHARACTERS DELAYING

If multiple characters are delaying, the one with the highest initiative bonus (or higher Dexterity, in case of a tie) has the advantage. If two or more delaying characters want to act on the same initiative count, the one with the highest bonus goes first. If two or more delaying characters are trying to go after each other, the one with the highest initiative bonus gets to go *last*.

DEMORALIZE (STANDARD ACTION)

You can make an Intimidate check to demoralize an opponent as a standard action. See **Intimidate** in **Chapter Two** for details.

DISARM (STANDARD ACTION)

As a standard action, you may attempt to knock an item such as a weapon or device out of an opponent's hand. Make an attack roll against the defender. If you attempt to disarm with a ranged attack, you are at -4 on your attack roll. If your attack succeeds, make an opposed roll of your attack's damage against the defender's Strength. If you win, the defender is disarmed. If you attempted the disarm action as an unarmed attack, you now have the weapon. Otherwise, the defender drops it. If you make a disarm attempt with a melee weapon and lose, the defender may immediately make an attempt to disarm you as a reaction, without an attack roll.

DROP AN ITEM (FREE ACTION)

Dropping a held item is a free action, although dropping or throwing an item with the intention of accurately hitting something is a standard action.

DROP PRONE (FREE ACTION)

Dropping to a prone position is a free action, although getting up requires a move action unless you are trained in Acrobatics and make a successful check to Instant Up.

FEINT (STANDARD ACTION)

You can make a Bluff check to feint as a standard action. See **Bluff** in **Chapter Two** for details.

GRAPPLE (STANDARD ACTION)

Grappling is wrestling and struggling hand-to-hand. It's tricky, but it can be useful to pin a foe rather than simply pummel him unconscious.

GRAPPLE CHECKS

In a grapple, you need to repeatedly make an opposed grapple check against an opponent. A grapple check is like a melee attack roll. Your attack bonus on a grapple check is:

Grapple Check Attack Bonus = Combat Bonus + Strength modifier + Size Modifier.

SIZE MODIFIER

Your size modifier for a grapple check is +4 for every size category you are above Medium-size or -4 for every size category you are below Medium-size. Like all size modifiers, this one cancels out so opponents of the same size grapple each other normally.

To start a grapple, you first need to grab and hold your target. Make a melee attack to grab the target. If you don't hit the target, you fail to start the grapple. Once you hit, you have grabbed your opponent. Make an opposed grapple check. If you lose, the target is not grappled. If you succeed, you can apply one of the following effects:

- **Damage:** You deal damage like an unarmed strike.
- **Throw:** You can pick up and throw your opponent like an inanimate object. The throw occurs as a move action as part of the grapple (making grabbing, grappling, and throwing an opponent a full-round action). The distance you can throw an opponent is based on weight like any other object, and a throw automatically ends the grapple.
- **Pin:** You hold your opponent immobile for one round. When an opponent has pinned you, you are immobile (but not helpless) for one round. You have a -4 Defense modifier and lose your dodge bonus against attacks while pinned.

- **Break:** You can break the hold an opponent has over an ally.
- **Escape:** You can escape the grapple or a pin. If you are grappled and escape, you are no longer grappling and can take whatever movement you get as your move action. If you're pinned and escape, you are still grappling, but no longer pinned. If more than one opponent is grappling or pinning you, your grapple check result has to beat *all* of their checks to escape. You also can make an Escape Artist check (opposed by your opponent's grapple check) to escape.

While you're grappling, your ability to attack others and defend yourself is limited. You lose your dodge bonus to Defense against opponents you aren't grappling. You can still use it against opponents you are grappling.

You can use powers while grappling, subject to the requirements of the grapple. If you use a power requiring a standard action, you forfeit your grapple check that round, meaning you automatically lose the opposed grapple check. This may be worth it if the power helps you get out of the grapple or otherwise deals with your opponent. The Narrator may require a Concentration check to use some powers while grappled.

Example: Belanna the Pirate Queen grapples with the Thing From the Deep, a tentacled horror intent on dragging her down to a watery grave. Belanna has Combat +5 and Strength +2, giving her a Grapple bonus of +7. Unfortunately, the Thing has Combat +4, Strength +8, and a size modifier of +8, for a Grapple bonus of +20; Belanna is outmatched. The Thing makes a melee attack against Belanna's Defense of 16 and hits, initiating the grapple. The Narrator rolls its check and gets a 27. Belanna's player rolls a 13 and gets a 20, still not enough. The Thing has grappled the Pirate Queen and squeezes her in its tentacle, inflicting damage. Deciding there's no way she'll break free using sheer strength, Belanna's player asks to attack the tentacle holding her with her cutlass. The Narrator agrees and, on her next action, the Pirate Queen strikes, hoping to inflict enough damage to get free, or at least make the Thing think twice.

MULTIPLE GRAPPLERS

Several combatants can be in a single grapple. Up to four can grapple a single opponent of the same size. Opponents one size category smaller than you count for half, opponents one size category larger than you count double, and opponents two or more size categories larger count quadruple. So if you're medium-sized, eight small, four medium, two large, or a single huge opponent can grapple you. In the same way, four small opponents (counting as two opponents) plus one large opponent (counting as two opponents) can grapple you. Additional grapplers can aid their friends with the aid action, granting a bonus to that character's grapple checks for the round. See **Aid**, page 9.

MANIPULATE OBJECT (MOVE ACTION)

In most cases, moving or manipulating an object is a move action. This includes drawing or holstering a weapon, retrieving or putting away a stored object, picking up an object, moving a heavy object, and opening a door.

MENTAL GRAPPLE (STANDARD ACTION)

Characters with the Mind Touch power can grapple an opponent mentally rather than physically, a struggle of mind against mind. Mental grappling uses the same system as physical grappling, with the following differences:

- A mental grapple requires a successful use of Mind Touch to establish mental contact. Mental grapples do not require physical contact, but do require a standard action each round, as usual. If the attacker stops maintaining Mind Touch at any time, the mental grapple ends.
- Mental grapple checks are d20 + the character's Will save or the character's Mind Touch or Psychic Shield bonus (whichever is greater). Size and Strength modifiers do not apply.

- You cannot throw an opponent using a mental grapple.
- Damage inflicted by a mental grapple is based on the attacker's Wisdom bonus rather than Strength bonus.
- Anyone in a mental grapple loses their dodge bonus against all opponents, even the one they are mentally grappling, due to the distraction.
- Anyone involved in a mental grapple must make a Concentration check (Difficulty 20) to do anything else without first escaping the mental grapple. A character can take a different standard action by forgoing the mental grapple check for that round, but then automatically loses the opposed mental grapple check for the round.
- The winner of a mental grapple can choose to break off mental contact, even if another character established it.

The damage from a mental grapple is resisted by a Will save, not a Toughness save. For further clarification, mental grappling is different from the Psychic Blast power because the latter has greater damage potential: damage from a mental grapple is equal to just the attacking adept's Wisdom, whereas damage from Psychic Blast is based on the adept's save Difficulty for powers (one-half adept level *plus* Wisdom). A Psychic Blast can do considerably more damage, especially from a higher-level adept. Psychic Blast also entails no risk, whereas you can lose a mental grapple.

MOVE (MOVE ACTION)

The simplest move action is moving your speed. Many nonstandard modes of movement are also covered under this category, including climbing and swimming (up to one-quarter the character's speed), and crawling (up to 5 feet).

MOVE ALL OUT (FULL ACTION)

You can move all out as a full action. When you do so, you move up to four times your speed in a fairly straight line.

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

OVERRUN (STANDARD ACTION)

You can attempt an overrun as a standard action following a move action or as part of a charge. With an overrun, you plow past, or over, your opponent as you move, moving through his area. You can only make one overrun attempt per action.

First, you must move at least 10 feet in a straight line toward your target. The target chooses to avoid or block you. If he avoids you, you keep moving, since you can always move through an area occupied by someone who lets you pass. If he blocks you, make a trip attack against him (see **Trip**, later in this section). If you succeed in tripping your opponent, you can continue your movement as normal.

If you fail and are tripped in return, you fall prone. If you fail but are not tripped, you have to move 5 feet back the way you came, ending your movement there, essentially stopping directly in front of your opponent. If that space is occupied, you fall prone as well.

READY (STANDARD ACTION)

Readying lets you prepare to take an action later, after you would normally act on your initiative, but before your initiative on your next turn. Readying is a standard action, so you can move as well.

You can ready a single standard or move action. To do so, specify the action you will take and the circumstances under which you will take it. Then, any time before your next action, you may take the readied action as a reaction to those circumstances. For the rest of the fight, your initiative result is the count on which you took the readied action.

Your initiative result becomes the count on which you took the readied action. If you come to your next action and have not yet performed your readied action, you don't get to take the readied action (though you can ready the same action again).

RECOVER (FULL ACTION)

You can spend Conviction to use a full action to recover from damage in combat. One point of Conviction allows you to make an immediate recovery check as a full-round action. See **Recovery** later in this chapter for more information.

RELOAD (MOVE OR FULL-ROUND ACTION)

Reloading a bow is a move action. Reloading a crossbow is a full-round action. Reloading a firearm with an already filled box magazine or speed loader is a move action. Refilling a box magazine or a speed loader, or reloading a revolver without a speed loader or any firearm with an internal magazine, is a full-round action. Loading a belt of linked ammunition is a full-round action. Linking two belts together is a move action.

RUSH (STANDARD ACTION)

You can attempt a rush as a standard action made after a move action, or as part of a charge. (You normally can't make a standard action during a move action; this is an exception.) When you rush, you attempt to push an opponent straight back instead of damaging them. You move with the opponent, up to the limit of your movement.

First, you move adjacent to your target. You and the target make opposed Strength checks. If you and the target are different sizes, the larger one gets a +4 bonus per difference in size category. The target gets a +4 bonus for having more than two legs or being otherwise exceptionally stable.

If you win the opposed Strength check, you push the opponent back 5 feet per point your result exceeds your opponent's. You can't, however, exceed your normal movement speed, so any additional distance is ignored.

If you lose, you move 5 feet back the way you came, ending your movement there (essentially, you stop directly in front of your opponent). If that space is occupied, you also fall prone.

SPEAK (FREE ACTION)

In general, speaking is a free action. Some Narrators may limit the amount you can say during your turn, although characters can generally say quite a bit in the midst of combat. Issuing orders to followers in combat is a move action.

STAND UP (MOVE ACTION)

Standing up from a prone position requires a move action.

STARTLE (STANDARD ACTION)

With the Startle feat (see **Chapter Three**), you can make an Intimidate check to startle an opponent as a standard action.

TAUNT (STANDARD ACTION)

With the Taunt feat (see **Chapter Three**), you can make a Bluff check to demoralize an opponent as a standard action. By taking a -5 penalty on the check, you can attempt to taunt as a move action.



TOTAL DEFENSE (STANDARD ACTION)

Instead of attacking, you can use your standard action to avoid attacks that round. You don't get to attack or perform any other standard action, but you get a +4 to your dodge bonus for the round.

TRIP (STANDARD ACTION)

You can try to trip an opponent as a melee attack. Make a melee attack roll. If the attack succeeds, make a Strength or Dexterity check opposed by the defender's Strength, Dexterity, or Acrobatics check (use whichever ability has the higher modifier in each case). A combatant gets a +4 bonus for each size category exceeding medium or a -4 penalty for each size category smaller than medium (these size modifiers cancel out for opponents of the same size). The defender gets a +4 stability bonus on the check if he has more than two legs or is otherwise more stable than a normal humanoid. If you win, you trip the defender. If you lose, the defender may react immediately by trying to trip you with no need for an attack roll. If you have the Improved Trip feat, the defender doesn't get an opportunity to trip you.

A tripped character is prone, suffering a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls. Prone characters have -4 Defense against attacks from adjacent opponents and +4 Defense against ranged attacks. Standing up from a prone position is a move action. A trip attack may have other effects depending on the situation; for example, tripping an opponent on a narrow ledge or the edge of a cliff may cause the opponent to fall (the Narrator can allow a Difficulty 15 Reflex save to grab the edge of the precipice at the last moment).

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

For actions not covered in any of this material, the Narrator determines how long the action takes.

SKILLS

Most uses of skills in a combat situation are standard actions, but some might be move or full actions. The description of a skill provides the time required to use it. See **Chapter Two**.

FEATS

Certain feats allow you to take special actions in combat. Other feats are not actions in themselves, but grant a bonus when attempting something you can already do. Some feats aren't meant for use within the framework of combat. The individual feat descriptions tell you what you need to know about them. See **Chapter Three**.

COMBAT MODIFIERS

This section covers various maneuvers and situations affecting combat and how it plays out.

AGGRESSIVE STANCE

You can improve your chances of hitting with an attack by sacrificing your defense. Take up to a -4 penalty on your Defense to gain half that amount (up to +2) on your attack rolls for that round.

AREA ATTACK

Some attacks consist of powerful explosions, bursts of energy, or simply chucking really big things at opponents. These *area attacks* cover a larger area than a normal attack, so they're much harder to avoid.

An area attack automatically hits an area the attacker can accurately target, filling the area with its effect. Targets in the area get a Reflex saving throw against a Difficulty of $(10 + \text{attack's bonus or rank})$. The Reflex save Difficulty for an area attack weapon (like a flame thrower or grenade) is equal to 10

COMBAT MODIFIERS			
ATTACK MODIFIER			
Attacker is...	Melee	Ranged	
Dazzled	-1	-1	
Entangled	-2	-2	
On higher ground	+1	+0	
Prone	-4	+0	
Shaken	-2	-2	
Sickened	-2	-2	
DEFENSE MODIFIER			
Defender is...	Melee	Ranged	Dodge Bonus?
Behind cover	+4	+4	Yes
Blinded	-2	-2	No
Concealed	Special	Special	Yes
Dodging	+4	+4	Yes
Entangled	-2	-2	No
Flat-footed	+0	+0	No
Grappling	+0	+0	No
Helpless	5*	5*	No
Kneeling or sitting	-2	+2	Yes
Moving all out	+0	+0	No
Pinned	-4	-4	No
Prone	+4	-4	Yes
Stunned	-2	-2	No
Surprised	-2	-2	No

*The defender's Defense is 5, see **Helpless Defenders**.

+ the weapon's damage bonus, not the attacker's attack bonus. If the save is successful, halve the area attack's rank or bonus (rounding any fractions down) before applying it to the target, which then makes the normal saving throw against the attack. Targets with the Evasion feat suffer no effect if they make their Reflex save. Targets with Improved Evasion suffer only half effect even if they *fail* the save, and no effect if they succeed.

If you delay or ready a move action, you can try to avoid an area effect entirely. If you move before the attack and have sufficient movement to get out of the area, then you're safe. You must choose how far you move *before* the Narrator tells you the result of the area attack, so be sure you move far enough!

You can also spend a Conviction point to emulate the Evasion feat for one round, allowing you to suffer no effect from an area attack if you succeed on your Reflex saving throw.

Example: *Boom!* A grenade goes off perilously close to Agent O'Connor, who dives to avoid the blast in time. The explosion is an area attack, with +5 damage and a Reflex save Difficulty of 15. Agent O'Connor has a +7 Reflex save, and his player rolls a 9, giving him a 16, enough for a successful save. So the Narrator halves the grenade's damage to +2 (rounding down) and has O'Connor's player make a Toughness save for the agent, who may yet avoid harm. Meanwhile, O'Connor's ever-alert partner Agent Black has the Evasion feat, so when she also succeeds on her Reflex save, she takes no damage from the explosion, not even needing a Toughness saving throw.

AUTOFIRE ATTACK

An *autofire* attack is a volley of multiple shots with a single standard action. To use an autofire attack against a single target, make your attack roll normally. The amount by which your attack roll succeeds applies a bonus to the attack's saving throw Difficulty: +1 per 2 points the attack roll exceeds the target's Defense.

If a target's defense (involving special resistance or immunity) would normally ignore the attack before any increase in the save Difficulty, then the autofire attack has no effect as usual; a volley of multiple shots is no more likely to penetrate than just one.

An autofire weapon generally holds 30 rounds in a clip, and an autofire attack uses up 10 rounds, unless specified otherwise in the weapon's description.

MULTIPLE TARGETS

You can use autofire to attack multiple targets at once as a full action by "walking" the autofire attack from target to target. Choose a line of 5-foot squares no greater in number than your attack bonus. You may make attack rolls to hit targets, one target at a time, starting at one end of the line and continuing to the other end. You suffer a penalty to each of your attack rolls equal to the total number of squares. If you miss one target, you may still attempt to hit the others.

COVERING FIRE

An autofire attack can provide cover for an ally. Take a full action and choose an ally in your line of sight, who receives a +4 dodge bonus against enemies in your line of sight and in range of your autofire attack. (You have to be able to shoot at them to get them to keep their heads down or this maneuver won't work.) You cannot lay down covering fire for an ally in melee. Each character after the first who lays down covering fire for the same individual grants an additional +1 dodge bonus. All covering fire attackers receive a free attack if an opponent chooses to ignore the dodge bonus granted to the protected target.

SUPPRESSION FIRE

An autofire attack can lay down a volley to force opponents to seek cover. Take a full-round action and choose an opponent, who receives a -4 penalty to attack rolls and checks for one round while in your line

of sight and in range of your attack. An opponent who chooses not to seek cover ignores the attack modifier from suppression fire, but is automatically attacked (a free action for you). You cannot lay down suppression fire on an opponent in melee. Each character after the first who lays down suppression fire for the same target imposes an additional -1 penalty. All suppression fire attackers receive a free attack if the target fails to take cover or otherwise get out of their sight.

CONDITIONS

Generally speaking, any situational modifier created by the attacker's position or tactics applies to the attack roll, while any situational modifier created by the defender's position, state, or tactics applies to the defender's Defense. The Narrator judges what bonuses and penalties apply, using the **Combat Modifiers** table as a guideline.

COVER

Taking cover behind a wall, tree, or other obstacle provides a +4 bonus to Defense. Cover is measured relative to the attacker. For example, hiding behind a low wall provides no cover against an opponent hovering above you, but does provide cover against an opponent on the other side of the wall.

COVER AND REFLEX SAVES

Cover grants you a +2 bonus on Reflex saves against attacks originating from a point on the other side of the cover from you.

COVER AND STEALTH CHECKS

You can use cover to make a Stealth check to avoid being seen. Without cover, you need concealment (see Concealment later in this chapter) to make a Stealth check.

TOTAL COVER

If you cannot draw a line between you and a target without intersecting cover, the target has total cover. You can't make an attack against a target with total cover.

VARYING DEGREES OF COVER

In some cases, cover may provide a greater bonus to Defense and Reflex saves. In such situations, the normal cover bonuses to Defense and Reflex saves can be doubled (to +8 and +4, respectively). A creature with this improved cover gains a +10 bonus on Stealth checks.

STRIKING COVER

If it ever becomes important to know whether the cover was actually hit by an incoming attack, the Narrator should determine if the attack roll would have hit the protected target without the cover. If the attack roll falls within a range low enough to miss the target with cover but high enough to hit the target if there had been no cover, the cover is hit. This can be particularly important to know in cases when a character uses another character as cover.

In such a case, if the cover is struck *and* the attack roll exceeds the Defense of the covering character, the covering character takes the damage intended for the target. If the attack roll is lower than the Defense of the covering character, but higher than the Defense of the covered character, the original target is hit instead. The covering character avoided the attack and didn't provide cover after all! Covering characters can voluntarily lower defense bonus to ensure they provide cover.

CONCEALMENT

Concealment includes circumstances where nothing physically blocks an attack, but something interferes with the attacker's accuracy. Typically, concealment is provided by things like fog, smoke, shadows, darkness, foliage, and so forth.

CONCEALMENT MISS CHANCE

Concealment gives the subject of a successful attack a 20% chance (a roll of 17 or higher on d20) that the attacker missed because of the concealment. If the attack roll hits, the defender makes a miss chance roll to avoid being struck. Multiple concealment conditions do not stack.

CONCEALMENT AND STEALTH CHECKS

You can use concealment to make a Stealth check to avoid being seen. Without concealment, you usually need cover to make a Stealth check.

TOTAL CONCEALMENT

A target you cannot perceive with any of your accurate senses has total concealment from you. You can't directly attack an opponent with total concealment, though you can attack into the area you think he occupies. A successful attack into an area occupied by a target with total concealment has a 50% miss chance (a d20 roll of 11 or higher).

IGNORING CONCEALMENT

Concealment isn't always effective. Characters with Night Vision can see clearly for a greater distance with the same light source than other characters, for example.

CONCEALMENT		
Concealment	Example	Miss Chance
Partial	Fog; moderate darkness; foliage; precipitation	17 or higher
Total	Total darkness; invisibility; attacker blind; dense fog	11 or higher

DEFENSIVE STANCE

You improve your defense by sacrificing accuracy. Take a penalty of up to -4 on your attack rolls to gain half that amount (up to +2) as a dodge bonus for that round.



FINESSE ATTACK

Most attacks rely on sheer power to overcome the Toughness of a target's armor. Finesse attacks target the weak points of an opponent's defenses. Characters can normally make finesse attacks with melee weapons. Characters with the Improved Precise Shot feat can also make finesse attacks with ranged weapons, so long as they are within one range increment of their target.

To make a finesse attack, increase the Difficulty of your attack roll by an amount equal to the Toughness bonus of your opponent's armor. If your attack hits, the target does not get the armor's bonus on the Toughness save; the attack bypasses it altogether. If your attack roll fails, however, your attack glances harmlessly off the target's armor or, if you would have missed the target's normal Defense, misses entirely.

Creatures immune to critical hits are also immune to finesse attacks; their Toughness doesn't have any significant weak points to exploit. Also note that finesse attacks only affect the Toughness bonuses from armor and similar defenses. The natural Toughness bonuses from Constitution, size, and creature type are unaffected.

Example: Having determined from his first shot that Lord Grasin's armor is too tough, Indrus the archer closes the distance, moving behind cover, to get a better shot at the evil overlord. Since he has the Improved Precise Shot feat, Indrus can make a finesse attack using his bow. Grasin has Defense 15 and is wearing plate-mail (a +5 Toughness bonus). So Indrus increases the Difficulty of his attack from 15 to 20 (adding Lord Grasin's armor bonus). His player rolls: a 14, which adds to Indrus' attack bonus of +7 for a total of 21, a hit! Since he made a finesse attack this time, Indrus' arrow damage ignores Grasin's armor and the villain makes his Toughness saving throw using just his Constitution bonus as the arrow lodges in a vulnerable joint or opening in his armor.

GANGING UP

Typically, up to eight attackers can gang up on an individual target, provided they have room to maneuver. If the defender can fight side

by side with allies, back into a corner, fight through a doorway, and so forth, attackers can't gang up as easily.

Picture the eight attackers as evenly spaced out surrounding the defender. The defender can reduce the opportunity for attackers to gang up based on how much of the area around himself he can block off. Backed against a wall, a character only allows five attackers to get at him. Backed into a corner, only three attackers can get at him at a time. If the defender is standing in a doorway, the opponent in front of him can attack normally and one opponent on either side can attack as well, but the defender benefits from cover. If the defender is fighting in a 5-foot-wide corridor, only one attacker can get at him (unless attackers are coming at him from both directions).

The above rules are for medium and small characters. Larger characters present room for more attackers to get at them and combatants with ranged weapons can get at defenders more easily.

HELPLESS DEFENDERS

A *helpless* foe—bound, sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise at your mercy—is an easy target. You sometimes can approach a target unawares and treat the opponent as helpless if the Narrator allows.

REGULAR ATTACK

A melee attack against a helpless character is at a +4 bonus on the attack roll (equivalent to attacking a prone target). A ranged attack gets no special bonus. A helpless character's Defense score is 5, the same as an inanimate object.

COUP DE GRACE

As a full-round action, you can deliver a *coup de grace* to a helpless opponent adjacent to you. You automatically hit and score a critical hit. If the defender takes damage but is not knocked out or dying, he must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 10 + damage bonus) or be knocked out (for a non-lethal attack) or dying (for a lethal attack). You can't deliver a *coup de grace* against a target immune to critical hits. You can deliver



a coup de grace against a target with total concealment, but doing this requires two consecutive full-round actions (one to feel around and accurately perceive the target and another to deliver the coup de grace).

MINIONS

Minions are minor characters subject to special rules in combat, and generally easier to defeat than normal characters. The following rules apply to minions:

- Minions cannot score critical hits against non-minions.
- Non-minions can take 10 on attack rolls against minions (attackers normally cannot take 10 on attack rolls).
- If a minion fails a Toughness saving throw, the minion is knocked unconscious (non-lethal damage) or dying (lethal damage). Attackers can choose a lesser effect, if desired.
- The Impossible Toughness Save rule (See Damage and Recovery) does *not* apply to minions.

MOUNTED COMBAT

Your mount acts on your initiative as you direct it. You move at its speed, but the mount uses its action to move. (You can take move actions, like drawing your weapon, normally.) Without you to guide it, your mount avoids combat.

COMBAT WHILE MOUNTED

With a Difficulty 5 Ride check, you can guide your mount with your knees so as to use both hands to attack or defend yourself. This is a free action. When you attack a creature that is smaller than your mount and is on foot, you get the +1 bonus on melee attacks for being on higher ground.

If your mount charges you also take the -2 Defense penalty associated with a charge. If you make an attack at the end of the charge, you receive the bonus gained from the charge. When charging mounted, you deal +3 damage with a lance.

You can use ranged weapons while your mount is taking a double move, but at a -4 penalty on the attack roll. You can use ranged weapons while your mount is moving all out as well, but at a -8 penalty. In either case, you make the attack roll when your mount has completed half its movement.

USING POWERS WHILE MOUNTED

You can use powers normally if your mount moves up to a normal move (its speed) either before or after you use the power. If you have your mount move both before and after you use a power, then you have to make a Concentration check due to the vigorous motion (Difficulty 10) to successfully use the power. If the mount is moving all out, you can use powers when the mount has moved up to twice its speed, but your Concentration check is Difficulty 15.

IF YOUR MOUNT FALLS IN BATTLE

If your mount falls, you have to succeed on a Difficulty 15 Ride check to make a soft fall and take no damage. If the check fails, you take +2 lethal damage.

IF YOU ARE DROPPED

If you are knocked unconscious, you have a 50 percent chance (a roll of 11 or better) to stay in the saddle (6 or better if you're in a military saddle). Otherwise you fall and take +2 lethal damage.

SUNDERING

Sometimes you need to attack or break an object, such as when you want to strike an opponent's weapon or break down a door.

STRIKING AN OBJECT

Objects are easier to hit than characters because they usually don't move, but many are tough enough to shrug off damage.

OBJECT DEFENSE AND BONUSES TO ATTACK

Objects are harder or easier to hit depending on several factors.

- **Held Objects:** An object held by a character has a base Defense equal to the character's Defense + 5 + the object's size modifier. Objects use the same size modifiers as creatures (see **Size** in **Chapter Eight**).
- **Carried or Worn Objects:** Objects carried or worn by a character have a base Defense equal to the character's Defense + the object's size modifier.
- **Immobile Objects:** Immobile objects have a Defense of 5 + the object's size modifier. Adjacent attacks get a +4 bonus to hit immobile objects. (If you take a full-round action to aim, you get an automatic hit with an adjacent attack or a +5 bonus with a ranged attack.)

INEFFECTIVE ATTACKS

The Narrator may determine certain attacks just can't effectively damage certain objects. For example, you will have a hard time breaking open an iron door with a knife, or cutting a rope with a club. In these cases, the Narrator may rule that you inflict no damage to the object at all.

EFFECTIVE ATTACKS

The Narrator may rule certain attacks are especially effective against some objects. For example, it's easy to light a curtain on fire or rip a piece of cloth. In these cases, the Narrator may increase your damage bonus against the object (or apply a penalty to its Toughness save) or simply say the object is automatically destroyed by a successful attack.

TOUGHNESS

Each object has a Toughness score representing how well it resists damage. An object's Toughness works like a character's Toughness. To determine how much damage an object takes from an attack, roll d20 + Toughness against a Difficulty of 10 + the attack's damage bonus. The Toughness scores given on the **Substance Toughness** table are for approximately 1 inch of the material. Heavier objects increase their Toughness by +1 per doubling in thickness, so a foot-thick stone wall has a Toughness of 12 (base Toughness 8, +4 for approximately four doubling of thickness). Characters can attempt to break through heavier objects a little at a time, rather than all at once, such as chipping away at a stone wall inch by inch.

SUBSTANCE TOUGHNESS

Substance	Toughness
Paper	-10
Glass	0
Ice	0
Rope	0
Soil	2
Wood	5
Stone	8
Iron	10
Steel	15

DAMAGE TO OBJECTS

Objects suffer both non-lethal and lethal damage as lethal, but ignore non-lethal damage with a bonus less than their Toughness. A “wounded” object is damaged and suffers a 1 point reduction in Toughness. A “disabled” object is badly damaged. Disabled equipment and devices no longer function, while disabled barriers have holes punched through them. A “dying” object is destroyed. Damaged and disabled objects can be repaired. It’s up to the Narrator whether or not a destroyed object is repairable; if it is, the Difficulty of the Craft check is the same as for creating an entirely new item.

BREAKING ITEMS

In the case of a character trying to break something outright, such as smashing down a door or snapping bonds, make a Strength check with a Difficulty of 20 + the object’s Toughness. Success destroys the object, while failure does no damage. The only difference between this and attacking an object is the character can’t slowly wear down an object’s Toughness in this way.

SURPRISE ATTACKS

An attack may come from an unexpected quarter. An attack that catches the target off-guard in some way is called a *surprise attack*.

To make a surprise attack, you must catch your target unawares. You can make a surprise attack in the following situations:

- When you have total concealment from your target or the target otherwise hasn’t noticed your presence.
- When you use an interaction skill to throw your target off-balance, such as making a feint using Bluff.
- When your target is stunned.
- When you surprise a target at the beginning of combat.
- When you do something unexpected (in the Narrator’s judgment).

Characters with the Uncanny Dodge feat cannot be surprise-attacked so long as they are capable of taking free actions (not stunned or helpless).

The target of a surprise attack loses any dodge bonus to Defense against the attack and suffers an additional -2 Defense penalty.

OPTION: ESCALATING TOUGHNESS

Toughness generally does not improve as characters gain levels, with the exception of feats like Defensive Roll and Tough, which provide Toughness save bonuses at the expense of not being able to take other feats. More experienced (high-level) heroes generally avoid harm more through Combat bonus (the ability to dodge or parry attacks), improvements in their Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws (which ward off many other hazards), and the ability to spend more Conviction on poor Toughness saves.

This creates a scenario where even veteran characters may fall victim to a bad Toughness save against an attack. If you want higher-level characters to be literally tougher, you can assign a Toughness save bonus based on role and level equal to the character’s base Combat bonus. So a warrior, for example, gets a +1 Toughness bonus per level (the same as the warrior’s Combat bonus).

This option helps with character longevity, but may produce less realistic results as high-level heroes become nigh invulnerable to smaller attacks, so it depends on the style of game you want to have. The default *True20* rule is a largely fixed Toughness bonus based solely on Constitution and any modifying feats or worn armor.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

If you wield a second weapon in your off hand, you can get one extra attack per round with that weapon. You suffer a -6 penalty with your regular attack or attacks with your primary hand and a -10 penalty to the attack with your off hand when you fight this way. You can reduce these penalties in two ways:

- If your off-hand weapon is natural or Small or smaller, penalties are reduced by 2 each. (An unarmed strike is always considered a to be in this category.)
- The Two-Weapon Fighting feat lessens the primary hand penalty by 4, and the off-hand penalty by 6 (to -2 and -4, or -2 and -2 if the off-hand weapon is natural or Small or smaller).

If you attack the same target with both attacks and both hit, increase the damage of the attack with the higher damage bonus by +2, much like a use of combined attack.

The same rules apply for throwing two weapons (one with either hand) or wielding two ranged weapons, one in each hand.

DAMAGE AND RECOVERY

When you’re hit with a damaging attack, you make a Toughness saving throw, which measures the ability to avoid or shrug off damage.

Resisting damage has a base Difficulty of 15 plus a modifier equal to the attack’s damage bonus. For unarmed attacks, this is the attacker’s Strength score. For weapons, this is the weapon’s damage plus the attacker’s Strength score. For example, an attacker with Strength +1, wielding a short sword (damage modifier +2) has a total damage modifier of +3. So, resisting this damage is Difficulty 18 (15 + 3)..

Toughness Saving Throw =
d20 + Constitution + Feats + Armor -
Toughness save penalties from injury versus DC15 +
Attack’s Damage Bonus

If the Toughness saving throw succeeds, the target suffers no significant damage, nothing more than a slight scratch, bruise, or torn clothing. If the Toughness save fails, the target suffers damage; how much damage depends on the type of attack (lethal or non-lethal) and the amount the Toughness save result is below the Difficulty, as shown on the **Toughness Saving Throw Table**.

TOUGHNESS SAVING THROW

Result	Non-lethal	Lethal
succeeds	no effect	no effect
fails	bruised	bruised + hurt
fails by 5	dazed	stunned + wounded
fails by 10	staggered	staggered + disabled
fails by 15	unconscious	unconscious + dying

NON-LETHAL DAMAGE

Non-lethal Damage comes from unarmed attacks (punches and kicks), as well as specific non-lethal weapons, like saps.

- A failed Toughness save against a non-lethal attack means the target is *bruised*. Each bruised result imposes a -1 penalty on further saves against non-lethal damage, but does not affect saves against lethal damage.
- If the Toughness save fails by 5 or more, the target is *dazed*; mark down a dazed condition on the Damage Track. A dazed condition

also imposes a -1 modifier on further saves against non-lethal damage. You can have more than one dazed condition.

- If the Toughness save fails by 10 or more, the target is *staggered*; check off the staggered box on the Damage Track. If a target is already staggered and suffers another staggered result, check off the unconscious box.
- If the Toughness save fails by 15 or more, the target is *unconscious*; check off the unconscious box on the Damage Track.

LETHAL DAMAGE

Lethal Damage is inflicted by weapons, from cutting and piercing weapons like swords and spears to heavy bludgeoning weapons like hammers and maces.

- A failed Toughness save against a lethal attack means the target is *hurt*. Each hurt result imposes a -1 penalty on further Toughness saves against lethal damage.
- If the Toughness save fails by 5 or more, the target is *wounded*; mark down a wounded condition on the Damage Track. A wounded result also imposes a -1 modifier on further Toughness saves. You can have more than one wounded condition.
- If the Toughness save fails by 10 or more, the target is *disabled*; check off the disabled box on the Damage Track. If a target is already disabled and suffers another disabled result, check off the dying box.
- If the Toughness save fails by 15 or more, the target is *dying*; check off the dying box on the Damage Track. If a target is already dying and suffers another dying result, check off the dead box.
- If the Toughness save fails by 20 or more, the target is dead, killed instantly by the damage.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Lethal damage also inflicts non-lethal damage. Whenever your hero suffers lethal damage, check off the corresponding non-lethal damage, so a hero who is wounded is also dazed, a hero who is hurt is also bruised, and so forth. The effects of the conditions are cumulative..

DAMAGE OVERFLOW

If a target suffers a result that is already checked off, check off the next highest result. So, if a target is already staggered and suffers another staggered result, check off the unconscious box. If the unconscious box is checked and the character suffers more non-lethal damage, check off the first available lethal box (so go to disabled, dying, and so forth).

DAMAGE TRACK				
0	5+	10+	15+	20+
Bruised	Dazed	Staggered	Unconscious	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hurt	Wounded	Disabled	Dying	Dead

IMPOSSIBLE TOUGHNESS SAVES

If the Difficulty of a Toughness save is so high the hero cannot possibly succeed, even with a 20 on the die roll, the Toughness save is still rolled to determine the effect (the amount by which the character misses the Difficulty). A natural 20 means the character is only dazed or wounded, regardless of the Difficulty. Fate intervenes to spare the character from

otherwise certain doom. Narrators interested in realistic consequences for damage should ignore this rule.

CRITICAL HITS

A critical hit increases an attack's damage bonus, meaning critical hits can potentially inflict more serious damage.

DAMAGE CONDITIONS

Damaged characters can suffer from any of seven *conditions*, given on the Damage Track and described here.

The roll, save, check, and Defense penalties incurred by the damage conditions do not stack. Thus, even if a hero has multiple wounded conditions after a combat the -2 penalty on checks, attack rolls, and Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves is only applied once and remains until all wounded conditions are healed. The only penalty that does stack with multiple instances is the -1 penalty on Toughness saves.

DAZED

Dazed characters lose one full-round action after suffering a dazed result; they can take no actions, but retain their normal Defense. The following round, they can act normally.

DAZZLED

The creature's vision is impaired: -1 on attack rolls, Notice checks, and Search checks.

STAGGERED

Staggered characters lose one full-round action after suffering a staggered result. They can take no actions, lose their dodge and parry bonuses to Defense, and have a -2 penalty to Defense. In the following rounds, staggered characters can only take a standard or a move action, not both.

UNCONSCIOUS

Unconscious characters pass out and are helpless, unable to do anything until they awaken.

WOUNDED

Wounded characters are shaken, suffering a -2 penalty on all checks, including attack rolls and Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws, but *not* Toughness saves or Constitution checks. This persists until all wounded conditions are eliminated. Additionally, a wounded character is stunned for one round after being wounded. They can take no actions, lose their dodge bonus to Defense, and have a -2 penalty to Defense.

DISABLED

Disabled characters are badly injured. If a disabled character takes a standard action, he falls unconscious and begins dying on the following round.

DYING

Dying characters have to make a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) at the beginning of each round. On a failed check, the character dies. On a successful check, the character lives for another round (and must make a check the following round). If the check succeeds by 10 or more (Difficulty 20), the character's condition becomes disabled and unconscious.

DEAD

Dead characters are, well, dead. This usually means the end for the character, although some powerful healers can restore life to the recently deceased.

RECOVERY

Recovering from damage requires a Constitution check (Difficulty 10). A successful check erases the damage condition, while an unsuccessful check means there is no significant improvement for that time period.

You can make a recovery check once per minute for staggered and unconscious, once per hour for wounded, and once per day for disabled. Dying has its own particular check; once you are stable, dying becomes unconscious and disabled, which you recover from normally (one minute for unconscious, one day for disabled).

You can spend a Conviction point to get an immediate recovery check. You can also spend Conviction to improve the result of your recovery check, like any other die-roll. See **Using Conviction** in **Chapter One** for more information.

Bruised and dazed conditions fade automatically at a rate of one per minute. Hurt conditions do the same at a rate of one per hour. You can spend a Conviction point to immediately erase all bruised, dazed, and hurt conditions after, but not during, a conflict. Warriors can use their role's core ability to spend a Conviction point to erase all bruised and hurt conditions at any time, even during combat.

You recover lethal and non-lethal conditions in the following order: You start at the bottom rightmost condition on the Damage Track: the character recovers from that condition as specified, then moves to the condition above it, then to the bottom of the next column to the left, and so forth until completely recovered.

For example, a Disabled character first recovers from being Disabled, then Staggered, then one shift to the left to recover from being



Wounded, the Dazed (although since Dazed lasts for only a round, it's no longer a concern), then Hurt, and finally Bruised.

FATIGUE

Characters can suffer from *fatigue* as well as damage. This usually results from tasks requiring great effort, such as moving all out, exertion in difficult environments, and using powers. There are three fatigue levels: winded, fatigued, and exhausted.

WINDED

The character suffers a -1 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity, and cannot move all out or charge. A winded character who suffers an additional fatigue result becomes fatigued.

FATIGUED

The character cannot move all out or charge, and suffers a -2 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character who suffers an additional fatigue result becomes exhausted.

EXHAUSTED

The character is near collapse. Exhausted characters move at half normal speed and suffer a -3 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. An exhausted character who suffers an additional fatigue result falls unconscious (and must recover from it normally before recovering from fatigue; see **Damage Conditions**).

RECOVERY

Every hour of rest, a hero makes a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) to recover from fatigue. Success reduces the character's fatigue condition by one level (from exhausted to fatigued, from fatigued to winded, winded to normal). A full ten hours of rest allows any character to completely recover from all fatigue conditions.

CONDITION SUMMARY

This section describes the different adverse conditions that can affect characters. If multiple conditions apply to a character, apply all of their effects. If effects conflict, apply the most severe.

ABILITY DAMAGED

The character has temporarily lost 1 or more ability score points. Lost ability score points return at a rate of 1 per day.

ABILITY DRAINED

The character has permanently lost 1 or more ability score points. Points lost to ability drain do not recover.

BLINDED

The character cannot see at all, and thus everything has total visual concealment from him. He has a 50% chance to miss in combat, loses his dodge bonus to Defense, and suffers an additional -2 modifier to Defense. He moves at half speed and suffers a -4 penalty on most Strength and Dexterity-based skill checks. He cannot make Notice (spot) skill checks or perform any other activity (such as reading) requiring vision.

BRUISED

The character has suffered some minor damage. Each bruised condition imposes a -1 penalty on Toughness saves to resist further non-lethal damage.

DAZED

A dazed character can take no actions, but retains dodge bonus to Defense.

DEAD

The character is dead. A dead body generally starts to decay, but effects allowing a character to come back from death restore the body to full health or to its condition immediately prior to death. Either way, characters that have come back from the dead needn't worry about rigor mortis, decomposition, and other similar sorts of unpleasantness.

DEAFENED

A deafened character cannot hear and suffers a -4 penalty to initiative checks. He cannot make Notice (listen) checks.

DEBILITATED

The character has one or more ability scores lowered below -5. A character with debilitated Strength falls prone and is helpless. A character with debilitated Dexterity is paralyzed. A character with debilitated Constitution is dying. A character with debilitated Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma is unconscious.

DISABLED

A disabled character is conscious and able to act, but is badly injured. He can take only a single attack or move action each round, and if he performs any strenuous action, his condition changes to dying after the completing the action. Strenuous actions include moving all out, attacking, or using any ability requiring physical exertion or mental concentration.

DYING

A dying character is unconscious and near death. Upon gaining this condition, the character must immediately make a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) at the beginning of each round. On a failed check, the character dies. On a successful check, the character lives for another round (and must make a check the following round). If the check succeeds by 10 or more (Difficulty 20), the character's condition becomes disabled and unconscious.

ENTANGLED

An entangled character suffers a -2 penalty to effective Dexterity. If the bonds are anchored to an immobile object, the entangled character cannot move. Otherwise, he can move at half speed, but can't move all out or charge. An already entangled character that is entangled again becomes helpless.

EXHAUSTED

Exhausted characters are near collapse. They move at half normal speed and suffer a -3 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. An exhausted character suffering another fatigue result falls unconscious (and must recover from it normally).

FASCINATED

A fascinated character has been entranced by an effect. They stand or sit, taking no actions other than to pay attention to the fascinating effect, for as long as the effect lasts. The character takes a -4 penalty on checks made as reactions, such as Notice checks. Any potential threat allows the fascinated character a new saving throw or resistance check to overcome the fascination. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon or aiming an attack at the fascinated character, automatically breaks the fascination. An ally can shake a fascinated character free of the effect with an aid action.

FATIGUED

Fatigued characters cannot move all out or charge and suffer a -2 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character who

does something else that would normally cause fatigue becomes exhausted.

FLAT-FOOTED

A character who has not yet acted during a combat is flat-footed, not yet reacting to the situation. A flat-footed character loses his dodge and parry bonuses to Defense.

FRIGHTENED

Some things are just too terrifying for a mind to handle. A frightened character tries to flee from the source of the fear as quickly as possible. If unable to flee, the character is shaken.

GRAPPLED

A grappled character is engaged in wrestling or some other form of hand-to-hand struggle with one or more attackers. They cannot move or take any action more complicated than making a barehanded attack, using a small weapon, or attempting to break free from the grapple. In addition, grappled characters lose any dodge bonus against opponents they aren't grappling.

HELPLESS

Sleeping, bound, paralyzed or unconscious characters are all considered helpless. Enemies can make advantageous attacks against helpless characters, or even deliver a coup de grace. A melee attack against a helpless character is at a +4 bonus on the attack roll (equivalent to attacking a prone target). A ranged attack gets no special bonus. A helpless character's Defense score is 5, the same as an inanimate object.

HURT

The character has suffered minor damage. Each injured condition imposes a -1 penalty on Toughness saves to resist further lethal damage.

INCORPOREAL

An incorporeal character has no physical body. Incorporeal characters are immune to attacks from corporeal sources. They can be harmed only by other incorporeal beings or supernatural attacks.

INVISIBLE

An invisible character is virtually undetectable. Invisible characters gain a +2 bonus to hit defenders unaware of them, and such defenders lose their dodge bonus to Defense. Attacks against invisible characters have a 50% miss chance.

NAUSEATED

Nauseated characters can only take a single move action each round, meaning they are unable to attack (or take other standard actions) or move all out (or take other full-round actions).

NORMAL

The character is unharmed and unaffected by other conditions, acting normally.

PANICKED

A panicked character flees as fast as possible or cowers, dazed, if unable to get away. A panicked character defends normally but cannot attack.

PARALYZED

A paralyzed character stands rigid and helpless, unable to move or act physically. Strength and Dexterity are debilitated, but the character

may take purely mental actions. A paralyzed character's Defense score is 5, the same as an inanimate object.

PINNED

A pinned character is held immobile (but not helpless) in a grapple. Pinned characters lose their dodge bonus and suffer a -4 penalty to Defense.

PRONE

The character is lying on the ground. He suffers a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls. Opponents receive a +4 bonus on melee attacks against him but a -4 penalty on ranged attacks. Standing up is a move action.

SHAKEN

A shaken character has a -2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and checks (except for Toughness saves and Constitution checks).

SICKENED

A sickened character has a -2 penalty on attack rolls and checks.

SLOWED

A slowed character can only take a standard or move action each round (not both). The character takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls, Defense, and Reflex saves. A slowed character moves at half normal speed. A slowed character can move at full speed and attack only by charging (see **Charge** in this chapter).

STABLE

A stable character is no longer dying, but is still unconscious and disabled and must recover from those conditions normally.

STAGGERED

A staggered character can take a single move or standard action each round, not both. Any further damage to a staggered character shifts the character's condition to unconscious.

STUNNED

The character loses any dodge bonus to Defense, takes a -2 modifier to Defense, and cannot take actions other than reactions.

UNCONSCIOUS

An unconscious character has been knocked out and is helpless.

WINDED

A winded character suffers a -1 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity and cannot move all out or charge. A winded character suffering an additional fatigue result becomes fatigued.

WOUNDED

The character has suffered damage. Each wounded condition imposes a -1 penalty on Toughness saves to resist further damage. The character is also stunned for one full round after being wounded, and is shaken until all wounded conditions are healed.

HAZARDS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Heroes may encounter any number of dangerous environments and hazards in their travels. This section looks at these hazards and how to handle them in game terms.

ACID

Corrosive acids deal +4 damage per round of exposure, except in the case of total immersion (such as into a vat of acid), which deals +20 damage per round. An attack with acid, such as from a hurled vial or a monster's acidic spittle, counts as a round of exposure.

The fumes from most acids are poisonous. Those who come close enough to a large body of acid to dunk a creature in it must make a Difficulty 13 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Constitution damage. All such characters must make a second save 1 minute later or take another 1 point of Constitution damage.

Creatures immune to acid's caustic properties might still drown in it if they are totally immersed and need to breathe (see **Suffocation**).

COLD

An unprotected character in cold weather must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15, +1 per previous check) or receive a level of fatigue. Additional failed saves cause further levels of fatigue. Once a character is unconscious, failed saves cause the character to become disabled, then dying.

Characters may make Survival checks to receive a bonus on this saving throw (see the skill's description for further information). Characters in cold weather (below 40° F) make a Fortitude save each hour. In conditions of severe cold or exposure (below 0° F), an unprotected character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes. Characters in severe cold conditions wearing winter clothing only need check once per hour for cold damage.

Extreme cold (below -20° F) deals +2 lethal damage per minute in addition to requiring a Fortitude save every minute. Winter clothing makes the damage non-lethal per minute and reduces the Fortitude save to every 10 minutes.

ICE

Characters walking on ice move slower (see **Hampered Movement** earlier in this chapter) and the Difficulties for Acrobatics and Climb checks increase by +5. Characters in prolonged contact with ice may run the risk of taking damage from the cold.

DARKNESS

Characters with normal vision or the Night Vision feat can be rendered completely blind by putting out the lights. Torches or lanterns can be blown out by sudden gusts of wind. Even supernatural light sources can be dispelled or countered.

For purposes of the following points, a blinded creature is one who simply can't see through the surrounding darkness.

- Creatures blinded by darkness lose the ability to deal extra damage due to precision (for example, a surprise attack).
- Blinded creatures are hampered in their movement (see **Hampered Movement** earlier in this chapter). Blinded creatures can't move all out or charge.
- All opponents have total concealment from a blinded creature, so the blinded creature has a 50 percent miss chance in combat (a roll of 10 or less). A blinded creature must first pinpoint the location of an opponent in order to attack the right area; if the blinded creature launches an attack without pinpointing its foe, it attacks a random area within range.



- A blinded creature loses its dodge bonus to Defense and takes a -2 penalty to Defense.
- A blinded creature takes a -4 penalty on Search checks and most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks, including any with an armor check penalty. A creature blinded by darkness automatically fails any skill check relying on vision.
- A creature blinded by darkness can make a Notice check as a free action each round in order to locate foes by hearing (Difficulty equal to opponents' Stealth checks). A successful check lets a blinded character hear an unseen creature "over there somewhere." It's almost impossible to pinpoint the exact location of an unseen creature. A Notice check that beats the Difficulty by 20 reveals the unseen creature's location (but the creature still has total concealment from the blinded character).
- If a blinded creature is struck by an unseen foe, the blinded character pinpoints the location of the attacker (until the unseen creature moves, of course).
- A creature with the scent ability automatically pinpoints unseen creatures within 5 feet of its location.

FALLING

The basic rule for falling damaging is simple: +2 damage per 10 feet fallen, to a maximum of +40 (at 200 feet).

If a character deliberately jumps instead of merely slipping or falling, the damage is the same but with a +2 bonus on the Toughness save. A Difficulty 15 Acrobatics or Jump check grants an additional +2 bonus.

Falls onto yielding surfaces (soft ground, mud) do 2 points less damage. This reduction is cumulative with Toughness save bonuses from deliberate falls and skill checks. Falls into water do 4 points less damage.

Characters who deliberately dive into water take no damage on a successful Difficulty 15 Acrobatics or Swim check, so long as the water is at least 10 feet deep for every 30 feet fallen. However, the Difficulty of the check increases by 5 for every 50 feet of the dive. A failed check results in normal falling damage.

FALLING OBJECTS

Just as characters take damage when they fall more than 10 feet, they also take damage when hit by falling objects. Objects that fall upon characters deal damage based on their weight and the distance they have fallen.

For each 100 pounds of an object's weight, the object deals +1 damage, provided it falls at least 10 feet. Distance also comes into play, adding an additional +2 damage for every 10-foot increment it falls beyond the first (to a maximum of +40 damage).

Objects smaller than 100 pounds also deal damage when dropped, but they must fall farther to deal the same damage as larger ones. For every halving of weight, the object must fall for an additional 10 feet to cause +1 damage. So a 25 lb. object must fall 30 feet to inflict damage.

Objects weighing less than 1 pound do not deal damage to those they land upon, no matter how far they have fallen.

HEAT

An unprotected character in hot weather must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15, + 1 per previous check) or receive a level of fatigue. Additional failed saves cause further levels of fatigue. Once a character is unconscious, failed saves cause the character to become disabled, then dying. Characters may make Survival checks to receive a bonus on this saving throw (see the skill's description).

In very hot conditions (above 90° F), the save is once per hour. In severe heat (above 110° F), a character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes. Extreme heat (air temperature over 140° F, fire, boiling water, lava) deals lethal damage. Breathing air in these temperatures deals +2 lethal damage per minute. In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save against heat exposure every 5 minutes.

Boiling water deals +2 scalding damage, unless the character is fully immersed, in which case it deals +20 damage per round.

CATCHING ON FIRE

Characters touching a fire source might find their clothes, hair, or equipment on fire. Those at risk of catching fire are allowed a Difficulty 15 Reflex save to avoid this fate. If a character's clothes or hair catch fire, he takes +2 damage immediately. In each subsequent round, the burning character must make another Reflex saving throw. Failure means he takes another +2 damage that round. Success means the fire has gone out.

A character on fire may automatically extinguish the flames by jumping into enough water to douse himself. If no body of water is at hand, rolling on the ground or smothering the fire with cloaks or the like permits the character another save with a +4 bonus.

Those unlucky enough to have their clothes or equipment catch fire must make Difficulty 15 Reflex saves for each item, using the character's Reflex save bonus. Failing the save means the item takes the same amount of damage as the character.

SMOKE

A character breathing heavy smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (Difficulty 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round choking and coughing. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds is winded. If accumulated fatigue renders the character unconscious, he may suffocate (see Suffocation).

Smoke obscures vision, giving concealment to characters within it (and a miss chance of a 16 or higher on the die).

STARVATION AND DEHYDRATION

Characters might find themselves without food or water and with no means to obtain them. In normal climates, Medium characters need at least a gallon of fluids and about a pound of food per day to avoid starvation. (Small characters need half as much.) In very hot climates, characters need two or three times as much water to avoid dehydration.

A character can go without water for 36 hours plus twice his Constitution score. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each hour (Difficulty 10, +1 for each previous check) or receive a level of fatigue. Once unconscious from fatigue, the character is disabled if he fails another Constitution check, then dying.

A character can go without food for 3 days, in growing discomfort. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each day (Difficulty 10, +1 for each previous check) or become fatigued. Once unconscious from fatigue, the character is disabled if he fails another Constitution check, then dying.

Fatigue from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the character gets food or water.

SUFFOCATION

A character with no air to breathe can hold her breath for 2 minutes (20 rounds), plus or minus a number of rounds equal to her Constitution score times 4. So a Constitution +2 character can hold her breath for 28 rounds, while a Constitution -2 character can only hold her breath for 12 rounds. After this period of time, the character must make a Difficulty 10 Constitution check in order to continue holding her breath. The check must be repeated each round, with the Difficulty increasing by +1 for each previous success.

When the character fails one of these Constitution checks, she begins to suffocate. In the first round, she falls unconscious. In the following round, she is dying. In the third round, she suffocates and dies.

SLOW SUFFOCATION

A Medium character can breathe easily for 6 hours in a sealed chamber measuring 10 feet on a side. After that time, the character suffers a level of fatigue every 15 minutes. Once unconscious, the character suffocates and dies. Each additional Medium character or significant fire source (a torch, for example) proportionally reduces the time the air will last. Small characters consume half as much air as Medium characters. A larger volume of air, of course, lasts for a longer time.

WATER

Any character can wade in relatively calm water that isn't over his head, no check required. Swimming in calm water only requires skill checks with a Difficulty of 10. Trained swimmers can just take 10. (Remember, however, that armor or heavy gear makes any attempt at swimming much more difficult.)

By contrast, fast-moving water is much more dangerous. On a successful Difficulty 15 Swim check, it deals +0 non-lethal damage per round. On a failed check, the character must make another check that round to avoid going under.

Very deep water is not only generally pitch black, posing a navigational hazard, but worse, it deals +2 water pressure damage per minute for every 100 feet the character is below the surface. A successful Fortitude save (Difficulty 15, +1 for each previous check) means the diver takes no damage in that minute. Very cold water deals also deals cold damage (see **Cold**).

DROWNING

Air-breathers under water must hold their breath to avoid suffocation (see **Suffocation**).



CHAPTER SEVEN: NARRATING THE GAME

THE NARRATOR IS THE PLAYER WHO TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR RUNNING A **TRUE20** GAME. THE NARRATOR CREATES THE ADVENTURE, RUNS THE PLAYERS THROUGH IT, TAKES ON THE ROLES OF THE VARIOUS CHARACTERS THE HEROES MEET, AND HANDLES ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RULES. WHILE RUNNING THE GAME IS A BIG RESPONSIBILITY, IT'S NOT AS HARD AS IT MIGHT SEEM, AND PROVIDING A FUN AND ENTERTAINING GAME FOR YOUR FRIENDS CAN BE QUITE REWARDING.

THIS CHAPTER LOOKS AT SOME OF THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NARRATOR: RUNNING THE GAME AND REWARDING THE HEROES.



RUNNING THE GAME

While the players are responsible for keeping track of their own heroes and deciding on their actions, the Narrator is responsible for everything else in the game. A good Narrator tries to make sure that the game runs as smoothly as possible and is enjoyable for all of the players. Many components go into creating a good *True20* series. The following pages give you the basics, but simple experience is the best tool to help you become a better Narrator.

ASSIGNING DIFFICULTIES

True20 adventures can be broken down into a series of tasks heroes must perform, from piecing together clues to navigating the social intricacies of court to dueling a villain atop castle walls. It's up to the Narrator to assign the difficulty of these and numerous other tasks in the game and to determine the outcome of the heroes' efforts. Fighting has detailed rules, while skills, feats, and powers are covered in their respective chapters. This section offers some general guidelines on assigning the Difficulty of a task, based on the information from those chapters.

MODIFYING THE ROLL OR THE DIFFICULTY

There are two ways of making a task easier or harder: modify the character's die roll or modify the task's Difficulty. Generally speaking, circumstances affecting a character's performance, like having just the right tools for the job or being forced to improvise, apply a modifier to the die roll. Circumstances making the task easier or harder to

accomplish, like a favorable or unfavorable environment or a particularly demanding task, modify the Difficulty. If a condition applies to the character—like knowledge, health, equipment, preparedness, and such—it's usually a roll modifier. It doesn't have to be too fine a line, since modifying the die roll or the Difficulty amounts to the same thing in the end: the task being easier or harder to accomplish.

In either case, you don't need to inform the player. In fact, most of the time you shouldn't, since it keeps the hero's chances of success a secret and makes the task that much more dramatic and interesting. If the player asks, you can offer a general idea of how difficult the task is, based on what the character would know. Usually an answer like "it's fairly easy for you" or "you think it will be quite difficult" is sufficient.

CIRCUMSTANCE MODIFIERS

A good rule of thumb is favorable circumstances grant a +2 bonus on a check (or a -2 modifier to the Difficulty), while unfavorable circumstances impose a -2 penalty on the check (or a +2 modifier to the Difficulty). This allows you to quickly assess the conditions in an adventure and assign an appropriate modifier to a hero's check.

TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

Keep in mind opportunities for characters to take 10 and take 20 on their checks (see **Checks Without Rolls** in the **Introduction**). Characters can take 10 on a roll any time they're not rushed, threatened, or distracted. Characters can take 20 under the same circumstances so long as there's no penalty for failing the roll. This

THE ESSENCE OF *TRUE20*

The essence of the *True20* game is actually quite simple. The vast majority of the rules merely expand upon the core mechanic of the system, providing special-case guidelines or situational modifiers. So long as you understand the essentials, you can handle just about any situation.

Those interested in playing in a much looser and casual style should focus on these fundamentals and not worry about special-case rules or more detailed guidelines. If you come up with an unexpected situation, just choose an appropriate type of check, a Difficulty, and make a roll to see if the character succeeds or not. It's that simple.

MODIFIERS

Everything in *True20*—ability scores, skills, powers, and so forth—has an associated *modifier*, or score, a value telling you how strong or weak it is. Modifiers run from -5 (very weak) all the way up to +30 (incredibly strong) or more. You can rate virtually any ability by its associated modifier.

DIFFICULTY

Every task—from making an attack to avoiding harm to interaction—has a *Difficulty*, a value that tells you how difficult the task is to perform. Difficulties range from 0 (so easy it's not worth rolling) to 40 (nearly impossible).

CHECKS

Actions are resolved through *checks*, a roll of a d20, plus any appropriate modifiers. If the total of the check equals or exceeds the Difficulty, the action is a success. If it doesn't, then it's a failure. The Narrator can easily modify a check by having beneficial conditions apply a +2 bonus on a check and having adverse conditions impose a -2 penalty. This is true whether you're trying to use a skill, make an attack, make a saving throw, or use powers.

SAVES

Trying to avoid an effect is a saving throw. A successful save means you avoid, or diminish, the effect. A failed save means you suffer the results of the effect.

THAT'S IT!

That's the core of *True20*: roll d20 + modifiers versus a Difficulty. If you understand that, you can do pretty much anything in the game. The rest is just details. When in doubt, or whenever you want to speed the game along, just have a player make an appropriate check against a Difficulty based on how difficult the task is, and you really can't go wrong.

means you can dispense with rolls for most routine tasks. If a character wants to disable a device, for example, and his Disable Device bonus + 10 is equal to or greater than the Difficulty, don't bother having the player roll. The character just succeeds, so long as there's no great urgency. If the hero is trying to pick a lock as a horde of skeletons bears down on her, the associated stress means the character can't take 10, however.

When coming up with Difficulties for actions, keep the take 10 and take 20 rules in mind. If the Difficulty is low enough that anyone can take 10 and succeed, then it may be too low, or the action may be too trivial to worry about.

THE 50/50 RULE

Another good guideline to keep in mind is that the chance of an average character (with a modifier of +0) succeeding at an average task (Difficulty 10) is 50 percent. Any time you have an average character do something or want to set a Difficulty that you feel is average for a particular character, aim for about a 50 percent chance of success. If you want to know what bonus is required to have a 50 percent chance of succeeding at a particular task, just subtract 10 from the Difficulty. So a Difficulty 25 action (a formidable task) requires a bonus of +15 in order to have a 50 percent chance of success.

Keep in mind that a 50/50 chance on a task may allow a character to take 10 and automatically succeed at that task under routine conditions. This is an intentional design choice; the average character only really fails at an average task when she is hurried or under stress and can't take 10.

SECRET CHECKS

Sometimes it's a good idea to make checks secretly, so the players don't necessarily know the result. This is usually the case for any sort of check where the heroes don't immediately know whether they've succeeded or failed. For example, Notice checks should be made secretly. If the check succeeds, the character notices something. If it fails, then the player doesn't know whether it's because the hero failed to notice something or there wasn't anything there to notice in the first place. The same is true for checks involving powers, like Mind Reading or Visions, and certain interaction checks, so the player doesn't necessarily know the target's initial attitude or exactly how much it has improved.

ALTERING THE OUTCOME OF DIE ROLLS

On occasion, the outcome of a particular roll may seriously impact the game. For example, the heroes are walking into a trap and none of them make the necessary check to notice the danger in time. Or a hero gets in a lucky shot and the villain rolls a 1 on his Toughness saving throw, resulting in a quick defeat. What do you do?

In some cases, you can just go with the outcome the dice give you. If none of the heroes spot the trap, have it go off, but give the heroes an opportunity to escape later on. Even if the results of the die roll are unexpected, so long as they don't spoil the fun of the adventure, feel free to go with them. Unexpected twists and turns can be fun, not only for the players, but also for you when you run the game.

On the other hand, some die rolls result in anticlimactic or just plain dumb outcomes. In these cases, feel free to change things a little to make the outcome more interesting or more in line with how the game should go. In the above example, you might decide that the villain is only stunned rather than being knocked out, giving the heroes the upper hand, but not ending the climactic encounter prematurely.



USING OPPOSED CHECKS

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

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

Is this cheating? Well, yes, in a manner of speaking it is, but it's "cheating" in order to make the game more interesting and fun for everyone involved. So long as you don't alter the outcome of die rolls unfairly or maliciously and you do it to help ensure the game is fun, interesting, and challenging, you shouldn't have a problem. Besides, the players don't have to know that you change the occasional die roll. That's one of the reasons it's a good idea for Narrators to roll their dice out of sight of the players and then announce the results.

FAKING IT

Sometimes circumstances will arise in your series that the rules just don't cover, that you're not sure how to handle, or that would just be a waste of time to make a lot of die rolls for. In these cases, feel free to just fake it and make something up. Come up with a roll or rolls you feel suits the situation and go with it, so you can keep the game moving rather than getting bogged down in page flipping and rules arguments. One of the great things about the *True20* system is pretty much everything can be resolved with a simple check. So when all else fails, have a player make a check with the most appropriate trait: an ability score, skill, power, or something else. If the check beats your estimation of the Difficulty, it's a success. Otherwise, it's a failure.

You also can fake it when dealing with certain trivial situations in the game. If there's an important piece of information you want the players to know, don't bother seeing if they succeed at a Search check. You can pretend to make the checks, then just ignore the results and tell the players what their heroes find. Likewise, if a 10th-level hero is going to take out a 1st-level nobody, you don't have to make all the rolls. Just ask the player to describe how the hero defeats her hapless foe.

SAYING YES TO YOUR PLAYERS

Players are a cunning lot, so it's a virtual certainty that, sooner or later, they will come up with something for their heroes to do that is not covered in these rules. It may be a particularly innovative maneuver, a new use for a skill or power, using the environment to their advantage in some way, or something you never would have considered. When this happens, take a moment and ask yourself, would it be fun if what the player is proposing happened? A good way to think about it is, if something similar happened in a fantasy novel, would it be cool? If the answer is yes, then you probably should let the player try it.

Narrators have three major tools to help them say yes to their players' innovative ideas, while keeping them (somewhat) under control.

BONUSES AND PENALTIES

Remember the Narrator's rule of thumb: if something aids or makes a task easier for a character, it's worth a +2 bonus. If it makes the task harder or hinders the character, it's worth a -2 penalty. This allows you to assign modifiers for almost any situation on the fly, without having to look things up and slow down the game while puzzling out all the pluses and minuses. Just evaluate the overall situation, decide if the conditions are beneficial, neutral, or detrimental, and assign a +2, +0, or -2.

EXTRA EFFORT

When players want their characters to be able to pull off something outlandish, rather than saying no, let them try, but make them pay for it by saying it counts as extra effort. Extra effort already allows heroes to pull off various stunts, so there's no reason you can't expand the list when players come up with other ones.

CONVICTION

Like extra effort, Conviction points allow heroes to pull off amazing stunts. If a player wants to do something outlandish, require a Conviction point to make the attempt. The Conviction doesn't do anything but let the hero try something unusual, and players won't be able to pull off stunts all the time because their heroes have a limited number of Conviction points to spend. Still, it allows for the occasional one-of-a-kind stunts heroes accomplish in fantasy fiction.

MAKING MISTAKES

Narrators are only human. Sooner or later, you'll make a mistake, whether it's forgetting a particular rule or overlooking something about a character or an element of the story. Don't worry, it happens, and it doesn't mean your game is ruined!

The best way to handle a mistake is to own up to it. Tell your players you made a mistake and need to make a change in order to keep the game balanced, fair, and fun. Be reasonable and straightforward in handling your mistakes, and your players are much more likely to be cooperative and understanding in return.

HEROIC ADVANCEMENT

As heroes go on adventures and overcome challenges, they learn from their mistakes and draw confidence from their successes. Over time, they grow and become more capable. They learn new tricks and refine old skills. *True20* reflects this development through the awarding of levels.

Essentially, after an adventure or two, whenever you feel the heroes have reached a point of development in their story, you can award them an additional level. Generally, heroes should earn one level every one or two adventures, meaning they can go from 1st level to 20th level in twenty to forty adventures total. They only earn a level during a single adventure if it is especially long or harrowing, or they achieve a considerable success (in the Narrator's estimation).

Players can choose to apply this new level to one of their hero's existing roles, or they can add a level in a new role (see **Mixed-Role Heroes** in **Chapter One**). Increasing in level also improves a hero's abilities: attack bonus, Defense, saving throws, and so forth. Each hero also gains a new feat upon attaining a new level. See **Level-Dependent Benefits** in **Chapter One** for details.

Normally, heroes immediately gain all bonuses from their new level, but the Narrator can require some training time or preparation before the heroes improve in level. This is particularly true for heroes adding a new role. They may need the assistance of a teacher or mentor to attain their 1st level in the role.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ADVERSARIES

TRUE20 HEROES FIGHT ALL SORTS OF ADVERSARIES. VILLAINS ARE OFTEN OTHER CHARACTERS, BUT THEY MAY ALSO BE VARIOUS SORTS OF MONSTERS.

THIS CHAPTER PROVIDES SOME SAMPLE CREATURES YOU CAN USE AS ADVERSARIES IN YOUR TRUE20 ADVENTURES.



NARRATOR CHARACTERS

Adversaries are often other characters, portrayed by the Narrator, and ranging from vile master villains and their lieutenants to misunderstood anti-heroes or amoral mercenaries simply out for a tidy profit. Anyone with goals at cross-purposes to the heroes is a potential antagonist, with some more serious than others.

Narrator characters follow all the same rules as heroes, including having and using Conviction, and regaining it according to their natures. Narrator characters have roles and levels just like heroes as well. A good rule of thumb is for a major antagonist to be at least two levels greater than the highest-level hero, with lesser antagonists (lieutenants and henchmen) around the same level as the heroes, or even lower. This helps ensure the adversary is a reasonable challenge for the heroes.

Narrator characters can be any level you see fit, however. Keep in mind that even a high level character usually isn't that much tougher than a low-level one. A high-level foe may have greater skills and resources to draw upon, but can often be taken down by the same attack that would fell a lower-level opponent, provided the characters can get past the high-level character's defense bonus.

With major antagonists, it's often a good idea to reserve a Conviction point or two for recovery checks, re-rolling Toughness saves, and avoiding death. If nothing else, a major antagonist can always *appear* to die (plunging off a cliff, lost in an explosion, etc.), only to reappear in a later adventure, having escaped certain death.

ORDINARIES

While important Narrator characters and antagonists will usually belong to one of the three roles described in **Chapter One**, the vast majority of

people in the world aren't heroic adventurers or devious villains. They're just ordinary people, going about their daily lives, with very little need for the skills and abilities of adventuring heroes. These characters are called *ordinaries* in *True20*.

Ordinary is essentially a fourth role, in addition to adept, expert, and warrior, but it is a role inferior to the other three in terms of abilities. Levels in ordinary grant only one thing: 4 starting skills at 1st level and 4 additional skill ranks per level. Ordinaries do not gain combat or saving throw bonuses, nor do they gain any feats (either at 1st level or as they progress in level). The only difference between a 1st-level ordinary and a 20th-level ordinary is the number and rank of the character's skills. This is the case for most ordinary people: they learn and develop skills, but have little or no need to improve their ability to fight, avoid hazards, and so forth. If you can describe a Narrator character as an "ordinary (whatever)," odds are that character has the ordinary role.

Ordinaries also do not have or gain Conviction. They don't have the extraordinary drive and motivation of heroes and villains. They can (and sometimes do) use extra effort, but that is all.

Of course, ordinaries can be mixed-role, as described in **Chapter One**. They gain all the benefits of their level in any other role(s), including Conviction. A retired soldier turned shopkeeper, for example, might be a 2nd-level warrior from his early military training, but a 5th-level ordinary from his years of minding the store, which developed some of his skills (like Knowledge and Sense Motive) but not his military prowess. Likewise, a wily government functionary might mix levels of expert and ordinary, just as a wise sage might mix levels of adept and ordinary; possessing some skill with the supernatural, but primarily focusing on "book knowledge."



You can generally treat ordinaries as two levels lower than their actual level when comparing them to heroes. Ordinaries lack many of the usual benefits of their level, so they're no match for a character of one of the other three roles at the same level.

You can use the **Quick Narrator Characters** guideline (see the sidebar) for ordinaries: just pick (4 + Intelligence score) skills for them and set their rank at (level +3) and you're ready to go. For truly "ordinary" ordinaries, assume all of the character's ability scores are +0 (strictly average).

MINIONS

While heroes and important Narrator characters use the rules described previously, minor characters in the story are less capable (and durable). These characters and creatures are known as minions, and follow special rules, particularly where damage is concerned.

A minion makes a Toughness save against damage normally; however, if the save fails, the minion suffers the maximum possible result for that attack. Usually this means unconsciousness for a non-lethal attack

and death for a lethal attack. If the attacker wishes, the minion can suffer a lesser damage result. This means minions generally have only three damage conditions: normal, unconscious, and dead. This makes it easier for heroes to dispatch less important opponents and easier for the Narrator to keep track of them in combat.

Additionally, minions *never* have Conviction, even if they have levels in a heroic role. Their part in the story simply isn't important enough.

Note that the Narrator decides which characters and creatures are minions. In some cases, whether or not opponents count as minions may depend on the importance of the scene in the story. Not all followers are minions! For example, if the heroes are valiantly fighting their way past the undead guards of a sorcerer's citadel, then the Narrator may wish to consider those skeletons and zombies minions. On the other hand, when the heroes fight the sorcerer's ogre lieutenant, the Narrator chooses not to treat it as a minion, even though it is a follower of another Narrator character.

While many ordinaries are also minions, that doesn't have to be the case. Minion is a status apart from role or creature type and is assigned as the Narrator sees fit.

CREATURES

Many of the adversaries that heroes face are not human at all, but various sorts of creatures. A "creature" is simply a way of referring to a character that isn't necessarily human (or even alive, sometimes). Creatures come in many different types, and range from harmless animals to titanic monsters.

Each creature in this chapter is given in the same general format, and includes the following information:

SIZE

While heroes come in all sizes and shapes, most are generally within the human norms of size, between four and eight feet tall or so (medium-sized). Creatures, however, can vary greatly in size, from as small as mice to as large as dinosaurs. A creature's size affects certain traits. Modifications for size are shown on the Size table.

COMBAT MODIFIER

Larger creatures are easier to notice and hit relative to smaller ones, while smaller creatures are harder to notice and hit. Apply the combat modifier for the creature's size to its attack rolls and Defense. These modifiers cancel out for creatures of the same size, who attack and defend normally against each other.

GRAPPLE MODIFIER

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

STEALTH MODIFIER

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

TOUGHNESS MODIFIER

Larger creatures are tougher than smaller creatures with the same Constitution. Apply the Toughness modifier for the creature's size category to its Toughness saving throws.

REACH

A normal (medium-sized) creature has a 5 ft. reach, which means the creature can make a melee attack at any target up to 5 ft. away. Larger

SIZE									
Size	Combat Modifier	Grapple Modifier	Stealth Modifier	Toughness Modifier	Height	Weight	Space	Reach	Carrying Capacity
Colossal	-8	+16	-16	+8	64-128 ft.	250K- 2 mil lbs	30 ft.	15 ft.	x16
Gargantuan	-4	+12	-12	+6	32-64 ft.	32K-250K lbs.	20 ft.	15 ft.	x8
Huge	-2	+8	-8	+4	16-32 ft.	4K-32K lbs.	15 ft.	10 ft.	x4
Large	-1	+4	-4	+2	8-16 ft.	500-4,000 lbs.	10 ft.	10 ft.	x2
Medium	+0	+0	+0	+0	4-8 ft.	60-500 lbs.	5 ft.	5 ft.	x1
Small	+1	-4	+4	-1	2 ft.-4 ft.	8-60 lbs.	5 ft.	5 ft.	x3/4
Tiny	+2	-8	+8	-2	1-2 ft.	1-8 lbs.	2.5 ft.	0 ft.	x1/2
Diminutive	+4	-12	+12	-4	6 in-1 ft.	0.25-1 lb.	1 ft.	0 ft.	x1/4
Fine	+8	-16	+16	-8	3 in-6 in.	0.9-0.1 lb.	6 in.	0 ft.	x1/8

QUICK NARRATOR CHARACTERS

A particular trick to use when creating higher-level Narrator characters is to choose the character's starting skills (based on role and Intelligence score), then simply increase those skills to (level +3) rank, assuming the character spent all earned skill ranks at later levels keeping the starting skills at the maximum rank. This saves time in assigning skill ranks and figuring out what the character's proper rank in any given skill should be.

So, for example, an 11th-level expert with Int +2 has ten starting skills (8 + 2 for Int). Choose ten skills and make them all rank 14 (11 + 3 for maximum rank), assuming the expert started with those ten skills and spent his ten earned skill ranks for his ten succeeding levels to keep them at maximum rank.

and smaller creatures have a longer or shorter reach, as shown on the Size table. A creature with "0 ft." reach must effectively occupy the same space as an opponent to make melee attacks.

SPACE

A normal (medium-sized) creature is assumed to occupy a roughly 5-ft.-by-5-ft. space. Larger and smaller creatures occupy more or less space, as shown on the Size table.

CARRYING CAPACITY

Larger creatures can lift and carry more, while smaller creatures can lift and carry less. Larger creatures gain an increase in effective Strength for carrying capacity: +5 points (a doubling in capacity) per size category. Smaller creatures' carrying capacities are multiplied by the value in this column. So a tiny creature with Strength +0 has a heavy load of (100 x 1/2) or 50 lbs.

LEVEL

Creatures have levels much like heroes and other characters do. However, most creatures do not have roles or, more precisely, "creature" is their role in the story. Creature level can be treated much like role level in most ways, and is used to determine many of the creature's capabilities, just like role level for heroes.

A creature's level also serves as a rough guideline of what sort of challenge it should pose to the heroes. Generally, a creature the same level as the heroes should pose a reasonable challenge, while a lower-level creature is less of a threat and a higher-level creature is a more serious challenge. A creature more than two levels higher than the heroes may be too great of a challenge at the heroes' present level.

ROLE

While most creatures do not have roles (apart from being creatures), some can acquire levels in one of the three heroic roles (adept, expert, warrior) or in the ordinary role. This is particularly the case for intelligent creatures and those able to learn new skills (such as well-trained animals like warhorses).

Role levels apply to creatures the same way they do to others and creatures gain the usual benefits of the role, including combat and saving throw modifiers, skills, and feats. Some capabilities may be of more or less use to certain creatures, and the Narrator decides which skills or feats, for example, a particular creature may acquire and use.

TYPE & SUBTYPE

A creature's type has a significant effect on its capabilities. Type essentially serves as the creature's role. Note that 1st-level creatures with a heroic role determine their combat bonus, saves, skills and feats according to their heroic role alone (as heroes do). Monsters with multiple levels in any given creature type that gain levels in a heroic role do so using the rules for mixed-role heroes given in Chapter One.

CREATURE TYPES

A creature's *type* defines it, much like a character's role. In fact, a creature's type determines many of its traits in the same as heroes' roles do.

ABERRATION

An aberration has a bizarre anatomy, strange abilities, an alien mindset, or any combination of the three. If your creature concept is too strange to fit into another creature type, it is probably an aberration.

Features: An aberration has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Aberrations have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one additional feat at 1st level and an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: An aberration possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Aberrations eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Aberrations with an Intelligence score of -3 or below advance by gaining more levels in aberration. Aberrations with an Intelligence score of -2 or above advance by character role (usually adept).

ANIMAL

An animal is a living, nonhuman creature, usually a vertebrate with no supernatural powers and no innate capacity for language or culture.

Features: An animal has the following features (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Toughness:** Animals have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude and Reflex saves (certain animals have different good saves).
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Animals begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general, warrior and expert categories.

Traits: An animal possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Intelligence of -5 or -4 (a creature with an Intelligence score of -3 or higher cannot be an animal).
- Night Vision as a bonus feat.

- Training with natural weapons.
- A non-combative herbivore uses its natural weapons as a secondary attack. Such attacks are made with a -5 penalty on the creature's attack rolls, and the animal receives only 1/2 its Strength as a damage adjustment.
- Animals eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Animals advance by gaining more levels in animal.

CONSTRUCT

A construct is an animated object or artificially constructed creature. Constructs are built rather than being born or raised from the dead.

Features: A construct has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Constructs have a base Toughness of +1, modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** No good saving throws.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level if the construct has an Intelligence score. However, most constructs are mindless and gain no skills.
- **Feats:** Most constructs are mindless and have no feats. Constructs with an Intelligence score begin with Weapon Training and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general and warrior categories.

Traits: A construct possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- No Constitution score.
- Night Vision as a bonus feat.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any supernatural powers requiring mental contact).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease effects, and the Imbue Unlife supernatural power.
- Cannot heal damage on their own, but often can be repaired by exposing them to a certain kind of effect (see the creature's description for details) or through the use of the Imbue Item feat. A construct with the fast healing special quality still benefits from that quality.
- Not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, or exhaustion.
- Immunity to any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless).
- Immediately destroyed when reduced to "dying" status on the damage track.
- Since it was never alive, a construct cannot be affected by the Imbue Life power.
- Constructs do not eat, sleep, or breathe.

Advancement: Constructs advance by gaining more levels in construct.

DRAGON

A dragon is a reptilian creature, usually winged, with supernatural or unusual abilities.

Features: A dragon has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Dragons have a base Toughness score equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of their level (as warrior).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves.

- **Skills:** Skills equal to (6 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Dragons begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category. Dragons may choose a supernatural power in place of a feat like an adept, and treat their creature level as their adept level for using those powers.

Traits: A dragon possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in the description of a particular kind).

- Night Vision as a bonus feat.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to supernatural sleep and paralysis effects.
- Dragons eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Dragons advance by gaining more levels in the dragon creature type.

ELEMENTAL

An elemental is a being composed of one of the four classical elements: air, earth, fire, or water.

Features: An elemental has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Elementals have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good saves depend on the element: Fortitude (earth, water) or Reflex (air, fire).
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Weapon Training and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.



Traits: An elemental possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, and stunning.
- Not subject to critical hits.
- Unlike most other living creatures, an elemental does not have a dual nature—its soul and body form one unit. When an elemental is slain, no soul is set loose. Supernatural powers that restore souls to their bodies or restore life to the dead (such as *Imbue Life*) don't work on elementals.
- Elementals do not eat, sleep, or breathe.

Advancement: Elementals with an Intelligence score of -2 or below advance by gaining more levels in the elemental type. Elementals with an Intelligence score of -1 or above advance by character role (usually adept).

FEY

A fey is a creature with supernatural abilities and connections to nature or to a similar force or a magical place. Fey are usually somewhat human-shaped.

Features: A fey has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Fey have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 1/2 their level (as adept).
- **Saves:** Good Reflex and Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (6 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.



Traits: A fey possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Night Vision as a bonus feat.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Fey eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Fey advance by character role.

HUMANOID

A humanoid usually has two arms, two legs, and one head, or a humanlike torso, arms, and a head. Humanoids have few or no supernatural or extraordinary abilities, but most can speak and usually have well-developed societies. They usually are small or medium size, unless they belong to the giant subtype (which is at least large size). Every humanoid creature also has a subtype, based on its race (dwarf, elf, giant, gnome, goblin, halfling, human, orc, etc.).

Humanoids with only one level exchange the features of their humanoid level for the features of a heroic role. Humanoids of this sort are presented in this chapter as 1st-level warriors.

Humanoids with more than one racial level are the only humanoids that make use of the features of the humanoid type.

Features: A humanoid has the following features (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Toughness:** Humanoids have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert), or by character role.
- **Saves:** Good Reflex saves (usually; a humanoid's good save varies), or by character role.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, or by character role.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level, or by character role. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: A humanoid possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Training with natural weapons.
- Humanoids breathe, eat, and sleep.

Advancement: Humanoids advance by character role.

MONSTROUS HUMANOID

Monstrous humanoids are similar to humanoids, but with monstrous or animalistic features. They often have supernatural abilities as well.

Features: A monstrous humanoid has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Monstrous humanoids have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of their level (as warrior).
- **Saves:** Good Reflex and Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: A monstrous humanoid possesses the following traits (unless noted otherwise in a creature's entry).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Monstrous humanoids eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Monstrous humanoids advance by character role.

OOZE

An ooze is an amorphous or mutable creature, usually mindless.

Features: An ooze has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Oozes have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution +1. This value is modified by their size.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** No good saving throws.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, if the ooze has an Intelligence score. However, most oozes are mindless and gain no skills.
- **Feats:** Most oozes are mindless and have no feats. Oozes with an Intelligence score begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general category.

