

POST APOCALYPTIC ROLEPLAYING!

COLIN CHAPMAN



Several generations have passed since Doomsday when the Earth was wracked by the Final War. Our forebears told of the devastation, of the great pillars of ash and flame, of the clouds of manmade pestilence, of the waves of strangely scented death. All the marvels our ancestors had striven to create, their towering edifices of steel, concrete and glass, the lore stored on their webs of computers, were torn asunder, rent and lost. Many died, man and beast alike, and the Earth was tortured and twisted. Many more died during the Years of Dark Ice that followed.

As heat and light returned, those few survivors began to establish themselves anew, communities began to slowly grow again, both to protect and nurture or to seize and pillage, for both are paths of survival. Nations were gone, survival was paramount, trade was scant. What useful implements of the Before Time that could be safely salvaged were quickly hoarded and cherished, for future generations, for survival, for protection and predation.

The damage and poisoning of the Earth was reflected in the warped flesh of animal and man. Many were born with hideous mutations to the horror of their parents. Most died, others were cast out, only a few were nurtured or endured. Over time, the number of mutants has slowly increased, reluctantly accepted in some places, still reviled in others.

Fortified settlements are scattered across and beneath the blasted landscape now, linked by the battered roads our ancestors made. Road warriors in their armed and armored vehicles guard these places of civilization, escort the mighty trade rigs that ferry goods and people between those settlements that trade. Raiders assault these in their crude vehicles, steal and slaughter, constantly test the defenses of the towns and homesteads nearby. The weak, the foolish, quickly fall to their ravages.

This is a time of hardship, of rebuilding, a time when scavengers pick at the scraps of the Before Time, a time when might too often means right. But it is also a time of hope, for Humanity has endured and the Earth begins to very slowly mend. The future will again be wrought by our hands, for good or ill.

- Daniel Turing, Lore Keeper of Redtown

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Dedication

Colin would like to dedicate this book to his wife, Jo, the reason for his continued existence, and his daughter, Rosie, for bringing delightful madness into his life.

He would also like to express his absolute awe and gratitude to the folks who truly helped make this dream a reality. Words cannot convey how brilliant the folks listed under Special Thanks are.

**SUGGESTED FOR READERS AGED 12 AND OVER
PARENTAL DISCRETION IS ADVISED**

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CHAPTER 1

GET ON THE ROAD WHAT IS ROLEPLAYING?

A roleplaying game (RPG) is one of those things that's hard to explain but easy to understand once you see it in action. Roleplaying is best described as something like interactive group storytelling, but that's not completely accurate. While we can't be there to show you, we can try to illustrate what roleplaying is. Let's meet some players and look at an excerpt of one of their game sessions:



This is Colin. He's the *Game Master* (GM for short). He has an idea of the sort of adventure story the group will be playing through, and knows what events are likely to happen next, unlike the other players. He narrates the adventure, plays the roles of other characters and creatures (each of which is a *Game Master Character*, GMC for short) that the Players' characters meet, and referees the outcomes of anything any characters do.



This is Jerry. He's one of the *Players*. He's playing the role of a single specific character, a grizzled bounty hunter called Slade. This character is his *Player Character* (PC for short, also just "characters"). Jerry tells the group what Slade says and does in action, and in reaction to what's happening in the story.



This is Jo. She's another of the *Players*. Like Jerry, she's playing a single PC, this time a wisecracking mutant thief with a prehensile tail called Monkey-Tail.

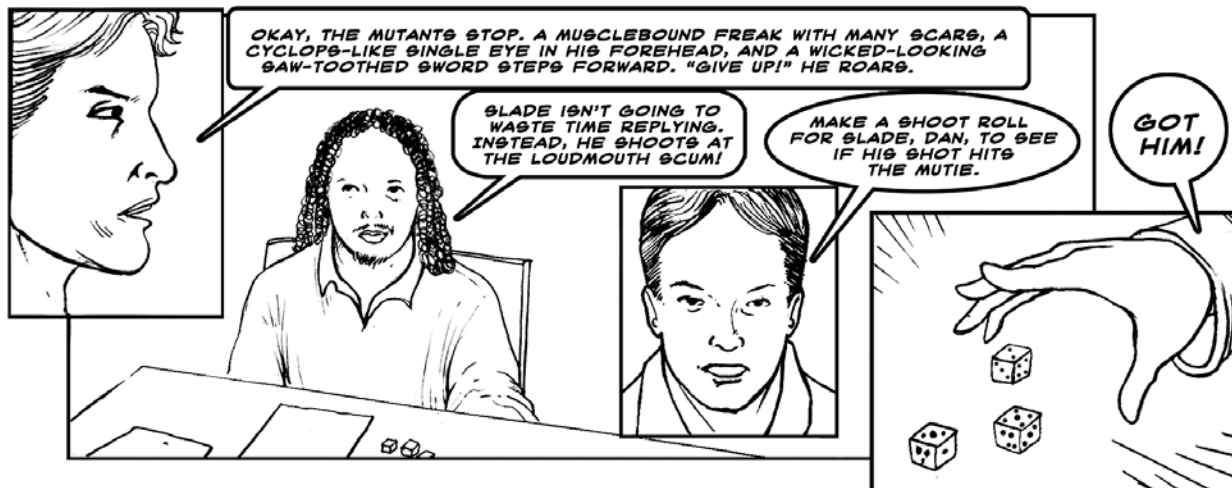
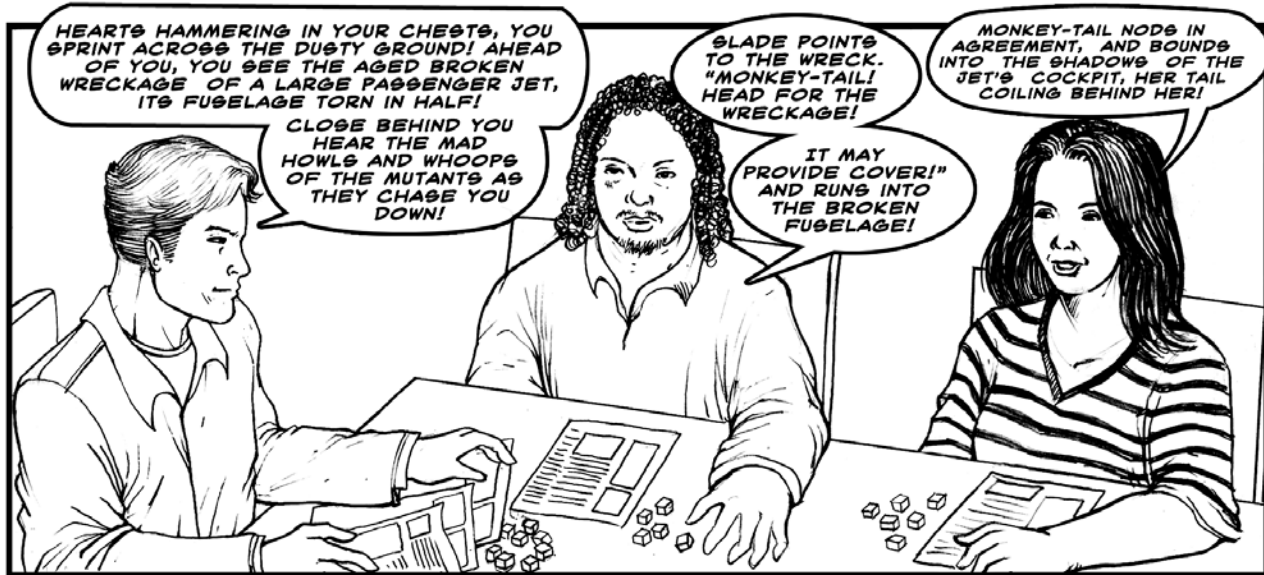
Let's take a look at them at their gaming table. You see, unlike normal acting, you don't need to dress up or actually physically act when you play a roleplaying game. You simply say what your character says and does, more like a story than a theatrical performance. You can say this in third person or first person.

Example 1: "Slade clammers onto the roof of the rusting car wreck to get a good look at the area."

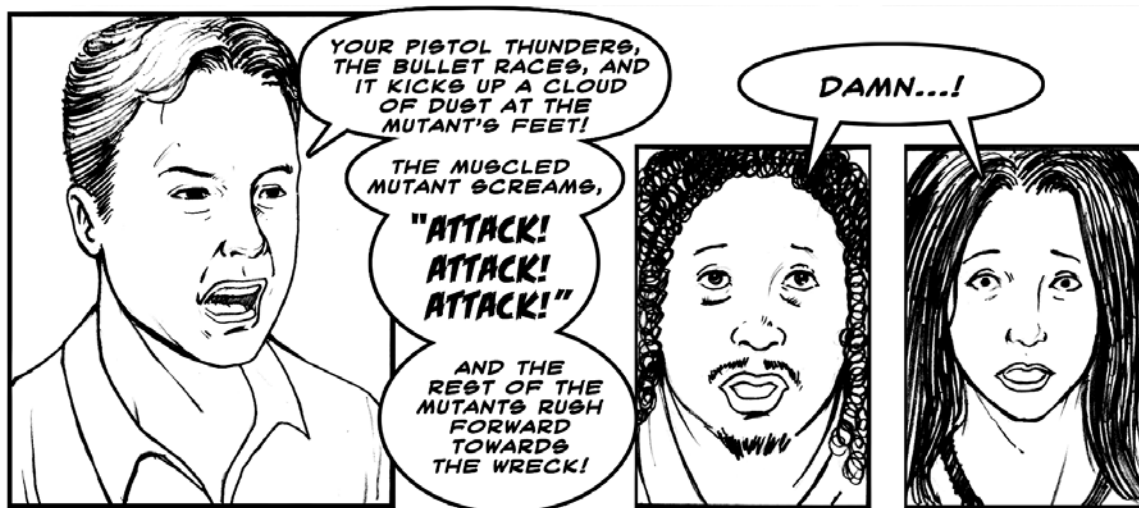
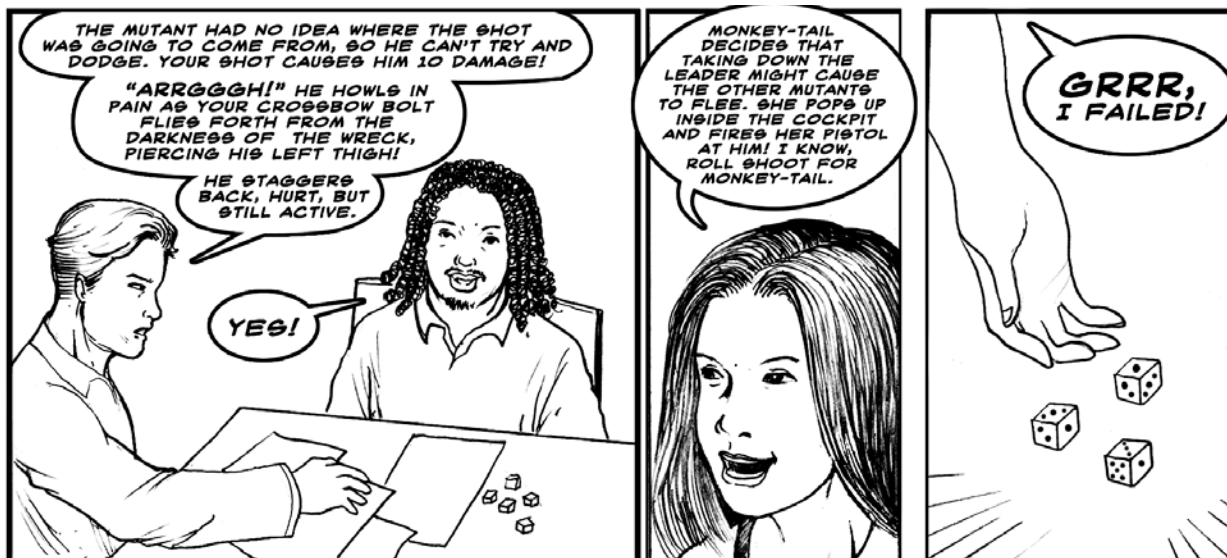
Example 2: "I clamber onto the roof of the rusting car wreck to get a good look at the area."

In front of them they've got some dice and their *Character Sheets* (sheets that provide all the details about their PCs for instant reference). They roll the dice when necessary to see if their PCs actually succeed or fail at what they're attempting. This is neat because it makes the game unpredictable; no one really knows how things are going to turn out.





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So, that's a little slice of a roleplaying session. What will happen next? Will Slade and Monkey-Tail fight off the mutants? Will they be captured or worse? Will something else unexpected happen? That all depends on what Dan and Jo (the Players) say their PCs do, what Colin (the GM) decides the mutants will do... and whether or not Colin has other ideas. That's the beauty of roleplaying games; the stories build as you go along, and while the GM may have some ideas, a lot of it is made up spontaneously. You never know just where the story will lead.



What You Need

To create characters and play *Atomic Highway*, you'll need the following supplies handy:

- A copy of this book.
- Somewhere suitable to play, that is, a place everyone can comfortably sit and talk without too much distraction. Having a flat surface to roll dice on is a bonus, as rolling dice on a book balanced on your lap isn't easy.
- A few regular six-sided dice. Three to five per player is ideal, but you can share as needed. If you don't have some immediately handy, raid any board games you might have. If you don't have any board games, go to the Internet, search for a random integer generator site, and have it generate a few sheets of random 1-6 numbers for you. Use those as your roll results, crossing them off in order.
- Paper and pencils.
- A few friends. At least one of you needs to be the GM and run the game, and you need at least one Player, but it's more fun if you have two to five Players.
- A little imagination.
- **Optional:** A photocopied or printed-off character sheet for each Player, or a copy of one of the ready-made characters for each Player. You can freely photocopy the character and vehicle/mount sheets as often as needed, or download them from our website to print off. You don't absolutely need them as you can easily write down everything you need, but they make things easier.





CHAPTER 2

THE VIEW OUT THE WINDOW

SETTING

What follows are the core setting elements that make *Atomic Highway* its own peculiar beast. Sure, it's not very realistic, but it's not intended to be; when realism and fun clashed, we chose fun every time.

The Post-Apocalyptic World Overview

Humankind has been devastated, populations of billions reduced to millions by nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare. Struggling in the poisoned aftermath of nuclear winter, bands of survivors huddled together for survival, over time forming various sorts of communities.

Communities

A selection of defined types of communities exist in the game, though these are convenient labels only.

- Bartertowns

Bartertowns are almost always the largest of communities, independent fortified towns of several hundred to several thousand individuals. Members of other communities, including rival bartertowns, come to them to trade, making them something of a melting pot, and generally more cosmopolitan and tolerant of outsiders and mutants than other communities.

They are often located on highways and/or waterways which make travel to and from them easier. Many are located close to resources that they themselves can exploit, subsist on, and/or trade, such as arable land or salvageable ruins.

Because the transport of goods and people between settlements is a dangerous proposition at best, due to raiders, roving tribes, or other hazards,

many bartertowns equip haulers, armed and armored trucks, for ferrying merchandise and travelers. Escorting these are road warriors, drivers of armed and armored battlecars. Outriders on customized motorcycles operate as couriers and scouts. Any or all of these may also be sent outside of the bartertown's walls to engage raiders in combat, should the vehicle-riding savages ever threaten in force.

- 'Steads

Smaller, fortified communities, 'steads (short for homestead or farmstead) typically comprise anything from a single family up to a couple hundred individuals. These smaller settlements tend to be focused on one or two primary means of support, such as crop farming or raising livestock, mining coal or cutting lumber, any excess being traded with nearby 'steads or, more frequently, traded at the nearest bartertown. A few are actually bartertown-created farms or outposts in very hostile areas, sending out outriders when necessary to assess the dangers nearby.

'Steads are known to be far more insular, suspicious, and oft-times peculiar in their ways than bartertowners - understandable given that their comparative isolation makes them more vulnerable to marauders. Whatever their faults may be, as a rule they are independent, tough, and pioneering.

- Remnant Enclaves

There are those rare settlements that formed around still-functioning scientific research stations, factories, or other locations where technology was abundant and still operable. These enclaves of "remnants," so named because they represent a past age, tend to cling fiercely to, and maintain as best they can, the technologies they live with,



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often guarding them jealously against what they perceive as barbaric outsiders. Others have gone out into the world to bring the benefits of technology back, sometimes to be welcomed, other times shunned or feared, even hunted for being proponents of the ways that wrought so much destruction.

- Trog Warrens

In many places, communities of people took to the shelter provided by the Earth itself, living in caverns, underground bunkers, or other subterranean abodes isolated from the harshness and ruination of the surface world. Sequestered underground, many lived largely oblivious or uncaring of the changes in the world above. Inbreeding, cabin fever, and/or mutation from chemicals leaching through the soil all too often took their toll, and many communities of these underground dwellers, nicknamed “troggs” (short for troglodytes) killed themselves off or became hopelessly degenerate cannibals, the mutant morlocks hated and feared by all who know of them.