Traits: An ooze possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Mindless: No Intelligence score, and immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any power requiring mental contact).
- Blind (but have the blindsight special quality), with immunity to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, and the Flesh Shaping power.
- Some oozes have the ability to deal acid damage to objects. In such a case, the amount of damage is equal to the ooze's Constitution score per full round of contact.
- Not subject to critical hits.
- Oozes eat and breathe, but do not sleep.

Advancement: Oozes advance by gaining levels in the ooze creature type.

OUTSIDER

An outsider is at least partially composed of the essence (but not necessarily the material) of some other plane of existence. Some creatures start out as some other type and become outsiders when they attain a higher (or lower) state of spiritual existence. Outsiders include such otherworldly creatures as angels, demons and devils.

Features: An outsider has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Outsiders have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of their level (as warrior).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (6 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: An outsider possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Unlike most other living creatures, an outsider does not have a dual nature—its soul and body form one unit. When an outsider is slain, no soul is set loose. Supernatural powers that restore souls to their bodies (such as *Imbue Life*) don't work on an outsider. An outsider with the native subtype can be affected by *Imbue Life* just as other living creatures can be.
- Outsiders breathe, but do not need to eat or sleep (although they can if they wish). Native outsiders breathe, eat, and sleep.

Advancement: Outsiders with an Intelligence score of -2 or below advance by gaining levels in outsider. Outsiders with an Intelligence score of -1 or above advance by character role.

PLANT

This type comprises vegetable creatures. Note that regular plants, such as one finds growing in gardens and fields, lack Wisdom and Charisma scores and are not creatures, but objects, even though they are alive.

Features: A plant creature has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Plants have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, if the plant creature has an Intelligence score. However, some plant creatures are mindless and gain no skills.
- **Feats:** Some plants are mindless and have no feats. Plants with an Intelligence score begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general category.

Traits: A plant creature possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Night Vision as a bonus feat.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any power requiring mental contact).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, and the Flesh Shaping power. Plant creatures are, however, affected by the Plant Shaping power.
- Not subject to critical hits.
- Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Advancement: Plants with an Intelligence score of -2 or below advance by gaining levels in the plant creature type. Plants with an Intelligence score of -1 or above advance by character role.

SUPERNATURAL BEAST

Supernatural beasts are similar to animals but can have Intelligence scores higher than -4. Supernatural beasts usually have supernatural abilities, but sometimes are merely bizarre in appearance or habits and have supernatural origins (such as the bear-shark).

Features: A supernatural beast has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Supernatural beasts have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of their level (as warrior).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude and Reflex saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Supernatural beasts begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: A supernatural beast possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet and night vision.
- Proficient with its natural weapons.
- Supernatural beasts eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Supernatural beasts advance by gaining levels in the supernatural beast creature type.

UNDEAD

Undead are once-living creatures animated by spiritual or supernatural forces, such as the Imbue Unlife power.

Features: An undead creature has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Undead have a base Toughness of +0 modified by their size and armor. They also gain a Toughness bonus equal to 1/2 their level (rounded down).
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 1/2 their level (as adept).
- **Saves:** Good Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (4 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, if the undead creature has an Intelligence score. However, many undead are mindless and gain no skills.
- **Feats:** Some undead are mindless and have no feats. Undead with an Intelligence score begin with Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category. In addition, skeletal undead gain Improved Initiative and zombie-like undead gain Tough as a bonus feat regardless of their Intelligence score.

Traits: An undead creature possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- No Constitution score.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any power requiring mental contact).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects.
- Not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, or ability drain. Immune to damage to its physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution), as well as to fatigue and exhaustion effects.
- Cannot heal damage on its own if it has no Intelligence score, although it can be healed. The fast healing special quality works regardless of the creature's Intelligence score.
- The Harm power heals undead creatures (treat this situation as if the Cure power were being used on a living creature).
- The Cure power damages undead creatures as if it were Harm used on a living creature.
- Immunity to any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects or is harmless).
- When reduced to "dying" on the damage track, it is immediately destroyed.
- Not affected by the Imbue Life supernatural power.
- Undead do not breathe, eat, or sleep.

Advancement: Undead with an Intelligence score of -2 or less advance by gaining levels in the undead creature type. Undead with an Intelligence of -1 or greater advance by role.

VERMIN

This type includes insects, arachnids, other arthropods, worms, and similar invertebrates.

Features: Vermin have the following features.

- **Toughness:** Vermin have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, if the vermin has an Intelligence score. However, most vermin are mindless and gain no skills.

- **Feats:** Most vermin are mindless and have no feats. Vermin with an Intelligence score begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general, warrior and expert categories.

Traits: Vermin possess the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Mindless: No Intelligence score, and immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any power requiring mental contact).
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Proficient with their natural weapons.
- Vermin breathe, eat, and sleep.

Advancement: Vermin advance by gaining levels in the vermin creature type.

CREATURE SUBTYPES

Subtypes are descriptors added on to a creature type in parentheses. Not all creatures have a subtype, while others have multiple subtypes. Some creature types such as humanoid and outsider always have at least one subtype.

AIR

This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders. Air creatures always have fly speeds and usually have perfect maneuverability.

AQUATIC

These creatures always have swim speeds and thus can move in water without making Swim checks. An aquatic creature can breathe underwater. It cannot also breathe air unless it has the amphibious quality.

COLD

A creature with the cold subtype has immunity to cold. It has vulnerability to fire, which means it takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from fire.

EARTH

This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders. Earth creatures usually have burrow speeds, and most earth creatures can burrow through solid rock.

FIRE

A creature with the fire subtype has immunity to fire and heat. It has vulnerability to cold, which means it takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from cold.

GIANT

A giant is a humanoid-shaped creature of great strength, usually of at least Large size. Giants tend to have good Fortitude saves rather than good Reflex saves like most other humanoids. Giants also tend to have night vision.

INCORPOREAL

An incorporeal creature has no physical body. Only other incorporeal creatures, supernatural weapons (or creatures that strike as supernatural weapons), and powers can harm it. It is immune to all mundane attack forms. Even when hit by powers or supernatural weapons, it has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source.

An incorporeal creature has no natural armor bonus but has a bonus to its Defense equal to its Charisma score (always at least +1, even if the creature's Charisma score is +0 or less).

An incorporeal creature can pass through solid objects. An incorporeal creature's attacks likewise pass through (ignore) natural armor, armor, and shields. Incorporeal creatures pass through and operate in water as easily as they do in air. Incorporeal creatures cannot fall or take falling damage. Incorporeal creatures cannot make trip or grapple attacks, nor can they be tripped or grappled. In fact, they cannot take any physical action that would move or manipulate an opponent or its equipment, nor are they subject to such actions. Incorporeal creatures have no weight and do not set off traps triggered by weight.

An incorporeal creature moves silently and cannot be heard if it doesn't wish to be. Non-visual senses, such as scent and blindsight, are either ineffective or only partly effective with regard to incorporeal creatures. Incorporeal creatures have an innate sense of direction and can move at full speed even when they cannot see.

NATIVE

A subtype applied only to outsiders. These creatures have mortal ancestors or a strong connection to the Material Plane and can be raised from the dead by the *Imbue Life* supernatural power just as other living creatures can be. Creatures with this subtype are native to the Material Plane (hence the subtype's name). Unlike true outsiders, native outsiders need to eat and sleep.

REPTILIAN

These creatures are scaly and usually cold-blooded. The reptilian subtype is only used to describe a set of humanoid races, not animals and monsters that are truly reptiles.

SHAPECHANGER

A shapechanger has the supernatural ability to assume one or more alternate forms. Many supernatural effects allow some kind of shape shifting, and not every creature that can change shape has the shapechanger subtype.

SWARM

A swarm is a collection of fine, diminutive, or tiny creatures that acts as a single creature. A swarm has the characteristics of its type, except as noted here. A swarm has a single level and Toughness save, a single initiative modifier, a single speed, and a single Defense bonus. A swarm makes saving throws as a single creature. A single swarm occupies a circle (if it is made up of non-flying creatures) or a sphere (of flying creatures) 10 feet in diameter, but its reach is 0 feet, like its component creatures. In order to attack, it surrounds an opponent. It can occupy the same space as a creature of any size, since it crawls all over its prey. A swarm can move through an area occupied by enemies and vice versa without impediment. A swarm can move through cracks or holes large enough for its component creatures.

A swarm of tiny creatures consists of 300 non-flying creatures or 1,000 flying creatures. A swarm of diminutive creatures consists of 1,500 non-flying creatures or 5,000 flying creatures. A swarm of fine creatures consists of 10,000 creatures, whether they are flying or not. Swarms of non-flying creatures include many more creatures than could normally fit in a 10-foot square based on their normal space, because creatures in a swarm are packed tightly together and generally crawl over each other and their prey when moving or attacking. Larger swarms are represented by multiples of single swarms. The area occupied by a large swarm is completely shapeable, though the swarm usually remains in contiguous areas.

Traits: A swarm has no clear front or back and no discernable anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits. A swarm made up of tiny creatures takes half damage from slashing and piercing weapons. A swarm composed of fine or diminutive creatures is immune to weapon damage. Reducing a swarm to "dying" status on the damage track causes it to



break up, though damage taken until that point does not affect its ability to attack or resist attack. Swarms are never staggered. Also, they cannot be tripped, grappled, or rushed, and they cannot grapple an opponent.

A swarm is immune to any power or effect that targets a specific number of creatures (including single-target supernatural powers), with the exception of mind-influencing effects if the swarm has an Intelligence score and a hive mind. A swarm takes half again as much damage (+50%) from powers or effects that affect an area, including widened powers.

Swarms made up of diminutive or fine creatures are susceptible to high winds such as created by the *Wind Shaping* power. For purposes of determining the effects of wind on a swarm, treat the swarm as a creature of the same size as its constituent creatures. A swarm rendered unconscious by non-lethal damage becomes disorganized and dispersed, and does not reform until it makes a successful recovery roll.

Swarm Attack: Creatures with the swarm subtype don't make standard melee attacks. Instead, they deal automatic damage to any creature whose space they occupy at the end of their move, with no attack roll needed. Swarm attacks are not subject to a miss chance for concealment or cover. A swarm's statistics block has "swarm" in the Combat entry, with no attack bonus given. The amount of damage a swarm deals is based on its level, as shown on the table that follows.

A swarm's attacks are not supernatural, unless the swarm's description states otherwise. Damage reduction sufficient to reduce a swarm attack's damage below 0, being incorporeal, and other special abilities can give a creature immunity (or at least resistance) to damage from a swarm. Some swarms also have acid, poison, blood drain, or other special attacks in addition to normal damage.

Swarm Level	Swarm Base Damage
1–5	+2
6–10	+4
11–15	+6
16–20	+8
21 or more	+10

Distraction: Any living creature vulnerable to a swarm's damage that begins its turn surrounded by a swarm is nauseated for 1 round; a Fortitude save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 swarm's level + swarm's Constitution score) negates the effect. Using or concentrating on supernatural powers within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (Difficulty 25). Using skills that involve patience and concentration requires a Difficulty 20 Concentration check.

VICE

A subtype usually applied only to outsiders native to the vice-aligned planes of existence. Outsiders with the vice subtype are also called fiends. Creatures with this subtype act in accordance with the vice aspect of their nature. A creature with the vice subtype overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were vice-aligned.

VIRTUE

A subtype usually applied only to outsiders native to the virtue-aligned planes of existence. Creatures with this subtype act in accordance with the virtue aspect of their nature. A creature with the virtue subtype overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were virtue-aligned.

WATER

This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders. Creatures with the water subtype always have swim speeds and can move in water without making Swim checks. A water creature can breathe underwater and usually can breathe air as well.

MOVEMENT

A creature's movement speed is the amount of distance it can cover in one move action. If a creature wears armor that reduces its speed, this is indicated along with a note specifying the armor type; the creature's base unarmored speed follows.

If the creature has other modes of movement, these are given after the main entry. Unless noted otherwise, such modes of movement are natural, not powers.

BURROW

The creature can tunnel through dirt but not through rock, unless the descriptive text says otherwise.

CLIMB

A creature with a climb speed has a +8 bonus on Climb checks. The creature must make a Climb check to climb any wall or slope with a Difficulty greater than 0, but it can always take 10, even if rushed or threatened while climbing. The creature climbs at the given speed. If it attempts an accelerated climb, it moves at double the given climb speed (or its normal land speed, whichever is less) and makes a single Climb check at a -5 penalty. Creatures cannot move all out while climbing. The creature retains its dodge bonus (if any) while climbing, and opponents get no special bonus on their attack rolls against a climbing creature.

FLY

A creature with a fly speed can move through the air at the indicated speed if carrying no more than a light load. (Note that medium armor does not necessarily constitute a medium load.) All fly speeds include a parenthetical note indicating maneuverability, as follows:

Perfect: The creature can perform almost any aerial maneuver it wishes.

Good: The creature is very agile in the air (like a housefly or a hummingbird), but cannot change direction as readily as those with perfect maneuverability.

Average: The creature can fly as adroitly as a small bird.

Poor: The creature flies as well as a very large bird.

Clumsy: The creature can barely maneuver at all.

Flying creatures can make dive attacks. A dive attack works like a charge, but the diving creature must move a minimum of 30 feet. Creatures can move all out while flying, provided they fly in a relatively straight line.

SWIM

A creature with a swim speed can move through water at the given speed without making Swim checks. It gains a +8 bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. The creature can always take 10, even if distracted or endangered when swimming. Creatures can move all out while swimming, provided they swim in a straight line.

ABILITIES

Creatures have the same ability scores as heroes: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), and Charisma (Cha), although some creatures lack certain ability scores. See Nonexistent Ability Scores in Chapter One for more information.

STRENGTH

Quadrupeds can carry heavier loads than bipedal creatures. Rather than using the carrying capacity multipliers in the **Size** table, quadrupeds use the following multipliers: Colossal x24, Gargantuan x12, Huge x6, Large x3, Medium x1-1/2, Small x1, Tiny x3/4, Diminutive x1/2, and Fine x1/4.

INTELLIGENCE

A creature can speak all the languages mentioned in its descriptive text. Any creature with an Intelligence score of -3 or higher understands at least one language.

SKILLS

This section lists the creature's skills along with skill modifiers, including adjustments for ability scores and any bonuses from feats or other traits.

FEATS

This section lists any feats the creature may have. Creatures may choose from the following feats in addition to those given in Chapter Three, provided the creature meets the feat's prerequisites.

ABILITY FOCUS (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: SPECIAL ATTACK

Choose one of the creature's special attacks. Add +2 to the Difficulty for all saving throws against the special attack on which the creature focuses.

A creature can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time the creature takes the feat it applies to a different special attack.

AWSOME BLOW (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: STR +7, SIZE LARGE OR LARGER.

As a standard action, the creature may choose to subtract 4 from its melee attack roll and deliver an awesome blow. If the creature hits a corporeal opponent smaller than itself with an awesome blow, its opponent must succeed on a Reflex save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 the creature's level + its Strength score) or be knocked 10 feet in a direction of the attacking creature's choice and fall prone. If an obstacle prevents the completion of the opponent's move, the opponent and the obstacle each take +2 damage, and the opponent stops in the space adjacent to the obstacle.

DOUBLE STRIKE (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: TWO OR MORE NATURAL WEAPONS.

The creature gains the benefits of Two-Weapon Fighting with its natural weapons (see the Two-Weapon Fighting feat in **Chapter Three**).

HOVER (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: FLY SPEED.

When flying, the creature can halt its forward motion and hover in place as a move action. It can then fly in any direction, including straight down or straight up, at half speed, regardless of its maneuverability.

If a creature begins its turn hovering, it can hover in place for the turn. A hovering creature cannot make wing attacks, but it can attack with all other limbs and appendages it could use in an attack. The creature can instead use a breath weapon or a supernatural power instead of making physical attacks, if it could normally do so.

If a creature of Large size or larger hovers within 20 feet of the ground in an area with lots of loose debris, the draft from its wings creates a hemispherical cloud with a radius of 60 feet. The winds so generated can snuff torches, small campfires, exposed lanterns, and other small, open flames of non-supernatural origin. Clear vision within the cloud is limited to 10 feet. Creatures have concealment at 15 to 20 feet (20% miss chance). At 25 feet or more, creatures have total concealment (50% miss chance, and opponents cannot use sight to locate the creature).

Those caught in the cloud must succeed on a Concentration check (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level) to use supernatural powers.

Without this feat, a creature must keep moving while flying unless it has perfect maneuverability.

SNATCH (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: SIZE HUGE OR LARGER.

The creature can choose to start a grapple when it hits with a claw or bite attack, as though it had the Improved Grab feat. If the creature gets a hold on a creature three or more sizes smaller, it squeezes each round for automatic bite or claw damage. A snatched opponent held in the creature's mouth is not allowed a Reflex save against the creature's breath weapon, if it has one.

The creature can drop a creature it has snatched as a free action or use a standard action to fling it aside. A flung creature travels up to 30 feet, and takes +2 damage per 10 feet traveled. If the creature flings a snatched opponent while flying, the opponent takes this amount or the appropriate falling damage, whichever is greater.

WINGOVER (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: FLY SPEED.

A flying creature with this feat can change direction quickly once each round as a free action. This feat allows it to turn up to 180 degrees



regardless of its maneuverability, in addition to any other turns it is normally allowed. A creature cannot gain altitude during a round when it executes a wingover, but it can dive. The change of direction consumes 10 feet of flying movement.

TRAITS

Creatures often have various special traits listed in their statistics and described here.

ABILITY SCORE LOSS

Some attacks reduce the opponent's score in one or more abilities. This loss can be temporary (ability damage) or permanent (ability drain).

Ability Damage: This attack damages an opponent's ability score. The creature's descriptive text gives the ability and the amount of damage. If an attack that causes ability damage scores a critical hit, it deals twice the indicated amount of damage. Ability damage returns at the rate of 1 point per day for each affected ability.

Ability Drain: This effect *permanently* reduces an opponent's ability score. The creature's descriptive text gives the ability and the amount drained. If an attack that causes ability drain scores a critical hit, it drains twice the indicated amount. Unless otherwise specified in the creature's description, a draining creature gains an extra recovery check with a +5 bonus whenever it drains an ability score, no matter how many points it drains.

Some ability drain attacks allow a Fortitude save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Charisma score). If no saving throw is mentioned, none is allowed.

ALTERNATE FORM

A creature with this trait has the ability to assume one or more specific alternate forms. Assuming an alternate form results in the following changes to the creature:

- The creature retains the type and subtype of its original form. It gains the size of its new form.
- The creature loses the physical traits of its original form and gains the physical traits of its new form.
- The creature retains the special traits of its original form. It does not gain any special traits of its new form.
- The creature retains the supernatural powers and attacks of its old form (except for breath weapons and gaze attacks). It does not gain the supernatural powers, special abilities or supernatural attacks of its new form.
- The creature gains the physical ability scores (Str, Dex, Con) of its new form. It retains the mental ability scores (Int, Wis, Cha) of its original form.
- The creature retains its save bonuses, although its save modifiers may change due to a change in ability scores.
- The creature is effectively disguised as a creature of its new form, and it gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.

AMPHIBIOUS

An amphibious creature is naturally aquatic but can also survive indefinitely on land. It can breathe both air and water without difficulty.

BLINDSENSE

Using non-visual senses, such as acute smell or hearing, a creature with blindsense notices things it cannot see. The creature usually does not need to make Notice checks to pinpoint the location of a creature within range of its blindsense ability, provided the creature does not have total cover. Any opponent the creature cannot see normally still has total concealment, and the creature still has the normal miss chance when attacking foes that have concealment. Visibility still affects the movement of a creature with blindsense. A creature with blindsense is



still denied its dodge bonus to Defense against attacks from creatures it cannot see.

BLINDSIGHT

Using non-visual senses, such as sensitivity to vibrations, scent, acute hearing, or echolocation, the creature maneuvers and fights as well as a sighted creature. Invisibility and darkness are irrelevant to such a creature. The ability's range is specified in the text. The creature does not need to make Notice checks against creatures within range of its blindsight ability; it detects them automatically.

BREATH WEAPON

A breath weapon attack usually deals damage and is often based on some type of energy.

Such breath weapons allow a Reflex save for half damage (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Constitution score). A creature is immune to its own breath weapon unless otherwise noted. Some breath weapons allow a Fortitude save or a Will save instead of a Reflex save.

CHANGE SHAPE

A creature with this special quality has the ability to assume the appearance of a specific creature or type of creature (usually a humanoid) while retaining most of its own physical qualities. A creature cannot change shape to a form more than one size category smaller or larger than its original form. Changing shape results in the following changes to the creature:

- The creature retains the type and subtype of its original form. It gains the size of its new form.
- The creature loses the natural weapons, movement modes, and extraordinary special attacks of its original form.
- The creature gains the natural weapons, movement modes, and non-supernatural special attacks of its new form.
- The creature retains all other special attacks and qualities of its original form, except for breath weapons and gaze attacks.
- The creature retains the ability scores of its original form.
- The creature retains its original saving throws.
- The creature retains any supernatural powers it had in its original form.
- The creature is effectively disguised as a creature of its new form, and gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.

CONSTRIC

The creature crushes the opponent, dealing bludgeoning damage, after making a successful grapple check. The amount of damage is given in the creature's entry. If the creature also has the Improved Grab feat, it deals constriction damage in addition to damage dealt by the attack used to grab.

DAMAGE REDUCTION

The creature receives a bonus to its Toughness saving throws against certain attacks. The creature takes normal damage from energy attacks (acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic), powers, and supernatural special abilities.

The entry indicates the bonus and the type of attack that negates the ability. A supernatural weapon automatically negates any damage reduction negated by a mundane weapon type. For example, skeletons have damage reduction +2/bludgeoning. This means they get a +2 bonus to their Toughness saves, unless hit by a bludgeoning weapon. They also lose their +2 bonus if hit by a supernatural weapon.

For purposes of harming other creatures with damage reduction, a creature's natural weapons count as the type that ignores its own damage reduction. For example, a vampire has damage reduction +4/silver and supernatural. This means a vampire can bypass the damage reduction of other creatures that are vulnerable to silver or supernatural weapons, including other vampires.

DARKVISION

The creature can see in total darkness, out to the specified range (usually 60 feet). Darkvision is black-and-white only, but is otherwise like normal sight.

DEPENDENT

The creature needs a particular substance to survive, much like humans need food, water, and air. When denied what it needs, the creature suffers the effects of starvation, dehydration, or suffocation (see **Chapter Six**), depending on how dependent it is on the substance.

DISEASE

When heroes come into contact with a disease, they must make a Fortitude saving throw against a Difficulty of 10 + the disease's virulence rank to avoid becoming infected. The method of infection depends on the disease. Some are airborne, while others require physical contact.

If a hero becomes infected, there is a period of anywhere from a few hours to a week or more during which the disease lies dormant. Then the disease takes effect. The initial effect is typically a point or two of ability damage (usually Strength or Constitution or perhaps a point of each).

After that, the victim makes another Fortitude save against the same Difficulty each day to fight off the disease. If that save fails, the character suffers the disease's effects again. If it succeeds, there is no effect that day. Two successful Fortitude saves in a row indicate the character has fought off the disease. Some diseases may have additional effects, such as fatigue, nausea, or even rendering the hero staggered or disabled while fighting off the disease.

FAST HEALING

The creature makes recovery checks at an exceptional rate, perhaps as often as once per round. Fast healing stops working when a creature is dead. Except for its speed, fast healing works just like natural healing, and doesn't provide any benefit against attacks that don't deal damage. It also doesn't allow a creature to regrow or reattach severed body parts.

FEAR

Fear attacks can have various effects.

Fear Aura: The use of this ability is a free action. The aura can freeze an opponent or function like the fear effect of the Heart Shaping power. Other effects are possible. A fear aura is an area effect. The descriptive text gives the size and kind of area.

Fear Cones and Rays: These effects usually work like the fear effect of the Heart Shaping power.

If a fear effect allows a saving throw, it is a Will save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Charisma score). All fear attacks are mind-influencing effects.

FLIGHT

A creature with this ability can cease or resume flight as a free action. If the ability is supernatural, it becomes ineffective under conditions that negate the use of supernatural powers, and the creature loses its ability to fly for as long as the negating effect or conditions persist.

FRIGHTFUL PRESENCE

This special quality makes a creature's very presence unsettling. It takes effect automatically when the creature performs some sort of dramatic action (such as charging, attacking, or snarling). Opponents within range who witness the action may become frightened or shaken. Actions required to trigger the ability are given in the creature's descriptive text. This ability affects only opponents lower in level than the creature. An affected opponent can resist the effects with a successful Will save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Charisma score). An opponent that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to that same creature's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failed save, the effect lasts for two rounds for each point the save failed. Frightful presence is a mind-influencing effect.

GAZE

A gaze attack takes effect when opponents look at the creature's eyes. The attack can have almost any sort of effect: petrification, death, charm, and so on. The typical range is 30 feet, but check the creature's entry for details. The type of saving throw for a gaze attack varies, but it is usually a Will or Fortitude save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Charisma score). A successful saving throw negates the effect.

A monster's gaze attack is described in abbreviated form in its description. Each opponent within range of a gaze attack must attempt a saving throw each round at the beginning of his or her turn in the initiative order. Only looking directly at a creature with a gaze attack leaves an opponent vulnerable. Opponents can avoid the need to make the saving throw by not looking at the creature, in one of two ways.

Averting Eyes: The opponent avoids looking at the creature's face, instead looking at its body, watching its shadow, tracking it in a reflective surface, and so on. Each round, the opponent has a 50% chance (1-10 on a d20) to not need to make a saving throw against the gaze attack. The creature with the gaze attack, however, gains concealment against that opponent.

Wearing a Blindfold: The opponent cannot see the creature at all (also possible to achieve by turning one's back on the creature or shutting one's eyes). The creature with the gaze attack gains total concealment against the opponent.

A creature with a gaze attack can actively gaze as an attack action by choosing a target within range. That opponent must attempt a saving throw but can try to avoid the creature's gaze as described previously. Thus, it is possible for an opponent to save against a creature's gaze twice during the same round, once before the opponent's action and once during the creature's turn.

Gaze attacks can affect incorporeal opponents. A creature is immune to gaze attacks of others of its kind unless otherwise noted.

Allies of a creature with a gaze attack might be affected. All the creature's allies are considered to be averting their eyes from the creature with the gaze attack, and have a 50% chance to not need to make a saving throw against the gaze attack each round. The creature also can veil its eyes, thus negating its gaze ability.

IMMUNITY

The creature is completely immune to some effect, suffering no harm or other effect from it. Essentially, the creature always succeeds on its saving throws against that effect, regardless of the Difficulty. So a creature immune to cold never suffers damage from cold, for example.

LIGHT SENSITIVITY

Abrupt exposure to bright light (natural or supernatural light equal to full daylight) blinds the creature for a round. On subsequent rounds,

the creature is dazzled (-1 on attack rolls, Notice checks, and Search checks) while operating in bright light.

MIMICRY

The creature can imitate sounds and voices, giving it a +20 bonus on Bluff and Perform checks to fool others into believing its mimicry is real.

PARALYSIS

This special attack renders the victim immobile. Paralyzed creatures cannot move, speak, or take any physical actions. The creature is rooted to the spot, frozen and helpless. Paralysis works on the body, and a character can usually resist it with a Fortitude saving throw (the Difficulty is $10 + 1/2$ creature level + key ability score.). A paralysis effect does not allow a new save each round. A winged creature flying in the air at the time that it is paralyzed cannot flap its wings and falls. A swimmer can't swim and may drown.

PETRIFICATION

A petrification attack turns a creature permanently to stone if they fail their saving throw. The saving throw is usually a Fortitude save (Difficulty of $10 + 1/2$ the creature's level + the creature's Constitution). The exact details and difficulty for the saving throw are given in the creature's description. A petrification effect may be reversed with a Difficulty 25 Earth Shaping check followed by a Difficulty 25 Flesh Shaping check.

POISON

Poison attacks deal initial damage—such as temporary ability damage or some other effect—to the victim on a failed Fortitude save. Unless otherwise noted, another saving throw is required 1 minute later (regardless of the first save's result) to avoid secondary damage. The Fortitude save against poison has a Difficulty equal to $10 +$ half the creature's level + the creature's Constitution score. A successful save negates the damage.

POUNCE

When a creature with this special attack makes a charge, it can attack with both claws and its bite all in the same round, like a use of the Two-Weapon Fighting feat (see **Chapter Three**).

POWERFUL CHARGE

When a creature with this special attack makes a charge, its attack deals extra damage in addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge. The amount of damage from the attack is given in the creature's description.

POWERS

The creature can use various supernatural powers, much like an adept. Unless specified otherwise in its statistics, a creature uses powers like an adept of its level with the normal effects and fatigue (if the power is fatiguing).

RAKE

A creature with this special attack gains an extra natural attack when it grapples its foe, usually due to claws or similar weaponry. Normally, a monster can attack with only one of its natural weapons while grappling, but a monster with the rake ability usually gains an additional rake attack it can use only against a grappled foe. Rake attacks are not subject to the usual -4 penalty for attacking with a natural weapon in a grapple.

A monster with the rake ability must begin its turn grappling to use its rake—it can't begin a grapple and rake in the same turn.

RAY

This form of special attack works like a ranged attack. Hitting with a ray attack requires a successful ranged attack roll, ignoring any defense bonus granted by a shield. Ray attacks have no range increment. The creature's descriptive text specifies the maximum range, effects, and any applicable saving throw.

REGENERATION

A creature with this ability is difficult to kill. Damage dealt to the creature is treated as non-lethal damage. The creature automatically gains an extra recovery check each round, with the bonus given in the entry. Certain attack forms, typically fire and acid, deal lethal damage to the creature, which doesn't go away. The creature's descriptive text describes the details. A regenerating creature that has been rendered unconscious through non-lethal damage can be killed with a coup de grace. The attack cannot be of a type that automatically converts to non-lethal damage.

Attack forms that don't deal physical damage (such as ability damage or ability drain) ignore regeneration. Regeneration also does not heal damage caused by starvation, thirst, or suffocation. Regenerating creatures can regrow lost portions of their bodies and can reattach severed limbs or body parts; details are in the creature's descriptive text. Severed parts that are not reattached wither and die normally.

A creature must have a Constitution score to have regeneration.

RESISTANCE TO ENERGY

The creature has a bonus to Toughness saving throws against damage of the given energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic) each time the creature is subjected to such damage. The entry indicates the bonus and type of damage affected.

SCENT

This ability allows the creature to detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. Creatures with the scent ability can identify familiar odors, just as humans do familiar sights.

The creature can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet; if downwind, it drops to 15 feet. Strong scents can be detected at twice these ranges. Overpowering scents can be detected at triple normal range.

When a creature detects a scent, the exact location is not revealed—only its presence somewhere within range. The creature can take a move or standard action to note the direction of the scent. If it moves within 5 feet of the source, the creature can pinpoint that source.

A creature with the scent ability can follow tracks by smell, making a Survival check to find or follow a track. The typical Difficulty for a fresh trail is 10 (no matter what kind of surface holds the scent). This Difficulty increases or decreases depending on the strength of the quarry's odor, the number of creatures being tracked, and the age of the trail. For each hour that the trail is cold, the Difficulty increases by 2. The ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat. Creatures tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

SENSITIVITY

The creature is sensitive to a certain substance and must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15) when coming in contact with it to avoid suffering a level of fatigue. The creature must repeat the save attempt every 10 minutes it remains in contact with the substance.

SUPERNATURAL IMMUNITY

A creature with supernatural immunity avoids the effects of supernatural powers and supernatural abilities used directly on it. This

works exactly like supernatural resistance, except that it cannot be overcome. Sometimes supernatural immunity is conditional or applies to only supernatural powers of a certain kind or adept level.

SUPERNATURAL RESISTANCE

A creature with supernatural resistance can avoid the effects of supernatural powers and supernatural abilities used directly on it. To determine if a supernatural power or ability works against a creature with supernatural resistance, the user must make an adept level check (1d20 + adept level). If the result equals or exceeds the creature's supernatural resistance, the power works normally, although the creature is still allowed a saving throw.

SUMMON

A creature with the summon ability can summon other creatures of its kind, but it usually has only a limited chance of success (as specified in the creature's entry). Roll a d20: On a failure, no creature answers the summons. Summoned creatures return whence they came after one hour. A creature that has just been summoned cannot use its own summon ability for 1 hour. Most creatures with the ability to summon do not use it lightly, since it leaves them beholden to the summoned creature. In general, they use it only when necessary to save themselves.

SWALLOW WHOLE

If a creature with this special attack begins its turn with an opponent held in its mouth (see the Improved Grab feat), it can attempt a new grapple check (as though attempting to pin the opponent). If it succeeds, it swallows its prey, and the opponent takes bite damage. Unless otherwise noted, the opponent can be up to one size category smaller than the creature. Being swallowed has various consequences, depending on the creature doing the swallowing. A swallowed creature is considered grappled, while the creature that did the swallowing is not.

A swallowed creature can try to cut its way free with any light slashing or piercing weapon by inflicting "wounded" status or worse on the damage track to the swallowing creature, or it can just try to escape the grapple. The defense bonus of the interior of the creature is +0 unless otherwise noted, and modifiers for size or Dexterity do not apply. The Toughness save of the interior of a creature that swallows whole is normally only its Constitution score, with no modifiers for size. If the swallowed creature escapes the grapple, success puts it back in the attacker's mouth, where it may be bitten or swallowed again.

TRAMPLE

As a full-round action, a creature with this special attack can move up to twice its speed and literally run over any opponents at least one size category smaller than itself. The creature merely has to move over the opponents in its path.

A trample attack deals bludgeoning damage (the creature's slam damage + 1.5 times its Strength score). The creature's descriptive text gives the exact amount.

Trampled opponents can attempt Reflex saves to take half damage. This is considered an area attack for purposes of Evasion and similar traits.

The save Difficulty against a creature's trample attack is $10 + 1/2$ creature's level + creature's Strength score. A trampling creature can only deal trampling damage to each target once per round, no matter how many times its movement takes it over a target creature.

TREMORSENSE

A creature with tremorsense is sensitive to vibrations in the ground and can automatically pinpoint the location of anything that is in contact with the ground. Aquatic creatures with tremorsense can also sense



the location of creatures moving through water. The ability's range is specified in the creature's descriptive text.

VULNERABILITY TO ENERGY

Some creatures have vulnerability to a certain kind of energy effect (typically either cold or fire). Such a creature takes half again as much (+50%) damage from the effect, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

COMBAT

This section lists the creature's combat, damage, Defense, and initiative bonuses, modified by the creature's other traits, as appropriate.

SAVING THROWS

The creature's Toughness, Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws are listed here. The modifiers take into account all of the creature's other traits. Any unaccounted for Toughness bonus a monster may have can be considered a natural armor bonus.

CONVICTION

Creatures generally have no Conviction points, but can gain Conviction by taking levels in a heroic role, in which case the creature acquires the same Conviction as a hero of that level. This is ignored if the Narrator has determined that a particular creature is a minion, since minions don't have Conviction (see Minions at the start of this chapter).

REPUTATION

A creature usually has a Reputation bonus of +0 but may increase the bonus by taking levels in a heroic role. The Narrator may decide certain creatures have a higher Reputation bonus, as suits the story.

A TRUE20 BESTIARY

The following section contains a selection of creatures for use as adversaries (or perhaps even allies) of the heroes in your *True20* game. They range from 1st-level animals to powerful fantastic creatures like mountain dragons and bear-sharks. In addition to using these creatures right out of the book, you can also make them examples for creating your own unique adversaries, following the creature types and guidelines earlier in this chapter.

Some creatures have bonus feats, usually capabilities inherent to their type or species rather than gained due to level, similar to bonus feats granted by backgrounds in Chapter One. These feats are denoted with a superscript "B".

BAT

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Diminutive

Speed: 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Abilities: Str -5, Dex +2, Con +0, Int -4, Wis +2, Cha -3

Skills: Notice 0 (+9), Stealth 4 (+18)

Feats: Night Vision^B, Skill Focus (Notice)

Traits: Blindsight (20 ft.)

Combat: Attack -, Damage -, Defense +6 (+2 Dex, +4 size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness -4, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +2

Skills: A bat has a +4 bonus on Notice checks. These bonuses are lost if its blindsight is negated

Bats are small nocturnal flying mammals. These statistics describe small bats that eat primarily insects.

BEAR

Type: 6th-level animal

Size: Large

Speed: 40 ft.

Abilities: Str +8, Dex +1, Con +4, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2

Skills: Climb 0 (+8), Notice 9 (+10), Swim 0 (+12)

Feats: Double Strike, Endurance, Improved Grab^B, Night Vision^B, Run, Track^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+1 Dex, -1 size), Damage +8 (unarmed), Defense +4 (+1 Dex, -1 size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +6, Fortitude +9, Reflex +6, Will +3

Skills: A bear has a +4 bonus on Swim checks.

Bears stand nearly 12 feet tall on their hind legs and weigh in at 1,200 pounds. These statistics suffice for most species of bear.

BEAR-SHARK

Type: 8th-level supernatural beast (aquatic)

Size: Large

Speed: 40 ft., swim 60 ft.

Abilities: Str +7, Dex +2, Con +3, Int -3, Wis +1, Cha -3

Skills: Notice 11 (+12), Swim 0 (+15)

Feats: Double Strike, Improved Grab^B, Improved Initiative, Night Vision^B, Run, Track^B

Traits: Amphibious, Blindsight, Keen Scent

Combat: Attack +9 (+2 Dex, -1 size), Damage +11 (bite) or +10 (claws), Defense +9 (+2 Dex, -1 size), Initiative +6

Saving Throws: Toughness +8, Fortitude +9, Reflex +8, Will +3

Blindsight: A bear-shark can locate creatures underwater within a 30-foot radius. This ability works only when the bear-shark is underwater.

Keen Scent: A bear-shark can notice creatures by scent in an 180-foot radius and detect blood in the water at ranges of up to a mile.

This chimerical creature is the result of a twisted magical experiment (or perhaps genetic engineering gone horribly awry). Bear-sharks have the head, dorsal and pectoral fins and tail of a shark, but the body and limbs of a brown bear. The combination of what are arguably the deadliest predators of land and sea is nothing to be trifled with, as it is equally deadly on land or in the water.

BLOOD PUDDING

Type: 10th-level ooze

Size: Large

Speed: 20 ft.

Abilities: Str +4, Dex -5, Con +7, Int —, Wis -5, Cha -5

Skills: —

Feats: Improved Grab^B

Traits: Blindsight (60 ft.), Blood Drain, Constrict, Engulf

Combat: Attack +1 (-5 Dex, -1 size), Damage +7, Defense +1 (-5 Dex, -1 size), Initiative -5

Saving Throws: Toughness +10, Fortitude +10, Reflex -2, Will -2

Blood Drain: A blood pudding can absorb blood directly through the skin of a living victim by making a successful grapple check. If it pins or engulfs its foe, it drains blood, dealing 1 point of Constitution drain each round that the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the blood pudding gains a recovery check with a +5 bonus.

Engulf: Although it moves slowly, a blood pudding can simply mow down medium or smaller creatures as a standard action. It cannot make a slam attack during a round in which it engulfs. Engulf is an area attack; the blood pudding merely has to move over the opponents, affecting as many as it can cover. Those being engulfed must succeed on a Difficulty 19 Reflex save or be engulfed; on a success, they are pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the blood pudding moves forward. Engulfed creatures are subject to blood drain, and are considered grappled and trapped within its body. The save Difficulty is Strength-based.

Blood puddings come in a range of reds, though most are the dark red color of dried blood. A blood pudding attacks by slamming into its prey. It is capable of lashing out with a pseudopod, but usually engulfs its foes.

BOAR

Type: 3rd-level animal

Size: Medium

Speed: 40 ft.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +0, Con +3, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -3

Skills: Notice 6 (+7)

Feats: Diehard, Tough

Traits: Night Vision, Scent

Combat: Attack +2, Damage +6 (gore), Defense +2, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +6, Reflex +3, Will +2

Though not carnivores, wild swine are ill tempered and usually charge anyone who disturbs them. A boar is covered in coarse, gray-black fur. Adult males are about 4 feet long and 3 feet high at the shoulder.

CALIBAN

Type: 1st-level humanoid (caliban) (1st-level warrior)

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +0, Con +1, Int -1, Wis +0, Cha -1

Skills: Notice +4 (+4), Sense Motive +4 (+4), Stealth +4 (+4)
Feats: All-out Attack, Armor Training, Night Vision ^B , Skill Training, Weapon Training
Traits: Mutations
Combat: Attack +1, Damage +1 (unarmed), +3 (club), Defense +1, Initiative +0
Saving Throws: Toughness +3 (+2 leather armor), Fortitude +3, Reflex +0, Will +0

Caliban Background Traits: Caliban have the following background traits.

- **Ability Adjustments:** None, unless their mutations indicate otherwise.
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision
- **Favored Feats:** Sneak Attack, Rage
- **Special:** All caliban roll twice for mutations.

Mutations: Each caliban has two or more mutations. Roll 1d20 twice for each caliban and consult the table at right.

Caliban are a cursed and decrepit race that once numbered among humankind. They have been warped by dark powers that have tainted and twisted the fiber of their beings, shaping them into something else entirely. Due to the chaotic nature of the forces that warped their physical forms, no two caliban look alike, nor have the exact same abilities. Since their mutations are not passed between generations, it appears a portion of that supernatural element still runs in their veins.

Caliban are suspicious creatures, often outcasts from society that must live out their lives in hiding to avoid persecution from those who fear them.

CAT

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Tiny

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str -4, Dex +2, Con 0, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2

Skills: Acrobatics 0 (+10), Climb 0 (+6), Jump 0 (+6), Notice 4 (+5), Stealth 0 (+10)

Feats: Night Vision^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+2 Dex, +2 size), Damage -4 (unarmed), Defense +4 (+2 Dex, +2 size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness -2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +1

Skills: Cats have a +4 bonus on Climb and Stealth checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Jump checks. Cats have a +8 bonus on Acrobatics checks. They use their Dexterity modifier instead of their Strength modifier for Climb and Jump checks. In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the Stealth bonus rises to +8.

These statistics are for the common housecat.

COCKROACH, GIANT

Type: 4th-level vermin

Size: Large

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +4, Dex +1, Con +3, Int —, Wis +1, Cha -3

Skills: Notice 0 (+5), Stealth 0 (+1)

Feats: Improved Initiative^B

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Light Sensitivity

Combat: Attack +3 (-1 size, +1 Dex), Damage +6 (bite), Defense +3 (-1 size, +1 Dex), Initiative +5

Saving Throws: Toughness +8 (+3 chitin), Fortitude +7, Reflex +2, Will +2

CALIBAN MUTATION TABLE

D20	Mutation	Effect
1	Horrific appearance	+6 bonus to Intimidate checks
2	Predatory claws	Claw attack, (Str +1) damage
3	Enhanced senses	+2 bonus to Notice checks and Scent trait
4	Suction cups on hands and feet	+4 bonus to Climb checks and +1 bonus to grapple checks
5	Slimy	+6 bonus to Acrobatics checks to escape grapples or bindings
6	Thick, warty or scaly hide	+1 Toughness save
7	Supernatural agility	+1 Dexterity
8	Poisoned fangs	Bite Attack, (Str) damage, poison (save Difficulty 10 + Con, primary and secondary damage 1 Con)
9	Hammer-fisted	+1 to unarmed damage
10	Supernatural reflexes	Improved Initiative as a bonus feat
11	Powerful legs	+4 bonus to Jump checks.
12	Enlarged eyes	+4 bonus to Notice checks
13	Spines	Automatically deals +0 damage per round while grappling or being grappled.
14	Multiple rows of teeth	Bite attack, (Str +1) damage
15	Chameleon Skin	+4 bonus to Stealth checks.
16	Swift-footed	+ 10 ft. speed
17	Unnatural size	Increase one size category
18	Stunted growth	Decrease one size category
19	Acidic blood	When damaged by a slashing or piercing weapon, the attacker suffers +0 acid damage.
20	Hyper-mutant	Roll twice more, re-rolling any 20s.

Skills: A giant cockroach has a +4 bonus on Stealth and Notice checks. The cockroach's Stealth bonus increases to +12 when amidst dark soil, rotting leaves or other decomposing organic matter.

These monstrous scavengers will eat almost anything, and will even attack smaller living creatures when hungry. Otherwise, giant roaches tend to be timid creatures, and often flee when confronted. In larger groups, they may be a bit more belligerant. They particularly dislike bright light and usually run away from it.

CRYPT WIGHT

Type: 4th-level undead (cold)

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +4, Dex +1, Con —, Int +1, Wis +2, Cha +4

Skills: Notice 7 (+9), Search 7 (+8), Intimidate 7 (+11), Stealth 7 (+8), Knowledge (any) 7 (+8)

Feats: Power (x2), Power^B

Traits: Burned by Daylight, Darkvision 60 ft., Powers (rank 7, Cha, save Difficulty 16; Cold Shaping +11, Heart Shaping +11, Mind Touch +11, Sleep +11).

Combat: Attack +3 (+1 Dex), Damage +5 (slam, +2 cold aura), Defense +3 (+1 Dex), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +7 (+5 natural armor), Fortitude +1, Reflex +2, Will +6

Burned by Sunlight: A crypt wight takes +2 fire damage each round it spends in direct sunlight.

Crypt wights are corpses of the ancient dead animated by malevolent spirits from another plane. Their bodies are shriveled to little more than leathery skin clinging to their bones, shrouded by tattered rags and rusting armor. They are surrounded by an aura of bitter cold, and their icy touch saps the warmth from the living. These fell beings shun sunlight, which sears their unholy flesh. Crypt wights rarely stray far from their burial mounds, and even then only at night.

DEER

Type: 2nd-level animal

Size: Large

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +2, Con +1, Int -4, Wis +2, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 5 (+9), Stealth 0 (+2), Swim 0 (+6)

Feats: Dodge Focus, Night Vision^B, Run^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +3 (+2 Dex), Damage +4 (gore) or +3 (hooves), Defense +4 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +1, Reflex +5, Will +2

Skills: Deer have a +2 racial bonus on Notice checks, and a +4 racial bonus on Stealth and Swim checks.

These timid herbivores can become aggressive around mating season.

DEER, MAGIC

Type: 10th-level supernatural beast

Size: Large

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex +3, Con +3, Int +2, Wis +5, Cha +4

Skills: Knowledge (supernatural) 13 (+15), Notice 13 (+20), Sense Motive 13 (+18), Stealth 7 (+10), Swim 6 (+13)



Feats: Dodge Focus, Lucky, Night Vision^B, Run, Widen Power

Traits: Powers (Wisdom, rank 13, save Difficulty 20; Body Control, Calm, Cure, Heart Reading, Mind Touch, Plant Shaping, Psychic Shield, Second Sight, Sleep, Supernatural Speed, Truth-Reading, Ward), Scent

Combat: Attack +11 (+2 Dex, -1 size), Damage +5 (gore) or +4 (hooves), Defense +12 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, -1 size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +5, Fortitude +14, Reflex +14, Will +12

Skills: Like mundane deer, magic deer have a +2 bonus on Notice checks, and a +4 bonus on Stealth and Swim checks.

Unlike its mundane counterpart, the rare magic deer is an intelligent supernatural being of great wisdom and compassion. They live in (and protect) unspoiled woodland areas. Magic deer have an unfriendly attitude toward anyone bringing fire into their territory; this includes any sort of smoking along with matches, torches, campfires, and so forth. They use their various supernatural powers to drive out intruders without harming them.

DOG

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Small

Speed: 40 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +3, Con +2, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Survival 0 (+1), Swim 0 (+6)

Feats: Night Vision^B, Skill Focus (Swim), Track^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+3 Dex, +1 size), Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +4 (+3 Dex, +1 size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +5, Reflex +5, Will +1

Skills: Dogs have a +2 bonus on Swim checks and a +4 bonus on Jump checks. Dogs have a +4 bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

The statistics presented here describe a dog of about 20 to 50 pounds in weight. They also can be used for small wild canines such as coyotes and wild dogs.

Dogs generally hunt in packs, chasing and exhausting prey until they can drag it down.

DRAGON, MOUNTAIN

Type: 16th-level dragon (earth)

Size: Large

Speed: 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), climb 60 ft.

Abilities: Str +4, Dex +0, Con +3, Int +2, Wis +2, Cha +2

Skills: Climb 19 (+31), Diplomacy 19 (+21), Intimidate 19 (+21), Notice 19 (+26), Search 19 (+21), Sense Motive 19 (+21), Stealth 19 (+17), Survival 19 (+21)

Feats: Attack Focus (bite), Cleave, Double Attack, Improved Initiative, Move-by Action, Skill Focus (Notice)

Traits: Blindsight (60 ft.), Breath Weapon (petrification, save Difficulty 21), Damage Reduction 2/supernatural, Frightful Presence (save Difficulty 20), Freeze, Immunity to sleep, paralysis, and petrification, Power (Earth Shaping +21), Supernatural Resistance 17

Combat: Attack +16 (+1 Attack Focus, -1 size), Damage +8 (bite) or +7 (claw), Defense +15 (-1 size), Initiative +4

Saving Throws: Toughness +12, Fortitude +13, Reflex +10, Will +12

Breath Weapon: A mountain dragon has one type of breath weapon, a cloud of petrifying gas. Those who fail their saving throw are turned to stone.

Freeze: A mountain dragon can hold so still that it appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a Difficulty 20 Notice check to realize that the mountain dragon is really alive.

Skills: Mountain dragons have a +2 racial bonus on Stealth and Notice checks. The Stealth bonus increases by +8 when a mountain dragon is concealed against a background of stone.

Mountain dragons frequent the ruins of ancient mountain fortresses. On hatching, a mountain dragon's pebble-like scales are a dull stony-grey color. As the dragon ages, its scales become larger, thicker, and smoother. Their coloration also shifts to match the color of the stones in the dragon's environment, helping it camouflage itself.

Mountain dragons are obsessed with precious gems, and have been known to go to great lengths to obtain them.

Mountain dragons are very territorial, and prefer to ambush their targets, either posing as a statue, or using their camouflage to sneak up on trespassers. They attempt to observe any intruders to gauge their intentions, their strengths, and their weaknesses before letting their presence be known. If a violent encounter begins to go badly for a mountain dragon, it will employ hit and run tactics.

GHOST

Type: 5th-level undead (incorporeal)

Size: Medium

Speed: fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Abilities: Str —, Dex +0, Con —, Int +0, Wis +1, Cha +3

Skills: Notice 0 (+9), Search 0 (+8), Stealth 0 (+8) plus four skills at 8 ranks each.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Manifestation, Rejuvenation, plus see below

Combat: Attack +3, Damage (by power), Defense +3, Initiative +4

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude —, Reflex +1, Will +5

Immunities: Ghosts are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-influencing effects (including mind-influencing powers). They are not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save.

Manifestation: Every ghost has this ability. A ghost dwells in the misty border realm between life and death and, as such, cannot affect or be affected by anything in the living world. When a ghost manifests, it partly enters the living world, becoming visible but incorporeal. When a ghost manifests, it can use any powers it possesses on material targets, provided they do not require physical contact. Only other incorporeal creatures, supernatural weapons, or powers can harm a manifested ghost. A manifested ghost can pass through solid objects at will. A manifested ghost always moves silently.

Rejuvenation: It's difficult to destroy a ghost through simple combat. The destroyed spirit restores itself within eight days. A ghost that would otherwise be destroyed returns to its old haunts with a successful level check (1d20 + ghost's Charisma) against Difficulty 16. As a rule, the only way to get rid of a ghost permanently is to determine the reason for its existence and set right whatever prevents it from moving on. The exact means varies with each ghost and may require a good deal of research.

Skills: Ghosts have a +8 bonus on Notice, Search, and Stealth checks.

All ghosts have one to three of the other traits described following. The save Difficulty against a ghost's traits is 12 + the ghost's Charisma score, unless otherwise noted.

Corrupting Touch: The ghost can use the Harm power with its incorporeal touch.



Drain Vitality: The ghost can use the Drain Vitality power with its incorporeal touch.

Frightful Moan: The ghost can emit a frightful moan like the fear effect of the Heart Shaping power. Doing so causes the ghost no fatigue.

Horrific Appearance: Any living creature within 60 feet that sees the ghost must succeed on a Fortitude save or immediately take 1 point of damage to all physical ability scores. A creature successfully saving against this effect is immune to the same ghost's horrific appearance for 24 hours.

Malevolence: Once per round, the ghost can merge its incorporeal form with a living creature by touch. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save. A creature that successfully saves is immune to that same ghost's malevolence for 24 hours, and the ghost cannot enter the target's space. If the save fails, the ghost vanishes into the target's body and controls it like a use of the Dominate power.

Move Object: The ghost can use the Move Object power, even while incorporeal.

Ghosts are the undead spirits of intelligent beings who, for one reason or another, cannot move on from their living existence to their next life. A ghost greatly resembles its living form, but in some cases the spiritual form is somewhat altered.

GOBLIN

Type: 1st-level humanoid (1st-level warrior) (goblinoid)

Size: Small

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str 0, Dex +1, Con +1, Int 0, Wis -1, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Ride 4 (+9), Search 0 (+2), Stealth 4 (+9), Survival 4 (+3)

Feats: Armor Training, Move-by Action, Talented (Notice & Search), Weapon Training

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.)



RYMANOS

Combat: Attack +3 (+1 Dex, +1 size), Damage +0 (unarmed) or by weapon, Defense +3 (+1 Dex, +1 size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +3, Reflex +1, Will -1

Skills: Goblins have a +4 racial bonus to Ride checks and often tame wolves as mounts.

Goblins are small humanoids, considered little better than vermin. They are 3 to 3 1/2 feet tall with yellowed skin and large, pointed ears. They live in savage tribal group, often nomadic.

HARPY

Type: 7th-level monstrous humanoid

Size: Medium

Speed: 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +2, Con +0, Int -2, Wis +1, Cha +3

Skills: Bluff 4 (+11), Intimidate 4 (+7), Notice 0 (+5), Perform (sing) 2 (+12)

Feats: Fascinate (Perform), Move-by Action, Skill Focus (Perform), Tough^B, Weapon Training

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.)

Combat: Attack +7 (+2 Dex), Damage +0 (claws) or by weapon, Defense +7 (+2 Dex), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +2, Reflex +7, Will +6

Skills: Harpies have a +4 bonus on Bluff, and Perform (sing) checks

Hideous hags with bird-like wings and lower bodies, harpies like to entrance hapless travelers and lead them to unspeakable torments. Only when a harpy has finished playing with its new toys will it release them from suffering by killing and consuming them.

Harpies can use the Fascinate feat when they sing. The victims walk toward the harpy, taking the most direct route available. If the path leads into a dangerous area (through fire, off a cliff, or the like), the

victim gets a second saving throw. Fascinated creatures take no actions other than to defend themselves.

HAWK

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Tiny

Speed: 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Abilities: Str -2, Dex +3, Con +0, Int -4, Wis +2, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+14)

Feats: Move-By Action

Combat: Attack +5 (+3 Dex, +2 size), Damage -1 (talons), Defense +5 (+3 Dex, +2 size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness -2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +5, Will +2

Skills: Hawks have a +8 racial bonus on Notice checks

Hawks are 1 to 2 feet long, with wingspans of 6 feet or less. These statistics can describe falcons and similar-sized birds of prey.

HORSE

Type: 3rd-level animal

Size: Large

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex +1, Con +2, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 6 (+7)

Feats: Endurance, Run

Traits: Night Vision

Combat: Attack +3 (+1 Dex, -1 size), Damage +3 (unarmed), Defense +3 (+1 Dex, -1 size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +6, Reflex +4, Will +2

Horses are widely domesticated for riding and as beasts of burden. The statistics describe large breeds of working horses, such as Clydesdales. These animals are usually ready for heavy work by age three. These horses cannot fight while carrying a rider.

- **Light Horse:** A light horse includes smaller breeds of working horses, such as quarter horses and Arabians, as well as wild horses. These animals are usually ready for useful work by age two. Light horses have +10 ft. speed, but -2 to Strength.

- **Warhorse:** A warhorse is specially trained for combat, giving it a level in the warrior role. It has a +1 to its Attack and Defense, and Notice rank, along with the Tough feat (+1 Toughness save bonus).

KAMODON

Type: 2nd-level monstrous humanoid (reptilian)

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +3, Con +1, Int +0, Wis +1, Cha -1

Skills: Notice 5 (+6), Stealth 5 (+8)

Feats: Double Strike, Improved Initiative

Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Poison, Scent

Combat: Attack +5 (+3 Dex), Damage +4/18-20 and poison (scimitar), +2 (claws), or +4 and poison (bite), Defense +5 (+3 Dex), Initiative +7

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +1, Reflex +6, Will +4

Poison: Kamodons coat their scimitars with a toxin they secrete from glands in their own mouths (save Difficulty 12, Initial Damage 1 Con, Secondary damage 1 Con). They have been known to brew and harvest other poisons as well.

Kamodons are a nomadic warrior race of desert dwelling reptilian humanoids. They are constantly on the move, and attack small humanoid settlements in the night. They are known and feared for their use of poisons and their tendency to kidnap infants for unknown purposes. Strong and agile, they are a force to be reckoned with.

MOSQUITO, GIANT

Type: 2nd-level vermin

Size: Small

Speed: 10 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +4, Con +1, Int —, Wis +0, Cha -3

Skills: Notice 0 (+4)

Feats: —

Traits: Attach, Blood Drain, Darkvision (60 ft.), Disease

Combat: Attack +6 (+1 size, +4 Dex), Damage +1 (bite, plus blood drain), Defense +6 (+1 size, +4 Dex), Initiative +4

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +3, Reflex +4, Will +0

Attack: If a giant mosquito hits with a bite attack, it latches onto the opponent's body. An attached mosquito is effectively grappling its prey. The giant mosquito loses its Dexterity bonus to defense (giving it Defense +2), but holds on with great tenacity. Giant mosquitoes have a +12 racial bonus on grapple checks. An attached mosquito can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove an attached mosquito through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the mosquito.

Blood Drain: An attached giant mosquito drains blood, dealing 1 point of Constitution damage each round it begins its turn attached to a victim. Once it has dealt 2 points of Constitution damage, it detaches and flies off to digest the meal. If its victim dies before the mosquito's appetite has been sated, the mosquito detaches and seeks new prey.

Disease: There is 10% chance (19-20 on a d20) that any given giant mosquito is carrying a disease of some variety. Anyone bitten by a disease-carrying giant mosquito has a chance of contracting the disease.

Skills: A giant mosquito has a +4 racial bonus on Notice checks.

Giant mosquitoes are nearly a yard long. They are mostly found in swampy areas, and other places with stagnant water.

OGRE

Type: 4th-level humanoid (giant)

Size: Large

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +5, Dex -1, Con +2, Int -2, Wis +0, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 7 (+7)

Feats: Attack Focus (club), Night Vision, Tough 4^B

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.)

Combat: Attack +2 (-1 Dex, -1 size), Damage +5 (unarmed), +9 (club), Defense +2 (-1 Dex, -1 size), Initiative -1

Saving Throws: Toughness +8 (+11 with armor), Fortitude +6, Reflex +0, Will +1

Ogres are hideous humanoid giants 9 to 10 feet tall and weighing 600 to 650 pounds. Their skin color ranges from dull yellow to dull brown. Their clothing consists of poorly cured furs and hides, which add to their naturally repellent odor. Ogres are fond of eating humanoid flesh.

Ogres favor overwhelming odds, surprise attacks, and ambushes over a fair fight. They are intelligent enough to use ranged weapons to soften up their foes before closing, but ogre gangs and bands rarely feature any real organization or tactics.

ORC

Type: 1st-level humanoid (1st-level warrior) (orc)

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex 0, Con +1, Int -1, Wis -2, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+2)

Feats: Attack Focus (greataxe), Armor Training, Rage, Weapon Training

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Light Sensitivity

Combat: Attack +1 (+2 with axe), Damage +3 (unarmed), +8 (greataxe), Defense +1, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +3, Reflex +0, Will -2

Orcs are savage humanoids with animalistic features and reddish eyes. When not raiding and pillaging, orcs are usually making weapons or training in using them. They have a hatred for all other creatures, seeing them as nothing more than prey.

RAT

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Tiny

Speed: 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

Abilities: Str -4, Dex +2, Con +0, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -4

Skills: Acrobatics 0 (+10), Climb 4 (+14), Intimidate 4 (+2), Jump 4 (+7), Stealth 0 (+14), Swim 0 (+10)

Feats: Evasion, Night Vision^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+2 Dex, +2 size), Damage -4 (unarmed), Defense +4 (+2 Dex, +2 size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness -2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +1

Skills: Rats have a +4 racial bonus on Stealth checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Acrobatics, Climb, and Swim checks. A rat can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A rat uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb and Swim checks. A rat has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.



These omnivorous rodents are one of the hardiest creatures that nature has to offer, and they thrive almost anywhere. Rats usually run away when confronted. They bite only as a last resort.

RAT, DIRE

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Small

Speed: 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +3, Con +1, Int -5, Wis +1, Cha -3

Skills: Climb 0 (+11), Notice 4 (+5), Stealth 0 (+7), Swim 0 (+11)

Feats: Evasion, Night Vision^B

Traits: Disease, Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+3 Dex, +1 size), Damage +0 (bite), Defense +4 (+3 Dex, +1 size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +3, Reflex +5, Will +3

Disease: There is 10% chance (19-20 on a d20) that any given dire rat is carrying a disease of some variety. Anyone bitten by a disease-carrying dire rat has a chance of contracting the disease.

Skills: Dire rats have a +8 bonus on Swim checks. Dire rats have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Dire rats use their Dexterity modifier for Climb and Swim checks.

Dire rats are hideous creatures up to 4 feet long. Anyone bitten by a dire rat must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 13) to avoid being infected with a disease doing 1 point of Constitution damage.

SHARK

Type: 3rd-level animal (aquatic)

Size: Medium

Speed: swim 60 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +2, Con +1, Int -5, Wis +1, Cha -4

Skills: Notice 6 (+7), Swim 0 (+9)

Feats: Tough 2, Tough^B

Traits: Blindsight, Keen Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+2 Dex), Damage +3 (bite), Defense +4 (+2 Dex), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +4, Reflex +5, Will +2

Keen Scent: A shark can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius and detect blood in the water at ranges of up to a mile.

Sharks are aggressive, carnivorous, fish liable to make unprovoked attacks against anything approaching them. Medium sharks are from 5 to 8 feet long and not usually dangerous to creatures other than their prey (smaller fish and sea mammals).

SKELETON

Type: 1st-level undead

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +1, Con —, Int —, Wis +0, Cha -5

Feats: Improved Initiative^B

Traits: Damage Reduction 2/Bludgeoning, Darkvision (60 ft.), Immunities

Combat: Attack +1 (Dex), Damage +1 (unarmed) or by weapon, Defense +1 (Dex), Initiative +5

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude —, Reflex +1, Will —

Damage Reduction +2/Bludgeoning: Skeletons lack flesh or internal organs, making them resistant to cutting and piercing weapons.

Immunities: Skeletons are immune to cold, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-influencing effects (including mind-influencing powers). They are not subject to critical hits, non-lethal

damage, ability damage, ability drain, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save, unless it works on inanimate objects.

Skeletons are the bones of the dead turned into supernaturally animated, mindless automatons obeying the commands of their creators. A skeleton is seldom garbed in anything more than the rotting remnants of whatever clothing or armor it wore when it died.

SNAKE, CONSTRICTOR

Type: 3rd-level animal

Size: Medium

Speed: 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex +3, Con +1, Int -5, Wis +1, Cha -4

Skills: Climb 2 (+13), Notice 0 (+5), Stealth 2 (+9), Swim 0 (+11)

Feats: Tough 2, Improved Grab^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +3 (+3 Dex), Damage +3 (bite or constriction), Defense +3 (+3 Dex), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +3, Fortitude +4, Reflex +6, Will +2

Skills: Snakes have a +4 bonus on Notice and Stealth checks. A snake can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A snake uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb and Swim checks.

Constrictor snakes usually are not aggressive and flee when confronted. They hunt for food but do not attempt to make a meal out of any creature too large to constrict. Constrictor snakes hunt by grabbing prey with their mouths and then squeezing it with their powerful bodies.

SNAKE, VIPER

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Tiny

Speed: 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

Abilities: Str -3, Dex +3, Con +0, Int -5, Wis +1, Cha -4

Skills: Climb 0 (+11), Notice 4 (+9), Stealth 0 (+15), Swim 0 (+11)

Feats: Attack Focus (bite)

Traits: Poison, Scent

Combat: Attack +6 (+1 Attack Focus, +3 Dex, +2 size), Damage -5 (bite, plus poison), Defense +5 (+3 Dex, +2 size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness -2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +5, Will +1

Poison: A viper's bite requires a Difficulty 10 Fortitude saving throw. The venom deals initial and secondary damage of 2 Constitution.

Skills: Snakes have a +4 bonus on Notice and Stealth checks. A snake can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A snake uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb and Swim checks. Vipers have a +8 bonus on Swim checks and can always choose to take 10 on Swim checks, even while threatened.

Vipers are not particularly aggressive, but will often lash out with a bite attack before attempting to retreat. They rely on their venomous bite to kill prey and to defend themselves.

SWARM, KILLER BEE

Type: 7th-level vermin (swarm)

Size: Diminutive

Speed: 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Abilities: Str -5, Dex +4, Con +0, Int —, Wis +1, Cha -1

Skills: Notice 0 (+5), Survival 0 (+1)

Feats: —

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Distraction, Immune to Weapon Damage, Poison

Combat: Swarm, Damage +4 (sting, plus poison), Defense +13 (+5 base, +4 Dex, +4 size), Initiative +4

Saving Throws: Toughness -3, Fortitude +5, Reflex +6, Will +3

Distraction: Any living creature that begins its turn within a killer bee swarm must succeed on a Difficulty 13 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save Difficulty is Constitution-based.

Poison: Injury, Fortitude Difficulty 13, initial and secondary damage 1 Con. The save Difficulty is Constitution-based.

Skills: Killer bees have a +4 racial bonus on Notice checks. They also have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks to orient themselves.

Killer bees are named for their extremely aggressive nature, and their habit of swarming anything they feel is threatening their hive. Killer bees have a strong aversion to the color black, and will attack anything of that color that approaches within 30 ft. of their hive.

VAMPIRE

Type: 8th-level undead

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +6, Dex +3, Con —, Int +1, Wis +3, Cha +1

Skills: Bluff 0 (+9), Diplomacy 11 (+12), Gather Information 11 (+12), Intimidate 11 (+12), Knowledge (supernatural) 11 (+12), Notice 0 (+11), Search 0 (+9), Sense Motive 11 (+14), Stealth 0 (+11)

Feats: Animal Empathy, Fascinate (Diplomacy), Improved Initiative^B, Improved Pin, Lightning Reflexes^B

Traits: Alternate Form, Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Create Spawn, Damage Reduction +4/silver and supernatural, Darkvision (60 ft.), Dominate, Fast Healing (per round), Gaseous Form, Immunities, Resistance +4 to cold and electricity, Spider Climb, Vampire Weaknesses

Combat: Attack +7, Damage +6 (unarmed), Defense +7, Initiative +7

Saving Throws: Toughness +8, Fortitude —, Reflex +7, Will +9

Alternate Form: A vampire can assume the shape of a bat or wolf as a standard action. The vampire gains the natural weapons and attacks of its new form. It can remain in that form until it assumes another or until the next sunrise.

Blood Drain: A vampire can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, draining 1 point of Constitution each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the vampire gains a recovery check with a bonus equal to the Constitution drained.

Children of the Night: Vampires command the lesser creatures of the world, and once per day can call forth swarms of rats or bats or a pack of wolves as a standard action. These creatures arrive within a minute, and serve the vampire for up to an hour.

Create Spawn: If a vampire kills a victim with blood drain, the victim returns as a vampire in three days. The new vampire is under the command of the vampire that created it and remains enslaved until its master's destruction. At any given time, a vampire may have enslaved spawn totaling no more than twice its own level; any spawn exceeding this limit are created as free-willed vampires. An enslaved vampire may create and enslave spawn of its own, so a master vampire can control a large number of lesser vampires in this fashion. A vampire may voluntarily free enslaved spawn in order to enslave new spawn, but once freed, a vampire cannot be enslaved again.

Damage Reduction: A vampire has damage reduction +4/silver and supernatural. A vampire's natural weapons are supernatural for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Dominate: A vampire can dominate a victim like a use of the power of the same name, except mental contact is not needed, and it is limited to a range of 30 feet. The ability has a range of 30 feet.



Fast Healing: A vampire makes a recovery check from damage each round. If dying, a vampire automatically assumes gaseous form and flees. It must reach its coffin within two hours or be destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in two hours.) Any additional damage dealt to a vampire forced into gaseous form has no effect. Once at rest in its coffin, a vampire is helpless. It becomes disabled after an hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of one recovery check per round.

Gaseous Form: As a standard action, a vampire can assume gaseous form. It has a fly speed of 20 feet and is immune to physical harm, but unable to make attacks or use any of its other traits.

Immunities: Vampires are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-influencing effects (including mind-influencing powers). They are not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save, unless it works on inanimate objects.

Spider Climb: At a speed of 20 ft., a vampire can climb sheer surfaces with no Climb check and no chance of falling.

Skills: Vampires have a +8 bonus on Bluff, Notice, Search, and Stealth checks.

Vampires are among the most powerful and feared of the undead. They appear much as they did in life, although their features are often hardened and feral, with the predatory look of wolves, and their skin is usually pale (except immediately after feeding).

Vampires often embrace finery and decadence and may assume the guise of nobility (if they were not already in life). Despite their appearance, vampires can be recognized by the fact that they cast no shadows and no reflections in mirrors.

Saves against the vampire's traits have a Difficulty of 14 + the vampire's Charisma score, unless noted otherwise (Difficulty 15 for the sample vampire given here).

WEAKNESSES

For all their power, vampires have a number of weaknesses.

Repelling a Vampire: Vampires cannot tolerate the strong odor of garlic and will not enter an area laced with it. Similarly, they recoil from mirrors or strongly presented holy symbols. These things don't harm vampires, merely keep them at bay. A recoiling vampire must stay at least 5 feet away from the mirror or holy symbol, and cannot touch or make melee attacks against a creature holding the item. Holding a vampire at bay takes a standard action each round.

Limited Movement: Vampires are unable to cross running water, but can be carried over it while resting in their coffins or aboard a ship. They are unable to enter a home or other building unless invited in by someone with the authority to do so. They may freely enter public places, since these are by definition open to all.

Slaying a Vampire: Reducing a vampire's condition to disabled incapacitates it but doesn't destroy it (see the note on fast healing). However, certain attacks can slay vampires. Exposing any vampire to

direct sunlight disorients it; it can take only a single move or standard action and is destroyed utterly the following round if it cannot escape. Similarly, immersing a vampire in running water causes it one level of lethal damage each round until its condition is disabled, then it is destroyed. Driving a wooden stake through a vampire's heart instantly disables it. However, it can recover if the stake is removed. A popular tactic is to cut off the staked vampire's head and fill its mouth with garlic, or to burn the body or expose it to sunlight, any of which will destroy it.

WOLF

Type: 2nd-level animal

Size: Medium

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +2, Con +2, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Stealth 1 (+3), Survival 0 (+1)

Feats: Attack Focus (bite), Improved Trip^B, Track^B

Traits: Night Vision, Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+2 Dex +1 attack focus), Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +3 (+2 Dex), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +5, Reflex +5, Will +1

Skills: Wolves have a +4 bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Wolves are pack hunters known for their persistence and cunning. A favorite wolf tactic is to send a few individuals against the foe's front while the rest of the pack circles and attacks from the flanks or rear.

ZOMBIE

Type: 1st-level undead

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex -1, Con —, Int —, Wis +0, Cha -5

Feats: Tough 2^B

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Immunities, Slow

Combat: Attack -1 (-1 Dex), Damage +1 (unarmed) or by weapon, Defense -1 (-1 Dex), Initiative -1

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude —, Reflex -1, Will —

Immunities: Zombies are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-influencing effects (including mind-influencing powers). They are not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save, unless it works on inanimate objects.

Slow: Zombies have poor reflexes and can perform only a single move action or standard action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round, but only if it charges.

Zombies are corpses animated by supernatural forces. Because of their utter lack of intelligence, the instructions given to a newly created zombie must be simple and specific. Zombies do nothing except what they are commanded to do.





CHAPTER NINE: ROLE CREATION

NOT ALL PERMUTATIONS OF THE CHARACTERS THAT PLAYERS WANT TO PORTRAY CAN NECESSARILY BE SUMMED UP IN THE THREE BASIC ROLES PRESENTED IN CHAPTER ONE. THIS CHAPTER EXPLORES THE CONSTRUCTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MORE ADVANCED AND SPECIALIZED ROLES.

The three heroic roles presented in **Chapter One**—adept, expert, and warrior—are intended to provide simple and easy-to-use frameworks for creating heroic characters. Much of the work of determining the hero’s traits is already done for you: simply choose the starting level, assign skill ranks, choose feats (and powers, for adepts), equip your hero, and you’re done.

Although *True20* offers a lot of flexibility in terms of hero creation, some traits are relatively fixed, based on role. Two warriors of the same level, for example, share the same basic Combat bonus before things like ability scores and feats are taken into account. Likewise, two experts of the same level can be expected to have similar skill ranks, albeit modified by their respective Intelligence scores and choices in assigning those ranks to different skills. Options for mixing role levels provide more

ways to customize, but only at higher levels where players have more than just one or two levels to apply.

For those who desire more individuality in their heroes, this chapter opens up the basic *True20* roles, going “under the hood” to provide players and Narrators with the tools to create their own custom-designed roles. By following just a few simple steps, you can create virtually any role your concept or setting requires, giving you as many or as few roles as you want!

Note that the guidelines in this chapter are an *optional* expansion for *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*. Narrators who prefer the simplicity of using the three basic heroic roles can continue to do so. For those interested in the expanded options of role creation, read on.

ROLE COMPONENTS

A role is made up of several components, including: the role’s core ability, Combat Progression, Skill Progression, Saving Throw Progression (in each of three saves: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will), Power Progression (if the role has access to supernatural powers), and access to feats. We’ll look at progressions first in terms of building new roles, and then at core abilities.

To create a role, choose Combat, Skill, Saving Throw, and Power Progressions that add up to a total cost of 5 points. Any fractional points

left over from this starting amount are discarded, so try to spend as much of the starting progression points as you can.

COMBAT PROGRESSION

Combat Progression determines how quickly the role’s Combat bonus improves. There are four progressions: Fast, Medium, Slow, and Very Slow.

- *Fast Progression* sets Combat bonus equal to the role’s level, like a warrior (so a 4th-level character in that role has Combat +4, for example).
- *Medium Progression* sets Combat bonus at three-quarters of the role’s level, rounded down, like an expert (so a 4th-level character in that role has Combat +3).
- *Slow Progression* sets Combat bonus at half the role’s level, like an adept (so a 4th-level character in that role has Combat +2).
- *Very Slow Progression* sets Combat bonus at one-quarter the role’s level (so a 4th-level character in that role has Combat +1).

These progressions are shown on the **Combat Progression Table**, while the cost of each type is shown on the **Combat Progression Cost Table**.

SKILL PROGRESSION

Skill Progression determines how many skills the role provides at 1st level, as well as how many skill ranks it provides each level thereafter. The starting skill, skill ranks, and their respective costs are shown on the **Skill Progression Cost Table**.

A role’s starting skills and skill ranks per level are always modified by the character’s Intelligence score, with a minimum of 1 starting skill and

SKILL PROGRESSION COST

Skills/Ranks	Cost
2	0.5 points
4	1 point
6	1.5 points
8	2 points
10	2.5 points
12	3 points
14	3.5 points
16	4 points

OPTION: SPLIT COMBAT PROGRESSIONS

You can choose to split up Combat Progression into Attack and Defense Progressions, allowing different progressions in each so you can create a role that's strong on attack and weak on defense, for example, or a primarily defensive role that's defensively strong, but doesn't pack a big punch (weak offense). Simply divide the costs on the **Combat Progression Cost Table** in half (2 points for Fast, 1.5 points for Medium, 1 point for Slow, and 0.5 points for Very Slow) and pay for each progression separately.

You can also split Combat Progression into melee and ranged or armed and unarmed if you wish (note that "unarmed" is melee range by default—don't split the progression twice), so a role can have a Fast Ranged Progression, but a Medium or even Slow Melee Progression. This might be suitable for an archer or marksman role, for example.

Don't get caught up in splitting Combat Progression into too many categories. Be careful to watch out for players looking to "optimize" by giving their hero a split Fast Progression with a point-saving Slow or Very Slow Progression, then carefully avoiding any circumstance where the slower Progression would come into play.

OPTION: NO COMBAT PROGRESSION

It's assumed that *True20* heroes always have at least *some* ability in combat—even the bookish scholarly types. You therefore normally have to choose at least Very Slow Combat Progression for a heroic role; only ordinaries completely lack one (page 118). The Narrator may allow the option of having No Combat Progression (and therefore a Combat bonus of +0 at all levels of the role) for a cost of 0 points, however, just like an ordinary.

OPTION: FINER SKILL PROGRESSION

If desired, you can split Skill Progression into even finer categories: each interval in between the steps on the **Skill Progression Cost Table** is a 0.25 points increase. So 5 + Int skill ranks is 1.25 points, for example, 7 + Int is 1.75 points, and so forth. This allows for some "fine tuning" of individual progressions.

You can also potentially extend the Skill Progression, if you want, to create roles with a wealth of skill ranks (true jacks-of-all-trades). *True20* has 28 base skills altogether; creating a role that can master virtually *every* skill (discounting skills with numerous specialties like Craft and Knowledge) with a Skill Progression of 20 (+ Int) is possible, but it would be all the role could do, since it would have no Combat or Power Progression!

1 skill rank per level. You may wish to require a minimum Progression of 4 (for 1 point) for heroes with Int -3 or lower in order to prevent min-maxing. In such cases, of course, you can argue that an Int -3 hero is going to need all the help he can get....

SKILL PROGRESSION AND MIXING ROLES

Mixed-role heroes with different Skill Progressions simply add them together to determine their total skill ranks. A hero who starts out in a role with eight starting skills, then switches to a role with a Skill Progression of 4 gets four skill ranks to improve those skills, meaning she's not going to be able to improve them all equally. Likewise, a hero who starts out with two skills and adds a level of a role with a Skill Progression of 8 gets eight more skill ranks and can definitely learn some new skills, since her level limits how much she can improve her existing ones.

SAVING THROW PROGRESSION

Saving Throw Progression determines the improvement of your Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save bonuses. Toughness save bonus does not increase by role or level, only by the application of feats like Defensive Roll and Tough. There are four options for Save Progression; the first two have no cost and are the default for most roles. The other two options costs 0.25 points.

ONE GOOD, TWO NORMAL

One of your saving throws follows the Good Progression, while the other two follow the Normal Progression. This option costs 0 Progression Points.

TWO MEDIUM, ONE NORMAL

Two of your saving throws follow the Medium Progression, while the third follows the Normal Progression. This option costs 0 Progression Points.

THREE MEDIUM

All three of your saving throws follow the Medium Progression. This option costs 0.25 Progression Points.

TWO GOOD, ONE NORMAL

Two of your saving throws follow the Good Progression, while the third follows the Normal Progression. This option costs 0.25 Progression Points.

SAVING THROW PROGRESSION

Level	Good	Medium	Normal
1	+2	+1	+0
2	+3	+1	+0
3	+3	+2	+1
4	+4	+2	+1
5	+4	+3	+1
6	+5	+3	+2
7	+5	+3	+2
8	+6	+4	+2
9	+6	+4	+3
10	+7	+5	+3
11	+7	+5	+3
12	+8	+6	+4
13	+8	+6	+4
14	+9	+6	+4
15	+9	+7	+5
16	+10	+7	+5
17	+10	+8	+5
18	+11	+8	+6
19	+11	+9	+6
20	+12	+9	+6

SAVE PROGRESSION AND MIXING ROLES

When determining the saving throw bonuses of a mixed-role character, use the base bonuses of the characters' first role. For additional roles, subtract 2 from the role's Good Save Progression and 1 from its Medium Save Progression to determine the amount to add. Normal Save Progressions add their full amount.

Example: A 4th-level adept (Good Will, Normal Fortitude and Reflex) also has two levels of warrior (Good Fortitude, Normal Reflex and Will). The adept role's base save bonuses are Fortitude +1, Reflex +1, Will +4 for 4th-level. The warrior role's are Fortitude +3, Reflex +0, Will +0 for 2nd-level. However, the Good Save (Fortitude) has its bonus reduced by 2 (to +1) before it is added. The Normal Reflex and Will saves are unaffected. The hero's final base save bonuses (before factoring in ability scores) are Fortitude +2 (+1 adept, +1 warrior), Reflex +1 (+1 adept, +0 warrior), and Will +4 (+4 adept, +0 warrior).

If the same 4th-level adept also had two levels of a role that provided Medium Fortitude and Reflex saves and Normal Will saves, there would be no saving throw increase at all, since the two medium saves would be reduced from +1 to +0 and the normal save would be at +0. The hero would need a third level in the additional role to improve saves (adding +1 to each, after modifications).

POWER PROGRESSION COST

Progression	Cost
Fast	2 points
Medium	1.5 points
Slow	1 point
Very Slow	0.5 points
None	0 points

POWER PROGRESSION

Level	Fast	Medium	Slow	Very Slow
1	4	3	2	1
2	5	3	2	1
3	6	4	3	1
4	7	5	3	1
5	8	5	4	2
6	9	6	4	2
7	10	7	5	2
8	11	7	5	2
9	12	8	6	3
10	13	9	6	3
11	14	9	7	3
12	15	10	7	3
13	16	11	8	4
14	17	11	8	4
15	18	12	9	4
16	19	13	9	4
17	20	13	10	5
18	21	14	10	5
19	22	15	11	5
20	23	15	11	5

POWER PROGRESSION

Power Progression determines a role's ability to use supernatural powers, and how effective those powers will be. The default (for 0 points) is a Power Progression of None, or no access to powers at all. There are four Progressions allowing access to powers and determining power rank, as described on page 54, they are Fast, Medium, Slow, and Very Slow, similar to the Combat Progressions. Each Progression's cost is shown on the **Power Progression Cost Table** while each Progression's rank per level is shown on the **Power Progression Table**.

POWER PROGRESSION AND POWERS

Anyone with a Power Progression other than None can acquire a supernatural power in place of a feat in the same way the adept role does (page 19). The power's rank is determined by the role's Power Progression, as given on the **Power Progression Table**.

The power save Difficulties for role power progression are calculated as follows:

- 10 + key ability + one-half role level for Fast,
- 10 + key ability + one-third role level for Medium
- 10 + key ability + one-quarter role level for Slow
- 10 + key ability + one-fifth role level for Very Slow.

All fractions are rounded down. So a Very Slow progression role has a power save Difficulty of 10 + ability until 5th level, when it becomes 11 + ability (with a maximum of 14 + ability at 20th level, when the fast progression role has a Save Difficulty of 20 + ability). For powers that have effects determined by adept level, such as Elemental Blast, use the listed power rank, minus 3, with a minimum level of 1.

POWER ACCESS

The adept role has access to potentially any supernatural power given in **Chapter Four**, provided the character meets the prerequisites of having and using the power. Power Progression is priced on the assumption of complete (or near-complete) access to powers in exchange for feats.