Xenophobic more often than not, only a few trog communities boast individuals willing to brave the light of the sun to trade on the surface world. Certain mutations have become somewhat stable in trog populations, particularly large light-sensitive eyes, albinism, and a small, slender frame possessed of extremely flexible joints. Even among those trogs not mutated, deathly pale skin and wide staring eyes are typical traits.

- Tribes

Eschewing most of the technologies of the past, some people banded together to form tribal groups, living a more primitive existence than those in the majority of permanent settlements. Ranging in size from a handful of families to several hundred members, tribes hunt and trade as need dictates, sometimes even raiding when times are lean. With their distinctive rituals and beliefs, and widely varying modes of dress, decoration, weapons, and tools, each tribe is unique. Shifting rivalries and alliances between nearby tribes are not uncommon. A small number of tribes are sedentary, but most are nomadic or partially so, moving with the seasons and game that supports them.

- Raiders

Among the most feared of communities are the raiders: large motorized gangs of bandits and pirates who pillage, scavenge and otherwise steal what they want or need to survive, very rarely trading. These nomadic groups terrorize travelers and ‘steads, fight among themselves, and when gathered in sufficient numbers, even assault bartertowns. Invariably ruled by the strongest, most cunning individuals, raider gangs have overrun and ravaged no small number of other communities. Most raider gangs have a large proportion of mutant members, either born to the

gang or ostracized from other communities and now bearing an understandable grudge. Raider gangs range in size from several dozen individuals to several hundred, and in a few cases multiple large bands have temporarily united under particularly charismatic warlords to form hordes of a few thousand.

Governance

The ways in which communities are governed vary dramatically. Some are run by hereditary rulers, others by councils of elders or those considered wise. Some are governed by elected representatives, others by community decision-making. In cases where a populace has any choice, the right to choose may be open to all, restricted by age or gender, or otherwise curtailed to only a select group of community members. Not a few are run by whoever is strong or cunning enough to seize power or exert enough influence to control the decision-making process; in some, the authority may be religion- or cult-based. Many raiders and some tribes are controlled by warlords or chiefs who win their position through trial by combat or other hazardous rites set to test their determination and strength. With every settlement being its own power, you can expect to find any system imaginable.

Trade & Wage

With the destruction of the monetary economy, humanity reverted to the means of trade it employed for most of its history: barter. No goods or services have any fixed values, nor does anyone earn a wage in monetary terms. Rather, what something is worth is utterly dependent on what someone is willing to trade for it, which is then completely dependent on the need or desire for it, and what they actually have to offer for it in return.

For instance, a rifle would be worthless to a ‘stead farmer if he didn’t have any ammunition for it, or at the very least know of someone who did, or maybe knows someone looking for a rifle that he might trade it to afterwards for increased benefit. Even if he wanted the rifle, he probably has limited means he can use for barter, perhaps offering meals and a safe place to sleep, or some of his excess grain, meat, or other produce. He could offer his services or farming advice as another possibility if his skills are such that the rifle-seller might have use for them. This means that when it comes to trade, you can’t place any real expectation on what you’ll obtain, as every case is different and haggling is common and expected.

One outgrowth of this return to barter is that a person’s word has far more weight and meaning than it has had for a long time. Someone who promises their services or aid to another, especially as part of a barter transaction, may face public disapproval,





ostracism, or even severe punishment if they renege.

In regard to wage, unskilled laborers in bartertowns and 'steads typically agree to work for others in exchange for basic necessities such as a shack to live in, a basic meal, some clean water, and/or enough fuel and clothing to keep warm. It's a basic, hard existence largely bereft of luxuries, but it certainly beats starving or living outside the protection of the community's walls and sentinels; some meager, supplemental "income" may also be generated through whatever skills or goods other members of the extended family can put to use or make. For those laboring as slaves or in servitude imposed as criminal punishment, the subsistence is often harsher.

Individuals with useful or necessary skills can expect better treatment, the amount of luxury they are lavished with highly dependent on the utility and rarity of their talents. A typical sentinel, for example, may be given a better quality shack, better food, more firewood, and possibly the odd luxury as a bonus. A veteran road warrior, on the other hand, may have a decent cabin, some good food, more regular allocations of scavenged luxuries, and even repairs and replacement parts for his gear, weapons, and battlecar when available.

Work itself varies according to the skills of the individual. The unskilled can expect to perform menial chores requiring little more than muscle and a willingness to follow simple instructions. Lifting and hauling, mucking out stalls, shoveling coal, digging trenches - these and other simple tasks are the lot of the unskilled.

Bartertowns are the largest markets for goods in their areas. Not only do they trade any excess their own farms and herds produce, or goods made by their residents, but they also operate as open markets for anyone from nearby 'steads and other communities with goods to exchange. Their bustling markets are as cosmopolitan as the post-apocalyptic world gets. Providing that the sentinels collect their cut from every transaction, they're usually happy to let anyone trade anything - in some cases that might even includes slaves, as slavery has again reared its ugly head here and there.

Food

That the diet of the post-apocalyptic man is simpler than in the Before Time goes without saying. Food is all about subsistence, and few can afford to be too choosy



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about what they eat. Fresh grains and vegetables are available from arable farms, but may be stunted or mutated depending on the local environment and weather, with the best fruits and vegetables being bartered at costs beyond those of most folks. Cattle, pigs, chickens, and other livestock are raised where possible; edible fish and seaweed are also possibilities for coastal communities. With the intensive farming methods of the past, meat and produce are far less common and thus far more expensive in barter terms. Alongside the livestock of yore, more readily available meats are also consumed: rats, dogs, cats, and any birds unlucky enough to be caught are all apt to fall into the stew pot - in some cases these might also be farm-reared. Offal of all kinds has also made a big comeback, and when horses can no longer serve as mounts or beasts of burden, they too are ready sources of protein ... as are humans in some communities.

More primitive cooking methods have returned, focused upon taking what little is available and making it go as far as possible. Broths and thin stews of rat or dog meat and coarse grain, maybe with a few turnip heads or chunks of root vegetable are the commonest fare, and treats such as roast rat-on-a-stick are sold on market days.

Beverages are similarly limited; water is the most common drink, crudely filtered and repeatedly boiled to make it fit for consumption. Harsh moonshine is the only widespread alcoholic drink, brewed from whatever appropriate scraps or substances are available (best not to ask what's added to give it that *kick*). Fruit juice and milk are luxuries, and anything more refined really is the domain of the elite, assuming it can be found at all.

Of course, the real luxuries, the foodstuffs of which most commoners can only dream of tasting, are the rare foodstuffs that have survived from the Before Time: bottles of spirits and wines, and the canned foods that are still edible - people often fight and kill for such.

Trogs, of course, face a vastly different environment than surface dwellers, with obvious differences in comestibles. They raise and eat pallid fish in underground pools, grow and harvest fungus, drink filtered water, and gather root crops where possible. These foods are supplemented by any cave-dwelling amphibians that can be caught such as frogs and salamanders, as well as bats and roasted cave crickets. When they do trade with the surface world, foodstuffs are some of the things they most eagerly barter for.

Shelter

Shelter in the post-apocalypse is a far cry from the constructions of the Before Time. Anything that lends itself as a building material is utilized, often haphazardly. A shack might boast timber walls made

from old planks, a roof made from beaten sheets of scrap metal, and a supporting concrete wall, the only part of a ruin left standing. In areas close to ruins, scavenged materials dominate, while away from past sites any local materials are used such as wood, stone, woven grass, and mud. Trogs, of course, live in their tunnels and complexes, and remnants maintain as best they can their historical dwellings. Nomadic folk, be they tribesmen or raiders, make use of tents, yurts, and teepees crafted from scavenged canvas, rubber sheeting, or the hides of beasts.

A fire pit is the commonest means of heat, and it, along with torches and lanterns, is also responsible for providing much of the shelter's light in these darker nights. Only where generators still function or have been recovered, with wiring still intact or jury-rigged, do bulbs light the darkness.

Furnishings are spare, often crude pieces of lashed or nailed together wood, scavenged barrels topped with old wooden doors, and old threadbare car seats. Opulence and comfort are not great, and even the overflowing dens of the elite are ramshackle, tattered, and faded.

Defenses

The primary defenses of surface settlements are their reinforced gates and walls, sturdily erected from stone or brick, and strengthened with wood, sheets of metal, and any other strong materials available. Such walls also often feature watchtowers from where the settlement's sentinels keep a wary eye on the land around, and these may be equipped with such weapons as ballistae, machine guns, or even trebuchets.

Many bartertowns and 'steads also make use of their surroundings, building against sheer rock faces or atop hills, and not a few are also surrounded by ditches, moats, and fields of wire, wooden stakes, and twisted scrap.

Most bartertowns, remnant enclaves, and some 'steads have dedicated militia, called sentinels. They are hardy folks that work as watchmen and guards, either in the employ of the settlement's governance, or more rarely, in service to the populace as a whole. That sometimes the sentinels are little better than thugs and strong-arms for some of the more vicious rulers is a sad truth.

In smaller settlements, such as the majority of 'steads, defense falls not only to sentinels, but to every able-bodied adult. Targets as they are of frequent raider assaults, 'steads have little choice but to bring to bear every arm they can.

Those bartertowns that boast road warriors, haulers, and outriders also have these resources to deploy when necessary, engaging raiders in mechanized combat beyond the settlements' gates.



Trog warrens are notoriously deadly places to venture. Not only do trogs camouflage the entries to their warrens and fit them with sturdy doors, they make extensive use of traps, such as hidden pits and deadfalls, to cripple or kill intruders. Of course, the strongest defense they have is the suffocating darkness of their labyrinthine tunnels, nearly impossible for any outsiders to navigate.

Technology

The level of technology in settlements varies massively, from the near-Stone Age level of some primitive tribes to the modern levels of technology painstakingly cared for in remnant enclaves.

A juxtaposition of technologies keeps most settlements working. Beasts of burden, carts, and horses, can be found on the same street as a greaser's generator-powered workshop. Coal-fueled boilers spew forth steam and smoke as they melt down plastics reclaimed from a nearby beach, located in the same sprawling building as the functioning saw bench works, its electrical components jury-rigged to a pair of old batteries. Machine guns are mounted to automobiles, while crossbows are issued to sentinels.

Here and there black powder arms are crafted again, as well as crude "zip" guns designed to fire whatever ammunition is available. Despite all this, technology is becoming more primitive. However well cared for, machinery can only be repaired to a point, and as wear and tear takes its toll, and scavenging replacement parts becomes ever more difficult, what modern technology remains gradually slips out of use. Already crossbows are becoming more common than firearms, and horses, carts, and simple boats already outnumber working automobiles. The skies are free of all but a few aircraft, autogyros and powered hang gliders among them.

Law & Justice

Tough times breed rough justice. Dependent entirely on the local customs and means of governance, law and justice in a settlement may be summary, meted out at the moment by sentinels empowered to do so. In other cases a trial may be involved, though this in no way guarantees fairness, impartiality, or due process. Trials can easily be symbolic only, the actual result a foregone conclusion - even when they are not, the burden of proof often lies with the defendant.

Sentinels are inevitably responsible for keeping the peace, for detaining criminals, and for otherwise enforcing the will and law of a settlement's leadership, though their reach does not extend beyond its walls. When a criminal escapes a settlement after committing

a particularly heinous crime, bounty hunters are hired to bring them back, often dead, but sometimes alive if it's desired that a particular example needs to be made of them (usually a gruesome public execution).

Punishments are varied indeed, and can oftentimes be cruel and unusual at the whim of the sentencing individual. Banishment, enslavement, periods of indentured servitude, and placement in a town's pit fighting arena are some of the less vicious and inventive punishments.

Very often, mob justice is the rule of the day and public beatings, whippings, pillories, and executions are common. Few really care that miscarriages of justice are all too frequent at the hands of hysterical, vengeful mobs.

Entertainment

When not helping with chores, children still play, still bat at each other with sticks, run and jump, climb, and play hide-and-seek. They still imagine with crude wooden toys. Adults though, have returned to song, story, music, and dance, to companionship, and still count alcohol a blessing whenever it's available.

With life so cheap, blood sports have returned, and bartertowns often feature pit fights, gladiatorial events between warriors, between warriors and beasts or condemned criminals. Held in purpose-made arenas or large cages, in halls or town squares, these fights can be to first blood or death, and involve bare-knuckle brawling, knife fights, and fully armed and armored melees, all accompanied by a flurry of bets among spectators with anything worth gambling.

In the wealthiest bartertowns, duels between battlecars are arranged as major events, and these can draw spectators from many miles around. The Romans would be very proud.

Education

Only the more enlightened 'steads and bartertowns have anything approaching common education, and even there, it's rudimentary at best. While lore keepers may teach basic arithmetic, reading, and writing, along with a highly sketchy knowledge of the past, children are seldom taught for more than one day a week, and never for more than a year. Instead, they help their parents with chores, learn basic skills from their extended families, and may be apprenticed to adults within the community around the age of ten, one less mouth to feed or worry about. Suffice to say, very few people can recognize more than a few basic written words any more, and even among those with basic education, reading and writing is not necessarily an easy or natural thing.



Chapter 2

Clothing & Fashion

When it comes to clothing, practicality is the greatest concern. Color choice and appearance are issues few people can afford to consider unless those choices somehow impact the practicality of the clothing being worn. Scavenged items are still common, and are handed down as much as possible, frequently patched until they all but fall apart. Newly unearthed garments of any real sturdiness are valuable finds indeed, especially good footwear such as boots.

Reclaimed fabrics of any and all kinds are cut and sewn into rough new garments; flags, curtains, bed linens are all used in this way. Alongside the found-material items, other new-made clothing is typically crafted from leather or hide; moccasins, loincloths, vests, bandanas, chaps, and strips of cloth wound around the legs or arms are all common.

Combined with an eclectic wardrobe, hairstyles are also individual. Hair is frequently long or rudely hacked short, often matted and dreadlocked, sometimes partially shorn and maybe even stiffened with wax, fat, or grease into spikes or mohawks. Decorative branding, tattooing, piercing, and scarification are also not uncommon, and the styles of these personal adornments tends to reflect the communities from which they hail.

Health

Although the importance of hygiene in preventing infection has not faded from post-apocalyptic culture, most medicines, including vaccines, have disappeared. As a result, diseases kept long at bay such as polio have resurfaced to plague the populace, not to mention mutated strains and entirely new diseases; these, combined with the lack of any reliable medical support, have caused a considerable drop in life expectancy and increase in infant mortality. Illnesses and infections that before were only minor, can now cause serious difficulties.

In attempts to treat injuries and illnesses in the absence of modern medicine, various herbal remedies and folk medicines have appeared. Sadly, for every remedy that has some beneficial impact, there are several others of no real medical value, or worse, which actively make matters worse. That some charlatans seek to make a living from the gullible by indulging in quackery only worsens the situation.

Faith & Religion

Theism and atheism continue to be every bit as potentially divisive as they ever were. With so much death and destruction, so much suffering and senseless, random waste of human life, many people still seek solace and meaning in faith and religion, or actively reject it as a myth to comfort and control the gullible.

Immediately following the apocalypse, while most individuals considered the more immediate concerns of survival of far greater importance, some communities did experience deep rifts and even conflicts based on their ideologies. The end result was that a few communities grew up based purely around single faiths or philosophies, often with little tolerance for those of different persuasions.

With so much lost, religions have splintered repeatedly to the extent that even many mixed outlook communities can claim to possess their own



Airman



unique denominations, all potentially very different in ritual and interpretation, not to mention additional apocrypha. Some of these new rituals are best left undescribed.

In the confusion of the new world, no small number of self-proclaimed messiahs have also stepped forward (as well as innumerable oracles, cult leaders, and outright frauds who are simply taking advantage of others), creating their own faiths and cult-based communities. Among the most strident of these are the apocalypse cults.

Apocalypse cults share only a few things in common. Firstly, they're obsessed with the Final War and whatever ultimate reason and meaning they believe to have been behind it, making it the center of their worship and ritual. Some consider the Final War a blessing, a chance to start Eden anew (in their own unique way, of course). Others regard it a divine punishment, and seek to make amends. A few boast very bizarre interpretations indeed, including attributing it to alien gods, the wrath of Nature, or stranger things still. Secondly, they actively seek converts, whether by gentle preaching, aiding others, and living by example, by aggressive, even violent conversion, or by targeting and preying on the needy. Thirdly, they all have very specific viewpoints on mutation, some seeing it as a blessing, many more as a curse, an outward manifestation of inner corruption.

The Place of Mutants

Reactions to mutants, or "muties" as they are often called, are varied, but are seldom neutral. Many humans view mutants with a mixture of slight revulsion, pity, and a little fear, which quickly becomes outright disgust and hatred in a notable minority. Only a few view mutants as exotic and interesting.