This option restricts the list of powers available to the role in exchange for an improved Progression with those powers. There are four categories of power access:

- **Unlimited:** This is the default (no adjustment in Power Progression); the role has complete access to the powers available in the setting, barring only those powers the Narrator restricts or chooses to make available on a case-by-case basis. Choose role's Power Progression normally from the **Power Progression Cost** table.
- **Broad:** The role is limited to a broad group of no more than half the available powers, approximately 30 to 35 of them, with a unifying theme. A "psychic" role might be limited to powers that suit real-world ideas of telepathy and extra-sensory perception, for example. Shift Progression costs down one level on the **Power Progression Cost** table, so Fast Progression costs 1.5 points, and so forth, with Very Slow Progression costing 0.25 points.
- **Narrow:** The role is limited to a narrow group of no more than a quarter of the available powers (about a dozen or so). A "shaper" role might be limited to powers with "Shaping" in their name, for example. Shift Power Progression costs down two levels on the table, so Fast Progression costs 1 point while Slow Progression costing 0.25 points. Very Slow Progression is unavailable for Narrow power access.
- **Singular:** The role is limited to a single power, or perhaps two very strongly related powers. Shift Power Progression costs down three levels on the table, so Fast Progression costs only 0.5 point, and

OPTION: CUSTOM FEAT ACCESS

An alternative option for feat access is to create a customized feat list for each role. This can become rather involved and it makes role creation more difficult. It can also be harder to balance, since it offers the opportunity to “cherry-pick” the very best feats and give the new role access to all of them at a bargain price. Narrators should consider carefully before allowing it, and may wish to come up with customized feat lists themselves rather than delegating it to the players.

OPTION: FEAT PROGRESSION

The default for *True20* roles is four starting feats plus an additional feat per level. If desired, the Narrator can allow a “Feat Progression” when designing roles, providing more feats than usual in exchange for deficiencies in other Progressions. The progression point costs for this are shown on the **Feat Progression Cost Table**. This adds some complexity and should be considered carefully. In particular, Narrators may wish to limit all roles with Power Progression to no more than one new power per level after 1st regardless of the number of available feats, in order to keep those roles from becoming too powerful too quickly.

Medium Progression costs 0.25 points, with slower Progressions unavailable for Singular power access.

If a power has a prerequisite the role’s Progression doesn’t include, then that power is generally unavailable to that role as well without specific permission from the Narrator.

Generally, power access limits should be imposed by the Narrator, thus preventing players from choosing to “limit” their heroes to a Power Progression exactly like the set of powers they’d choose anyway. Keep in mind that *True20* heroes are already somewhat limited in their Power Progression by the presumption that any heroic role has a maximum of 23 feats (4 at 1st level, plus one per additional level) over the span of 20 levels, making it impossible to learn *all* the powers of a broad group.

POWER PROGRESSION AND MIXING ROLES

There are two options when mixing roles that have Power Progressions. The Narrator decides which option applies.

The first and simplest option is that each role has its own *unique* Power Progression and power access that do not stack or operate together, even for mixed-role heroes. A hero who’s 5th-level in a Fast Power Progression role and 4th-level in a Medium Power Progression role has two power ranks: rank 8 for the first role and rank 5 for the second. The powers of the first role operate at rank 8 while the powers of the second operate at rank 5. They may even have different key abilities or lists of available powers (suitable for characters who mix power-types, such as a psychic/sorcerer or a priest/wizard). This option works best when each Power Progression role has its own distinct power-set.

The other option is to allow some or all of a mixed-role hero’s Power Progressions with access to the same powers to stack. When determining the total power rank for a mixed-role hero with stacking Power Progressions, use the base Power Progression of the first role. Reduce the Power Progression rank of any additional roles by 3 for Fast, 2 for Medium, and 1 for Slow before adding their ranks to the first role, leaving Very Slow Progression as-is. Using the aforementioned 5th-level Fast/4th-level Medium hero as an example, the base would be rank 8 (for the first, Fast Progression, role). The rank 5 for the second role is reduced to 3 (minus 2 for Medium Progression) then added to 8 for a total power rank of 11, slightly less than a 9th-level Fast Progression hero would have, but better than a 9th-level Medium Progression.

FEAT ACCESS

The three core roles in *True20* each have access to their own specific types of feat: adept, expert, or warrior. All roles have access to general feats. During role creation, Narrators need to decide what types of feats customized roles can acquire.

The default (costing 0 points) is general and one other category as best suits the role. A priest role with supernatural powers, for example, best suits the adept category, while an adventuring archeologist role is probably best suited to expert feats.

Each additional category of feats costs 0.5 points, with access to all categories costing 1 point. Note that access to adept feats does *not* grant the ability to exchange a feat for a supernatural power; that requires a Power Progression (as described previously). Many adept feats are essentially useless to roles lacking a Power Progression. There’s no “discount” for this, it’s just how those feats work.

FEAT PROGRESSION COST	
Progression	Cost
One feat per level	0 points
Bonus feat every fourth level	0.25 points
Bonus feat every other level	0.5 points
Two feats per level	1 point



CORE ABILITIES

Each role in *True20* has a *core ability*, available only to those who take their first character level in that role. A hero who starts out as a 1st-level warrior has the warrior core ability; if she later acquires a level of adept, she doesn't gain the adept core ability, because she didn't start out as an adept.

Core abilities provide a reason to choose one role over another as a starting role and help to differentiate mixed-role heroes; the warrior/adept does not have the same in capabilities as an adept/warrior, for example, since they have different core abilities. The warrior/adept has Determination and can fight on against difficult odds while the adept/warrior has the Talent and greater flexibility in the use of powers.

The easy way of handling core abilities for custom created roles is to simply choose one of the three core abilities of the *True20* heroic roles when you create a new role, as best suits the role's concept. A mystic warrior might have Determination like the warrior role, while a martial artist has Expertise like the expert role, and so forth. This lessens the value of core abilities somewhat because they're no longer unique. In *True20* no two roles have the same core ability, but under this system, it's quite likely multiple roles will provide the same one, providing less incentive to choose your first level in that role.

NEW CORE ABILITIES

Alternatively, you may wish to create a new core ability for the new role. There's no exact system for the design of core abilities. Instead, use the following guidelines and examples to help you design a suitable core ability.

- Core abilities generally enhance the use of Conviction, either improving a normal use or allowing the hero to spend Conviction for an additional effect. This helps to set a limit on how often the core ability can be used.
- Core abilities are slightly more effective than feats since each hero only gets one, whereas roles accumulate many feats. A core ability generally shouldn't do something that a feat already does.
- Core abilities tend to focus on the role's *core*, what that role is about. For example, warriors have Determination because a warrior is all about being able to fight and win. Experts have Expertise because they're all about being skilled. Try to fit the core ability to the role's core concept.
- Core abilities that do not require the spending of Conviction are possible, but should be more limited and not generally under the player's control. This allows the Narrator to decide how often the core ability comes into play and prevents it from being abused. Such "passive" core abilities usually involve resistance to some effect or condition. If it's something the player can choose to "activate" in play, it should probably require the spending of Conviction.

OPTION: ABILITY PROGRESSION

As with feat progression, *True20* assumes a standard progression in ability bonuses by level. This progression does not vary according to role in the core rules; all heroes progress at the same rate. You may wish to allow different ability bonus progressions for roles strongly focused on self-improvement, such as athletes who gain in Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution, rigorous scholars or academics who improve Intelligence and Wisdom, or public figures who focus on improving Charisma. The ability progression options are:

Even if variable ability progressions are available, heroes are still limited to a maximum of +5 in an ability, modified by their background. Even a role that offers a +1 ability bonus per 3 levels, for example, can't add the entire +6 bonus over 18 levels to a single ability! The Narrator may wish to impose other restrictions on ability progression bonuses to suit the game.

SAMPLE CORE ABILITIES

Here are some sample new core abilities you can use in building new roles, or as examples when creating new core abilities of your own.

AMAZING SAVE

Choose your Fortitude, Reflex, or Will saving throw; when rolling saves for the chosen saving throw, roll two dice and use the better of the two rolls. This core ability *cannot* apply to Toughness saves. If you spend Conviction to re-roll a save, roll only *one* die and compare it to the better of your original two rolls.

COMMON SENSE

It may not be that common, but you've got it. Whenever you're about to do something foolish or downright *stupid*, the Narrator *must* warn you, usually with something along the lines of "Are you sure you *really* want to do that?" Based on this, you may choose a different course of action. Common Sense doesn't cost Conviction, but it's also not under your control.

EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT

By spending a point of Conviction when you use extra effort, you gain any *two* benefits rather than having to choose just one. If you choose the same benefit twice, its effectiveness increases by 50%, giving +3 to a check bonus or tripling your carrying capacity or movement speed. For the Willpower benefit, you make two additional saves rather than one. You still suffer the fatigue of the extra effort normally.

HIGHER GUIDANCE

Sometimes you just know things; there seems to be a higher power watching over you. You can spend a point of Conviction to ask the Narrator a direct question and get a truthful answer, although the Narrator's reply may be brief (often just a "yes" or "no"). The Narrator may choose not to answer if it would adversely affect the flow of the game, in which case you get your Conviction point back.

HIGHER PURPOSE

You serve a higher purpose or calling. It might be a nationality, religion, philosophy, or anything else approved by the Narrator but it cannot be an achievable goal, such as "destroy the Lich King" or "wipe out crime in the city." When faced with a challenge directly related to your Higher Purpose, you may spend a Conviction point to gain either two feats or a single power (with a Fast Power Progression equal to your total level) you can use for the duration of the encounter or scene. The feats or power are chosen when you acquire this ability and cannot be changed. If you ever abandon your purpose, you lose the use of this core ability. The Dedicated feat (page 45) is quite common for heroes with this core ability. Once chosen, your Higher Purpose cannot be changed.

ABILITY PROGRESSION COST

Progression	Cost
+1 per six levels (default)	0 points
+1 per five levels	0.25 points
+1 per four levels	0.5 points
+1 per three levels	1 point

FEARLESS

You are completely immune to effects that cause fear (including supernatural powers like Heart Shaping) and to the effects of the Intimidate skill, unless the user's total level is at least four greater than yours. You can also eliminate a fear-induced condition from an ally at any time by spending a point of Conviction and standing up to the source of the fear (often with a rousing speech or a simple statement like "We're not afraid of you!").

ULTIMATE TRAIT

Choose an ability score, skill, or saving throw; when making a check using that trait, you can spend a point of Conviction and automatically treat your die roll as a 20. Note this is not considered a "natural" 20, but otherwise works like a die result of 20. For example, if you have Ultimate Strength, you can spend a point of Conviction on a Strength check and just add 20 to your Strength bonus rather than rolling the die. Ultimate Abilities *do not* improve the use of skills based on those abilities; having Ultimate Strength doesn't affect your Climb or Swim skill checks, for example, just raw Strength checks. This is true even when using a skill untrained, applying just the ability modifier.

ORDINARIES AND ROLE CREATION

The Ordinary role (page 118) is limited to Narrator characters and is not designed for balance compared to the heroic roles. In essence, Ordinary grants only a Skill Progression of 4 per level and doesn't have a Combat, Normal Save Progression, (since Ordinary saves don't improve with level) or Feat Progression.

At the Narrator's option, an Ordinary may choose to exchange a level of the usual Skill Progression for a different trait with a value of 1 Progression Point (that of the 4 + Int Skill Progression). So, for

example, an Ordinary attaining 3rd-level could trade the usual skill ranks for that level for a general feat (the only category Ordinaries can access by default), a level of Slow Combat Progression, Good Save Progression, or Slow Power Progression (although the character would also need to exchange a level of Skill Progression for one or more powers to make use of this). This allows higher-level Ordinaries to gain some variety and one or two interesting "tricks" they may have picked up along the way.

Note that you can achieve this effect just as easily (and more effectively) by giving the Ordinary one or more heroic role levels. This option is intended for minor tweaks to Ordinary progression. For an ex-soldier turned ordinary citizen, you're still best off with a mixed-role Warrior/Ordinary character.

Some settings might even call for applying the Ordinary role to heroes, in order to limit their progression and make them less heroic and more, well, ordinary. This particularly suits genres like horror, where heroes are often otherwise ordinary people thrust into extraordinary circumstances (see **Chapter Twelve** for details) and later acquiring levels in one or more heroic roles.

THE HEROIC ROLES

Here's a breakdown of the three heroic roles according to the Progressions in this chapter, showing how they are constructed. Use them as examples for creating new roles:

ADEPT

Combat Progression: Slow (2 points)

Skill Progression: 4 + Int (1 point)

Save Progression: Good Will, Normal Fortitude and Reflex (0 points)

Power Progression: Fast, Unlimited (2 points)

Core Ability: The Talent (page 19)



The adept role's clear focus is on powers, the role's highest Progression, and on breadth of powers as well, since adepts have the entire power list to choose from by default. Their core ability supports this too, allowing them to use powers untrained and shrug off the fatigue of wielding their various abilities.

EXPERT

Combat Progression: Medium (3 points)

Skill Progression: 8 + Int (2 points)

Save Progression: One Good, Two Normal (0 points)

Power Progression: None (0 points)

Core Ability: Expertise (page 20)

The expert is a good overall role. Its focus is on Skill Progression, which is good but not so high that the other Progressions suffer. A variant expert who's more bookish and less of an adventurer might trade a Slow

Combat Progression for an even better Skill Progression (12 + Int) or a Slow Power Progression (for a "dabbler" in supernatural powers with a lot of knowledge and supporting skills).

WARRIOR

Combat Progression: Fast (4 points)

Skill Progression: 4 + Int (1 point)

Power Progression: None (0 points)

Core Ability: Determination (page 21)

It's no mystery where this role's focus lies: the Fast Combat Progression says it all. The warrior has the ability to fight well, with a point invested in a decent Skill Progression to provide adventuring skills needed in the field. The warrior's core ability is all about surviving the next fight and having an edge over less determined foes.

SAMPLE CUSTOMIZED ROLES

The following are examples of custom-built roles using the guidelines in this chapter. They are suitable for use alongside existing *True20* roles. By way of example, these roles use some of the new core abilities described previously.

PRIEST

Combat Progression: Medium (3 points)

Skill Progression: 4 + Int (1 point)

Save Progression: Medium Fortitude and Will, Normal Reflex (0 points)

Power Progression: Medium, Broad (1 point)

Feat Access: Adept

Core Ability: Higher Guidance

The priest is a kind of fantasy generalist: a decent combatant with solid Fortitude and Will saves and access to a broad selection of supernatural powers suitable to the priest's patron god or pantheon, usually including powers like Cure and Ward (against the faith's enemies). Traditionally, priestly powers rely on Wisdom; priests use their Higher Guidance to help make wise choices for themselves and their allies.

MARTIAL ARTIST

Combat Progression: Unarmed Fast (2 points), Armed Medium (1.5 points), using the option for Split Combat Progressions.

Skill Progression: 4 + Int (1 point)

Save Progression: All Medium (0.25 points)

Power Progression: Slow, Narrow (0.25 points)

Feat Access: Expert, with Improved Strike as a standard feat at 1st level.

Core Ability: Amazing Reflex Save

The martial artist is a specialized warrior focusing on unarmed combat, becoming a kind of "living weapon." The role's unarmed Combat bonus equals that of a warrior, although its skill with weapons lags behind. The role also has access to a narrow set of powers involving enhancing the body and unarmed abilities, including Body Control, Enhance Ability, Enhance Senses, Supernatural Speed, and Supernatural Strike.

HOLY WARRIOR

Combat Progression: Fast (4 points)

Skill Progression: 2 + Int (0.5 points)

Save Progression: Medium Fortitude and Will, Normal Reflex (0 points)

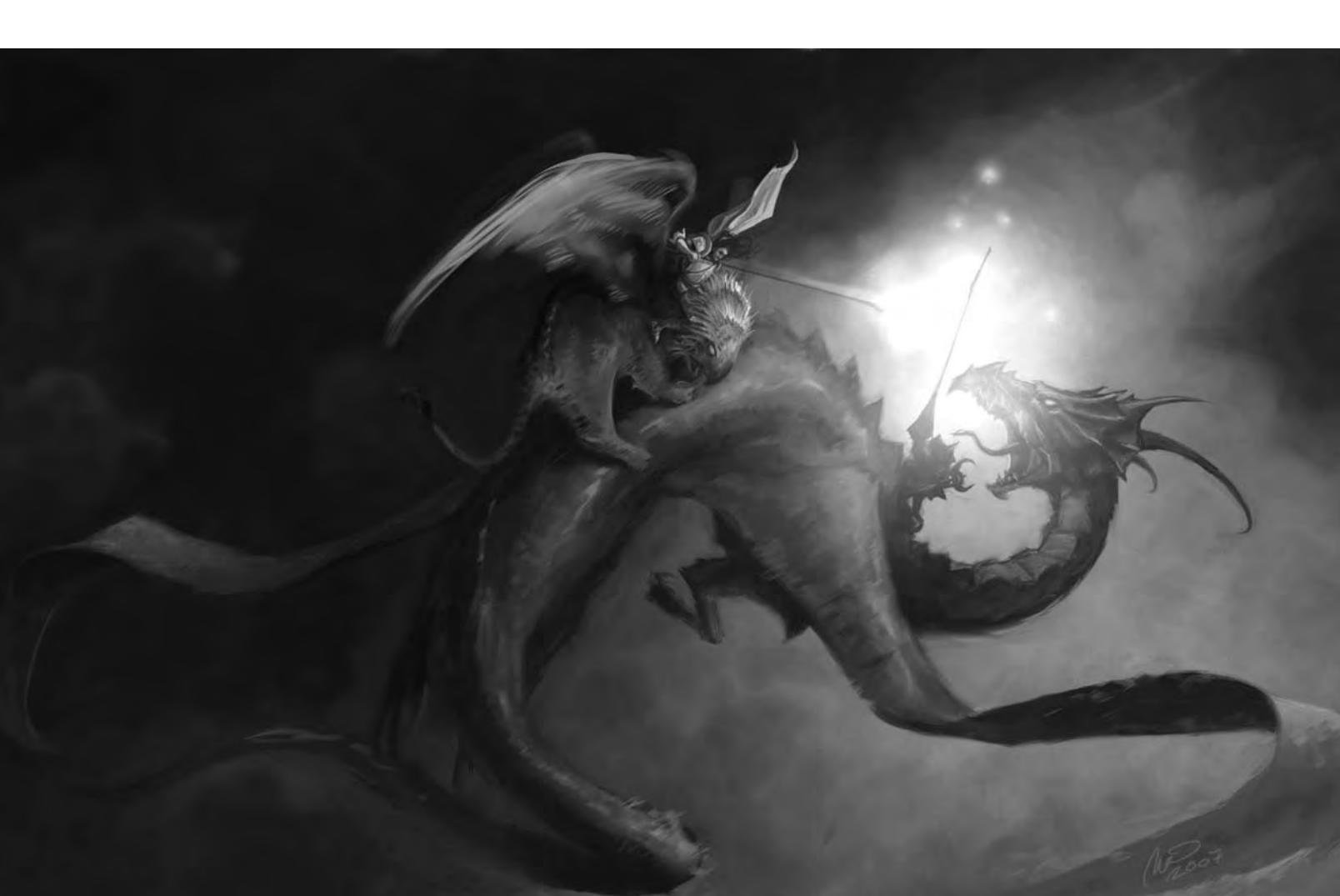
Power Progression: Medium, Narrow (0.5 points)

Feat Access: Warrior

Core Ability: Higher Purpose

The holy warrior combines the martial skills of a warrior with access to a narrow set of powers suited to the role's devotion to a particular deity or pantheon—essentially a narrow subset of the priest's broad powers. Holy Warriors are better fighters than priests, but have fewer skills and less access to powers overall. They also lack access to power-modifying adept feats, having combat-oriented warrior feats instead. They're front-line fighters against the enemies of their Higher Purpose.





CHAPTER TEN:

FANTASY

ADVENTURES

SWORDS AND DRAGONS, DUNGEONS AND SORCERY, FEARSOME BEASTS AND UNKNOWN ARCANE LANDS—THIS CHAPTER EXPLORES SPECIALIZED RULES FOR BRINGING WORLDS OF FANTASY ADVENTURE TO LIFE USING THE TRUE20 SYSTEM.

The clash of steel, the chanting of sorcerers, and the roar of dragons: these are the hallmarks of the fantasy genre. Fantasy is distinguished from other genres by the inclusion of a supernatural element such as magic as a key part of the story's plot, theme or setting. This supernatural element has profound effects on the setting, making it different from our own world in fantastic ways. This genre allows you to explore your imagination. Virtually anything can be possible in a fantasy setting. You can tell stories filled with wonder and magic, from timeless tales about the struggle of the

human spirit and the search for identity to a bloody kick-in-the-door high-adrenaline hackfest. Fantasy often overlaps with science fiction and horror genres, but even then, it maintains a distinctive feel. More than any other genre, fantasy makes use of a number of recognizable symbols and archetypes in order to tell a story. Each archetype serves as a framework from which a myriad of variations can be built while retaining the same core idea. In the following pages you will find guidelines for using these symbols, themes and archetypes as tools with which to build or enrich your own setting.

SUBGENRES

The fantasy genre can be broken down into any number of overlapping subgenres. Brief descriptions of the more common fantasy subgenres are provided here.

MYTHOLOGY, FAIRYTALES AND FOLKLORE

Mythology is rooted in the belief systems of ancient cultures. It serves as a foundation for most fantasy subgenres. It is in mythology and folklore that we find the origins of most of fantasy's themes and archetypes. Myths that have molded and shaped the fantasy genre include the epic of Gilgamesh, the Odyssey, the Iliad, Beowulf, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, Dante's Inferno and the legends of King Arthur.

HIGH FANTASY

When most people think of fantasy, they think of fantasy as seen in J.R.R. Tolkien's writings. Many consider Tolkien to be the father of the high fantasy genre. His work in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy is one of the primary inspirations for high fantasy.

In high fantasy, the plot often revolves around an epic conflict between good and evil (or occasionally between order and chaos) taking place in

a magical world. The stakes are high, and the protagonists often find the fate of the world rests upon their shoulders. The heroes usually begin the story as outcasts, operating outside of regular society. They must struggle to overcome their weaknesses before they can prevail against the overwhelming forces of evil. High fantasy depicts morality in an objective way rather than relative to the individuals involved. This moral tone is a strong theme in high fantasy. In addition to Tolkien, other prominent examples of high fantasy can be seen in C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*, the *Chronicles of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever* by Stephen R. Donaldson, and the *Wheel of Time* series by Robert Jordan.

HISTORICAL FANTASY

Historical fantasy often takes a given time or place in the history of the real world, then speculates how things might have been if magic had existed and played a role in shaping events leading up to that time period. Alternatively, historical fantasy can be set in a fantasy world closely analogous to our own, with various fantasy cultures recognizably derived from different real-world cultural groups and ideologies. Like high fantasy, historical fantasy often draws heavily upon mythology, possibly including mythological creatures living among the people who historically believed in their existence.

ROMANTIC FANTASY

The "romance" in romantic fantasy does not just deal with relationships, but also deals heavily with idyllic visions of what the world could be like. As with high fantasy, many heroes begin as outcasts from society, but over the course of the story they often find a place in society that accepts them for who they are. Other themes present throughout this genre are the empowerment of women, the acceptance of same-sex relationships, harmony between humans and nature, psychic bonds, and the enlightened society. Romantic fantasy often features a strong theme of enlightenment and acceptance fighting against evil and intolerance. This genre was shaped primarily by writers such as Diane Duane, Mercedes Lackey and Tamora Pierce. Anyone interested in playing *True20* using the romantic fantasy subgenre should check out *Blue Rose, the Roleplaying Game of Romantic Fantasy*, also available from Green Ronin Publishing.

SWORD AND SORCERY

Sword and sorcery is a subgenre in which swashbuckling heroes engage in exciting and extremely violent plots as they quest after glory, wealth and power. Sword-and-sorcery heroes often act in amoral ways. Even when they perform good deeds, they are usually acting in their own self interest. There is an element of romance in this subgenre, but it is not as prominent here as it is in romantic fantasy. This subgenre avoids the objective moral values of high fantasy and has no sense of cosmic justice. Common folk are often distrustful of the heroes of this genre, describing them as "adventurers" in a sense that is often synonymous with "thieves." The sword-and-sorcery subgenre is also marked with an emphasis on intense action and immediate physical threats. The "Conan the Barbarian" stories of Robert E. Howard are a primary inspiration for this genre.



In a sword-and-sorcery game, heroes should be allowed to indulge their vice nature as often as their virtue nature without incurring many penalties. Adventures will often focus on the acquisition of treasure and magical items. In order to move the story forward, the Narrator may wish to ensure the treasures are soon spent or the magical items become lost or destroyed, thus necessitating the heroes to go out and seek the next artifact or treasure trove. Unsavory acts, such as looting the corpses of fallen enemies, may become commonplace in such a game.

CONTEMPORARY FANTASY

Contemporary fantasy takes place in a modern world, much like our own. The major difference is a strong supernatural element somewhere in the

world, whether it is the existence of magic or of supernatural beings such as zombies, vampires, werewolves, ghosts, fairies and immortals. This element is often hidden from the public eye, and may introduce elements of conspiracy into the setting. Examples of contemporary fantasy can be seen in the works of Joss Whedon, Neil Gaiman, H.P. Lovecraft, and J. K. Rowling. For more information on running a *True20* game in a contemporary setting, refer to **Chapter Thirteen**.

DARK FANTASY

Dark fantasy takes the high fantasy or swords-and-sorcery subgenres and mixes them with elements of the horror genre. For more information on how to use horror elements in your game, see to **Chapter Twelve**.

GENRE CONVENTIONS

In addition to the presence of supernatural elements, fantasy settings usually contain a source of evil the heroes must overcome. They often use recognizable character archetypes to build and advance the plot.

SUPERNATURAL RATINGS

Since fantasy is defined by its supernatural elements, it is important to define the degree of influence supernatural forces have in the setting. This can be achieved by assigning one of the following supernatural ratings (SRs) to the setting.

SR 0: NON-FANTASY

A campaign with this SR has no supernatural powers, dragons, elementals, fey, outsiders, supernatural beasts, undead, or any other element of the supernatural. If gods exist in this world, they are distant and do not intervene in the affairs of mortals in any obvious way. If there are constructs in the setting, they are entirely technological in nature. SR 0 campaigns are typically not considered fantasy, but might have a place in a pulp-inspired setting.

SR 1: FORGOTTEN LORE

At this level, heroes are not allowed to acquire or use supernatural powers—such powers restricted to a very few elite Narrator characters. No one can achieve more than 7 levels of adept, thereby capping power ranks at +10. Aberrations, dragons, elementals, fey, monstrous humanoids, outsiders, supernatural beasts, and undead are rare or nonexistent. Few people in this campaign are aware the supernatural exists, possibly not even the heroes. Any encounter with the supernatural will be extremely unnerving, and onlookers may risk terror or even insanity. Some of the flashier supernatural powers such as Apport, Blink Teleport, Elemental Aura, Elemental Blast, Imbue Life, Self Shaping and Teleport do not exist.

SR 2: EMERGING ARCANIA

Heroes cannot begin as adepts at 1st level. At least half their character levels must be in a heroic role other than adept. Some Narrator characters may be exempt from this restriction. Nobody can achieve more than 10 levels of adept. Most people are unaware the supernatural exists, but the heroes and other knowledgeable Narrator characters know of it, even if they do not understand it. Those who use supernatural powers may risk corruption, mutation or madness. Some of the flashier supernatural powers such as Apport, Blink Teleport, Elemental Aura, Elemental Blast, Imbue Life, Self Shaping and Teleport do not exist.

SR 3: LOW MAGIC

In a low magic setting, the Narrator should discourage more than one or two of the heroes from becoming adepts. He may choose to require them to take at least one level of expert before gaining any levels as adepts. Most people in such a setting are aware magic exists, but few

truly understand it. Your average Narrator character will be extremely distrustful of anyone who displays supernatural powers or traits.

Nobody can achieve more than 13 levels in the adept role. Those who use supernatural powers may risk corruption, mutation or madness. Some of the flashier supernatural powers such as Apport, Blink Teleport, Elemental Aura, Elemental Blast, Imbue Life, Self Shaping and Teleport are unavailable to the heroes, if they exist in the setting at all. All power check Difficulties for these powers are increased by 10.

SR 4: RISING TIDE

In an SR 4 campaign, supernatural things and events are common enough that not everyone fears them automatically. Nobody can achieve more than 16 levels in the adept role. Some of the flashier supernatural powers such as Apport, Blink Teleport, Elemental Aura, Elemental Blast, Imbue Life, Self Shaping and Teleport have their power check Difficulties increased by 5, if they exist in the setting at all.

SR 5: DAWN OF MAGIC

In an SR 5 setting, there are no restrictions on the number of adept levels any character may achieve. Travel to other planes of existence may be possible, but is rare. This is the default assumption for any campaign with adepts and supernatural powers.

SR 6: HIGH ARCANIA

In an SR 6 setting, non-adepts may use feat slots to purchase 4 ranks worth of supernatural powers in a similar manner to the Skill Training feat. Ranks in various supernatural powers may be purchased in this way up to a maximum rank equal to the hero's total level + 3, divided by 2. Supernatural items and creatures may become fairly common in such a setting, possibly even being bought and sold in stores or markets for a high price. Divine intervention in mortal affairs may occur on a semi-regular basis, including relationships and even procreation with mortals.

SR 7: EVERYDAY SUPERNATURAL

This level of supernatural influence allows non-adepts to use feat slots to purchase supernatural powers at a rank equal to the hero's total level + 3, divided by 2. Lower the Difficulty of all fatigue saves for supernatural power use by adepts by 5. In such a setting, magic may have evolved right along with technology or replaced technology altogether. Divine intervention in mortal affairs is fairly commonplace, and the descendants of gods are many. Many adventures may involve traveling to other worlds or planes of existence.

SR 8: WORLD OF WONDERS

In a world of wonders, astonishing sights punctuate the landscape. It is not uncommon to see castles built on the tops of clouds, to have the dead come back to life, or to meet a divine being during a casual walk. Heroes may be on a first name basis with gods and perform unimaginable feats.



As with SR 7, non-adepts may use feat slots to purchase supernatural powers at a rank equal to the hero's total level + 3, divided by 2. The Difficulty of all power checks and fatigue saves for supernatural power use are lowered by 5 for adepts. Fantastical possibilities such as time travel may be possible at this stage.

SR 9 AND HIGHER

This level of supernatural activity reaches beyond comprehension. The laws of nature are bent and broken through supernatural means, to the point where they have become largely irrelevant.

SITUATIONAL ARCHETYPES AS ADVENTURE HOOKS

Situational archetypes are recurrent themes in fantasy literature that can be used as generic frameworks for adventures. A list of situational archetypes is provided along with a sample adventure hook for each.

THE INITIATION

One or more beginning-level heroes are faced with some test to prove their worth or make a name for themselves. This often involves some form of ritual to signify the coming of age of the initiate(s).

Example: *Before the heroes are granted knighthood, access to weapons and armor and the freedom to come and go on adventures, they must prove themselves worthy of bearing arms in the annual jousting tournament.*

THE FALL

One of the heroes has committed some transgression or act of disobedience that leads to their expulsion from their family, society, religious order or some other group, until they can find some way to redeem themselves.

Example: *After removing the helmet of a slain adversary, one of the heroes finds to his horror that the enemy he just killed was actually his brother, acting under magical compulsion. The hero's family is distraught and invokes the curse of the kinslayer. The hero is doomed to never return home until he has somehow made amends.*

THE ODYSSEY

The heroes are sent in search of some secret knowledge necessary to restore fertility and prosperity to the kingdom. Along the journey, the heroes and their companions become isolated or lost and enter into a literal or figurative hell, where they are forced to face their own dark sides and vice natures. The heroes must accept personal responsibility to return to the land of the living.

Example: *The heroes find they need information they can only get from an old ally and mentor of theirs who has since passed away. They must journey into the underworld and locate their friend's spirit to question him, and find some way to return from the nether realm with this knowledge and their lives.*

THE MAGIC WEAPON

The heroes must journey to find a supernatural weapon of great power. Only one of the heroes can use it to its fullest potential, however, due to some special quality that only she possesses.

Example: *The heroes hear rumors that the holy sword of the sun-god has been located in an ancient ruin, but only the pure of heart may wield its might.*

THE QUEST

The heroes must search for a person or talisman. If found, it will restore fertility to a wasted land whose desolation may be mirrored in the disability or illness of its ruler.

Example: *The land has fallen under a terrible drought and locust plague the countryside, causing a great famine. The king appears possessed by some devil, and is in no condition to lead his people to a solution to this grave threat. The heroes must locate and return with the Book of Days, using its ancient knowledge to drive away the evil spirits that have plagued the land with misfortune.*

THE REBIRTH

After one of the heroes suffers a debilitating disease, fatal wound, or death, the other heroes must search for a way to restore their companion to life and good health.

Example: *A fiendish adversary poisons one of the heroes with a deadly toxin brewed in the depths of the netherworld. There is no known antidote. According to legends, only immersion in the healing waters of the mountain spring of destiny can save their companion now.*

THE RISE OF EVIL

The forces of evil are gathering in great strength. It is up to the heroes to fight against the odds to preserve what good there is left in the world.

Example: *A long forgotten demigod of chaos and destruction has emerged from hiding. He is amassing his hordes of loyal cultists and monstrous servants into an army the likes of which has not been seen for ages. This demigod seeks to topple the established order and remake the known world in his own image.*

THE TASK

One or more of the heroes must perform a difficult task, such as slaying a great monster in order to save a kingdom, win the affections of their true love, or identifying themselves so they may claim their rightful position, title or heritage.

Example: *One of the heroes discovers he is actually the bastard son of the king and the only true heir to the throne. When confronted, the aging king asks the hero to prove his lineage by finding the long lost “sword of kings” and use it to slay the dragon plaguing the kingdom.*

THE HERO’S JOURNEY

According to Joseph Campbell, author of *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, everyone has the potential to become a hero. What makes heroes unique is their fearlessness in their search for identity. Heroes are the people who dare to do what nobody else can. They are the characters who define themselves in the context of great challenges, and thus discover great destinies.

The following is an overview of Campbell’s “hero’s journey” and advice for using it as a framework to build your own adventures. The hero’s journey is split into three basic segments: the departure, the descent, and the return. Each of these segments is broken into its basic components and explained in the context of a *True20* game. The elements of the journey are not absolute and manifest differently (even in a different order) from one journey to the next.

PROLOGUE

At the beginning of a campaign, the players and their heroes may be somewhat disoriented, particularly if they are new to roleplaying or the *True20* system. Disorientation tends to lead to suggestibility, and it is in the Narrator’s hands to get the story rolling.

Before setting out on the adventure, the heroes enter the story and are introduced to each other in such a way that they may identify with one another. The Narrator should work with each character to develop both an internal and an external problem or conflict. This may take the form of a tragic flaw, a deep emotional or physical wound, or some other

need. Often these conflicts will be expressed in the hero’s selection of a virtue and a vice.

At this time, the heroes can each be given a chance to reveal something about their back story and how they came to be here. Meanwhile the Narrator must establish the mood and theme of the setting. The Narrator may also reveal some of the overarching conflicts of the campaign setting, and what is at stake. This step need only be performed at the beginning of a campaign, and need not be repeated before each adventure.

THE DEPARTURE

The departure involves the heroes leaving behind all that is familiar to embark on a quest into the unknown. This is usually takes up about the first fourth of an adventure, and takes the heroes from the adventure hook that began the journey to right before the adventure’s major ordeal.

THE CALL TO ADVENTURE

Once the theme is set, the Narrator introduces an “adventure hook,” or an incident that initiates the story and gets the plot moving forward. This hook presents the heroes with a problem or challenge. It could take the form of a temptation, such as finding the location of an ancient treasure; a loss that must be avenged; or the appearance of a herald who brings news of some mission or warns them against an impending tragedy. A well-crafted adventure hook will have something each hero can gain or a misfortune that can be averted by participating in the adventure. Some of the heroes may be in desperate situations, such as being in great debt or grave danger, so they will have little choice but to accept the call to adventure.

REFUSAL OF THE CALL

Once the call to adventure has been issued, it is up to the heroes to act. They may go along with the adventure hook or resist with excuses as to why their characters would avoid the call. After each hero has had a chance to accept the call, the Narrator may wish to add incentive by playing off the reluctant heroes’ internal and external conflicts or their virtues and vices, or foreshadow that continued refusal leads to impending tragedy. If few of the heroes seem interested in the call to adventure, the Narrator may want to try a different adventure hook. This could lead to the same adventure or an entirely different journey altogether.

SUPERNATURAL AID

Once the call has been answered, the heroes must often search for a source of wisdom. This source may be personified in a Narrator character serving as a mentor to the heroes, such as an older (and higher level) heroic character, a wise man, or a seer. Alternatively, the source of wisdom may be a dream, vision, prophecy, or knowledge gained from an ancient tome. This wisdom is meant to provide the heroes with important guidance on their adventure, give them the clues they need to succeed in the trials ahead and assist them in overcoming any fears they may have. The heroes might also be gifted with special weapons or supernatural items to aid them in their journey.

CROSSING THE FIRST THRESHOLD

After finding a source of wisdom, the heroes must face their first challenge. This often takes the form of a low level adversary in a conflict meant to test their resolve and build their confidence. This first threat may even be a bluff or an illusion, in which case all the heroes need to do is bravely press onward. If the first challenge is an adversary, the heroes may be able to turn them into an ally.

After the first challenge has been overcome the heroes set off on the beginning of their journey, entering an unknown part of the world. From this point on there is no turning back. The beginning of the journey is often exhausting, frustrating and disorienting. Depending on where their journey takes them, the heroes may risk fatigue and getting lost.

TESTS, ALLIES & ENEMIES

The Narrator should tailor descriptions of the new world the heroes are experiencing so it contrasts sharply with their comparatively ordinary origins. The heroes find themselves tested by the Narrator with a number of challenging encounters, but have a low risk of character death. This allows the players to get used to their hero's abilities and weaknesses, and gives the Narrator a chance to feel out what kinds of challenges the heroes can handle.

This is a time for the heroes to form friendships and rivalries between themselves and the Narrator characters they meet along the way, as well as learning any special qualities of the region such as risks of avalanches, traps, quicksand or bandits. Finally the heroes find themselves at a way-station of some sort, such as a bar, inn or tavern. Their visit may involve food, music, information gathering, flirtations, gambling, and danger. While not entirely safe, this is a place to rest for a short while.

THE BELLY OF THE WHALE

After a short rest, the heroes must make preparations for the central ordeal of the adventure. This may be their last chance to buy supplies, sharpen weapons, and polish armor before heading into the thick of things.

Once the heroes set off again, the Narrator can test them with a variety of complications such as lame horses, leaking boats, bad weather, perusing enemies, hostile natives, and dangerous terrain. The heroes encounter a number of situations where all is not as it seems. They must learn to beware of tricks, traps and illusions.

Finally, the heroes risk death as they find themselves faced with their first major challenge. The heroes enter the underworld (either literally or figuratively), going down into an abysmal place from which there seems to be no exit or escape route. In many adventures, this location may be a dungeon of some kind. The heroes start to understand their main adversary and learn about his plans and motives.

THE DESCENT

The descent makes up the bulk of the adventure. It encompasses the major ordeal of the journey as well as the rising action, ending with the adventure's climax. The descent usually takes up a little over half of the adventure.

THE ROAD OF TRIALS

The road of trials is the main bulk of the adventure. The heroes encounter a series of tests, tasks, monsters, traps, and other challenges, which have a tendency to occur in threes. During this time the heroes brush with death; one of them or their companions may die or become disfigured.

The Narrator may somehow confront the heroes with their own dark sides. This may take the form of internal struggles, struggles between the heroes or a confrontation with adversaries representing darker versions of themselves. The heroes must face their fears, often personified in the form of a dragon or a creature of nightmare.

TEMPTATION FROM THE TRUE PATH

The Narrator confronts the heroes with a compelling reason to abandon their quest. Heroes with religious convictions may have their faith tested and be tempted to stray from the path of spiritual purity. Other temptations may include indulgence in the heroes' respective vices.

ATONEMENT

The Narrator may give the heroes an opportunity to atone for their past transgressions, whether they gave in to temptation, lost their faith, or betrayed their companions earlier in the adventure. If applicable, this atonement may be witnessed and recognized by a father-figure such as the hero's patron deity or the presence of one of their parents in physical or spiritual form. The atonement may also exact a price from

the hero, ranging from loss of a special item to the ultimate sacrifice of a hero's life.

CONFRONTATION WITH THE ENEMY

The heroes have their first direct confrontation with the adventure's main adversary. The full extent of the Enemy's plans or powers may become apparent for the first time. They discover the full threat posed by their adversary and realize there is more at stake than they had thought. The heroes may need to use special knowledge and resources they have gained along the way to defeat the Enemy. While there is a chance the Enemy may die in this encounter, it should be difficult for the heroes to achieve this. Instead, the Enemy may retreat to be encountered again at a later time. The Enemy is not always an individual and may be a more abstract adversary, such as death itself.

THE REWARD & THE ULTIMATE BOON

After the heroes have traveled the road of trials and defeated the main adversary, the Narrator should take the opportunity to reward the heroes for their efforts. They may find treasure or supernatural items. Alternative rewards may be important information or advancement in level to reflect personal growth. The heroes also find whatever item or information they initially set out on the journey to discover.

THE RETURN

The return encompasses everything that happens from the adventure's first climax to its resolution. In some cases, the first climax experienced in the Descent was a false climax, and the real climax awaits the heroes on the Road Back.

THE ROAD BACK

Now that the heroes have obtained the boon, they must escape with it and their lives intact. The return can be just as dangerous as the initial journey, particularly if the Enemy is still active, if there are still guardians that have not been defeated, or if the heroes have awakened new and vengeful forces.

RESCUE FROM WITHOUT

While escaping with the boon, the heroes may receive guidance or assistance from rescuers who help them escape from the abyss and back to the normal world. This may particularly be the case if one or more of the heroes is badly wounded or otherwise weakened.

RETURN WITH THE BOON & FINAL MASTERY

After the climax, it is time to wrap up loose ends. The heroes have successfully retrieved what they came for, whether treasure, revenge, justice, a talisman, an elixir, secret knowledge, or a supernatural item, or else they are doomed to repeat the ordeal before victory can be claimed.

The heroes may wish to return to areas left unexplored or rest before returning home with the boon, a literal or figurative form of healing and restoration. Captured adversaries may be imprisoned, interrogated or otherwise punished. The heroes may have leveled-up, gained Conviction, or received some other reward proportional to the ordeal they have gone through. The Narrator may choose to use any loose ends left unresolved as adventure hooks, leading to an entirely new adventure cycle, and a new hero's journey.

NARRATOR CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

A number of archetypes are common to the fantasy genre. Narrators may want to consider including them in *True20* fantasy adventures in order to meet players' expectations.

PROTAGONIST ARCHETYPES

- **Beast Friend:** This is an animal companion who represents the hero's relationship with nature. This archetype can be introduced into your game through the Familiar or Companion feats, or if one of the heroes chooses to play an awakened beast. Beast Friends are common in romantic fantasy.
- **Changeling:** This is a heroic character spirited away in her youth to be fostered by strangers. She is later returned to her true home and heritage, but as an outsider. Here, she can see new problems and solutions others cannot. This concept may be worked into any hero's backstory.
- **Hunting Group of Companions:** Heroes often have a loyal group of companions willing to face any number of perils at their side (Robin Hood's Merry Men, or the Knights of the Round Table). A hero may gain such companionship with the other heroes, or may gain his own group of loyal companions through the Leadership feat.
- **Initiate:** Initiates are beginning (1st level) heroic characters who, prior to their first real quest, must go through some sort of training, test, or ceremony. In fantasy literature they are often portrayed as innocent, and often wear white. The heroes themselves may be the initiates, or they may meet or be required to protect a young initiate.
- **Loyal Retainer:** Many heroes have a loyal sidekick or servant who is heroic in their own right. They serve as protectors of the hero and reflect the hero's capacity for honor, nobility and companionship. This archetype can be introduced into your game through the Companion feat.
- **Tutor:** Much like the heroic mentor, these Narrator characters serve as teachers to the initiates. They may be role models to the heroes or even a father or mother figure. The tutor imparts the knowledge and skills necessary to survive the quest.

ANTAGONIST ARCHETYPES

- **Devil Figure:** These characters represent evil incarnate. They pretend to be on the heroes' side and may offer riches, fame or knowledge in exchange for something the heroes know they must never give up such as loyalty to their lord or companions, their code of honor, or their very soul. These characters may be mortal or fiendish and use honeyed words to weave a complicated web of lies to sow distrust. Devil figures usually have maximum ranks in the Bluff skill and the Skill Focus (Bluff) feat.
- **The Creature of Nightmare:** This is a monster summoned (literally or metaphorically) from the darkest parts of the human psyche. It often takes the form of a perversion or desecration of the human body (examples might include lycanthropes or undead). This creature is terrible in its power, often exceeding any single hero in level. The Narrator may want to give such a creature the Frightful Presence trait to represent its fearsome nature.
- **The Evil Villain with the Ultimately Good Heart:** Many stories include a redeemable villain that can be saved by the nobility or love of one or more of the heroes. This often occurs after the villain has been beaten, when the heroes choose to show mercy or appeal to the villain's inner virtue, causing their beaten foe to shift away from his vice nature. Whether or not this character is ultimately redeemed and joins the side of good hinges upon the actions of the heroes, but the Narrator can provide clues that such a villain still has some good left inside, along with an idea of what his virtue nature might be. If the heroes manage to redeem this villain, they may gain a powerful and loyal ally (see the **Corruption** rules for more on corruption and redemption).



OTHER NARRATOR CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

- **Damsel in Distress:** This is a vulnerable character (often female) that the heroes must rescue. She may become the bait for a trap to ensnare the heroes.
- **Earth Mother:** This character is symbolic of the earth's fruition, abundance and fertility. She offers spiritual, emotional and physical succor to those she meets. She is often depicted as a wide hipped, large bosomed, kindly natured woman dressed in earth tones. Occasionally she may secretly be an avatar of a god or spirit of nature.
- **Martyr:** This is a character (usually humanoid, but occasionally an animal) that must ultimately die or be destroyed in some fashion in order to cleanse the corruption and sin visited upon the community, or to redeem an important individual.
- **Outcast:** This is a character banished from a community or social group for some crime (real or imagined) against his peers. The outcast is usually destined to become a wanderer.
- **Platonic Ideal:** This character represents a spiritual ideal of purity and may serve as a source of inspiration and intellectual rather than physical attraction for one of the heroes (such as Dante's Beatrice). Such a character may have the Dedicated feat focused on a virtuous religion, philosophy or deity.
- **Star-Crossed Lovers:** Two characters are engaged in a love affair that is fated to end badly for one or both of them due to some tragic situation, often the disapproval of their love by society, friends, or family.
- **Tempter/Temptress:** This is an individual characterized by sensuous beauty who may well prove to be the downfall of one or more of the heroes. Such characters always have the Attractive feat and may use the Bluff skill for seductive purposes.

FANTASY HEROES



Fantasy heroes run the gamut from epic to tragic. They can be noble and chivalrous or grim, gritty antiheroes. In this section, we'll look at the nuts and bolts of creating *True20* fantasy heroes.

BACKGROUNDS

Fantasy heroes can come from a wide variety of backgrounds. There are often several human cultures in a fantasy setting, each with their own cultural background. Settings with a stronger dose of supernatural involvement (SR 4+) may have a variety of humanoid racial backgrounds as well, possibly including dwarves, elves, and halflings, among others. Players may even be able to pick from a variety of awakened animals. This section includes sample backgrounds to get you started.

MYTHIC RACE BACKGROUNDS

In a fantasy setting there is no particular reason to limit characters to being human. This section provides sample backgrounds for mythic creatures to be used as characters.

CENTAUR

Centaurs are a race of extremes. Many are wild, bawdy and uncivilized, yet they have a great capacity for heroism, knowledge, and wisdom.

- **Initial Size:** Medium
- **Speed:** 50 ft.
- **Initial Ability Adjustments:** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution, -1 Intelligence.
- **Bonus Feats:** Armor Training (light and heavy), Weapon Training
- **Darkvision:** 60 ft.
- **Natural Weapons:** Centaurs can kick opponents, dealing +1 lethal damage.
- **Favored Feats:** Cleave, Spirited Charge.
- **Racial Levels:** 4. Before a centaur can take any levels in a heroic role, it must attain all 4 racial levels.
- **Level Lag:** 1
- **Special:** Note that while centaurs do grow to be Large in size, their torsos are still human sized, so they can only use weapons sized for a Medium creature. Also note that centaur ability adjustments include their increased size.

ELF, ALFAR (FROST ELF)

Alfar are elves of the icy mountain forests and the cold and unforgiving arctic regions.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, +1 Charisma
- **Bonus Feats:** Animal Empathy, Night Vision, Talented (Performance (any two)), Trackless, Weapon Training

CENTAUR RACIAL LEVELS

Level	Combat	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Feats	Traits
1	+1	+0	+2	+2	1	Darkvision 60 ft., Hooves, +1 damage
2	+2	+0	+3	+3	0	+1 Dex, +1 Con, +1 Wis
3	+3	+1	+3	+3	1	+2 Str, Large Size, Hooves +2 damage
4	+4	+1	+4	+4	0	+1 Dex, +1 Natural Armor

- **Ageless:** Elves do not grow old once they reach adulthood. They gain the benefits of advancing in age without accumulating any of the penalties.
- **Eagle Eyed:** Elves can see twice as far as a human in good light.
- **Cold Resistance:** +2
- **Favored Feats:** Choose 1 supernatural power (Elves treat their total level as their adept level for this power).
- **Level Lag:** 2

ELF, LLEDRITH SIDHE (FOREST ELF)

Lledrith Sidhe are elves of the deepest forests.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom
- **Bonus Feats:** Animal Empathy, Night Vision, Skill Focus (Survival), Trackless
- **Ageless:** Elves do not grow old once they reach adulthood. They gain the benefits of advancing in age without accumulating any of the penalties.
- **Eagle Eyed:** Elves can see twice as far as a human in good light.
- **Favored Feats:** Choose 1 supernatural power (Elves treat their total level as their adept level for this power).
- **Level Lag:** 1

ELF, DAOINE SIDHE (ELF LORD)

Daoine Sidhe are the immortal predecessors of all lesser elven races.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Dexterity, +1 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom, +2 Charisma
- **Bonus Feats:** Animal Empathy, Iron Will, Night Vision, Talented (Craft (metalworking), and Knowledge (supernatural)), Trackless, Trailblazer, Weapon Training
- **Ageless:** Elves do not grow old once they reach adulthood. They gain the benefits of advancing in age without accumulating any of the penalties.
- **Eagle Eyed:** Elves can see twice as far as a human in good light.
- **Damage Reduction:** 2/cold iron
- **Favored Feats:** Choose 1 supernatural power (Elves treat their total level as their adept level for this power).
- **Level Lag:** 3

FAUN

Fauns are a race of fey closely related to centaurs. Like their satyr cousins, fauns have human-like bodies with goat legs, hooves and small goat-horns. Fauns are curious, thrill-seeking individuals, but more moderate than their satyr cousins in the pursuit of hedonistic pleasures.

- **Ability Adjustments:** -1 Strength, +1 Dexterity, -1 Wisdom, +1 Charisma
- **Bonus Feats:** Fascinate (Perform), Night Vision, Talented (Perform (dance), Perform (musical instruments))
- **Natural Weapons:** Fauns can strike in combat with their horns or hooves, doing +1 lethal damage.
- **Favored Feats:** Fascinate (other skills), Suggestion

HUMAN CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

As detailed in **Chapter One**, various human cultures can also serve as backgrounds. This section looks at some cultural backgrounds appropriate to the fantasy genre.

AMAZON

Amazons are a group of humans renowned for their women warriors. Their society is matriarchal. The women work and fight while the men perform household chores and care for the children.

- **Bonus Feats for Amazon Women:** Attack Focus (bow), Skill Focus (Ride), Weapon Training

POWERFUL BACKGROUNDS, LEVEL LAG AND RACIAL LEVELS

More powerful backgrounds in *True20* may include a “Level Lag.” This is the suggested number of levels a character with this background should lag behind the rest of the heroes in order to remain at the same relative power level. Other backgrounds have a number of “Racial Levels” listed. These racial levels must be completed before the hero begins progression in a heroic role in order to gain the full benefits of the racial background to which they are attached. The hero is then free to begin acquiring levels in a heroic role using the rules for mixed-role heroes, except they also gain the core ability of the first heroic role in which they take a level.

Example: A group of 2nd level heroes could include a 1st level centaur hero (the centaur is one level behind the others due to his level lag). The centaur character must use his next three levels to complete the four racial levels all centaurs must take. Once the centaur reaches fifth level (at which point the other heroes in the group would be 6th level) the centaur character may take its first level in a heroic role, gaining that role’s core ability.

EXTRAPLANAR ELVES

In some campaigns, nonhuman races such as elves may be farie-folk from another realm. In this case, all elves have the fey type instead of the humanoid type, and gain the extraplanar subtype while retaining the elf subtype.

- **Bonus Feats for Amazon Men:** Endurance, Skill Focus (Craft (cooking)), Skill Focus (Diplomacy)
- **Favored Feats:** Attack Specialization, Greater Attack Focus

ATLANTEAN

Atlanteans are a race of sea-people who can commune with the creatures of the ocean’s depths. They are held in awe and fear by many seagoing cultures, ruling the waterways when they so choose.

- **Skills:** Atlanteans have a +8 bonus on Swim checks. They can always take 10 on Swim checks, even if rushed or threatened.
- **Aquatic empathy:** Atlanteans have the benefits of the Animal Empathy feat, but only with aquatic creatures.
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision
- **Hold breath:** Atlanteans can hold their breath for 60 rounds, plus 6 x their Constitution score in rounds before they risk drowning.
- **Water dependency:** Atlanteans dehydrate more easily than land-dwellers. They must be immersed in water once per day or consume twice as much water as a normal human. An Atlantean with no immersion and limited to normal human water consumption or less suffers from dehydration (see **Starvation and Dehydration** in on page 112).

EASTERNER

Easterners are the undisputed masters of unarmed combat, a skill developed after weapons were forbidden to all by the soldiers of the emperor.

- **Bonus Feats:** Improved Strike, Prone Fighting, Talented (Acrobatics and Jump)
- **Favored Feats:** Chokehold, Stunning Attack

HIGH MAN

High men were the first men to be created. They are perfectly formed and godlike. Their bearing is both regal and terrifying.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Wisdom, +1 Charisma
- **Bonus Feats:** Attractive, Endurance, Leadership, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Training
- **Favored Feats:** Greater Weapon Focus, Inspire
- **Level Lag:** 1

HIGHLANDER

Highlanders are a members of a ferocious warrior race that lives in a mountainous region. They are known for their ferocity in combat, their passion in artistic performance and their intimate connection to nature.

- **Bonus Feats:** Startle, Taunt, Talented (Knowledge (nature), Survival)
- **Favored Feats:** Fascinate, Rage

HORSE LORD

The Horse Lords are a nomadic people who roam the plains, taming the wild horses that live there. From a very young age they learn to ride, and their cavalry are the finest the world has ever known.

- **Bonus Feats:** Animal Empathy (only applies to horses), Skill Focus (Handle Animal), Skill Focus (Ride)
- **Favored Feats:** Attack Focus, Spirited Charge

NOMAD

Nomads are a people of the desert. They are skilled at surviving in such harsh terrain, subsisting as traders and herders.

- **Bonus Feats:** Skill Focus (Survival), Talented (Handle Animal and Ride), Weapon Training
- **Favored Feats:** Diehard, Evasion

NORSEMAN

Norsemen are a fierce race of raiders from the icy north. They are known for their skill at sea and feared for their berserker warriors.

- **Bonus Feats:** Talented (Drive (water vehicles only) and Navigate), Skill Focus (Survival), Weapon Training
- **Favored Feats:** Rage, Tough

ROAMER

The roamers are an often persecuted and misunderstood race of wandering entertainers, acrobats and musicians. Few know where these folk originated from, but they are rumored to be gifted with second sight. Some say they are cursed to never cross the same river twice in the same year.

- **Bonus Feats:** Talented (Acrobatics and Slight of Hand), Skill Focus (Perform (pick any two)).
- **Favored Feats:** Evasion, Sneak Attack

TRIBESMAN

Tribesmen come from any number of hunter-gatherer tribes. Their ability to track and bring down their quarry is unsurpassed.

- **Bonus Feats:** Skill Focus (Survival), Track, Trackless
- **Favored Feats:** Hide in Plain Sight, Tough

WILD MAN

Wild men are a barbaric and degenerate race of humans. They have no interest in the trappings of civilization, and often pose a grave threat to those who encroach on their territory. Many consider them little better than animals.

- **Bonus Feats:** Endurance, Track
- *Scent Trait*
- **Favored Feats:** Rage, Tough

SAMPLE AWAKENED BEAST BACKGROUNDS

Awakened beasts are gifted with intelligence and supernatural abilities. They are still creatures of the wild rather than of civilization. Awakened beasts have little need of cities, wealth, or agriculture, for example. They are close to nature and its cycles. Some of them are quite fond of humans while others are more wary, but in general they are cautious in their dealings with the “two-legged races.”

All awakened beasts have the following traits:

- **Supernatural:** The creature type of an awakened beast changes from animal to supernatural beast. Supernatural beasts receive $(2 + \text{Int, minimum 1})$ skills at 1st level, and $(2 + \text{Int})$ skill ranks at each additional level.
- **Abilities:** Awakened beasts have only 4 points to distribute among their abilities, rather than the 6 of other heroes.
- **Night Vision:** All awakened beasts gain Night Vision as a bonus feat.
- **Limited manipulation:** Awakened beasts have no hands or opposable thumbs, so they cannot easily manipulate objects. They are generally limited to the simple manipulations they can perform with their mouths and forelimbs. This means awakened beasts suffer a -20 penalty on checks involving manual dexterity, such as Craft, Disable Device, and Sleight of Hand. The Narrator may simply rule many tasks involving those skills impossible for awakened beasts (meaning they automatically fail when attempting them). This penalty does *not* apply to awakened beasts using the Manipulate Object power.
- **Cannot speak:** Awakened beasts cannot speak in humanoid tongues, although they are capable of communicating through the Mind Touch power. They are limited to the normal vocalizations of their animal type. This may limit their ability to use interaction skills in some situations.
- **No wealth:** Awakened beasts have a starting Wealth score of +0. They have a limited ability to carry money, and many items made for humanoids are of no use to them. Awakened beasts operating in human society accumulate Wealth normally from advancing in level.



AWAKENED BEAR RACIAL LEVELS

Level	Combat	Fort save	Ref Save	Will Save	Feats	Traits
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	1	Bite/claw +2 damage, Scent
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	0	+1 Str, +1 Wis
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	1	+1 Str, +1 Con
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	0	+1 Str, Large Size, Bite/claw +3 damage
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	0	+1 Str, +1 Con
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	1	+1 Str, +1 Con

AWAKENED HORSE RACIAL LEVELS

Level	Combat	Fort save	Ref Save	Will Save	Feats	Traits
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	1	Hooves +1 damage, Scent
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	0	+1 Wis, +10 ft. speed
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	1	+1 Str

AWAKENED LEOPARD RACIAL LEVELS

Level	Combat	Fort save	Ref Save	Will Save	Feats	Traits
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	1	Bite +2 dmg, claw +0 dmg, Pounce, Scent
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	0	+1 Dex, +1 Con, Rake
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	1	+1 Str, +1 Dex

AWAKENED WOLF RACIAL LEVELS

Level	Combat	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Feats	Traits
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	1	Bite +2 damage, Scent
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	0	Howl, +1 Wisdom

AWAKENED BEAR

Awakened bears are reclusive creatures, quick to anger when they or their young are threatened.

- **Initial Abilities:** +3 Strength, +1 Dexterity, +1 Constitution
- **Initial Size:** Medium
- **Speed:** 40 ft.
- **Skills:** Awakened bears have a +4 bonus on Swim checks.
- **Bonus Feats:** Improved Grab, Power (Mind Touch), Track
- **Natural Weapons:** Awakened bears attack by biting or clawing, causing Str+2 lethal damage.
- **Scent Trait**
- **Favored Feats:** Rage, Improved Critical
- **Level Lag:** 2

AWAKENED HORSE

Masters of the plains, awakened horses look much like normal horses and have the same ranges of coloration. They are fiercely independent; they allow no one except a trusted companion to ride them. They consider any attempt to break them as mounts as a form of enslavement.

- **Initial Abilities:** +2 Strength, +1 Dexterity, +2 Constitution
- **Size:** Large
- **Speed:** 40 ft.
- **Bonus Feats:** Endurance, Power (Mind Touch), Skill Focus (Notice)
- **Natural Attacks:** Awakened horses attack with their hooves, causing Str+1 lethal damage.
- **Scent Trait**
- **Favored Feats:** Diehard, Improved Critical (hoof)

AWAKENED LEOPARD

Awakened leopards are fiercely independent. These jungle cats are about four feet long and weigh about 120 pounds. They usually hunt at night.

The background presented here can be used to describe any feline of similar size, such as jaguars, panthers and mountain lions.

- **Initial Abilities:** +2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +1 Constitution
- **Size:** Medium
- **Speed:** 40 ft., Climb 20 ft.
- **Skills:** Awakened leopards have a +8 bonus on Jump checks and a +4 bonus on Stealth checks. Awakened leopards have a +8 bonus on Acrobatics and Climb checks. An awakened leopard can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened. In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the Stealth bonus improves to +8.
- **Bonus Feats:** Improved Grab, Power (Mind Touch)
- **Natural Weapons:** Awakened leopards attack with their claws, causing Str+0 lethal damage, or by biting, causing Str+2 lethal damage.
- **Scent Trait**
- **Favored Feats:** Critical Strike, Sneak Attack

AWAKENED WOLF

Awakened wolves live in tight knit packs. A friend of theirs is a friend for life, but they do not bond easily. They are eminently practical, sometimes ruthless, but also proud and honorable.

- **Initial Abilities:** +1 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution
- **Size:** Medium
- **Speed:** 50 ft.
- **Skills:** Awakened wolves have a +4 bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.
- **Bonus Feats:** Improved Trip, Power (Mind Touch), Track
- **Natural Weapon:** Awakened wolves attack by biting, causing Str+2 lethal damage.
- **Howl:** By letting out a howl as a move action, an awakened wolf of 2nd-level or greater gets a +4 bonus to Intimidate checks for the rest of that round.
- **Scent Trait**
- **Favored Feats:** Crippling Strike, Rage, Surprise Attack

HEROIC ROLES

The fantasy genre is one of the least limiting with respect to heroic roles. Warriors and experts brush shoulders on a regular basis and adepts are far more common in fantasy than in any other genre, particularly in high magic settings. Fantasy warriors include barbarian berserkers, tribal defenders, soldiers, crusaders, assassins, knights, archers, rangers, weapon-masters, musketeers, and paladins. Fantasy experts include bards, thieves, blacksmiths, herbalists, alchemists, lore masters, and scouts. Adepts include evil sorcerers, wizards, necromancers, druids, summoners, seers, and mystics.

Even the new roles presented in **Chapter Nine** can easily fit into a fantasy setting. The exact types of roles available vary based on the setting's flavor and Supernatural Rating. For example, adepts are less common in low-magic settings, and martial artists are less common in western European fantasy settings as compared to those with a more Asian flavor.

OPTIONAL RULE: HEROIC CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

These heroic archetypes represent symbolic characters of story and song, adding a mythic feel to your campaign. At the beginning of a campaign, each player chooses a heroic archetype for his or her hero. As the hero gains levels, they also gain levels and the associated benefits (called mythic gifts) of their heroic archetype. There is no reason two or more characters cannot have the same archetype at the same time.

CHANGING HEROIC ARCHETYPES

As the campaign unfolds, a player may wish to change heroic archetypes to explore a new aspect of their hero and add depth to their character. Each heroic archetype has certain exit points labeled "the unfolding myth" which allow the character to cease all progression in the previous heroic archetype and begin progressing in another, beginning at 1st level. With the Narrator's consent, a player may also

THE CHAMPION	
Level	Champion's Mythic Gifts
1	First Mythic Skill
2	Hero's Blade
3	Last Best Hope
4	Heroic Smite +2
5	Second Mythic Skill
6	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
7	Heroic Immunity (3 rounds)
8	Heroic Smite +3
9	Heroic Resolve I
10	The Elixir I
11	Heroic Immunity (4 rounds)
12	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
13	Heroic Smite +4
14	Third Mythic Skill
15	Heroic Immunity (5 rounds)
16	Heroic Resolve II
17	Heroic Smite +5
18	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
19	Heroic Immunity (6 rounds)
20	The Elixir II

change archetypes at any dramatically appropriate time in the story. The hero retains the abilities from the character levels assigned to the old archetype.

When changing heroic archetypes, there are limits to which ones you can switch to based on your current heroic archetype.

CHANGING HEROIC ARCHETYPES

Heroic Archetype	May become
Champion	Fated or Mentor
Shadow	Champion or Trickster
Mentor	Maiden or Oracle
Oracle	Fated or Maiden
Trickster	Shadow or Mentor
Maiden	Oracle or Trickster
Fated	Champion or Shadow

MYTHIC SKILLS

Several of the following heroic archetypes provide the hero with a number of Mythic Skills. Such a character may choose one of their existing skills to become a Mythic Skill. You can take 10 on a Mythic Skill even if rushed or threatened. When you spend a Conviction point on performing this skill, you treat the roll as a 20 (meaning you don't need to roll the die at all, just apply the result of 20 to your skill modifier).

THE CHAMPION

Your heroic journey has a single purpose: To find and defeat "The Enemy."

HERO'S BLADE

Any weapon you wield has its Toughness increased by an amount equal to half your Champion archetype level.

LAST BEST HOPE

Once per game session, you gain a Conviction point at the beginning of your turn if you and all of your allies have expended all of your Conviction points.

HEROIC SMITE

You may spend a Conviction point after you successfully strike an opponent to increase the damage dealt by +2. You may even apply this bonus to damage from supernatural powers, provided the power requires an attack roll. The damage bonus for Heroic Smite increases to +3 at 8th level, +4 at 13th level, and +5 at 17th level.

THE UNFOLDING MYTH

You may change archetypes to the Fated or the Mentor and immediately gain the first Archetypal Gift listed there. If you instead choose to remain with your current archetype, you gain a bonus Conviction point.

HEROIC IMMUNITY

Choose any one supernatural power or offensive trait possessed by your Enemy. Spend a Conviction point to gain immunity to this ability for 3 rounds. You can only have one heroic immunity in effect at any given time, and it does not prevent damage from other opponents using that same power or trait. The duration of heroic immunity increases to 4 rounds at 11th level, 5 rounds at 15th level, and 6 rounds at 19th level.

HEROIC RESOLVE

You may spend a Conviction point to gain immunity to fear effects for 6 rounds.



THE ELIXIR I

You may spend a Conviction point to gain a single non-fatiguing use of the Enhance Ability supernatural power with ranks equal to your Champion archetype level + 3, divided by 2.

HEROIC RESOLVE II

As Heroic Resolve I, but you also gain immunity to mind-influencing effects.

THE ELIXIR II

You may spend a Conviction point to gain a single non-fatiguing use of the Enhance Ability supernatural power with ranks equal to your Champion archetype level + 3.

THE SHADOW

Your destiny is tied to the Champion, but it is not yet clear whether your fate is to aid him or to supplant him.

SELECT CHAMPION

Upon assuming the shadow archetype, a hero must select a specific companion with the Champion archetype to whom they wish to tie their mythic gifts. If there is no champion amongst the Shadow's allies, the Shadow may instead select any hero with which they are traveling until one or more Champions are available to choose from. Once a Champion is selected, the selection cannot change until they die or otherwise part company with you.

THE ENEMY REVEALED

If the Narrator has revealed the Enemy, you may spend a Conviction point to sense the direction to the Enemy (regardless of distance). This ability lasts for 3 rounds.

SHADOW'S EDGE

When the Champion spends a Conviction point, if you have fewer Conviction points than the Champion's new total, you gain a Conviction point.

SHADOWFEAR I

You may spend a Conviction point to reveal your inner shadow in combat. All opponents within 30 feet must succeed at a Will saving throw (Difficulty = 10 + 1/2 your Shadow archetype level + your Charisma score) or be shaken for 3 rounds. You may not affect opponents with more levels than you.

THE UNFOLDING MYTH

You may change archetypes to the Champion or the Trickster and immediately gain the first Mythic Gift listed there. If you instead choose to remain with your current archetype, you gain a bonus Conviction point.

SHADOW BOON I

You may spend a Conviction point to gain a single non-fatiguing use of the Enhance Ability supernatural power as though you were a 1st-level adept.

SHADOWFEAR II

As Shadowfear I, but opponents who fail their save are frightened instead.

CHAMPION'S SHADOW I

When you and the Champion both spend Conviction points to independently attempt the same task, you gain a bonus to your roll as though the Champion were using the Aid action to help you. This does not increase the bonus you get when the Champion actually uses the Aid action, but rather provides you with an aid bonus when you are both performing the same action separately.

THE SHADOW

Level	Shadow's Mythic Gifts
1	Select Champion, First Mythic Skill
2	The Enemy Revealed
3	Shadow's Edge
4	Shadowfear I
5	Second Mythic Skill
6	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
7	Shadow Boon I
8	Shadowfear II
9	Champion's Shadow I
10	Shadow's Price I
11	Shadow Boon II
12	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
13	Champion's Shadow II
14	Third Mythic Skill
15	Shadow Boon III
16	Shadowfear III
17	Champion's Shadow III
18	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
19	Shadow Boon IV
20	Shadow's Price II

SHADOW'S PRICE I

At the beginning of your turn, if you have 0 Conviction points, you may take a Conviction point from the Champion (if he has any). You can either do this any number of times so long as you have the Champion's expressed consent on each occasion, or once per game session without the Champion's consent.

SHADOW BOON II

As Shadow Boon I, but it operates as though you were a 2nd-level adept.

CHAMPION'S SHADOW II

When you and the Champion both spend a Conviction point to attempt the same task, you may use the Champion's final result on the die if it is higher than your own.

SHADOW BOON III

As Shadow Boon I, but it operates as though you were a 3rd-level adept.

SHADOWFEAR III

As Shadowfear I, but opponents who fail their save are panicked instead.

CHAMPION'S SHADOW III

When you and the Champion both spend a Conviction point to attempt the same task, if the Champion succeeds on the roll, you succeed as well, achieving the same result.

SHADOW BOON IV

As Shadow Boon I, but it operates as though you were a 4th-level adept.

SHADOW'S PRICE II

As Shadow's Price I, but you may take a Conviction point from any ally. This can be done any number of times with the appropriate ally's consent, or once per ally per game session without their consent.

THE FATED

Fate toys with you as a cat toys with a mouse. Though it seems clear you are destined for greater things, you often wonder if the suffering along the journey will be worth the prize.

DAMAGE CONVERSION

Once per combat, you may spend a Conviction point to gain 2 points of Damage Conversion until the end of the current combat. Damage Conversion allows you to ignore up to its rating in non-lethal damage, or convert up to its rating in lethal damage to non-lethal damage. The amount of damage conversion gained increases to 4 points at 5th level, 6 points at 9th level and 8 points at 14th level.

LONG-SUFFERING

When you spend a Conviction point to gain a recovery check while outside of combat, you gain a +2 bonus to your check. This bonus increases to +4 at 10th level and +6 at 17th level.

FICKLE FATE

When you use a Conviction point to re-roll a die roll, you get the conviction point back if the final result fails.

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE I

When you roll a natural 1 on any check, and spend a Conviction point to re-roll, you may spend another Conviction point to roll a third time if you are unhappy with your second result. You must accept the result of this third and final roll.

THE UNFOLDING MYTH

You may change archetypes to the Champion or the Shadow and immediately gain the first Mythic Gift listed there. If you instead choose to remain with your current archetype, you gain a bonus Conviction point.

FATE INTERVENES I

If you have just been struck unconscious, you may spend a Conviction point to change your status to staggered. You may also use this ability to awaken from sleep (either supernatural or mundane) just in time to defend yourself from an attack. You awaken at the beginning of the round in which you are to be attacked and may roll initiative and act normally, though you may be beginning the round in a prone position.

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE II

When you roll a natural 1 on any die roll and spend a Conviction point to re-roll, you may spend another Conviction point to treat the roll as a 15 if both rolls were 14 or less. You must accept the result of this third and final roll.

RENEWED VITALITY

You can spend a Conviction point to immediately erase all hurt and bruised conditions and any penalties associated with them. If you have the warrior Core Ability, you can also erase up to 2 dazed and 2 wounded conditions as well.

FATE INTERVENES II

If you are struck and killed by a single attack, you may spend a Conviction point to revert back to dying, stabilizing automatically.

BATTLE-HARDENED I

If you are struck in combat, you may spend a Conviction point to convert all lethal damage dealt by the attack into non-lethal damage.

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE III

When you roll a natural 1 on any check and spend a Conviction point to re-roll, you may spend another Conviction point to treat the roll as a 20.

SUDDEN BOON

When you roll a natural 20 on the die, you may spend a Conviction point to roll it again and add the result of the second roll to the first.

BATTLE-HARDENED II

As Battle-Hardened I, but you may spend a Conviction point to convert all damage dealt by all sources in a single round to non-lethal damage.

THE MENTOR

You are not destined for greatness. You are destined to bring out the greatness in others.

WATCH AND LEARN I

When you and an ally both spend a Conviction point to independently attempt the same task requiring a die roll, you both gain a bonus as though you and your ally were each using the Aid action to help each other, even though your actions are separate.

MENTOR'S GIFT I

When an ally spends a Conviction point on any task requiring a die roll, if you have more Conviction points than that ally, you may give them the Conviction point to spend from your own total. This can only be used once per session.

MENTOR'S INFLUENCE

You can spend a Conviction point to give an ally a +3 bonus on any die roll. This bonus increases to +4 at 11th level, and +5 at 17th level.

MENTOR'S LESSON I

When you and an ally both spend a Conviction point to attempt the same task requiring a die roll, you may switch rolls with your ally after rolling the dice (but before determining whether or not the check succeeds).

WATCH AND LEARN II

When you and an ally both spend a Conviction point to attempt the same task requiring a die roll, you may use your ally's final result on the die if it is higher than your own.

THE UNFOLDING MYTH

You may change archetypes to the Maiden or the Oracle and immediately gain the first Mythic Gift listed there. If you instead choose to remain with your current archetype, you gain a bonus Conviction point.

HIDDEN TALENT

Add any one feat to your favored feat list.

MENTOR'S GIFT II

As Mentor's Gift I, but you may use Mentor's Gift once per session per ally.

MENTOR'S BOON

When you use Mentor's Influence to give an ally a bonus on a check and their check succeeds because of the bonus you provided them with, you gain a Conviction point.

HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

When you are called upon to make a skill check for a Knowledge skill you have no ranks in, you may spend a Conviction point. For this single

THE FATED

Level	Fated Mythic Gifts
1	Damage Conversion 2
2	Long-suffering +2
3	Fickle Fate
4	Reversal of Fortune I
5	Damage Conversion 4
6	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
7	Fate Intervenes I
8	Reversal of Fortune II
9	Damage Conversion 6
10	Long-suffering +4
11	Renewed Vitality
12	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
13	Fate Intervenes II
14	Damage Conversion 8
15	Battle-Hardened I
16	Reversal of Fortune III
17	Long-suffering +6
18	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
19	Sudden Boon
20	Battle-Hardened II

THE MENTOR

Level	Mentor Mythic Gifts
1	Watch and Learn I
2	Mentor's Gift I
3	Mentor's Influence +3
4	Mentor's Lesson I
5	Watch and Learn II
6	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
7	Hidden Talent
8	Mentor's Gift II
9	Mentor's Boon
10	First Mythic Skill
11	Mentor's Influence +4
12	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
13	Desperation
14	Second Mythic Skill
15	Watch and Learn III
16	Mentor's Lesson II
17	Mentor's Influence +5
18	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
19	Heroic Example
20	Mentor's Passing

check, you are considered to have at least as many ranks in this skill as your Mentor archetype level.

WATCH AND LEARN III

When you and an ally both spend a Conviction point to attempt the same task, if you succeed on the roll, your chosen ally automatically succeed as well, achieving the same result.

MENTOR'S LESSON II

As Mentor's Lesson I, but you gain a Conviction point if you both succeed at the task.

HEROIC EXAMPLE

When an ally spends a Conviction point to re-roll, you can spend a Conviction point to allow them to instead treat the roll as a 20. This does not count as a natural 20—you simply add 20 to your modifier in place of the die roll.

MENTOR'S PASSING

If you die, each of your allies has his or her Conviction points refreshed or gains +1 Conviction point, whichever is higher.

THE ORACLE

Though you do not know where fate will ultimately lead you, the journey's path is revealed to your gifted sight.

AUGURY

You may spend a Conviction point to determine the best course of action, determined as simply asking the Narrator a "yes/no" or "weal/woe" question.

REVELATION

You gain a bonus supernatural power. You must have any prerequisites the power requires. If you have no adept levels, you may still use the power at rank 3.

PRESCIENCE I

You may spend a Conviction point to allow an ally to spend a Conviction point even after the Narrator informs them of the success or failure of the action. (Normally, a player may only spend a Conviction point *before* the Narrator informs him of the success or failure of an action.)

THE ORACLE

Level	Oracle Mythic Gifts
1	First Mythic Skill
2	Augury
3	First Revelation
4	Prescience I
5	Second Mythic Skill
6	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
7	Second Revelation
8	Prescience II
9	Mythic Adept I
10	True Sight
11	Irresistible Power
12	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
13	Third Revelation
14	Third Mythic Skill
15	Mythic Adept II
16	Prescience III
17	Mythic Adept III
18	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
19	Fourth Revelation
20	Prophecy

THE UNFOLDING MYTH

You may change archetypes to Fated or Maiden and immediately gain the first Mythic Gift listed there. If you instead choose to remain with your current archetype, you gain a bonus Conviction point.

PRESCIENCE II

As Prescience I, but after you spend your Conviction point, your ally may treat the second die roll as a 15. In this case, they do not roll the die. They simply add 15 to their modifier in place of adding a random die roll.

MYTHIC ADEPT I

You may spend a Conviction point to take 10 on a power check or adept level check, even when rushed or threatened.

TRUE SIGHT

You may spend a Conviction point to gain the benefits of a successful use of either the Second Sight or True Vision supernatural power for 3 rounds. This does not cause you fatigue.

IRRESISTIBLE POWER

Spend a Conviction point when you use a supernatural power, increasing the save Difficulty of that power by 3.

MYTHIC ADEPT II

You may spend a Conviction point to treat your roll on a power check or adept level check as a 15. You do not need to roll the die; simply add 15 to your modifier.

PRESCIENCE III

As Prescience I, but after you spend your Conviction point, your ally may treat their re-roll as a 20.

MYTHIC ADEPT III

You may spend a Conviction point to treat your roll on a power check or adept level check as a 20. This does not count as a "natural 20" but merely allows you to add 20 to your modifier instead of adding a random die roll.

FOURTH REVELATION

You gain a fourth bonus supernatural power for which you have the prerequisites for. If you have no adept levels you may still use the power at rank 3.

PROPHETCY

You may spend a Conviction point to ask the Narrator a number of yes/no questions equal to either three or your Wisdom score (whichever is higher). The Narrator answers only "yes" or "no."

THE TRICKSTER

Though you travel with the heroes on their mythic journey, your true motives remain hidden from sight. Do you work with the heroes to succeed or will you be a source of strife?

MYTHIC DEFENSE I

You may spend a Conviction point to gain a +3 bonus to defense for 1 round. This bonus increases to +4 at 9th level and +5 at 17th level.

TRICKSTER'S AID I

When you use the Aid action, you may spend a Conviction point to add or subtract your Charisma score (if positive) to the aided character's check instead of the normal +2 bonus. A character may refuse your



aid, but only before you declare whether you are actually helping or hindering them. If you are using this Mythic Gift to hinder the person you are “aiding,” you may attempt to disguise your sabotage as an honest attempt to help them with a successful Bluff check.

DEVIL'S LUCK I

If you and all of your allies fail a saving throw, you may spend a Conviction point to roll your own save again as though you were making a new check. The result from your second roll stands.

THE UNFOLDING MYTH

You may change archetypes to the Shadow or the Mentor and immediately gain the first Mythic Gift listed there. If you instead choose to remain with your current archetype, you gain a bonus Conviction point.

ILL-WILL

When any other player spends a Conviction point to improve a check, you may spend a Conviction point of your own to gamble on their failure. If your ally’s check fails despite their Conviction point, you gain 2 Conviction points. (You cannot benefit from both Ill-Will and Goodwill on the same action.)

DEVIL'S LUCK II

If you and at least one of your allies fail a saving throw, you may spend a Conviction point to roll your own saving throw again (even if some of your allies succeeded). This ability is otherwise the same as Devil’s Luck I.

OPPOSITION

When you spend a Conviction point on an opposed roll, you may add either your Charisma or your Intelligence score to the roll (chosen when you get this ability).

TRICKSTER'S AID II

As Trickster’s Aid I, but you may choose to use either your Intelligence or your Charisma score (if positive).

GOODWILL

When any other player uses a Conviction point to re-roll, if the check still fails despite the use of a Conviction point, you may spend a Conviction point to allow them to re-roll the check once again. Your ally can spend yet another Conviction point on the new check, if he chooses. (You cannot benefit from both Ill-Will and Goodwill on the same action.)

THE TRICKSTER

Level	Trickster Mythic Gifts
1	First Mythic Skill
2	Mythic Defense +3
3	Trickster’s Aid I
4	Devil’s Luck I
5	Second Mythic Skill
6	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
7	Ill-Will
8	Devil’s Luck II
9	Mythic Defense +4
10	Opposition
11	Trickster’s Aid II
12	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
13	Goodwill
14	Third Mythic Skill
15	Trickster’s Aid III
16	Devil’s Luck III
17	Mythic Defense +5
18	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
19	Trickster’s Twist
20	Final Betrayal

TRICKSTER'S AID III

As Trickster's Aid I, but if you are helping your ally you may add both your Intelligence and Charisma to their roll (provided both are positive).

DEVIL'S LUCK III

If you and any of your allies attempted the same saving throw (whether they succeeded or failed), you may spend a Conviction point to roll your own saving throw again, with a +1 bonus per ally who failed the roll (if any). This ability is otherwise the same as Devil's Luck I.

TRICKSTER'S TWIST

You may spend a Conviction point to allow any other character (hero or Narrator character) to re-roll any check, attack roll, opposed roll, or saving throw they just rolled. Their first roll is discounted and the second roll stands.

FINAL BETRAYAL

When an ally spends a Conviction point to re-roll, after seeing the new result of your ally's roll, you may spend a Conviction point to take that die result for yourself, which you must use for a die roll before the end of your next action. Your ally's Conviction point is still considered spent; unless they spend another Conviction point they are stuck with their original roll. When you use this gift you may not use Ill-Will to gain a Conviction point if it causes your ally to fail.

THE MAIDEN

Your fate is that of the archetypical Maiden, one who embodies the promise of the future and the vulnerability of youth.

PROTECTED I

If you are attacked (melee or ranged) and there is an ally within 5 feet, with that player's permission, you may spend a Conviction point to switch places with your ally. Your ally suffers the attack instead.

Level	Maiden Mythic Gifts
1	First Mythic Skill
2	Protected I
3	Mythic Healing I
4	Desperation +2
5	Second Mythic Skill
6	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
7	Mythic Healing II
8	Desperation +4
9	Protected II
10	Maiden's Lure I
11	Mythic Healing III
12	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
13	Protector's Boon
14	Third Mythic Skill
15	Maiden's Lure II
16	Desperation +6
17	Protected III
18	<i>The Unfolding Myth</i>
19	Mythic Healing IV
20	Ultimate Sacrifice

MYTHIC HEALING I

You may spend a Conviction point to remove all hurt and bruised conditions from any ally you can touch.