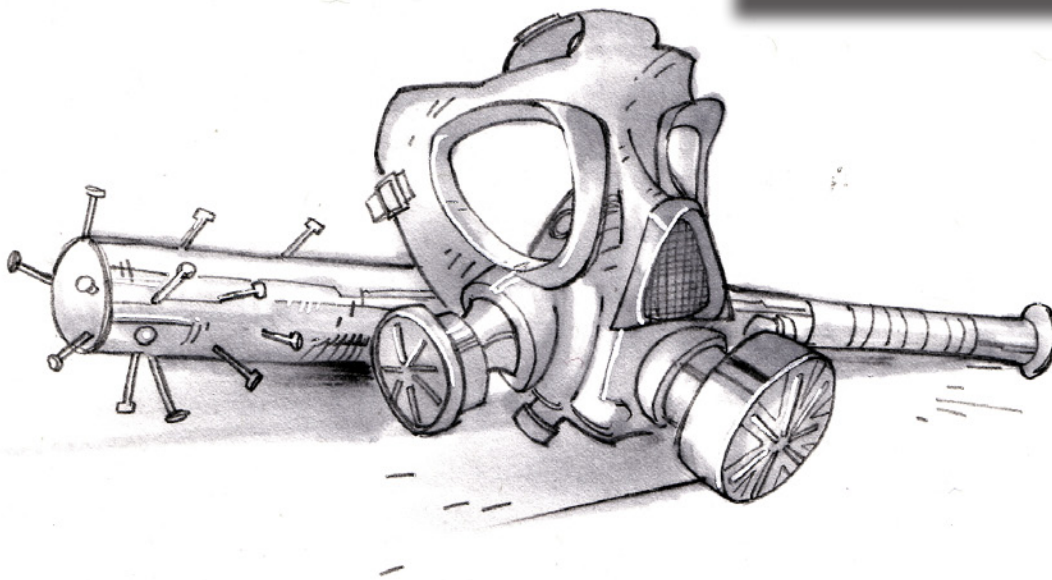
Outside of bartertowns — those places most likely to accept mutants outside of mutant enclaves and to display a varied attitude among its populace — entire communities frequently reflect a certain outlook or bias regarding muties. In some, muties are barely tolerated second-class citizens; in others they are slaves or banned outright. A few societies even consider it their duty to wipe mutants off the face of the planet. Even among those few humans who are tolerant of mutants, a positive reaction is far from guaranteed; no few appealing mutants have found themselves chained up in private menageries.

For their part, faced with pity, disgust, outright bigotry or violence, mutants often flee their communities, usually dying in the wilderness. Some, however, survive long enough to find other mutants to band together with and form communities of their own, or more frequently, groups of raiders. Suffice it to say, these latter mutants, often bitter at their treatment by others, only exacerbate the undercurrent of anti-mutant feeling.

Life as a mutant, if not brief, is far from easy.

BUT WHAT'S THE WORLD LIKE?

Don't worry, that's something your GM will discuss with you after they've read the material on making the setting their own.



CHAPTER 3

ROCK WHEN YOU ROLL!

Player Advice

Playing in a roleplaying game can be intensely rewarding, a great way to have fun with friends, blow off steam, and exercise your imagination. Like any hobby though, you really do get out of it what you put in, and nothing ruins the enjoyment of the entire gaming group like someone who simply doesn't inject a little fun themselves, or worse, actively makes the game less fun for their fellow players.

Here then are some useful tips to consider if you want to be a good Player:

1) Talk With Your GM and Group

Before a game even begins, before you even start creating a character, take a little time to talk with the members of the group about what sorts of adventures you'd like to play. Do you want a lot of action? Some intrigue? Romance between characters? Do you want adventures set in a specific location or a wandering game? Conversely, also discuss the things you don't want in the adventures; if there are things you're uncomfortable dealing with and really don't want featured, make sure you tell people now rather than later. Listen to each other, and work with the GM to agree on some common elements that will and will not feature in your games together. By being fair, working together, and sharing some ideas, you'll help the GM create adventures that are likely to be far more rewarding for everyone involved.

Don't be afraid to talk to your fellow Players and GM, especially if something is bothering you, as knowing about an issue is often the only way it will ever get resolved. However, if at all possible, do it outside of game time, waiting until the end of the session if you need to, and be respectful

and mindful when you do it; sometimes people causing an issue may not even know they are.

2) Create An Appropriate Character (PC)

When you decide upon a character concept, make sure it fits the type of adventures you're going to be playing. If folks want to play relatively serious games, and you come up with a character that's largely a joke, or is embellished by a ridiculous name, you're ruining their enjoyment for the sake of your own. Similarly, if you're tempted to create a character who simply doesn't fit the types of adventures or setting the group set out, don't.

If at all possible, create your character in cooperation with the GM and the other Players. Not only does this mean potentially disruptive characters can be headed off immediately, you can better create a valued team character, and establish possible relationships and links between the characters before the game starts. Just as cool, the background of the character you create may prompt adventure ideas for the GM, resulting in adventures in which your character is more deeply involved and invested.

Just as importantly, create a character who's capable of working with those of the other Players. One common cause of games falling apart is the Player who creates a completely selfish, often vicious character who betrays the other Players' characters, actively attacks them, and so on. Another example is the character who never thinks, only rushes to attack, sometimes even attacking innocent bystanders, or constantly ruins any plans the other Players might construct. No real group of people would ever put up with such an individual in their midst;



don't expect the other Players or their characters to put up with such a disruptive presence either.

3) Be Prepared

If you've gone to the trouble of creating a character, at least make sure you know what they are capable of. Spend a little time familiarizing yourself with their Attributes, Skills, Mutations, Flaws, and Gear before the game even starts. Not only will you more quickly be able to decide what they attempt to do, you can more swiftly locate the appropriate information on your character sheet.

For that matter, make sure you bring the resources you need to the game. Make sure you've got your character sheet, any dice you might have, and any notes you might have made. No one wants to spend valuable time waiting while you rummage through your bag only to find you've forgotten your character sheet yet again. When you've got them, make sure they're out and ready to use before the game begins.

Apart from the system elements of your character, make sure you're familiar with their history and personality. Spend a little time thinking about how they act, react, think, and speak. Get yourself into their mindset as it'll make playing them far easier and quicker. Try to get the essence of your character across during play. You might adopt an appropriate speech pattern when talking in-character, use one or two distinct mannerisms when portraying them, and should ensure their actions fit their outlook and experience, even if those actions go counter to what you yourself would say or do. Of course, if you don't feel comfortable or talented enough to do that, do your best to describe what the character is doing, how they sound, and so forth.

4) Respect Your Group

Roleplaying is a social experience, and social experiences are only fun for everyone if people actually make an effort to get along and treat each other with respect and trust. It should go without saying, but we'll say it anyway: listen to the other Players and the GM, pay attention so people don't have to keep reiterating what has happened or has been said, and be prepared to take your turn. Also, avoid butting in and whatever you do, do *not* try to control the other Players or their characters - the only thing you control is your own character.

It all comes down to this: be mindful, patient, and polite. Be punctual and reliable, and if you have to miss a session or will be late, at least let the others know as far in advance as possible. Don't belittle the efforts of other members of the gaming group or talk over them, don't be abusive, and don't "rules-lawyer," meaning that you should avoid quoting the

rules as a challenge to the GM, or to any results or rolls made by the other Players, and so on. This kind of behavior stops the game mid-pace and can result in arguments. Remember that sometimes the rules should take a backseat to fun, and should not be the end-all and be-all of the game.

Just as importantly, if someone raises an issue concerning you at all, and they raise it in a respectful, friendly way, consider what they're saying and try not to be offended. We all make mistakes after all, and we frequently improve by learning from these mistakes, whether we're the GM or a Player.

A really good thing about respect is that it can also heighten everyone's enjoyment, and tends to be reciprocated. Take a moment now and then to praise your fellow gamers for their efforts, to give a thumbs-up for particularly cool plans or acting, to say a kind word, or to thank the GM for preparing and running the game.

A final, important element of respect is this: don't cheat. Seriously, using crooked dice, trying to sneak in rerolls when folks aren't looking, or "accidentally" adding a point or two more when calculating results - all of these are big no-nos. It shows a lack of respect for the rest of the gaming group, as you're giving yourself a selfish and unfair advantage they don't share. It defeats the purpose of the rules, and if you're going to make sure you "win" all the time that way, you may as well just sit around and tell a predefined story. It shows a lack of respect for the rules as these are already set up to give considerable advantages to Major characters. If you feel the rules don't work for whatever reason, it's better to discuss the possible issue with the group and change the offending rule if necessary, than to cheat to get the results you want.

5) Play Like You Mean It!

Apart from actively portraying your character, try to be proactive. Don't just let events happen to your character: actively consider what the character would do, and then experience the adventure accordingly. Stay focused on the game, and avoid too much chatter during play that's not directly related to the game.

Be descriptive! Nothing is more monotonous than "I punch him. I get 3 Successes. He takes 9 Damage. I dodge. I get 2 Successes. He misses me..." *ad nauseum*. Add a little flavor and creativity! Don't go overboard, but you can liven the game up for everyone if you embellish things a little: "I grab a nearby wooden chair in one meaty fist and swing it forcefully at the thug's ugly mug!" or "I leap over the table and roll into cover behind the battered wooden table!" or "I wink at the attractive stranger across the room, a mischievous twinkle in my eye." And so on.

Support the game! You can make the gaming experience more fulfilling for the entire group,



Chapter 3

including yourself, and ease the GM's workload by truly getting involved. Freely share any ideas you have, help out the GM and any fellow Players, especially new gamers, in any way you can, without being obtrusive or overbearing, of course. If you have the skills and time, create character portraits or props for folks. Remember, you can even earn more Fortune (page 66) for your character by doing so!

6) Relax and Have Fun!

The last piece of advice is arguably the most important: relax and have fun! Don't forget that your character is not you, and you are not your

character! It can be demoralizing to be on the losing end of a conflict, or sad if a beloved character dies, but remember that it's just a character in a story, it's just a game, and bad things sometimes happen to people, even in roleplaying games. Accept defeat with grace, and if your character dies, create a new one and get ready to dive in again!

If you're not having fun, try to figure out why. If it can be resolved by discussion with the GM and/or rest of the group, take the time to resolve the issue before it completely ruins the fun for you. If it can't be resolved for whatever reason, stop playing; no gaming is better than bad gaming, for everyone involved.



Mutant Bounty Hunter

CHAPTER 4

BUCKLE UP!

CREATING YOUR CHARACTER

So, you're ready to create a Player Character (PC) for *Atomic Highway*? Just follow these basic steps and examples, and you'll be ready to roll! These rules create highly competent individuals, on a par with many of the action heroes you see in movies. This means they aren't necessarily the best choice for GMCs, except for the odd exceptional individual or memorable adversary.

Generating Numbers

One or more dice can be used to generate different ranges of numbers. For instance, a die creates a range of 1-6, but can also be used to create a range of 1-3 by halving the result and rounding up. A pair of dice can create a range of 2-12, just by adding their results together, and three dice can produce a range of 3-18 in the same way.

0) OPTIONAL: SELECT RACE

Atomic Highway assumes the character you play is a human, or possibly a mutant human. In the appendices, however, are optional rules for creating and playing humanoid animals, assuming that your GM and/or group approves of such a character choice as fitting within the campaign.

1) Character Concept

Have some idea of what sort of character you want to play. Do you want to be a grizzled road warrior? An inquisitive and proud wasteland barbarian? A devil-may-care autogyro pirate? A two-fisted scholar? You don't need anything particularly detailed at this point. As needed, skim over the various Rearings and Pursuits (pages 23-29) and see if any of them inspire you.

Example: Dan is new to *Atomic Highway* and looks over the *Rearings* and *Pursuits* for inspiration. He likes the sound of the *Remnant Rearing* and *Brave Pursuit*, weaving them together with the concept of a survivor of a high-tech enclave who goes "native" and joins a nearby primitive tribe.

2) Assign Attribute Points

Consider what your character's natural abilities are likely to be. Are they going to be strong or frail as a result of a childhood disease? Persuasive or shy? Intelligent or slow-witted? Bear in mind what sort of character you want to play, and which Attributes are most likely to characterize them. A scarred pit fighter, for example, is likely to be stronger and tougher than normal, or a feral savage may have developed sharper senses. First, look over the Attribute descriptions (pages 30-31) to get a good grasp of what they are and mean, and then split 18 points among them, with at least 1 and no more than 5 in any single Attribute.

Example: Dan wants his character to be physically capable as a tribal warrior, but brighter than normal as a result of his unusual past. After some thought, he assigns his 18 points to his Attributes as follows:

Chapter 4

Muscle 3,
Understanding 3,
Tenacity 2,
Appeal 2,
Nimbleness 3,
Toughness 3,
Senses 2

2.1) OPTIONAL: ROLL MUTATIONS

If you want to play a mutant, write down "Flaw: Mutie." If you are a humanoid animal also roll a Flaw on the table (page 34) if you wish to be more mutated.

If the optional Psychic Powers in the appendices are being used, roll a die: 6 indicates you roll on the Psychic Power table; any other result, roll on the Mutation table.

You can choose to roll a second Mutation following the same process, but must also roll a Flaw unless the second is a Psychic Power.

If you roll opposing Mutations and Flaws, such as Enduring and Fragile, you must reroll the Flaw.

2.2) Optional: Trog Mutants

If you are a member of the Trog Rearing and want to be a mutant, you can take the following package instead of rolling for any Mutations/Flaws:

Physical Mutations: Hypermobile, Night Vision

Flaws: Light Sensitive, Mutie

3) Calculate Health

Unless modified by Mutations or Flaws, calculate a character's Health as follows:

$$(\text{Muscle} + \text{Tenacity} + \text{Toughness}) \times 2$$

Shade in any boxes on the character's Health Track (see the character sheet) beyond that number, leaving the unshaded boxes to show their Health.

Example: Dan's character has Muscle 3, Tenacity 2, and Toughness 3, and so leaves 16 unshaded boxes - $(3 + 2 + 3) \times 2 = 16$ - to show his Health on his Health Track.

4) Record Natural Skills

All characters have Natural Skills, which are Skills that everyone has at least some rudimentary proficiency in such as swinging a punch, running, and jumping. All characters start with the following Skills at Novice level (1): *Athletics*, *Brawl*, *Melee*, *Notice*, *Persuade*, *Shoot*, and *Stealth*.

Example: Dan records the Natural Skills on the character sheet.



5) Select and Record Rearing

What sort of upbringing did your character have? What kind of environment did they come from? Where they live now might not be where they were born and raised. They might have left their home willingly or not, whether they loved it or loathed it. Pick the most appropriate Rearing template, make any necessary choices, and record any Skills or other details.

Example: Selecting the Remnant Rearing, Dan selects Drive 1 from his options, adds the new Skills to his list, adding up existing totals, so his character now has the Skills Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Drive 1, Lore 2, Melee 1, Notice 1, Persuade 1, Shoot 2, Stealth 1, Tech 2. He also records the gas mask and Geiger counter from the Gear.

6) Select and Record Pursuit

What has the character done for most of their adult life up until this point? What are they most experienced or proficient at doing? Although they can develop in any way once the game starts, their Pursuit gives you a clear idea of where their skills and interests primarily lie. Pick the most appropriate Pursuit template, make any necessary choices, and record any Skills, Gear, or other details.

Example: Having selected the Brave Pursuit, Dan selects Ride 1 from his options, and again adds the new Skills and increases any appropriate totals. His character now has the Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Lore 2, Melee 2, Notice 2, Persuade 1, Ride 1, Shoot 3, Stealth 2, Survive 2, Tech 2, Zoofinity 1. He also selects and fleshes out his character's equipment, choosing a horse for a mount and rolling to find it's not mutated.

R.A.D. SAYS: CUSTOMIZE YER GEAR!

The descriptions of equipment are basic and brief. You can add a visual impact and element of personality to your character by describing their clothing and equipment in a little more detail. Bear in mind precious little is remotely close to pristine anymore. Nearly everything is stained, torn, patched, worn, scratched, a bit rusted, peeling, and/or otherwise extremely well used. Still, there're plenty of possibilities: are the character's pants threadbare jeans, ripped and stained khakis, or oversized military fatigues held up with string? Is their medium handgun a scratched and faded Glock 19 semi-auto with tape around the handle, or a Smith & Wesson Model 14 revolver polished so much the bluing is almost worn off? A little color and detail goes a long way toward stoking the imaginations of all involved.

7) Customize!

You have 4 points to buy new Skills for your character or improve existing ones, though again, remember that level 4 limit! Some humanoid animals have no Skill points with which to customize.