DESPERATION

If you are helpless, unconscious, or dying, your allies gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws and checks related to coming to your aid and protecting you. When they spend Conviction to re-roll a die result, treat the new result as a 20 (but not a natural 20). Treat this ability as if they had temporarily gained the Dedicated feat, with you as the object of their dedication. The bonus provided by desperation increases to +4 at 8th level, and +6 at 16th level.

THE UNFOLDING MYTH

You may change archetypes to Oracle or Trickster and immediately gain the first Mythic Gift listed there. If you instead choose to remain with your current archetype, you gain a bonus Conviction point.

MYTHIC HEALING II

As Mythic Healing I, but can also remove up to 2 dazed and 2 wounded conditions.

PROTECTED II

As Protected I, but when you spend a Conviction point to switch places with an ally, add your Charisma score to your ally's Defense. This Defense bonus lasts until the start of your ally's next turn.

MAIDEN'S LURE I

Once per game session, you may take 1 of your ally's Conviction points if you have fewer Conviction points than they do. Deduct the point from their total and add it to your own. If the ally is unwilling, they may attempt a Will save to resist. The Difficulty is equal to $10 + 1/2$ your Maiden archetype level plus your Charisma score.

MYTHIC HEALING III

As Mythic Healing I, but you can remove all dazed and wounded conditions.

PROTECTOR'S BOON

When you switch places with an ally in combat and your ally is struck by the attack meant for you, your ally gains a Conviction point.

MAIDEN'S LURE II

Once per game session per ally, you may take one of your ally's Conviction points if you have fewer than they do. Deduct the point from their total and add it to your own.

PROTECTED III

As Protected I, but when you spend a Conviction point to switch places with an ally, add your Charisma score to your ally's Defense and Toughness. These bonuses last until the start of your ally's next turn.

MYTHIC HEALING IV

As Mythic Healing I, but you may also restore all dazed, wounded, staggered, disabled and dying conditions.

ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

As long as you are alive, you can restore one ally full life, removing all damage conditions from anyone who died or was otherwise incapacitated within the last round—but your own life is forfeit in exchange.

SKILLS

Virtually any of the skills presented in **Chapter Two** are suitable for a fantasy campaign. The only major exceptions are the Computers and Pilot skills, which will not be available in fantasy settings lacking the necessary technology.

Craft sub-skills in a fantasy setting may include alchemy, bowyer/fletcher, metalworking, scribing, stonemasonry, and trap making. Disable Device sees widespread use for disarming traps and picking locks. The Drive skill can be used to control chariots, wagons and watercraft. Knowledge sub-skills may include architecture and engineering, astronomy, nobility and planar cosmology. Knowledge (theology and philosophy) can be used to discover information about deities, outsiders and undead while Knowledge (supernatural) may provide information on supernatural beasts, dragons and fey, or allow a hero to determine which supernatural power an adept is currently using (Difficulty 20). Knowledge (linguistics) can be used to decipher ancient hieroglyphs.

FEATS

Most feats presented in **Chapter Three** will see widespread use in a fantasy setting. The only major exception is Firearms Training which is not available in settings lacking firearms. In addition, the following section provides new feats for fantasy heroes to be used at the Narrator's discretion.

COMPANION (GENERAL)

You have a loyal sidekick who follows you on your adventures, whether an animal companion, squire, shield bearer, accompanying bard, apprentice adept, apprentice thief or beginning craftsman. If your companion is an animal, it may be any kind of animal with a number of animal levels equal to or less than your own character level - 2. Otherwise your companion may be of any role and heroic background available in the setting. Your companion begins play with a total number of levels equal to your own level - 2. Your companion gains levels as you do, but it is always at least 2 levels lower than you.

CLOAK DANCE (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: STEALTH RANK 10, PERFORM (DANCE) RANK 2

You are skilled at using tricks to make yourself seem to be where you are not. You can take a move action to use a cloak or similar sheet-like object to obscure your exact position. Until your next turn, you have the benefits of concealment. Alternatively, you can take a full-round action to entirely obscure your exact position. Until your next action, you have total concealment.

FEATHER STEP (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: ACROBATICS RANK 4, MUST BE IN A CAMPAIGN OF SR 5 OR GREATER (SEE SUPERNATURAL RATINGS EARLIER IN THIS CHAPTER).

You can make a Difficulty 15 Acrobatics check to run across objects that could not normally hold your weight.

GAIN POWER (EXPERT OR WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: IMPROVED STRIKE

The Narrator may wish to allow warriors and experts to be able to take feats that duplicate the effects of a supernatural power. For example, a "Chi" feat could allow limited access to the Enhance Ability power to a character specializing in the martial arts, or a "Dim Mak" feat could simulate the legendary death touch by allowing limited access to the Harm power.

The power rank provided by these feats may depend on the campaigns Supernatural Rating. Generally, campaigns with an SR of 5 or less

provide the user of this feat with access to a power as though they were a 1st level adept, and may allow them to increase their power rank by one per additional feat slot expended. SR 6 campaigns may allow the hero to use this feat to purchase up to four ranks in a supernatural power each time the hero takes this feat, much like Skill Training. See **Supernatural Ratings** for more details on how the SR effects the power ranks gained by this feat.

Special: You cannot spend Conviction to gain access to this feat.

IMPROVED TAUNT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: 4TH LEVEL, TAUNT

You may apply the effects of your Taunt feat to a number of targets equal to 1/2 your level (round down). Make one Bluff check; each target makes a separate resistance check.

IMPROVISED WEAPONS PROFICIENCY (GENERAL)

You can use an improvised weapon (an ordinary object reasonably sized and shaped for use as a weapon) without penalty. Characters without this feat take a -4 penalty on attack rolls made with improvised weapons.

INTANGIBLE ARMOR (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: ARMOR TRAINING

Fate smiles kindly upon you. Even when you are without armor, you have some protection against harm. Your character gains an additional +2 bonus to their Toughness saves when not wearing armor of any variety (including natural armor).

INSIGHTFUL STRIKE (WARRIOR OR EXPERT)

You may add your Intelligence score to the damage you inflict with a melee attack in place of your Strength score while fighting an opponent that is vulnerable to critical hits.

INTUITIVE STRIKE (WARRIOR OR EXPERT)

You may add your Wisdom score to the damage you inflict with a melee attack in place of your Strength score while fighting an opponent that is vulnerable to critical hits.

KEEN SENSE OF SMELL (GENERAL)

You possess an animalistically keen sense of smell. You gain the Scent trait (page 130).

LION HEARTED (GENERAL)

You possess great courage and continue onward where others would cower in fear. You gain a +4 bonus to all Will saves against fear effects.

MENTAL BOND (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: BOTH MEMBERS OF THE BONDED PAIR MUST TAKE THIS FEAT.

You share a mental bond with one of your companions, either a fellow hero or a sidekick acquired through the Companion feat. The two of you are always in mental contact (like a use of the Mind Touch supernatural power). If some outside force interferes, such as the Ward power, you can make a Mind Touch or Wisdom check to overcome it. If your psychic link is broken, it is automatically reestablished as soon as possible.

RENOWN (GENERAL)

Your reputation precedes you. Increase your reputation bonus by +3. You can take this feat multiple times, gaining a +3 increase each time.

RIASTRADH (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: RAGE, BASE COMBAT BONUS +5 OR MORE, MUST BE IN A CAMPAIGN OF SR 5 OR GREATER (SEE SUPERNATURAL RATINGS).

When you rage, you become filled with supernatural power. Your body swells into a hulking, monstrous form that literally burns with wrath. While raging, make a Difficulty 15 level check. If successful, you increase 1 size category (so a Medium creature would become Large). Any who touch or are touched by you through unarmed attacks, grappling or any other physical contact suffer +1 fire damage. You gain an additional +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution, suffer a -1 penalty to Dexterity, and gain a +4 bonus to Intimidate skill checks while raging. You also gain the bonuses to Toughness and penalties to combat associated with your increased size. Wearing Medium-size armor prevents the use of this feat as it restricts the character's body from expanding to monstrous size.

SMASHING BLOW (WARRIOR)

You may add 1/2 your Strength bonus (rounded up) in place of your Dexterity bonus on attack rolls with any melee weapon at least one size category larger than you are, requiring two hands to wield it. If your target attempts to block, you may add your full Strength bonus.

POWERS

Supernatural powers are bound to play a heavier role in a fantasy game than in any other genre. This section provides you with a number of options and guidelines for handling of supernatural powers in your game.

SUPERNATURAL PHILOSOPHIES

In the fantasy genre, supernatural elements such as magic can have a profound influence on both the setting and the plot. Nowhere is the influence of the supernatural more obviously manifested than in the ways adepts in the setting interact with it. In many fantasy stories, those who wield supernatural power attach a particular philosophy to it. This supernatural philosophy will often guide their choice of powers and influence how the adept chooses to use them. Supernatural philosophies vary widely between fantasy settings, but often have similarities that can be useful as guidelines for constructing your own.

CORE CONCEPT

First, establish the core beliefs that define a supernatural philosophy and distinguish it from the others in your setting. This often includes some notion of where the adept's powers come from, be it manipulation of a cosmic force, a divine gift showing the favor of a god, the power of the mind over reality, or the result of special knowledge and arcane study.

PREREQUISITES

Some arcane philosophies require adepts to fulfill certain requirements. These requirements often include being trained in one or more relevant Knowledge skills, such as Knowledge (physical sciences), Knowledge (behavioral sciences), Knowledge (life sciences), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) or Knowledge (supernatural).

CHOOSING A KEY ABILITY

An adept's supernatural philosophy usually determines what their key ability will be. Adepts who believe they derive their powers from their religious beliefs or the result of divine favor use Wisdom as their key ability. Adepts who believe they learn their powers through intense study of magical words and arcane symbols use Intelligence. Adepts who believe their powers are an innate extension of their force of personality use Charisma. Some supernatural philosophies require different powers to have different key abilities.

CANONICAL POWER LISTS

Once you have your core concept, establish a list of supernatural powers that best fit this supernatural philosophy. This list of *canonical powers* is usually around 10 powers long. For each additional power added to the list, an additional barred power must be chosen. An adept with a particular supernatural philosophy casts all powers on the list of canonical powers as though they were 1 level higher than their actual adept level. They cast any powers that are neither canonical powers nor barred powers as though they were 1 adept level lower.

BARRED POWERS

Just as there are supernatural powers that compliment any given supernatural philosophy, there are also powers that either contradict it, or which someone of that philosophy would never conceivably learn or use. These powers become barred to anyone of that particular supernatural philosophy. Each supernatural philosophy has 2 barred powers plus 1 barred power per extra canonical power.

ADDITIONAL PERKS AND DRAWBACKS

You may wish to add additional abilities to your supernatural philosophy. The possibilities here are far too numerous to list as they are limited only by your imagination. Just be sure any added bonus you throw in is balanced out by a corresponding weakness or drawback.

SAMPLE SUPERNATURAL PHILOSOPHIES:

Here are three sample supernatural philosophies to use as models while making your own. Powers marked with an asterisk are from the *True20 Bestiary*.

DRUIDISM

Prerequisites: Trained in Knowledge (life sciences)

Key Ability: Wis

Canonical Powers: Beast Link, Cure, Cure Disease, Earth Shaping, Enhance Senses, Enhance Self, Nature Reading, Plant Shaping, Self-Shaping, Summon Animals*, Wind Shaping, Weather Shaping

Barred Powers: Imbue Unlife, Mind Probe, Mind Shaping, Shadow Shaping

NECROMANCY

Prerequisites: Trained in Knowledge (life sciences) and Knowledge (supernatural)

Key Ability: Int

Canonical Powers: Body Control, Cold Shaping, Dominate, Drain Vitality, Enhance Self, Flesh Shaping, Ghost Touch, Harm, Heart Shaping, Imbue Life, Imbue Unlife, Pain, Shadow Shaping*

Barred Powers: Bliss, Calm, Light Shaping, Purifying Light

Perk: Necromancers can use Mind Touch on undead and on the recently dead. When using Mind Touch on a recently dead target, the Difficulty increases by 1 for every day the target has been dead.

Drawback: Necromancers can only use the Dominate power on undead and outsiders.

PSIONICS

Prerequisites: Trained in Knowledge (behavioral sciences).

Key Ability: Cha.

Canonical Powers: Body Control, Calm, Combat Sense, Dominate, Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, Manipulate Object, Mind Probe, Mind Touch, Mind Reading, Mind Shaping, Move Object, Object Reading, Psychic Blast, Sense Minds, Suggestion

Barred Powers: Enhance Other, Elemental Weapon, Flesh Shaping, Imbue Life, Imbue Unlife, Nature Reading, Plant Shaping, Weather Shaping

DIVINE ASPECTS: THE ROLE OF THE GODS

Each fantasy world is molded and shaped by the gods who rule it. All deities have a portfolio of one or more aspects of reality over which they rule. An adept who gains supernatural powers from a god may exchange their Core Ability for any 2 divine aspect core abilities chosen from their god's list of divine aspects. Demigods have only 2 divine aspects, lesser deities have 3, intermediate deities have 4 and greater deities have 5. The exact gods available, their rank, and specific aspects depend on the setting. The following is a list of sample aspects a god might have, along with the corresponding core ability the deity can grant to worshipers and guidelines for atonement.

ATONEMENT

These are the conditions under which the adept loses the benefits of a specific divine aspect until they have somehow made atonement to their patron deity.

ART OR CRAFT

An adept who worships the god of a specific art or craft can spend a Conviction point to gain a +10 bonus on any corresponding Craft or Perform skill check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly goes for more than a week without practicing her chosen craft.

ABILITY

An adept who worships the god of a specific ability (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom or Charisma) can spend a Conviction point to gain a +4 bonus to the specified ability for purposes of completing a single task (fighting a single foe, moving a heavy object, solving a riddle).

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly abuses her ability, using it for personal gain rather than to further the god's agenda.

ANIMALS

Adepts who worship a god of animals may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Beast Link power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly abuses or mistreats an animal.

CHAOS

An adept who worships a god of chaos can spend a Conviction point to have a random and otherwise unexpected event come out in their favor. The Narrator is the sole arbiter of the exact result.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she participates in routine behavior, such as purposefully doing any one thing at the same time two or more days in a row.

CREATION

Adepts who worship a god of creation may spend a Conviction point to create any object they could buy using their Wisdom score as their Wealth bonus. This object appears either in their hands or at their feet.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly participates in needless and wanton destruction.

DEATH

Adepts who worship a god of death may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Sleep power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly attempts to bring someone back to life or prevents the death of anyone whose condition is Dying.



ELEMENT

Adepts who worship a god embodying an elemental force (Air, Cold, Earth, Fire, Water) may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to the appropriate Elemental Shaping power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly makes use of the element to which her god is opposed.

HEALING

Adepts who worship a god of healing may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Cure, Cure Poison, or Cure Disease power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly refuses healing to someone who requests it of her.

HEARTH/LIFE

Adepts who worship a god of the home, hearth or childbirth may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Imbue Life power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly endangers someone in his own home.

HUNTING

Adepts who worship a god of hunting or archery may spend a Conviction point to gain a +10 bonus to their next ranged attack roll.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly declines an invitation to a hunting party or archery contest.

KNOWLEDGE

Adepts who worship a god of knowledge may spend a Conviction point to gain a +10 bonus to any Knowledge skill check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she fails to put the knowledge she has been granted by this aspect to use.

LOVE

Adepts who worship a god of love may spend a Conviction point to cause a target creature to fall deeply in love with the next member of the appropriate race and gender they lay eyes upon. If the subject is unwilling, he may resist this effect with a Will save with a Difficulty equal to $10 + 1/2$ the adept's level plus the adept's Charisma score.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she refuses aid to or mistreats a loved one, or if she does not love another.

MAGIC

Adepts who worship a god of magic may spend a Conviction point to retry any fatigue save or power check after it is known that the original check failed to produce the desired result.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she destroys a magical item or uses the Severance power.

MOON

Adepts who worship a moon god may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Self-Shaping power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she does not make a sacrifice on a night of the full moon.

ORDER

Adepts who worship a god of order may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Dominate power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she knowingly and willingly breaks the law or directly causes someone else to do so.

PROTECTION

Adepts who worship a god of protection may spend a Conviction point to give a +5 bonus to Toughness for five rounds to any target within their line of sight.



Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly refuses to protect the weak and helpless.

NATURE

Adepts who worship a god of nature may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Nature Reading power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly despoils nature, or refuses to protect a natural area from harm.

PLANTS

Adepts who worship a god of plant life may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to the appropriate Plant Shaping power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly and needlessly destroys plant life.

RACE

Adepts who worship the god of a specific race (dwarves, elves, orcs etc.) may spend a Conviction point to shift the attitude of a member of that race toward them up to two levels closer to "Helpful" on the influence table (See page 92).

Atonement: The adept must atone if she denies aid to any member of the god's chosen race who asks for it.

SUN

Adepts who worship a sun god may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Light Shaping power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she goes 24 hours without being touched by the sun's rays.

THIEVERY

Adepts who worship a god of thieves may spend a Conviction point to gain a +10 bonus to any skill check being used to commit theft.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she aids authorities in the apprehension of a thief.

TRICKERY

Adepts who worship a god of trickery may spend a Conviction point to gain a +10 bonus to any Bluff or Disguise skill check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she knowingly and willfully passes up an opportunity for a good prank.

UNDEATH

Adepts who worship a god of undeath may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Imbue Unlife power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she prevents the creation of undead.

VICE

Adepts who worship a god of vice may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus on any check to perform an evil act in accordance with their vice.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she gains Conviction through her virtue nature.

VIRTUE

Adepts who worship a god of virtue may spend a Conviction point to resist any compulsion (supernatural or otherwise) that would make them act in an evil manner, or in a manner according to their vice.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she acts in an evil way or willingly gives in to her vice nature.

WAR

Adepts who worship a god of war may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to their combat score for 1 round.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she willingly declines a challenge to personal combat.

WEATHER

Adepts who worship a weather god may spend a Conviction point to gain a +5 bonus to any Weather Shaping power check.

Atonement: The adept must atone if she seeks shelter from a storm.

EQUIPMENT

This section provides you with expanded rules for weapons, armor and supernatural items likely to be available in most fantasy games.

EXPANDED ARCHAIC WEAPONS

Chapter Five provides some common archaic weapons found in low-tech fantasy and historical settings. The following section offers information in an expanded format on additional archaic weapons useful in a fantasy setting, with the weapons from **Chapter Five** also reprinted here for easy reference.

The weapons have the following qualities listed on the tables:

CATEGORY

Melee weapons are categorized as simple, martial, or exotic. Martial weapons require the Weapon Training feat to use proficiently, while each exotic weapon requires its own Exotic Weapon Training feat to use proficiently.

DAMAGE

This is the damage dealt by the weapon on a successful hit. Melee and thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength score to this damage.

CRITICAL

This notes how the weapon is used with the rules for critical hits.

20: The weapon scores a threat on a natural roll of 20, as usual for critical hits.

19–20: The weapon scores a threat on a natural roll of 19 or 20 (instead of just 20).

18–20: The weapon scores a threat on a natural roll of 18, 19 or 20 (instead of just 20).

When the weapon scores a critical hit, increase the damage as indicated.

+3: The weapon deals +3 damage on a critical hit.

+4: The weapon deals +4 damage on a critical hit.

+5: The weapon deals +5 damage on a critical hit.

DAMAGE DESCRIPTOR

Melee weapon damage is generally classified as bludgeoning (weapons with a blunt striking surface, like a club), piercing (weapons with a sharp point), and slashing (weapons with a sharp edge). Some foes may be resistant or immune to some types of damage.

RANGE INCREMENT

Melee weapons designed for throwing can also be used to make ranged attacks. Thrown weapons have a range increment just as other ranged weapons do—but the maximum range for a thrown weapon is five range increments. Any attack at less than the given range increment is not penalized for range. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll.

SIZE

Size categories for weapons and other objects are defined differently from the size categories for creatures. The relationship between a weapon's size and its wielder's size defines whether it can be used one-handed, if it requires two hands, or if it's a light weapon. A Medium or smaller weapon can be used one-handed or two-handed. A Large weapon requires two hands.

Larger and Smaller Weapons: In some cases, creatures larger or smaller than Medium may wield versions of weapons scaled to their size. A “sword” wielded by a Tiny creature is barely a knife for a Medium creature. Likewise a giant's “knife” may be the size of a human's sword.

As a general guideline, normal sized weapons adjusted for larger or smaller creatures increase their damage by +1 per size category above Medium and lower it by –1 per size category below Medium. So a knife (+1 damage) sized for a Huge creature does +3 damage, the equivalent of a sword for a Medium creature.

COST

The number before the slash is the weapon's purchase Difficulty. The number after the slash is the weapon's coin value.

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

ANKUS

Sometimes called a bullhook, elephant hook, or elephant goad, this tool is used in the training of elephants but can also be used as a weapon. It consists of a 2- or 3-foot handle with a metal head (usually bronze or steel) with two pointed tips, one coming straight out of the handle, and the other curving to one side.

ARROWS AND BOLTS

An arrow used as a melee weapon is treated as a small, improvised weapon (–4 to attack rolls), doing damage like a knife. An arrow that hits its target is considered destroyed; one that misses has a 50% chance (11 or better on the d20) of being broken or lost. The same guidelines apply to crossbow bolts.

AXE, THROWING

A small, light axe balanced for throwing.

BAGH NAKH

Also known as the “tiger's claw” this hand weapon is designed to be held in the fist by placing fingers through individual holes; three or more small spikes or blades curve from the handpiece. The bagh nakh can be used in a grapple or in conjunction with the Improved Strike feat. The bagh nakh grants a +10 bonus to resist disarm attempts.

BATTLEAXE

This is a heavy-bladed axe that can be wielded with one or two hands.

BOLO

A bolo is a set of weighted cords intended to entangle an opponent. If the bolo hits, the target makes a Difficulty 14 Reflex save. A failed save means the target is entangled. See the **Condition Summary** in **Chapter Six** for the effects of entanglement.

BOOMERANG

A thrown boomerang that misses returns to the thrower's hand, ready to be thrown again on the next round. A boomerang that hits does not return. Boomerang wielders with the Exotic Weapon Training feat can throw the weapon so it hits the target on the return arc as a surprise attack (see the **Surprise Attacks** section of **Chapter Six**).

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Cost	Weight
Simple Weapons							
Ankus	+1	20/+3	Piercing and bludgeoning	—	Med	5	4 lb.
Club	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Med	4	3 lb.
Gaff/Hook	+1	20/+3	Piercing	—	Tiny	2	2 lb.
Gauntlet	+0	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Tiny	5	1 lb.
Gauntlet, spiked	+1	20/+3	Piercing	—	Tiny	5	1 lb.
Knife/Dagger	+1	19–20/+3	Piercing	10 ft.	Tiny	7	1 lb.
Longspear	+3	19–20/+4	Piercing	—	Large	6	9 lb.
Mace, heavy	+3	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Med	7	8 lb.
Mace, light	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Small	6	4 lb.
Morningstar	+3	20/+3	Bludgeoning and piercing	—	Med	7	6 lb.
Pitchfork	+2	20/+4	Piercing	—	Large	4	6 lb.
Punching Dagger	+1	20/+4	Piercing	—	Tiny	8	1 lb.
Quarterstaff	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Large	4	4 lb.
Sap	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Small	2	1 lb.
Sickle	+1	20/+3	Slashing	—	Small	7	2 lb.
Spear	+3	19–20/+4	Piercing	20 ft.	Large	6	6 lb.
Staff-sling	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	20 ft.	Med	5	2 lb.
Stiletto	+0	19–20/+3	Piercing	—	Tiny	3	1/2 lb.
Tonfa	+1	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Med	6	2 lb.
Unarmed Attack	+0	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	—	—	0 lb.

BOW

Bows add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage, although most bows are only designed to add up to a +5 Str bonus at best.

CHAKRAM

The chakram is a metal ring about one foot in diameter; the exterior is sharp while the interior edge is dull, providing a place to hold and spin the chakram before throwing it.

CHAIN

You can wield a weighted chain to strike a target up to 10 ft. away. You can use it to make trip attacks and to disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats (and its benefits stack if you already have those feats). A spiked chain inflicts piercing rather than bludgeoning damage due to the spikes along the chain's length.

CLAYMORE

Slightly smaller, lighter and far more maneuverable than the great sword. A proficient wielder gains a +1 bonus to parry attempts and can choose to add half their Strength score (rounded up) to attack rolls in place of their Dexterity. If the wielder has the Smashing Blow feat, they may instead add their whole Strength score to their attack roll.

CLUB

Any of a number of blunt weapons used to strike, including nightsticks, batons, and similar bludgeoning weapons.

CROSSBOW

A crossbow is similar to a bow and used for the same reasons. A crossbow does not add the user's Strength bonus to its damage.

CROSSBOW, REPEATING

The repeating crossbow holds five crossbow bolts. As long as it holds bolts, you can reload it by pulling the reloading lever (a free action). Loading a new case of five bolts is a full-round action.

You can fire a repeating crossbow with one hand or fire a repeating crossbow in each hand in the same manner as you would a normal crossbow of the same size. However, two hands are required to use the reloading lever or to load a new case of bolts.

CUTLASS

This short thick sword has a slightly curved blade that can be used for either thrusting or slashing, and often has a basket hilt. This is the weapon favored by pirates and buccaneers.

FALCHION

This weapon combines the versatility of a sword with the chopping power of an axe.

FLAIL

With a flail, you can make trip attacks and disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats. Its benefits stack if you already have those feats.

GAFF/HOOK

This metal hook is used by sailors to load and unload ships. Occasionally a prosthetic one is used to replace a severed hand.

GAUNTLET

This metal glove protects your hands and lets you deal lethal rather than non-lethal damage with unarmed strikes. Spiked gauntlets inflict piercing damage. You cannot lose a gauntlet to a disarm action (see the description of the Disarm action in [Chapter Six](#)).

GREATAXE

A big, heavy axe favored by barbarians and those looking to dish out a lot of damage.

GREATCLUB

A two-handed version of a club, often studded or spiked with metal.

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Cost
Martial Weapons							
Axe, throwing	+1	20/+3	Slashing	10 ft.	Small	2 lb.	5
Bagh Nakh	+1	20/+3	Piercing and slashing	—	Tiny	2 lb.	3
Battleaxe	+3	20/+4	Slashing	—	Med	6 lb.	9
Claymore	+3	19–20/+4	Slashing	—	Large	6 lb.	12
Cutlass	+3	20/+4	Piercing and slashing	—	Med	3 lb.	9
Falchion	+3	18–20/+4	Slashing	—	Large	8 lb.	10
Flail	+3	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Med	5 lb.	8
Flail, heavy	+4	19–20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Large	10 lb.	11
Greataxe	+5	20/+3	Slashing	—	Large	12 lb.	11
Greatclub	+3	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Large	8 lb.	5
Greatscimitar	+3	18–20/+3	Slashing	—	Large	8 lb.	9
Greatsword	+4	19–20/+3	Slashing	—	Large	8 lb.	11
Handaxe	+1	20/+4	Bludgeoning	—	Small	3 lb.	4
Khopesh	+3	20/+3	Slashing	—	Med	7 lb.	10
Kukri	+1	18–20/+3	Slashing	—	Small	2 lb.	7
Lance	+3	20/+4	Piercing	—	Large	10 lb.	9
Lance, jousting	+0	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Large	10 lb.	6
Machete	+3	20/+3	Slashing	—	Med	5 lb.	8
Main-gauche	+1	20/+3	Piercing and slashing	—	Small	2 lb.	7
Maul	+4	20/+4	Bludgeoning	—	Large	10 lb.	10
Polearm	+3	20/+4	Piercing or slashing	—	Large	12 lb.	8
Pike	+3	20/+4	Piercing	—	Large	12 lb.	7
Rapier	+2	18–20/+3	Piercing	—	Med	2 lb.	9
Saber	+2	19–20/+4	Slashing	—	Med	5 lb.	9
Scimitar	+2	18–20/+3	Slashing	—	Med	4 lb.	10
Scythe	+3	20/+5	Piercing or slashing	—	Large	10 lb.	10
Sword	+3	19–20/+3	Slashing	—	Med	4 lb.	10
Sword, short	+2	19–20/+3	Slashing	—	Small	2 lb.	7
Trident	+3	20/+4	Piercing	—	Med	4 lb.	7
Warhammer	+3	20/+4	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Med	5 lb.	6
Warhammer, light	+1	20/+3	Bludgeoning	20 ft.	Small	2 lb.	4
Warpick, heavy	+3	20/+5	Piercing	—	Med	6 lb.	8
Warpick, light	+1	+5	Piercing	—	Small	3 lb.	6
Exotic Weapons							
Chain	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Large	10 lb.	5
Chain, spiked	+2	20/+3	Piercing	10 ft.	Large	10 lb.	8
Nunchaku	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Small	2 lb.	3
Sword, bastard	+4	19–20/+3	Slashing	—	Med	6 lb.	14
Whip	+0	20/+3	Bludgeoning	15 ft.	Small	2 lb.	4

GREATSCIMITAR

A massive two-handed version of the scimitar.

GREATSWORD

A large, two-handed, wide-bladed sword.

HANDAXE

A handaxe is a small axe, like a hatchet, designed for use in combat.

JAVELIN

This is a light, flexible spear intended to be thrown. Javelins can also be used in melee combat.

KHOPESH

This large blade has a hook at the end. It is particularly useful for making trip attacks or sundering attempts, providing you with a +2 bonus. Its benefits stack with the Improved Trip and Improved Sunder feats.

KNIFE

A knife is a bladed weapon with a length of less than 18 inches. This includes knives, stilettos, sais, switchblades, bowie knives, and hunting knives, among others.

KUKRI

This heavy, curved knife has its sharp edge on the inside of the curve, making it a useful weapon for stealth and assassination.

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage Bonus	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Cost
Simple Weapons							
Blowgun	+0	20/+1	Piercing	20 ft.	Medium	2 lb.	2
Crossbow, heavy	+3	19–20/+3	Piercing	120 ft.	Medium	8 lb. +1 lb./10 bolts	11
Crossbow, light	+2	19–20/+3	Piercing	80 ft.	Medium	4 lb. +1 lb./10 bolts	10
Dart	+1	+2	Piercing	20 ft.	Tiny	1/2 lb.	3
Javelin	+2	20/+3	Piercing	30 ft.	Medium	2 lb.	4
Sling	+1	20/+3	Bludgeoning	50 ft.	Small	0 lb. +5 lb./stone	3
Martial Weapons							
Bow	+3	20/+4	Piercing	100 ft.	Large	3 lb. +3 lb./20 arrows	10
Bow, short	+2	20/+4	Piercing	60 ft.	Medium	2 lb. +3 lb./20 arrows	9
Shuriken	+1	20/+3	Piercing, Autofire	10 ft.	Tiny	1/10 lb.	3
Exotic Weapons							
Bolo	—	—	—	40 ft.	Small	2 lb.	3
Boomerang	+2	20/+4	Bludgeoning	20 ft.	Small	1 lb.	2
Chakram	+2	20/+4	Slashing	30 ft.	Small	1 lb.	6
Crossbow, repeating	+3	19–20/+3	Piercing, Autofire	80 ft.	Med	6 lb. +1 lb./10 bolts	21
Net	—	—	—	10 ft.	Med	6 lb.	12

LANCE

A lance deals +3 damage when used from the back of a charging mount. It has reach so you can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. While mounted, you can wield a lance with one hand.

LONGSPEAR

A longspear has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. If you use a ready action to set a longspear against a charge, you deal +4 damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

MACE

A mace has a sturdy wooden handle capped by a flanged metal head.

MAIN-GAUCHE

This specialized fencing dagger is often used in the off-hand to parry while attacking with a longer weapon, providing a +2 bonus to parry attempts.

MANOPLE

A gauntleted sword with two smaller curved blades extending on either side of the main one, the manopla grants a +10 bonus to resist disarm attempts. In addition, it has a +2 bonus on disarm check, including the roll to keep from being disarmed if the disarm fails.

MAUL

A massive hammer, the maul grants a +2 bonus to Sunder and Trip attempts. These bonuses stack with the Improved Sunder and Improved Trip Feats. In order to even lift the maul, a character must have Strength +1 or greater.

MORNINGSTAR

This weapon combined the impact of a club with the piercing power of metal spikes.

NET

A net is used to entangle enemies. When you throw a net, you make a ranged attack against your target. A net's maximum range is 10 feet. If you hit, the target is entangled. An entangled creature takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls and a -4 penalty on Dexterity, can move at only half speed, and cannot charge or run. If you control the trailing rope by

succeeding on an opposed Strength check while holding it, the entangled creature can move only within the limits of the rope. If the entangled creature attempts to use a supernatural power, it must make a Difficulty 15 Concentration check or be unable to use the power effectively.

An entangled creature can escape with a Difficulty 20 Escape Artist check (a full-round action). The net has +2 Toughness and can be burst with a Difficulty 25 Strength check (also a full-round action).

A net is useful only against creatures within 1 size category of you.

A net must be folded to be thrown effectively. The first time you throw your net in a fight, you make a normal ranged touch attack roll. After the net is unfolded, you take a -4 penalty on attack rolls with it. It takes 2 rounds for a proficient user to fold a net and twice that long for a non-proficient one to do so.

NUNCHAKU

This is a popular martial arts weapon, made of two wooden shafts connected by a short length of rope or chain.

PIKE

This long sharpened pole provides a Medium-size wielder with a 15 ft. reach but cannot be used in close quarters.

PITCH FORK

This farming tool can make a handy improvised weapon.

POLEARM

Any of a number of weapons consisting of a bladed metal head atop a long wooden pole.

PUNCHING DAGGER

These piercing daggers can be used in conjunction with the Improved Strike Feat.

RAPIER

A light fencing sword with a sharp point, usually used for thrusting attacks.

QUARTERSTAFF

This is any fighting staff between 4 and 6 feet long, including the bo staff used in martial arts.

SABER

This slightly curved fencing blade is designed for slashing and chopping strikes rather than thrusts.

SAP

A sap is a bludgeoning weapon intended to knock out targets without permanently injuring them. Saps inflict non-lethal damage.

SCIMITAR

A scimitar is a long, single-edged sword with a curved blade.

SCYTHE

A scythe can be used to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the scythe to avoid being tripped.

SHURIKEN

These are flat metal stars or spikes for throwing. Shuriken can be thrown in groups (making them autofire weapons). Although they are thrown weapons, shuriken do not add the thrower's Strength bonus to damage due to their lightness.

SICKLE

This curved bladed weapon can be used to make trip attacks with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip feat. Its benefits stack if you already have the feat.

SLING

Your Strength modifier applies to damage rolls when you use a sling, just as it does for thrown weapons. You can fire, but not load, a sling with one hand. Loading a sling is a move action that requires two hands. You can hurl ordinary stones with a sling, but stones are not as dense or as round as bullets. Such an attack deals 1 point less damage and you take a -1 penalty on attack rolls.

SPEAR

A spear is a bladed pole-arm. Most spears can also be thrown.

STAFFSLING

A staff sling can be used to hurl stones and bullets or be wielded as a quarterstaff in close quarters.

STILETTO

You get a +5 bonus on Sleight of Hand checks made to conceal a stiletto on your body (see the Sleight of Hand skill).

SWORD

A sword is a blade between 18 and 30 or more inches in length, single or double-edged. This category includes longswords, katanas and similar weapons.

SWORD, BASTARD

A bastard sword is an exotic weapon, too large to use in one hand without special training. A character can use a bastard sword two-handed as a martial weapon.

SWORD, SHORT

A short sword is similar in construction to a sword, but it has a shorter blade. This category includes the gladius and other long knives.

TONFA

These versatile weapons consist of two parts: a handle and a perpendicular clublike shaft that lies along the hand and forearm. They are a common martial arts weapon.

TRIDENT

A three-tined piercing weapon similar to a spear.

WARHAMMER

A warhammer is a heavy hammer that can be wielded with one or two hands. Warhammers can also be thrown.

WHIP

A whip can strike targets up to 15 ft. away. You can use it to make trip attacks and to disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats. Its benefits stack if you already have those feats.

UNARMED ATTACK

An unarmed attack has a damage bonus of +0, modified by the attacker's Strength. Unarmed attacks inflict non-lethal damage.

EXPANDED ARCHAIC ARMORS

Chapter Six provides some basic archaic armors found in low-tech fantasy and historical settings. The following section offers information on additional archaic armor in an expanded format, with the armors from **Chapter Six** reprinted here for easy reference.

ARCHAIC ARMOR

Heroes in low-tech settings still wear armor of leather or metal to protect them, and may carry wooden or metal shields.

LEATHER

Heavy leather plates covering the torso and other vital areas.

STUDDED LEATHER

Leather armor augmented with metal studs and rivets.

HIDE

Crude armor made from thick animal hides and furs.

SCALE MAIL

A shirt of interlocking metal scales.

CHAINMAIL

A shirt of heavy metal chain, often with a hauberk (hood) to cover the wearer's head.

BREASTPLATE

Chainmail augmented with a metal breastplate.

SPLINT MAIL

Leather armor with narrow vertical strips of metal riveted to it.

BANDED MAIL

Chain and leather armor with horizontal bands of metal sewn over top.

ARCHAIC ARMOR

Armor	Toughness Bonus	Weight	Cost
Leather (light)	+1	15 lb.	12
Studded leather (light)	+2	20 lb.	13
Hide (medium)	+2	25 lb.	11
Scale Mail (medium)	+3	30 lb.	15
Chainmail (medium)	+3	40 lb.	18
Breastplate (medium)	+4	30 lb.	19
Splint Mail (heavy)	+4	45 lb.	19
Banded Mail (heavy)	+4	35 lb.	19
Plate-mail (heavy)	+5	50 lb.	21
Full plate (heavy)	+6	55 lb.	23

PLATE-MAIL

This is chainmail augmented with a metal breastplate, greaves (leg-guards) and arm-guards.

FULL PLATE

A full (and heavy!) suit of articulated metal plates, like that worn by medieval knights.

SUPERNATURAL ITEMS

Supernatural items are masterwork items imbued with one or more feats or supernatural powers. These items may be single use, multiple use, or permanent.

No cost is given for Multi-Use and Permanent Magic Items (unlike One Use). This is intentional. All a hero needs to do is make a masterwork item specifically for receiving the supernatural power. The Narrator can require special materials or an additional cost (maybe +1 to the purchase Difficulty of materials for each 5 charges or so) as best suits the campaign setting.

SINGLE-USE SUPERNATURAL ITEMS

Single-use supernatural items are essentially supernatural powers temporarily imbued into an item such as a scroll, charm or potion from which effects can be released at a later time. The power check is made, the save Difficulty is set and the specific effect (if the power

has more than one potential effect) is chosen at the time of the item's creation.

To create a single-use supernatural item, a character must have the Imbue Item feat and the appropriate supernatural power. First, the proper components must be purchased. The components to make a single-use item have a purchase Difficulty of 6 +1 per 5 ranks of power check bonus that the adept wishes to imbue. Next, a Difficulty 15 Craft check of the appropriate type is necessary to create the item. Potions require a Craft (alchemy) check, and scrolls require a Craft (calligraphy) check. The enchanting of the item takes an hour or the use time of the power (whichever is longer). After this, the adept must make a power check, including a +5 power challenge, to imbue the power's effect into the item. Finally the adept must make a Knowledge (supernatural) check (Difficulty 15) and spend a Conviction point to seal the effect into the item until it is released. The adept may choose to take 10 on the Craft, Knowledge (supernatural), and power checks. If any of these checks fail, the process must begin anew.

SAMPLE SINGLE-USE SUPERNATURAL ITEM: HEALING POTION

Single use of Cure with a pre-set power check of 10.

MULTI-USE SUPERNATURAL ITEMS

Multi-use supernatural items are similar to permanent magical items, except the masterwork item may only be imbued with a single supernatural power and any number of adept feats that modify that power. In addition, multi-use supernatural items are limited to a certain number of uses or "charges" of the effect. The item's wielder may use a standard action to activate one of the item's charges and gain the benefits of the imbued power as though they had just made a power check equal to their level +10. The save Difficulty for the powers of a multi-use item is equal to $10 +1/2$ the wielder's level (adepts may also add their key ability). Once these charges are expended, the item loses its supernatural qualities.

The construction of these items is similar to that of permanent supernatural items, except the enchantment process for a multi-use supernatural item takes one hour plus an additional hour per 5 charges being imbued. At the end of this time, the adept makes a power check with the imbued power (Difficulty 15 + 1 per charge to be imbued). Any fatigue save the power may require also has its Difficulty increased by +1 per charge to be imbued. The adept must then spend a number of Conviction points equal to 1 + the number of feats being imbued. The Knowledge (supernatural) check required to seal the enchantment has a Difficulty of 10 +1 per feat the item is imbued with. If any of these checks fail, the process must begin over again. This same process may be used to re-charge an item (minus the Conviction cost), but it can never be imbued with more charges than the initial total of charges the item was created with.

SAMPLE MULTI-USE SUPERNATURAL ITEM: STAFF OF THE TRUE FLAME

Masterwork staff with 10 charges of Elemental Blast (Fire).

PERMANENT SUPERNATURAL ITEMS

Anyone wielding a permanent supernatural item gains the benefits of the feats and powers with which the item is imbued. When a non-adept accesses a power through a supernatural item, they do not risk fatigue or make a power check. Instead, they gain benefits from the power as though their power check had been equal to their level + 5. This means certain effects of any given power may not be accessible by lower level characters using the item. Adepts may choose to use a supernatural item this way, or they may risk fatigue to make their own power check normally, just as though they were using one of their own supernatural powers. The wielder of a supernatural item may spend a Conviction point to gain a +3 bonus to their power check as though they were using the Empower feat. The save Difficulty for any powers within a permanent supernatural item is $10 +1/2$ the wielder's level (adepts may also add their key ability).

ALTERNATE MATERIALS

BRONZE, IRON, STEEL, ADAMANTINE AND MITHRIL

Metal armor gains damage reduction against all non-supernatural weapons made of a softer metal.

- Armor made from iron provides Damage Reduction 2/iron.
- Armor made from steel provides Damage Reduction 2/steel.
- Armor made from adamantine provides Damage Reduction 2/adamantine or mithril.
- Armor made from mithril provides Damage Reduction 2/adamantine or mithril.

Weapons made from bronze or iron have a chance of bending when your opponent rolls a natural 20 on their Toughness save. The weapon is considered to have a Toughness bonus equal to its damage rating, and must make a successful Difficulty 15 Toughness save to avoid bending.

When such a weapon bends, it suffers a -1 penalty to hit and a -1 penalty to damage. The wielder can take a full round action to straighten the weapon and eliminate the penalty to hit (but not the penalty to damage). Straightening such a weapon requires a Strength check with a Difficulty equal to 10 plus the weapon's damage bonus. Completely restoring the weapon and eliminating all penalties will require a Difficulty 10 Craft (metalworking) check. Bronze and iron weapons must be sharpened after every combat encounter in which they were used, or they will become dulled. Dull weapons suffer a -1 penalty to damage cumulative with any penalties for bending.

STONE AND BONE

Weapons made from stone or bone have a chance of shattering whenever your opponent rolls a natural 20 (19 or 20 for stone weapons) on their Toughness save. The weapon is considered to have a Toughness bonus equal to its damage rating, and must make a successful Difficulty 15 Toughness save to avoid shattering. A shattered weapon immediately becomes useless. Stone weapons made from obsidian gain a +1 bonus to damage, but have a -2 on saves to avoid shattering.

Creating a permanent supernatural item is an expensive and difficult process, and requires the creator to have the Imbue Item feat and the appropriate power(s). Creation of these powerful items first requires a masterwork item specially created to serve as the receptacle for the imbued powers (See the description of the Craft skill on pages 32-33 for more on creating masterwork Items). The Narrator may also decide special components are required that can only be acquired through some special quest.

The enchanting process takes 1 day per power or feat the adept wishes to imbue the item with. The adept must then succeed on a Difficulty 25 check with each power to be permanently imbued into the item. If the item being imbued is a weapon, "Supernatural Weapon" must be one of the powers given to it. Finally the adept must spend a number of Conviction points equal to the number of powers and feats imbued, and succeed on a Knowledge (supernatural) check (Difficulty 20 +2 per imbued power and +1 per imbued feat).

After the ordeal is over, the adept automatically acquires 1 level of fatigue, plus any additional fatigue resulting from the use of fatiguing supernatural powers. If any of the required checks fail, the process must begin over again.

SAMPLE PERMANENT SUPERNATURAL ITEM: CALIBURN

Masterwork Sword, Imbued with Attack Specialization (Caliburn), Cleave, Combat Sense, Great Cleave, Greater Attack Specialization (Caliburn), Improved Critical, and Supernatural Weapon

Purchase Difficulty	Item's Price (in silver pieces)
2	Up to 10 sp
4	20 sp
7	50 sp
10	100 sp
12	200 sp
15	500 sp
18	1000 sp
20	2000 sp
23	5000 sp
26	10,000 sp
28	20,000 sp
31	50,000 sp
34	100,000 sp
36	200,000 sp
39	500,000 sp
42	1,000,000 sp
44	2,000,000 sp
47	5,000,000 sp
+8	Each additional x10

OPTIONAL RULES

The following section provides a number of optional rules you can mix and match to add flavor and depth to a fantasy setting. Remember that not all of these rules will be appropriate for all fantasy settings.

CORRUPTION

Some fantasy characters, particularly those in high fantasy or romantic fantasy, suffer from progressive problems caused by some sort of taint, whether it is the corruption of pure evil, uncontrolled magic, or the distorting powers of chaos. The corruption rules presented in **Chapter Twelve** can be integrated into a fantasy game to serve this purpose.

The causes of corruption in a fantasy setting can be many and varied. Corruption may be caused by committing morally repugnant actions. It might be the result of prolonged exposure to evil artifacts, demon lords, or unhallowed ground; the consequence of pushing one's supernatural powers beyond its limits; of casting supernatural powers such as Harm, Pain or Imbue Unlife; or even the acquisition and utilization of forbidden knowledge. Whether a devotion to vile gods or the price for accessing the darkest parts of one's own psyche, the exact conditions under which a character risks corruption will depend on the nature and tone of the setting.

HARD COINAGE

The wealth system in **Chapter Five** is a fine abstract system for tracking resources, particularly when the complexities of credit or bartering are involved. Some fantasy settings may be better served, however, by a more concrete wealth system that tracks actual coinage.

In the hard coinage system, the standard currency is measured in pieces of silver. Copper and gold coins may also exist. In this case, treat one gold piece as approximately equal in value to 10 silver pieces, and one silver piece being equal in value to 10 copper pieces.

STARTING COINAGE

Heroes begin the game with 500 silver pieces, plus 200 sp per point of Charisma (if positive), plus 40 sp per rank in a professional skill. The Wealthy feat adds 800 silver pieces to this total each time it is taken.

HIGH LIVING

High Living is an optional rule the Narrator can invoke to reflect the penchant of many heroic characters to spend their wealth like there is no tomorrow. As a result, enormous quantities of coin can be spent on fine food and drink, clothing, gambling, entertainment, and pleasant company.

Any hero with a Wealth score over +5 who is not specifically saving up for a large purchase and has no other specific plans for spending it finds their wealth score drops by 1 point per week until it reaches +5 or less. If your game is using the coinage system for tracking wealth the hero instead loses 50% of their wealth each week they possess more than 500 silver pieces.

HONOR

Whether it involves serving king and clan or adhering to a knightly code of conduct, honor is something many fantasy characters strive to achieve. The following guidelines provide you with rules for tracking the honor of heroes and major Narrator characters, as well as suggested game effects. These rules may be most appropriate for classical or romantic fantasy games, or in settings with an Oriental flavor.

ACQUIRING HONOR

Honor is measured in terms of points, similar to an ability score. The normal range for honor scores is between +5 and -5, with +0 being average. Unlike ability scores, these maximum and minimum values are absolute and cannot be affected by a character's background.

Honor comes from action, not inaction. While a character can lose honor by not acting, he cannot gain honor by refusing to act. Generally a character gains a point of honor when they act in a particularly honorable fashion. Actions that increase one's honor score vary. Some examples of actions that can increase a character's honor score are:

- Avenging the murder of a friend or family member
- Successfully completing an assigned quest of great difficulty
- Completing a great deed
- Defeating an enemy at least 2 levels higher in single combat
- Fulfilling a family debt
- Leading an army to victory
- Dying heroically

LOSING HONOR

Depending on the character's code of honor, dishonorable actions—those that reduce one's honor score—may include any of the following examples. Unless otherwise noted, each of these actions results in the loss of 1 honor point.

- Accused of a crime
- Banished or excommunicated
- Breaking an oath
- Convicted of a crime (-2 pts)
- Failing an assigned quest or task
- Killing an unarmed or helpless foe
- Losing a contest
- Losing a supernatural or masterwork item
- Losing to an enemy 2 or more levels lower than oneself
- Failing to protect one of your family members from being murdered

HONOR SCORE	
-5 (Traitorous)	
-4 (Treachorous)	
-3 (Dastardly)	
-2 (Dishonorable)	
-1 (Ignoble)	
+0 (Average)	
+1 (Noble)	
+2 (Honorable)	
+3 (Praiseworthy)	
+4 (Virtuous)	
+5 (Paragon)	

- Rash or improper social behavior
- Refusing a fair challenge
- Refusing your lord or master
- Being taken prisoner (-2 pts)
- Accepting a bribe
- Treason (-6 pts)

EFFECTS OF THE HONOR BONUS:

- Your honor bonus applies to all Will saves to resist the effects of any compulsion that would otherwise cause you to perform an ignoble or dishonorable act.
- Your honor bonus applies to all Diplomacy checks made with anyone who owes allegiance to the same lord, country, or clan as yourself.

- Your honor bonus is applied directly to your Leadership score.
- Your honor bonus or penalty is added as a bonus to your Reputation score.
- Your honor bonus (if positive) applies to Sense Motive checks against anyone with a negative honor score.
- If your honor bonus is negative, that penalty is added as a bonus to Bluff checks against anyone with a positive honor score.
- If your honor bonus is negative, that penalty is added as a bonus to your Intimidate checks.

WERGILD (HONOR PRICE)

In many societies, fines for minor crimes are proportional to the honor of the victim. A person's *wergild*, or honor price, has a purchase Difficulty equal to $15 + \text{their honor score}$.

ADVERSARIES & CHALLENGES

When looking for adversaries to throw at your heroes in a fantasy game, the options are virtually limitless. Just about any creature found in the **Adversaries** section of **Chapter Eight** or in the *True20 Bestiary* is suitable for use in a fantasy adventure. A few additional creatures and hazards are presented here.

ANTHROPOMORPHIC ANIMALS

Many fantasy tales include anthropomorphic animals, or "beast men," either as ferocious monsters or somewhat more civilized folk. This template allows you to quickly and easily create such humanoid animals.

Anthropomorphics created by this template are usable as heroes, if desired, although the Narrator may wish to apply a measure of level-lag for creatures with significant ability bonuses, since most animals do not advance by heroic role. The Narrator may also wish to limit the application of this template to creatures within two size categories of medium to avoid especially large or small anthropomorphics, at least for use as heroes in the game.

ANTHROPOMORPHIC ANIMAL

"Anthropomorphic Animal" is an inherited template added to any animal (referred to as the base animal). It uses the base animal's statistics and abilities except as noted here.

ANTHROPOMORPHIC ANIMAL (TEMPLATE)

Level:	Increase the base animal's level to a minimum of 1st level.
Type:	The creature's type changes to humanoid, and gains "anthropomorphic animal" as a subtype.
Size:	Shift the base animal's size 1 size category towards Medium.
Speed:	If its base land speed is below 20 ft., then increase it to 20 ft.
Abilities:	The base animal's Intelligence is increased by +4, and its Charisma is increased by +3. If it gained a size category, increase its Strength by +2 and decrease its Dexterity by +1. If it lost a size category, decrease its Strength by 4 and its Constitution by 1, and increase its Dexterity by +1.
Skills:	As base animal, adjusted for increased Intelligence.
Feats:	As base animal.
Traits:	As base animal.
Combat:	If the base animal has lost a size category with this template, decrease the base damage for all of its natural weapons by 1 point. If it has gained a size category with this template, increase the base damage for all of its natural weapons by +1.
Saving Throws:	As base animal, adjusted for its new size.
Advancement:	By heroic role.
Level Lag:	None



CHAPTER ELEVEN:

SPACE

ADVENTURES

IN THE DEPTHS OF SPACE LIE VAST STELLAR EMPIRES, STRANGE ALIENS, TECHNOLOGY BEYOND THE IMAGINING OF TODAY'S SCIENCE. THIS CHAPTER EXPLORES SPECIFIC RULES FOR SETTING YOUR OWN ADVENTURES AMONGST THE STARS.

Imagine a world where the limits of time, space and technology are put to the test. What would be possible as humanity approached those limits? What wonders might we uncover and what dangers might we face? What might humanity find out there in the infinite reaches of space? Welcome to science fiction.

In science fiction, stories are based on the effects of scientific discoveries, environmental changes, or technological advancements. These are often

extrapolated from current trends in the scientific community. The impact of science on civilization may be the main focus of the story, or it may serve just as a backdrop, providing the setting in which the story unfolds. In some cases the stories may be set “one step ahead” of current technology, while others posit science so far advanced that it borders on the magical. Science fiction has heroes, yet the story does not often focus on them to the exclusion of the current state of the society or civilization they live in.

SUBGENRES

Science fiction is a very fluid genre. The following list covers some of the more prominent subgenres of science fiction, particularly those involving interplanetary or interstellar space travel.

ALIEN INVASION

The alien invasion subgenre revolves around the invasion of the earth by one or more space faring alien races. These aliens may seek to exterminate us and take the Earth for themselves, to enslave us, or to use us as a source of food. The invasion could be anything from a full military onslaught to a covert infiltration of human society. Examples of the alien invasion subgenre include *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *Independence Day*, *The Liberation of Earth*, and *War of the Worlds*.

MILITARY SCIENCE FICTION

This subgenre is set against a backdrop of interstellar warfare. This galactic conflict may take place between star-spanning human nations, or between humans and one or more alien races. These stories are often told from the point of view of the soldiers fighting the war. Such a campaign emphasizes military ideals such as discipline, honor, duty, loyalty, and courage. The Narrator may want to encourage the heroes to take appropriate virtues. Examples of this subgenre can be found in David Drake’s *Counting the Cost*, Joe Haldeman’s *The Forever War*, and Robert Heinlein’s *Starship Troopers*.

SCIENCE FANTASY

Science fantasy is a subgenre combining elements of science fiction and fantasy. Technology may have advanced in ways resembling magic, such as the development of psionic powers or the use of nanotechnology to perform seemingly magical feats. There is speculation about the future and the impact of science, but it’s not overly concerned with realism. Science fantasy focuses more on heroic characters than other types of science fiction and often makes use of classical fantasy archetypes. It may even go so far as to include space-faring dragons, biologically engineered zombies, or techno-mages. For more information on the fantasy genre, refer to [Chapter Ten](#).

SPACE OPERA

Space opera is an epic subgenre of science fiction. It features larger than life heroes journeying across the galaxy on romantic adventures to some of the most exotic locations the universe has to offer. Heroes in such stories often have access to spaceships capable of traveling at incredible speeds. Planets usually have earthlike atmospheres and intelligent alien inhabitants. Various sorts of powers (particularly psychic or mental powers) are common, and there may be orders or organizations of adepts wielding them. Examples of space opera include *Babylon 5*, *Dune*, *Farscape*, *Star Trek*, and *Flash Gordon*.

TECH RATINGS

Technology is a driving force behind the plot of any science-fiction story. The heroes and antagonists of science fiction make use of a wide range of technological weapons, defenses, and tools. Devices shape the setting in which these characters live, influencing travel, trade, business, communications, and virtually every other area of life. Your choices regarding which technologies are widely available and which are limited or unavailable will have a significant impact on your science-fiction setting.

The tech rating (TR) indicates the technology available in a particular society or civilization. Technological development pervades all aspects of a culture, particularly at higher levels (TR 5 and beyond) when long-range communication is virtually instantaneous. Even at lower levels, it’s unlikely—but not impossible—for a group of humans (or other sentient beings) to be at one tech rating in some respects but not in others. Tech ratings may vary wildly from place to place on the same world or even the same continent.

Tech ratings are a measure of technological progress only. A society may be very advanced technologically, but still be fairly backwards with regard to its social development. Likewise, a society with stone-age technology could be socially or spiritually advanced.

TR 0: STONE AGE

The major achievements of a Stone Age society are the use of fire, the domestication of animals, and the invention of agriculture. An individual living in a Stone Age society is primitive, but isn’t necessarily gullible, stupid, or easily frightened by advanced technology. Common

weapons in a TR 0 civilization include the club, the dagger, the spear, and the bow. Armor made from hide or leather is possible, as are wicker shields. Communication beyond the local tribe or settlement doesn’t exist. Travel is accomplished by foot or by simple rafts or canoes. Simple pottery, stone-working, and woodworking are possible.

TR 1: BRONZE/IRON AGE

Early human civilizations learned to work metal toward the end of the Stone Age. The malleability of copper made it the first metal to be “tamed.” Adding tin to copper created bronze, which allowed tools and weapons of great durability to be crafted. In turn, those improved tools made ironworking possible, replacing bronze as the metal of choice for tools and weapons.

In a Bronze/Iron Age society, advances in pottery, construction, and agriculture allow for the concentration of populations into larger groups, with a corresponding upswing in the accumulation and sharing of knowledge. The rise of nations, city-states, and empires begins in the Bronze Age. Organized efforts to improve communications allow regional societies to exist. Galleys and small sailing vessels are capable of longer voyages; some cultures build extensive road or canal networks to link distant places. Improvements in agriculture permit the rise of artisans, craftsmen, professional soldiers, and other occupations not directly concerned with gathering food.

The sword replaces clubs and daggers as the preferred infantry weapon. Chariots briefly dominate warfare before cavalry (aided by the introduction of the stirrup) renders them obsolete. The first true



military forces and tactical systems appear. Armor can now be made from sewn plates or scales, metal links, or even forged breastplates. A variety of metal melee weapons dominate the battlefield.

TR 2: MIDDLE AGES

Maturing civilizations experience a period of turmoil and adjustment during the Middle Ages. Developments continue in architecture, commerce, metallurgy, and mathematics. Wider dissemination of information becomes possible thanks to advanced printing techniques. Sturdy seafaring carracks and galleons open the door to future advances.

As population grows and knowledge of agriculture evolves, cities and towns grow larger. Toward the end of this age, feudal systems begin to collapse. Specialized crafts develop, universities appear, and the middle class is born. The first corporations emerge in the form of trade guilds. The evolution of strong systems of trade and finance distribute a society's wealth more evenly, diluting the power of the nobility.

Tools of warfare undergo a significant revolution. Sophisticated chain and plate armors protect warriors from harm, and elaborate fortifications become both art and science. Toward the end of the Middle Ages, the introduction of simple gunpowder weapons signals the end of knights, heavy armor, and organized armies of swordsmen.

TR 3: AGE OF REASON

The Age of Reason is an era when the development of ideas takes precedence over technological invention. Experimentation becomes the means by which the physical properties of nature are systematically examined. The study of scientific disciplines—chemistry, electromagnetics, medicine, biology, and astronomy—flourishes. Instruments such as microscopes and telescopes enable scientists to greatly extend the range of their observations and discoveries.

The new reliance on science generates waves on all levels of society. Superstition falls away and exploration reaches its apex. Society

begins to experiment with new forms of government. Corporations and economic alliances continue to evolve.

The cannon becomes the dominant factor in naval warfare, while massed musket fire and horse-pulled field pieces rule the battlefield. The bow vanishes, replaced by the flintlock. Light melee weapons remain common.

TR 4: INDUSTRIAL AGE

At this tech rating, the theoretical knowledge of the previous era matures into widespread practical applications. The harnessing of hydraulic, steam, and electric power creates an explosion of commerce and industry. Developments such as the telegraph, telephone, and radio make global communication possible. Breakthroughs in manufacturing techniques allow the construction of heavy ironclad vessels, rail transportation, and architecture of previously unimaginable size. Pioneers venture high into the atmosphere and descend into the sea's depths.

Urbanization is complete as individuals gather in smaller environments where they can more easily exchange goods and information. Corporations expand in power, many establishing themselves throughout the explored world. Governments are based on political and economic factors.

Warfare changes swiftly through the period. Aircraft and submersibles join the list of military assets. Reliable and accurate rifles, pistols, and machine guns become common. Mechanized war machines herald the first great change in the art of battle since the end of the knight.

TR 5: INFORMATION AGE

In the Information Age, computer technology and electronics rule supreme. Satellite information systems and the Internet connect the globe digitally. This era also sees the introduction of fission power, reducing the importance of fossil fuels. The automobile replaces the locomotive as the common form of travel. The first steps toward

space travel involve massive chemical rockets, unmanned probes and satellites, and short-term manned missions.

The technology of the era also allows greater citizen participation in government. The emergence of international alliances begins to dissolve borders between nations. Corporations gather power and threaten government authority.

Most weapons at this time are refined versions of Industrial Age equipment. Rifles, machine guns, and heavy howitzers are still used by the world's soldiers. Computerized targeting systems and guided weapons make warfare much more precise and efficient. Strategic weapons of mass destruction, tested but never used, exhibit the species' power to exterminate itself in minutes.

TR 6: FUSION AGE

The development of fusion power provides an efficient, nonexpendable energy source that almost obliterates the need for chemical fuel sources. Advanced space exploration and colonization become possible. Computers become even more accessible, reliable, and powerful, leading to the development of virtual systems and widespread access to the global Internet.

Slowly, individual nations are replaced by world powers including megacorporations, as the line between national citizen and corporate employee is rendered indistinct. Armed with the means to eradicate the entire species, world powers keep conflicts to the level of skirmishing and posturing. Integration of the Information Age's improvements proceed peacefully.

Scientific advances in genetic engineering lead to the first attempts to genetically manipulate human beings. Early results are encouraging, with the manifestation of positive and negative mutations in the species toward the end of the age. Scientists also perfect cloning technology; the first human clones are created. In the later years of this age, the first crude applications of gravity induction technology appear, in the form of vehicles that can move through the air without using physical propulsion or consumption of fuel.

Chemical-powered explosives and firearms remain the weapons of choice; fusion technology can't be effectively miniaturized for personal combat. Nevertheless, advanced chemistry and superconducting technology change the materials and capabilities of many weapons. True spaceships become possible, propelled by powerful fusion drives, but still requiring a reaction mass to traverse space. The age sees the tenuous settlement of other planets and asteroids within the same star system.

TR 7: GRAVITY AGE

At this tech rating, two key technologies herald humanity's climb to the stars. The gravity induction reactor replaces fusion power as a more efficient source of energy that can be miniaturized with ease. World

powers explore, divide, and colonize the entirety of the local star system. At the same time, however, life on the home planet is unchanged.

The second advance of the era brings perhaps the greatest upheaval in the history of human civilization. The introduction and integration of gravity induction technology leads to the creation of the induction engine, which allows starships to bridge the gap between the stars. Political and economic reorganization occurs as the species spreads far from home.

Projectile firearms are in their last days as crude energy weapons become available. Powered armor is available to warriors of this age. Personal (melee) weapons enjoy a resurgence, due in large part to a shift in military tactics—armed conflict between individuals seldom occurs on an army scale, but more frequently involves engagements of small units in conditions where ranged weapons are not effective.

Computer technology links every society, settlement, and outpost of a star system in a single information net, creating an unparalleled exchange of data for business, entertainment, and research.

TR 8: ENERGY AGE

The continuing miniaturization of induction engine technology allows power plants the size of marbles to harness the basic forces of creation. Powerful personal force screens and energy weapons dominate the battlefield, as projectile weapons finally disappear after ruling the battlefield for a thousand years. Miniaturized sensors, shields, and engines allow mass production of small, practical starfighters. At the other end of the spectrum, advanced construction techniques allow humans to build enormous, self-sustaining cities in space.

TR 9 AND HIGHER

These tech ratings are beyond reach or comprehension, although isolated worlds or undiscovered species may exist that have access to them. Practical control of matter at the subatomic level, the ability to travel through time, or the power to "fold space" to shorten travel distances may be possible at this stage of technological development.

PURCHASING ITEMS OF VARYING TECH RATINGS

Depending on the economics of a campaign, a Narrator may choose to make items of a different tech rating unavailable, cheaper, or more expensive to purchase. For the sake of game balance, Narrators who want to make lower-TR and higher-TR items available to characters should adjust the purchase Difficulties of items as follows.

- -2 to Purchase Difficulty for each TR lower than the current one, except in the case of valuable antiques.
- +5 to Purchase Difficulty for equipment from the next highest TR (the limit for purchasing cutting-edge technology), assuming the technology is available at all.

GRAVITY INDUCTION

Control of gravity is one of the key features of TR 7. The development of gravitonic science and gravitonic engineering leads to a host of miraculous devices: levitating cars, interplanetary drives requiring no reaction mass, and a wide range of military tools. Just as the application of electricity was spurred by the discovery of the induction principle, the creation of devices that induce gravitational energy leads to an effective control over weight.

Gravity induction relies on the phenomenon first set forth in Einstein's Theory of Special Relativity: An object's mass approaches infinity as the object's velocity approaches the speed of light. By using a cyclotron to accelerate a tiny particle to near-light speed, the gravity generator creates gravitons between the particle and the surrounding mass. These gravitons can be siphoned off, redirected, or stored by use of the induction coil.

At TR 7, gravity inducers can be miniaturized to the size of hockey pucks for special applications. An inducer powerful enough to negate a human's gravitational attraction to the Earth is about the size of a discus, while the induction motor in a flying car requires a gravity generator about the size of a spare tire.

SPACE HEROES

Heroes in science-fiction space adventures are many and varied. This section looks at options for creating heroes for a space adventure campaign.

OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUNDS

In a modern or futuristic *True20* campaign, you may wish to use heroic backgrounds based off of the character's education and job training rather than the culture to which they belong.

ASTRONAUT TRAINEE

As scientists and pioneers, astronaut trainees have prepared their minds and bodies for the rigors of space travel and life in space. They are elite members of a sophisticated space program, waiting for the opportunity to hurl themselves into the void to shed light on the mysteries of the universe.

- **Bonus Feats:** Skill Focus (Pilot), Talented (Navigate and Survival), Zero-G Training
- **Favored Feats:** Skill Mastery, Tough

COLONIST

Colonists are wayfaring pioneers who set the foundations of new societies on far-flung continents, planets, or moons. To survive in their new surroundings, they must live off the land and defend themselves against indigenous predatory life forms and hostile forces of nature.

- **Bonus Feats:** Endurance, Planetary Adaptation, Skill Focus (Survival)
- **Favored Feats:** Diehard, Tough

DOCTOR

A doctor can be a physician (general practitioner or specialist), a surgeon, or a psychiatrist.

- **Bonus Feats:** Skill Focus (Medicine), Talented (Knowledge (sciences)) and Knowledge (physical sciences)), Talented (Knowledge (behavioral sciences) and Knowledge (technology)),
- **Favored Feats:** Jack-of-All-Trades, Skill Mastery

DRIFTER

Drifters are aimless, world-wise wanderers who move between cities or star systems, working odd jobs until boredom or fate leads them elsewhere.

- **Bonus Feats:** Contacts, Jack-of-All-Trades, Tireless
- **Favored Feats:** Jack-of-All-Trades, Tough

ENTREPRENEUR

Entrepreneurs are obsessed with being financially independent. They believe in themselves, have an abundance of confidence, and the ability to acquire the necessary funds to bankroll their newest moneymaking venture.

- **Bonus Feats:** Master Plan, Skill Focus (Knowledge (business)), Wealthy
- **Favored Feats:** Inspire, Skill Mastery

HEIR

Heirs are the elite sons and daughters of powerful magnates, influential nobles, and imperial monarchs.

- **Bonus Feats:** Connected, Renown, Wealthy
- **Favored Feats:** Inspire, Jack-of-All-Trades

INVESTIGATIVE

This occupation includes investigative reporters, photojournalists, private investigators, police detectives, criminologists, criminal profilers, espionage agents, and others who use their skills to gather evidence and analyze clues.

- **Bonus Feats:** Firearms Training, Improved Strike, Talented (Gather Information and Search).
- **Favored Feats:** Skill Mastery, Well-Informed

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement personnel can include any sort of police force, or special law enforcement training.

- **Bonus Feats:** Firearms Training, Improved Strike, Talented (Gather Information and Intimidate)
- **Favored Feats:** Chokehold, Stunning Attack

MILITARY

You are trained as a member of the armed forces.

- **Bonus Feats:** Armor Training (Light), Improved Strike, Firearms Training
- **Favored Feats:** Attack Specialization, Improved Attack Focus

OUTCAST

"Outcast" is not so much an occupation as a forced way of life. Persecuted and exiled for being different, outcasts are lone pariahs or shunned members of a culture society finds deviant or abhorrent.

- **Bonus Feats:** Skill Focus (Stealth), Skill Focus (Survival), Tough
- **Favored Feats:** Diehard, Tough

SCAVENGER

Scavengers turn society's wreckage and discarded trash into useful tools or items for trade. If they're lucky, their endeavors might even yield one or two objects of special value.

- **Bonus Feats:** Improvised Weapon Training, Salvage, Skill Focus (Search)
- **Favored Feats:** Improvised Tools, Jack-of-All-Trades

TECHNICIAN

Scientists and engineers of all types fit within the scope of this starting occupation.

- **Bonus Feats:** Inventor, Skill Focus (Knowledge (one of business, earth and life sciences, physical sciences, or technology)) Skill Focus (Craft (one of chemical, electronic, mechanical, or structural))
- **Favored Feats:** Skill Mastery, Well-Informed

TRANSPORTER

Skilled drivers and pilots, transporters move people, information, and precious cargo safely from one destination to another.

- **Bonus Feats:** Talented (Computers and Pilot), Skill Focus (Craft (any)), Skill Focus (Navigate)
- **Favored Feats:** Master Plan, Skill Mastery

DESIGNING ALIEN BACKGROUNDS

Science fiction covers a near infinite number of alien species, variant human races or other character backgrounds. This chapter cannot possibly cover all the possibilities, so we have presented you with rules for creating your own species backgrounds tailored to your specific campaign.

Each background begins with 3 background points to spend and either two favored feats or one favored power. Refer to the **Background Modifications** table to see options for spending your background points.

BACKGROUND MODIFICATIONS

Modification	Background Point Costs
Natural Armor Bonus	1 pt cost/+1 bonus
Ability Increase	2 pts cost
Ability Decrease	2 pts bonus
Additional Favored Feats	1 pt cost/ 2 feats
Additional Favored Power	1 pt / power
Blindsight 60 ft.	2 pts cost
Blindsight 60 ft.	3 pts cost
Bonus Feat (pre-selected)	1 pt cost
Bonus Feat (player's choice)	2 pts cost
Bonus Power	1 pt cost
Bonus Skill (player's choice)	1 pt cost
Burrow 10 ft.	1 pt cost
Burrow 20 ft.	2 pts cost
Climb 20 ft., +8 to Climb (can take 10)	2 pts cost
Climb speed increase	1 pt cost/ 10 ft.
Darkvision 60 ft.	1 pt cost
Darkvision 90 ft.	2 pts cost
Energy Resistance 2	1 pt cost
Fly 30 ft. (poor)	2 pts cost
Fly speed increase	1 pt cost/ 30 ft.
Fly maneuverability class increase	1 pt cost/ class
Glide 30 ft. (average)	1 pt cost
Glide Speed Increase	1 pt cost / 30 ft.
Initiative Bonus	1 pt cost / +4 bonus
Land speed increase	1 pt cost / 10 ft.
Large Size	0 pts cost
Level Lag	7 pt bonus/level
Natural Attack +1 or less	0 pts cost
Natural Attack +2	1 pt cost
Natural Attack +3	2 pts cost
Natural Attack +4	3 pts cost
Scent Trait	1 pt cost
Small Size	0 pts cost
Skill Bonus	1 pt cost / +4 bonus.
Swim Speed 20 ft., +8 to Swim (Can take 10)*	2 pts cost
Swim speed increase	1 pt cost / 10 ft.
Tremorsense 60 ft.	1 pt. cost

*A creature with a Swim speed receives the Amphibious trait for free if it suits the creature's nature (Narrator's choice). The Hold Breath trait costs 1 point, and allows the creature to hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 20 plus 4x its Constitution.

SAMPLE ALIEN BACKGROUNDS

The following alien backgrounds are drawn from UFO mythology and are presented as examples you can build, modify or drop directly into your science-fiction setting.

GREY

Greys, also known as zetas or reticulians, are a psionic alien race with a history of interaction with and abduction of humans. They look like short, slender and hairless grey humanoids with large heads and bulbous black eyes. Some believe these aliens conduct elaborate scientific experiments on humans.

- **Ability Adjustments:** -1 Str, -1 Con, +1 Int, +1 Wis
- **Bonus Feats:** Adaptation (Low Gravity), Iron Will
- **Bonus Power:** Mind Touch
- **Favored Power:** Mind Touch (Treat total level as adept level for this power)

NORD

Also called "nordics," the nordics are a psionic species that appear much like beautiful human beings. This is either the result of a remarkable case of convergent evolution, the result of genetic engineering, or perhaps they are descended from abducted human ancestors. Nordics claim to be from the Pleiades, even though that star cluster is far too young for them to have evolved there.

- **Bonus Feats:** Attractive, Iron Will
- **Bonus Power:** Mind Touch
- **Favored Power:** Mind Touch (Treat total level as adept level for this power)

REPTOID

Reptoids (also known as saurians or sauroids) are a race of reptilian humanoids. Many scientists theorize they evolved on an earthlike planet where reptiles dominated and mammals never evolved. Reptoids are incredibly fast and possess a cold intellectual curiosity. Reptoids show little emotion by human standards.

- **Ability Adjustments:** -1 Str, +1 Dex, -1 Con, +1 Int
- **Natural Armor:** Reptoids gain a +2 natural armor bonus to Toughness.
- **Bonus Feat:** Improved Initiative
- **Favored Feats:** Evasion and Seize Initiative
- **Natural Attacks:** Reptoids have natural claw and bite attacks that inflict 1+ Str damage with a successful unarmed attack.

ROLES

In a science-fiction setting, experts and warriors will take center stage. Adepts may not even exist in a science fiction campaign, or perhaps their "supernatural" powers are explained through quasi-scientific means. Experts include all manner of scientists, inventors, engineers, and doctors, as well as traders, explorers, and diplomats. Warriors include space marines, soldiers, law enforcers, bounty hunters, gunners and fighter pilots. If there are adepts in the setting, they might be psions, superscience gadgeteers, or technomages.

EXPERT VARIANT: THE SPECIALIST

Experts are the "skill users" of *True20*. Their broad range of skills, however, may not reflect the degree of specialization that can occur in technologically advanced societies. Specialists are experts with a narrower focus to their skills, able to achieve higher ranks in their "specialized skills" than other heroes of equivalent level. Specialists



gain 6 starting skills and 6 skill points per level. They may pick two related skills from their starting skills to be their “specialized skills.” The specialist begins with 6 ranks in each of their starting specialized skills; their maximum rank for these two skills is equal to their level + 5.

Specialist Core Ability: A specialist may always take 10 on their two “specialized skills,” and may spend a Conviction point when making a specialized skill check to treat the roll as a 20 (meaning you don’t need to roll the die at all, just apply the result of 20 to your skill modifier).

SKILLS

With the possible exception of Knowledge (supernatural) most of the skills presented in **Chapter Two** can be put to good use in a space adventure campaign. The Computers skill increases in importance as it is used throughout society. The Craft (mechanical), Craft (electronic) and Craft (chemical) skills also gain new importance for building and maintaining high-tech equipment. The Survival skill remains useful for navigating terrestrial environments, but is not well suited for being used to navigating the vast outer reaches of space. A new “Navigate” skill has been added to serve this purpose, along with new uses for other skills.

COMPUTERS (INT)

In addition to all the standard uses, this skill can be used to operate shipboard sensors as well as send, jam, scramble, and unscramble transmissions sent through space or across dimensions.

Check: The following applications of the Computers skill can be used untrained:

Conduct Active Sensor Scan: Using a starship’s sensors to analyze another ship or object in sensory range requires a Computers check (Difficulty 15). An active sensor scan conducted over a vast distance (for example, across a star system) or subjected to some form of disturbance (such as interference from a solar flare) applies a -5 or higher penalty on the check.

Send Transmission: Routine communications (hailing a nearby ship, using a subspace or dimensional transceiver, and so on) are accomplished with a Computers check (Difficulty 10). Communications sent over incredibly long distances (such as between star systems) are subject to distortion; correcting that distortion to ensure a message reaches its intended destination requires a successful Computers check (Difficulty 20).

The following applications of the Computers skill can’t be used untrained:

Jam Transmission: This skill can be used to prevent a ship or facility from receiving an incoming transmission. An opposed Computers check between the individual receiving the message and the individual attempting to jam the message determines whether or not the message gets through. If an unmanned computer receives the transmission, jamming the transmission requires a Computers check (Difficulty 15).

Scramble/Unscramble Transmission: Computers can be used to scramble a transmission. This is done with an opposed Computers check between the individual sending the message and anyone attempting to intercept or unscramble it.

Time: Scrambling or unscrambling a transmission are all full-round actions. Conducting an active sensor scan or sending/ jamming a transmission is a move action.

CRAFT (INT)

You can use the appropriate Craft skill to repair vehicles, starships, and constructs (including robots).

Check: Repairing damage to a vehicle or starship takes one hour of work, a mechanical tool kit, and a proper facility such as a workshop or hangar bay. (Without a tool kit, you take a -4 penalty on your Craft check.) At the end of the hour, make a Craft check (Difficulty 20). Success repairs the most severe damage condition. If damage remains, you may

continue to make repairs for as many hours as it takes to completely restore the vehicle or starship.

The same rules apply to robots and other constructs, except the Craft check is more difficult to achieve (Difficulty 30).

Special: A vehicle, starship, robot, or other construct reduced to “dying” on the damage track cannot be repaired. It can be salvaged for parts, however (see the Salvage feat description).

DISABLE DEVICE (INT)

You can use this skill to disable a robot.

Check: Disabling a robot is a full-round action and requires a successful Disable Device check (Difficulty 30). The robot must be pinned before the check can be made.

Special: A disabled robot or disabled external cybernetic attachment can be re-enabled with a successful Craft check (see Craft).

KNOWLEDGE (TECHNOLOGY) (INT)

You can make a Knowledge (technology) check to correctly identify starships, robots, and vehicles, as well as identify unfamiliar technological devices.

Check: The Difficulties for identifying technological items vary depending on the type of information required:

- Identifying a robot or vehicle by its general type or classification: Difficulty 10
- Determining the function or purpose of a particular mechanical system: Difficulty 15
- Recalling the standard, factory-model design specs of a particular type or class of starship, vehicle, or robot: Difficulty 20

When confronted with an unfamiliar piece of technology or alien artifact, you can make a Knowledge (technology) check to correctly



surmise the primary purpose of the device. A success does not enable you to activate the item, nor does it make you proficient with the item. The base Difficulty of the Knowledge (technology) check is 10 for simple tools and instruments and 20 for more complex devices such as weapons or vehicles. This Difficulty is increased by 5 for every progress level the alien technology differs from your own.

NAVIGATE (INT)

You're trained in finding directions and plotting courses from place to place.

Check: Make a Navigate check when trying to find your way to a distant location without directions or other specific guidance. Generally, you do not need to make a check to find a local street or other common urban site, or follow an accurate map. You might make a check, however, to find your way through a dense forest or a labyrinth of underground storm drains.

For movement over a great distance, make a Navigate check. The Difficulty depends on the length of the trip: Difficulty 20 for a few hours, 22 for a few days, 25 for up to a week, and 28 for more than one week. If you succeed, you follow the best reasonable course toward your goal, but it takes twice as long, since you lose time backtracking and correcting your course. If you fail by more than 5, you travel the expected time, but only get halfway to the destination at which point you become lost.

You can make a second Navigate check (Difficulty 20) to find the right path. If you succeed, you continue on to your destination; the total time for the trip is twice the normal time. If you fail, you lose the normal time for the trip before you can try again. You can keep trying until you succeed, losing the normal time for the trip each time.

When faced with multiple choices, such as a branch in a tunnel you can make a Navigate check (Difficulty 20) to intuit the right choice. If unsuccessful, you choose the wrong path, but at the next juncture, with a successful check, you realize your mistake and can correct it. You cannot use this function of Navigate to find a path to a site if you have no idea where the site is. The Narrator may choose to make the Navigate check in secret.

You can use Navigate to determine your location without the use of any high-tech equipment by checking the constellations or other natural landmarks. You must have a clear view of the night sky to make this check. The Difficulty is 15.

Time: A Navigate check is a full round action.

Special: You can take 10 when making a Navigate check. You can take 20 only when determining your location, not when traveling.

PILOT (DEX)

You can use the Pilot skill to feint in starship combat.

Check: You can use a Pilot check to feint in starship combat just like you would use a Bluff check to feint in regular combat. With a successful check, you mislead another starship so it can't dodge your attack effectively. This check is opposed by the target pilot's Sense Motive check. If you succeed, the next attack your starship makes against the target ignores its pilot's Dexterity bonus to Defense (if it has one), thus lowering the target's Defense score.

Feinting in starship combat is an attack action.

MEDICINE (WIS)

This skill can be used to treat members of other species.

Check: Using Medicine on creatures of a species that evolved on a different home planet carries a -4 penalty. The Xenomedic feat negates the penalty.

Special: The Medicine skill cannot be used on nonliving or inorganic creatures, such as constructs or undead.

FEATS

Most of the feats in **Chapter Three** are suitable for a science-fiction campaign, though the usefulness of adept feats depends on the status of adepts in the game.

Some feats gain new uses in a science fiction setting. Exotic Weapon Training can be used to learn how to activate and wield alien weaponry. Catch Arrows may be of limited usefulness, but the Deflect Arrows feat may be used to deflect incoming energy beams with a “plasma sword,” or similar melee weapon made of pure energy. The Vehicular Combat feat becomes critical for any pilot who wants to survive a starship dogfight, and the Animal Empathy feat may be used to interact with any alien creature with an Intelligence of -4 or -5.

The following new feats are suited to *True20* science-fiction settings:

ARMOR TRAINING, POWERED (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: ARMOR TRAINING (LIGHT), ARMOR TRAINING (HEAVY).

You are trained to move and fight while wearing powered armor. You only apply your powered armor’s check penalty to Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, and Swim checks. See Armor Construction for powered armor values.

Normal: Characters without the appropriate Armor Training feat apply their armor’s check penalty to all physical rolls and checks while wearing it, including attack rolls.

DEADLY AIM (WARRIOR OR EXPERT)

You may add half your Dexterity score (rounded up) to the damage you inflict with all crossbows and guns.

INVENTOR (GENERAL)

You can use the Knowledge (technology) and Craft skills to create inventions and temporary devices. See **Equipment Invention & Construction** in this chapter for more details.

LIGHTNING CALCULATOR (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: INT +1

You can perform mathematical functions in your head 10 times faster than normal, like a human calculator. You also gain a +4 bonus to Bluff, Computers and Navigate checks where complex calculations must be made.

PLANETARY ADAPTATION (GENERAL)

Your physiology has been altered by life on a planet with adverse environmental conditions. You gain one of the benefits listed here, depending on your planet of origin.

- Barren World:* You gain a +4 bonus on Survival checks and a +4 bonus on Constitution checks against starvation and thirst.
- Cold World:* You gain a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves against extreme cold, as well as cold resistance 2.
- Dark World:* You gain Darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. Darkvision is black and white only, but otherwise works as normal sight.
- High-G World:* You gain a +1 bonus to all Strength checks. Reduce your height by 6 inches.
- Hot World:* You gain a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves against extreme heat, as well as fire resistance 2.
- Low-G World:* You gain a +1 bonus to all Dexterity checks. Increase your height by 6 inches.
- Water World:* You gain a +4 bonus on Swim checks and can hold your breath for a number of rounds equal to twice your Constitution score.

Special: You may only take this feat at 1st level. You may select this feat more than once, however, if you get multiple feats at 1st level; each time you choose this feat, you gain a different benefit.

SALVAGE (GENERAL)

You can salvage parts from destroyed vehicles, mecha, starships and robots. Salvaging a destroyed vehicle, mecha, or robot takes time, as noted on the **Salvage** table. At the end of this time, make a Search check. If the check succeeds, you may increase your Wealth score by the amount indicated on the table, either by selling the salvaged parts for scrap or using them to offset the cost of future building projects.

SALVAGE

Salvaged Machine’s Size	Time Required	Search Check Difficulty	Wealth Increase
Tiny or smaller	10 min	15	+1
Small, Medium, and Large	30 min	20	+2
Huge	1 hr	25	+3
Gargantuan	3 hr	30	+4
Colossal	6 hr	35	+6
Awesome	12 hr	40	+8

Special: A particular vehicle, mecha, or robot can be successfully salvaged only once. Any further attempts to salvage the wreckage fail automatically.

TIME SENSE (GENERAL)

You always know what time it is and have an accurate idea of the passage of time. You also gain a +4 bonus to Acrobatics, Drive and Pilot skill checks when performing maneuvers that require precise timing.

ULTRA IMMUNE SYSTEM (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: CONSTITUTION +1

You are less susceptible to the ravages of poison, disease, and radiation poisoning. You gain a +2 bonus on Fortitude saving throws to resist poisons, diseases, and radiation sickness. Furthermore, any permanent ability drain inflicted upon you is treated as temporary ability damage instead.

URBAN TRACKING (GENERAL)

You can track down the location of missing persons or wanted individuals. To find the trail of an individual or to follow it for one hour requires a Gather Information check. You must make another Gather Information check every hour of the search, as well as each time the trail becomes difficult to follow, such as when it moves to a different area of town.

The Difficulty of the check and the number of checks required to track down your quarry depend on the community population and the conditions.

URBAN TRACKING

Population	Difficulty	Checks Required
Fewer than 2,000	5	2
2,000–9,999	10	3
10,000–49,999	15	4
50,000–99,999	20	5
100,000–499,999	25	6
500,000+	30	7

Condition	Difficulty Modifier
Every three creatures in the group being sought	-1
Every 24 hours the quarry has been missing or sought	+1
Tracked quarry "lies low"	+5
If you fail a Gather Information check, you can retry after one hour of questioning.	

Normal: A character without this feat can use Gather Information to find out information about a particular individual. Each check takes around three hours and does not allow effective trailing.

Special: You can cut the time per Gather Information check in half (to 30 minutes per check rather than one hour per check), but you suffer a -5 penalty on the check.

XENOMEDIC (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITES: KNOWLEDGE (EARTH AND LIFE SCIENCES) 6 RANKS, MEDICINE 6 RANKS.

You know how to provide safe medical treatment to alien life forms. You can, without penalty, use the Treat Injury skill to perform surgery on a living creature regardless of its type.

Normal: Characters without this feat take a -5 penalty on Medicine checks on alien species.

Special: This feat cannot be used to heal or repair nonliving or inorganic creatures, such as constructs or undead.

ZERO-G TRAINING (GENERAL)

You can function normally in low gravity or zero gravity. You take no penalty on attack rolls in low-gravity or zero-gravity environments. In addition, you do not suffer the debilitating effects of space sickness.

Normal: Without this feat, you take a -4 penalty on attack rolls while operating in zero-gravity environments, or a -2 penalty on attack rolls while operating in low-gravity environments. In addition, you are subject to the effects of Space Adaptation Syndrome, also known as space sickness. (See **Zero Gravity Environments** for more information.)

POWERS

Supernatural powers do not often see use in science-fiction settings. When they do appear in the genre, they are typically rare and have some sort of quasi-scientific explanation behind them. Supernatural powers may be used to represent psionic powers (see **Psionics** in **Chapter Ten**), bizarre mutations, manipulation of some cosmic force connecting all living beings, or even the effects of controlling nanites or using superscience gadgets to produce seemingly magical effects. In each of these cases, the supernatural powers available are limited to ones that can be logically explained by the adept's pseudoscientific abilities.

EQUIPMENT

WEAPON CONSTRUCTION

Science fiction heroes often have a wide array of weaponry to help them out when diplomacy is not an option. This section provides you with basic guidelines for designing your own weapons and other handheld tools.

STEP 1: DETERMINE CONSTRUCTION POINT CAPACITY (CPC)

Once the tech rating of the weapon or other piece of equipment you are constructing has been set, refer to the following table to set the number of CP this item can contain.

WEAPON CONSTRUCTION POINTS
BY SIZE AND TECH RATING*

Size	TR 0	TR 1-3	TR 4-5	TR 6	TR 7	TR 8	Base Reach
Tiny	1	2	3	4	5	6	5 ft.
Small	2	3	4	5	6	7	5 ft.
Medium	3	4	5	6	7	8	5 ft.
Large	4	5	6	7	8	9	5 ft.
Huge	5	6	7	8	9	10	10 ft.
Gargantuan	6	7	8	9	10	11	15 ft.
Colossal	7	8	9	10	11	12	20 ft.

* Simple melee weapons have their maximum CP value lowered by 1. Exotic and heavy weapons have their maximum CP value raised by 1.

STEP 2: DETERMINE DAMAGE

Next, purchase the damage rating for the weapon you wish to construct. All weapons begin with a default base damage rating of +0. Each +1 lethal damage costs 1 CP. Every +2 non-lethal damage cost 1 CP. If the weapon is a single-use weapon that is destroyed when it is used (such as a grenade) halve the CP cost of damage. Choose one type of damage you

This section provides you with guidelines for designing your own futuristic weapons, armor, and vehicles tailored to your science fiction setting. Rules are also provided for allowing heroes to build and invent their own equipment in play.

TECH RATING (TR)

When creating a piece of equipment, first determine the available technology. This is generally the TR of the setting (see the general **Tech Ratings** section for details), although TRs may vary locally within a setting, such as some worlds or nations on a world having a lower (or even higher) TR than average.

At the Narrator's option a character with the Inventor feat may be able to build an item one TR higher than normal as a skill challenge, applying a -5 penalty to all checks associated with designing/building the invention.

CONSTRUCTION POINTS

The equipment design rules in this section use *construction points* (CP) and *construction point capacity* (or CPC) to determine the limits of an item's capabilities at any given tech rating and generally how difficult and expensive that item is to build.

If you're just designing a new piece of equipment for use in the setting, the CP total just provides a guideline for how expensive the item should be: a purchase Difficulty of 8 + total CP is a good starting guideline, modified based on how common and accessible you want to item to be. Items with very high CP totals (particularly vehicles) may have a much lower purchase Difficulty, but such items are largely beyond the capability of individuals to build on their own.

If a player is designing the item in order to build or invent it, the CP cost also affects the Difficulty of associated skill and Wealth checks to produce the item. See **Equipment Construction and Invention** at the **Equipment** section for details.

want the weapon to do from the following list: Acid, Autofire, Ballistic, Bludgeoning, Cold, Concussion, Disintegration, Electricity, Energy, Fire, Piercing, Radiation, Slashing, Sonic, or Vibration.

STEP 3: DETERMINE RANGE

If the weapon is a melee weapon, 10 ft. of throwing distance can be purchased for 1 CP. If the weapon is a ranged weapon, it has a base range of 10 ft. per point of damage. Additional range for a ranged weapon can be purchased as indicated on the **Extended Range** table.

EXTENDED RANGE

Range Extension	Cost
+100 ft.	1 CP
+1000 ft.	2 CP
+1 mile	3 CP
+5 miles	4 CP
+20 miles	5 CP
+200 miles	6 CP
+2,000 miles	7 CP
+20,000 miles	8 CP

STEP 4: PURCHASE FEATURES

Features enhance a weapon or alter how it works, similar to feats. The following features can be added to any weapon or similar piece of equipment.

BREAKDOWN

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 4 OR HIGHER

A weapon with this feature is designed to be easily taken apart and put back together, making it easy to transport and hide. When separated into its component pieces, it is almost impossible (Difficulty 30 Search check) to recognize as a weapon. Taking the weapon apart is a full action; putting it back together requires 5 rounds.

FEAT BONUS

COST: 1 CP

Some weapons or pieces of equipment offer their user the benefits of a particular feat. If they already have this feat, the benefits of the actual and virtual feats are added together. Weapons can have the following virtual feats: Improved Defense, Improved Disarm, Improved Grab, Improved Sunder, Improved Trip and Precise Shot. Handheld equipment can have any virtual feat that is not combat oriented.

IMPROVED CRITICAL BONUS

COST: 1/2 CP

This feature increases the weapon's critical hit damage bonus by +1. It can be purchased up to three times.

IMPROVED CRITICAL RANGE

COST: 1 CP

This feature increases the weapon's critical threat range by 1 point. It can be purchased up to three times.

INTEGRATED EQUIPMENT

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: THE INVENTOR MUST INDEPENDENTLY BUILD OR PURCHASE THE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT BEFORE IT CAN BE INTEGRATED INTO THE WEAPON AS A FEATURE.

A particular piece of equipment (weapon or nonweapon) has been integrated into the weapon and can be used by the weapon's bearer at

any time. This feature is often used to give ranged weapons features like glow-lamps or flares, though it is not limited to those applications. Some weapons may use the integrated equipment feature to incorporate a small computer or sensor module, reducing the amount of equipment the character has to carry.

When selecting the integrated equipment feature, choose a piece of equipment. That equipment is integrated into the base weapon and can be used at any time. Additionally, you must choose whether or not the equipment may be physically separated from the base weapon or not at the time of purchase. This feature may be selected multiple times, each time adding a single additional piece of equipment to the base model.

KNOCKBACK

COST: 2 CP

This weapon knocks a target back 1 ft. per point by which they failed their Toughness save. They must also make a Dexterity Check with a Difficulty equal to the number of feet they were thrown back in order to avoid falling prone.

SENSOR BAFFLING

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

From simple metal detectors to advanced X-ray scanners, there's a way to detect every weapon. As the tech rating increases, so does the accuracy of weapon-sensing devices. The ability to confuse these sensors can be invaluable, especially when smuggling weapons past security. Any weapon with the sensor baffling feature grants a +4 bonus on any checks made to conceal the weapon from sensors or other detection devices.

SPRING-LOADED

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITE: WEAPONS OF SIZE SMALL OR SMALLER ONLY

Some weapons are designed to be concealed from sight, then drawn into the hand at a moment's notice. The spring-loaded feature ensures that small weapons can remain hidden under layers of clothes or armor and still be called to action at any time. The bearer of a spring-loaded weapon automatically gains the benefits of the Quick Draw feat with this specific weapon, even if the weapon is hidden from sight on that hero's person.

SKILL BONUS

COST: 1 CP/+4 BONUS

Some weapons or pieces of equipment offer their user a bonus to a particular skill check. For example, a particularly large or daunting weapon might offer a bonus to Intimidate checks.

FEATURES FOR MELEE WEAPONS

The following features can be added to most varieties of melee weapons.

BRACE VS. CHARGE

COST: 1/2 CP

PREREQUISITES: HAFTED WEAPON OF MEDIUM OR LARGER SIZE

You can brace this weapon against a charge as a full action. You get a +2 bonus to damage against the next opponent to charge you.

DOUBLE WEAPON

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: EXOTIC WEAPON

This feature for melee weapons allows a single armament to be used as if its wielder held two of the same weapon, granting him an extra

attack at a penalty (see **Two-Weapon Fighting** on page 108). A skilled fighter using this weapon can strike an opponent twice, once with each end. If used to make a single attack as normal, this weapon confers no special bonuses or penalties.

REACH

COST: 1/2 CP/+5 FT.

This is a long weapon designed to strike opponents before they can close to melee range. A weapon with this feature can be used to attack opponents up to 10 feet away.

BARBED

COST: 1 CP

A barbed weapon has hooks and flanged blades designed to impale a foe. Anyone hit by a barbed weapon must make a Strength check with a Difficulty equal to the weapon's damage rating. On a failed check, the victim is caught on the barbs and cannot move without suffering additional damage equal to the weapon's normal damage in order to pull free. The wielder of the weapon can also tear it free as a move action, causing damage equal to the weapon's normal damage. An aid action can also free a victim from a barbed weapon, provided the weapon's wielder does not take action to oppose it.

FEATURES FOR RANGED WEAPONS

The following features can be added to most types of ranged weapons, though the Narrator can overrule any nonsensical combination.

CLOSE QUARTERS

COST: 1 CP

Designed with a thick stock, built from exceptionally durable materials, or created with a bayonet mount, a close quarters weapon can be used as a club or spear without penalty, in which case it counts as a melee weapon with a +2 damage rating.

HEAVY RECOIL COMPENSATION

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

This weapon is exceptionally easy to handle when emptying a clip at a target. This feature is available only to weapons that do Autofire damage. It reduces all penalties for using autofire to attack multiple targets by -1.

LOCK SYSTEM

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

This weapon verifies its user's identity in some way before functioning (such as checking fingerprints or scanning DNA). The weapon checks a user as a free action, allowing you to draw and use it without spending any additional actions. If someone other than you tries to use it, she must overcome the device's security system. Defeating this system requires Disable Device check with a Difficulty equal to 10 + the weapon's TR.

Special: You can take this feature more than once, increasing the Disable Device Difficulty by +2 each time.

HEADS-UP DISPLAY (HUD)

COST: 2 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

This extra includes a helmet and visor that transmits data to and from the weapon. It includes targeting information, shot paths, and other useful information. A weapon with this feature grants you a +1 bonus per missed shot against a single target until you hit. Once you hit, you

maintain that bonus until the end of the current encounter. If you change targets, your bonus resets to 0; you may begin anew against your new target should you miss.

INDIRECT FIRE

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 8 OR HIGHER

This weapon can strike targets its user cannot see or trace a direct line to. There must still be a clear path between the weapon and its target, but this route could be from any direction. The weapon's user must have some way of knowing his target's location. He can either guess or he can receive information via radio, psychic link, or some other means.

When using the weapon, the attacker targets a spot within range. He then makes an attack against Defense 20. On a hit, his attack lands in the spot he targeted. Otherwise, it scatters 5 feet x (20 - your attack result), to a maximum of half the distance between the attacker and his target. For example, if you rolled a total of 18, the shot scatters 10 feet.

To resolve a scattered attack, roll a die to determine the direction the shot scatters. To find the direction, pick out a 5-foot square next to the intended target and count in the nine spaces around the target until you reach the result of the die roll. Pick the square you want to count as one before rolling. You can re-roll any result of 19 or 20 to ensure that all the squares have the same chance of being selected.

MULTI-AMMO

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

Ranged weapons are designed to accept different types of ammunition, from bullets that explode into thick banks of fog, to beams of energy that stun rather than kill. A multi-ammo weapon can use any of the ammunition types described later in this section.

When you buy this feature, you can select a single use of one type of ammo. You can purchase this feature multiple times; choosing a single ammo type more than once gives you additional uses of that type of ammunition. You can replenish your ammo supply when you reload between encounters. Your Narrator has final authority on whether you have the opportunity to restock. Once you have chosen the ammunition you want to use, you cannot change your choice unless your Narrator allows you to do so.

SCATTER GUN

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

This weapon delivers a spread of fire across a wide area, much like a shotgun or similar weapon. When fired, this weapon projects a cone that is 5 feet x the weapon's damage rating. Normally, you cannot choose to change between a cone and a normal attack. If you increase this feature's cost to 2 points, you can change between firing modes as a free action.

TARGETING SYSTEM

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

You can use your weapon to ignore a target's cover bonus to Defense. As either a standard or move action, you can aim at a target and opt to ignore his cover bonus to Defense. You suffer a penalty to your attack's damage equal to the cover's Toughness.

TRACKING SYSTEM

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

By acquiring and locking on to a single target, your ranged weapon helps you aim. If you spend a full action aiming at a single target, you gain a +2 bonus to all attacks against him. You suffer a -4 penalty to attack anyone or anything else, however, as your weapon is locked onto your chosen target and will continually try to return to that target until it is deactivated. You can deactivate the targeting computer as either a standard or move action. If you turn off the tracking system, you neither gain the bonus nor suffer the penalty.

VISUAL SENSOR ARRAY

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 7 OR HIGHER

This weapon incorporates a series of visual sensors which allow it to sense potential targets before its user notices them. The Narrator may allow the weapon to make a Notice check as a free action to notice an opponent independent of its user. For the purposes of this check, the weapon has 10 ranks in Notice. If it succeeds, the weapon warns the user, who may then spend a half action to gain the benefits of the successful check.

STEP 5: PURCHASE ACCESSORIES

Accessories are additional qualities your weapon can have that *do not* count against its maximum CP total. They do apply, however, to the item's CP total for figuring its cost and relevant Difficulties for constructing or designing it.

The following weapon accessories are available for addition to most firearms.

LASER SIGHT

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

A laser sight projects a non-damaging laser beam showing where the weapon is aimed. This grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls with that weapon.

TARGETING SCOPE

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

When you take a full action to aim a weapon with a targeting scope, double the normal benefits of aiming: a +4 attack bonus, or +8, if you're aiming at a stationary object.

SUPPRESSOR

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

A suppressor muffles the noise of a ballistic weapon, making it Difficulty 10 for normal hearing to detect it.

AMMUNITION TYPES

Ammunition alters how a weapon works. It only works with weapons that have the multi-ammo feature, as most guns and other ranged weapons are designed to work with specific types of ammo. Keep in mind most ranged weapons must draw on some sort of supply, be it arrows, bullets, or energy packs. Alternative forms of ammunition often provide a bonus to an attack balanced out by some penalty, such as a bonus to hit with an attack that deals reduced damage. Other ammunition types give your attack some other effect, such as creating a smoke cloud at the point of impact. Note that your Narrator may rule that certain types of ammo are impossible to use with the type of weapon you want to use. If you cannot reasonably describe how the weapon functions with an ammo type, it might not be a good fit for the weapon.



ALTERNATIVE DAMAGE TYPE

An alternative ammunition variety may simply deal a different type of damage.

BINDING

When this ammo strikes its target, it bursts into a grasping set of wraps or mechanical arms, allowing it to grapple an opponent and hold him in place. This ammunition is considered to have a grapple bonus equal to the weapon's damage rating.

CLOUD

When this shot hits, it bursts into a thick cloud of smoke. The shot deals no damage. It lingers for a number of minutes equal to the weapon's damage rating. The cloud fills a roughly spherical area with a diameter of five feet per point of the weapon's damage rating. The cloud provides total concealment to all within its radius.

DAZZLE

The shot produces a flash of light, a sonic burst, or some other effect to overwhelm the target's senses. Any target struck by this attack suffers no damage, but instead must make a Fortitude save with a Difficulty of 15 + the weapon's damage rating or become dazed for a number of rounds equal to the weapon's damage rating. If they fail their saving throw by 5 or more, they are blinded instead of dazed.

DISARMING

This ammunition is specifically designed to knock a weapon from an opponent's hand. You may use it to make ranged disarm attacks. You must make an attack to hit your target. If you succeed, follow the rules for disarming (see page 101). If he fails, he is disarmed. His weapon falls to the ground in his current space.

EMP

Designed to defeat mechanical devices, this ammunition has no effect on non-machine targets. This ammunition type deals no damage to living or biological organisms, but gains a +2 bonus to damage to constructs, computers or vehicles. This damage is considered an electrical attack.

NON-LETHAL

Ballistic weapons can fire rubber bullets, while bows can fire blunt-tipped arrows or quarrels. This ammunition inflicts non-lethal rather than lethal damage.

SLOW

This ammunition bursts into a thick glue or similar substance, hindering its target's movement. The target suffers no damage, but must succeed in a Fortitude save with Difficulty equal to 15 + the weapon's damage rating or only be able to take partial actions. Slowed characters gain a new Fortitude save each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per successive save.

STAPLING

This ammo traps a target in place. It might pin his arm to a nearby wall or skewer his foot to prevent him from moving. Alternatively, it could spray an area with glue to trap the target. On a successful hit, the target must make a Reflex saving throw. A failed save means the target is bound and helpless, need a Difficulty 20 Strength or Escape Artist check to get free. A successful save means the target isn't trapped, but must still contend with the primary effect of the weapon (impaled limbs, sticky ground, and so forth).

STUN

On impact this ammunition releases a powerful electric charge, requiring a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15 + the weapon's damage rating) to avoid being stunned. Stunned characters gain a new Fortitude save each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per successive save.

TRANQUILIZER

Coated with powerful sedative or poison, these shots are capable of weakening or befuddling a target. This ammunition works like a normal attack, but instead of inflicting damage it inflicts levels of fatigue. A target that is struck must make a Fortitude save. The Difficulty is equal to 15+ the weapon's damage rating. If the target fails her saving throw, she suffers one level of fatigue plus an additional level of fatigue for every 5 points by which she missed the saving throw.

ARMOR CONSTRUCTION

Steady advancements in weapon technology and the exploration of increasingly hostile environments necessitate advancements in armor to protect against them. The following section provides rules for designing your own protective equipment.

STEP 1: DETERMINE CONSTRUCTION POINT CAPACITY (CPC)

Once the tech rating of the item you are constructing has been set, refer to the following table to set the number of CP this weapon can contain.

ARMOR CONSTRUCTION POINTS

Size	TR 0-1	TR 2-4	TR 5	TR 6	TR 7	TR 8
Light	1	2	3	4	5	6
Medium	3	4	5	6	7	8
Heavy	5	6	7	8	9	10
Powered	—	—	—	10	11	12

POWERED ARMOR

Powered armor contains a power supply that allows it to purchase other features that require power to use. The power supply must be kept charged in order for the armor to give the character its benefits beyond its defense bonus. Characters who wish to use powered armor without penalty must have the Powered Armor Training feat.

STEP 2: DETERMINE TOUGHNESS BONUS

Each point of Toughness bonus costs 1 CP.

STEP 3: PURCHASE FEATURES

The following is a list of features that may be built into a suit of armor.

ABLATIVE SHIELD

COST: 2 CP/1 CP OF TOUGHNESS BONUS

PREREQUISITES: TR 7 OR HIGHER

Your armor generates an ablative shield which has its own damage track. Attacks directed at you are absorbed by your shield. The shield dissipates once it reaches disabled status on the damage track; any further damage is handled normally. The ablative shield gains a recovery check with a +3 bonus to the die roll every other round.

ABSORPTION SHIELD

COST: 1 CP/+1 TOUGHNESS

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

Your armor generates an energy shield which helps absorb attacks. It provides a +1 bonus to your Toughness saves for every CP spent for the shield. This feature can be purchased up to a maximum of eight times.

CLOSE QUARTERS DEFENSE SYSTEM

COST: 1 CP

Your armor is covered with sharp spines, electrical outlets, and similar hazards that can burn, cut, or impale anyone who comes too close to you. Anyone who attempts to grapple or grab you automatically suffers +2 damage of a damage type picked at the time of the armor's creation. Your opponent continues to suffer this damage each round if he maintains a grapple against you.

CONCEALED WEAPON

COST: 1 CP (TINY OR SMALL), OR 2 CP (MEDIUM)

PREREQUISITES: RANGED WEAPONS CAN ONLY BE PLACED IN POWERED ARMOR. THE INVENTOR MUST EITHER BUY OR BUILD THE ADDED WEAPON SEPARATELY BEFORE IT CAN BE INTEGRATED INTO THE ARMOR.

Your suit is designed to hold and conceal an extra piece of armament. It pops out of a hidden compartment or looks like a harmless piece of equipment when not in use. The first time you use this weapon during an encounter, you can make a Bluff check as a free action against your target. If you win, your opponent is considered flat-footed against the weapon's first attack. Your Narrator can judge that opponents you have faced before expect the attack and thus are not affected.

DEFLECTION SHIELD

COST: 1 CP/+1 DEFLECTION BONUS

PREREQUISITES: TR 7 OR HIGHER

Your armor generates a deflection shield that provides a +1 bonus to your defense for every CP spent on this feature. Deflection shield can be purchased no more than ten times.

ENERGY RESISTANCE

COST: 1 CP/+2 ENERGY RESISTANCE

PREREQUISITES: TR 4 OR HIGHER

This feature gives the hero 2 points of energy resistance per CP. Each time this feature is purchased, it affects a new energy type chosen from the following list: Acid, Cold, Electricity, and Fire.

ENVIRONMENTAL SEAL

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: MEDIUM OR HEAVY ARMOR, TR 5 OR HIGHER

The environment seal feature transforms any armor into a stable and insulated artificial environment. This provides the wearer with breathable air and external pressure to assure comfort and survival for up to eight hours, ensuring that the armor can function in deep sea, deep space, or anywhere in-between. Only armor with an integrated sealed helmet, body glove, and emergency air tanks to generate internal atmosphere can handle this feature.

EXTERNAL WEAPON MOUNT

COST: 1 CP (TINY, SMALL OR MEDIUM), 2 CP (LARGE)

PREREQUISITES: RANGED WEAPONS CAN ONLY BE USED WITH POWERED ARMOR. THE INVENTOR MUST BUY OR BUILD THE ADDED WEAPON SEPARATELY BEFORE IT CAN BE INTEGRATED INTO THE ARMOR.

Your armor contains an attached ranged weapon system. This weapon may be up to 1 size larger than the size of the armor (armor designed to fit a Medium humanoid can hold up to a Large weapon).

HOLOSCREEN

COST: 3 CP

PREREQUISITES: POWERED ARMOR, TR 7 OR HIGHER

A holoscreen unit projects a holographic image around the suit of armor, making it appear as something else of roughly similar proportions occupying the same amount of space. For instance, it could make a Medium creature look like a small tree or outcropping of rock.

Although the holographic projection appears real, physical objects can pass through it without difficulty. If the wearer moves, the holographic image moves as well. Attacks made against the wearer are treated as though it had 20% concealment, since the projected image may not perfectly match the creature's true proportions. A holoscreen is powered by the armor's internal power source.

INTEGRATED EQUIPMENT

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: THE INVENTOR MUST EITHER BUY OR BUILD THE ADDED PIECE OF EQUIPMENT SEPARATELY BEFORE IT CAN BE INTEGRATED INTO THE ARMOR.

A particular piece of nonweapon equipment has been integrated into the armor and can be used by the armor's wearer at any time.

When selecting the integrated equipment gadget, choose a piece of equipment. That equipment is integrated into the base armor and can be used at any time. Additionally, you must choose whether or not the equipment may be physically separated from the base armor at the time of purchase. This gadget may be selected multiple times, each time adding a single additional piece of equipment to the base model. Should the armor be destroyed or lost, the integrated equipment is destroyed or lost as well.

MAGNETIC FEET

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

This armor comes with electromagnetic grippers, allowing it to cling to ferrous substances such as iron and steel. The wearer gains a Climb speed of 20 feet and does not need to make Climb checks to scale ferrous surfaces. This feature can be used to anchor someone in a zero-g environment.

PERSONAL FLIGHT JETS

COST: SEE TABLE

PREREQUISITES: POWERED ARMOR, SEE TABLE FOR TR REQUIREMENTS

Personal flight jets consist of a wearable set of propulsion jets attached to powered armor, allowing the wearer to fly. The CP cost and flight speed of the jets depend on their quality as indicated in the following table. The basic maneuverability class for jets is Poor. Maneuverability can be improved by spending an additional 1 CP per maneuverability class raise.

PERSONAL FLIGHT JET COSTS

Flight Jet Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	5	30 ft. /round (3 mph)	1/2 pt
Class II	5	60 ft. /round (6 mph)	1 pt
Class III	5	100 ft. /round (10 mph)	2 pts
Class IV	6	250 ft. /round (25 mph)	3 pts
Class V	6	500 ft. /round (50 mph)	4 pts
Class VI	6	1000 ft. /round (100 mph)	5 pts
Class VII	6	2500 ft. /round (250 mph)	6 pts
Class VIII	7	5000 ft. /round (500 mph)	7 pts



PERSONAL WATER TURBINES

COST: SEE TABLE

PREREQUISITES: POWERED ARMOR, SEE TABLE FOR TR REQUIREMENTS

Personal water turbines allow the wearer of the attached suit of armor to propel themselves through water or a similar liquid environment. The CP cost and flight speed of the turbines depend on their quality, as indicated in the following table. The environmental seal feature is required in order to breathe underwater.

PERSONAL WATER TURBINE COSTS

Turbine Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	5	20 ft. /round (2 mph)	1/2 CP
Class II	5	30 ft. /round (3 mph)	1 CP
Class III	6	50 ft. /round (5 mph)	2 CP
Class IV	6	100 ft. /round (10 mph)	3 CP
Class V	6	250 ft. /round (25 mph)	4 CP
Class VI	6	500 ft. /round (50 mph)	5 CP
Class VII	7	1000 ft. /round (100 mph)	6 CP
Class VIII	7	2500 ft. /round (250 mph)	7 CP

PERSONAL RADAR

COST: 3 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

Adding personal radar to a suit of armor gives the armor's wearer Blindsight out to 90 ft.

PHOTON SCREEN

COST: 4 CP

PREREQUISITES: POWERED ARMOR, TR 8 OR HIGHER

Using a series of light reflectors molded to the armor's frame, this unit bends light around the armor, rendering it and its wearer invisible (see page 105, for the effects of invisibility).

RADIATION SHIELDING

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER, ENVIRONMENTAL SEAL

This feature provides the armor's wearer with a +5 bonus to saves against radiation.

RECOVERY SYSTEM

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: POWERED ARMOR, TR 6 OR HIGHER

If you are knocked unconscious, the armor's systems activate an autopilot feature that attempts to return you to a previously chosen location. The recovery system can only store one location at a time. You can toggle this feature on and off as a free action. Your armor uses the full range of its movement abilities to move you to safety.

SKILL BONUS

COST: 1 CP/+4 BONUS

Some suits of armor offer their user a bonus to a particular skill check. A particularly daunting looking suit of armor might offer a bonus to Intimidate checks. Other possibilities include jump jets, stealth devices or climbing spikes. This feature may be purchased twice for any given skill.

STRENGTH ENHANCEMENT

COST: 2 CP/+1 STR BONUS

PREREQUISITES: POWERED ARMOR, TR 6 OR HIGHER

This feature gives the armor's wearer a +1 bonus to Strength for every time this feature is purchased. The bonus only lasts as long as the armor is worn and the power supply is charged. This feature can be purchased up to five times.

SUBTLE

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: LIGHT OR MEDIUM ARMOR, TR 4 OR HIGHER

This feature allows the suit of armor to be hidden under clothing. Spotting it takes a Difficulty 10 Notice check.

TARGETING COMPUTER

COST: 2 CP

PREREQUISITES: POWERED ARMOR, TR 6 OR HIGHER

This is a computer system built into a suit of armor that gives the wearer a +1 bonus to all attack rolls using ranged weapons. The bonus does not stack with any bonuses to accuracy the weapon itself may have (from a scope or laser sight, for example).

VOICE MODULATOR

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

This sound system alters your voice, making it impossible to identify you and giving you a more majestic, commanding (and intimidating) tone. While wearing this armor, you gain a +2 bonus to Intimidate checks and can boost your volume so others can hear you clearly from up to a mile away.

STEP 3: PURCHASE ACCESSORIES

Armor accessories do not count against its maximum CP cost, although they do modify its CP total for determining purchase, design, and construction Difficulties.

COMMUNICATION UNIT

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 4 OR HIGHER

This accessory provides your armor with a built-in two-way radio or other form of verbal communication unit. It can be used to communicate with anyone who is equipped with a similar type of gear. The effective range of this unit depends on its TR.

TR	Effective Range
5	Within orbit of the same planet
6	Within the same star system
7	Within 1 light year
8	Within 5 light years

GPS UNIT

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

This suit of armor includes a Global Positioning unit that can record the user's position on any given planet along with the paths they have previously taken. It grants a +2 to land-based Navigate and Survival checks and prevents the hero from getting lost.

INFRARED GOGGLES**COST:** 1 CP**PREREQUISITES:** PL 5 OR HIGHER

Your armor is equipped with specialized goggles that provide you with the benefits of the Night Vision feat.

STORAGE COMPARTMENTS**COST:** 1 CP

You have enough space in your armor to securely hold up to four items, each of which can be no larger than your hand, pistol, or other Small item. You can secure these compartments, forcing thieves to make an Disable Device check (Difficulty 15) to open them.

VEHICLE CONSTRUCTION

Sometimes heroes make use of various vehicles to get around. Vehicles are used primarily for transportation, although they may come with additional capabilities—including weapons—that make them useful in other situations as well.

STEP 1: DETERMINE VEHICLE SIZE AND STANDARD FEATURES

Once you have determined the TR of the vehicle you are constructing, you must decide how big the vehicle is going to be. The vehicle's size will determine some of the vehicle's basic stats, such as its base Strength, Defense and Toughness values. In addition to those values, most vehicles have a number of standard features depending on their progress level. Standard features are the beginning attributes and traits of any vehicle before any other features have been built or purchased.

TR 0-3: No additional standard features**TR 4:** Headlights, seating, radio receiver, seatbelts**TR 5:** As TR 4 plus air conditioning, heating, air bags, cruise control**TR 6-8:** As TR 5 plus communication gear, breathalyzer, flatscreen digital TV monitor with basic internet browsing capabilities, remote shutdown system

Strength: A vehicle's Strength, much like a character's, determines its carrying capacity. Medium vehicles have a base Strength of +0. Each increase in size category increases a vehicle's base Strength by +5. A vehicle can move at normal speed carrying up to its medium load, 2/3 speed with a heavy load. It can also pull up to five times its heavy load at 1/2 speed (up to 10 times, if equipped with the proper hauling equipment and given an unobstructed area in which to move).

Defense: A vehicle's base Defense is 10 + its size modifier.**Toughness:** This is the vehicle's base Toughness rating, which starts out at 5 for a Medium vehicle. Each increase in size category also increases a vehicle's base Toughness by +2.**STEP 2: DETERMINE CONSTRUCTION POINT CAPACITY (CPC)**

The number of CP used to build a vehicle depend on its size and TR, as shown in the following table:

Vehicle Size	TR 0-3	TR 4	TR 5	TR 6	TR 7	TR 8
Awesome	100	110	120	130	140	150
Colossal	80	90	100	110	120	130
Gargantuan	60	70	80	90	100	110
Huge	40	50	60	70	80	90
Large	20	30	40	50	60	70
Medium	5	10	20	30	40	50
Small	2	5	10	20	30	40

STEP 3: PURCHASE MOTIVATORS

The means of propulsion or motion for a vehicle is called its motivator. When designing a vehicle, it's important to choose a motivator that is in keeping with its intended use and terrain.

PROPELLERS/ROTORS**COST:** SEE TABLE**PREREQUISITES:** SEE TABLE

Propellers and rotors were one of the first motivators developed that can allow a vehicle to fly. The exact cost and speed of the propellers/rotors are listed in the following table.

Propeller Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	4	50 mph	6 CP
Class II	4	100 mph	8 CP
Class III	4	250 mph	10 CP

JET ENGINES**COST:** SEE TABLE**PREREQUISITES:** SEE TABLE

Jet engines can include any type of propulsion system meant for flight. The exact prerequisites, costs and speeds of the jet engine depend on its quality and are listed in the following table.

Engine Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	5	500 mph	12 CP
Class II	5	1000 mph	14 CP
Class III	5	2500 mph	16 CP
Class IV	6	5000 mph	18 CP

VEHICLE SIZE AND STANDARD FEATURES

Vehicle Size	Modifier	Size	Examples	Str	Toughness	Defense
Awesome	-12	128-250 ft.	Space transport	+25	+15	-2
Colossal	-8	64-128 ft.	Passenger jet	+20	+13	+2
Gargantuan	-4	32-64 ft.	Semi, yacht, fighter jet	+15	+11	+6
Huge	-2	16-32 ft.	Stretch limo, SUV, tank	+10	+9	+8
Large	-1	8-16 ft.	Car, truck	+5	+7	+9
Medium	+0	4-8 ft.	Motorcycle	+0	+5	+10
Small	+1	2-4 ft.	Skateboard	-1	+3	+11

TANK TREADS

COST: SEE TABLE

PREREQUISITES: SEE TABLE

Tank treads include a set of treads, a suspension system and an appropriate motor. The exact prerequisites, costs and speeds of the treads depend on their quality and are listed in the following table.

Tread Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	4	25 mph	2 CP
Class II	4	50 mph	3 CP
Class III	5	100 mph	4 CP

AUTOMOTIVE WHEELS

COST: SEE TABLE

PREREQUISITES: SEE TABLE

Automotive wheels include a number of wheel axles a suspension system and an appropriate motor. The exact prerequisites, costs and speeds of the wheels depend on their quality and are listed in the following table.

Wheel Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	4	25 mph	2 CP
Class II	4	50 mph	3 CP
Class III	5	100 mph	4 CP
Class IV	5	250 mph	5 CP
Class V	5	500 mph	6 CP
Class VI	6	1,000 mph	7 CP

HOVER UNIT

COST: SEE TABLE

PREREQUISITES: SEE TABLE

A hover unit allows a vehicle to hover just above the surface, whether that surface is solid ground or water or a similar liquid. The exact prerequisites, costs and speeds of the hover unit depend on its quality and are listed in the following table.

Hover Unit Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	5	25 mph	3 CP
Class II	5	50 mph	4 CP
Class III	6	100 mph	5 CP
Class IV	6	250 mph	6 CP
Class V	7	500 mph	7 CP
Class VI	7	1,000 mph	8 CP
Class VI	7	2,500 mph	9 CP

WATER TURBINES

COST: SEE TABLE

PREREQUISITES: SEE TABLE

Water turbines allow a vehicle to move over or through a body of water or a similar liquid. The exact prerequisites, costs and speeds of the turbines depends on their quality and are listed in the following table. This feature does not specifically allow the crew to survive underwater unless you also purchase life support.

Turbine Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	4	25 mph	4 CP
Class II	4	50 mph	5 CP
Class III	5	100 mph	6 CP
Class IV	5	250 mph	7 CP
Class V	6	500 mph	8 CP

SPACESHIP DRIVE

COST: SEE TABLE

PREREQUISITES: SEE TABLE

A spaceship drive allows slower-than-light travel through the vacuum of space. The exact prerequisites, costs and speeds of the spaceship drive depends on its quality and are listed in the following table. This feature does not specifically allow the crew to survive the vacuum of space unless you also purchase life support.

Drive Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Class I	5	10,000 mph	10 CP
Class II	5	25,000 mph	11 CP
Class III	6	50,000 mph	12 CP
Class IV	6	100,000 mph	13 CP
Class V	6	250,000 mph	14 CP
Class VI	6	500,000 mph	15 CP

STARSHIP DRIVE

COST: SEE TABLE

PREREQUISITES: SPACESHIP DRIVE (ANY), NARRATOR'S APPROVAL, SEE TABLE

A starship drive allows a ship to travel through the vacuum of space at speeds equal to or exceeding the speed of light. The exact prerequisites, costs and speeds of the spaceship drive depends on its quality and are listed in the following table. This feature does not specifically allow the crew to survive the vacuum of space unless you also purchase life support. It takes 10 rounds and a Difficulty 15 Knowledge (technology) check to engage a starship drive. This time may be halved by adding 5 to the Difficulty.

STEP 4: PURCHASE FEATURES

In addition to the vehicle features listed here, a vehicle can be outfitted with the following armor features listed in the previous section: absorption shield, communication unit, deflection shield, energy resistance, environmental seal, GPS unit, holoscreen, photon screen, radiation shielding, and targeting computer.

ALARM

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

The vehicle has an alarm system that goes off when an unauthorized access or activation attempt is made. A Disable Device check (Difficulty 20) overcomes the alarm. For each additional CP, the Difficulty increases by 5.

ANTI-ACCIDENT SYSTEM

COST: 2 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

Anti-accident systems use airbags, fire-retardant foam, no-skid brakes, gyroscopic stabilizers, and other safety features to improve a driver's chances of surviving or averting accidents. The system reduces collision damage by half, though this only applies to the vehicle equipped with an anti-accident system. Further, the operator of a vehicle so equipped gains a +2 bonus on Drive or Pilot checks to make hard-brake or hard-turn maneuvers.

AUTOCOMP, GUNNER

COST: 2 CP + 2/+1 ATTACK BONUS

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

STARSHIP DRIVE

Drive Class	Minimum TR	Max Speed	Cost
Light speed	7	1 light yr/yr	1 CP
Class I FTL	7	2 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/183 earth days)	2 CP
Class II FTL	7	5 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/73 earth days)	3 CP
Class III FTL	7	10 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/37 earth days)	4 CP
Class IV FTL	7	25 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/15 earth days)	5 CP
Class V FTL	7	50 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/week)	6 CP
Class VI FTL	7	100 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/3.5 earth days)	7 CP
Class VII FTL	7	250 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/35 hours)	8 CP
Class VIII FTL	7	500 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/17.5 hours)	9 CP
Class IX FTL	8	1,000 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/9 hours)	10 CP
Class X FTL	8	2,500 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/3.5 hours)	11 CP
Class XI FTL	8	5,000 light yrs/yr (approx 0.5 light yr/hour)	12 CP
Class XII FTL	8	10,000 light yrs/yr (approx 1 light yr/hour)	13 CP
Class XIII FTL	8	25,000 light yrs/yr (approx 3 light yrs/hour)	14 CP
Class XIV FTL	8	50,000 light yrs/yr (approx 6 light yrs/hour)	15 CP
Class XV FTL	8	100,000 light yrs/yr (approx 12 light yrs/hour)	16 CP
Class XVI FTL	8	250,000 light yrs/yr (approx 29 light yrs/hour)	17 CP

A gunner autocomp is an onboard computer with AI software capable of automatically aiming and firing all of a vehicle's mounted weapons, thereby removing the need for one or more gunners. Most vehicles equipped with a gunner autocomp still allow the vehicle's weapons to be controlled manually if the autocomp is deactivated or disabled. Disabling a gunner autocomp requires a successful Disable Device check (Difficulty 15).

The gunner autocomp's attack bonus, depends on the quality of the system's AI software.

Special: Additional weapons can be connected to the vehicle's gunner autocomp at a cost of 2 CP each. A maximum of three weapons may be connected to a single gunner autocomp.

AUTOPILOT COMP

COST: 1 CP +1/4 RANKS IN DRIVE OR PILOT

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

A driver autocomp consists of an onboard computer with AI software capable of operating a vehicle, thereby removing the need for a driver or pilot. Most vehicles equipped with a driver autocomp still retain a driver's seat, allowing the vehicle to be controlled manually if the autocomp is deactivated or disabled. Disabling a driver autocomp requires a successful Disable Device check (Difficulty 15).

The autopilot comp has a maximum Drive or Pilot bonus of +4 per TR above 5. This feature may be purchased a number of times equal to the vehicle's progress level minus five.

ENGINE STRENGTH BOOST

COST: 1 CP/+2 STR

Raise your vehicles base Strength score (as determined by its size) by 2 points each time you buy this feature.

HIDDEN COMPARTMENTS

COST: 1 CP

The vehicle has hidden compartments or cargo areas holding up to a tenth of the vehicle's medium load in cargo. A Search check (Difficulty 20) allows the searcher to find the hidden compartment. For each additional CP spent on building hidden compartments, increase the Difficulty by 5.

LIFE SUPPORT

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITE: ENVIRONMENTAL SEAL, TR 5 OR HIGHER

This feature provides the necessary life support systems to keep the vehicle's crew alive in the depths of the ocean or the vacuum of space.

NAVIGATION SYSTEM

COST: 1 CP/+5 BONUS

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

The vehicle has a navigation computer, granting a +5 bonus to Navigation skill checks. This bonus can be increased by +5 each time this feature is purchased to a maximum of +20.

REMOTE CONTROL

COST: 1 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

The vehicle's owner can operate it remotely using a transmitter and control device. Remotely controlling a vehicle requires the same kind of action (usually a move action) as if you were actually behind the wheel of the vehicle.

SENSORS

COST: 1 PT/+5 BONUS

PREREQUISITES: TR 5 OR HIGHER

Each time you purchase this feature, it provides a +5 bonus to Computers skill checks to detect nearby or incoming vehicles and objects or perform active sensor scans.



SENSOR CLOAK/JAMMER

COST: 1PT/+5 TO DIFFICULTY

PREREQUISITES: TR 6 OR HIGHER

Each time you purchase this feature, it makes it more difficult to detect your vehicle or run active sensor scans on it. Computers skill checks with those goals have their Difficulty increased by 5.

SMOKESCREEN/DISPLACER

COST: 2 CP

PREREQUISITES: TR 4 OR HIGHER

The vehicle can generate a smoke screen, creating an area of total concealment behind it 10 feet wide and up to 50-feet long. Activating the smoke cloud is a standard action.

Special: At TR 7 and above, this feature displaces the vehicle, fooling electronic sensors as well as visual detection.

TRACTOR BEAM

COST: 4 CP

PREREQUISITES: SPACE VEHICLE, TR 6 OR HIGHER

This feature allows your vehicle to perform grappling checks to immobilize and/or draw in other space vehicles. The target vehicle's pilot may oppose this grapple check with a Pilot skill check.

STEP 5: PURCHASE ARMOR

Any vehicle intended for combat may need additional protective plating to survive battle.

VEHICULAR ARMOR

COST: 1PT/+1 TOUGHNESS

Each CP spent on vehicular armor gives the vehicle an additional +1 to its Toughness bonus up to the limit determined by its TR.

Tech Rating	Armor Bonus	Examples
1	+2	Copper plating, bronze plating, iron plating
2-3	+3	Steel plating
4	+4	Carbon-steel plating
5	+5	Alumisteel, duraplastic, Kevlar, titanium
6	+6	Duralloy, resilium, tritanium
7	+8	Crystal carbon, neovulcanium
8	+10	Megatanium, nano-adaptive, reactive

STEP 6: PURCHASE WEAPONS

A vehicle intended for combat may be outfitted with weapons from the **Weapons** section. A vehicle can typically be outfitted with weapons of up to two size classes larger than itself.

EQUIPMENT CONSTRUCTION AND INVENTION

Characters with the necessary Knowledge and Craft skills can build equipment from component parts, while characters with the Inventor feat can also create entirely new pieces of equipment using the guidelines in the previous sections.

To create an invention, the inventor works with the Narrator to define its traits, tech rating, and total cost in CP. This cost is used for the necessary skill checks, and determines the time required to create the invention. The tech rating of the invention is determined by the Narrator based on the available technology and the descriptions of what is possible at each tech rating.

DESIGN CHECK

First, the inventor must design the invention. This is a Knowledge (technology) skill check. The Difficulty is $10 +$ the invention's CP cost. It requires an hour's work per CP. The character can take 10 or 20 on the check. In the latter case, the design process takes 20 times longer (20 hours per CP). You can halve the design time by taking a -5 on the Knowledge check.

If the check is successful, you have a design for the invention. If the check fails, the design is flawed and you must start over. If the check fails by 10 or more, the character is not aware of the design flaw; the design *seems* correct, but the invention won't function (or at least won't function properly) when it's used. For this reason, the Narrator should make the design check secretly and only inform the player whether or not the character appears to have succeeded.

If the inventor is simply making an existing piece of equipment from scratch and has access to blueprints or directions, skip this step of the invention process and proceed to acquire the proper materials. If the inventor is building an existing piece of equipment, but has no access to blueprints or plans, a design check is still necessary to "reinvent" the item.

MATERIALS

Before construction can begin, the inventor must acquire the necessary parts or materials. In most cases this means purchasing equipment with a purchase Difficulty equal to $2 +$ the item's total CP cost. The rules for purchasing items of a lower or higher Tech Level apply.

In certain circumstances the inventor may be able to get some or all of the parts by scavenging them from a junkyard, derelict spaceship, or similar source (See the **Salvage** feat in this chapter). Generally you cannot gain materials to build an invention with a tech rating more than one level higher than the TR of the materials you have available.

CONSTRUCTION CHECK

Once the design and materials are in-hand, the character can construct the invention. This requires four hours of work per CP, so an invention costing 10 construction points takes 40 hours (about a week's work normally, or working two days straight without rest) to construct.

When the construction time is complete, make a Craft skill check using the Craft specialty appropriate to the invention (generally chemical, electronic, or mechanical). The Difficulty is 10 + the invention's CP cost. You can't take 20 on this check, but you can take 10. You can halve construction time by taking a -5 on the Craft check. Success means the invention is complete and functional. Failure means the invention doesn't work.

Failure by 10 or more may result in a mishap, at the Narrator's discretion. Exactly what depends heavily on the invention. Inventing mishaps can become a source of adventure ideas and put the heroes in some difficult situations.

OPTION: JURY-RIGGING DEVICES

Assuming the proper materials are available or have already been acquired, an inventor can choose to spend a Conviction point to jury-rig an invention. This is ideal for when a particular device is needed *right now*.

When jury-rigging an invention, skip the design check and reduce the time of the construction check to 1 *round* per CP of the item's cost, but increase the Difficulty of the Craft check by +5. The inventor makes the Craft check and, if successful, has use of the jury-rigged item for one encounter before it burns out, falls apart, blows up, or otherwise fails.

You can't take 10 or take 20 when jury-rigging, nor can you speed up the process any further by taking a skill check penalty. You can jury-rig an invention again for another use by spending another Conviction point and making another skill check.

Jury-rigging devices is highly cinematic, and the Narrator should only allow it for appropriate styles of play. More realistic settings should ignore this option, sticking with the more time-consuming normal requirements of inventing.

SAMPLE WEAPONS

The following sample weapons follow the same format as those found in **Chapter Five** with the addition of information about weight and tech rating (TR).

CHAIN SWORD

This sword has a chainsaw-like blade that contains rapidly rotating metal teeth.

CONCUSSION ROD

This mace-like weapon has a miniature artificial gravity generator embedded in its alloy head, which increases in mass at the instant of impact.

HIGH FREQUENCY SWORD

This sword is made of a durable metal alloy. Microscopic machines cause the blade to vibrate at high speeds, giving the blade extra cutting power.

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Cost
TL6 Simple Weapons							
Stun Baton	+2 +Stun	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Med	1 lb.	16
TR 6 Martial Weapons							
Chainsword	+5	20/+4	Slashing	—	Med	3 lb.	13
High Frequency Sword	+6	19–20/+3	Slashing	—	Large	2 lb.	15
TR 7 Simple Weapons							
Concussion Rod	+5	20/+3	Bludgeoning/Concussion	—	Med	3 lb.	17
TR 8 Martial Weapons							
Plasma Sword	+7	19–20/+3	Energy	—	Med	1 lb.	17

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage Bonus	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Cost
TR 6 Ranged Weapons (Fire Arms)							
Laser pistol	+5	20/+3	Energy	50 ft.	Medium	3 lb.	17
Laser rifle	+6	20/+3	Energy, Autofire	60 ft.	Large	8 lb.	19
Laser sniper rifle	+6	20/+3	Energy	160 ft.	Large	14 lb.	21
TL7 Ranged Weapons (Fire Arms)							
Concussion rifle	+6 plus Knockback	20/+3	Concussion	60 ft.	Large	6 lb.	22
Plasma pistol	+6	20/+3	Energy	60 ft.	Medium	3 lb.	17
Plasma rifle	+8	20/+3	Energy	80 ft.	Large	8 lb.	19
Rail gun	+7	20/+3	Ballistic	170 ft.	Large	18 lb.	24
TL8 Ranged Weapons (Fire Arms)							
Cryonic rifle	+7	20/+3	Cold	70 ft.	Large	8 lb.	21
Disintegrator	+9	20/+3	Disintegration	90 ft.	Large	6 lb.	23
Lightning gun	+8	20/+3	Electricity, Autofire	80 ft.	Large	30 lb.	19
Pulse rifle	+7	20/+3	Energy, Autofire	170 ft.	Large	11 lb.	21
Sonic beam	+5 plus Stun	20/+3	Sonic	50 ft.	Medium	3 lb.	18

PLASMA SWORD

This sword's small metal handle generates a solid beam of plasma contained by a gravity-induced force field.

STUN BATON

The stun baton is a long rod similar to those carried by modern-day police officers, though it emits a pulse of stunning energy when it strikes a target, stunning them (see the **Stun** ammunition type on page 194).

CRYONIC RIFLE

A cryonic rifle fires beams of freezing energy. A target reduced to dying status by this weapon automatically stabilizes.

DISINTEGRATOR

Resembling a laser rifle, a disintegrator fires a micro-singularity that obliterates the target's molecular structure on impact. Anything killed or destroyed by the weapon completely disintegrates.

LASER WEAPONS

Laser weapons come in many shapes, sizes, and types. All lasers strike with a concentrated blast of light and heat energy.

LIGHTNING GUN

The lightning gun fires a crackling ray of electricity capable of sweeping quickly through large areas.

PLASMA WEAPONS

Plasma occurs when gases become electrically charged after losing electrons. Plasma weapons condense this electrically charged gas into a destructive force that can eat through solid objects and cause severe damage.

PULSE RIFLE

The pulse rifle is a fully automatic laser assault rifle capable of firing a rapid barrage of laser rounds.

RAIL GUN

A rail gun uses gravity pulses to propel a projectile at high velocities. Metal shards are accelerated along the rail gun's length, leaving the barrel at an extremely high velocity.

SONIC BEAM

The sonic blaster fires a pulse of destructive sound at the target. In addition, any creature damaged by the sonic pulse may be stunned (see the **Stun** ammunition type on page 194).

ADVENTURES

Science fiction adventures commonly take the heroes into environments and situations that are lethal. A variety of hazards and challenges heroes face in a general sci-fi or space adventure are outlined here, as well as guidelines for generating star systems and star sectors for these heroes to explore.

ENVIRONMENTS

From the coldest reaches of space to the star-scorched surface of an irradiated planet, space adventures can take heroes into some of the most inhospitable environments imaginable.

RADIATION SICKNESS

Radiation can be naturally or artificially produced. All stars produce radiation in some variety, and planets closer to these stars typically suffer more severe effects than worlds farther away. Many starships and other pieces of technology incorporate radioactive parts and fuel cells that can flood an area with harmful radiation when ruptured or exposed. Ancient alien civilizations might leave behind powerful artifacts that emit harmful radiation. Whether the source is natural or artificial, any character in an environment rich with radiation may suffer some negative effects for exposure.

When characters are exposed to radiation, they may be afflicted with radiation sickness. Radiation sickness functions exactly like exposure to any other disease, following the normal rules for diseases. The Fortitude save Difficulty and the effects of radiation sickness vary according to the level of radiation and the length of time the hero has been exposed to it.

Radiation exposure has five degrees: mild, low, moderate, high, and severe. To determine the degree of exposure, determine whether the character has encountered an irradiated area (the former site of a nuclear explosion) or a radioactive source (a lump of radioactive material). Determine how long the characters were exposed to the radiation within a given 24-hour period (rounding up) and consult the Radiation Exposure table to determine the degree of exposure.

The degree of the exposure determines the severity of the radiation sickness, as indicated on the **Radiation Sickness** table. At low levels, radiation sickness is a slow disease.

TREATING RADIATION SICKNESS

Radiation sickness can be cured using the Medicine skill. Treating radiation sickness requires a medical kit. Advanced medicine and advanced technology can eliminate radiation sickness or obviate its harmful effects.

GRAVITY

Gravity determines how easily a person performs certain actions as well as the amount of damage a character takes from falling. For ease of play, these rules present four simplified gravity environments: normal gravity (1.0 g), low gravity (<1.0 g), high gravity (>1.0 g), and zero gravity (0 g).

NORMAL GRAVITY

"Normal gravity" equates to gravity on Earth. Environments with normal gravity impose no special modifiers on a character's ability scores, attack rolls, or skill checks. Likewise, normal gravity does not modify a creature's speed, carrying capacity, or the amount of damage it takes from a fall.

LOW-GRAVITY ENVIRONMENTS

In a low-gravity environment, the pull of gravity is significantly less than what we experience living on Earth. Although an object's mass doesn't change, it becomes effectively lighter.

- Speed:** A creature's speed increases by +5 feet in a low-gravity environment. This bonus applies to all of the creature's modes of movement.
- Carrying Capacity:** A creature's normal carrying capacity (See page 91) is doubled in a low-gravity environment. In addition, the creature gains a +10 bonus on any Strength check made to lift or move a heavy unsecured object.
- Skill Check Bonuses:** Creatures in a low-gravity environment gain a +10 bonus on Strength-based skill checks (including Climb, Jump, and Swim checks).
- Attack Roll Penalty:** Creatures take a -2 penalty on attack rolls in a low-gravity environment unless they are native to that environment or have the Zero-G Training feat.

RADIATION EXPOSURE

Situation	Time of Exposure (Minimum)				
	1 round	1 minute	10 minutes	1 hour	1 day
Character in irradiated area:					
Lightly irradiated	Mild	Mild	Mild	Mild	Low
Moderately irradiated	Mild	Mild	Low	Low	Moderate
Highly irradiated	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
Severely irradiated	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Severe
Character exposed to radiation source:					
Lightly radioactive materials	Mild	Mild	Low	Low	Low
Moderately radioactive materials	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Highly radioactive materials	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	High
Severely radioactive materials	High	High	Severe	Severe	Severe

- Damage from Falling:** Creatures do not fall as quickly in a low-gravity environment as they do in a normal or high-gravity environment. Falling damage is halved.
- Long-Term Effects:** Long-term exposure to low-gravity conditions can cause serious problems when returning to normal gravity. A creature that spends 120 hours or more in a low-gravity environment takes 2 points of temporary Strength damage upon returning to normal gravity.

HIGH GRAVITY ENVIRONMENTS

In a high-gravity environment, the pull of gravity is significantly greater than we experience living on Earth. Although an object's mass doesn't change, it becomes effectively heavier. Even the simple task of walking or lifting one's arms feels more laborious.

- Speed:** A creature's speed decreases by -5 feet (to a minimum of 0 feet) in a high-gravity environment. This penalty applies to all of the creature's modes of movement.
- Carrying Capacity:** A creature's normal carrying capacity (See page 91) is halved in a high-gravity environment. In addition, the creature takes a -10 penalty on any Strength check made to lift or move a heavy unsecured object.
- Skill Check Bonuses:** Creatures in a high-gravity environment take a -10 penalty on Strength-based skill checks (including Climb, Jump, and Swim checks).
- Attack Roll Penalty:** Creatures take a -2 penalty on attack rolls in a high-gravity environment unless they are native to that environment.
- Damage from Falling:** Creatures fall more quickly in a high-gravity environment than they do in a normal- or low-gravity environment. Falling damage is doubled.
- Long-Term Effects:** Long-term exposure to high-gravity conditions can cause serious problems when returning to normal gravity. A creature that spends 120 hours or more in a high-gravity environment takes 2 points of temporary Dexterity damage upon returning to normal gravity.

ZERO-GRAVITY ENVIRONMENTS

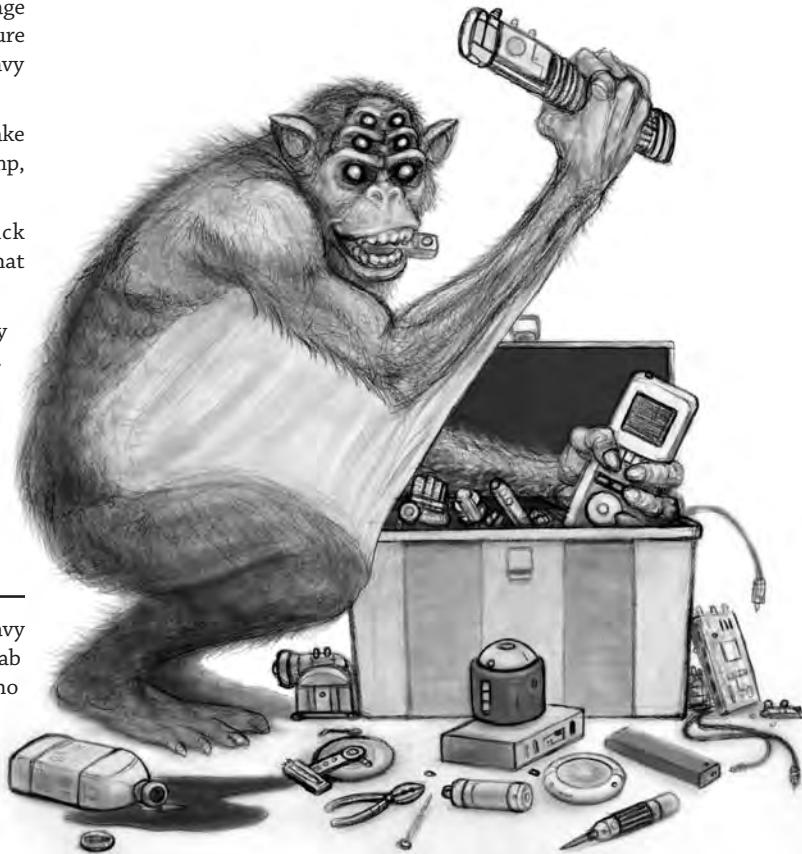
Creatures in a zero-gravity environment can move enormously heavy objects. As movement in zero gravity requires only the ability to grab onto or push away from larger objects, Climb and Jump checks no longer apply.

Most creatures find zero-gravity environments disorienting, taking penalties on their attack rolls and suffering the effects of Space Adaptation Syndrome (space sickness). In addition, creatures in zero gravity are easier to bull rush than in other gravity environments.

RADIATION SICKNESS

Degree of Exposure	Fortitude Save Difficulty	Incubation Period	Initial and Secondary Damage
Mild	12	1 day	Nauseated for 24 hours
Low	15	12 hours	1 Con
Moderate	18	9 hours	2 Con
High	21	6 hours	3 Con
Severe	24	3 hours	4 Con

- Space Adaptation Syndrome:** A creature exposed to weightlessness must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15) to avoid the effects of space sickness. Those who fail the save are shaken; those who fail by 5 or more are also nauseated. The effects persist for eight hours. A new save is required every eight hours the creature remains in a zero-g environment. Creatures with the Zero-G Training feat do not suffer the effects of space sickness.



- **Speed:** While in a zero-gravity environment, a creature gains a fly speed equal to its base land speed or retains its natural fly speed (whichever is greater). However, movement is limited to straight lines only; a creature can change course only by pushing away from larger objects (such as bulkheads).
- **Carrying Capacity:** A creature's normal carrying capacity increases by 10 times in a zero-gravity environment. In addition, the creature gains a +20 bonus on any Strength check made to lift or move a heavy unsecured object.
- **Attack Roll Penalty:** Creatures take a -4 penalty on attack rolls and skill checks while operating in a zero-gravity environment unless they are native to that environment or have the Zero-G Training feat.
- **Long-Term Effects:** Long-term exposure to zero-gravity conditions can cause serious problems when returning to normal gravity. A creature that spends 120 hours or more in a zero-gravity environment takes 3 points of temporary Strength damage upon returning to normal gravity.
- **Weight vs. Mass:** While an object in zero gravity loses weight, it does not lose mass or momentum. Thus, while a character could push a 10-ton piece of equipment around in space, albeit slowly, getting it to stop is a bit more difficult. If a character were to come between that piece of equipment and a solid object, that character would be crushed just as if he were in full gravity—just more slowly.

For simplicity, assume a Strength check to lift or move an object in zero gravity gains a +20 circumstance bonus. Stopping an object already in motion does not.

ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS

As with variants in gravity, a change in atmospheric conditions can cause major problems for characters. Not every planet will have the same atmospheric density or chemical composition as Earth, meaning that worlds otherwise hospitable to human life may not be ideal for humans born and raised on Earth.

CORROSIVE ATMOSPHERE

Some atmospheres (breathable or not) contain corrosive chemicals and gases. Corrosive atmospheres slowly eat away at equipment and can cause significant equipment failure. The corrosion can be particularly troublesome in atmospheres that demand special survival gear, as any breach in a protective environmental suit renders it useless. Unprotected equipment exposed to a corrosive atmosphere takes +1 acid damage per hour of exposure. This damage ignores hardness and deals damage directly to the equipment, eating away at it slowly.

Creatures not wearing protective gear in a corrosive atmosphere take +1 acid damage per round of exposure.

THIN ATMOSPHERE

Planets with thin atmospheres have less oxygen per breath than the standard Earth atmosphere. Many thin atmospheres are the equivalent of being at a high elevation on Earth, such as on top of a mountain or in the upper atmosphere. A creature exposed to a thin atmosphere must succeed on a Fortitude save (Difficulty 20) every hour. On the first failed save, the creature is fatigued. A fatigued creature that fails a subsequent save becomes exhausted for as long as it remains in the thin atmosphere. After one hour of complete, uninterrupted rest in a normal atmosphere, an exhausted creature becomes fatigued. After eight hours of complete, uninterrupted rest, a fatigued creature is no longer fatigued.

THICK ATMOSPHERE

Thick atmospheres contain a more dense concentration of certain elements, like nitrogen, oxygen, or even carbon dioxide, than the standard Earth atmosphere. These dense atmospheres sometimes

contain a different balance of elements, while others simply contain a higher number of gas particles in each breath. The effects of exposure to a thick atmosphere are similar to those of a thin atmosphere, except the Fortitude save Difficulty is 15 instead of 20.

TOXIC ATMOSPHERE

Some atmospheres (breathable or not) contain toxic gases that are debilitating or lethal to some or all forms of life. The atmosphere is treated as always containing a type of inhaled poison.

VACUUM

Despite some popular myths, moving into a vacuum does not cause the body to explosively decompress, nor does it cause instant freezing as heat bleeds away from the body. Rather, the primary hazards of surviving in the vacuum of space are the lack of air and exposure to unfiltered ionizing radiation.

On the third round of exposure to vacuum, a creature must succeed on a Constitution check (Difficulty 20) each round or suffer from aeroembolism ("the bends"). A creature that fails the save experiences excruciating pain as small air bubbles form in its bloodstream; such a creature is considered stunned and remains so until returned to normal atmospheric pressure. A creature that fails the Constitution check by 5 or more falls unconscious.

The real danger of vacuum comes from suffocation, though holding one's breath in vacuum damages the lungs. A character who attempts to hold his breath must make a Constitution check (Difficulty 15) every round; the Difficulty increases by 1 each round, and on a successful check the character takes 1 point of Constitution damage (from the pressure on the linings of his lungs). If the check fails, or when the character simply stops holding his breath, he begins to suffocate. In the next round, he falls unconscious. The following round, he begins dying. On the third round, he is dead.

Unfiltered radiation bombards any character trapped in the vacuum of space without protective gear. A creature exposed to this ionizing radiation suffers from severe sunburn as well as the effects of radiation exposure; the degree of exposure depends on the nearest star's classification (see **Star Systems** for more information).

DECOMPRESSION

The sudden decompression of a starship, vehicle, or other object can be dangerous to creatures inside. Whenever a sealed environment within a vacuum is breached, all of the air inside rushes out quickly to equalize the air pressure. Creatures within the decompressing environment must succeed on a Reflex save (Difficulty 15) or be thrust toward the breach (and possibly beyond it) at a speed of 60 feet per round. Creatures three size categories larger than the breach's size category are big enough not to get dragged toward the breach (no Reflex save required). For example, a Fine breach pulls only Fine, Diminutive, and Tiny creatures toward it; creatures of Small size or larger are unaffected.

If the breach's size category is larger than the creature's size category, the creature passes through the opening and is blown out into vacuum. If the breach's size category is the same as the creature's size category, the creature is blown out into the vacuum and takes +2 damage as it gets pushed through the breach. If the breach is one or two size categories smaller than the creature's size category, the creature isn't thrust into the vacuum but takes +4 damage as it slams against the area around the breach. It takes another +4 damage each round until the air completely evacuates from the decompressed compartment or until the creature pulls itself away from the breach with a successful Strength check (Difficulty 20).

The time it takes for all of the air to evacuate from a compartment depends on the size of the breach and the volume of the decompressing

compartment, as shown on the Decompression Times table. Once the air has completely rushed out through the breach, the pressure equalizes and the interior environment becomes a vacuum.

DECOMPRESSION TIMES

Breach Size	Decompression Time
Fine (1-inch square)	3 rounds per 10-foot cube of air
Diminutive (3-inch square)	3 rounds per 10-foot cube of air
Tiny (6-inch square)	2 rounds per 10-foot cube of air
Small (1-foot square)	2 rounds per 10-foot cube of air
Medium (2 1/2-foot square)	1 round per 10-foot cube of air
Large (5-foot square)	1 round per 10-foot cube of air
Huge (10-foot square)	1 round per 20-foot cube of air
Gargantuan (15-foot square)	1 round per 30-foot cube of air
Colossal (20-foot square)	1 round per 40-foot cube of air

UNIVERSE BUILDING

The exploration and settlement of our universe is a major theme in many science fiction stories, as are alien visitors from another planet, star system or galaxy. This chapter sets forth some guidelines to help you create your own science fiction universe.

THE SCALE OF YOUR CAMPAIGN

The first question to consider when designing a science fiction setting is its scale. In a modern-day or near-future campaign, the heroes may never set foot outside of their home world. In a far-future space-opera or military campaign, however, the heroes may visit hundreds of worlds during the course of their adventures.

PLANETARY CAMPAIGNS

In a planetary campaign, the plot and level of available technology confine the heroes to a single reasonably habitable planet or moon. In this kind of campaign, you probably don't need to put much detail into the rest of the universe. It may be a good idea to make note of how many other planets are in the same star system, and how many moons or other satellites the heroes' home world has. You won't need much information about these heavenly bodies aside from their numbers and possibly a brief description of their size, climate and any religious significance the planet's inhabitants might attach to them.

STAR SYSTEM CAMPAIGNS

A star system campaign is a setting where technology allows the heroes to travel to other planets and moons within the star system their home world resides in. The plot of such a campaign will often give the heroes reasons to travel between planets and visit moons. If you are running a star system campaign, you can skip to the **Star System Generation** section of this chapter.

STAR SECTOR CAMPAIGNS

In a star sector campaign, the heroes have access to technology that allows them to visit other nearby stars. Such a campaign often includes multiple human colonies in different star systems. When running a star sector campaign, you are going to want to map out the star sector the heroes are adventuring in.

MAPPING A STAR SECTOR

When mapping a star sector, you will first want to determine the size of the area you want to map. First, deciding the approximate number of star systems you want to have in the sector. We suggest the use of graph paper for mapping your star sector. The scale of the map will most

likely be in light years, and the recommended scale is for one square (or hex) to equal one light year. For every ten or so star systems you want to place in the sector, map out a 10 light year by 10 light year area. In each 10x10 light year square, place 1d20/2 stars (round up), making sure no two star systems are less than one light year apart. This is as far as you need to go for a simple or soft science fiction star map. For a more realistic three dimensional map, continue with the following steps.

To add a third dimension to your map, you are going to have to define the distances the star systems are above and below the two dimensional plane that the graph paper represents. Somewhere near the center of your star cluster, pick a star system of particular importance to your campaign. This star will be considered to exist in the same physical plane of the graph paper. The other stars on the map will be marked as being above or below this plane. To determine the distance above or below, roll 2d20 for each star system and subtract 21 from the total. This will result in a range between +19 and -19. If you rolled doubles, roll another d20, adding the result if your current value is positive, and subtracting it if it is negative. Positive numbers represent the number of light years the star system is above the plane of the graph paper, and negative numbers are below. Write this number next to each star system you marked on the graph paper. Once you have your star sector map made, you may want to add further detail to the more important star systems using the **Star System Generation** guidelines later in this chapter.

GALAXY-SPANNING AND MULTI-GALAXY CAMPAIGNS

A galaxy-spanning campaign can be an intimidating proposition. Our own galaxy, the Milky Way, spans some 50,000 light years in diameter and contains roughly 100 billion stars. Even the most ambitious Narrator could never hope to develop that many locations in any kind of detail. The key to such a campaign is to only develop the parts of the galaxy your heroes have a high chance of visiting. Inevitably, the heroes will sooner or later get off any course you could have foreseen. In this case you will have to improvise and develop details of the places they visit as needed. Instead of mapping out entire galaxies, simply map out the star sectors that will be the most important to your campaign.

STAR SYSTEM GENERATION

A star system can contain one star or multiple stars. Humans are more likely to find habitable planets in systems with single stars. In reality, more than half of all star systems have two or more stars; these systems typically contain planets that are inhospitable to human life.

NUMBER OF STARS	
D20	Number of Stars
1-10	1 star
11-16	2 stars (Binary system)
17-19	3 stars (Trinary System)
20	4 stars (Quaternary System) or more at the Narrator's option.

STAR TYPE

Depending on their initial mass, stars may vary widely in color, surface temperature, brightness and lifespan. Stars are classified using a lettering system that describes the star and gives information about its type. Known as the spectral class of a star, a designation of O, B, A, F, G, K, or M is given to the star based on its mass and energy output. Class O stars are the hottest, largest, and brightest stars, and class M stars as the smallest and coldest, with a gradual scale between them. Since a star's mass determines how hot it burns (as well as how strong its gravitational pull is), the star's classification actually helps extrapolate the kinds of planets that might be in that star's system. Since larger stars

burn hotter and smaller stars burn cooler, the mass of a star determines the climate of the worlds that orbit it.

In addition to the standard array of star types, several other types of stars (or what were once stars) might be found at the center of a star system. Most of these stars (called “non-main sequence stars”) have characteristics that make certain planetary conditions impossible. No type of non-main sequence star is likely to support worlds hospitable to human life. Types of non-main sequence stars include black holes, neutron stars, white dwarf stars, black dwarf stars, brown dwarf stars, and red supergiants.

DEGREE OF IONIZING RADIATION

Ionizing radiation—radiation that breaks down atoms within living tissue—is common in space. All stars produce and emit harmful levels of ionizing radiation; a star system is considered an “irradiated area” for the purposes of determining radiation exposure, particularly in the vacuum of space. (Planetary atmospheres and protective environment suits can protect a creature from ionizing radiation.)

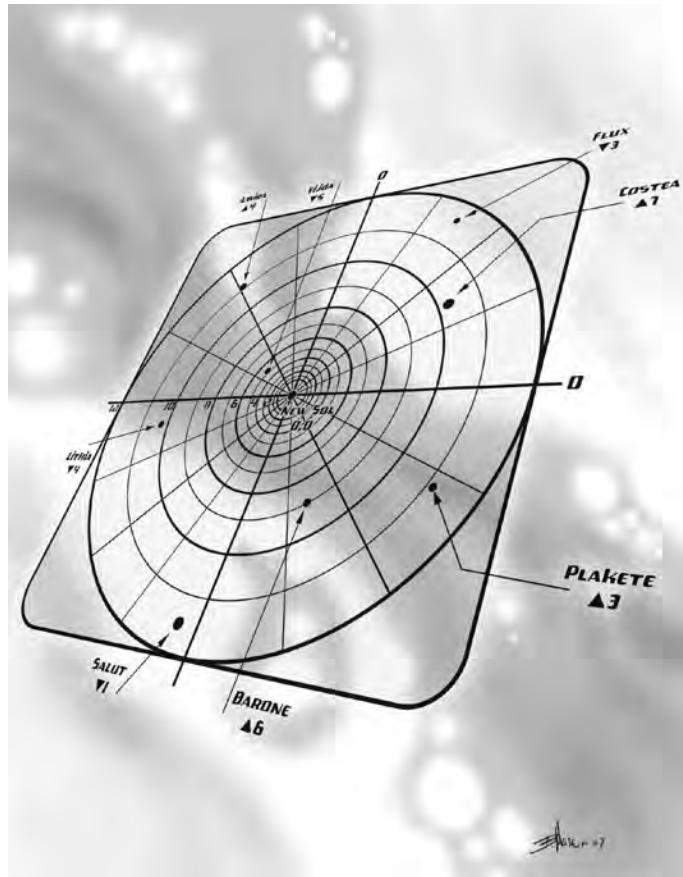
The degree of radiation exposure depends on the nearest star's classification, as shown in the Star Systems table. For systems with two or more stars, increase the degree of radiation by one grade (light becomes moderate, moderate becomes high, and highly becomes severe).

NUMBER OF PLANETS

The number of planets in a given star system can be determined by rolling on Table: Star Systems. For systems with multiple stars, use the star with the fewest planets allowable to determine the number of planets in the system.

HOSPITABLE STARS

The chief classifications of hospitable stars are F, G, and K. These stars produce the right amounts of heat and the right types of radiation to allow



human-compatible worlds to exist. Not every world around a Class F, G, or K star is hospitable; however, even inhospitable worlds within such systems could be made to support human life with artificial modifications to their ecosystems (a long a painstaking process called “terraforming”).

INHOSPITABLE STARS

Class O, B, A, and M stars are the least likely to support planets capable of hosting human life. The stars toward the hotter end of the spectrum produce too much heat to allow living, breathing organisms to thrive. Class M stars do not give off enough heat to support life. These stars are also known to be violently unstable and prone to bursts of stellar activity.

Star Systems			
D20	Star Classification	Degree of Radiation*	Number of Planets (round up)
1	Class O (blue-white)	High	2-5 (d20/5 + 1)
2	Class B (blue-white)	Moderate	3-6 (d20/5 + 2)
3	Class A (blue)	Moderate	1-10 (d20/2)
4-7	Class F (green)	Light	2-11 (d20/2 + 1)
8-11	Class G (yellow)	Light	3-12 (d20/2 + 2)
12-15	Class K (orange)	Moderate	4-13 (d20/2 + 3)
16-19	Class M (red)	High	2-11 (d20/2 + 1)
20	Roll again on Non-Main Sequence Star Systems table.		

* Refer to the Radiation Exposure table for details.

NON-MAIN SEQUENCE STAR SYSTEMS

D20	Star Classification	Degree of Radiation*	Number of Planets (round up)
1	Black hole	High	None
2–5	Neutron star	Severe	0–3 (d20/5 – 1)
6–9	White dwarf	Moderate	2–5 (d20/5 + 1)
10–13	Black dwarf	Light	3–6 (d20/5 + 2)
14–17	Brown dwarf	Light	2–5 (d20/5 + 1)
18–20	Red supergiant	High	0–3 (d20/5 – 1)

* Refer to the Radiation Exposure table for details.

BLACK HOLES

Black holes are stars that have expended their fuel sources and exploded in a massive supernova. Few, if any, planetary bodies survive the initial death of such a star. Once the star has exploded, its gravity is so great that it collapses in on itself and warps light, time, and space around it. Black holes drag all nearby matter into its center, collecting rings of cosmic debris called accretion discs that can be seen at great distances. Some planets and asteroids might survive being pulled into a black hole long enough for some adventuring, but they are incredibly dangerous places to explore.

NEUTRON STARS

A neutron star is a large star that has exhausted its fuel source but hasn't collapsed in on itself. Instead, the entire star's remaining matter compresses into a much smaller body, mere kilometers in diameter. Within this tightly packed core, the star's density crushes the atoms into an object composed entirely of subatomic particles known as neutrons. Planets orbiting a neutron star are typically cold, lifeless, and severely irradiated. Another type of neutron star is the pulsar, which emits severe levels of radiation at great distances.

WHITE DWARF STARS

A white dwarf star is so much smaller than a neutron star that it does not have the mass to collapse in on itself. Instead, white dwarfs are

typically small, dense and surrounded by rings of wreckage that were once planetary bodies in its system. White dwarfs emit very little light or energy. The rings that surround them are usually cold and dark. These rings are not bombarded by as much radiation as in a neutron star and could potentially support life, assuming enough heat could be generated.

BLACK DWARF STARS

Black dwarf stars completely burn out after expending their fuel. The most stable of dead stars, black dwarfs consume their fuel supply and then cool into a cinder that emits no light or heat. Any planetary systems that existed around a black dwarf will remain intact but usually become barren and frozen.

BROWN DWARF STARS

In many ways, the brown dwarf is not even a star. Brown dwarf stars are stellar bodies that almost coalesced into true stars but never managed to form completely. Brown dwarfs are dim and small. They may have planets in their system, but these worlds almost never support life due to the lack of heat and light.

RED SUPERGIANTS

Most red supergiants begin their lives as average-sized stars. However, they burn hot and expend their hydrogen fuel supplies quickly. When its hydrogen supply is depleted, a red supergiant begins burning other, heavier elements such as helium, causing the star to expand to enormous size. An expanding red supergiant consumes its innermost planets and then burns so hot and bright it renders all other planets in its system incapable of supporting life naturally.

STELLAR HAZARDS

Two types of stellar hazards can create higher-than-normal levels of ionizing radiation: solar flares and cosmic rays.

SOLAR FLARES

Solar flares release tremendous amounts of electromagnetic energy (including harmful ultraviolet rays and X-rays), as well as highly charged protons and electrons. The effects are comparable to a radioactive blast from one hundred million billion tons of TNT (compared to the 20,000-ton equivalent blasts that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki). Fortunately, while solar flares aren't rare, they are predictable.

Radiation from a solar flare is treated as "severe" for the purposes of determining the radiation's effects (see the Radiation Exposure table in this chapter).

COSMIC RAYS

Cosmic rays, unlike solar flares, cannot be predicted. Consisting of high energy subatomic particles moving at relativistic speeds, these rays can penetrate miles of solid mass (though extremely few get through the Earth's atmosphere without colliding with other atoms or molecules, effectively rendering them harmless). In space, these subatomic particles can cause severe cell damage, even genetic mutation.

Radiation from a cosmic ray shower is treated as "high" for the purposes of determining the radiation's effects (see the Radiation Exposure table).

FILLING IN A STAR SYSTEM

The following tables are meant to help you fill in the details of the more important star systems.* Since planetary orbits are often elliptical, the AU measurements listed here are merely the average distances for single-star systems. For multi-star systems, this is the minimum distance between the planet and any of the stars it is orbiting.

INTERNAL PLANETARY ORBITS

d20	AU from star*	Average Thermal Environment**
1	0.2	Extreme heat
2	0.3	Extreme heat
3	0.4	Extreme heat
4	0.5	Extreme heat
5	0.6	Very hot
6	0.7	Very hot
7	0.8	Hot
8	0.9	Hot
9	1.0	Normal
10	1.1	Normal
11	1.2	Cold
12	1.3	Cold
13	1.4	Cold
14	1.5	Extreme cold
15	1.6	Extreme cold
16	1.7	Extreme cold
17	1.8	Extreme cold
18	1.9	Extreme cold
19	2.0	Severe cold
20	2.1	Severe cold

* There is a minimum distance of 0.2 AU between planets. If a die roll places a planet less than 0.2 AU from its nearest neighbor, then either move it to where it will be 0.2 AU from any other planets or re-roll. In a hard science-fiction setting, the planets in these inner orbits will almost exclusively be Terran planets or asteroid belts. Since planetary orbits are often elliptical, the AU measurements listed here are merely the average distances for single-star systems. For multi-star systems, this is the minimum distance between the planet and any of the stars it is orbiting.

These temperatures are for satellites surrounding a class F, G, or K star. Treat satellites around O, B, and A class stars as if they were 0.5 AU closer for purposes of determining temperature. Treat satellites of class M stars as if they were 0.5 AU farther away when determining temperature. See the **Cold and **Heat** sections on pages 110 and 112 for details regarding temperature rules.