Example: Dan sees his character as being a skilled mounted warrior, and so spends 2 points to increase his character's Ride Skill to 3. He also decides that his character has a steely gaze and can seem frightening to many folks, and so uses his 2 remaining points to give him Intimidate 2. The final Skills look like this: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Intimidate 2, Lore 2, Melee 2, Notice 2, Persuade 1, Ride 3, Shoot 3, Stealth 2, Survive 2, Tech 2, Zoofinity 1.

8) Personalize!

Give your character a name, describe their appearance and gear as necessary, and briefly outline their life, personality, and motivations. You don't need to overdo it; a few good descriptive sentences are better than pages of material you'll barely reference.

Example: Dan names his character Iron Ghost (formerly Marcus Lanner), a tribal name partially referring to his upbringing in a remnant community. Dan decides that Marcus left his remnant community in disgust at their over-reliance on technology, and was adopted by a tribe when he was found dying in the wilderness; he struggled hard to become a valuable member of the tribe, eventually earning the name Iron Ghost and becoming a brave. Dan describes him as athletic and deeply tanned, with dreadlocked brown hair, narrow brown eyes, and many dark ritual scars forming swirling patterns over his skin. Considering his character's personality, Dan decides that although he grew up with knowledge of technology, Iron Ghost is convinced that returning to a more primitive existence is less destructive and far more honest. Iron Ghost eschews his past, and is loyal, forthright, and thoughtful.

SKILL LIMITS AND RECORDING SKILL TOTALS

Just to make it absolutely clear, you total up any Skill levels (including initial Natural Skills and those increased with customization points) during character creation to gain the final Skill level. Also (and it's bolded because it's important): **NO STARTING SKILL CAN EXCEED 4!** You can improve Skills to level 5 in-game, but level 4 is the starting limit.



Chapter 4

Character Improvement

As in the real world, characters improve over time, increasing their proficiency with existing skills, learning new ones, and even improving their raw abilities with exercise and training. To reflect this, Players earn Experience for their characters, gaining 1-3 Experience each session of play.

Every Player gains 1 Experience for being present and involved, with the GM awarding 1-2 extra to any Players who really helped move the adventure along. Experience is collected, then spent on character to make any of the following improvements at the listed costs:

Improvement	Experience Cost
Gaining a new Skill	4
Raising a Skill	New Level x 2
Raising a Attribute	New Level x 6

Completed Character Example

Iron Ghost (originally Marcus Lanner)

Player: Dan

Race: Human

Rearing: Remnant

Pursuit: Brave

Description: Athletic and deeply tanned, with dreadlocked brown hair, narrow brown eyes, and many dark ritual scars forming swirling patterns over his skin.

Personality: Convinced that returning to a more primitive existence is less destructive and far more honest. Iron Ghost eschews his past, and is loyal, forthright, and thoughtful.

Background: Marcus left his remnant community in disgust at their over-reliance on technology, and was adopted by a tribe when he was found dying in the wilderness; he struggled hard to become a valuable member of the tribe, eventually earning the name Iron Ghost and becoming a Brave.

Attributes

Muscle 3, Understanding 3, Tenacity 2, Appeal 2, Nimbleness 3, Toughness 3, Senses 2

Skills

Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Intimidate 2, Lore 2, Melee 2, Notice 2, Persuade 1, Ride 3, Shoot 3, Stealth 2, Survive 2, Tech 2, Zoofinity 1

Health: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Armor: None.

Weapons: Knife, heavy vicious bludgeon (large carved wooden club set with animal claws), short bow (12 arrows).

Clothing: Hide pants, leather vest (decorated with bone beadwork), bearskin cloak, hide boots secured with leather strips.

Gear: Gas mask, Geiger counter.

Transport: Horse with saddle blanket and harness.



Iron Ghost

CHAPTER 5

BORN TO BE BAD!

REARINGS & PURSUITS

REARINGS

Rearings represent a character's early life and formative years.

Bartertown

You were born and raised in a bartertown, what passes for civilization in these darker days. Growing up in a trade hub, you encountered a variety of individuals from all sorts of backgrounds and communities, and so have a somewhat broader view of the world than many outsiders. With basic schooling also being common in barter towns, you also picked up a little education and knowledge, unlike the barbarians beyond the walls.

Skills: Lore 1, Notice 1, Persuade 1, Tech 1, and two Skills of choice at 1.

Weapon: Knife.

Gear: Roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Feral

Orphaned or abandoned in the wilderness, you survived against the odds, whether raised by beasts or surviving by your own wits and luck. You came late to language and all but the most crude of tools, and sometimes struggle with the more animalistic instincts you



Feral Child

developed to survive. Many things of civilization and technology are still objects of wonder to you, and many social mores remain mysterious.

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Notice 1, Stealth 1, Survive 1, Zoofinity 1.

Clothing: Necklace of teeth and claws.

Gear: 1-6 interesting stones, shells, or useless knick-knacks such as the mechanism of a music box.

Nomad

Large packs of nomads wander the wilderness and waters between barter towns, riding an assortment of scavenged and crudely maintained buggies, motorcycles, trucks, and boats. A rare few have even taken to the skies on powered hang-gliders and autogyros. As part of such a pack you raided, traded, and scavenged, leading a rough, sometimes savage existence. Even you are wary of the more vicious packs, however, who have become little more than pitiless ravagers, human in name only.

Skills: Boat 1 or Drive 1 or Pilot 1 / Intimidate 1 or Persuade 1 / Melee 1, Scavenge 1, Shoot 1 / Survive 1 or Tech 1.

Weapon: Knife or chain of choice or bludgeon of choice.

Gear: Roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Chapter 5

Remnant

Here and there, pockets of survivors cling desperately to the knowledge and technologies of the Before Time. In far-flung research stations, or in military bunkers, generations have been born and raised on tales of the pre-Doomsday world, you included. Of course, time takes its toll on technology, knowledge, and community, and your understanding is far from accurate or as complete as you might think. Worse yet, you've emerged into a world for which you were ill prepared.

Skills: Boat 1 or Drive 1 or Pilot 1 / Lore 2, Shoot 1, Tech 2.

Gear: Gas mask; Geiger counter.

'Steadier

Small pockets of civilization exist beyond the bartertowns; isolated farmsteads, militaristic outposts, xenophobic communities. What they all have in common, however, is that they are heavily fortified and pioneering. Growing up in such a settlement, you're accustomed to hardship and the necessity of community as raiders of all stripes tried the defenses of your settlement again and again. You've learned to be suspicious through hard lessons, but you've also learned the value of loyalty.

Skills: Boat 1 or Drive 1 or Ride 1 / Heal 1 or Lore 1 / Melee 1, Notice 1, Shoot 1 / Tech 1 or Zoofinity 1.

Weapon: Knife.

Gear: Roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Tribal

During the Years of Dark Ice, some survivors reverted to a tribal existence out of necessity or because they actively spurned the technologies and social groupings of the Before Time. You grew up in such a self-sufficient tribe, a community with its own peculiar rites and outlook, where hunting, gathering, and sometimes raiding or trading were the means to survival, and the only technologies available were those simple tools crafted by your own hand.

Skills: Athletics 1, Boat 1 or Ride 1 / Melee 1, Notice 1, Stealth 1, Survive 1.

Weapon: Boomerang or knife or short spear.

Gear: Tribal craft necklace made of carved beads, bones, or teeth/claws.

Trog

In the Years of Dark Ice some survivors took shelter in the bowels of the Earth, deep underground in warrens of caves. Your world was one of failing ancient lamps, sputtering torches, cabin fever, and primitive subterranean life. No Trog community emerged unchanged

into the ruined world above: some are crippled with agoraphobia, xenophobia, or some other degeneracy; the wretched morlocks are testament to that. You, however, are curious about the world above, curious enough to venture forth and explore it despite your fear of the great unknown it represents.

Note: If you want to create a mutant Trog, you can choose the package of Mutations and Flaws outlined on page 20 instead of rolling.

Skills: Athletics 1 / Brawl 1 or Melee 1 / Notice 2, Stealth 2.

Gear: Torch (wooden or battery powered) or lantern (candle or oil fueled); protective goggles or roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

PURSUITS

Pursuits represent a character's main adult experience and training at the start of the game.

Airman

In the years following the Final War, aviation swiftly dwindled, spluttered, and died. Well, almost. While the glory lies in the dust, a lucky few still claim the skies. You are one such individual. Sky pirate or explorer, mercenary pilot or devoted defender of the place you call home, you traverse the sky in a dangerously ramshackle autogyro or motorized hang-glider. You have your share of accidents and close encounters with airborne mutants, of course, but you know that nothing beats the freedom of the skies.