EXTERNAL PLANETARY ORBITS

d20	AU from star*	Temperature
1	4	Severe cold
2	6	Severe cold
3	8	Severe cold
4	10	Severe cold
5	12	Severe cold
6	14	Severe cold
7	16	Severe cold
8	18	Severe cold
9	20	Severe cold
10	22	Severe cold
11	24	Severe cold
12	26	Severe cold
13	28	Severe cold
14	30	Severe cold
15	32	Severe cold
16	34	Severe cold
17	36	Severe cold
18	38	Severe cold
19	40	Severe cold
20	42+	Severe cold

PLANETS AND OTHER STELLAR SATELLITES

D20	Satellite	# of Moons*	Low Density (1-6)	Medium Density (7-14)	High Density (15-20)	Examples
1-2	Planetoid	d20/5 - 2	Low Gravity	Low Gravity	Normal Gravity	Pluto
3-6	Sub-Terrestrial	d20/5 - 1	Low Gravity	Normal Gravity	Normal Gravity	Mars, Mercury
7-10	Terrestrial	d20/5 - 1	Low Gravity	Normal Gravity	High Gravity	Earth, Venus
11-13	Super-Terrestrial	d20/5	Normal Gravity	Normal Gravity	High Gravity	—
14-15	Mega-Terrestrial	d20/5 + 1	Normal Gravity	High Gravity	High Gravity	—
16-17	Asteroid Belt	None	Zero Gravity	Zero Gravity	Low Gravity	‘The Main Belt’
18	Lesser Gas Giant	d20/2 + 1	High Gravity	High Gravity	High Gravity	Uranus, Neptune
19	Gas Giant	d20/2 + 4	High Gravity	High Gravity	High Gravity	Saturn, Jupiter
20	Gas Supergiant	d20/2 + 6	High Gravity	High Gravity	High Gravity	—

*Treat moons of terrestrial planets as Planetoids. Moons of a Gas Giant are treated as Planetoids, Sub-Terrestrial or Terrestrial-sized planets. Their characteristics may be rolled on the above table by rolling 1d20/2 (rounded up).

Planetoids are between 2,000 and 4,000 km in diameter. Sub-Terrestrial Planets are between 4,000 and 8,000 km in diameter. Terrestrial Planets, such as Earth and Venus, are between 8,000 and 16,000 km in diameter. Super-Terrestrial Planets are between 16,000 and 36,000 km in diameter. Mega-Terrestrial planets are over 36,000 km in diameter. Lesser Gas Giants are Jovian planets that measure between 36,000 and 72,000 km in diameter. Gas Giants are Jovian planets that measure between 72,000 and 144,000 km in diameter. Gas Supergiants are Jovian planets that measure over 144,000 km in diameter.

VEHICLE COMBAT

Science fiction often includes battles between spaceships and other similar vehicles. The following template is meant to help simplify combats involving one or more vehicles manned completely by Narrator characters.

MANNED VEHICLE

A manned vehicle is simply a vehicle controlled by one or more Narrator characters.

Manned vehicle is an acquired template that can be used to combine a vehicle (referred to hereafter as the base vehicle) and its crew (referred to hereafter as the pilot, captain, gunners, and/or technicians) into a single stat block. In the case of a single crew member, use their statistics for all crew positions.

If you don't already have statistics for the crew, you can simply pick a crew level. Treat the crewmembers as having skill bonuses equal to their level + 5 in all relevant skills, and combat bonuses equal to their level + 2.

MANNED VEHICLE TEMPLATE

Size: As base vehicle

Type: A manned vehicle is considered a construct.

Level: As Pilot or Captain

Speed: As base vehicle

Abilities: Strength as base vehicle and Dexterity as base Pilot. No Constitution score. Other attributes are effectively zero.

Skills: A manned vehicle uses the pilot's Notice, Computers and Drive or Pilot skill bonuses, the Captain's Bluff, Diplomacy and Sense Motive skill bonuses and the technician's Craft (electronics), and Craft (mechanics) skill bonuses. Vehicles with radar may use the Computers skill in place of Notice and Search checks to detect incoming objects.

Feats: None

Traits: As base vehicle plus construct traits. A manned vehicle also gains the following trait if its pilot has the Vehicular Combat feat:

Vehicular Combat: Once each round, a manned vehicle may attempt to avoid an attack that would normally have hit by opposing the attack roll with either a Drive or a Pilot skill check, as appropriate for the base vehicle's type. A manned vehicle may also substitute this skill check for its Defense for the rest of the round, but doing so requires a full round action if there is only one crew member.

Combat: A manned vehicle has the attack bonuses of its gunners and gains one attack for each gunner on board (provided it is outfitted with enough weapons). Defense is as base vehicle. Initiative as Pilot or Commander, or +0, whichever is higher.

Saves: Toughness as base vehicle, Reflex as base pilot and Will as base captain. A manned vehicle has no Fortitude save.

VEHICLES AND THE DAMAGE TRACK

Vehicles are immune to non-lethal damage.

- **Disabled:** A vehicle that becomes disabled can only take a single move or attack action each turn (not both); it cannot take any full-round actions. If it attacks, attempts to escape at cruising speed, or performs any other action that would strain its systems, it suffers +5 damage after completing the act. A disabled starship is considered helpless. It has a Defense of 5 + its size modifier. Repairs that remove the disabled condition make it fully functional again.
- **Dying:** A vehicle that is “dying” is beginning to break apart. The vehicle is immobilized, helpless and beyond repair. While a vehicle is dying, its crew may attempt to evacuate. The vehicle suffers +5 damage each round. Armor does not protect against this damage.
- **Dead:** A ‘dead’ vehicle explodes, dealing damage equal to its base Toughness bonus due to size to any crew left onboard. The vehicle is completely destroyed.



CHAPTER TWELVE:

Horror

Adventures

FEARSOME FORCES SLITHER AND LURK AT THE VERY PERIPHERY OF HUMAN PERCEPTION. WHETHER THEY BE SANITY-TESTING CREATURES FROM UNIMAGINABLE ADVENTURES, OR ALL-TOO-HUMAN MONSTERS, THE CHAPTER LAYS OUT RULES FOR BRINGING THEM TO HIDEOUS LIFE IN TRUE20 STYLE.

Being scared is fun. Whether it's a movie, graphic novel, or video game, we all enjoy the frisson created by fear. Why? Because being scared allows us to experience one of the strongest emotions we have and at the end of the day, we can turn off the television, put away the book, or turn off the video console with the full confidence that it is all just make believe.

Horror adventures allow you the opportunity to even more fully immerse yourself in a world where something is askew. There are many different flavors of horror, so it is important for the Narrator to determine what type of horror adventure or campaign he wishes to run. While he may take input from the players, the unknown elements of the setting are often important components in creating fear in a horror game, so such suggestions may be integrated or ignored at the Narrator's whim.

FLAVORS OF FEAR: GENRE CONVENTIONS

Horror is a broad genre with many subgenres in its expansive domain, but at its dark heart, horror is about evoking fear. If you don't think that's enough to hang an adventure on, think again. Horror can range as widely as one's dark imagination allows. Some specific subgenres of horror help to further define and refine how this whole business of how creating fear is generally handled.

BLOOD AND GORE

Splatter horror, often referred to as *slasher* horror, is one of the simpler styles of horror to handle. Most often the characters are ordinary individuals, such as camp counselors or college students, and must contend with a psychotic serial killer whose cleaver has decided to lay claim on the characters. This style is most suitable for one-shot adventures, as the casualty rate could be a bit high for any type of sustained campaign.

THINGS FROM THE OTHER SIDE

Supernatural horror, on the other hand, is ideal for both short adventures and campaigns, lasting as long as the collective sanity of the characters allows. Characters can range from ordinary to experts, warriors, and, though quite unusual, even adepts. Encounters can vary from cultists to aliens to things-man-was-not-meant-to-know. The most important elements for this style of play is that true evil is alive and well, and monsters exist in whatever capacity you wish to present them.

UNKNOWN TERROR

"The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown."

— H.P. Lovecraft, "Supernatural Horror in Literature"

range from, "Why does the Hobbs House have flickering lights in its windows?", to complex conspiracies that typically develop over a campaign's lifetime, such as, "Why is the United States concealing the fact that extraterrestrial life exists?"

MAKING IT THROUGH THE NIGHT

Survival horror comes in two flavors, is simple and straightforward to run, and can lend itself to either a sustained campaign or an evening's entertainment. Typically, in this scenario, something in the overall setting has gone terribly wrong. An element of the supernatural usually plays a key part in survival horror. Rather than the horror being hidden away, as in suspense or supernatural horror, the monsters, zombies, or whatever are very much at work in the neighborhood, eating their way through the populace and hoping to have a bit of the heroes' brains for dessert.

The goal of the characters is simple: survive the night, the week, or the journey to a safe destination. When the characters complete this initial goal, continued game play can continue in this style or take on a more strategic aspect, wherein the characters may search for other survivors or mount a campaign against the threat in the hopes of driving it back. Characters are most often ordinary, but can also have the expert or warrior roles. Adepts are almost never seen in survival horror, but that doesn't mean your game can't be different.

IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

A variant on the survival horror theme is *apocalyptic* horror, wherein some catastrophic event has irrevocably modified the world, such as a viral strain that has turned ninety percent of the world into vampires. It is up to the heroes to find a way to survive in a world gone mad.

This is like survival horror, only rather than making it through the night, the heroes are in an ongoing struggle for survival. They might have a slim hope of reaching or creating some kind of haven for themselves and others, but otherwise their job is to live to fight another day. Apocalyptic horror becomes less horror over time and more of a shoot-'em-up survival game.

NOTES ON HORROR NARRATION

Evoke the senses in a horror story: a sickly sweet perfume wafting up from beneath the rotted door, the sudden chill that whips up from nowhere and mysteriously vanishes, or the lone, mournful cry of some anguished animal echoing across the bay: these are all ways to pull the players more fully into your story. A successful horror game relies on the suspension of disbelief, of leading the characters into closely identifying with their characters. Appealing to their senses, particularly smell, touch, and sound, is a key part of drawing players in.

Pay attention to pacing. Preparation is essential to narrating a solid horror adventure. Some of the best scenarios are built on suspense; it falls upon you, as the Narrator, to be fully familiar with the story you want to tell.

Set the mood. Horror games can be run anytime, but like a scary movie, they are best run at night even if where you are playing is well lit. Why? The fear of the dark is in the very bones of man; unless you are playing in the basement, you have the constant dark lurking just outside the windows. (The basement, on the other hand, provides countless other opportunities to exploit.)

Take your game seriously. Certainly, you're playing a game, but it is especially important to maintain a level of seriousness in horror games, even more so than in other genres. Humor may arise naturally during the course of play among your players; it is a natural defense mechanism, and should be allowed to run its course. If you allow it to take a central focus in your games, however, the horrific illusion will be dispelled.

HORROR HEROES

As previously mentioned, heroes in horror stories often come from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. In this section, we'll examine the various backgrounds and roles associated with the archetypes we so often find in horror literature and cinema.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS: BACKGROUNDS

Regardless of whether the characters end up in a fistfight with a fury or running from a wraith, heroes of horror adventures are typically examples of the "common man" or woman, with family and jobs and concerns just like everyone else.

ACADEMIC

Who they are: Academics are people who have dedicated their lives to furthering their understanding of the world. They are librarians, archaeologists, scholars, professors, students, teachers, and other education professionals.

Bonus Feats: Talented (Bonus Skills), Well-Informed

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Computers, Knowledge (any), Gather Information, Language, Medicine

Favored Feats: Skill Mastery, Well-Informed

ATHLETE

Who they are: Athletes include amateur athletes of Olympic quality and professional athletes of all types, including personal trainers, gymnasts, weight trainers, wrestlers, boxers, martial artists, swimmers, skaters, and those who engage in any type of competitive sport.

Bonus Feats (choose any two): Assessment, Endurance, Lightning Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Run, or Tireless

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Acrobatics, Climb, Concentration, Jump, Swim

Favored Feats: Skill Mastery, Tough

BLUE COLLAR

Who they are: The blue collar background includes factory work, farming, food service jobs, construction, service industry jobs, taxi drivers, postal workers, and other jobs that are usually not considered to be desk jobs.

Bonus Feats (choose any two): Endurance, Skill Focus, Talented, Tireless

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Craft (any), Drive, Handle Animal, Knowledge (popular culture)

Favored Feats: Improvised Tools, Jack-of-all-Trades

CREATIVE

Who they are: The creative background covers artists of all types who fan their creative spark into a career. Illustrators, copywriters, cartoonists, graphic artists, novelists, magazine columnists, actors, sculptors, game designers, musicians, screenwriters, photographers, and web designers all fall under this occupation.

Bonus Feat: Any one feat normally available to your role.

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Computers, Craft (visual arts or writing), Knowledge (art or supernatural), Perform

Favored Feats: Jack-of-all-Trades, Skill Mastery

CRIMINAL

Who they are: This illicit background reveals a life from the wrong side of the law. This background includes con artists, burglars, thieves,

crime family soldiers, gang members, bank robbers, and other types of career criminals.

Bonus Feats: Connected, Contacts

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Disable Device, Knowledge (streetwise), Sleight of Hand, Stealth

Favored Feats: Firearms Training, Improvised Tools, Master Plan, Weapon Training

DILETTANTE

Who they are: Dilettantes usually get their wealth from family holdings and trust funds. The typical dilettante has no job, few responsibilities, and at least one driving passion that occupies his or her day. That passion might be a charity or philanthropic foundation, an ideal or cause worth fighting for, or just a lust for living.

Bonus Feats: Connected, Wealth

Bonus Skills: Diplomacy, Knowledge (any)

Favored Feats: Jack-of-All-Trades, Skill Mastery

INVESTIGATIVE

Who they are: There are a number of jobs that fit within this background, including investigative reporters, photojournalists, private investigators, police detectives, criminologists, criminal profilers, espionage agents, and others who use their skills to gather evidence and analyze clues.

Bonus Feats: Contacts, Firearms Training

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Gather Information, Knowledge (streetwise), Notice, Search, Sense Motive

Favored Feats: Jack-of-All-Trades, Well-Informed

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Who they are: The law enforcement background includes uniformed police, state troopers, federal police, federal agents, SWAT team members, and military police.





Bonus Feats: Firearms Training, Improved Disarm

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Drive, Intimidate, Knowledge (civics), Notice

Favored Feats: Attack Specialization, Stunning Attack

MEDICAL

Who they are: A character with a medical background can be a physician (general practitioner or specialist), a nurse, a surgeon, a psychiatrist, or an EMT.

Bonus Feats: Skill Focus (Medicine), Second Chance (Provide Care)

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Computers, Craft (pharmaceutical), Knowledge (behavioral science), Medicine, Search

Favored Feats: Improvised Tools, Master Plan

MILITARY

Who they are: The military background covers any of the branches of the armed forces, including army, navy, air force, and marines, as well as the various elite training units such as Seals, Rangers, and Special Forces.

Bonus Feats (choose any two): Endurance, Firearm Training, Improved Critical

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Demolitions, Knowledge (tactics), Stealth, Survival

Favored Feats: Master Plan, Seize Initiative

RELIGIOUS

Who they are: Religious characters are ordained clergy of all persuasions, as well as theological scholars and experts on religious studies.

Bonus Feats: Dedicated, Skill Focus: Knowledge (theology and philosophy)

Bonus Skills: Diplomacy, Knowledge (theology and philosophy)

Favored Feats: Empower, Imbue Item

TECHNICAL

Who they are: The technical background is similar to the academic but is much more "hands-on." Engineers, mechanics, and physical scientists fit within the scope of this background.

Bonus Feats: Contacts, Talented

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Computers, Craft (chemical, electronic, mechanical, or structural), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, business, physical sciences, or technology)

Favored Feats: Improvised Tools, Jack-of-All-Trades

WHITE COLLAR

Who they are: The white collar background represents office workers and desk jockeys, lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, bank personnel, financial advisors, tax preparers, clerks, sales personnel, real estate agents, and a variety of mid-level managers.

Bonus Feats: Connected, Talented

Bonus Skills (choose any two): Computers, Diplomacy, Knowledge (any)

Favored Feats: Fascinate, Well-Informed

ROLES

While *True20 Adventure Roleplaying* has three main roles for characters to select from, we recommend the following six:

Arcanist: Someone with a keen intellect and knowledge of the arcane arts whose powers often come through rituals, bargains with supernatural powers, and deeds.

Blessed: Someone with shrewd awareness and self confidence whose powers are based in her faith.

Expert: Someone experienced in a wide range of skills.

OMITTING ADEPTS

While the supernatural plays an important role in horror, the nature of horror demands that the heroes not have the upper hand in this area. As a general rule, access to powers should be limited in scope and restrictive in nature. To that end, four new roles have been introduced (the Arcanist, Blessed, Intellectual, and Psychic) in lieu of the more general adept role.

If you opt to allow adepts, do so sparingly. Adepts have the full gamut of supernatural abilities to draw upon and can quickly change the tone of the campaign from horror to modern fantasy. The best choice is to relegate adepts to the realm of adversaries, such as witches, mad sorcerers, and warlocks—making the level of supernatural power associated with adept something that requires a pact with infernal or otherworldly forces that extract a hideous price.

Restricting the adept role to Narrator characters preserves its rightful place in a horror campaign. Other recommendations and considerations are found in the **Powers** section of this chapter.

Intellectual: Someone who is highly skilled and posses uncanny deductive ability.

Psychic: Someone with mental agility and social grace whose powers come from within.

Warrior: Someone with skill at arms and various combat techniques.

ARCANIST

Some characters are able to decipher ancient writings and piece together fragments of knowledge found in books of forgotten lore. With such knowledge, they are able to command the forces of earth and sky and beyond, should they so choose. Others seek power more directly through bargaining and rituals, while others still prefer to keep their knowledge in the realm of the purely theoretical.

The arcanist role has the following features:

Role Type: Adept

Combat Progression: Slow (2 points). The combat bonus is equal to 1/2 the character's arcanist levels.

Skill Progression: 8 + Int (2 points)

Feat Access: 4 from Adept or General (0 points)

Save Progression: Good Will, Normal Fortitude and Reflex (0 points)

Power Progression: Slow, Unlimited (1 point). The character's power rank is equal to half his adept levels (rounded up) + 1.

Great Resolve (Core Ability): Through your years of study you have detailed knowledge of folklore, mystical and alchemical formulae, and magical creatures. You can draw on this knowledge to strengthen your resolve in the face of the supernatural. When making a Will save, you can spend a point of Conviction and automatically treat your die roll as a 20. Note this is not considered a "natural" 20, but otherwise works like a die result of 20.

ARCANIST PATHS

The following sets of starting skills and feats show some of the more common paths taken by the arcanist. (The paths assume an Intelligence score of +0).

MYSTIC

The mystic is a character who has abandoned traditional sciences to pursue the ephemeral studies of the Unseen World and the mysteries of the supernatural. He constantly travels in pursuit of enlightenment.

Key Abilities: Intelligence, Charisma

Starting Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (behavioral sciences), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (supernatural), Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Notice, Search, Sense Motive

Starting Feats: Body Control, Iron Will, Mind Over Body, Second Chance (Fatigue saves)

OCCULTIST

The occultist dabbles in the supernatural as an academic pursuit, hoarding old books and scrolls as a personal storehouse of arcane lore. A lifetime of poring over forbidden secrets has given the Occultist unnatural insights, teaching him a trick or two that just might be the difference between life and death.

Key Abilities: Intelligence, Wisdom

Starting Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (life sciences), Knowledge (supernatural), Knowledge (physical science), Gather Information, Languages (choose four), Notice, Search

Starting Feats: Eidetic Memory, Second Chance (Sanity Saves), Skill Focus: Knowledge (Supernatural), Ward

BLESSED

Some characters are touched by the divine in such a way they are able to perform miracles. Others achieve this state through strict discipline and adherence to their faith. In either case, they use their abilities to actively further their cause's agendas whenever possible. The parameters of characters taking this role need to be carefully worked out and defined with the Narrator as it pertains to the source of their powers and their access to them.

The blessed role has the following features:

Role Type: Adept

Combat Progression: Slow (2 points). The combat bonus is equal to 1/2 the character's acolyte levels.

Skill Progression: 6 + Int (1.5 points)

Feat Access: 4 from Adept or General (0 points)

Save Progression: Good Will, Normal Fortitude and Reflex (0 points)

Power Progression: Fast, Broad (1.5 points). A blessed hero can only choose powers from the broad list of powers provided below.

Higher Purpose (Core Ability): You serve a higher purpose or calling, inspired by your faith. When faced with a challenge *directly* related to your Higher Purpose, you may spend a Conviction point to gain either two feats or a single power (with a Fast Power Progression equal to your total level) you can use for the duration

NEW CORE ABILITY: BRAVE

A Narrator can incorporate this new core ability into his campaign either by allowing players to swap out their character's normal core ability, or by creating a new role (using the method detailed in **Chapter Nine**) and using this as the core ability.

Brave: You can spend a point of Conviction to immediately erase all startled, spooked and scared conditions (and their associated penalties).



of the encounter or scene. Choose the feats or power when you acquire this ability, they (and your higher purpose) cannot be changed. If you ever abandon your purpose, you lose the use of this core ability. The Dedicated feat (page 45) is quite common for heroes with this core ability.

Fall from Grace: Should you not adhere to the tenets of your higher purpose, you are incapable of using your core ability or your supernatural powers until such time as you have made recompense for your misdeeds. Alternately, if you are using the Corruption rules, if you have one or more points of Corruption, you are incapable of accessing your core ability or powers.

BLESSED PATHS

The following sets of starting skills and feats show some of the more common paths taken by acolytes. (The paths assume an Intelligence score of +0).

AVENGING ANGEL

This character is gifted with offensive powers enabling them to further their cause. Often, a character taking this role improves its effectiveness by combining it with one or more roles of warrior, making them more effective combatants. Wisdom is especially important for channeling their divine powers, while Dexterity and Constitution enables them to mix it up.

Key Abilities: Wisdom, Dexterity

Starting Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Notice, Sense Motive

Starting Feats: Dedicated, Supernatural Strike, Supernatural Weapon, Weapon Training

THE CHOSEN

This character fills the traditional role of his chosen faith, be it ascetic monk, priest, or rabbi. His dedication and devotion has brought to him divine gifts that he must somehow understand and use for the good of humanity. These chosen become known as saints, faith healers, and holy men and women of all colors and creeds. Wisdom and Intelligence are paramount for putting these divine gifts to best use.

Key Abilities: Wisdom, Intelligence

Starting Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Notice, Sense Motive

Starting Feats: Cure, Dedicated, Skill Focus: Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Ward

EXPERT

The expert role is focused on skill and interaction but is also a capable fighter when need be. In a horror campaign, an expert can be an adventurous college professor, a hard-boiled private eye, or even a member of the criminal underworld.

EXPERT PATHS

The following sets of starting skills and feats show some of the more common paths taken by this role. (The paths assume an Intelligence score of +0).

DETECTIVE

Investigating murder and mayhem are all in a day's work for a detective. His knowledge of the criminal mind and the streets can serve him in good stead in a variety of campaign types.

Key Abilities: Charisma, Intelligence

Starting Skills: Gather Information, Knowledge (civics), Knowledge (life sciences), Knowledge (streetwise), Notice, Research, Search, Sense Motive

Starting Feats: Benefit (Detective), Firearms Training, Jack-of-All-Trades, Skill Mastery (Gather Information, Notice, Search, Sense Motive)

REPORTER

A man who wants to get his story at any cost, the reporter often finds himself drawn into situations far greater than he could ever believe possible.

Key Abilities: Charisma, Intelligence

Starting Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (current events) Notice, Perform (acting), Research, Search

Starting Feats: Benefit (Press Pass), Improvised Tools, Skill Mastery (Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Search), Well-Informed

BLESSED POWER LIST

Bliss	Body Control	Calm	Cure	Cure Blindness/ Deafness	Cure Disease	Cure Poison	Earth Shaping
Elemental Resistance	Enhance Senses	Fire Shaping	Heart Reading	Heart Shaping	Imbue Life	Imbue Unlife (vice)	Light Shaping
Mind Touch	Nature Reading	Object Reading	Purifying Light	Second Sight	Severance	Sleep	Suggestion
Supernatural Strike	Supernatural Weapon	Teleport	True Visions	Truth-Reading	Visions	Ward	Water Shaping
Weather Shaping	Wind Shaping	Wind Walk					

INTELLECTUAL

Intellectuals are highly educated people possessing very keen powers of observation and deduction. Their ability to pick up on subtle clues borders on the uncanny, giving them almost superhuman problem-solving capability.

The intellectual role has the following features:

Role Type: Expert

Combat Progression: Slow (2 points). The combat bonus is equal to 1/2 the character's intellectual levels.

Skill Progression: 8 + Int (2 points)

Save Progression: Good Will, Normal Fortitude and Reflex (0 points)

Feat Access: Any 4 from General or Expert (0 points). Since an intellectual has Power Progression, you can swap out a feat in exchange for a supernatural power on the Intellectual Power List.

Power Progression: Fast, Narrow (1 point). The intellectual can only choose powers from the narrow list below. Rather than being true supernatural powers, these abilities represent the intellectual's extraordinary talent for deduction, understanding of human nature, and logic. The Narrator may allow you to include other powers on a case-by-case basis provided they can be described as natural abilities rather than supernatural powers.

Common Sense (Core Ability): It may not be that common, but you've got it. Whenever you're about to do something foolish or downright stupid, the Narrator *must* warn you, usually with something along the lines of "Are you sure you really want to do that?" Based on this, you may choose a different course of action. Common Sense doesn't cost Conviction, but it's also not under your control.

INTELLECTUAL POWER LIST

Enhance Ability	Enhance Senses
Heart Reading	Heart Shaping
Nature Reading	Psychic Shield
Second Sight	Suggestion
True Vision*	Truth-Reading

*True Vision is from the *True20 Bestiary*

INTELLECTUAL PATHS

The following sets of starting skills and feats show some of the more common paths taken by intellectuals (The paths assume an Intelligence score of +0).

ANTIQUARIAN

Practical professors, antiquarians often offer their services as appraisers and experts in the world of art history to a broad and eclectic range of clientele. Over time, they often accumulate great storehouses of knowledge, both practical and esoteric. Sometimes, innate curiosity or greed gets the better of them and they leave their positions as resident expert and journey into the realms of the strange and mysterious, in search of artifacts, knowledge, or both.

Key Abilities: Intelligence, Charisma

Starting Skills: Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (art), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (supernatural), Languages (French, Italian, Latin), Notice, Search

Starting Feats: Contacts, Enhance Senses, Fascinate, Suggestion

MAKING A NON-COMBAT EXPERT

Face it: a studious, absent-minded professor wouldn't necessarily know how to use a firearm effectively, and he certainly wouldn't be very effective in a fistfight. The expert role seems tailor-made for a highly skilled academic, however, so how does one reconcile the combat capability of the role with a character concept that doesn't include such capability? Players and Narrators have a few options available to them to resolve this dilemma.

STAY ON CONCEPT

At the simplest, all one must do to make a non-combative expert is to stay on concept and stick with skill-based feats, not take the Firearms Training or Weapon Training feats. Lacking a Weapon Training feat imposes a -4 penalty attack rolls with firearms and martial weapons. Without a weapon feat, an expert needs to be 7th level in order to have a +1 to hit (not including Dexterity, of course). Although an expert without a weapon feat is not as capable in combat, it does not affect his Defense. The character lacks basic skill in combat but he can still effectively dive for cover when he needs to.

SIMPLE WEAPON TRAINING AS A VIRTUAL FEAT

All roles provide proficiency in simple weapons. This can be considered a "bonus feat" that all characters receive regardless of role; even ordinaries get free proficiency in simple weapons. If one considers Simple Weapon Training as a feat, it further solves the problem of combat-capable experts. A player who wants to make an expert with absolutely no training in combat can voluntarily give up this "virtual feat" in exchange for any other General or Expert feat. In this case, Simple Weapon Training is considered to be a prerequisite for Weapon Training. Without it an expert has a -4 penalty when using simple weapons. The expert can pick up the Simple Weapon Training and Weapon Training feats later on as the studious professor grows into a skilled monster-hunter.

THE POINT-BUY ROLE SYSTEM

Players and Narrators can use the point-buy role creation system presented in [Chapter Nine](#) to create a highly-skilled role with little or no ability in combat. One such "non-combat expert" role, the Intellectual, is provided here as an example.

DESCRIBING THE INTELLECTUAL'S POWERS

The powers of the intellectual are not actually supernatural. Rather, they are observational abilities gained through deductive reasoning and keen insight. Players and Narrators can use the explanations below to describe an intellectual's powers, or invent their own.

Enhance Ability: You have an innate understanding of the principles of applied force and leverage, which manifests itself as a temporary boost in Strength or Dexterity.

Enhance Senses, True Vision: Your skill with deductive reasoning naturally augments your Notice skill and makes you difficult to Bluff.

Heart Reading, Truth-Reading: You have the ability to detect the emotions of others through the interpretation of subtle body language and micro-expressions.

Heart Shaping, Suggestion: Your detailed understanding of human nature enables you to subtly manipulate the emotions of others.

Nature Reading: Your understanding of the natural world allows you to make educated guesses about your environment.

Psychic Shield: Your logical mind makes it difficult for psychic power to affect you.

Second Sight: You have a knack for making assumptions about the use of supernatural powers based on their lingering influences on the environment.

PSYCHIC POWER LIST

Beast Link	Bliss	Body Control	Calm	Cure	Enhance Senses	Fire Shaping	Heart Reading
Heart Shaping	Manipulate Object	Mind Probe	Mind Reading	Mind Shaping	Mind Touch	Move Object	Nature Reading
Object Reading	Pain	Psychic Blast	Psychic Reflection	Psychic Shield	Psychic Trap	Scrying	Second Sight
Sense Minds	Suggestion	True Visions*	Truth-Reading	Visions	Ward		

CRIMINOLOGIST

An expert analyst and forensic specialist, a criminologist studies normal social behaviors and how certain factors influence deviation from the norm. Combining elements of statistician, psychologist, and sociologist, this highly trained academic is invaluable for their practical creativity and logical thinking. Their keen understanding of the human psyche enables them to trigger emotional states in potential suspects as well. Criminologists are often drawn into cases through the discovery of bizarre deaths and their drive to find the underlying truth of a mystery.

Key Abilities: Intelligence, Wisdom

Starting Skills: Concentration, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences), Knowledge (Forensics), Notice, Sense Motive, Search

Starting Feats: Heart Shaping, Improvised Tools, Talented (Knowledge (behavioral sciences) and Knowledge (forensics)), Well-Informed

PSYCHIC

Psychic characters are those that have had their inner core awakened and are capable of performing feats of extrasensory perception, psychokinesis, or both.

The psychic role has the following features:



Role Type: Adept

Combat Progression: Slow (2 points). The combat bonus is equal to 1/2 the character's psychic levels.

Skill Progression: 6 + Int (1.5 points)

Feat Access: 4 from Adept or General (0 points)

Save Progression: Good Will, Normal Fortitude and Reflex (0 points)

Power Progression: Fast, Broad (1.5 points). The Psychic can only choose powers from the Psychic Power List. Certain overt powers, such as Psychic Blast and the fatiguing version of Move Object, may be further restricted at the Narrator's discretion if they do not fit the campaign.

Higher Guidance (Core Ability): You just know things sometimes and there seems to be a higher power watching over you. You can spend a point of Conviction to ask the Narrator a direct question about something and get a truthful answer, although the Narrator's reply may be brief (often just a "yes" or "no"). The Narrator may choose not to answer if it would adversely affect the flow of the game, in which case you get your Conviction point back.

*True Visions is from the *True20 Bestiary*

PSYCHIC PATHS

The following sets of starting skills and feats show some of the more common paths taken by psychics (The paths assume an Intelligence score of +0).

CLAIRSENTIENT

A clairsentient is an empathic character capable of sensing and interpreting energies around people, places, and/or things. As she progresses, she grows in understanding these energies and frequently expands her abilities and powers.

Key Abilities: Charisma, Wisdom

Starting Skills: Concentration, Gather Information, Knowledge (supernatural), Notice, Sense Motive, Search

Starting Feats: Heart Reading, Object Reading, Truth-Reading, Visions

PSYCHOKINETIC

This type of psychic does not deal with the gentle subtleties of the mind, but learns to use sheer force of personality to affect the world. This mind-over-matter ability can manifest in a variety of ways.

Key Abilities: Charisma, Constitution

Starting Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (supernatural), Notice, Sense Motive

Starting Feats: Cure, Fire Shaping, Manipulate Object, Move Object

WARRIOR

The warrior's strengths involve combat and physical toughness. Warriors are hardy men and women who are capable of handling themselves in a fight and can more easily resist poison and disease.

WARRIOR PATHS

The following sets of starting skills and feats show some of the more common paths taken by Warriors. (The paths assume an Intelligence score of +0).

GOVERNMENT AGENT

Often sent into situations to observe and investigate, an agent may have a secret agenda or be quite the company man. Wisdom and Intelligence are essential in helping analyzing data and perform due diligence in his primary fields of expertise, while Dexterity enables him to aim accurately should such situations arise.

Key Abilities: Wisdom, Intelligence

Starting Skills: Gather Information, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences), Notice, Search

Starting Feats: Benefit (Security Clearance), Firearms Training, Skill Focus: Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences), Talented (Notice, Search)

SOLDIER

The soldier is the modern warrior, trained to fight (usually for a nation, but sometimes on a freelance basis) in myriad situations and circumstances around the world. The soldier is hardened by combat and conflict, and ready to deal with any threat—usually with violence. Dexterity and Wisdom are important for selecting and striking the best targets, while Constitution and Intelligence aid in all-around survivability.

Key Abilities: Dexterity, Wisdom

Starting Skills: Climb, Disable Device, Stealth, Survival

Starting Feats: Accurate Attack, Endurance, Firearms Training, Tough

SKILLS & FEATS

The skills and feats detailed in chapters **Two** and **Three** suit most horror games, but some more subtle skills and unique feats also fit into the genre, as described here.

SKILLS

Following, you will find refinements of two existing skills for use in your horror campaign and the introduction of a new skill, Research.

KNOWLEDGE (SUPERNATURAL) (INT)

The occult, magic and the supernatural, astrology, numerology and similar topics including:

- Clues about a creature's weakness or origin.
- Insights into the cultural origins of magic, cults or rituals based upon evidence as varied as an inscription, an offering or a chant echoing down a hallway.
- The link between current strange occurrences and those in the past.

LANGUAGE

TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION

Language is an unusual skill. Each rank in this skill gives you the ability to read, write and speak another language at its basic level.

- **Basic Level:** Taking a language once grants you literacy and fluency in a language. You have a regional accent as well. This is the level that all characters speak their Native tongue at, unless they elect to take another level of proficiency.
- **Expert Level:** Taking two ranks in the same language grants the character complete and utter fluidity. The character copies slang, local dialects and cultural body language with ease. (A character with English at this level may emulate regional American accents, as well as British, Cockney, Irish and other English accents, for example.).
- **Dead or Exotic Languages:** These languages require the assignment of two skill ranks to have at the *basic level* and three skill ranks to have at *expert level*.

Dead Languages (Common)	Dead Languages (Exotic)
Aramaic	Enochian (Angelic)
Gaelic	Incantic (Blasphemer's script, cryptographic, written only)
Greek	Lethe (The forgotten tongue)
Hieroglyphics (Written only)	Mortis (Corpse tongue)
Latin	Lucent (Corrupted Enochian)

RESEARCH (INT)

INTELLIGENCE

Even if you don't know something off the top of your head, a good researcher can often turn up answers. Given enough time (usually a few hours) and proper information sources like libraries, newspaper morgues, microfilm, microfiche, and computer records, you get a general idea about a given topic. The Difficulty of a Research check is 10 for basic knowledge, 15 for more obscure data, and 20 to 30 for very obscure bits of lore. This assumes that no obvious reasons exist why such information would be unavailable, and that you have a way to acquire restricted or protected information. The Narrator determines how obscure a particular topic is (the more obscure, the higher the Difficulty) and what kind of information might be available depending on where you are conducting your research.

Challenges: You can accept the following challenges when making a Research check.

Scanning the Headlines: You may add +5 or +10 to the Difficulty to reduce Research time by half or one quarter respectively.

Time: A Research check normally takes an hour.

Topic	Difficulty	Example Source
General	10	Textbooks
Specific	15	Computer records
Obscure	20	Newspaper morgues
Disorganized	+5	Scattered notes
Restricted	+5	Police case files
Protected	+10	Government documents

FEATS

In this section we present new feats to aid your heroes in their battles against the horrors of the night.

ALTERNATE APPROACH (GENERAL)

Instead of relying on willpower and discipline, you handle the mind-bending and sanity-stretching effects of horror with either sheer guts or incredible mental flexibility.

Benefit: Select either your character's Intelligence or Constitution score. Use that ability score's modifier for all Sanity saves (see **Fear and Terror** later in this chapter).

BRUTE FORCE (GENERAL)**PREREQUISITES:** STRENGTH +1, COMBAT BONUS +1

Your fighting style takes advantage of your impressive strength.

With a battleaxe, club, quarterstaff, sword or warhammer (or any other melee weapon your Narrator allows), you may add your Strength instead of your Dexterity to attack rolls.

You cannot make a finesse attack while using the Brute Force feat.

CHALLENGE [FAST FEINT] (GENERAL)

You can make a Bluff check to feint in combat as a move action.

COLD-BLOODED (GENERAL)

You get +1 to Sanity saves and +1 to Intimidation attempts. Also, you gain +2 on saving throws to resist the Mind Touch power—your mind is a cold, dark place where few go willingly.

FALSE ATTACK (WARRIOR)**PREREQUISITE:** CHALLENGE [FAST FEINT]

You can make a feint to set your opponent up for a devastating attack on a vital area. By taking the full round action, you can make a single false attack. If you miss, you have a -2 penalty to your defense the following round. If you hit, you deal +2 damage.

IMPROVED KNOCKOUT PUNCH (WARRIOR)**PREREQUISITES:** IMPROVED STRIKE, KNOCKOUT PUNCH

When your first unarmed attack is against a flat-footed opponent, treat a successful attack as a critical hit. This critical hit deals +4 damage instead of +3.

IMPROVED OVERRUN (GENERAL)**PREREQUISITES:** STRENGTH +1

When you attempt to overrun an opponent, the target may not choose to avoid you. You also gain a +2 bonus on your Strength check to knock down your opponent.

IMPROVED RUSH (GENERAL)**PREREQUISITES:** STRENGTH +1

When you perform a rush, you gain a +2 bonus on the opposed Strength check to push back the defender.

INSPIRE (EXPERT)

The following is a new use of the Inspire feat (page 47).

Commanding Voice: You are especially good at snapping people out of a freeze and reassuring them that things aren't as bad as they seem. If you shout at someone who has a failed Sanity save, they can immediately reroll their Sanity save using your Charisma bonus to determine the new result. Doing this counts as a standard action and is considered the use of an interaction skill, even though no skill check is required. This means your subjects have to be able to hear and understand you. You can affect a number of subjects equal to half your expert level (with a minimum of one). You can use this feat once per day per expert level. You can spend a Conviction point for an additional use that day.

IMPROMPTU WEAPON PROFICIENCY (GENERAL)

Household items are lethal weapons in your hands. You take only a -2 penalty on attack rolls when using any kind of improvised weapon. Additionally, Impromptu Weapons count as a weapon type for you, allowing you to acquire additional feats such as Attack Focus, which are normally unavailable for Impromptu Weapons.

JADED (GENERAL)

You've seen it all. You receive a +2 bonus on all Sanity saves.

KNOCKOUT PUNCH (GENERAL)**PREREQUISITES:** IMPROVED STRIKE

When your first unarmed attack is against a flat-footed opponent, treat a successful attack as a critical hit. This damage is non-lethal damage.

LONER (GENERAL)

You have few connections to other people or ideals. You do not suffer any penalties to Sanity saves for being alone or only having one other person present.

RITUAL KNOWLEDGE (GENERAL)**PREREQUISITE:** YOU MUST HAVE DISCOVERED A RITUAL IN WRITTEN FORM AND HAD AT LEAST A WEEK TO STUDY AND PRACTICE IT.

You have memorized the requirements and procedure for a particular ritual. Pick one supernatural power. You can perform that power as a ritual without requiring access to the written form of the ritual. You must still meet all other requirements of the ritual, such as special materials and conditions. See **Rituals** for further details and examples.

URBAN TRACKING (GENERAL)

You can track down the location of missing persons or wanted individuals.

To find the trail of an individual or to follow it for 1 hour requires a Gather Information check. You must make another Gather Information check every hour of the search, as well as each time the trail becomes difficult to follow, such as when it moves to a different area of town.

The Difficulty of the check and the number of checks required to track down your quarry depend on the community population and the conditions:

URBAN TRACKING

Population	Difficulty	Checks Required
Fewer than 2,000	5	3
2,000–9,999	10	4
10,000–49,999	15	5
50,000–99,999	20	6
100,000–499,999	25	7
500,000+	30	8

URBAN TRACKING CONDITION MODIFIERS

Condition	Difficulty Modifier
Every three creatures in the group being sought	-1
Every 24 hours the quarry has been missing or sought	+1
Tracked quarry "lies low"	+5

If you fail a Gather Information check, you can retry after one hour of questioning. You can cut the time per Gather Information check in half (to 30 minutes per check rather than one hour per check), but you suffer a -5 penalty on the check. This is the same as a challenge on your Gather Information skill check (limited to urban tracking) and you can take the Challenge feat (page 44) in order to cut the time for urban tracking in half without any penalty on your skill check.

POWERS

Supernatural powers are common in horror stories, but most often in the hands of the heroes' adversaries! The Narrator should decide what, if any, powers are available to heroes (including the existence of the other power-wielding heroic roles described on pages 213–215). If powers are available to the heroes, they may include some or all of the following.

PURIFYING LIGHT

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION

You can wield the power of pure light as a weapon against the forces of evil. This power allows you to do two things.

Light Blast: First, you can cast a supernatural bolt of light like an Elemental Blast (see **Chapter Four**), except it only affects undead and supernatural creatures of innate evil (creatures with the vice subtype), such as fiends.

Shining Ward: Second, you can call forth a shining light to fill an area up to 60 feet across. Maintaining the area of pure light requires concentration. Any undead or supernatural creature with the vice subtype must make a Will save in order to enter the area of light, and another Will save each round to remain there. A failed save means the creature cannot enter the area and must leave immediately if it is already inside it.

Both uses of Purifying Light are fatiguing. You make the fatigue save after each Light Blast and after you stop maintaining a Shining Ward.

Time: Both uses of Purifying Light require a standard action.

SUMMON OUTSIDER

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: 6TH-LEVEL ADEPT OR HIGHER, TRAINED IN THE KNOWLEDGE (SUPERNATURAL) AND KNOWLEDGE (THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY) SKILLS.

You can summon outsiders, beings from other planes of existence, to serve you. This requires a check of $d20 + \text{adept level} + \text{your key ability}$ with a Difficulty of $10 + \text{twice the outsider's level}$. Summoning a 5th level outsider is Difficulty 20, for instance. Summon Outsider is fatiguing (Difficulty 10 + the outsider's level). The summoned creature does your bidding for a number of days equal to your adept level before returning to its home plane.

Time: Summon Outsider is a standard action.

TRUE VISION

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION

Your insight is difficult to fool. You can use your True Vision bonus in place of your Sense Motive bonus to resist Bluff attempts. You can also use it in place of your Will save bonus to overcome Illusions and other supernatural powers that fool your senses. These benefits operate automatically for you once you have learned this power.

If you take a full-round action, you can make a True Vision check, opposed by the bonus of any illusory or concealing ability or the Disguise or Stealth bonus of any creature. If you win the check, you see the subject as it truly is, ignoring the effects of any disguise, illusion or concealment. This effect is fatiguing and requires concentration to maintain.

Time: True Vision normally requires no effort to use, operating automatically.

EQUIPMENT

More so than many other genres, horror is a feeling that transcends time and space. As such, Narrators may well to take players back in time to some of the more popular periods for horror, such as the Victorian era, the 1920s or the 1950s. Many are content to blend their horror with the contemporary era, while others prefer their horror in the cold depths of space. As such, rather than present you with a laundry list of goods, we'd prefer to present the Narrator with some guidelines to keep in mind.

First off, consider the Wealth score your friend. Regardless of the period in which you elect to play, you can still use it as a rule of thumb. Just be aware of items that did not exist in the period in which you wish to game as it can break the atmosphere. If your party is sneaking through a foggy street in 1840s London and a rough pops out with an Uzi, you've probably lost their attention (and respect) unless you have an awfully good reason.

True20 Adventure Roleplaying covers a lot of the basics, especially if you're not overly concerned with details such as specific gun types and keeping up with ammunition variances. Should you find resource management an integral part of a horror experience and that sweating where your next bullet is going to come from really attenuates the horror, we'd like to recommend the exhaustive weapons list found in *True20 Worlds of Adventure*.

Certain other items are of particular use to explorers of the dark and a sampling of such staples follows:

DIGITAL I/R THERMOMETER

A hand-held, pistol-grip device, a digital infra-red thermometer can detect the surface temperature of an object at a distance of 20 feet. It can even detect ambient temperatures if aimed at a point in the air. When an



apparition manifests or uses any of its powers, it draws energy from the environment. This draw of energy results in a rapid decrease in temperature around the entity. A digital thermometer can detect and record this change, but the results are often open to interpretation. For example if a reading is taken near an air conditioning vent or by a window at night, one would expect the ambient temperature of that area to be lower than the rest of the room. Only significant and abnormally rapid decreases in temperature are possible indications of a supernatural presence. *Purchase Difficulty:* 13.

EMF DETECTOR

An EMF Detector is a device that can measure fluctuations in the ambient electromagnetic field (EMF) of an area approximately 30 feet across. Although EMF Detectors are normally used to locate power leaks and electrical wiring, paranormal investigators have also discovered that they can also detect the presence of supernatural entities. If an invisible creature of any kind is within 30 feet of an EMF Detector, the device will register an increase in the ambient EMF. Of course, a similar increase will occur if the detector is within 30 feet of an electrical device or power source, so great care must be used in interpreting the readings. Getting an accurate reading usually requires measuring the normal ambient EMF in every room in a house to get an idea of what is baseline for the area; baseline EMF is usually between .5 and 1.5. Any reading significantly above that baseline may indicate the presence of an invisible supernatural force. *Purchase Difficulty:* 10.

SPECIAL MATERIALS

There are a few special materials that often crop up in the horror genre.

IRON

Cold-wrought iron is a powerful ally in the fight against supernatural creatures. Its mystical properties include the ability to hold ghosts at bay, and to cause great injury to mischievous faeries and goblins. A weapon of cold-wrought iron ignores the DR of fey creatures and certain fiends. An apparition is unable to cross a complete circle of cold iron, which is why old cemeteries were encircled wrought iron fences; if a ghost wanted to wander, it was confined to the cemetery grounds. An apparition (see the *True20 Bestiary*) must succeed on a Difficulty 20 Will save to cross an enclosed circle of iron.

SALT

Salt is believed by many cultures to hold magical properties. It can be used to keep spirits at bay and even ward off the devil himself. Spilled salt cast over the left shoulder fends off bad luck, and a circle of salt is often a component of summoning rituals to fence in the summoned entity. In a horror game, pure salt can be used in a variety of ways.

AGAINST ZOMBIES

A zombie animated by the Zombie ritual—but not one animated by the Imbue Unlife supernatural power or by other means—can be de-

animated if it tastes salt. The usual means of defeating a zombie is by filling its mouth with salt and sewing it shut so it can never rise again. In more desperate situations, a handful of salt can be thrown into a zombie's mouth to de-animate it. A human mouth is a Fine target, so getting salt into a zombie's mouth is an attack roll with a Difficulty equal to $10 + \text{the zombie's Defense} + 8$.

IN SHOTGUN SHELLS

A character who succeeds on a Difficulty 10 Craft (Gunsmith) check can open a shotgun shell and replace the shot with rock salt. Farmers often use this technique to scare off trespassers without inflicting serious injury on them. Rock salt counts as shot for damage purposes (see **Chapter Five**), and the range increment is only 10 ft. Used against the living, rock salt converts the shotgun's damage from lethal to non-lethal. An interesting side effect of a rock salt shotgun blast is that it can temporarily disrupt an apparition's ability to manifest. An apparition (see the *True20 Bestiary*) hit by rock salt must succeed on a Will save with a Difficulty equal to $15 + \text{the shotgun's damage}$. On a failed save, the apparition cannot manifest for 1 round. If it fails the save by 5 or more, the apparition cannot manifest for one minute (10 rounds); if it fails the save by 10 or more, it cannot manifest for one hour. This is only a temporary solution, of course, and other means must be followed in order to truly banish an apparition.

INWARDS AND SUMMONING

A circle of pure salt aids in keeping spirits at bay. An adept using the Ward or Summon Outsider supernatural powers receives a +2 bonus on the power check after spending a full round drawing a circle of salt. The salt must surround the area to be protected or where the entity will appear once summoned.

SILVER

Silver is a common material for weapons in the fight against the supernatural. It is a metal associated with purity and with the moon, and its properties when used against lycanthropes are well known. A silver weapon ignores the Damage Reduction of a lycanthrope. Silver was also once used as a backing for mirrors, and this may be why a vampire casts no reflection in a mirror—the purity of the silver “rejects” the vile image of the undead creature. In the modern day when mirrors no longer have silver backings, carrying a silver mirror is a simple means of verifying whether or not a person is indeed a vampire.

WOODEN STAKE

The most common weapon of a vampire hunter, a simple wooden stake can be used to keep a vampire from rising from the grave. In order to be effective, a stake must be made of a wood with certain innate magical properties, such as oak, mistletoe, or dogwood. Just jabbing a stake into the heart of a vampire is not enough to disable it: the creature must be nailed to the ground in order to keep it from rising.

OPTIONAL RULES

In this section and the next, we present you with a lot of ways to season your horror setting to taste. You'll find guidelines for using ordinarys as adventurers, a discussion on group dynamics, ways to incorporate rituals neatly into your game, options for mental disorders, variable sanity systems, and directions in which to take your campaign.

ORDINARY HEROES

In a typical *True20* campaign, the characters are created using heroic roles. This assumes a certain level of competence and expertise above and beyond most people; indeed this is why they are called “heroes” in the first place.

Heroes are not ordinary people. They are more skilled, more capable, and in general more powerful than the average “man on the street.”

In a horror adventure, however, a Narrator might not want the characters to be quite so heroic. Part of the attraction of horror is pitting the common person against supernatural threats. Mixing heroic levels and ordinary levels allows a Narrator to run games where the characters are not quite as heroic as the normal roles allow. The Narrator can also use the mixed heroic/ordinary option to represent characters who originally know nothing of the supernatural but learn of it and eventually become heroic in their battles against it.

Ordinary levels can be further modified using the role creation system (see **Ordinaries and Role Creation** in **Chapter Nine**). Using that method, the players have a little more leeway in advancing their characters by swapping their skill points for a General feat, a Slow combat progression, or a Good save progression.

OPTION 1: STRICTLY ORDINARY

In a strictly ordinary game, the characters are not allowed to take levels in heroic roles. This approach has some significant pitfalls a Narrator should take into consideration. First, the only benefit the characters receive when they go up in level is skills. They get no Conviction, no Combat bonus, no increase in saving throws, and, most significantly, no feats and no core ability. The lack of feats is perhaps the most limiting factor of a strictly ordinary series. Without feats, a character can only wield simple weapons without suffering a -4 penalty. They have no way to increase their Toughness except through the use of armor, which in turn is limited by the fact they cannot take Armor Training feats to offset the armor check penalty.

Because of all the disadvantages of the ordinary role, a strictly ordinary game is best left to one-shot scenarios where the characters are not expected to engage in a career of adventure.

OPTION 2: START AS AN ORDINARY, ALTERNATE WITH HERO

A Narrator who wants to run a less heroic game can require a character's first level be taken as an ordinary. Once characters attain 2nd level, they

can select heroic roles and advance normally as a mixed-role heroes. Characters made using this option can be even further diluted from the heroic by requiring the player to take the ordinary level at every odd-numbered level.

The biggest disadvantage for characters made using this option is that they lack the four starting feats heroic roles provide. They also lack Conviction, at least until they attain 2nd level and can take a heroic role. Furthermore, as mixed-role heroes whose first level is not a heroic role, such characters lack core abilities. These factors make for a character significantly disadvantaged when compared to purely heroic characters. However, some Narrators desire a grittier atmosphere in which to weave their horror; it certainly lends an air of quiet desperation to a scenario when the players know their characters have no Conviction to rely upon initially. Kind Narrators may allow characters who attain 2nd level the core ability associated with their selected heroic role, since they didn't start with one.

OPTION 3: START AS A HERO, ALTERNATE WITH ORDINARY

This is perhaps the best option for Narrators who want the characters to be a little less heroic. Rather than starting out as ordinaries, the characters take on heroic roles at 1st level, but they must take the ordinary role on every even-numbered level (or even more infrequently, such as every third level). This slows the rate at which the character's number of feats, Combat bonus and saving throws increase, while still allowing for some growth in terms of skill.

RITUAL MAGIC

A curious teenager recites an incantation she found in an old book of magic and accidentally calls forth a demonic entity. A business tycoon who is secretly a powerful cult leader erects monuments that enable him to call down his alien god. A brave priest and his assistant face off in an exorcism against an evil spirit inhabiting the body of an innocent child. Rituals are a way for Narrators to enable adversaries and even ordinaries to wield some control over supernatural forces.

Access to ritual magic should be tightly controlled by the Narrator. Power should not be so easy to come by that it becomes commonplace. A would-be ritualist may have to track down multiple ancient texts in order to piece together the various parts of a ritual, or the book in which the ritual can be found may be closely guarded in the archives of a museum or university.

The heroes should not be given free and regular access to ritual magic, as that takes some of the mystery away from the horror genre. More than anything, ritual magic should be a plot device that begins or ends an adventure. The heroes may have to fight against a creature called to this world by a ritual, or, more dramatically, they have to interrupt a ritual in progress to prevent the creature from being summoned. Furthermore, many rituals have drastic and lasting consequences. The heroes must be aware of the ramifications of their actions; one who engages in the forbidden art of ritual magic risks corruption, his mind, his soul, and even the fate of the world itself.

GUIDELINES FOR RITUALS

A ritual always requires some form of incantation, usually accompanied by gestures. Most rituals also require certain material components such as incense, a circle containing mystic symbols, or sacrifices of blood from a living victim.

During a ritual the ritualist must make an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma check depending on the nature of the ritual. Rituals with more powerful effects have much higher Difficulties, with the most

powerful among them having a Difficulty so high the ritualist must rely on assistants to have any chance of success.



SUPERNATURAL POWERS AS RITUALS

The easiest way to create a new ritual is to base it on one of the supernatural powers in **Chapter Four** or the *True20 Bestiary*. Not all supernatural powers are appropriate for conversion to rituals; usually rituals involve calling or driving away supernatural creatures, empowering one's self, or altering some feature of the local environment (i.e. causing earthquakes or controlling weather).

Narrators can use the following general guidelines to convert a supernatural power into a ritual.

- **Difficulty:** The base Difficulty to perform a ritual is equal to 10 + the power's normal power check Difficulty. If the effect of a power depends on the result of a power check, the ritualist chooses the Difficulty that will achieve the desired result.
- **Adept Levels:** Use the ritualist's total level as the adept level for any calculation relying on adept level (but not for powers in which the adept level is part of a d20 roll). For example, the Ward power would use the ritualist's total level to determine its area of effect.
- **Fatiguing:** If the supernatural power is fatiguing, increase the base Difficulty by +2. Furthermore, the ritual is fatiguing as well, requiring a successful Will save with a Difficulty equal to half the ritual's Difficulty to avoid fatigue. The fatigue save Difficulty is calculated from the final Difficulty for the ritual, after all bonuses from aids and extended time have been applied.
- **Maintenance/Concentration:** If the supernatural power requires maintenance or concentration, increase the base Difficulty by +2. If it requires both, increase the base Difficulty by +4.
- **Prerequisites:** If the power has another power as a prerequisite, increase the base Difficulty by +2 for each required power. If the power has a level-based prerequisite—which includes powers with a power rank prerequisite—increase the base Difficulty by 1/2 the required level (rounded up). For example, Imbue Life has a prerequisite of Cure rank 12, which translates to at least 9 adept levels since power rank is equal

to level + 3. This results in an increase of +7 to the base Difficulty: +2 for the power requirement and +5 for the level requirement.

- **Effects:** A ritual normally only allows the ritualist to perform a single effect. To allow a single ritual to have multiple effects, increase the base Difficulty by +2 per extra effect. For example, the Ward power entails an area effect and a creature ward. A single ritual that does both has its base Difficulty increased by +2.

- **Time:** Multiply the time required to use a supernatural power by 10. The result is how long it takes to perform the ritual. A supernatural power that is a move action or a standard action requires five rounds (30 seconds) to perform as a ritual, and a power that is a full-round action takes at least one minute (10 rounds). This time cannot be reduced, but it can be increased as the ritualist takes time and makes absolutely certain everything is being done correctly. Increasing the time required to perform a ritual reduces the Difficulty by an amount equal to the multiple minus 1. Therefore twice as long to perform the ritual reduces the Difficulty by 1, three times as long reduces it by 2, and so on to a maximum of -19 (20 times as long).

RITUAL ELEMENTS

Each ritual description has the following elements:

- **Power:** The supernatural power upon which the ritual is based, if any. Other than the ritual requirements, the power functions as written when used as a ritual.
- **Difficulty:** The ability check required and the Difficulty. During a ritual, the ritualist must usually make an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma check against a set Difficulty. Each assistant must also make a check of some sort, usually similar in nature to the check required by the ritualist. For each assistant who succeeds, the ritualist gets a +2 bonus to her roll as per Aid. A character involved in a ritual cannot take 10 or 20 on any check required by the ritual.
- **Ritualists:** Each ritual has a ritualist who leads the ceremony and usually one or more assistants who aid the ritualist.
- **Components:** Any special items or materials required for the ritual.
- **Aids:** Any special qualities the ritualist and her assistants must possess, as well as certain qualities that provide a bonus to the ritualist's check. One aid consistent for all rituals is adept levels. The ritualist adds half her adept level (rounded down) to her ability score check to perform the ritual.
- **Time:** How long it takes to perform the ritual.
- **Costs:** Some rituals inflict injury or ability damage, or negatively affect some other aspect of the participants.
- **Success:** What effect the ritual has if successful. Usually, success means the power works as written.
- **Failure:** What happens if the ritual fails. Unlike normal supernatural powers, rituals usually have some drastic consequence for failure.

SAMPLE RITUAL: EXORCISM

This ritual drives out demons or evil spirits possessing a victim or inhabiting a building.

Power: Ward (creature ward vs. Outsiders), fatiguing

Difficulty: Charisma check Difficulty 32 (10 + base Difficulty 20 +2 for fatiguing). Each assistant must succeed on a Difficulty 10 Charisma check to aid the ritualist. Will save Difficulty 16 to avoid fatigue.

Ritualists: An exorcism requires a ritualist and usually at least one assistant.

Components: No components are required, but religious exorcists generally use symbols and texts sacred to their religion as well as

DEMONIC POSSESSION

In the Horror genre, fiends rarely manifest physically unless they are specifically summoned via the Summon Outsider power or the Summon Demon ritual. Instead, fiends prefer to rely on more subtle approaches to influence mortals; they tempt those who contact them, spreading corruption and vice through suggestions and promises of power. Usually, the most overt actions a fiend takes involve possession of a living host. To reflect this, all fiends with the Mind Touch power have the Malevolence trait:

MALEVOLENCE

A fiend can possess a living creature through the use of the Mind Touch power. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (Difficulty of 10 + 1/2 the fiend's level + the fiend's Charisma). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that fiend's Malevolence for 24 hours. If the save fails, the fiend vanishes into the target's body and controls it as if using the Dominate supernatural power. While in possession of a mortal body, the fiend uses its own mental ability scores and Will save and has access to all of its Intelligence-, Wisdom-, and Charisma-based skills, all of its adept feats and skill-based feats, and all of its supernatural powers and traits except the ability to summon other fiends. It does not have access to its physical ability scores, skills, feats, or traits (such as DR).

If you are using the Corruption rules, a character possessed by a fiend automatically gains a point of Corruption. If the character willingly allowed the fiend to possess him, he gains two points of Corruption.

other substances symbolizing purity, such as holy water, salt, or white candles.

Aids: The ritualist must be trained in either the Knowledge (theology and philosophy) or Knowledge (supernatural) skills. The ritualist must also be pure of heart and faith: he must have no Corruption and must not have gained Conviction by giving in to his vice for at least a week prior to the exorcism. Other requirements may be enforced by the Narrator depending on the ritualist's religion, such as a Catholic priest needing the approval of the church before attempting an exorcism. The Difficulty of the Charisma check increases by +2 for each condition he fails to meet.

The ritualist receives a +1 bonus if he has 6 or more ranks in Knowledge (supernatural) or Knowledge (theology and philosophy), and a +2 bonus if he has 6 or more ranks in both skills. The ritualist gets an additional bonus of +1 to +4 if he has some sway over the entity, such as having knowledge of a spirit's past life or knowing a demon's true name. The amount of this bonus (if any) is up to the Narrator. Assistants with 6 or more ranks in Knowledge (supernatural) or Knowledge (theology and philosophy) provide a bonus of +3 to the primary ritualist rather than the usual +2.

Time: 5 rounds

Costs: The ritualist and each assistant may have to make Sanity saves depending on what the entity does during the exorcism. Anyone who fails a Sanity save automatically fails any other check she must make during the ritual. Any character present at an exorcism can offer himself to the entity to spare the body of the possessed victim. This is usually an act of desperation when an exorcism has gone wrong and the entity threatens to hurt its current victim. In this case, the martyr automatically gains a point of Conviction because of the sacrifice. Of course, the entity can always choose not to accept the offer. The exorcism must begin anew to confront the entity in the new victim.

Success: If the ritualist succeeds on his Charisma check, the entity must succeed on a Will save or be forced from its host. The save Difficulty is equal to the base Difficulty chosen by the ritualist. (In this sample exorcism, the base Difficulty is 20, so that is the fiend's Will save Difficulty). If the entity is an outsider, it is forced to return to its plane of origin and may not return unless specifically summoned. If the entity is a ghost it is disrupted and cannot manifest for d20 months. A ghost with a number of levels equal to less than half of the ritualist's adept levels (rounded down) is destroyed.

Failure: If the ritualist fails the Charisma check or the entity succeeds on its Will save, the entity remains in place and the exorcism must be started anew. The entity may also choose to possess any character present instead. The victim and the entity must make opposed Will saves, with the entity taking possession of its victim if it succeeds.

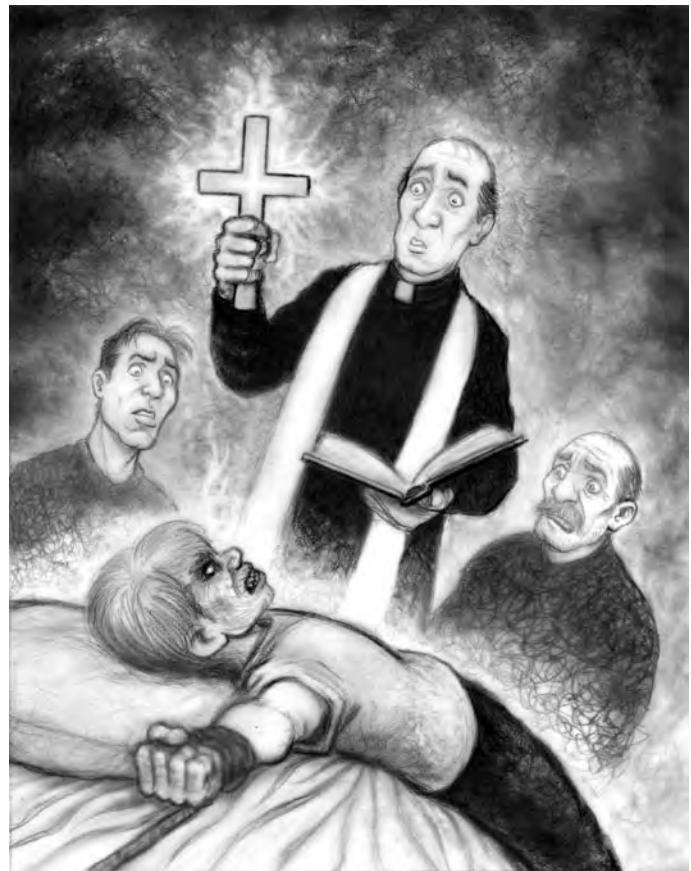
SAMPLE RITUAL: SÉANCE

This ritual enables the ritualist to force an apparition to manifest in order to communicate with it. (See the **Apparition** template in the *True20 Bestiary*).

Power: Mind Touch

Difficulty: Charisma check Difficulty 20 (10 + base Difficulty 10) if the spirit is in the location where the séance is taking place. If the spirit is being called from another location, the Difficulty is modified by the ritualist's familiarity with the spirit. Most ritualists are at least slightly familiar with the spirits they try to contact either through personal research or by having them described in detail before the séance. Likewise, prior use of other powers such as Sense Minds and Second Sight may allow a ritualist to learn enough about a local spirit to be considered casually familiar. Each assistant must succeed on a Difficulty 10 Charisma check to aid the ritualist.

Ritualists: A séance requires a circle of at least two people, one of whom is the ritualist.



Components: None. The ritualist and each assistant need only link hands and concentrate.

Aids: The ritualist needs only to have some knowledge of the supernatural; she must be trained in the Knowledge (supernatural) skill. The ritualist gets a +2 bonus if she has 6 or more ranks in Knowledge (supernatural).

Time: 1 minute (10 rounds)

Costs: The ritualist and all assistants may have to make Sanity saves if an apparition does appear, and may have to make more Sanity saves depending on what it does during the séance. A character involved in the ritual who fails a Sanity save automatically breaks the séance chain, which might dismiss the apparition.

Success: If the primary ritualist succeeds on her Charisma check, an apparition responds to her call. Depending on its whims, it can manifest and communicate with the ritualist or anyone present in the room. If the séance is held in a place known to be haunted, the answering apparition will be the most powerful entity in that area (measured by level + Charisma) or the specific entity named, whichever condition applies. If a séance is held in a place that is not haunted or where a haunting is only suspected, the ritualist must call a specific entity by name. Otherwise, any entity may answer the call. The latter is a potentially dangerous situation and should only be attempted by a ritualist who is certain she can control the answering entity.

Once called, an apparition remains for a number of minutes equal to its Charisma (minimum of one minute). The ritualist can dismiss an apparition before that time expires by making a Charisma check opposed by the apparition's Will save. Dismissing an apparition is a standard action. If the séance chain is ever broken, such as by a member of the chain releasing her partners' hands, the apparition can try to possess that person as a free action if it has the Malevolence trait. If it does not possess the trait or cannot possess the person, it must succeed on a Difficulty 20 Will save or be instantly dismissed. A dismissed apparition cannot be summoned by a séance or manifest for 24 hours.

Failure: If the ritualist fails the Charisma check by 4 or less, no apparition is called and the séance is a failure. If the ritualist fails by 5 or more, the results can be disastrous. The narrator is free to interpret the consequences of a failed séance as he sees fit. One possible consequence is that a hostile entity—such as an evil apparition or even a demon—answers the call.

SAMPLE RITUAL: SUMMON DEMON

This ritual allows the ritualist to call forth a fiend to do his bidding. (See **Fiends** in the *True20 Bestiary*.)

Power: Summon Outsider, fatiguing

Difficulty: Charisma check Difficulty 37 (10 + base Difficulty 22 + 2 for fatiguing + 3 for level prerequisite). Assistants must succeed on a Difficulty 10 Charisma check to aid the ritualist. Will save Difficulty 18 to avoid fatigue.

Ritualists: Only a ritualist is required, but assistants are usually utilized due to the high Difficulty.

Components: The ritualist must perfectly inscribe a summoning circle into which the summoned fiend will appear. The ritualist gets a +1 bonus for each of the following additional components used: an altar specifically dedicated to the summoning of fiends, special incenses and candles, an animal sacrifice (of an animal or animals with a total level of 5 or greater), ritual performed on an unholy day.

Aids: The ritualist receives a +1 bonus if he has 6 or more ranks in Knowledge (supernatural) or Knowledge (theology and philosophy), and a +2 bonus if he has 6 or more ranks in both skills. The ritualist gets an additional bonus of +1 to +4 if he has some sway over the entity, such as knowing a demon's true name. The amount of this bonus (if any) is up to the Narrator. The sacrifice of an intelligent creature (Int -2 or greater) provides a +10 bonus.

Time: 1 minute (10 rounds)

Costs: When the fiend appears in the summoning circle, everyone present must make a Sanity save with a Difficulty equal to the Terror level of the fiend. Witnesses not subject to Sanity saves are immune. If you are using the Corruption rules, the ritualist and all assistants automatically gain a point of Corruption for participating in summoning a fiend.

Success: If the ritualist succeeds on the Charisma check, a fiend of the desired type (or the specific fiend named) appears in the summoning circle and awaits its orders. The base Difficulty of this sample summoning ritual is 22; using this ritual, the ritualist can summon a 6th-level fiend (such as a bearded fiend or a succubus from the *True20 Bestiary*).

Failure: If the ritualist fails his Charisma check, no fiend is summoned. The ritual is a failure and must be restarted. If the ritualist fails by more than 5 or more, a fiend of 2nd level or lower may appear for no other purpose than to wreak havoc among those involved in the ritual. It obeys no one and attacks everything in sight for five rounds before returning to its home plane.

SAMPLE RITUAL: ZOMBIE

This ritual allows the ritualist to transform a corpse into a zombie slave.

Power: Imbue Unlife, fatiguing

Difficulty: Wisdom check Difficulty 12 (10 + 2 for fatiguing). Each assistant must succeed on a Difficult 10 Wisdom check to aid the ritualist. Will save Difficulty 6 to avoid fatigue.

Ritualists: The zombie ritual requires only a ritualist.

Components: A fresh corpse, grave dirt, at least one pint of animal blood.

Aids: A ritualist with at least 6 ranks in the Knowledge (supernatural) skill receives a +2 bonus on her Charisma check.

Time: 10 minutes

Costs: When a zombie rises, everyone present must make a Sanity save with a Difficulty equal to the Terror level of the zombie. Witnesses not subject to Sanity saves are immune. Creating If you are using the Corruption rules the ritualist automatically gains a point of Corruption for creating a zombie.

Success: If the ritualist succeeds on her Wisdom check, the corpse animates as a zombie. The zombie is animated indefinitely (until it is destroyed) and is fanatically loyal to the ritualist. The zombie can be destroyed by physical means, or de-animated by filling its mouth with salt.

Failure: If the ritualist fails her Wisdom check, the corpse is not animated and can never again be subject to any form of the Imbue Unlife power or any rituals dealing with necromancy.

FEAR AND TERROR

Whether it's called a Horror Check, a Fear Save, or Sanity, one of the staples of Horror gaming is some mechanic to represent the character's "fight or flight" reaction to supernatural events. Although some players claim that such mechanics unfairly deny them control of their own character, it does bring an element of fear into the game itself. You never know how badly you're going to roll on a Sanity save, and it could mean the difference between fighting bravely and curling up into a terrified ball. That uncertainty helps bring the drama to the player more than just straight roleplaying alone. Certainly, no one wants their character to be the one paralyzed with fear when the monster rears its ugly head, but likewise no one wants their character to be injured in a battle. Having heroes who are subject to fear and terror isn't all that different from heroes subject to injury and death—it's just a matter of game mechanics. Physical trauma damages the character's body, and psychological trauma damages the character's mind.

THE SANITY SAVE

Anyone encountering a sudden shock or horror must make a Sanity saving throw. This is a roll of d20 + the character's Sanity bonus, plus any relevant feats and represents the mind's ability to deal with scary situations and reality-bending encounters. Think of it as

a kind of "psychological Toughness saving throw." In fact the Sanity save mechanic uses a system almost identical to the Toughness save mechanic. A character's Sanity bonus varies, depending on which method the Narrator chooses for the series (see **The Basis of Sanity** for details).

A Sanity save has a base Difficulty of 15 plus a modifier equal to the Fear/Terror Level of the encounter. For example, a ghoul springs out of the dark. It has a Terror Level of 3, so the Difficulty is 18 (15+3).

**Sanity Saving Throw = d20 + Sanity Bonus + Feats
vs. Difficulty 15 + Fear/Terror Level**

If the Sanity save succeeds, the target suffers no significant effect, nothing more than a slight scare or jolt. If the Sanity save fails, the target suffers mental health damage. The effects depend on the degree of the encounter (Fear or Terror) and the amount the Sanity save result is below the Difficulty.

Fear is instilled by lesser horrors and scares: a sudden cry, a gunshot, a man leaping out of a dark alley, etc.

A failed Sanity roll against Fear means the target is *startled*, imposing a -1 penalty on further saves against Fear, but not affecting saves against

terror. If the Sanity save fails by 5 or more, the target is *spooked*; mark down a spooked condition on the Mental Health Track. A spooked condition also imposes a -1 modifier on further saves against Fear. If the Sanity save fails by 10 or more, the target is *frightened*; check off the frightened box on the Mental Health Track. If the Sanity save fails by 15 or more, the target is *terrified*; check off the terrified box on the Mental Health Track. If a target suffers a result that is already checked off, check off the next highest result. So, if a target is already frightened and suffers another frightened result, check off the terrified box. If the terrified box is checked and the character suffers another effect from Fear, check off the first available Terror box (so, go to confused, unhinged and so forth.)

Terror is inflicted by great horrors and shocks that question the viewer's perceptions of reality: a window frosting over in the middle of summer, a ghost walking through the wall and so on.

A failed Sanity roll against a terror means the target is *scared*. Each scared result imposes a -1 penalty on further Sanity saves. If the Sanity save fails by 5 or more, the target is *confused*; mark down a confused condition on the Mental Health Track. A confused result also imposes a -1 modifier on further Sanity saves. If the Sanity save fails by 10 or more, the target is *unhinged*; check off the unhinged box on the Mental Health Track. If the Sanity save fails by 15 or more, the target is *psychotic*; check off the psychotic box on the Mental Health Track. If a target suffers a result that is already checked off, check off the next highest result, so if a target is already confused and suffers another confused result, check off the unhinged box. If that's already checked off, check off the psychotic box. A character can only be pushed immediately over the brink of sanity by being exposed to a great shock or a series of shocks while already in a mentally unstable condition.

MENTAL ANGUISH

Terror effects cause fear effects as well. Whenever your hero suffers a terror effect, check off the corresponding Fear box, too. So, a hero who is confused is also spooked, a hero who is scared is also startled. The effects of the mental health conditions are cumulative, except for startled and scared conditions, where only the highest value applies.

MENTAL HEALTH TRACK

	0	5+	10+	15+
Startled	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Spooked	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Frightened	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Terrified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Confused	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Unhinged	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Psychotic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Insane	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

IMPOSSIBLE SANITY SAVES

If the Difficulty of a Sanity save is so high the hero cannot possibly succeed, even with a 20 on the die roll, the Sanity save is still rolled to determine the effect (the amount by which the character misses the Difficulty). A natural 20 means the character is only startled or scared, regardless of the Difficulty. Fate intervenes to shield the character's mind from otherwise certain trauma.

Narrators interested in more realistic consequences for fear and terror should ignore this rule.

MINIONS AND SANITY

A minion makes a Sanity save against mental health damage as usual; however, if the save fails, the minion suffers the maximum possible result for the Fear/Terror in question. For Fear, this usually means terrified, while for Terror, this usually means psychotic. This is, of course, subject to the Narrator's discretion.

MODIFIERS TO SANITY SAVES

Situation	Modifier
A loved one is endangered.	+4
You possess something proven to be useful against the threat.	+4
A loved one is clearly endangered by the threat.	+4
A friend or ally is clearly endangered by the threat.	+2
You possess something believed to be useful against the threat.	+2
You have been warned about what you're about to see.	+2
You are with several (4+) allies.	+2
You defeated a similar threat in the past.	+1
You are in close quarters (no place to run).	-1
You have faced and been defeated by a similar threat in the past.	-1
An innocent is participating in the scene (but not threatened).	-1
Each previously failed Sanity save	-1
You are accompanied by only 1 other person.	-2
A friend or ally is participating in the scene (but not threatened).	-2
Dim light.	-2
You are alone.	-4
Total darkness.	-4
You are at "wounded" or worse on the damage track.	-4

FEAR EFFECTS

- **Startled:** A startled character receives a -1 penalty to further Fear saves.
- **Spooked:** A spooked character receives a -1 penalty to further saves against Fear. The character flees as fast as possible for one full round or cowers, dazed, if unable to get away. He defends normally, but cannot attack. The following round, he can act normally.
- **Frightened:** A frightened character loses one full round action. They can take no action, lose their dodge bonus to Defense, and have a -2 penalty to Defense. In the following rounds, frightened characters can only take a standard or move action.
- **Terrified:** A terrified character falls to the floor, catatonic and helpless until he recovers.

TERROR EFFECTS

- **Scared:** A scared character receives a -1 penalty to further Sanity saves.
- **Confused:** A confused character is *shaken*. They receive a -2 penalty on all checks, including attack rolls and Fortitude, Reflex and Will saving throws. This persists until the confused condition is lifted. Additionally, a confused character is *stunned* for one round after being confused. They can take no actions, lose their dodge bonus to Defense, and have a -2 penalty to Defense.
- **Unhinged:** An unhinged character suffers -2 penalty to effective Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma until this condition is lifted.
- **Psychotic:** Psychotic characters suffer a -3 penalty to effective Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma until this condition is lifted and may only take a single action each turn. If a character was previously unhinged, these penalties replace those.
- **Insane:** This character is unable to interact meaningfully with the world. This usually means the end for the character, as he is a gibbering shadow of his former self. Powerful sorceries or long-term counseling can restore sanity in some, but not all, cases.

REGAINING YOUR WITS

Recovering from mental health damage requires a Wisdom check (Difficulty 10). A successful check erases the mental condition, while an unsuccessful check means there is no significant improvement for that time period.

You can make a recovery check once per minute for frightened and terrified, once per hour for confused, once per day for unhinged and once per week for psychotic. Insane characters are over the brink and can only be returned to sanity (and to play) by special dispensation of the Narrator.

You can spend a Conviction point to get an immediate recovery check from Fear effects, rather than having to wait a minute. You can also spend Conviction on your recovery check.

Startled and spooked conditions fade automatically at a rate of one per minute. Scared conditions do the same at a rate of one per hour.

Characters may use Knowledge (behavioral science), or an interaction skill as deemed appropriate by the Narrator to use the Aid action to assist the target's recovery. A character may only benefit from one person's help at a time in this manner.

THE BASIS OF SANITY

When planning the type of horror setting you want to create, it's essential to consider how you want to handle one of the more aspects of the game, Sanity. Following, you will find three Sanity variations for your perusal. Consider them carefully as each will have a varying impact on your game and how your players will approach your adventures. The effects of each are listed in their individual descriptions. Once you select a Sanity system, you should naturally use the same method for all characters in a campaign.

SANITY AS AN ABILITY CHECK

The character's Sanity bonus is equal to an ability score, such as Wisdom or Charisma.

SANITY SAVE BASE VALUE

Total Level	Hero Base Sanity Bonus	Minion Base Sanity Bonus
1	+2	+0
2	+3	+0
3	+3	+1
4	+4	+1
5	+4	+1
6	+5	+2
7	+5	+2
8	+6	+2
9	+6	+3
10	+7	+3
11	+7	+3
12	+8	+4
13	+8	+4
14	+9	+4
15	+9	+5
16	+10	+5
17	+10	+5
18	+11	+6
19	+11	+6
20	+12	+6

With this option, the character's Sanity bonus does not increase with level. The bonus only increases through the selection of certain feats and when the character's ability bonus increases. Since the Sanity bonus does not increase with level, there is no way to model characters growing accustomed to the supernatural. A character is just as susceptible to Fear and Terror at high levels as at lower levels.

When using this method with Charisma as the key ability, the benefit of the Lucky feat does not apply to the character's Sanity save bonus (since it's already a Charisma-based save).

This method, using Wisdom, is the default method in the *Agents of Oblivion* campaign setting in *True20 Worlds of Adventure*.

SANITY AS A WILL SAVE

The character's Sanity bonus is equal to her Will save bonus.

As a Will save, the character's Sanity bonus increases with level and is explicitly tied to Wisdom. The character can be assumed to be growing more accustomed to the unnatural as she progresses in level, thanks to the increasing Will save. Naturally, adepts and experts who select Will as their good save have a distinct advantage over other characters when using this method. Furthermore, since the effects of the Iron Will, Jaded, and Lucky feats stack, it is easy to build up a character's bonus to Sanity saves.

SANITY AS A NEW SAVE

Sanity is a new saving throw in addition to Toughness, Fortitude, Reflexes, and Will.

Like Will save-based Sanity saves, this method has the advantage that it increases with level and can be further augmented through the use of feats designed to counter fear and terror. A Sanity save using this method is made like any other saving throw. A character's Sanity save bonus is equal to base Sanity save value from level plus Wisdom or Charisma modifier.

The Narrator chooses whether to use Wisdom or Charisma as the key ability for Sanity saves. When using this method with Charisma as the key ability, the benefit of the Lucky feat does not apply to the character's Sanity save bonus (since it's already a Charisma-based save).

Unlike other saving throws, which are role-dependent, all heroic characters have Sanity as a good save. The reason for this is that heroes are braver and more resistant to fear and terror than normal people; this is part of what makes them heroes. A hero can stand in the face of fear and be relatively unshaken by horrible things that would send a normal person into fits of hysteria.

DETERMINING THE SANITY SAVE DIFFICULTY

Narrators should keep a few key concepts in mind when setting the Difficulty for a Sanity save. Firstly, they must decide which effect is most appropriate for the save: Fear or Terror. A Sanity save results in a Fear effect if it is caused by frightening but otherwise normal events. A Sanity save results in Terror if it is triggered by supernatural events or events that can cause psychological trauma. A supernaturally inspired Sanity save should only have a low Difficulty if it can somehow be explained away through odd coincidences or natural forces.

FEAR/TERROR LEVEL FOR CREATURES

With the introduction of Sanity saves into the game, it is necessary to add the traits of Fear and Terror to existing Adversaries found in such

reference works as the *True20 Bestiary*. Any creature listed with a Fear or Terror Level forces an appropriate Sanity save and is immune to the effects of Fear and Terror.

Adding a Fear/Terror Level to a creature is easy: it is equal to its total levels. Consult the chart below to determine the appropriate classification, either Fear or Terror. You can add situational modifiers as you see fit. It is suggested you reserve assigning Fear for animals and vermin to those especially scary ones, like giant cockroaches and hungry wolves, not the neighborhood dog or an individual rat. Likewise, normal animals that are dangerous but which have been rendered harmless (or at least seemingly so) would not trigger a Sanity save; looking at a tiger in a zoo is not nearly the same as encountering one in the wild with no fence between you and it.

A creature's Fear/Terror level can be reduced by virtue of its appearance or reputation. For example, unicorns and true gargoyles are each 4th-level creatures, which gives them a Fear level of 4. Unicorns are less fearsome-looking than gargoyles and are more likely to inspire awe than fear, so it wouldn't be out of line to reduce the unicorn's Fear level to 2 or even 0.

*A monstrous humanoid or supernatural beast provokes Fear or Terror depending on its appearance.

OPTIONAL RULE: DISORDERS

Characters reduced to "unhinged" or worse on the mental health track suffer from severe penalties as a result of the mental trauma they have experienced. Depending on how well those characters roll on their recovery checks, the more severe penalties could last for days or even weeks.

Rather than dealing with those penalties, a character can wipe out all mental health conditions in exchange for a disorder selected by the Narrator or rolled on the **Random Disorder Table**. A Narrator can also automatically give a character a Disorder if the player rolls a natural 1 on the Sanity save or recovery check.

A disorder comes into effect within one day of the event that triggered it.

If a character develops a mania or a phobia, the disorder should be tailored to fit the circumstances of the event that triggered it. For example, a character who avoided a ghoul in a cemetery by hiding behind a tree might develop Dendromaina—the overwhelming desire to be around trees. Without a tree to hide behind, he feels vulnerable and exposed. Likewise he could just as easily develop coimetrophobia (ghouls dwell in cemeteries, after all) or necrophobia (dead things attract ghouls).

ADDICTION

The character turns an addictive substance to banish the memories that haunt him. While under the influence of the substance he suffers a -1 penalty on all attack rolls, saves, ability score checks, and skill checks. This penalty lasts for 24 hours. He can go a maximum number of days equal to his Charisma or his Constitution (whichever is greater) before entering withdrawal. When in withdrawal, the character must succeed on a Difficulty 10 Fortitude save each day or be shaken until a new fix is gained. A character who is tempted by his addiction (e.g. someone offers him a drink) must succeed on a Difficulty 10 Will save to resist. A character addicted to an illegal substance also risks arrest.

Stacking Effects: Increase the penalty while under the influence by 1, or increase the Fortitude save Difficulty to resist withdrawal by 2, or select an additional substance to which the character is addicted. A character with multiple addictions must satisfy each addiction to avoid withdrawal. Every time a character receives the Addiction disorder, his Wealth bonus decreases by 1.

STATIC SANITY SAVE DIFFICULTIES

Difficulty	Sample Causes for a Situational Sanity Save	Fear/ Terror Effect
5	Hearing a distant gunshot.	Fear
5	Finding a human skeleton.	Terror
10	Trapped in a potentially deadly situation.	Fear
10	Finding a human corpse.	Terror
15	Hearing a sudden scream very close by.	Fear
15	Witnessing a scene of great pain or suffering.	Terror
20	A large explosion happens nearby.	Fear
20	Seeing someone sacrificed in a dark ritual.	Terror

CREATURE FEAR/TERROR

Creature Type	Fear	Terror
Aberration	—	Y
Animal	Y	—
Construct (robotic)	Y	—
Construct (supernatural)	—	Y
Dragon	—	Y
Elemental	—	Y
Fey	Y	—
Humanoid	Y	—
Monstrous humanoid*	Y	Y
Ooze	—	Y
Outsider	—	Y
Plant	Y	—
Supernatural beast*	Y	Y
Undead	—	Y
Vermin	Y	—

RANDOM DISORDER TABLE

d20	Disorder
1	Weakened mind
2	Depression
3	Sociopathic tendencies
4	Obsessive-compulsive disorder
5–6	Addiction
7	Psychotic episodes
8	Paranoia
9–11	Phobia
12–13	Generalized anxiety disorder
14–15	Delusions and hallucinations
16–17	Night terrors
18	Obsession
19	Mania
20	Amnesia

AMNESIA

The character mentally blocks out the memories of whatever caused the trauma, but suffers from occasional flashbacks. If this disorder is selected, take note of the event that triggered it and the Sanity save Difficulty. If reminded of the event in the future, the character must succeed on a Sanity (Terror) check with a Difficulty equal to that of the original event as the repressed memories flood back in. If the character

succeeds on the Sanity save, her denial is still in effect and she can lock out the memories once more.

Stacking Effects: If this disorder is caused by a similar event or memories of the original event, increase the Sanity save Difficulty by 1 as the memories become harder and harder to shut out.

DELUSIONS AND HALLUCINATIONS

The character begins to hear voices, catch movement out of the corner of her eye, and see fleeting glimpses of things when nothing is present. She cannot be certain if what she is seeing is real or just the product of her own troubled mind. She has a -1 penalty on all Notice and Search checks and on Sanity saves.

Stacking Effects: Increase the penalty on Notice and Search checks and Sanity saves by 1.

DEPRESSION

The character loses hope for the future and ceases attaching emotional importance to certain aspects of life. He suffers a -2 penalty on Will saves and a -1 penalty on all other saves and checks due to a lack of motivation. This penalty does not apply to Sanity saves; the character simply does not care enough to be particularly bothered by anything he sees.

Stacking Effects: Increase the penalty by 1 each.

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

The character suffers from a variety of physical and emotional symptoms such as jumpiness, twitches, expectations of doom, and hyper-vigilance. He jumps at shadows and is always looking for danger. All attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks (except for Notice checks) suffer a -1 penalty. Notice checks have a +1 bonus.

Stacking Effects: Increase the penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks (as well as the bonus on Notice checks) by 1.

MANIA

The character has a strong, unnatural desire for some particular object or situation and feels comforted by its presence. In situations where the subject of his mania is not present, he must succeed on a Difficulty 10 Will save or be shaken until he can obtain it.

Stacking Effects: Select an additional mania or increase the Will save Difficulty by 2 for an existing mania.

NIGHT TERRORS

The character's sleep is frequently plagued with nightmares. Each time the character sleeps, she must succeed on a Difficulty 10 Will save or suffer a nightmare so vivid she wakes up screaming and cannot sleep for at least 8 hours. The character is automatically fatigued for the next 24 hours due to lack of sleep. The only way to alleviate this penalty is through a full 8 hours of sleep. A character who resorts to pharmaceutical means to achieve her needed rest may become addicted to the medication.

Stacking Effects: Increase the Will save Difficulty by 2 to avoid having a night terror.

OBSESSION

The character becomes obsessed with something, investing strong emotional bonds in it or gaining a sense of security from possessing it. The object of the obsession could be a sentimental trinket of some kind or something the character insists can protect or shield them from danger (such as a crucifix or good luck charm). The character must keep the object of her obsession with her at all times. She frequently checks to see if the item is on her person, and absentmindedly fondles

the item in times of stress. If the item is removed from the character, she becomes frantic and suffers a -1 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks, and saving throws until the object is returned or the disorder is removed.

Stacking Effects: Increase the penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks, and saving throws by 1.

OBSessive-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

The character develops a set of rituals and nervous responses that he must perform. This unsettles people around him, giving the character a -1 penalty on all Charisma-based checks. If the character is prevented from performing his rituals, he suffers a -1 penalty on all skill checks.

Stacking Effects: Increase the penalty on Charisma-based skill checks by 1.

PARANOIA

The character becomes convinced that enemies are everywhere. He suffers a -2 penalty on Sense Motive checks and always believes that others are plotting against him if he fails a Sense Motive check.

Stacking Effects: Increase the penalty on Sense Motive checks by 2.

PHOBIA

The character has a strong, unnatural fear of some particular object or situation. If confronted with the subject of her fear, she must succeed on a Difficulty 12 Sanity (Fear) check. If the Sanity save is triggered by a creature, the creature's Sanity save Difficulty is increased by +2.

Stacking Effects: Select an additional phobia or increase the Fear (panic) save Difficulty by 1 for an existing phobia.

PSYCHOTIC EPISODES

The character suffers occasional psychotic episodes during which he becomes mentally detached from reality. He may become delusional and see terrifying hallucinations, or he may become manic and rant wildly about the horrors that he has seen. Before each game session, the character must succeed on a Difficulty 15 Will save or suffer a psychotic episode at some point during the game session. The Narrator decides when the psychotic episode occurs. During a psychotic episode, the character is shaken.

Stacking Effects: Increase the Will save Difficulty to avoid having a psychotic episode by 1.

SOCIOPATHIC TENDENCIES

A character who becomes a sociopath slowly loses the capacity to connect with anything he experiences or is involved in. He suffers 1 point of Charisma drain as his emotions deaden and he stops caring about the world around him. The only Charisma skill not affected by the Charisma drain is Intimidate. A character whose Charisma drops to less than -3 by taking this Disorder becomes an incurable sociopath and is taken over by the Narrator.

Stacking Effects: 1 additional point of Charisma drain.

WEAKENED MIND

A character with this disorder gains a permanent -1 penalty to all Sanity saves and a -2 penalty to Will saves to recover from disorders. This condition must be eliminated before any hope exists of curing other mental disorders the character may have.

Stacking Effects: An additional -1 Penalty to Sanity saves and an additional -2 to Will saves to recover from disorders. For every two instances of this disorder, the character's Charisma is reduced by 1 as he exhibits nervous twitches and erratic behavior.

SAMPLE MANIAS AND PHOBIAS

Prefix	Desire for (-mania)/Fear of (-phobia)	Prefix	Desire for (-mania)/Fear of (-phobia)
Acro-	Heights	Hemo-	Blood
Aero-	Air	Herpeto-	Reptiles
Agora-	Open spaces	Hydro-	Water
Ailuro-	Cats	Iatro-	Doctors
Andro-	Men (males)	Ichyo-	Fish
Anthropo-	People or society	Insecto-	Insects
Arachno-	Spiders	Ligyro-	Loud noises
Astro-	Stars	Mechano-	Machines
Auto-	Being alone or by oneself	Motor-	Automobiles
Automatono-	Things that falsely represent a sentient being	Muso-	Mice and rats
Automys-	Being dirty	Necro-	Death or dead things
Aviato-	Flying	Neloo-	Glass
Bacterio-	Germs	Nocti-	The night
Ballisto-	Missiles or bullets	Nososome-	Hospitals
Baro-	Loss of gravity	Nycto-	Night or nightfall
Batho-	Depth or deep places	Odonto-	Teeth
Biblio-	Books	Oneiro-	Dreams
Blenno-	Slime	Onomato-	A certain name, word, or phrase
Botano-	Plants	Ophidio-	Snakes
Bronto-	Thunder and lightning	Ornitho-	Birds
Bufono-	Toads	Osse-	Bones
Caco-	Ugliness	Pago-	Ice or frost
Ceno-	Eftiness, empty rooms	Pedi-	Children
Chiono-	Snow	Phago-	Eating
Chronomentro-	Clocks	Phono-	Noise, including one's own voice
Claustro-	Confined spaces	Pyro-	Fire
Coimetro-	Cemeteries	Scoto-	Darkness
Coulro-	Clowns	Somni-	Sleep
Cyno-	Dogs	Spectro-	Mirrors
Daemono-	Demons	Taphe-	Being buried alive
Demo-	Crowds	Terato-	Monsters
Dendro-	Trees	Thalasso-	The sea
Dipso-	Drinking	Thanato-	Death or dying
Entomo-	Insects	Tomo-	Surgery
Gephyro-	Crossing bridges	Urano-	The heavens, the sky
Geronto-	Old people or of growing old	Vermi-	Worms
Gyne-	Woman (females)	Xantho-	The color yellow
Hamarto-	Sin or making an error	Xeno-	Strangers
Haphe-	Being touched	Xylo-	Wood or wooden objects
Helio-	The sun	Xyro-	Razors
Hemato-	Bleeding	Zoo-	Animals

A BAG FULL OF BONES

The list of manias and phobias on the **Sample Manias and Phobias** table is included as a handy reference and as a source of inspiration for Narrator's crafting their adventures. Many great works of horror, both cinematic and written, pare down their themes to the essence of one idea and use it as a motif in their work. You, as the director of your own nightmares, can pluck out a bone, such as Automysomania, the desire to be dirty, and easily flesh it out for an evening's entertainment.

ELIMINATING DISORDERS

Regardless of the time period, mental disorders are not easy to eliminate. At best, a patient with a single disorder can recover in a month's time with proper care and intensive counseling. In less prosaic

conditions, the character can be subjected to extremes of physical and psychological trauma, possibly resulting in further withdrawal into the dark recesses of the mind.

LEVEL GAIN

When a character goes up a level, she can make a Difficulty 15 Will save for each disorder she has. On a successful save, she eliminates the disorder.

PERSONAL PSYCHIATRIC CARE

Prolonged one-on-one psychiatric care of at least 1 month, with no odd occurrences during the therapy, allows the character to make a Difficulty 15 Will save to remove a single disorder. The psychiatrist may make a Knowledge (behavioral science) check to assist the character using the Aid rules (page 9).

PRE-1950 SANITARIUM CARE

While the purpose of a sanitarium is to cure mental disorders, in earlier times they more often simply served as prisons for the insane. The sad truth is that a patient in a sanitarium is unlikely to receive the careful attention she requires. In addition, the very conditions in early sanitariums lead themselves to Sanity saves. There is rampant abuse and harsh therapies such as shock treatment. Patients are strapped into straitjackets at the first sign of unrest with little or no concern for their comfort or well-being. Inmates are chained to walls, strapped down, poked, prodded, and humiliated by the orderlies and even the doctors.

Recovery in a sanitarium works as described above, but because of the lack of proper treatment, the character can only roll for recovery once every two weeks. Furthermore, because of the horrific living conditions the character has a modifier of between -1 to -5 (Narrator's choice) to all Will saves made on the road to recovery in a sanitarium. As the modifier indicates, many patients in sanitariums would be better off locked in their nephews' attics.

CORRUPTION

In the horror genre, characters can acquire both moral and mental decay quite readily. You've already seen the various options provided through the Sanity systems. Now we present you with an additional option you can either use in lieu of the above system or integrate into the Sanity system of your choice.

Corruption represents moral decay and the slippery slope of a character's descent into evil thought and deed. In some circumstances, subject to the Narrator's discretion, evil influences can be so overwhelming that characters automatically gain Corruption. Examples of this can be seen in the Rituals section.

The possibility of gaining Corruption occurs whenever a character performs one of the following corrupt acts:

- Using any power in a corrupt place.
- Using any power while in contact with a corrupt item.
- Using a power to take life.
- Using a power to directly control someone.
- Using a power to read someone's mind.
- Succumbing to one's vice nature while in a corrupt place.
- Succumbing to one's vice nature while in contact with a corrupt item.
- Summoning a creature from beyond the void.
- Necromancy.
- Killing in a corrupt place.
- Performing any other transgression listed on the table below.

Please note the above list is not comprehensive and the Narrator has final authority on what constitutes a corrupt act.

When a character commits a corrupt act, make a Charisma saving throw for the character. The difficulty is 10 plus half the rank of the power used for supernatural powers, or according to the following chart for other transgressions.

DISORDERS AND CORRUPTION

Disorders and Corruption present additional opportunities for the Narrator to further define and refine their horror setting. If you want to limit the effectiveness of a power like Mind Touch or Vision, for example, attach a "price tag" with an attached disorder or Corruption to it. Maybe reading someone's mind without permission (the most useful application of that power) leads to corruption. Seeing into the future might expose precogs to things "outside of time" the mortal mind wasn't meant to see and possibly cause a Sanity save or a weakened mind. You don't have to ban the troublesome powers outright, but you can ensure that players have good reason to use them with caution. Alternatively, you can make Corruption or a certain disorder a prerequisite for even *having* certain powers, limiting them to tainted characters only (which is a good way to limit them to the bad guys without flatly saying so).

Difficulty	Act
10	Minor Transgression (Lying, petty theft)
15	Significant Transgression (Deliberately hurtful actions)
20	Major Transgression (Murder, rape)
30	Mortal Transgression (Conscious betrayal of companion, murder of innocents)

A successful save means there is no effect other than the consequences of the character's action. A failed save means the character acquires 1 point of Corruption.

CORRUPT PLACES

Places can become tainted with Corruption over time. Classic examples are houses where multiple murders occurred, apartments of serial killers, graveyards where dark rituals took place and so on. It is as though the dark soul of the demented took root and darkened the place for all times. Such corrupt places can spread their evil to those who spend their time there. The amount of evil a place has is reflected by its Corruption score, which can scale from 1 to 10.

THE EFFECT OF CORRUPT PLACES

Characters that do not have Corruption are not subject to the effects of corrupt places unless they willingly commit any of the acts listed under Corruption above. Characters with Corruption, however, are vulnerable to dark influences and add the Corruption score of such a place up to their own Corruption level. For example, three characters move through a haunted graveyard (Corruption: 2). One character has no corruption, the second has 1 point of Corruption, and the third has 3 points of Corruption. While in the tainted place, the first character is unaffected, the second has an effective Corruption of 2, and the third an effective Corruption of 4. The effects of Corruption then apply normally. Characters that have embraced Corruption gain the additional benefits of an enhanced Corruption.

CORRUPT ITEMS

A corrupt item is much like a corrupt place, except it only affects individuals in contact with the item. Anyone carrying a corrupt item is subject to Corruption checks. Some corrupt items bestow benefits to their possessor, which makes them darkly attractive.

EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

A character's Corruption score applies as a penalty to the character's Constitution and Wisdom scores. This means a character with Constitution +2, Wisdom +1, and 2 points of Corruption has an effective Constitution +0 and Wisdom -1. These penalties reflect the impact of Corruption on the character's physical and mental well-being. Victims of Corruption experience these losses of Constitution and Wisdom as physical and mental symptoms. Physically she suffers fatigue, weakness, nausea, and gnawing hunger. Psychologically, she experiences growing fear, anger, paranoia, and mistrust.



The character begins losing control over her vice nature. When presented with an opportunity to regain Conviction by acting in accordance with her vice nature, the character must succeed on a Will save (Difficulty 10 + total corruption) to resist. Otherwise, she gives in and follows her vice nature for the scene. Characters who have a Wisdom score of 0 or greater can spend a point of Conviction to automatically overcome this urge. Characters with negative Wisdom cannot. A victim of Corruption whose Wisdom is debilitated goes mad in accordance with her vice nature, completely.

REDEMPTION

Eliminating Corruption takes time and Conviction. Characters may take the Conviction point they would normally earn each day and apply it towards their Corruption. Additionally, they may take any Conviction points earned by embracing their virtue during the course of play and apply those toward their Corruption as well. It takes ten applied points of Conviction to eliminate one point of Corruption. Dealing with the dark forces comes with a price.

Note that characters can still gain Corruption while working toward eliminating it, so it is often a struggle against the character's darker impulses. Characters may also find themselves in need of additional Conviction on occasion, taking an awarded Conviction point rather than applying it toward their redemption. This slows, but does not interrupt, the process.

ADVERSARIES

In horror, you have free rein to use any creature your dark heart desires. Whether it is goblins in a closet, ghosts in a graveyard, or vampires in the vineyard, you can easily pull such creations out of **Chapter Eight** or the *True20 Bestiary*. Simply add the Fear/Terror levels as mentioned in the Sanity section, wrap an adventure around it, and you're ready to scare your gaming group for hours. It is suggested you build the atmosphere up to the key creature slowly, having several false scares and encounters with more mundane threats before the culminating moment of confrontation with the central abomination!

EMBRACING CORRUPTION

If not stopped early on, Corruption eventually leads to insanity. A character is therefore faced with two choices: either find ways to eliminate it through conscious effort and virtuous acts, or embrace it. Most characters will obviously choose the path of the light, but some cannot, for whatever reason. They choose to embrace the darkness and dive into its depths. Characters embracing corruption become NPCs under the Narrator's control and gain the following benefits:

- The character no longer suffers any Constitution or Wisdom penalties from accumulated Corruption.
- The character cannot benefit from Cure powers used by a non-corrupt healer. The powers simply have no effect. A healer who has embraced Corruption can use Cure on other corrupt characters, including himself.
- A corrupt adept changes the key abilities of all his powers to his Corruption score. Instead of applying his Intelligence score to Move Object, for example, the adept applies his Corruption score. This means adepts who have embraced Corruption wield considerable power. The maximum Corruption score is normally 10; characters who have embraced Corruption, however, continue to gain Corruption points, although they add their Corruption score to all future saves to resist gaining additional points.

CREATING A SERIES: APPROACHES TO HORROR

One of the more difficult aspects of gaming in the horror genre is getting the heroes together in the first place. Unlike a typical fantasy series kick-off, it's somewhat difficult in a modern-era setting to simply have everyone "meet in a tavern and decide to go adventuring." There has to be some unity of purpose to a group of monster-hunters, a common thread tying them together and providing a motivation to go out and do what they do.

This section discusses some ideas for how to bring the characters together, united against the dark horrors that threaten the innocent souls of the world. All groups have an advantage, which sets them apart from the others and determines the tone of the campaign, and a disadvantage, which are drawbacks the Narrator can use to heighten suspense or otherwise throw obstacles into the heroes' paths. Also provided are suggested skills and feats appropriate for members of a particular group. Not all members of the group have to have these skills and feats; they are just suggestions that mesh well with the group dynamic. These breakdowns along with the example sources should put you well on the road to dark adventure.

ACCIDENTAL TOURISTS

This was a quiet little suburb a few years ago. Now, things are just... scary. In a horror game of Accidental Tourists, the characters aren't even heroes: they are everyday people thrust into horrifying situations from which there appears to be no escape. Normal folks square off against unstoppable serial killers, alien invaders, and suave vampires right in their own backyards. A group consisting of these characters is best run as a one-shot scenario.

Advantage: None. Accidental tourists have no advantage, really. They are outclassed by nearly every monster out there. The fun of a group of Normal folks comes from playing scenarios reminiscent of classic splatter films where the characters are hunted down and killed one by one.

Disadvantage: Non-heroic. A group of tourists do not use any of the heroic roles. They are ordinaries, meaning they get no feats and no combat bonus. They don't even get Conviction! They are run-of-the-mill men and women who have to rely on wits and sheer luck to survive. An enterprising Narrator might want to allow the survivors to become heroes eventually, molding them into one of the other types of groups as they progress (see **Ordinary Heroes** in the **Optional Rules** section).

Examples: *A Nightmare on Elm Street, Friday the 13th, Halloween*

Suggested Backgrounds: Any

Suggested Archetypes: Any

GOVERNMENT AGENTS

Clad in dark suits and flashing badges in the faces of townspeople and local authorities alike, government agents scour the countryside to uncover the truth—or perhaps to conceal it.

Government agents are the easiest type of group to assemble and run in a horror campaign—after all, it's their job. The characters are agents with the FBI, the CIA, the NSA, the DHS, or a fictitious government organization created by the Narrator. They were recruited for their special talents and interests and given the task of investigating (or covering up) claims of the supernatural.

Advantage: Resources. The primary advantage of a group of government agents is resources. They have access to all the latest technology, from cell phones to laptops to crime databases to other knowledgeable agents

they can consult with on a moment's notice. Government agents can also look into files and records off-limits to others, and can usually count on the assistance—however begrudgingly—of local law enforcement.

Disadvantage: Mistrust. Government agents are the least trusted group of all. When mysterious people in dark suits and black cars pull into a small town, the people talk... to everyone but them. With rumors of black helicopters, mind-control techniques, and other conspiracy theories running rampant, a government agent could easily find the people she needs to talk to the most unwilling to even look in her direction. Government agents also have to contend with internal politics of their own agency. If Senator So-and-So wants a quiet resolution to that problem in Roswell, he gets it or you get reassigned. It's also likely not everyone at the Agency has your best interests at heart—you always have to watch your step.

Examples: *Project Blue Book, Hellboy, The X-Files*

Suggested Backgrounds: Academic, Investigative, Law Enforcement, Military, Technician

Suggested Archetypes: Government Agent, Detective, Soldier

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTERS

Looking for the truth even if they have to bend the law to do it, investigative reporters dig through old document morgues, interview everyone remotely associated with a mysterious event, and sometimes even fast talk their way into restricted areas to find that precious kernel of truth.

A group of investigative reporters could be employed by some form of media: a newspaper, magazine, tabloid, or even a television show. It is their job to research and investigate reports of paranormal activities and report them to the world. Since most serious publications tend to scoff at tales of ghosts and aliens, the publication most likely has a disclaimer somewhere that it is "for entertainment purposes only." That doesn't matter, though. People have the right to know the truth! More often than not, this group butts heads with the government agents trying to cover it up.

Advantage: Freedom of the Press. As investigative reporters, the characters are journalists and by law cannot be impeded from reporting what they uncover. Important people and authorities may threaten or otherwise try to coerce the heroes, but when all is said and done, the heroes have the advantage of free speech. Freedom of the Press can be powerful leverage to get people to loosen their tongues when they are reticent. If they don't tell you everything, you can print what you do know and let the people decide what happened. In many cases, the truth is less damaging than rampant speculation by an uninformed public.

Disadvantage: Credibility. Because the a group of investigative reporters write articles involving conspiracy theories and things that go bump in the night, they may lack credibility in the journalistic community. Who believes that stuff anyway? Other media outlets may be hesitant to deal with them, and local authorities are likely to dismiss them as crackpots and refuse to tell them anything. There are certainly some people out there who believe every word printed in supermarket tabloids, but most laugh them off as ludicrous. The investigative reporter's "freedom of the press" doesn't count for much when what you report is though of as journalistic garbage.

Examples: *Kolchak the Nightstalker*

Suggested Backgrounds: Academic, Creative, Criminal, Investigative, White Collar

Suggested Archetypes: Criminologist, Detective, Reporter



MILITARY/ PARAMILITARY SQUAD

Highly trained, lethally efficient, and expertly coordinated, the military squad deploys to danger zones around the world to fight the enemies of the state and defend citizens with duty, honor, and bravado.

Whether members of a national army, a local militia, or a police department, the heroes are crack combat troops more than capable of dealing with threats in a precise manner. This type of group lends itself best to one-shot scenarios pitting the heroes' training and weapons against an onslaught of supernatural creatures.

A military squad can be part of a series, but it can be a challenge for the Narrator to come up with scenarios in which such a group could be believably involved. In most cases, this type of group is best treated as a subset of one of the other groups in an ongoing campaign, such as government agents or survivalists. As the former, they are the combat arm of a government agency trained to deal with supernatural threats. In the latter, they are the remnants of a military squad trying to make their way in a world gone mad.

Advantage: Weapons and Training. Members of a military or paramilitary squad have one major advantage most other groups do not: hardware. Every member of the group has weapons, perhaps some body armor, and even a handful of frag grenades. In a strictly military campaign, the group may have a Hummer or a helicopter or even an APC to carry them around. Along with their ordinance, the members of a military group also have the training and discipline to use them well.

Disadvantage: Chain of Command. As a member of a combat unit, you are subject to the orders of superior officers who may not fully understand your position. Members of a military squad are required

to stay within the proper chain of command and follow orders without question. Although it is the duty of those in the field to inform their commanders of the situation so they can issue proper orders, the brass might not want to hear about it when facing supernatural opponents. Another disadvantage of the military group is that, despite the hardware, all those weapons are of little use against monsters that are immune to bullets.

Examples: *Dog Soldiers, Predator*

Suggested Backgrounds: Athlete, Blue Collar, Military, Technician

Suggested Archetypes: Government Agent, Soldier

MONSTER HUNTERS

Ordained by some higher power to defend mankind from the creatures of the night, the monster hunters walk the twilight between reality and the supernatural. Monster hunters are not exactly normal people. They are empowered, by birth, destiny or even technology, to track down and dispatch supernatural creatures. Secretive Vatican agents, teenagers given awesome powers by forces beyond, and psychics who take the fight to the source of evil are all examples of monster hunters. This group is perhaps the freest group of all, since they aren't subject to government policies, chains of command, or (in some cases) codes of ethics.

Advantage: Power. Monster hunters, by their very definition, have the power to confront and defeat monsters on their own terms. Of all the groups, monster hunters are also the easiest in which to play adepts. Sometimes you need a little supernatural ability of your own when you fight vampires on quiet suburban streets.

Disadvantage: Supernatural magnet. Monster hunters have a lot of power and ability—and the monsters know it. Because they are so effective in hunting down and exterminating supernatural threats, the heroes attract all manner of ghoulies and ghosties and long-legged beasties who want

nothing more than to exterminate them back. With great power comes great responsibility, but also great enemies. A group of monster hunters is frequently assailed on all sides by the forces of darkness.

Examples: *Angel, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Ghostbusters, Supernatural, Van Helsing*

Suggested Backgrounds: Academic, Creative, Dilettante, Investigative, Religious, Technician

Suggested Archetypes: Antiquarian, Avenging Angel, Clairsentient, Criminologist, Occultist

PERSONAL HORROR

In a setting of personal horror, the roles are reversed. The heroes are the monsters, hiding from human persecution or dealing with the tragedy of what it means to be a monster. Because they are outnumbered by the teeming masses of humanity, the heroes of a game of personal horror must act carefully lest they draw attention to themselves. The heroes may belong to a society of monsters living right under the humans' noses, closely following a rigid set of guidelines designed to keep their existence a secret, or they may be in hiding somewhere in the wilderness, only occasionally visiting areas of human habitation. Although players may be strongly tempted to run "evil" characters in a game such as this, Narrators should stress the fact that the characters are still supposed to be heroes. Perhaps they are trying to restore their humanity or protect innocents from the depredations of other monsters who are not so kind. This serves to enhance the roleplaying opportunities and caters to the tragedy inherent to the genre. Even "good" monsters are still seen as monsters no matter how hard they try; therein lies the real horror.

Advantages: Power. Because they aren't human, the heroes in this type of game aren't bound by the normal restrictions of character design. They can possibly have abilities above +5, bonus supernatural powers, and non-human traits (such as Scent or Flight). Narrators who want to run a game of personal horror should be aware of the imbalance that such powerful characters bring to the game. They will likely be stronger, faster, and more capable in combat than most human adversaries. In light of this possible imbalance, it is recommended that Narrators either tone down the abilities of the creatures in the *True20 Bestiary* before allowing them as heroic backgrounds, or make up their own versions using the rules for creating new backgrounds in *True20*.

Disadvantages: Persecution. When you're a monster, you are feared. There's no getting around that. Even the best of intentions can be misinterpreted when you're obviously inhuman. A hero in a game of personal horror must tread lightly, not attract too much attention, and know when to run. Even powerful creatures can be hunted and killed by skilled humans, and that includes powerful supernatural creatures

like you. Certain humans might also know of your weaknesses and will certainly take advantage of them to bring you down.

Examples: *Nightbreed, Interview with the Vampire, An American Werewolf in London*

Suggested Backgrounds: Any

Suggested Archetypes: Any

SURVIVALISTS

Life is a daily struggle against things that yesterday were strictly unheard of outside of video games and horror stories. Survivalist horror depends on some world-altering event that destroyed civilization and forced people to find ways to survive. The End could have been caused by a hideous sea god rising from the ocean floor and sending forth masses of cosmic horrors against the world, the Biblical Revelation coming to pass with demons and monsters erupting from fiery cracks in the earth, or a bizarre plague that turns the bodies of the recent dead into cannibalistic ghouls. This is the horrible world in which the Survivalist group must make their way. It is a bit of a departure from the "investigate and defeat" motif of the other groups and often crosses over completely with other genres, such as post-apocalyptic and science fiction. Elements of horror still exist, however, but they are blatant and commonplace and more often dealt with using outright combat.

Advantage: Freedom. In a survivalist horror campaign, the characters have no laws to restrict them. They can go guns blazing into almost any situation if they want to. There is no authority to oppose them or to prevent them from ransacking a military laboratory for the information they need. They won't be arrested for harassing or killing those that try to impede them.

Disadvantage: Lack of resources. With society either completely gone or in a rapid downward spiral, the hardest thing for a group of Survivalists is to find what they need to survive. Weapons are important, certainly, but now that mass-produced food is a thing of the past, where will the group find sustenance to keep them healthy enough to use those weapons? Not only are common necessities at a premium, but the heroes may also encounter a dearth of research materials. When a tentacled horror is eating its way through the huddled refugees of a city in ruins, where do you go to find out what can kill the thing? Another major disadvantage of this style is a high mortality rate. With monsters everywhere, it can be quite a challenge just to survive the night.

Examples: *Dawn of the Dead, I Am Legend, 28 Days Later*

Suggested Backgrounds: Any

Suggested Archetypes: Any

HORROR THROUGH THE AGES

Another important element of a horror game is the era in which it is set. The era in which a horror game is set determines the overall tone of the game. Certain themes are more prevalent in some eras and less prevalent in others. For example, most horror in the 1950's deals with subversive aliens and giant bugs. The horror of the Victorian Era is primarily philosophical in nature and deals with pseudoscience. In addition to the tone, naturally the era in which a horror game is set restricts the heroes in their choice of equipment. In some cases, the era even restricts the heroes' choice of skills and feats. Although a Narrator can run a horror game in any era, the following times tend to be the most popular. This section looks at the major eras of horror, from the Victorian Age up to the present, and how to create stories that evoke their particular styles in your *True20* game. These aren't the only approaches but they're the ones that capture the style of horror fiction from each era.

THE VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN ERAS

The Victorian Era begins in the mid-19th century with the coronation of the woman for whom the era is named: Alexandrina Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. After her death in 1901, the Edwardian Era began with the coronation of Prince Albert Edward.

The Victorian and Edwardian Eras are times of change and rapid scientific advancement. The people of these eras saw the rise of industrialization, the birth of the middle class, and the first significant advances in the fields of medicine, forensic science, and biology. Unfortunately, they also witnessed advances in the art of

war, culminating in the so-called “Great War” in 1914. This roughly 70-year period is also a time of rigid social mores and strict rules of behavior that dictated “propriety” in thought and deed. This is the age of Nikola Tesla, Thomas Edison, Pierre and Marie Curie, Wilbur and Orville Wright, and Charles Darwin... but it is also the age of Aleister Crowley, Bram Stoker, and Edgar Allan Poe.

Despite the great advances in science and society—or perhaps because of them—the people of this time developed a strong interest in matters of the occult. Spiritualism and mesmerism were all the rage. People consulted psychics and fortunetellers, and occultists gathered in arcane societies to further their understanding of the world beyond that of the living. Even as men and women of vision looked towards the future and created inventions that were thought impossible only years before, others cast their gazes into the past and dreamed of fantastic things even science couldn’t explain.

The Victorian and Edwardian Eras are excellent settings for a horror game because they are an age in which the beliefs of humanity existed in a strange no-man’s land between science and the supernatural. The horrors of this time include creatures of myth and folklore (*Dracula*), human horrors (Jack the Ripper), and the tragic results of poorly understood science (*Frankenstein*, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*).

THE PROHIBITION AND DEPRESSION ERAS

The Victorian and Edwardian Eras gave way in the early part of the 20th century as society rebelled against the inflexible rules of propriety in the face of global unrest. The Prohibition and Depression Eras comprise the “Interwar” period between 1919 and 1939. The boys were home from the war, the horrible Spanish Influenza epidemic was finally over, and it was time to get back to basics and rebuild. Alcohol was outlawed much to the chagrin of many people in the nation, but that didn’t stop them. What couldn’t be bought in the stores and pubs was easily available through other less legitimate means, making many people wealthy.

The middle class, born of the industrialization of the Victorian Era, grew by leaps and bounds as more and more people found themselves with disposable income and that most precious of resources: free time. People were well fed and happy. There was enough to go around. And if there wasn’t enough, you could easily take out loans or play the stock market, which seemed to get better every day and make men millionaires overnight.

That all changed on Tuesday, October 29th, 1929. The high times of the Prohibition Era collapsed into the Depression Era. The Crash of ‘29, “Black Tuesday,” ushered in an economic depression that lasted over 10 years and only ended with wartime production in the early years of World War II. In stark contrast to the previous decade, the 30’s were a time of great upheaval and poverty. Bread lines extended around the corner as fortunes were lost overnight.

During this time, the inventions of men like Robert Goddard and advances in telescopes and astronomy caused greater and greater interest in what lay beyond the atmosphere. The Prohibition and Depression Eras also brought about unparalleled advances in travel with mass produced automobiles, extensive rail lines, and even commuter airlines. The fanciful ideas of the Victorian “natural philosophers” faded away to true scientific speculation of the natural world. Much of the speculation was dark, however. This is the age of H. P. Lovecraft, Robert Bloch, Clark Ashton Smith, and August Derleth, who imagined ancient beings with forms and motives unfathomable by humankind.

The Prohibition and Depression Eras are excellent settings for a horror game because they are an age of discovery and mystery. Much of the world is still unexplored; it was still possible for ancient secrets and arcane lore to come face to face with modern science wielded by men and women of adventure. The horrors of this time include the same threats as the Victorian and Edwardian eras, in addition to alien entities beyond the imaginings of humanity (*The Call of Cthulhu*) and the mysteries of lost civilizations (King Tut’s curse).

WORLD WAR 2 AND THE ATOMIC AGE

World War 2 began in 1939 with Hitler’s invasion of Poland and the Sudetenland. America stayed out of the “European conflict” until 1941, when Japan launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. The war soon raged from one end of the globe to the other, engulfing nation after nation. Millions died in Nazi death camps and the stalemate of the eastern front in Russia.

The Depression Era came to an end in America as wartime production created jobs for millions. Even women entered the workforce, taking up jobs that were traditionally held by men. Eventually the Allied Forces prevailed; the war in Europe officially came to an end on May 7, 1945. The war in the Pacific ended on August 14 of the same year when Japan surrendered to the United States. This war, even more so than the Great War that preceded it, saw terrible advances in military technology. Jet planes, rocket-propelled bombs, submarines, RADAR, and even early computers were brought into the war effort on all sides. Most horrifying, however, was the development of the atomic bomb. The destruction of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki ushered in the Atomic Age.

After World War 2, the world entered a so-called “Cold War” between the superpowers. The United States and the Soviet Union each



developed atomic weapons. Mistrust grew on each side and paranoia escalated. Never before did humanity have the means of destroying the world, and now this power was in the hands of two antagonist nations teetering on the brink of war. In the United States, paranoia was at an all-time high as Senator Joseph McCarthy launched a witch hunt to weed out "Communist Influences."

Aside from the nuclear escalation of the Atomic Era, the world at large saw other advances in science. The first true computers were invented, and that technology grew by leaps and bounds from vacuum-tubed behemoths that filled entire rooms, to refrigerator-sized consoles that ran on magnetic tape, to tabletop units filled with microchips. At the end of the sixties, a man even walked on the moon.

World War 2 and the Atomic Age are excellent eras for a horror game because this is the time in which horror became almost entirely scientific and psychological in nature. Nazi scientists researched genetics, eugenics, and the occult. This is also the time in which UFO lore got off to a strong start with Kenneth Arnold's sighting of "flying saucers" near Mt. Rainier, not to mention the alleged crash of an actual alien spacecraft in Roswell, New Mexico just 2 weeks later. Furthermore, the Atomic Age saw the birth of radioactive horrors. The perils of radiation and tinkering with the very building blocks of the Universe became the new nightmares (*Them!, The Amazing Colossal Man*). In addition to the perils of atomic energy, the rampant paranoia of the age gave rise to the horror of alien creatures bent on world domination and the subjugation of humanity (*The Thing From Another World, The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*).

MODERN DAY

The Modern Day era spans the early 1970's to the current day. The Vietnam Conflict came to a close; the Cold War got even colder before finally finding its own conclusion and fading from the public mind. The United States and the U.S.S.R. rattled their sabers at each other

from time to time, but overall they settled for using other nations as pawns in a potentially explosive chess game.

Computer and space science grew by leaps and bounds during this time. Just 10 years after landing on the moon, America had an orbital shuttle that could launch and return to Earth like an airplane. The Internet, born in the mid-60's, also grew by leaps and bounds as computers continued to get smaller, faster, and cheaper. By the early 1990's, almost the entire world was connected to the global information grid.

This was a time of relative peace in the world, a time of social and scientific advancements and prosperity. Ultimately, the Soviet Union collapsed and the Iron Curtain came crashing down. The Cold War was finally over. Unfortunately, at the dawn of the new millennium, a new war was about to begin. Terrorists aligned in global organizations unlike any that had been seen before. On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center towers in New York City and part of the Pentagon in Arlington, VA, were felled by terrorist attacks. Another plane crashed in Pennsylvania, brought down by the heroic actions of its passengers.

The Modern Day is an excellent setting for a horror game because it is the era most gamers are familiar with. The social mores and historical events of the previous eras are sometimes difficult to effectively work into a game, so the Modern Day makes the Narrator's job a bit easier. As far as horror itself, gone were the giant radioactive bugs and conquering aliens. Instead, horror became gory and graphic (*Halloween, Friday the 13th*). This time saw some of the earliest instances of new sub-genres of horror: survivalist horror (*Dawn of the Dead* and *Day of the Dead*) and backwoods horror (*The Hills Have Eyes, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*). The Modern Day also saw the return of supernatural threats as people experienced a renewed interest in the occult (*Rosemary's Baby, The Exorcist, The Omen*). The horror of the Modern day likewise mixes in equal amounts of action and adventure; vampire hunters are just as likely to use shotguns and grenades as mallets and holy water (*John Carpenter's Vampires, From Dusk til Dawn*).





CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

MODERN

ADVENTURES

GANGSTERS, SPIES, TERRORISTS—THE HEAVILY ARMED AND ARMORED FORCES OF EVIL THREATEN THE STABILITY OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT. THIS CHAPTER PRESENTS THE RULES, EQUIPMENT AND ADVERSARIES FOR TRUE20 ADVENTURES IN THE MODERN WORLD.

So what is a modern adventure anyway? Good question. First things first. Let's talk about what it *isn't*. A modern adventure isn't paying your taxes and dealing with your boss or the ongoing water-cooler soap opera that is your job. A modern adventure isn't dealing with traffic jams, or mowing the lawn and fixing that pesky water leak in the bathroom sink. It isn't minivans, soccer games, Friday night sleep-overs or report cards.

In short, a modern adventure isn't the world you live in.

A modern adventure is a hyper-real, mind-bending journey into the world of espionage, organized crime, modern warfare, counter-

terrorism, the war on drugs, gritty urban-punk and martial arts action. It's a non-stop, heart-pounding adrenaline rush filled with high-speed car chases, dogfights 35,000 feet above the earth, and HALO drops into war-torn Chechnya or a dozen other hot spots around the world. It's being jettisoned out the torpedo tube of a ballistic missile submarine a quarter mile off the coast of Iran to get intel on a suspected plutonium enrichment facility. A modern game is filled with political intrigue, shadow governments, weapons dealers, drug czars, crooked cops, and homicidal maniacs.

In short, a modern adventure *is* the world you live in.

OVERVIEW

As heroes in a modern series, you might be apart of an elite black-ops division of the CIA. Your division is tasked with bringing down various international organizations bent on acquiring chemical weapons, deadly viruses, nuclear weapons and other top secret technologies which serve to further the agendas of these nefarious groups. This is a game of ultra-modern cloak and dagger with exotic next-generation gear only available to people in your line of work; people that, for all intents and purposes, *don't exist*. Stories are filled with exciting plot twists, betrayal and high tension. Time is always working against you and you never know exactly who you can trust; that includes your fellow heroes.

Your characters might be apart of the special forces, operating behind enemy lines on recon missions or covertly smuggling guns into a third-world country. Your characters are elite, the tip of the spear. Your operations have saved the lives of countless men and women in the armed forces. Adventures in this genre can be straightforward military operations in war zones across the world, covert ops or even rogue adventures in which you play mercenaries hired to do extractions and any number of other missions.

If saving the world in a more direct way is your style, then your heroes can hunt down nefarious terrorist cells around the world as you wage the war against terror. Your team might be comprised of spec-ops forces with varying skill sets and CIA operatives or even FBI agents. These types of games merge the best of military and espionage adventures. You'll need a wide range of skills and extreme patience as you infiltrate these highly secretive militant groups if you want to prevent another major terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Games like these aren't always "kick down the door with guns blazing" operations. Many times you'll risk your life just to get a name, a photograph or some other tiny clue in your ongoing quest to bring down major terrorist organizations. That's all part of this high-stakes game you play.

Looking for something with a little bit of dirt on it? How about organized crime? Plunge your characters deep into the underbelly of

criminal organizations such as the mafia, the Japanese yakuza, the Chinese triad, the Russian mafia and myriad lesser criminal groups. Your characters might be hit men, bodyguards, or running a small-time crew who engages in racketeering, blackmail, extortion, or armed robbery. These heroes get to act with relative impunity so long as they kickback a percentage of the profits to the organization that controls the town you are operating in. The heroes might even be made-men, brought into the family and entrusted with larger operations, such as running a casino in Atlantic City or Las Vegas.

If being the bad guy isn't to your liking, you might choose an undercover cop, playing a dangerous game of cat and mouse as you secretly gather information. These types of games are extremely dangerous and veritably ooze with suspense. Your characters have to continuously prove themselves to the individuals they are trying to bring to justice. You have to *live* your cover identity. One miss-step, one lie that doesn't jive with every other lie you've told these dangerous people and you go swimming in the closest river with a concrete pair of shoes. Expanding on the crime-theme prevalent in many modern games, you might play a detective, hunting down notorious felons and sifting through clues. You might be tasked with investigating a suspected group of cops who have crossed the line, abusing their power for personal gain.

Want to play adventures involving SWAT? We've got you covered there, too. Bomb threats, bank robberies, hostage situations, stand-offs with a lunatic packing more heat than the local chapter of the NRA: these and many other high-tension adventures await your characters should they choose to join this elite branch of law enforcement.

Martial arts adventures are also a fun part of the modern genre. Defend your neighborhood against roving gangs using your mastery of kung fu, or fight against a rival school who seeks to show the dominance of their fighting style. Compete in tournaments to earn fame for your dojo. Take it to the streets, blending genres as you fight against the triad and the yakuza in Hong Kong, Bangkok, Tokyo, Nepal and Shanghai.

GENRE CONVENTIONS

The modern world is all about realism. Pain is raw and doesn't simply go away. Wounds take time to heal, and when you die, that's it—game over. Generally speaking, there are no mystical spells to bring the dead back to life, no powers that spray blasts of flame from your fingers. There are no energy pistols or force fields, no dragons to slay, and no beasties hiding in sewers or under your bed. The real monsters sell drugs to kids, murder people, commit rape, steal babies, rob banks and carry out cowardly acts of terrorism. They are crooked cops, ruthless dictators, rogue spies and serial killers. They are insurgent groups who attack your squad with rocket-propelled grenades and mortars, firing off a few quick rounds to cause chaos before disappearing into the crowds from whence they came. This section takes a look at various aspects of the modern world and how they might affect your game.

WEAPONS

The weapons you use are varied, but the vast majority of them were created within the past 50 years, many within the last decade. Hand guns, grenades, shotguns, assault rifles, .50 caliber machine guns, sniper rifles, cemtex, dynamite, satchel charges, knives, aluminum baseball bats: these weapons are the core of a modern game. Some might even use weapons such as a katana, a compound bow or a modernized crossbow. Others might prefer hand to hand combat and invest part of their lives learning martial arts, becoming lethal weapons themselves. The weapons your characters use are a big part of the modern game, but sometimes what you use isn't as important as how you get it.

CONVENTIONAL ACQUISITION

It isn't difficult for characters to obtain a firearm through conventional channels. Most common firearms (and weapons permits) can be bought at gun or pawn shops. Even large retail outlets sell hunting rifles. A character can get a .357 Magnum or a Glock .9mm hand gun at any sporting goods outlet. It's not as if buying a gun is illegal.

The problem for characters who choose to buy a gun through conventional means is that they will leave a paper trail for people such as police officers, private detectives etc. to follow. Forms authorizing a background check have to be filled out and processed before a person actually receives the weapon, which can take up to three days in most cases. In addition to leaving a record of the purchase, fingerprints and a photocopy of the character's ID, the character has to wait for his gun. You might be wondering what the big deal is? There isn't, really, unless your character happens to be planning to use the weapon in an illegal operation of some sort. For these types of characters, the best option when considering obtaining a weapon is to hit the black market.

THE BLACK MARKET

The black market is a shadow community existing to provide people with anything and everything they might want, whether it be ripped dvd's, illegal drugs, guns or suitcase nukes. Much like an onion, there are a number of layers to the black market. Which layer(s) your characters will be exposed to ultimately depends on what your characters are trying to acquire.

The following is an examination of the various levels of the black market. Guidelines are provided for gathering information about the black market. This is particularly important, as the black market doesn't advertise. Characters are going to need to do some legwork to even find a black market contact and setup a meet. It's also inherently dangerous. One shouldn't simply assume a given encounter with people dealing on the black market is going to go smoothly. Also included are suggested modifiers to purchase Difficulties for items at a given level, availability suggestions, and information about hazards characters might encounter when dealing on the black market.

GATHER INFORMATION CHECKS

As a general rule of thumb, heroes should not be allowed to take 10 or 20 when making initial Gather Information checks to learn about the black market. As stated before, dealing on the black market is a highly dangerous undertaking. There are a number of variables involved. Will a paranoid gang banger or fence simply decide to shoot the heroes and take their money? Will the police raid a meet? If a Gather Information check fails, the characters might have tipped off an undercover cop instead of a dealer. They might have contacted someone who works for a rival organization rather than the intended organization. The FBI might have the heroes or their contacts under surveillance and record the meet. Many problems can crop up if the heroes aren't careful.

As the heroes gain more experience dealing with these shady individuals, however, it should naturally become easier, allowing them to take 10 on subsequent checks to deal with organizations with whom they have previous experience. Contacting new people and organizations should be handled as if the heroes have never dealt with the organization before. Above all, it should never be so safe that heroes can take 20 when dealing with people who work in the black market, regardless of who they are dealing with.

GATHER INFORMATION CHECKS AND TIME

Normally a Gather Information check can take one or even several hours, at the discretion of the Narrator. The Contacts feat can reduce this time to minutes. This is appropriate only if heroes have an existing, ongoing relationship with a criminal organization. If the characters are



just beginning to get involved in the black market, the process should take much longer. It is suggested that Narrators increase the base time involved in researching the black market to days rather than hours.

Let's face it. Criminals are paranoid people, sometimes justifiably so. When a person new to the scene goes snooping around, it raises alarms. People start talking. News spreads around the streets, and suddenly the heroes have a bunch of goons busting through doors with baseball bats and shotguns wanting to know why they're getting so nosey. While news can spread fast on the streets, there's no guarantee the characters will get the information they need when they need it.

WEALTH CHECK DIFFICULTIES

As previously stated, buying on the black market is illegal. Prices for illicit items such as drugs and weapons are marked up to reflect the risk involved in selling them. Heroes won't be able to pay by check or credit card when dealing with these people. They either have cash on hand or the deal is off.

On the international black market, increases to Wealth check difficulties reflect not only the dangers involved, which are considerable, but also the processes involved. These types of transactions involve at least upper-end six-figure dollar amounts and can rise into the tens of millions, depending on what is being bought and sold. For the most part, that kind of currency doesn't simply change hands. It has to be funneled through dummy corporations, smuggled out of the country or be transferred through multiple bank accounts in order to avoid raising the attention of various world governments and agencies like Scotland Yard, INTERPOL, the FBI, and the NSA.

Consider that in the United States, customs agents can automatically seize cash in excess of \$10,000. Those caught with that much cash are detained and questioned by federal agents. With this in mind, the heroes risk being flagged by INTERPOL, the FBI, NSA and the Department of Homeland Security as possible terrorists. Even if the heroes are

released (which, thanks to the Patriot Act, isn't guaranteed), they will be watched constantly. Aside from the obvious problems this causes, the people who were supposed to get that money in the first place may just decide to kill the heroes rather than risk exposure. Each level of the black market will have suggestions for Wealth Check modifiers. Feel free to adjust them as you see fit.

STREET LEVEL

The street level of the black market is pretty much what the name says; Street level activity. At this level the average black market items include small quantities of illegal drugs and stolen electronics such as tv's, stereos and dvd players. Heroes can also find bootlegged DVDs, snuff films, handguns, rifles, sawed-off shotguns and the occasional assault rifle. Cheap prostitution is a common black market service available on any inner-city street corner. Characters can fence stolen watches, jewelry or guns and other similar items at this level.

Information is usually limited to rumors and news about what's happening in the city, things that directly relate to neighborhood criminal activity. Local snitches, fences and bartenders who are connected to the underground scene will have general information about specific individuals, recent high-profile jobs, gangs and their territory, etc.

LEVEL OF ORGANIZATION

There isn't any real organization at this level. Most dealers working at street level are amateurs who have no real sense of purpose, no direction, no goals beyond making enough money to continue their seedy lifestyle. These people have no real head for business, a fact reflected in how they live. Their influence in the underworld is marginal at best. The major players in a typical city give these people an illusion of importance, but the truth of the matter is any one of these street dealers can be easily replaced.

TYPICAL HAZARDS

The streets are filled with all sorts of dangers. Roving gangs, con artists, petty criminals and the police are always concerns when heroes are involved in illegal activity. Paranoia runs high when meeting with the average street-level dealer. These individuals are always suspicious of newcomers looking to buy items. Heroes will likely need to "prove" they aren't undercover cops before any business can begin.

GETTING INFORMATION

Knowledge about the black market at the street level is common. If characters are performing Gather Information checks, it is suggested that the base Difficulty be 5 for general knowledge and 10 for specific knowledge about individuals or groups, such as known drug dealers, fences and notable gangs. The time involved in acquiring this information is standard, with appropriate outcomes for failed Gather Information checks.

Gather Information checks assume characters are paying bribes to their contacts. Characters may also use Knowledge (streetwise) to find black market dealers using the same Difficulty as for Gather Information checks, with the hero relying on her knowledge of the streets to get the information she needs.

ACQUISITION TIME

Acquiring illicit items and services on the street is almost immediate. In most cases the contraband is readily available and deals are done on the spot. For this reason, Narrators should feel free to ignore the guidelines for purchase times when characters are buying gear on the streets.

COST MODIFIERS

The prices of street-level black market items vary greatly depending on what you want, but typically run from \$10 (a dime bag of weed or

a bootlegged dvd) to \$2000 (a pound of cocaine, a stolen car, or guns and ammunition for you and your crew). Street-level black market items have a +3 modifier to the cost, but only if they are considered highly illegal (guns, drugs, etc). Items like bootlegged DVDs and electronics are generally sold at a lower price than the base cost. For these items, apply a -3 modifier to the base cost of the item. The cost of an item may never drop below 1.

ORGANIZED CRIME

At this level, the black market branches out into areas where serious money is made. Professional hits, drug smuggling, coercion, blackmail, fraud, racketeering, loan sharking, gambling, money laundering and low-to-mid level arms deals are trademarks of organized crime. Everything you find on the streets is put there by crime rings such as the yakuza, mafia, triad and other freelance outfits.

Freelancers are groups of people who run organized operations but are independent of any ethnic affiliations. Many of these are tightly knit crews who have been working together for years. These individuals likely met in prison, making plans to work together after their release. Whatever the case, these criminals are hard core, dangerous people, dedicated to a life of crime. Freelance crews are usually at odds with more traditional criminal organizations, who view them as upstarts looking to muscle in on their action.

SERVICES

Any illicit drugs or weapons you find on the streets have been put there by people involved with organized crime. So what's the point of risking contacting these organizations directly? Criminal organizations have influence and power not measured by the weapons, equipment or drugs they can provide. These groups employ tactics such as bribery, coercion and favors to get what they want. They blackmail people, increasing their power and influence. The lure of these groups lies in what they can do for you.

ASSASSINATIONS

Otherwise known as "hits" or "contracts," assassinations are regularly performed by organized crime syndicates. Some targets are eliminated for personal reasons while others are killed because of the threat they pose to the continued existence of the organization. Sometimes highly proficient hit men will be called in to take the target out, but generally speaking, the contract will be handled "in house," with the organization using their own muscle to get the job done.

The average cost of a contract varies from target to target, depending on the complexity of the hit and how "high profile" the target is. The base cost of an assassination is $25 + \text{half the total level of the target}$. To find the total cost of the hit, add the reputation score of the target. The Narrator is free to choose the fame or infamy rating of the target as he sees fit.

Example: A contract is put out on a local district attorney. The district attorney is an 8th level expert with a Reputation (fame) score of 3. The total cost of the hit is 32 ($25 + 4 + 3$).

BRIBERY

Criminal organizations play heavily upon greed as a way of getting people to do what they want. They get people like union officials, cops, lawyers and judges in their pocket and then use these people to make certain that various issues play out in their favor. For instance, a detective on the take might be used to remove certain key pieces of evidence from a crime scene. A judge in the mob's pocket can be very handy when a high profile trial might send a mob boss to prison.

Heroes rarely have the clout and resources that a criminal organization has. Crime rings can influence people and groups the characters

otherwise might not have access to. When some situation absolutely needs to play out in the favor of the heroes, one option will almost always be to go to the mob and get them to pay off the person or persons in question.

The cost of a bribe depends on who is being bribed, the length of time, and how much extra the organization charges. There is no hard, fast way of determining the price of a bribe. The prices can change from person to person. A street cop might only need \$1000 a month, while a Judge would require \$10,000 on a case-by-case basis. Narrators should factor the above information into the cost and set the cost at what they think is best.

BLACKMAIL

Sometimes bribery won't work but the problem still needs to be taken care of. In situations like this, blackmail is an effective option.

Blackmail generally takes a while to get the target to "play ball" and can often come to violence. For these reasons costs can be much higher due to the risks involved. Narrators should use the guidelines for bribery when determining how much it will cost the heroes to get the organization to blackmail someone.

LOANS

Heroes in need of quick cash can always contact a loan shark for help financing a purchase. The danger here is that the money has to be paid back, with interest. If the characters can't pay back the loan on time, they risk bringing the full weight of the organization down on their heads.

If the characters need a specific item, the base cost of a loan is equal to the cost of whatever it is the heroes need the money for. When using a loan to get a specific item, the Narrator can, at his discretion, choose to forgo any Wealth checks involved in purchasing said item. If the characters just want money to finance a number of unspecified future purchases, find the dollar amount and apply the relevant cost. The interest on any given loan is +3 (weekly) to the base cost of the loan. Successful Diplomacy checks can reduce the interest by 1 for every 5 points by which the character succeeds on the Diplomacy check.

Eventually the heroes are going to need to pay back the loan. Each week that goes by without the loan being paid back increases the total cost by 3. This means that a loan with a total cost of 29 that hasn't been paid back after 2 weeks jumps to 35! If more than 3 weeks pass without the loan being paid (in part or in full), it is suggested that the Narrator send goons to attack the heroes.

LEVEL OF ORGANIZATION

Unlike the fast-paced chaos of street level black market activity, organized crime is, well, organized. Operations are run much like any business. To acquire an item or service, characters will need to setup a preliminary meeting with representatives of the organization in question. The following guidelines are presented to give Narrators insight into the processes involved in dealing with criminal organizations.

THE PRELIMINARY MEET

The preliminary meeting is apart of a process where the organization begins to get an idea of who the characters are, what they want and most importantly, whether or not they can be trusted. Criminal organizations at this level don't do business with just anyone. The meeting won't happen anywhere near the mob's places of business. It might be in a park, along the waterfront, or in some other place not affiliated with the organization.

They'll contact the people they have in their pocket in at the police station to find out if the heroes have a criminal record. They'll send out goons to hit up their contacts on the streets to see if the characters have a reputation. In short; the bosses will look for anything out of the



ordinary. Afterwards, they'll think about it for a few days before deciding whether or not to setup a second meeting.

THE SECONDARY MEET

This meeting is traditionally more formal, taking place in one of the organization's fronts such as a bar, a casino, a restaurant, or a warehouse: somewhere the two parties can discuss business without worrying about police or federal agents listening in. At least one mid-level boss will be at this meeting, accompanied by no less than four bodyguards of an appropriate level. At this time the characters will be expected to discuss exactly what it is they want and why they want it. Depending on how negotiations go, the bosses will either refuse to deal with the characters or they will agree to a final meet. Characters will be sent away with instructions to wait until they are contacted.

THE FINAL MEET

Heroes will be contacted by representatives of the organization and told the location and time of the next meeting. This is generally a highly tense situation; the culmination of days (sometimes weeks) of negotiations and information gathering. One boss and at least four bodyguards will be at the point of contact, with more mooks within a block's distance from the meet. The characters will be searched for bugs and weapons. Once everything checks out, the meet will begin. Barring any unforeseen events (double-crosses, police raids, assassination attempts by rival organizations), the characters will obtain what they want.

TYPICAL HAZARDS

At this level, the dangers of dealing with criminal organizations depend largely on how the characters are perceived by the organization in question. If the characters have developed a good reputation with the people they are dealing with, they might be brought into the organization, consequently inheriting the enemies of said organization. This can include rival groups and even government agencies, such as the FBI.

Should the heroes cross an organization, things become much more dangerous. Contracts will be taken out on the characters, leading to encounters with various henchmen including mooks and professional hit men. Gangs and other seedy groups looking to up their street rep might also get involved in the hunt for the heroes.

GETTING INFORMATION

Criminal organizations don't exactly advertise their operations, but they don't try and hide their presence either. In many cases, criminal organizations tend to flaunt their ability to operate with relative impunity. The reason is because people don't talk about the organization, period. Whether this is out of fear of reprisal, blackmail or bribes, it's very difficult to obtain anything more than general information about criminal organizations.

It is suggested that the base difficulty for Gather Information and Knowledge (streetwise) checks pertaining to general information about these organizations is 10. Specific details, such as names of bosses, bases of operation and such for Gather Information and Knowledge (streetwise) checks are more difficult to obtain. The base difficulty for checks to acquire specific knowledge be 15–20, at the Narrator's discretion. Gather Information checks assume bribes are employed in the process of obtaining information, and Knowledge (streetwise) checks assume the characters have been around the block enough times to know who's who.

ACQUISITION TIME

The availability of black market items and services at this level can vary greatly depending what the heroes want and how long it takes to earn enough trust with an organization. Newcomers are going wait longer than people who dealt with the organization before. It is suggested that initial acquisition times start at a minimum of 1 week and scale down as the heroes build a reputation with the organization in question. This process can go as slow or as fast as the Narrator feels is appropriate for the series.



COST MODIFIERS

Black market items and services acquired through a criminal organization vary greatly depending on what the heroes want. Gangsters and their ilk don't deal in small-time operations. That's what the street gangs and common thugs are for. Heroes looking to deal with the mob or some other crime ring should expect to spend at least ten grand for a particular service. Cost modifiers are typically +5 and higher at the Narrator's discretion. Alternatively, the criminal organization might forgo costs in favor of having the characters perform favors.

FAVORS

Favors are the quickest way for criminal organizations to get someone "in their pocket." This is how it works. Oftentimes, a person such as a small business owner or someone with a gambling problem will come to a criminal organization such as the local mafia looking for help. Maybe the business owner is having trouble with local gangs breaking into his store and vandalizing the place. Maybe the gambler is into the mob for 50 grand and can't pay the money back.

In either case, crime bosses sometimes choose to assist these people with their problems. The gambler might be offered a chance to work off his debt by performing various jobs, like breaking legs, dumping bodies, or giving them something that is of value, such as the security codes to his workplace or company secrets. The business owner can get the issue with the gangs taken care of and have continued protection, provided he kicks back a hefty percentage of his profits for the rest of his career. The mob owns these people from that point on. This is what can happen to heroes who deal with organized crime and don't pay their debts.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

International organized crime is a world apart. It's filled with terrorist groups, international drug cartels and multi-national arms dealers. It's a vast array of informant networks who deal in information-brokering and blackmail. International organized crime involves governments and shadow organizations who launder money through countless shell companies, selling weapons to third-world countries and terrorist groups.

Such groups buy and sell secrets, cutting-edge technology and dangerous biological, chemical and even nuclear weapons. International criminal organizations also deal in human trafficking. They smuggle people into countries such as the United States with the promise of a better life, only to sell them to corrupt individuals who keep them as slaves—or worse.

LEVEL OF ORGANIZATION

International organized crime is incredibly sophisticated. The men and women who run the various facets of the underworld have operations that span the globe, thanks to the Internet and global telecommunications. The world has grown smaller, enabling criminal organizations to communicate with each other over long distances in minutes rather than weeks or months.

An opium dealer in Turkey can contact his partners in Europe and arrange for them to setup shipments with dealers in New York City in a day's time. A week later (depending on how the shipment is being transported) the product has been distributed to dealers and is being sold on the streets. Fifty years ago this level of organization and the speed at which plans are implemented would have been very difficult to achieve.

Unlike legitimate governments, international criminal organizations have no red-tape to deal with, making the process that much easier. Indeed, trade agreements with nations such as Mexico work in the favor of smugglers who operate under the guise of legitimate companies. They

simply transport their product right through ports of entry, with little or no worry about being hassled by border patrols or DEA agents.

SERVICES

The vastness of the international black market is such that heroes can conceivably get anything they can think of, if they can afford it. The items and services at this level of the black market can easily cost millions of dollars. This is the deep end of the pool, so to speak. For the most part, heroes won't have access to that kind of capital. They'll likely need to be affiliated with these organizations in some fashion. This effectively negates any need for Wealth Checks, unless you happen to be narrating a high-level series of adventures where the characters are running their own black market organization. If this is the case, feel free to apply whatever modifiers to the cost you feel are appropriate for the following types of services:

ASSASSINATIONS

These contracts are carried out by highly proficient individuals: professional assassins, military special forces or government black-ops teams—people who, for all intents and purposes, don't even exist. The targets are high profile men and women: oil barons, senators, congressmen and other elected officials. They are leaders of terrorist organizations, arms brokers and drug kingpins. These targets must go down and stay down.

KIDNAPPING

Kidnapping happens all the time. Many companies insure their workers against the possibility of an organization snatching them off the streets and holding the victim ransom until the companies pay up. Other groups don't want money; they want information, technology, weapons or the release of a political prisoner. Kidnapping someone's spouse or child is an effective way to get people to play ball.

SMUGGLING OPERATIONS

Smuggling operations are commonplace among the various organizations that comprise the international black market. To say that selling weapons in the international arms bazaar is lucrative would be a gross understatement. Billions of dollars are spent on weapons each year. After all, wars cost money. It's not just about war and weapons, however—drugs and people are also smuggled across the borders of every country in the world. So long as human beings have a desire to get high or force others into servitude, there will be people who are willing to hazard the risks involved in getting them what they want.

TYPICAL HAZARDS

One of the most important functions of federal and international agencies such as INTERPOL and the FBI is hunting down anyone involved with illegal activities such as those mentioned above. Beyond that, however, simply dealing with terrorist organizations, drug smugglers and arms dealers carries an inherent risk of death. These people will shoot you, chop you up and feed you to a pack of pigs if you so much as look at them sideways. They may be planning to kill you even if you do everything right. Money is, after all, money.

Of course, things can get much worse than taking a bullet in the head. These people may decide you know more than you're telling them. They might suspect you are double-crossing them or working for a rival organization. If this is the case, you are probably going to be interrogated—the hard way. Torture is a brutal yet effective way of getting information, and these criminal organizations have no qualms about doing it.

GETTING INFORMATION

The international black market is interesting in that it has a place in popular culture. We see movies and television shows that deal with this subject matter all the time. We are bombarded with news broadcasts about

global instances of terrorist activity, drug seizures, kidnappings, murder, and war. It isn't hard to formulate some basic ideas about the international black market because we see evidence that it exists every day.

It certainly isn't far-fetched to assume that the heroes are exposed to the same media that we are. With this in mind, it is suggested that Gather Information checks to obtain general information on the international black market have a Difficulty between 10 and 15, depending on what information the characters are attempting to uncover. This modification to standard rules on Gather Information checks reflects the inherent dangers involved in researching these groups.

Specific knowledge is an entirely different matter. Though heroes may have ideas about what the international black market is, they are going to be hard-pressed to get actual names and places without appropriate contacts. In many cases, the heroes will need to be affiliated with an organization such as INTERPOL, the FBI, CIA or NSA to be able to obtain credible information about the international black market. For these reasons, it is suggested that specific information be treated as either restricted or protected information with Difficulties ranging between 20 and 25.

CONTACTS

A modern adventure isn't just about what you know—it's also who you know. Whether you're a detective putting the squeeze on a local snitch, an up-and-coming player in the mob, a professional thief looking to fence his loot or a spy working deep cover in Berlin, you need to have contacts. Let's say you are preparing to extract a nuclear physicist from a research facility. Five hours before the extraction, you find out the intel you have on the security systems is false. What do you do? Is there an asset close enough to get you the tech you need? Do you have a local black market contact? It's the little things that sometimes get you killed. Having the right contacts can often mean the difference between life and death.

Contacts immediately inject flavor into the game. They are the Narrator characters we interact with when investigating a crime or tracking down a wanted felon. A contact can help you find a place to lay low if all your normal safe houses have been compromised, or they can get you out of town when all hell breaks loose. Of course, they can also drop you flat if things get too hot, but everybody needs a little dramatic challenge now and then.

MAINTAINING CONTACTS

Contacts are more than just a feat; they are Narrator characters that have their own agendas, their own sets of problems and personalities which must be taken into consideration when the heroes need to use them. Heroes who have established a network of contacts such as fences, suppliers, informants etc. need to maintain a positive relationship with these individuals to keep using them. The heroes must be willing to expend time and resources to keep those relationships strong, or they may find themselves without help at a critical juncture.

While the Connected and Contacts feats listed in **Chapter Three** are fairly general, it can add a lot to the game to give those bonuses specific faces, names, and areas of expertise. In a modern setting, dealing with such capable and illicit organizations means that information is at a premium. You can capitalize on this aspect of the game by requiring that time the Contacts feat is taken, it refers to a specific location, group, or level of criminal activity, possibly personified by a specific individual. This will give the Narrator additional dramatic license, adding considerably to the realistic feel of the gritty modern setting. It is suggested that you have the players write out basic information on contacts so that they will have a solid idea of what contacts they are dealing with.

If you use this method, remember that not every contact is relevant to a particular series. For instance, contacts with fences and street level

informants in Los Angeles will do the characters no good when trying to obtain information about a criminal organization in London or a terrorist cell operating out of Lebanon.

If a character loses her contacts through the course of the game, the Narrator must decide whether or not that Contact can be salvaged. At the Narrator's discretion, the player may be able to build a new relationship with an individual who had the type of information her former associate provided, thus preserving that instance of the feat. If the focus of the game shifts and her existing contacts are no longer relevant, however, she will need to pick the Contacts feat up again, building a new network to call upon that provides the needed information. Narrators should use their best judgment in determining whether or not the player's existing Contact and Connected feats are still relevant to the task at hand.

HOW MANY CONTACTS?

The Contacts, Connected and Well-Informed feats grant heroes access to an informant network which can be quite useful in investigation-oriented adventures. With a potential wealth of information only a phone call away, however, the temptation is to abuse the feat can be powerful. Remember, contacts aren't simply tools a character can use but living, breathing Narrator characters with whom heroes interact. Narrators might want to consider allowing only a small number of contacts at the beginning of an adventure series and players to role-play acquiring new contacts as the game progresses.

While the number of contacts a hero should have access to is entirely up to the Narrator, the number shouldn't exceed the character's reputation score, modified by her Charisma bonus.

MODERN HEROES

Your characters have families. They grew up, went to high school (or may still be in high school) and went out into the world. How did they become heroes, though? What life choices did they make to get where they are now? This section takes a look at individual roles and how they manifest in context with your characters' modern-day lives.

WARRIORS

What does it mean to be a warrior in the modern world? We're not talking about hulking, axe wielding barbarians in full plate mail, after all? That said, there is a connection between the modern day warrior and the fantasy warrior. They both share a primal lust for combat, a desire to prove themselves by defeating their foes on the battlefield, in the fighting ring, or simply in some dark alley. For warrior heroes, honor is earned on the battlefield, whether in blood, accomplishments, or attitude.

BACKGROUNDS

The warrior thrives on conflict—it's in his blood. Many people strive to avoid physical conflict in their day to lives, but the warrior is constantly looking for some physical challenge to overcome. The traits of warrior might manifest in athletic activities such as weight lifting, football, gymnastics, basketball, etc. On the other hand, the traits of a warrior might be born out of a desire to emulate role models, such as professional athletes or war heroes.

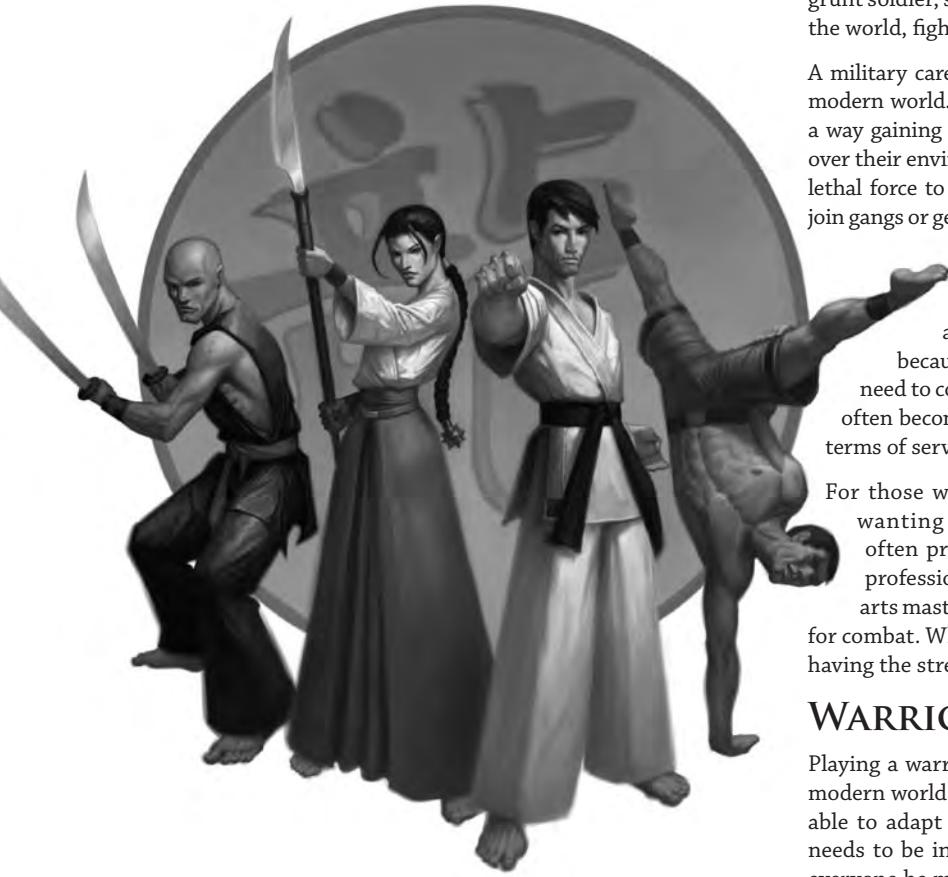
The average warrior might have joined the military right out of high school. From there, the character could qualify for any number of special operations teams, such as the Green Berets, Navy SEAL training, EOD (explosive ordinance disposal), Army Rangers, Marine Force Recon or sniper training. They might skip the military and go straight into civilian law enforcement, providing their home with its policemen, SWAT officers, or firemen. Of course, a warrior could just as easily be a grunt soldier, serving his country on the front lines of conflicts around the world, fighting and dying alongside his brothers-in-arms.

A military career isn't the only way the warrior role manifests in the modern world. Other would-be warriors turn to violence and crime as a way gaining acceptance and establishing a some measure of control over their environment. These characters often resort to physical, often lethal force to make their place in the world. Criminal warriors often join gangs or get involved with organized crime, seeking a social support system more in line with their own ideas on what it means to be a man. Some join the military, but their reasons for becoming soldiers are less noble than the average man or woman who joins up. They learn to kill because the act of doing so gives them a rush or reinforces their need to control situations. These warriors are the most dangerous, often becoming mercenaries, hit men and hired muscle when their terms of service end.

For those who embrace the need for physical challenge without wanting to be on a first-name basis with death, athletics often proves the key. Warriors could be boxers, cage fighters, professional wrestlers or even stunt men. They might be martial arts masters or play professional sports, using the game as a proxy for combat. Whatever their background, you can count on the warrior having the strength and skill necessary to get the job done.

WARRIOR SKILLS

Playing a warrior requires more than muscle, especially in the gritty modern world. This type of hero needs to be intelligent, cunning, and able to adapt to his environment. In social situations, the warrior needs to be intimidating, yet have enough tact to avoid provoking everyone he meets. He doesn't necessarily need to know how to hack



into a computer, encrypt/decipher a message, identify a new disease, or analyze a chemical compound—after all, somebody has to know how to keep those guys alive when the chips are down.

Suggested skills: Climb, Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Gather Information, Knowledge (physical sciences), Knowledge (earth sciences), Knowledge (tactics), Notice, Search, Sense Motive, Stealth, Survival, Swim

THE EXPERT

A modern group needs to fill particular roles to be successful in the same way an adventuring party in a fantasy or science fiction game needs certain roles to be effective. The main difference between role selection for a modern game as opposed to a fantasy game is that the modern expert is likely to need to be able to handle a very broad range of highly technical tasks. A group of heroes in a modern series could be comprised entirely of experts and work out just fine. Indeed, it is suggested that each member of the team have at least one or two levels in the expert role so as to bring the widest possible range of skills to the table.

The expert is the most wide-ranging role in the modern setting. An expert might be someone who is trained in a number of highly technical fields of study, such as computer programming, telecommunications, cryptography, electronics, surveillance techniques and a multitude of other skills. Experts might be CIA analysts, field agents (but not necessarily operatives), or computer hackers. These types of experts achieve their goals through the use of technology, usually playing a backup role in a given adventure. They might handle surveillance, keeping the group informed of any developments in the operation. Known as “operators,” these men and women play a key role in the success of any covert operations.

Experts aren’t necessarily tech-savvy. They might be con-artists, actors, journalists, private investigators, survivalists, hostage negotiation experts, politicians, detectives, undercover narcotics agents, or even old-school spies. These characters achieve their goals through a combination of social interaction and use of technology, depending on the objective. They engage in intelligence and counter-intelligence missions, knowing how to remain inconspicuous in any situation and exploit their environment.

Fixers are another type of expert, specializing in getting a team whatever it needs. They have a thorough knowledge of the black market, often freelancing by fencing stolen goods. Contacts are the name of the game for these individuals. Fixers can get you fake passports, high-tech gear, a stolen car, automatic weapons, cemtex, building plans, dirt on a corrupt politician, or just about anything else you can think of.

For those games where the experts have to take care of themselves in the field, there are commandos. The commando is really a hybrid role, combining elements of both the warrior and expert to provide tactical support for a team using a wide range of military-based skills. The commando knows how to use nearly every type of modern firearm available, has ample experience with a wide range of explosives, and is easily able to create his own homebrew demolitions and improvised traps. Special forces members, hit men and high-threat response teams (SWAT and Delta Force) are examples of commandos.

On the criminal side of things, cat burglars are also another type of expert, relying on a combination of athletic ability, traditional thieving skills and a detailed knowledge of current technologies employed in various types of alarm systems including biometric security, infrared, thermo graphic and ultraviolet motion detection systems. Cat burglars (or professional thieves, if you prefer) know how to hack into security cameras and cut the feed without alerting security guards. They know the best ways to enter a building and can trick an alarm system into shutting down when needed. No vault is safe from these individuals. Professional thieves are a valuable asset in a wide variety of missions, especially those requiring

physical penetration of an installation such as a chemical weapons facility, a government office or military compound.

BACKGROUNDS

The CIA opens the door for characters to begin a career in the highly dangerous field of espionage. Characters might be field operatives working to bring down the international black market, or they may work in counter-intelligence, laying traps for the spies of other nations. This line of work pits characters against the resources of other intelligence groups, resulting in a game of cat-and-mouse in which one wrong move could bring their careers to a short and tragic end.

For those with more local aspirations, a career in law enforcement might be in order. Characters can begin as beat cops, possibly one day transferring to detective, joining CSI, or switching to the DEA—perhaps even going federal and joining the FBI. A career in the FBI could also lead to a wide range of assignments, including tracking down the country’s most dangerous criminals, apprehending serial killers, and investigating kidnappings or government cover-ups.

A government career could also lead to recruitment by the CIA or NSA, where heroes would likely work to counter domestic terrorist activity by right-wing militia and extremist groups. Alternatively, your characters might choose to fight the war on drugs both at home and abroad, raiding cocaine farms in Columbia and taking out key locations in the Far East opium trade along the Silk Road.

In a gritty modern setting focusing on the characters’ involvement with organized crime, the expert role manifests in the aforementioned hit men, fences, professional thieves, con artists and much more. Criminal organizations employ people who have specific areas of expertise just as other organizations do. A standard “crew” of professional thieves needs to have people who can handle security, operate police scanners, drive, or any other technical proficiency required to get the job done. Weapons experts trained in the use of demolitions play a key role in any job dealing with breaking into vaults, unless of course there is a character capable of using high-tech anti-security devices.

Suggested Skills: Climb, Computer, Bluff, Diplomacy, Disable Device, Gather Information, Knowledge (behavioral sciences), Knowledge (streetwise), Knowledge (physical sciences) Knowledge (earth sciences), Knowledge (life sciences), Knowledge (technology), Knowledge (tactics), Notice, Perform, Search, Sense Motive, Stealth, Survival, Swim

THE ADEPT

At first glance, today’s world is devoid of the supernatural. The modern world burned its witches long ago, banishing society’s belief in magic to fairy tales and tabletop games. This setting is all about the material world: real guns, real crime, real action, real consequences. One doesn’t see true psychics reading the deepest thoughts of others, or supreme arcanists tossing fireballs at their foes. Very little scientific evidence of the supernatural exists, making it easy to conclude that there is nothing supernatural in the modern age—or if there is, it is hidden very carefully hidden.

In a realistic modern setting, the supernatural doesn’t seem to belong at all. Narrators might consider eliminating powers and the adept role entirely. There are other options, however, which help the adept can find new significance in a modern setting.

Chapter Four describes powers as supernatural abilities. They do not, however, have to represent anything so spectacular. Some powers are well-suited to representing extraordinary abilities. For example, the Combat Sense power could simply be a well-trained soldier’s ability to assess a combat situation and react to it in a superior manner. The bonus earned from the power is a result of the soldier’s ability to turn assessment into action. The Enhance Ability power could be a martial

artist focusing his willpower to increase his physical prowess. Not every power can be treated as extraordinary natural abilities, but a few can. Narrators should feel free to design new powers with this approach in mind.

The adept is not completely forsaken in the Modern world. Warriors and experts can certainly dabble in the role to pick up some of the extraordinary abilities adepts have access to. What about a hero who starts as an adept, however? Luckily, even that approach doesn't have to make them seem out of place. For one, adepts can be played as "savants", utilizing extraordinary natural abilities to do incredible things. Powers such as Body Control, Combat Sense, Elemental Resistance, Enhance Ability, Enhance Senses, Nature Reading, and Truth Reading are believable as impressive feats. An adept may simply be an amazingly talented person who naturally excels in certain areas.

There are also a number of societies (public and secret) who claim to understand certain arcane arts. What if they actually do possess practical knowledge of the supernatural? A modern adept might be a member of

the Order of the Golden Dawn, the Aetherius Society, the Rosicrucian Order, or any other society of supernatural practitioners. Adepts among such ranks can reasonably possess several powers that they are forbidden from using in the open. Healing powers are especially common among secret societies, as well as psychic abilities and "transmutation" powers that resemble classic alchemy. The various Cure, Psychic, and Shape powers would be appropriate for such modern adepts.

A third option is to treat the adept as the standard fantasy mage, capable of reshaping reality with a flick of the wrist. The modern world is a cruel place to those with such talents, however, so adepts of this style have to keep their abilities well-hidden. The Synchronicity core ability detailed later in this chapter provides a way for adepts to wield their flashier powers without attracting attention.

Suggested Skills: Bluff, Concentration, Disguise, Gather Information, Knowledge, Language, Medicine, Notice, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth. These skills emphasize the adept's need for discretion and worldly awareness, as well as common areas of focus (such as healing and meditation).

BACKGROUNDS

In the previous section we examined what heroes do in the modern game and the ways in which a character's background facilitates their role in a given series. Some characters might even be antiheroes, choosing a life of crime in order to achieve their base goals. Whether criminal or agent of the law, however, a background that explains how the hero got from point A to point B will add depth and realism to a modern game.

CREATING BACKGROUNDS FOR MODERN ADVENTURES

What does it mean to be a warrior or an expert in the modern world? Unlike backgrounds in a fantasy setting, where the roles encapsulate a character's chosen profession, a background for a modern game provides more specific information. This is largely because all of the heroes in the modern world are human. Lacking other metahuman or monstrous races, we must take our cues from the role selection (adept, expert, warrior), further expanding on those roles by choosing relevant backgrounds that provide focus. Indeed, backgrounds could be better described as jobs or professions, in that they directly relate to the specific functions heroes will perform within the context of a modern adventure.

When creating your own backgrounds, consider the three core roles (and the new ones provided in the next section of this chapter) and how they might be expanded. Are there any professions in the modern world which might make an interesting heroic background? Also, consider the type of series you are involved in and how a hero with this new background will interact with other heroes.

Here are some suggestions for specific aspects of backgrounds for you to consider when creating your own.

ABILITY ADJUSTMENTS

Normally, race determines the relevant ability adjustments that come with background selection. In the modern genre, however, human is the only character race. Arguments can be made that certain professions require characters to be physically fit or highly intelligent. While this may or may not be true, the problem with this line of thinking is that we run the risk of stereotyping our heroes. With this in mind, it is suggested that no modern heroic background have any ability modifiers.

BONUS FEATS

When determining bonus feats for your backgrounds, choose feats the heroes are likely to take anyway if they are germane to the profession.

For instance, a warrior may want an armor proficiency and firearm training, so feel free to grant those as bonus feats since they are basic building blocks for that role. This frees up future slots for feats that have prerequisites.

BONUS SKILLS

Modern backgrounds are almost always defined by one or two skills. Make sure those are used as bonus known skills for the background. There are a few instances when no skills are appropriate; in these cases, provide the background with a third bonus feat in lieu of bonus known skills. This also applies to backgrounds representing a highly advanced level of training, as they often warrant an additional feat instead of new known skills.

FAVORED FEATS

With the exception of explicitly supernatural backgrounds, no modern background should have access to powers or adept feats. Nearly all modern backgrounds draw from both warrior and expert feat categories, with expert feats being the more common of the two.

The following categories provide some general guidelines and examples for creating new backgrounds. If you disagree with the choices made for a particular background, feel free to craft your own.

ARCANE BACKGROUNDS

The supernatural can manifest in many forms, from occult demonology to psionic powers to reality-bending magic. If your heroes are involved in the supernatural, then they may need a background to represent their familiarity with or access to these strange powers.

Arcane backgrounds can take almost anything for bonus feats, depending on the particular milieu. Knowledge (supernatural) is a universal bonus known skill; if the hero believes he draws power from a divine source, then Knowledge (theology & philosophy) might also be warranted. Arcane backgrounds are the only ones with access to adept feats or powers as their favored feats.

MIRACLE WORKER

Often called faith healers, saints, or angels, these rare few possess inexplicable healing powers. They may be of divine origin or they may stem from a purity of heart; wherever they come from, the results are nothing short of miraculous. These gifted individuals can heal a variety of ailments and conditions with a mere touch. Some work discreetly,

helping others in a humble fashion. Others use their abilities to achieve fame or spread the word of a divine power.

Bonus Feats: Lucky, Talented (Knowledge (supernatural) and Knowledge (theology & philosophy))

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (supernatural), Knowledge (theology & philosophy)

Favored Feat (choose one): Cure, Cure Blindness/Deafness, Cure Disease, or Cure Poison

OCCULTIST

Those who delve into dark, obscure lore such as demonology often discover hidden mysteries and secret powers. Though they have learned powerful secrets, they cannot practice openly, lest they risk exposure and repercussions. Instead they wield their dark arts in the shadows, using their powers to influence world events or serve the agenda of evil, otherworldly forces.

Bonus Feats: Eidetic Memory, Night Vision

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (supernatural), Language (any ancient)

Favored Feats: Choose any one power.

SHADOW SORCERER

Shadow sorcerers are individuals who can tap into an ancient source of power, the stuff fairy tales are made of. Unable to operate openly, these magi hone their abilities with an eye toward discretion and concealment. They affect the world without making anyone aware of the supernatural forces at work. Some even gather together into secret societies and shape global events as a united cabal. Heroes may adventure with a shadow sorcerer and never discover his true nature.

Bonus Feats: Iron Will, Skill Focus (Knowledge (supernatural))

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (supernatural), Stealth

Favored Feats: Choose either Erase Signature and Subtle Signature, or one power of your choice.

GOVERNMENT BACKGROUNDS

World governments of all types are composed of people doing very specialized jobs. Many of these jobs are of a menial sort, however, some interesting background choices are available. Want an exciting job in espionage, investigations, or diplomatic intrigue? Look no further than your local government.

Government backgrounds typically center around social interaction, so they should receive some as bonus skills; bonus feats focused on boosting those skills are also appropriate. Some of the “agent” backgrounds also warrant Firearms Training. Favored feats are commonly drawn from the expert category, but warrior feats may also be applicable (especially Seize Initiative).

DEA AGENT

Members of the Drug Enforcement Agency forward America’s “war on drugs” agenda. Their job is to stem the flow of narcotics into the US and arrest those involved in drug trafficking. This is a complicated job; their assignments take them from suburban neighborhoods to foreign countries and everywhere in between. DEA Agents have strong knowledge of the criminal underground, often working alongside small-time crooks to take down more important ones. Because they operate so close to (and sometimes with) illegal groups, they are well-trained in self-defense.

Bonus Feats: Firearms Training, Skill Training

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (streetwise), Search

Favored Feats (choose two): Sneak Attack, Stunning Attack, Weapon Bind

DIPLOMAT

Governments around the world need people to handle international relations—or to smile politely while waiting to stab one another in the back. Such a person needs to have impeccable social skills to forward his nation’s agenda. Many diplomats are neutral representatives of their nation’s interests, but some may be ordered to forward those interests through more covert channels. Regardless of their official duties, diplomats enjoy the full benefits of immunity to legal ramification on foreign soil; a convenience to some, an essential tool to others.

Bonus Feats: Benefit (diplomatic immunity), Skill Focus (Diplomacy)

Bonus Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy

Favored Feats: Fascinate, Suggestion, Well-Informed

FBI AGENT

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is the national investigation agency of the United States. It is concerned with crimes spreading across the nation, and thus deals with very prolific, dangerous criminals. The FBI deals with several threats to America, such as terrorism, espionage, cyber-crime, corruption, and white-collar crime. Agents are trained to be proficient in a variety of areas, since they have to deal with situations as varied as the criminal mind.

Bonus Feats: Eidetic Memory, Firearms Training, Skill Training

Favored Feats (choose two): Elusive Target, Skill Mastery, Stunning Attack

SECRET AGENT

World governments employ spies for a variety of missions. Intelligence-gathering, assassinations, embarrassing enemy nations, sabotage... there are as many missions for a secret agent as there are ways to die horribly in the clutches of a ruthless foreign power. Secret agents lead dangerous lives and are typically disavowed by their nations if discovered. Masters of stealth, they are assigned a variety of missions



from simple intelligence gathering to complicated sabotage and assassination assignments.

Bonus Feats: Benefit (alternate identity), Benefit (security clearance), Contacts

Favored Feats (choose two): Hide in Plain Sight, Master Plan, Seize Initiative

INVESTIGATIVE BACKGROUNDS

There are quite a few independent types of snoops, from private eyes, to journalists, to bounty hunters and more. While all these folks have diverse purposes, they each share an inquisitive, questing method which they use to achieve their goals. Whether documenting a husband's infidelity for a wealthy client, grabbing the biggest scoop of the century, or tracking a bail runner across state lines, the investigative field is full of adventurous opportunities.

Investigative types vary, but all fundamentally deal with people on some level. Diplomacy and Gather Information are common bonus skills, and most bonus feats will boost these skills. Favored feats such as Fascinate and others of the expert category are popular.

BOUNTY HUNTER

So long as governments can put a price on a criminal's head, there will always be someone willing to hunt him down and collect the reward. Bounty hunters are legally entitled to work in the United States as bail bondsman, tracking down folks who skip their court dates. Other bounty hunters track down anyone who's worth something to someone, whether sanctioned by law or not. They need to be able to apprehend their target and keep them secured until delivery is arranged.

Bonus Feats: Improved Grab, Track



Bonus Skills: Notice, Survival

Favored Feats (choose two): Chokehold, Grappling Finesse, Weapon Bind

GUMSHOE

The private investigator is a detective for hire. Fond of trenchcoats, fedoras, and large amounts of bourbon, gumshoes are finders and getters. They work for themselves or an independent agency, relying on their contacts and their deductive skills to solve whatever quandary is put in their path. Unlike police detectives, who are hindered by official procedures, gumshoes go about their investigations however they see fit, bending or breaking the law to suit their needs.

Bonus Feats: Contacts, Skill Focus (Knowledge (streetwise))

Bonus Skills: Gather Information, Knowledge (streetwise)

Favored Feats (choose two): Elusive Target, Redirect, Well-Informed

LAW ENFORCEMENT BACKGROUNDS

Laws keep society stable, but only if they are enforced. The men and women who take it upon themselves to enforce those laws have dedicated themselves to upholding the legal infrastructures of their communities, regions, and nations. They each do whatever they can to help make their world a better place. Of course, there is a certain prestige that comes from carrying a badge that one cannot help but enjoy on occasion; it can often allow a hero access to areas and information from which he would otherwise be barred.

Law Enforcement backgrounds often receive Firearms Training as a bonus feat, but not always. Gather Information, Knowledge (civics), and Notice are common bonus known skills. Weapon Bind is a ubiquitous favored feat, as are Stunning Attack and Seize Initiative.

BEAT COP

These are the grunts of the law world, the uniform-wearing police officer who patrols the streets. They deal with crime right at the street level, responding first to emergency calls and putting themselves directly in the line of fire. They take this risk willingly as part of their job to uphold the law and protect the innocent. They are also called upon to be role models in the community, and may spend as much time delivering speeches to the young as they do patrolling their beats.

Bonus Feats: Endurance, Firearms Training

Bonus Skills: Drive, Knowledge (civics)

Favored Feats (choose two): Defensive Roll, Stunning Attack, Weapon Bind

BOMB SQUAD OFFICER

These specialized officers are explosives experts. Their job is to disable any explosive devices found at a crime scene or investigate suspicious packages in public places. They require steady hands and strong knowledge of explosive technology. Bomb scenarios are equal parts waiting game and white-knuckle adventure, with life and death riding on a single split-second decision. Those who take up this job do so at great risk, but with the knowledge that their skills (and sometimes sacrifice) helps protect countless people.

Bonus Feats: Armor Training, Talented (Craft (demolitions), Disable Device)

Bonus Skills: Craft (demolitions), Disable Device

Favored Feats (choose two): Diehard, Master Plan, Skill Mastery

DETECTIVE

The investigative branch of law enforcement, these men and women pick up the clues left after the crime to ascertain who, what, where, when,

why, and how. Detectives don't wear a uniform but still carry a badge, granting them access to many places with a simple flash. Still, they must know the legal limits to their investigative access in order to ensure the evidence they collect is admissible in court. Their job is essential to solving crimes where the culprit is not readily apparent, making sure no one is able to break the law without facing justice.

Bonus Feats: Contacts, Skill Focus (Gather Information)

Bonus Skills: Gather Information, Notice

Favored Feats (choose two): Skill Mastery, Stunning Attack, Well-Informed

S.W.A.T. OFFICER

Special Weapons And Tactics personnel are the elite of law enforcement. They perform highly dangerous jobs serving high-risk warrants, rescuing hostages, preventing terrorist attacks, and engaging heavily-armed criminals. SWAT training focuses on close-quarters battle (CQB) tactics and equipment, specifically for urban environments. They generally receive the best equipment available to law enforcement, including full body armor, riot shields, automatic rifles, shotguns, tear gas, and more.

Bonus Feats: Armor Training, Attack Focus (firearms), Firearms Training

Favored Feats (choose two): Attack Specialization (firearms), Greater Attack Focus (firearms), Seize Initiative

MILITARY BACKGROUNDS

Heroes from military backgrounds are combat-focused characters who hold (or have held) an allegiance to a nation or cause. In exchange for years of service, they receive weapons training and access to military-level equipment. Military heroes are the ones you want on your side in a firefight. They are not typically suited for civilian work, and don't often possess strong social skills.

Military backgrounds should always get Firearms Training as a bonus feat and should be considered for Armor Training as well. Knowledge (tactics), Notice, Stealth, and Survival are common military skills. Favored feats can be drawn from both the warrior and expert feat groups; important ones are Favored Opponents, the Attack Focus / Attack Specialization trees, and Sneak Attack.

GROUND POUNDER

Trained combatants are the heart of nearly every military force in the modern world. This background represents grunts from organized national armies or similar forces. Common training includes the proper use of firearms and armor, as well as specialized ordinance like grenades. Unit organization and teamwork are key skills crucial to the success of a ground pounder. Working together, units of ground pounders have the equipment and skills necessary to overcome any foe.

Bonus Feats: Armor Training, Firearms Training

Bonus Skills: Knowledge (tactics), Survival

Favored Feats: Attack Specialization (firearms), Favored Opponent, Tough

GUERRILLA FIGHTER

Masters of uncommon tactics, guerrillas fight fervently for a cause, using whatever methods they can to achieve victory. They became increasingly more common during the last half of the 20th century, and are the predominant type of soldier in modern conflicts. Guerrillas are not often above methods deemed uncivilized, such as suicide bombing, biological or chemical warfare, or using weapons of mass destruction. Many others do uphold a certain code of honor, however, fighting under self-imposed constraints to harm their enemy without hurting innocents. Whether called "terrorist" or "freedom fighter," these loosely-organized soldiers uphold their cause above all else.

Bonus Feats: Devotion, Firearms Training

Bonus Skills: Craft (traps), Stealth

Favored Feats (choose two): Favored Opponent, Hide in Plain Sight, Sneak Attack

MERCENARY

These hired guns are increasingly common in the modern age; as in the corporate world, employing independent contractors can often be cheaper than maintaining a standing military. Mercenaries work for the highest bidder and fetter themselves with ideals in only the rarest of examples. They gain combat experience all over the world, traveling wherever the fighting (and, therefore, the work) may be.

Bonus Feats: Armor Training, Firearms Training, Quick Draw

Favored Feats (choose two): Favored Opponent, Sneak Attack, Tough

SPECOPS

Special operatives fill unconventional combat roles. They are masters of situational awareness, often scouting locations before larger military assaults or providing valuable intelligence from behind enemy lines. They may also be the ones called upon to eliminate high profile targets. They are peacekeepers, scouts, assassins, or whatever other role is called for by their mission objectives.

Bonus Feats: Armor Training, Assessment, Firearms Training

Favored Feats (choose two): Attack Specialization (firearms), Favored Opponent, Sneak Attack

URBAN-PUNK BACKGROUNDS

The city streets are home to numerous slums, ghettos, and underworlds. The best and the worst of humanity live in these areas. Poverty and violence are common. Gangs and organized crime battle against the police and each other for dominance. The urban-punk scene is a world unto itself, fraught with danger.

Bonus feats for urban-punk backgrounds focus on improving combat abilities (such as Accurate Attack) or developing proficiency in key skills (such as Skill Focus). Bluff, Disguise, and Knowledge (streetwise) are popular bonus known skills. Warrior-category favored feats are the most common.

CAT BURGLAR

Cat burglars are modern swindlers with the agility and know-how to defeat most locks, alarms, and other forms of security. They are able to consistently outwit law enforcement, and their keen reflexes help them get out of tight binds. No house, bank, or vault is safe from these able thieves.

Bonus Feats: Improved Speed, Uncanny Dodge

Bonus Skills: Acrobatics, Climb

Favored Feats (choose two): Acrobatic Bluff, Evasion, Master Plan

GRIFTER

Grifters practice the time-honored art of the con, making a living by depriving fools of their money. They spin lies like a turntable and have hands so fast they make professional magicians jealous. They always run the risk of conning someone smart enough to see through their game, but that doesn't deter many.

Bonus Feats: Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand)

Bonus Skills: Bluff, Sleight of Hand

Favored Feats (choose two): Fascinate, Jack-Of-All-Trades, Suggestion

FIXER

Need some cutting-edge gear for an upcoming mission? How about dirt on a politician or the location of a safe house? A fixer can get what you need, when you need it. With an array of contacts and informants rivaling the intelligence-gathering capabilities of the CIA, fixers have their fingers on the pulse of the city. They can get anything—for a price.

Bonus Feats: Skill Focus (Gather Information), Master Plan

Bonus Skills: Diplomacy, Knowledge (streetwise)

Favored Feats (choose two): Well-Informed, Sieze Initiative, Suggestion

HACKER

Computers are the key that makes the modern information age possible. Hackers are the savants of that digital environment, able to seamlessly create, modify, and destroy software. They often do little else besides operate a computer, leading them to have trouble in social situations. They almost always lack martial ability. Their ability to do nearly anything in the digital environment, however, more than makes up for their deficiencies.

Bonus Feats: Skill Focus (Computers), Tireless

Bonus Skills: Computers, Knowledge (technology)

Favored Feats (choose two): Improvised Tools, Master Plan, Skill Mastery

HIT MAN

Anything can be bought for a price, including death. Like bounty hunters, hit men (who can be male or female) hunt down others for the price on their heads. Unlike bounty hunters, however, their targets have an alarming tendency to end up dead. Hired by criminal organizations, government officials, jealous spouses, or anyone else with enough

money, these people conduct themselves as professionals; others often mistake them for businessmen or white-collar workers.

Bonus Feats: Accurate Attack, Firearms Training, Weapons Training.

Favored Feats: Chokehold, Crippling Strike, Sneak Attack

MOOK

These tough guys are the muscle and enforcers of mobs, gangs, or other organizations. Relying on intimidating presence and strength, these men and women get things done in the underworld. Most make a good living working for crime bosses and drug dealers. They collect extortion money, put the squeeze on rivals, even carry out hits or “disappear” inconvenient obstacles. Not all mooks are bad people, but their line of work is certainly of questionable legality.

Bonus Feats: All-Out Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Strike

Favored Feats (choose two): Crippling Strike, Chokehold, Rage

THE VANISHED

Some people choose to live “off the grid,” leaving no paper or electronic evidence of their existence. They have no bank accounts, no medical records, no permanent address, take all payments in cash... everything they can to avoid detection through modern means. They learn to be quite skilled at avoiding surveillance cameras and disappearing from plain sight. Whether motivated by paranoia or simply sick of an information-deluded culture, the vanished may be many or few; without any records of their existence, one may never know.

Bonus Feats: Jack-of-All-Trades, Low Profile

Bonus Skills: Disguise, Stealth

Favored Feats (choose two): Elusive Target, Evasion, Sneak Attack

ROLES

The roles we choose in the modern game all have their basis in the world around us. The ways in which roles manifest in the game are numerous. A modern game allows for many variations on existing roles. This section takes a look at the core roles in *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*, discussing each role and how it manifests in the game. Background suggestions are included in this section, along with new roles and new core abilities for you to choose from.

WARRIOR

When one thinks about the warrior in the modern game, the military soldier is likely the first thing which comes to mind. Soldiers are a key component of every military fighting force on the planet, so it's only natural that the warrior role be selected for adventures involving the military. A soldier isn't simply a ground-pounding grunt, however. Consider choosing military-based backgrounds such as SpecOps or even the guerrilla fighter. Other options for the warrior role include bounty hunters, gang bangers, bodyguards, mercenaries, beat cops, members of SWAT teams, security force team members, hit men or even mooks.

EXPERT

The expert role has the widest range of applications in the modern game. Experts are essentially anyone proficient in a certain field of study, whether that be diplomacy, crime scene investigation, profiling, running scams, computer hacking, electronics, telecommunications or any number of other specializations.

Experts might focus on an agent background, choosing to become a data analyst for the CIA or an espionage agent. They might be police

detectives or private detectives. Experts might choose work in the FBI or the DEA, or perhaps work the other side of the street and become professional thieves or computer hackers.

ADEPT

Of all the roles, the adept is perhaps the most difficult to fit into a modern setting. As mentioned before, magic generally doesn't exist in the modern world. Too many people don't believe in it. Most gritty modern games deal with police dramas, military adventures, or espionage. When magic is brought into the modern world, the game takes on a supernatural aspect which might be better left in the realm of horror or science fiction.

That said, we have provided three new roles that contain adept powers: the commando, the operator and the brawler. While these hybrid roles aren't necessarily adepts, they do allow for one adept power each, adding additional flavor to the role.

NEW ROLES

The following roles provide you with additional options when creating heroes for your *True20* modern game.

AGENT

Combat Progression: Slow (2 points)

Skill Progression: 7 + Int (1.75 points)

Save Progression: Medium Fort, Ref, and Will saves (0.25 points)

Feat Progression: General, expert, and warrior feats (0.5 points)

Feat Progression: Bonus feat every other level (0.5 points)

The agent is the quintessential government operative. Whether she is working in the FBI, NSA, DEA or the CIA, she is a highly trained hero tasked with the protection of the citizens of the United States. She advances a bit slower in combat than a normal warrior would, but she benefits from advanced training, decent saves across the board, access to three feat categories and even an extra feat every other level. Her high level of training ensures that she will prove to be an asset to the group in any situation.

OPERATOR

Combat Progression: Very slow (1 point)

Skill Progression: 10 + Int (2.5 points)

Save Progression: Good Will, Normal Fort and Ref saves (0 points)

Power Progression: Fast, Singular power (Information Sense) (0.5 points)

Feat Progression: 2 feats per level. Has access to general and expert feats. (1 point)

Need someone who can crack a heavily encrypted database in her sleep? Need to dig up dirt on a local mafia don? How about someone who can trick out an alarm system, hijack the video monitors and guide you past physical security, all at the same time? If the answer was yes to any of the above questions, then the operator is the chica for you. She may not be able to catch a bullet with her teeth or take down a navy seal with a toothpick, but her brainiac-like intelligence ensures you'll have someone on your team who can perform all the technical aspects of the job. The operator's information sense ability makes her the guru of computer gurus; additional feats allow her to branch out into other areas of expertise.

BRAWLER

Combat Progression: Fast, Melee (2 points)

Combat Progression: Slow, Ranged (1 point)

Skill Progression: 4 + Int (1 point)

Save Progression: Good Reflex, Normal Fort and Will saves (0 points)

Power Progression: Fast, singular power (Enhance Ability) (0.5 points)

Feat Progression: General and warrior feats (0 points)

Feat Progression: Bonus feat every other level (0.5 points)

The brawler is an old-fashioned ass-kicker, plain and simple. He doesn't need any weapons but the two he was born with. He gains a bonus feat every other level, which helps him hone his fighting skills, rounding out average Intelligence and saves. If you want a warrior who can handle himself in a brawl or take out a guard quietly, this is the man for you.

COMMANDO

Combat Progression: Medium Ranged (1.5 points)

Combat Progression: Slow Melee (1 point)

Skill Progression: 6 + Int (1.5 points)

Save Progression: Medium Fort and Ref, Normal Will saves (0 points)

Power Progression: Medium, Singular power (Combat Sense) (0.25 points)

Feat Progression: General, warrior, and expert feats (0.5 points)

Feat Progression: Gains a bonus feat every four levels (0.25 points)

The commando has trained for war his entire life. He learned to hunt by the age of eight, became an Eagle Scout in high school and has probably seen *Full Metal Jacket* a thousand times (not to mention every movie Sylvester Stallone ever made). After high school, he realized his dream and joined the army, where he learned to use any and every weapon he could get his hands on. His medium ranged combat progression and combat sense ability reflects that dedication. Additionally, the commando has access to three feat categories and gains an additional feat every four levels.

NEW CORE ABILITIES

The following core abilities are provided for you to use when creating new roles for your modern game.

CALL YOUR BLUFF

You can spend a Conviction point to treat the roll for any Bluff, Sense Motive and Sleight of Hand check as a 20, although this roll is not considered a "natural" 20. Instead of rolling the die, just add 20 to your skill check modifier.

CHECK THE SIGHT LINES

You can make a Difficulty 20 check using the highest-ranked skill from the following list: Notice, Sense Motive and Search. If you succeed, treat the result as if you succeeded on a Gather Information check, gaining specific knowledge about your surroundings.

FEARSOME PRESENCE

You can spend a point of Conviction to inspire fear in his nearest foe as a standard action. The foe must make a successful Will save (Difficulty = 10 + your level + your Intimidate ranks) or be shaken. This condition lasts for one round, plus an additional round for every 5 points by which the save failed.

STYLE ADAPTATION

If you spend one round studying your opponent and make a successful Notice (Difficulty 20) check, you gain a bonus to defense equal to your Wisdom score. This bonus lasts for the entire combat and only affects melee combat with the Narrator character in question. This bonus stacks with Canny Defense.

SYNCHRONICITY

You can spend a point of Conviction to make an overt Power manifestation appear to be a natural occurrence. For example, you can strike a foe with an energy Elemental Blast and spend Conviction to make it appear to be bolt of lightning from the clouds overhead. In any instance where even synchronicity cannot conceivably make a Power appear natural, witnesses must make a Will save (Difficulty = 10 + the adept's power rank). On a failed save, the witness' minds develop their own rationalization for the Power's occurrence. Success indicates witnesses see the power for what it truly is. Synchronicity does not mask supernatural signatures.

TEAMWORK

You are trained to coordinate your actions with your team. When working with a group designated as your "team," you gain a +2 bonus to aid checks. This bonus increases by +1 every four levels. By spending a point of Conviction, you can transfer this bonus to a teammate for one round. You do not benefit from this ability while one of your teammates does.

TRIVIA MASTER

You have absorbed so much knowledge that you've got a bit of useful information for just about any situation. By making a check (d20 + the Operator's level) as a full-round action, you may ask the Narrator for any potentially useful information pertinent to the current situation. On a result of 9 or lower, no information is gleaned. On a roll of 10-19, the Narrator imparts only common knowledge about the situation. On a roll of 20-29, the Narrator reveals something uncommon, information known to only a few people. On a roll of 30 or above, the Narrator communicates a very rare fact or a piece of obscure knowledge.

SKILLS

Skills are an important part of the modern game. With few exceptions, every skill in the *True20* gaming system has relevance in the modern world. What follows is an examination of skills which are especially relevant to the genre, providing ideas for ways in which you can use them in the game as well as new challenges where appropriate. At the end of the section you will find new skills, such as Profession (cryptography), a must have for any espionage-oriented character.

BLUFF

Being able to pull off a good con job, or simply needing to lie at an appropriate time, can be a necessity in modern adventures. Heroes who deal in espionage often need to use subterfuge in order to get the job done.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Bluff.

Distracting Lie: In exchange for a -5 penalty on your check, your bluff sends the target off on a wild goose chase. The target will move 10 feet away from you for every 5 points by which you succeed on the Bluff check.

COMPUTERS

Knowing how to use a computer is almost mandatory in the modern game. The Computers skill allows your heroes to store valuable information such as contact lists, job information and addresses. Accessing the Internet requires a computer and can cut down research times considerably.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Computers.

Program on the Fly: Sometimes you might need to quickly modify a program to address unforeseen developments in a hack, such as



an upgrade in computer security. You may add a +5 to the difficulty to quickly write a new piece of code on the fly. Success on the write program check indicates the time to create the program is reduced to one half hour rather than an hour. Adding +10 to the check further reduces the time to write the program to 15 minutes.

Trace IP Address: Sometimes a hacker will attempt to defeat your computer's security. You may add a +5 difficulty to your Computers check when attempting to trace an IP back to its source. Success on the defend security check grants a +2 bonus to Gather Information checks for purposes of finding information about the person or persons who attempted to hack your system.

Bounce IP: You may add a +5 difficulty to your defend security check to negate an IP trace on your system.

Logic Bomb: You may add a +10 difficulty to your defeat computer security check and drop a logic bomb into the target system. Success on this check provides access to the sysadmin control panel, allowing you to perform all the functions the system administrator would normally be able to do. You gain +5 to find file checks and can shut down the system, change passwords and write a back door into the system.

CRAFT

The Craft skill has less utility in the modern game than, say, a fantasy setting, but you can still find some interesting uses for it. Military heroes have training in the use of explosives and can improvise detonators and craft explosives from seemingly innocuous chemicals. Professional hit men, mercenaries, insurgents and espionage heroes also use Craft to obtain similar results. Beyond explosives, however, there are other applications of the skill you might consider. For instance, a hero could use the Craft skill and modify a cell phone and laptop to monitor conversations. Heroes might use Craft to improvise weapons or tools. Being able to repair items in the field is also a useful aspect of the Craft skill.

CRYPTOGRAPHY (INT)

Cryptography deals with writing and decrypting messages written in code. Heroes with this skill are able to decipher and write coded messages which incorporate various types of encryption, such as one-time-pads, running key ciphers, null ciphers, polyalphabetic ciphers and polygraphic substitution ciphers. The difficulty and length of time it takes to accurately decipher/write a given piece of code depends on the complexity (length) of the message. See the table below for more information.

Difficulty	Message Length	Time
10	1 sentence	1 minute
15	Up to one paragraph	10 minutes
20	2 paragraphs or more	30 minutes

DISABLE DEVICE

The Disable Device skill can be used in a number of ways. You can use it to disable security cameras, cut phone lines and deactivate explosive devices such as bombs or land mines. You can also use Disable Device to manually override security cameras (reroute them to a monitor controlled by another team member) and other electronic alarm systems.

You can also use Disable Device to perform sabotage on various devices. For instance, you might use this skill to rig pressure relief valves on a piece of machinery to fail, causing the device to blow up after a certain amount of time.

DISGUISE

Being able to alter one's appearance can be an invaluable skill in the modern game, especially if heroes are taking part in an espionage series. It's a big part of trade craft—a set of skills that field agents learn during their training in order to be more effective spies. Looking like you fit into a certain demographic is important when operating undercover in another country.

It's not always about looking like a specific individual; sometimes it's more important to simply not stand out in the crowd, to look like you belong. Certainly, needing to look like a certain person can be an issue as well, especially if you have to obtain information that only one person can access. In either case, having ranks in Disguise can be very useful indeed.

GATHER INFORMATION

Characters often need to make use of contacts to gain leads on important cases or obtain exotic equipment. It's recommended that all heroes get at least a few ranks in Gather Information in order to make this easier.

KNOWLEDGE

With the vast wealth of information available to characters, having a number of Knowledge skills can be quite useful. One subset of Knowledge—Knowledge (supernatural)—isn't appropriate for the modern game, as the supernatural world takes a back seat to espionage or military games. That said, if you are running a series dealing with these elements, then ranks in that skill will be very helpful.

FEATS

The *True20* rules contain a great selection of feats. It's difficult to expand upon this list for a modern campaign without becoming redundant, so we have not included any new feats in this chapter. The existing selection is comprehensive enough that you will find many options when choosing feats for your modern heroes.

Which feats are particularly relevant to the modern game? Simple answer: nearly all of them. But before we get into that, let's look at the shorter list: the feats that aren't especially useful in the modern day setting.

Shield Training won't be very useful unless your characters are acting as riot police or taking part in an SCA event or renaissance festival. Adept feats are also not relevant unless you happen to include powers in your game. Ranged Pin is only really useful if your characters are using modern versions of bows, such as a compound bow or crossbow. Bolas or thrown knives also work nicely with the Ranged Pin feat.

Track, Trackless, and Trailblazer may or may not be useful, depending on the campaign. Ground pounders, guerrillas, and SpecOps characters who spend a great deal of time in the wilderness can really benefit from these feats. If you're running a city-oriented series which involves espionage or organized crime, players should be discouraged from choosing these feats. If you do want Track but aren't going to be playing in a wilderness environment, you might consider including a version of the Urban Tracking feat found on pages 189 and 218.

The Deflect Arrows and Snatch Arrows feats apply to all thrown weapons. While this is especially handy in a fantasy game, in the modern setting these feats are so limited in scope that you would be better off grabbing the Dodge Focus and Lightning Reflexes feats instead. Spirited Charge is also less useful since ranged weapons tend to take precedence over swords and daggers, as is Rage.

The various melee combat feats only gain relevance in situations where your characters are using hand held weapons like daggers, or machetes, so be sure this is the type of character you are wanting to play before you start picking feats like Cleave, Great Cleave, Weapon Break and Weapon Bind. Remember, your opponents aren't likely to

toss away their guns and pull melee weapons just because you are using one. The phrase "Don't bring a knife to a gun fight" is especially relevant here. For these types of characters, you might want to choose the brawler optional role. See the **Roles** section of this chapter for more information.

Okay, so what feats are especially important for the modern game? Firearms training has to be at the top of the list for any warrior wanting to hold her own in a fight, as well as Armor Training. The latter depends largely on the series; Light Armor Training allows for the use of bulletproof vests, which are more easily concealed than, say, riot armor. This is an important consideration if you aren't playing a military-oriented series. It is highly recommended that characters start play with these two feats; you can always grab Exotic Weapon Training and upgrade Armor Training at higher levels.

Continuing our examination of combat related feats, Point Blank Shot and Far Shot are useful for any marksmen, especially if you are looking to put your skills to use as a sniper or hitman. Attack Focus, Favored Opponent and Critical Strike are also very handy. Using Favored Opponent in the modern game requires your hero to pick professions rather than race or species, so you'll need to consider what types of antagonists you want your hero to focus on. Examples might include actors, hit men, police officers, politicians, soldiers, or yakuza. Saying "humans" is too broad a category.

The expert role manifests in a wide variety of character concepts. With this in mind, feat selection for this role tends to vary depending on what hero you are creating. A computer hacker will benefit greatly from Eidetic Memory, Talented, Skill Focus, Skill Training and Skill Mastery.

Heroes involved in espionage games do well to take the Benefit feat as well as the aforementioned skill-related feats. Connected, Contacts, and Well-Informed are essential to espionage characters as well as fixers, police officers and detectives. Indeed, it can be argued that any character in the modern game should have these feats. Low Profile is also a good choice for espionage-oriented characters.

POWERS

At first glance, adepts and magic are more subdued in a world of high-tech gadgets, worldwide telecommunications, the internet, military weapons and equipment. It has been said previously in this chapter that magic isn't a hallmark of the traditional modern series—for instance, you probably won't see the adept playing a major role in a classic military-oriented series of adventures.

Does this mean you *can't* have adepts in a modern game? Of course not.

Before you disregard the adept role entirely, consider that heroes don't necessarily have to be gun-toting, gadget-wielding superspies or battle-hardened soldiers. Powers don't necessarily have to be "supernatural," either. They might be presented as latent mutations or psychic abilities that manifest in heroes right around the time they start their adventuring careers. The movie *Firestarter* is a good example of a character born with latent psychic abilities, along with nearly any modern superhero series.

Narrators might consider having powers manifest in heroes who have volunteered for government experiments, such as MKULTRA, an alleged mind control program which took place during the Vietnam conflict. What about genetic modifications, innate abilities, or “gifts” from some higher power? You might consider going the traditional route and allowing modern-day witches and warlocks. While the latter suggestion tends to bleed into the realm of horror, there is certainly nothing inherently wrong with a modern game having supernatural elements. Consider watching movies such as *The Warlock*, *Constantine*, *The Prophecy* and *Hellboy* for inspiration on how you might run a series of adventures with these types of adepts.

Another option is for martial artists who have trained all their lives, learning to control their bodies and harness inner “chi” to perform fantastic feats of physical prowess. Many movies and television shows present these types of characters in very cool and interesting ways. Movies such as *Bulletproof Monk*, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Rumble in the Bronx*, *Lethal Weapon 4* and even *The Matrix* provide great examples of how you might use the adept role to create a martial arts hero.

So what powers are especially well suited for a modern game? For a low-powered adventure series, Narrators might consider allowing powers with no overtly spectacular effects (explosions, etc.). These powers include Bliss, Body Control, Computer Link, a limited form of Cure, Elemental Resistance, Enhance Senses, Harm, Heart Reading, Mind Probe, Mind Reading, Mind Shaping, Object Reading, Psychic Blast, Psychic Shield, Sense Minds, Suggestion and Vision. High-powered games pretty much take the gloves off, shedding commonly accepted paradigms in favor of a setting where anything and everything is

possible. In such a series, there really is no restriction to what an adept might achieve.

NEW POWERS

The following power has been provided for the operator role enhancing the heroes’ ability to find information on the Internet. The idea behind this power is there are computer users out there who have a kind of innate understanding of how computers work. They just “get it,” whereas other people need to struggle to hone their computer skills.

INFORMATION SENSE

FATIGUING

You can improve your ability to sense the connections between bits of information or data. An Information Sense check grants you a bonus to your Computers and Knowledge checks (see the accompanying table). Each round you choose which skill to apply it to. You can select a bonus lower than the result you get on the table to reduce fatigue Difficulty, which is $10 +$ the bonus gained.

Result	Bonus
Up to 4	+1
5–14	+2
15–24	+3
25–34	+4
35+	+5

Time: Activating Information Sense is a move action. The bonus lasts for 10 rounds (one minute) per use.

EQUIPMENT

This section introduces new items for use in the modern game. More importantly, it provides the tools you need to create your own customized equipment.

CUSTOMIZING GEAR

The modern game provides many opportunities for adventure. Whether it’s a high-tech game of espionage or a fast-paced game of hard core military conflict, one thing is certain: you need equipment to get the job done. The style of game often dictates the type of gear heroes will need. Military adventures focus on survival gear, high-tech weapons, communications equipment, etc. Espionage adventures use a wide range of neat spy gadgets and equipment.

Now, we could inundate you with a plethora of tables and list after list of specific items, but it’s easier to provide a simple set of guidelines for creating nearly any type of spy-gadget or piece of equipment you can think up.

This system breaks gear down into three basic categories: the core component, add-ons, and the casing. Let’s take a look at each of these categories in turn.

THE CORE COMPONENT

Core components determine the primary function of a piece of equipment. For instance, the core component of a cell phone is a communications system, while an RF (Radio Frequency) scrambler’s primary function would be an ECM (Electronic CounterMeasures) component. Every piece of equipment has a primary function. Any bonuses to relevant skill checks are discussed in the component’s description along with information about damage (if the device has a weapon feature). This component also determines the base cost of a given piece of equipment.

ADD-ONS

Add-ons are peripheral devices which can be used to further augment a core component. These aren’t mandatory and increase the cost of the piece of gear. An example of a typical add-on would be a satellite uplink. Satellite uplinks allow any core component capable of digitally sending or receiving information the ability to do so via a satellite. Each add-on has its own description that provides details on relevant bonuses to skill checks, as well as any pertinent information about damage (if the add-on has a weapon feature).

CASING

This category determines what the end product is going to look like. Generally speaking, the equipment’s casing is determined by the parameters of the mission. In the following mission example, the hero will need an appropriate casing for 4 pieces of gear; a fingerprint scanner, a fingerprint generator, a combination diskdrive/databomb drive and a micro-transceiver.

Example: You are attending a black tie affair at a politician’s mansion in order to break into his private office and download personal financial records off his computer. You’ll be going in through the front door, which means you won’t be able to carry a backpack with all your gear. You’ll need to have your gear look like something else in order to maintain your cover.

In order to get past the level 1 biometric security, you need use your fingerprint scanner (neatly disguised as a pair of prescription glasses) to obtain a digital scan of the governor’s left index fingerprint so that you can have a latex copy made in the handy-dandy fingerprint generator, which, you’ve decided, looks like an ordinary beeper. Once inside the governor’s office, you need to hack into his computer to retrieve the financial records, not an easy feat considering you don’t have the time to sit down and start throwing code at it yourself. Luckily, your operator

wrote some autoexecutable programs and encrypted them onto a mini USB drive that looks like a cigarette lighter. All you need to do is plug the lighter into the computer and it will automatically attempt to defeat the computer security, allowing you to download the information into the free memory on the concealed disk drive.

All the while, you'll need to maintain comms with your team, a task easily accomplished thanks to the fake rose in your lapel that doubles as a two-way microtransceiver with a 2 mile range.

Each of the casings for the devices in the previous example adds a modifier to the cost of said device. A device's casing provides a base difficulty for any Notice checks performed by the Narrator, modified (if relevant) by the character's Sleight of Hand check. Casings also determine the final size of the device. No device can have more than one casing.

GEAR CREATION PROCESS

Creating a piece of gear is simple. Just follow these steps:

1. Choose your core component.
2. Choose any relevant add-ons.
3. Choose a casing.
4. Add base cost and all cost modifiers.
5. Make a Wealth check to purchase the device.

CORE COMPONENTS

The following section lists components that are used as a base to create specific types of gear. Many of these devices can be used as-is, or you can modify them with add-ons and casings. Components that cannot be modified with add-ons or casings will show it in their descriptions.

ANTI-SECURITY COMPONENTS

Anti-security components are devices used to bypass various locking mechanisms and other elements found in most commercial and privately owned security systems. This category also includes clothing worn in operations involving heists or infiltration missions.

CLIMBING SUIT

A climbing suit consists of a pair of shoes, gloves and a black spandex body suit with a hood. The gloves and shoes are lined with a special adhesive which bonds with concrete, steel and other materials used in the construction of buildings. The suit will hold up to 300 lbs. without losing any of its adhesive properties, providing a +5 bonus to Climb checks.

Size: Medium

Available Add-ons: None

Casing: No

Base Cost: 11

CONTACT LENS GENERATOR

The contact lens generator creates a set of lenses which can be used to fool a retinal scan. When the hero uses contact lenses created by the generator, the Narrator makes a Notice check for the biometric security system at a base difficulty of 10 + the score of the optical scanner's Gather Information check to create the scan used by the contact lens generator. If the security system succeeds on the Notice check, the system refuses to accept the retinal information. If the Notice Check fails, the system accepts the fake retina as valid.

Size: Tiny

Available Add-ons: Decrease Size, Data Transfer Capabilities, Performance Enhancement, Intuitive, Additional Storage, Wireless

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 25

DATA CARD

Data cards are used to gain access to various parts of a building, such as restricted areas of a research facility or even a room in a hotel. The level of access granted to the owner of a data card depends on the security clearance of the owner. Heroes can access any locked room in a building allowed by the data card without needing to make any Disable Device checks.

Size: Diminutive

Available Add-ons: None

Casing: No

Base Cost: 10

DATA CARD READERS/WRITERS

These devices will scan a working data card, copy the security information it contains to a storage drive, attempt to decrypt the security clearances, and download the information to a blank data card with the needed authorizations approved. To determine whether or not a data card reader/writer successfully obtains the required information, make a Gather Information check. The base difficulty to analyze and decrypt the information on a data card is a base 10. Consult the table below for additional modifiers.

SECURITY CLEARANCE	
Desired Security Clearance	Modifier
General access	5
Administrative access	10
Total access	15

Size: Tiny

Available Add-ons: Decrease Size, Performance Enhancement, Additional Storage, Satellite Uplink

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 12

GLASS CUTTER (LASER)

Much like a manual glass cutter, a laser glass cutter is used to cut quickly and effectively through regular glass, storm windows, and security-grade glass (bulletproof glass). Typical use of a laser glass cutter involves a hero attaching the glass cutter to the window, programming the diameter of the intended hole into the device and then activating it. The laser makes the cut. All that is left is for the hero to remove the glass. The device takes one round to cut a hole large enough for a Medium-size person to fit through.

Size: Tiny

Available Add-ons: Muffled, Ranged Use, Masterwork

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 20

GLASS CUTTER (MANUAL)

A manual glass cutter is a circular hand-held device used to cut through regular glass found on the outside of most homes and businesses. If used in combat, the device is considered a one-handed improvised melee weapon and does +1 slashing damage due to the sharpness of the blade. The device takes 2 rounds to cut a hole large enough for a Medium-sized person to fit through.

Size: Diminutive

Available Add-ons: Muffled, Masterwork

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 5

GRAPPLER GUN

A grappler gun fires a grappling hook and an attached cable up to 150 ft. away. Alternately, the grappling hook can be swapped out with a dense magnet which will hold up to 300 lbs. without slipping. To use a grappler



gun, make a Ranged touch attack (Difficulty 10). Success indicates you have affixed the grappling hook or magnet to its intended position.

Size: Small

Available Add-ons: Decrease Size, Masterwork, Muffled

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 10

GRAVITY HARNESS

A gravity harness allows a character to hang from two thick nylon cords (one on either side of the torso) while keeping their hands free to perform necessary tasks. The harness is powered by a small motor which allows the character to lower herself up to 100 ft without making a climb check. The cords can be retracted by remote control. When using a gravity harness, the character must make an Acrobatics check (Difficulty 10) to remain in the desired position.

Size: Medium

Available Add-ons: Decrease Size, Masterwork, Muffled

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 15

FINGERPRINT SCANNER

The fingerprint scanner is used to digitally scan fingerprints into a storage media where they are then transferred to a fingerprint generator and prepared for output in latex form. The effectiveness of a fingerprint scanner is determined by the quantity of the print obtained. To determine if the device functioned properly, make a Gather Information check. Use the following chart to determine the difficulty of the fingerprint scanner's Gather Information check.

Fingerprint Information	Fingerprint Difficulty
Full	5
Partial	10
Negligible	15

Size: Diminutive

Available Add-ons: Decrease Size, Data Transfer Capabilities, Performance Enhancement, Additional Storage, Wireless Access.

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 25

FINGERPRINT GENERATOR

The fingerprint generator creates a clear latex fingerprint which can be used to access rooms, vaults, safes and even various types of technology protected by biometric security systems which require a fingerprint identity scan. When the hero uses the latex print, the Narrator makes a Notice check for the biometric security system at a base difficulty of $10 + \text{the score of the Fingerprint scanner's Gather Information check}$ to create the scan used by the fingerprint generator. If the security system succeeds on the Notice check, the system refuses to accept the fingerprint. If the Notice Check fails, the system accepts the fingerprint as valid.

Size: Tiny

Available Add-ons: Decrease Size, Data Transfer Capabilities, Performance Enhancement, Intuitive, Additional Storage, Wireless Access

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 25

LOCK PICK

Lock picks are used to open common locks such as pin tumbler locks, tubular pin tumbler locks, lever locks and wafer locks. They are comprised of a number of picks and tension wrenches. Disable Device checks used to open these types of locks require that heroes have lock picks. Manually picking a lock takes one round to accomplish.

Size: Diminutive

Available Add-ons: Masterwork, Decrease Size

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 5

OPTICAL SCANNER

The optical scanner is used to digitally record a target's retinal information into a storage media for use in a contact lense generator. The effectiveness of an optical scanner is determined by the amount of retinal data obtained by the device. To determine if the device functioned properly, make a Gather Information check. Use the following chart to determine the difficulty of the optical scanner's Gather Information check.

Retinal Information	Retinal Data Difficulty
Full	5
Partial	10
Negligible	15

Size: Diminutive

Available Add-ons: Decrease Size, Data Transfer Capabilities, Performance Enhancement, Additional Storage, Wireless Access

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 30

PORTABLE CUTTING TORCH

A portable cutting torch is used to burn through various materials such as concrete, iron, and steel. If used in combat, the device is considered a one-handed improvised melee weapon and does +2 fire damage due to intense heat.

Size: Small

Available Add-ons: Decrease Size, Additional Storage, Submersible

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 10

COMPUTER COMPONENTS

Computer hardware components modify or otherwise affect a given computer system. The system in question might be a desktop computer, a laptop, or even a server. The following are just a few examples of the possible types of components you can create for your computer systems.

DATABOMB DRIVE

This special USB flash drive is the hottest thing on the streets for the modern hacker. It contains a plethora of premade hacking programs, from Trojan horses to logic bombs to password sniffers. They run automatically upon insertion into a USB slot, requiring no input to go about their programmed tasks. With one of these in hand, even relatively inexperienced computer user becomes a hacker to be reckoned with.

The databomb drive has an effective Computers bonus of +20; the Narrator rolls the databomb drive's Computers check as soon as it is connected to a system. Each upgrade increases the effectiveness of the program, adding +1 to Computers checks.

- **Skeleton Key:** The databomb drive attempts to open up full system access, including any networks the computer may be connected to. This is a defeat computer security task.
- **Annihilation:** The databomb drive attempts to eliminate all data on the system. This is a degrade programming task.

Databomb drives require at least a full-round action to work, and may take longer depending on how well-defended the system is. Each upgrade increases the effectiveness of the installed programs, adding a +2 bonus to the relevant Computers check.

Size: Tiny

Available Add-ons: Decreased size, Intuitive, Upgrade, Satellite Uplink

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 30

DATA LEECH

When placed in close proximity to a computer hard drive, a data leech is a piece of hardware that will attempt to siphon all the computer files and programs from the computer and place them into an onboard storage drive. The device has an effective Computers bonus of +10. The Narrator rolls the data leech's Computers check against a Difficulty 20 plus any relevant bonuses provided by the target system's security. Success indicates the data leech has copied the hard drive's information. Each upgrade adds a +5 bonus to the data leech's Computers check.

Size: Tiny

Available Add-ons: Decreased size, Intuitive, Upgrade, Performance Enhancement, Satellite Uplink

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 30

FIREWALL

A firewall is the main line of defense against attempts to hack into a computer. Firewalls grant the user a +5 bonus to defend security checks. Each upgrade grants another +2 bonus to defend security Checks.

Size: Small

Available Add-ons: Upgrade

Casing: No

Base Cost: 10

RANDOM ACCESS MEMORY

Random access memory (otherwise known as RAM) increases the computer system's speed for loading, displaying and allowing manipulation of applications (computer programs) and data. Every stick of RAM increases the speed at which a user can perform Computers checks. Each upgrade reduces the time required to write programs by 5 minutes for every additional stick of RAM added to the system.

Size: Fine

Available Add-ons: Upgrade

Casing: No

Base Cost: 11

COMMUNICATIONS COMPONENTS

Core communications components are devices which facilitate communication between one or more individuals.

CELL PHONE

A cell phone is a small handheld device used for communication.

Size: Diminutive

Available Add-ons: Additional Storage, Data Transfer Capabilities, Interface Capabilities, Programmable, Secure Line

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 9

MICROTRANSCEIVER

A microtransceiver is a miniature microphone that allows the wearer to communicate with another person or persons.

Size: Fine

Available Add-ons: Data Transfer Capabilities, Satellite Uplink

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 15

ECM (ELECTRONIC COUNTERMEASURE) COMPONENTS

Electronic CounterMeasure (ECM) components are used to affect the functionality of other electronic devices, such as radio transmitters, security cameras, and listening devices.

DIGITAL SIGNAL SCRAMBLER

A digital signal scrambler is a device which scrambles digital signals, blacking out security cameras and monitors in a three block radius. A digital signal scrambler initiates an opposed test between the operator of the device and the operator or the targeted piece of equipment. Both the hero and the Narrator make a die roll, adding the technology rating (cost) of their respective pieces of equipment to the result. The highest result wins the test. Each upgrade increases the power of the digital signal scrambler's signal, adding a +1 bonus to any opposed tests.

Size: Small

Available Add-ons: Decreased Size, Upgrade

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 25

RF SCRAMBLER

An RF scrambler is a device that scrambles radio signals, preventing the targets from sending or receiving information through radio transmissions. An RF scrambler will attempt to jam any transmissions within a 500 yard radius, initiating an opposed test between the operator of the RF scrambler and the person sending the message being jammed. Both the hero and the Narrator roll a d20, adding the technology rating (cost) of their respective pieces of equipment to the result. Whoever rolls the highest wins the test.

Each upgrade increases the power of the RF scrambler's signal, adding a +1 bonus to any opposed tests.

Size: Small

Available Add-ons: Decreased size, Upgrade

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 25

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPONENTS

Pharmaceutical components are drugs commonly used to incapacitate the target or lower his ability to resist interrogation.

SODIUM PENTOTHAL

Sodium pentothal, more commonly known as "truth serum," is used by spies and other federal agents during interrogations. It is a powerful tranquilizer, capable of quickly rendering a target unconscious. A barbiturate, sodium pentothal works by decreasing the subject's ability for higher cortical brain function, consequently making it more difficult to tell a lie.

People who have been injected with a standard dose of sodium pentothal must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 20) or lose initial and secondary damage of 2 Charisma. The duration of a typical injection is one hour. Highly concentrated dosages of sodium pentothal will knock a character out, while overdosing can cause coma and death. Targets must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 25) or be rendered unconscious for 10 minutes.

Size: Fine

Available Add-ons: Concentrated Dosage, Multiple Delivery Systems

Casing: Yes

Base Cost: 17

ADD-ONS

Add-ons are additional modifications you can make to core components in order to increase the performance of your equipment. Once you have chosen a core component, add the cost modifier of the add-on(s) you wish to purchase to the base cost of the core component. The number of add-ons you may purchase for your device is limited only by the cost and what is available for a given core component. The following are just a few possibilities of add-ons that can be created for core components:

ADDITIONAL STORAGE

This add-on increases the data storage component by an amount equal to its original storage capacity. For example, a fingerprint scanner with additional storage can store data for two fingerprints. The same component with two additional storage add-ons can store three fingerprints.

Cost Modifier: +2

CONCENTRATED DOSAGE

Certain drugs can be concentrated for increased effect, as listed in their descriptions.

Cost Modifier: +3

DATA TRANSFER CAPABILITIES

This core component is able to transfer its data to another device using a common data format. It requires a physical connection to do so unless the components both have the wireless access or satellite uplink add-ons.

Cost Modifier: +1

DECREASED SIZE

Advances in miniaturization allow complex devices to be offered in smaller package. Each time this add-on is applied to a core component, it becomes the next smaller size (a Small object becomes Tiny, etc).

Cost Modifier: +4

INTERFACE CAPABILITIES

A component with this add-on can interface with other devices for added functionality. For example, a laptop computer and cell phone with interface capabilities can allow the computer to connect to a cellular network. Interfacing requires a physical connection unless both components also have the wireless access or satellite uplink add-ons.

Cost Modifier: +1

INTUITIVE

The more advanced the technology, the more complicated it is to use... unless it is designed to be intuitive. By simplifying as much of the operation as possible, the core component can be activated and used as a free action.

Cost Modifier: +1

MASTERWORK

This core component is finely made, providing a +1 bonus on rolls made to use it.

Cost Modifier: +5

MUFFLED

This component works more quietly than normal, requiring a Notice check (Difficulty 10) to hear. Each time this add-on is applied beyond the first, the Notice Difficulty is increased by 5 (to a maximum of 30).

Cost Modifier: +2

MULTIPLE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

In the field, not every drug can be injected into its desired target. A multiple delivery system drug is available in a form that can be quickly converted into any mode of delivery: inhaled, ingested, contact, or injected. The drug must be converted to one of these forms to be usable; doing so is a full-round action. Once converted, the drug is stuck in that delivery form. This add-on can also be used in chemical components to create weaponized versions.

Cost Modifier: +2

PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT

The core component has been improved to work faster. The device's operation takes less time, going from a full-round action to a move action.

Cost Modifier: +5

PROGRAMMABLE

A programmable component has a wealth of additional functionality. The user is able to preset a number of automatic conditions for the device's operation. For example, the user can set the device to activate after a time delay, activate automatically under certain conditions, deactivate under certain conditions, or anything else the device is able to do within the limits of its design.

Cost Modifier: +4

RANGED USE

This component can now be used up to 5 ft. away from the objects it affects.

Cost Modifier: +2

SATELLITE UPLINK

Hundreds of satellites orbit the Earth, making satellite connections one of the most reliable forms of uplink. Items with a satellite uplink are able to connect to the Internet or communicate with other connected systems regardless of their location, without the need for a hardwired connection or a wireless area network.

Cost Modifier: +3

SECURE LINE

This component's connection is hardened against interception and tapping. The difficulty of cracking a secure line is increased by +5 each time this add-on is applied.

Cost Modifier: +2

SUBMERSIBLE

The core component can function even if submersed in water or other liquids.

Cost Modifier: +1

UPGRADE

Core components are improved by a generic upgrade to performance and design as listed in their descriptions.

Cost Modifier: +1

WIRELESS ACCESS

The component can access wireless networks, allowing it to connect to other systems or the Internet without a physical connection. A wireless network must be present, however, for a component with wireless access to be able to connect to anything.

Cost Modifier: +2

CASINGS

A casing is a cover for a device that makes it look like something it's not. Being able to sneak equipment into a research facility is often critical to a mission. Walking through the door with a bunch of high-tech gadgets in plain sight just isn't going to cut it.

The types of casings you can use for your gear are endless. You might modify a data leech to look like a pack of gum or a compact. A

microtransciever might be fashioned to look like earrings, a cufflink or a watch. Apply a couple of decrease size add-ons to your RF scrambler and make it look like an MP3 player. With this system, you're only limited by your imagination.

The size of the casing you choose determines the final cost of your piece of gear. Consult the following table to find cost modifiers based on size.

CASING SIZES	
Size	Cost Modifier
Large	—
Medium	+1
Small	+2
Tiny	+3
Diminutive	+4
Fine	+5

SAMPLE CASINGS

The following examples of potential casings are by no means exhaustive. We encourage you to get with your Narrator and develop new and interesting casings for your gear.

- **Large:** Vending machine, refrigerator, desk, box, washing machine, dryer, stereo components, speakers, suitcase, television
- **Medium:** Briefcase, clothing, laptop, backpack, pants, shirt, shorts
- **Small:** Video camera, paperback book, toolbox, pencil sharpener, tie, shoes
- **Tiny:** Camera, can of shaving cream, thermos
- **Diminutive:** Dental floss, beeper, cell phone, lipstick, breath spray
- **Fine:** jewelry, business card, coin



OPTIONAL RULES

The following are optional rules provided for you to use in your series.

ARMOR DEGRADATION

In a modern game, your characters have access to various types of armor. While the armor protects us, though, it takes a beating. In an average gun battle, it is likely that heroes are going to get shot at least once or twice. After all, that's why we wear armor in the first place! How long can our armor take that kind of abuse? The answer: Not long. What follows is a simple way of handling armor degradation.

On a failed Toughness save, the Toughness bonus of your armor will degrade by 1 point for a number of points below the difficulty in the same way that you take damage. Light Armor degrades 1 point for every 5 points below the difficulty of the Toughness save. Medium armor degrades 1 point for every 10 points below the difficulty of the Toughness save, and heavy armor degrades 1 point for every 15 points below the difficulty of the Toughness save.

The rate at which your armor degrades is dependant upon the type of armor you wear. A light vest certainly isn't designed to take as much punishment as a tactical vest and this system reflects that by scaling the Toughness saves based on the type of armor you wear. So, a character wearing a tactical vest who fails his Toughness save by 15 points will see the Toughness bonus of his vest degrade by 1 point, whereas a character wearing a leather jacket who fails his Toughness save by the same amount will lose what little protection the jacket offered altogether!

OPPOSED TECHNOLOGY CHECKS

When playing a modern adventure (especially one centered on espionage) your characters will have access to cutting-edge technology: image recognition software, parabolic microphones, burst transmitters, computer programs, sound filters, voice modulation devices, tracking devices, electronic lock picks, miniature cameras and a host of other intelligence gathering devices. Normally, using a device would give your character a bonus to a certain skill such as Computers, Disable Device, Gather Information or Notice (just to name a few). When we apply a bonus to a skill check, however, we assume that the piece of equipment automatically works. This minimizes the role of anti-security devices that may be employed by your adversaries.

A simple skill check, however, doesn't add drama to the scene in the same way that it would if there was a measure of uncertainty with regards

to how well your gear will actually function in the field. So what to do? You can opt to use opposed technology tests.

Opposed technology tests pit one device against another in an opposed check. The goal of the opposed check is to determine whether or not a device the character is using can defeat various countermeasures employed by your adversaries. Here's how it works.

Every device has a technology rating. This rating reflects the complexity of the device and how well it performs its intended function. The technology rating is equal to the purchase Difficulty for a given device. For example, a slim jim has a technology rating of 1, while a lap top with a connection to a satellite in geo-synchronous orbit, EMP protection on the hard drive and installed XLS decryption software would have a technology rating of 34. When your character is using this technology on another device, an opposed check is performed.

The player rolls a d20 and adds the technology rating of the device she is using. The narrator also rolls a d20, adding the technology rating of the device which is considered to be under attack. Whoever rolls highest wins the test. If the character's device wins the opposed technology test, she gains a bonus to the relevant skill check equal to the difference between the results of the opposed test.

If the Narrator wins, the Difficulty of the character's skill check is raised by a number equal to the difference of the results. The time it takes for the test is 1 round plus a number of rounds equal to the difference between the pieces of technology. An opposed technology test always takes a minimum of one round to resolve.

For example, your group might need to hack into a server to obtain intelligence about an upcoming meeting between two individuals, but the server can't be accessed through regular channels. A team needs to break into the building containing the server and place a miniature wireless modem with a satellite uplink onto the server. The modem will automatically attempt to breach the firewall of the server and connect with the host, allowing a hacker to access the server remotely.

The server has a technology rating of 36. Your wireless modem has a technology rating of 34. The opposed check is performed with both the player and the narrator rolling a d20, adding the technology rating of their respective devices to the check. The Narrator scores a 46, while the character scores a 48. Success! After 3 rounds, the wireless modem has successfully negotiated with the host, allowing the hacker to attempt to locate the proper file, defeat the encryption and gain the required information. The hacker gains a +2 bonus to his Computers check to defeat the security of the server and any other relevant Computers checks, such as finding a file or attempting to erase information on the system.

ADVERSARIES

The following are just a few examples of the types of organizations and adversaries you might encounter in a typical modern adventure.

GOON

Type: 1st-level Warrior

Abilities: Strength +2, Dexterity +3, Constitution +2, Intelligence -1, Wisdom +0, Charisma +0

Skills: Intimidate 4 (+4), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+4), Sense Motive 4 (+4)

Feats: All-Out Attack, Chokehold, Firearms Training, Improved Initiative, Improved Strike, Rage, Startle

Core Ability: Fearsome Presence

Combat: Attack +1, Defense +1, Initiative +7

Saves: Toughness +2, Fortitude +4, Reflex +3, Will +0

Conviction: 3, **Wealth:** +5, **Reputation:** +0, **Virtue:** Determined, **Vice:** Insensitive

Weapons: Heavy pistol (+4 damage), baseball bat (+1 damage)

Equipment: Cell phone, car, suits, spare ammunition, extra guns

Arm-breakers, gorillas, mooks, gombahs: they have a dozen different names but they're all the same—hired muscle. Goons are there to make sure you don't cross the line when you're dealing with their boss. If you do, they'll come after you with baseball bats, looking to make your fingers and kneecaps bend the wrong way—if you're lucky.



MOB BOSS

Type: 4th-level Expert, 2nd-level Warrior

Abilities: Strength +1, Dexterity +0, Constitution +1, Intelligence +2, Wisdom +1, Charisma +2

Skills: Bluff 9 (+11), Diplomacy 9 (+11), Drive 7 (+7), Gather Information 7 (+9), Intimidate 9 (+11), Knowledge (civics) 9 (+11), Knowledge (streetwise) 9 (+11), Notice 7 (+9), Search 7 (+9), Sense Motive 9 (+11)

Feats: All-Out Attack, Chokehold, Diehard, Firearms Training, Improved Initiative, Improved Strike, Influential, Point-Blank Shot, Rage, Renown, Startle, Wealthy

Core Ability: Call Your Bluff

Combat: Attack +5, Defense +5, Initiative +4

Saves: Toughness +1, Fortitude +6, Reflex +1, Will +2

Conviction: 5, **Wealth:** +11, **Reputation:** +5, **Virtue:** Industrious, **Vice:** Miserly

Weapons: Hold-out pistol (+2 damage)

Equipment: Cell phone, PDA with various contact information, luxury cars, expensive suits, nickel-plated hold out pistol, extra ammunition, flashy jewelry

The mob boss is a dangerous man who worked his way up to the top by being more cunning, more ruthless and more intelligent than his fellow mooks. He's got everyone who matters in his hip pocket. Cops, lawyers, politicians, judges; they all want a piece of what the mob boss is selling and they don't care if a few innocent people suffer because of it. The city is his playground; if you cross him, he'll make sure the last thing you see is his smiling face.

SUPER-SPY

Type: 9th-level Federal Agent

Abilities: Strength +0, Dexterity +3, Constitution +0, Intelligence +1, Wisdom +1, Charisma +2

Skills: Acrobatics 12 (+15), Bluff 12 (+14), Disable Device 12 (+13), Disguise 12 (+14), Gather Information 12 (+14), Notice 12 (+16), Sleight of Hand 12 (+15), Stealth 12 (+18)

Feats: Benefit (alternate identity), Benefit (security clearance), Contacts, Evasion, Firearms Training, Improved Evasion, Master Plan, Move-By Action, Quick Draw, Point Blank Shot, Ranged Pin, Redirect, Seize Initiative, Skill Focus (Notice), Skill Focus (Stealth), Sneak Attack, Stunning Attack, Uncanny Dodge, Well-Informed

Core Ability: Check the Sight Lines

Combat: Attack +4, Defense +4, Initiative +3

Saves: Toughness +0, Fortitude +4, Reflex +7, Will +5

Conviction: 7, **Wealth:** +7, **Reputation:** +2, **Virtue:** Courageous, **Vice:** Impulsive

Weapons: Masterwork heavy pistol (+1 attack bonus, +4 damage), assault rifle (+5 damage) masterwork knife (+1 attack bonus, +1 damage)

Equipment: Multiple fake passports, fine clothing, formal clothing, cell phone with secure line, satellite uplink and data transfer capabilities, PDA, EMP-hardened laptop, luxury sports car, lock picks

The super-spy is a master of deception, a highly trained ghost capable of penetrating the most heavily protected complexes on the planet. No secret is safe from the super-spy; her contacts are far-reaching and the organizations she works for are wealthy, capable of providing her with anything she might require to perform her mission.

CROOKED COP

Type: 1st-level Ordinary

Abilities: Strength +1, Dexterity +2, Constitution +2, Intelligence +0, Wisdom +1, Charisma +0

Skills: Bluff 4 (+7), Gather Information 4 (+4), Medicine 4 (+5), Notice 4 (+5), Sleight of Hand 0 (+5)

Feats: Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand)
Combat: Attack +0, Defense +0, Initiative +2
Saves: Toughness +2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +2, Will +1
Conviction: 0, Wealth: +5, Reputation: +0, Virtue: Generous, Vice: Cowardly
Weapons: Masterwork heavy pistol (+1 attack bonus, +4 damage), stun gun (Stun), tonfa (+1 damage)
Equipment: Badge, extra ammunition, police cruiser, walkie talkie

This is the guy who makes all the other cops look bad. He takes bribes from the mob in return for looking the other way when they shake down a small business owner. He takes drugs from street gangs and uses it as collateral when dealing with his snitches. He removes evidence from crime scenes and murders people who cross him.

GANG-BANGER

Type: 1st-level Ordinary
Abilities: Strength +3, Dexterity +0, Constitution +3, Intelligence +0, Wisdom -1, Charisma +1
Skills: Drive 4 (+4), Intimidate 4 (+5), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+4), Search 4 (+4)
Feats: None
Combat: Attack +0, Defense +0, Initiative +0
Saves: Toughness +3, Fortitude +3, Reflex +0, Will -1
Conviction: 0, Wealth: +6, Reputation: +0, Virtue: Bold, Vice: Arrogant
Weapons: Heavy pistol (2) (+4 damage)
Equipment: Extra ammunition for pistols, drugs, a tricked-out car, street clothes

The gang banger is an urban warrior who goes to war with those who cross him and his set every night. His territory is marked by gang symbols; the colors he wears are a badge of honor. If you don't respect this man, he'll pull out his 'nines, smoke you and leave you bleeding in the streets.

ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations are provided for you to use in your modern adventure series.

X-CON

Professional international espionage became something of a "boom industry" during the Cold War. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, several ex-KGB members and others in the intelligence community formed an organization that could spy on any nation while holding allegiance to none: X-con, a group of black ops and wetwork experts who sell their expertise to the highest bidder. X-con gathers intelligence, plants moles and sleepers, performs complex sabotage, and even carries out assassinations, all for the right price. Members of X-con are the best spies in the world, period; running afoul of them is a death sentence, though working for them can be equally dangerous.

- Agenda:** To earn lucrative amounts of money performing espionage services for the international community; to destabilize key nations and foster a global environment where their services are needed.
- Membership:** No more than 150 agents and affiliates (non-agent personnel). Five figures make up X-con's "Upper Management." Their identities are unknown to other X-con personnel, perhaps even to each other.
- Resources:** Billions of dollars in slush funds and secret accounts. X-con agents have access to the latest in high-tech gadgetry but are assigned only what is necessary on a per mission basis. Agents also have all travel arrangements taken care of, and my receive backup from other agents if requested.

PALLADINO INVESTIGATIONS

This small family firm operates out of Seattle, Washington. Joseph Palladino, a discharged police detective, was determined to clear his name following his dismissal from the force. With the help of his sister Elizabeth, the pair discovered who had framed Joseph for the brutal beating and eventual death of a police informant. After his name was cleared, Joseph decided he enjoyed the life of a private eye more than that of a police detective.

Palladino Investigations takes cases of any kind, from suspicious wives wanting proof of a husband's infidelity to high-profile kidnappings that need to stay out of the headlines. Elizabeth, her husband Frank, and their child Julie all work at the firm under the mentorship of "Uncle Jo."

- Agenda:** To solve any crime; no mystery is too tough, no bill is too big.
- Membership:** Four, the Palladino family.
- Resources:** An office, a computer that works most of the time, Elizabeth's camera, and Julie's moped. They also maintain various contacts among Seattle's police force and the criminal underworld.

OMERTA

"The Law of Silence" is a vast criminal organization with worldwide connections. Originating in Italy, Omerta has gone beyond any nationality, becoming a nation unto itself where crime is the currency. The mafia is the backbone behind much of the world's drug trade and has a hand in illegal weapon smuggling as well. Its members pledge their honor and loyalty to the group, becoming one of an enormous gang-family. Despite the occasional feud and outside rivalry, Omerta has managed to thrive for the past thirty years, becoming a vast criminal empire.

- Agenda:** To protect Omerta and its members; to uphold the "family" honor; to profit from activities both legal and illegal.
- Membership:** Several thousand, perhaps over one million; it is impossible to determine or even estimate.
- Resources:** An undefinable amount of wealth and influence, including power over law enforcement, the judicial branch and high-ranking politicians.

ADVENTURES

The possibilities for adventures in the modern genre are nearly endless. Pick up an newspaper and you'll find a wealth of plot hooks which, with a little work, can be used to spark an adventure or series of adventures. What follows is a series of plot hooks based on the different modern games represented in this book. These should get you started and hopefully provide fuel for future adventures.

LADY LIBERTY

The characters gain information indicating a terrorist cell may have been activated in New York City. A Mossad agent contacts the characters' boss with information suggesting a shipment of weaponized sarin gas has made it into the country via a cargo vessel which left Athens three weeks ago.

A contact at the New York Port Authority was murdered two nights ago. The man had a note in his personal possessions. On it, was a name—Harik Mosanni—and the following message: 5947833, *Alpha protocol enacted*. What does the message mean? Who was Harik Mosanni? Where is the sarin gas now, and can the characters find it before more innocent lives are lost?

ONE NIGHT IN BRUSSELS

One of the heroes' contacts in Brussels has obtained information indicating an emergency meeting between at least two high-level members of X-con will be taking place within the next 24 hours. The team needs to fly to Brussels, meet with the contact and obtain intelligence on the X-con members. Their objective is to get photos of each member and obtain audio of the meeting without being detected by security.

DEEP COVER (SERIES HOOK)

In this adventure, heroes are tasked with infiltrating an arms-smuggling organization based in Chechnya. They are to gather intel on the major players in the organization, the types of weapons that are being bought and sold, as well as information on who the buyers are. This should be a long-term series, filled with suspense and ever-increasing danger as the characters become immersed in the world of the smugglers.

THE VIGILANTE

Someone is hunting down and killing street crooks and low-level members of various crime syndicates in the city. Your team of detectives has been tasked with bringing this vigilante to justice. This type of adventure is a morality tale. The vigilante is technically doing the city a favor by killing these seedy individuals, but at what point does justice become revenge? Do evil people have the same rights as law-abiding citizens?

Who is this person and what is his (or her) background? The vigilante appears to be highly proficient, indicating he might have some formal training with weapons and explosives, as some criminals have been victims of car bombings. Can your team stop the vigilante before more people die? Will his actions cause further violence as the criminal world takes the matter into its own hands?

AWOL

A SpecOps unit has gone missing somewhere in the infamous "Triangle of Death" sector of Northern Iraq. The heroes have been tasked with finding these soldiers and bringing them back to base. As the search progresses however, the team of heroes begin to find clues indicating that the unit they are searching for has gone rogue.

What is their mission? Are they turncoats? Do they answer to some other branch of the military? These and more questions plague the squad as the heroes move through this district, risking attacks from insurgents as they struggle to find the missing team.

MOB WAR (SERIES HOOK)

A high level Mafia boss was killed by a Triad assassin. Now the streets run red with blood as the two organizations have gone to war. Your heroes are involved with one of the factions and are tasked with performing various jobs. They might be bodyguards, charged with protecting a high level boss, or they may be assassins, tasked with finding and killing high-ranking members of the rival organization.

While this series hook can directly involve organized crime, Narrators can easily tweak it to involve rival spy organizations or street gangs, depending on what roles your players have chosen.

VENDETTA

Someone is hunting one of the heroes, playing a game of cat-and-mouse as he seeks to cause as much trouble for the character as possible before finally killing him. Can the hero find out who the person is and why they are seeking revenge? This type of adventure carries many assumptions. It assumes the heroes have a history in which they made enemies. It assumes that family members might be hurt as the antagonist looks for ways to make the character suffer. Be creative when thinking up ways to motivate your heroes to bring this nasty business to an end.

PROJECT DOPPLEGANGER

The heroes are tasked with the recovery of an X-con program; a worm designed to sniff multiple government databases and download personal information of various under cover agents and government officials. The program retrieves specific information; addresses, photographs, copies of finger prints, etc. The agency the characters work for believes that this program will be used by criminal organizations to facilitate a massive attack on the intelligence capabilities of the U.S and British governments.

This information could be used to assassinate individuals or even replace them with moles. The most recent intelligence places the program in the vault of a casino in Monte Carlo. Heroes will have to break in, recover the disk containing the program, and replace it with a modified copy that will give X-con false information leading to dead ends.



APPENDIX: D20 SYSTEM CONVERSION

The game systems in *True20* are based on the popular *d20 System*. However, there are a number of important differences, notably in how *True20* handles damage and injury. This appendix offers conversion guidelines for players familiar with other *d20 System* games and products who are interested in adapting those materials for use with *True20*. Among other things, this opens up a wide range of source material usable in your *True20* game, including various creatures, supporting characters, supplemental rules, and so forth. It also allows you to adapt material from *True20* to your favorite *d20 System* games as well.

ABILITIES

Other *d20* games rate ability scores on a scale from 1 to 20 or more, with ability modifiers based on the ability score. Those modifiers are equivalent to the -5 to +5 or more scores found in *True20*. When using other *d20* creatures in *True20*, drop the ability scores and just use the ability modifiers. When converting *True20* creatures for use in other *d20* games, determine ability scores by doubling the *True20* ability modifier and adding 10. Treat a result of 0 as 1. So Strength +1 becomes Strength 12 (1 x 2 + 10), while Intelligence -5 becomes 1 (-5 x 2 + 10 = 0, which becomes 1).

DAMAGE AND INJURY

Damage in most *d20 System* games is recorded using hit points. Essentially, each character and creature has a number of hit points based on their level (modified by things like Constitution), and each attack inflicts a number of hit points of damage. When hit points drop to a certain level, certain conditions, like disabled and dying, come into play.

The *True20* system of damage involves a Toughness saving throw in place of hit points, with damage conditions showing the effects of damage.

When converting a *d20* character to *True20*, give the character a Toughness bonus based on Constitution, with any appropriate modifiers for the Defensive Roll and Tough feats.

TOUGHNESS AND HIT POINTS

Damage Reduction: A creature with damage reduction receives +2 to its Toughness save bonus for every 5 points of damage reduction. This bonus does not apply against damage from sources that bypass the damage reduction. For instance, a werewolf does not gain a Toughness bonus from damage reduction for damage inflicted by silver weapons.

Energy Resistance: A creature receives +2 to its Toughness bonus for every 5 points of energy resistance it possesses, but only against energy attacks of the matching type.

Toughness feat: A character receives a cumulative +1 to his Toughness bonus every time he takes the Toughness feat, the equivalent of the Tough feat in *True20*. When converting *True20* characters with Tough to hit points, the Tough feat grants 3 additional hit points on top of the character's total (based on level and Constitution).

DAMAGE BONUS

In *True20*, attacks have a damage bonus, used to determine the Difficulty of the target's Toughness save. In *d20*, attacks have a damage roll, a

die roll plus a modifier determining how many hit points the attack removes from the target.

To quickly convert *True20* damage bonus to dice of damage, divide the base damage bonus (not including modifiers for abilities like Strength) by 2; the attack does that many d6 of damage. If there's a remainder left over, the attack does an additional d4 damage. Add the attacker's Strength modifier to the total damage, so Strength 18 adds +4 damage to the attack's total damage, after it is rolled.

To convert *d20* damage to *True20* damage bonus, see the **Damage Dice to Damage Bonus** table. If an attack does multiple dice of damage, multiply the damage bonus on the table by the number of dice rolled. The exception to this rule is for attacks based on a d3 or d2, since multiplying by zero gives a result of zero; in this case, every additional die adds +1 to the bonus (so an attack of 4d3 has a bonus of +3).

To this base damage bonus, add any damage bonuses for Strength, magical enhancement, special abilities, and the like, as normal. If an attack includes bonus damage dice, such as a rogue's sneak attack bonus or energy damage from a magical weapon, convert that damage to a bonus as above and add it to the attack's base damage.

DAMAGE DICE TO DAMAGE BONUS

Die Type	Base Damage Bonus
d3 or lower	+0
d4	+1
d6	+2
d8	+3
d10	+4
d12	+5

In some circumstances, attacks may do a bit more or less damage than normal. A critical hit does more damage than usual, while many attack spells do only half damage if the target succeeds in a saving throw.

MAGICAL HEALING

Instead of healing a certain number of hit points, *d20 System* healing spells in *True20* grant a magical recovery check, using the normal Difficulty. The character using the healing magic makes the recovery check for the wounded subject, as follows:

d20 + caster level + magic bonus

The magic bonus depends on the spell used; see the **Spell Changes** section later in this appendix.

The recipient heals the most serious wound condition if the magical recovery check succeeds. Every 10 points by which the magical recovery check result succeeds, the recipient's next most serious damage condition heals. (Unlike natural healing or the Cure power, magical healing can heal multiple damage conditions at once.) If an attempt to use magical healing on a dying character fails, the recipient of the spell still stabilizes automatically.

SUPERNATURAL HEALING

The paladin's lay on hands ability, the monk's wholeness of body ability, and other such supernatural healing powers allow characters to make

one or more magical recovery checks per day. The total hit points the character can heal per day using the standard *d20 System* rules becomes a bonus to his magical recovery check. The character decides how much, from a minimum of +1 to the full bonus, to allocate to any given magical recovery check. Once the total bonus is used up, the character can make no more supernatural healing checks that day. This otherwise works the same way as a healing spell and can improve damage conditions by multiple steps.

Example: *Donovan Rel is a 4th-level paladin with Charisma 14, giving him a +8 bonus (4th level + 2 Cha modifier) to magical recovery checks when using lay on hands. He could use this bonus for eight separate magical healing attempts, each with a bonus of +1; he could make just one check with a bonus of +8; or he could make anywhere from two to seven magical healing attempts with various bonuses, as long as the total bonus used for the day does not exceed +8.*

DAMAGE TO OBJECTS

Just as *True20* characters and creatures suffer damage conditions instead of losing hit points, so too do inanimate objects. The effects of damage are slightly different, since objects don't feel pain or suffer from wound trauma, but the core system remains the same.

TOUGHNESS AND HIT POINTS FOR OBJECTS

In *True20*, each object has a Toughness bonus. In *d20*, objects have two qualities: hardness and hit points. Hardness serves as damage reduction; the object ignores points of damage equal to its hardness each round. Hit points work like those of creatures, except objects are destroyed at 0 hit points instead of being disabled.

To convert from *True20* Toughness to *d20*, give the object hardness equal to its *True20* Toughness and hit points equal to 2.5 times its *True20* Toughness (rounding down).

To convert from *d20* hardness and hit points to *True20* Toughness, give an object +1 Toughness for every 5 hit points and +2 Toughness for every 5 points of hardness.

Example: *A strong wooden door has hardness 5 (+2) and 20 hp (+4), giving it a total +6 Toughness bonus in True20. A stone door has hardness 8 (+3) and 60 hit points (+12) for a total +15 Toughness bonus.*

FEAT CHANGES

The *d20 System* metamagic feats Empower Spell and Maximize Spell must be changed in *True20* to reflect the nonvariable nature of damage and healing spells. Empower Spell increases the bonus of such spells by 50 percent (round down). Maximize Spell doubles the bonus of suitable spells. If a spell is both empowered and maximized, its bonus increases by 150 percent. All other aspects of the feats remain the same.

Example: *An explosive runes spell inflicts 6d6 damage in d20, which translates to a +12 damage bonus. An empowered explosive runes has a +18 damage bonus (+12 x 1.5); a maximized explosive runes has a +24 damage bonus (+12 x 2); and an empowered, maximized explosive runes has a +30 damage bonus (+12 x 2.5).*

SPELL CHANGES

The following *d20* spells have altered effects or mechanics in *True20* to reflect the nature of the damage system.

- *Cure Critical Wounds:* This spell provides a base +12 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +1 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +20 caster level bonus).
- *Cure Light Wounds:* This spell provides a base +3 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +1 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +5 caster level bonus).
- *Cure Minor Wounds:* This spell provides a +0 bonus to the magical recovery check, with no caster level bonus.
- *Cure Moderate Wounds:* This spell provides a base +6 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +1 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +10 caster level bonus).
- *Cure Serious Wounds:* This spell provides a base +9 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +1 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +15 caster level bonus).
- *Cure, Mass:* All *cure* spells (except for *cure minor wounds*) have corresponding *mass cure* versions. Each provides the same bonus to the magical recovery check as the single target version, but the maximum caster level bonus increases by +20. *Mass cure moderate wounds*, for example, provides a base +6 bonus with a maximum +30 caster level bonus.
- *Harm:* This spell inflicts damage on the target, with a base +10 damage bonus, and an additional +2 damage bonus per caster level (to a maximum +30 caster level bonus). The total damage bonus is halved if the target makes a successful Will save, and the spell cannot reduce the target past disabled.
- *Heal:* This spell provides a base +10 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +2 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +30 caster level bonus). All other factors of the spell function as described in the *Player's Handbook*.
- *Regenerate:* In addition to regenerating the subject's body parts, this spell provides a base +12 bonus to the recovery check, with an additional +1 per caster level (to a maximum +35 caster level bonus).

Spells inflicting hit point damage (other than *harm*) should be adjusted as shown on the **Damage Dice to Damage Bonus** table.

CONVERTING CREATURES

Converting *d20 System* creatures for use with *True20* is a simple process:

1. Use the creature's Constitution and Size to determine its Toughness.
2. Convert hit point damage of the creature's attacks to a damage bonus.
3. Convert any spell-like abilities into equivalent powers.
4. Convert any *d20 System* skills to *True20* skills. Generally, this means combining skills like Listen and Spot or Hide and Move Silently, using the average of the skill bonuses.

Most other creature statistics remain the same between the two systems, so it's fairly easy to use creatures from any *d20 System* book in *True20*.



Name	
Background	
Role	
Level	



TRUE20

ADVENTURE

ROLEPLAYING

Description

Character Portrait

Abilities		Combat		Saving Throws		Other Statistics	
Strength		Initiative		Toughness		Size	
Dexterity		Dodge		Fortitude		Speed	
Constitution		Parry		Reflex			
Intelligence		Base Attack Bonus		Will			
Wisdom		Melee Attack Bonus		Characteristics			
Charisma		Ranged Attack Bonus		Virtue			
Damage Track				Vice			
0	5+	10+	15+				
Bruised	Dazed	Staggered	Unconscious				
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Hurt	Wounded	Disabled	Dying	Dead	Wealth and Reputation		
					Wealth		
					Prof. Skill		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reputation		

Weapon	Attack Bonus	Damage Bonus	Range

Skill	Bonus	Skill	Bonus	Skill	Bonus
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Feats					

Powers

Special Abilities

Equipment

Conviction	<input type="checkbox"/>									
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