Skills: Notice 1, Pilot 2, Shoot 1, Survive 1, Tech 2, and choose three Skills from Brawl 1, Lore 1, Melee 1, Persuade 1, Scavenge 1.

Armor: Light (roughly padded garments or a fur-lined leather jacket; leather flying cap or military helmet).

Weapons: Crossbow of choice (and 12 bolts) or handgun of choice (fully loaded).

Clothing: Scarf or cyclist's filter mask; goggles or sunglasses; shirt; pants; gloves; boots.

Gear: Binoculars or collapsing telescope.

Transport: 10 vehicle points to purchase a customized autogyro or motorized hang-glider (fully fueled).

Beastmaster

As technology failed, humankind turned to more ancient means of transport and protection: beasts of burden, guard dogs, or any and all creatures that can be reliably trained and/or usefully harnessed. As a beastmaster, you've spent your days breeding, raising, training, and treating the animals used by

your community, whether they be horses or hounds, livestock or the few pets to be found. You've even dealt with mutated beasts which, for all their altered physiologies, are still normal animals at their core, with only a few tormented exceptions.

Skills: Heal 2 / Intimidate 1 or Persuade 1 / Notice 1, Ride 2, Zoofinity 2, and choose two Skills from Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Melee 1, Shoot 1.

Weapons: Bow/crossbow of choice (and 12 arrows/bolts) or rifle of choice (fully loaded) or shotgun of choice (fully loaded); primitive melee weapon of choice.

Clothing: Leather or fur tunic; gloves; boots; pants; shirt; coat or jacket or cloak.

Gear: Six strips of dried meat and/or bundles of fodder; small leather bag or metal case; basic veterinary tools.

Transport: Mount of choice (and saddle blanket and harness).

Pets: Pet beast of choice.

MOUNTS AND PETS

The follow choices are available for mounts:

Cattle, Horse, Large Deer, Medium Deer

The following choices are available for pets:

Boar, Large Bird of Prey, Large Canine, Medium Canine, Medium Feline, Small Feline

Roll for mounts and pets using the table under Natural Animals (page 107) to see if they are mutated.

Bounty Hunter

Justice in the ruined world is a lot harsher than in the Before Time, and while sentinels enforce what passes for law and order in the bartertowns and 'steads, lawbreakers can escape their reach by fleeing into the wilds beyond a settlement's walls. As a bounty hunter, it's your job to track down such fugitives and bring them to justice - for a price, of course. It's dangerous work, and because bounties are only posted for the most wanted of criminals, you often find yourself tracking down and facing the vilest scum imaginable. As often as not you bring them back dead; bringing them back alive takes more effort even if it pays more.

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Criminal 1, Heal 1, Melee 1, Notice 1, Shoot 2, Stealth 1, Survive 1.

Weapons: Bow/crossbow of choice (and 12 arrows/

bolts) or rifle of choice (fully loaded) or shotgun of choice (fully loaded); knife; two primitive melee weapons of choice.

Clothing: Gloves; boots; pants; shirt; coat or jacket or cloak; hat or hood or scarf.

Gear: Flint and steel or box of matches (20) or lighter (fully fueled); 1-6 sets of manacles; waterskin (full) or canteen (full); 50-ft. coil of rope.

Brave

One of the proudest moments of your life was your acceptance by your tribe as a brave, as one of their trusted hunters, warriors, and defenders. You undertook the grueling initiation, performing the required tasks and rituals to the satisfaction of the tribal leaders, proving your worth and skill. You bear adornments as befit your tribe, displaying your courage and achievements to the admiration of those around you, and you'll not hesitate to garnish yourself with further glories.

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 1 / Boat 1 or Ride 1 / Melee 1, Notice 1, Shoot 1, Stealth 1, Survive 2, Zoofinity 1.

Weapons: Axe of choice or bludgeon of choice; bow/crossbow of choice (and 12 arrows/bolts) or spear of choice or rifle of choice (fully loaded); knife.

Clothing: Hide pants or loincloth; leather vest; hide moccasins or sandals or boots; fur or woven wool or canvas cloak/blanket; tribal jewelry such as beads in the hair, necklaces, and armbands/wristbands.

Transport: Mount of choice (and saddle blanket and harness) or canoe or kayak.

Greaser

Tech is only as reliable as the people who fix it, and you do that and more. As parts become scarcer you scavenge and improvise, trying to keep the old technologies working, and are often found tinkering with this or that. Internal combustion engines, crude electrics, methane burners, firearms - you name it, and you've probably worked on it. You repair, modify, and jury-rig all manner of devices, making you an important member of your community, and you are seldom happier than when investigating a new device, or fiddling under the hood of a battlecar.

Skills: Boat 1 or Drive 1 or Pilot 1 / Lore 1, Scavenge 2, Shoot 1, Tech 2, and choose three Skills from Brawl 1, Melee 1, Notice 1, Persuade 1.

Weapons: Bow/crossbow of choice (and 12 arrows/bolts) or firearm of choice (fully loaded).

Clothing: Battered and oil-stained coveralls or denim pants and ragged shirt; heavy-duty gloves; thick leather boots.



Chapter 5

Gear: Durable work goggles or welding mask; tough leather/canvas bag or metal toolbox; an assortment of mechanic's and electrician's tools (screwdrivers, wrenches, soldering iron, gas-powered welding torch, roll of duct tape, etc.); pot of grease or oil; dozens of nuts, bolts, screws.

Hauler

With the wastelands and wilderness between settlements being so fraught with peril, trade and travel trucks are heavily armored and armed, driven by the haulers, people like yourself. You've driven one of the warwagons that ferried people and goods from town to town, escorted by battlecars. You've faced nomad raiders, sky pirates, tribal warbands, and mutant ambushes in your convoys, but have always come through. Not everyone was so lucky. It's a tough job, but your rig has seen you through thick and thin, and you love it like it's your family - in many ways it is.

Skills: Brawl 1, Drive 2, Intimidate 1, Lore 1, Notice 1, Shoot 1, Tech 1, and choose two Skills from Heal 1, Melee 1, Scavenge 1, Survive 1.

Weapons: Bludgeon of choice; firearm of choice (fully loaded).

Clothing: Pants or skirt; boots; shirt or vest; coat or jacket; hat or hood.

Gear: Small metal toolbox; a few essential mechanic's tools (wrenches, tire iron, small oil can, etc.).

Transport: 26 vehicle points to purchase a customized truck (fully fueled).

Healer

Medicine is a far cry from the miracle days of the Before Time. With the chemicals and medicines of before gone, people like yourself have had to rediscover old remedies and create your own. Without high-tech medical facilities, you have to practice with a bag of assorted tools and a (hopefully clean) table to work on. It's a messy business, and mortality rates are high, but you've saved as many lives as you could with your eclectic combination of elementary medical techniques, herbalism, and self-invented cures.

Skills: Brawl 1, Heal 2 / Intimidate 1 or Persuade 1 / Lore 1, Notice 1, Scavenge 1, Shoot 1, and choose two Skills from Boat 1, Melee 1, Ride 1, Survive 1.

Weapons: Crossbow of choice (and 12 bolts) or handgun of choice (fully loaded); knife; melee weapon of choice.

Clothing: Pants or skirt; shoes or boots; shirt or vest; coat or jacket or cloak; hat or hood.

Gear: Small pouch of assorted dried herbs and

dubious ingredients; leather doctor's bag or first aid box; assorted basic medical tools and supplies (scalpels, pestle and mortar, needles and thread, bandages, syringes, small bottle of alcohol, etc.).

Transport: Mount of choice with saddle blanket and harness or canoe or kayak or dinghy.

Lore Keeper

So much knowledge has been lost in such a short time, the electronic data of an entire age wiped away, books decayed and ruined, film rotted and useless. You know that if humankind is to learn anything from the past, or benefit from its past knowledge and experience, such information must be sought out, cherished, recorded, and passed on.



Greaser

Historian, storyteller, advisor, lawkeeper and scholar, you maintain the oral traditions of your community, preserve ancient repositories, and learn all you can, devouring knowledge hungrily. How you use such knowledge, of course, is up to you, for better or worse.

Skills: Boat 1 or Ride 1 / Lore 2, Notice 1, Persuade 1, Scavenge 1, Shoot 1, Tech 1, and choose two Skills from Brawl 1, Intimidate 1, Melee 1, Survive 1.

Weapons: Handgun of choice (fully loaded) or pistol crossbow (and 12 bolts); knife.

Clothing: Pants or skirt; shoes or boots; shirt or vest; coat or jacket or cloak; hat or hood.

Gear: (1-6)+4 rolls on the Library Scavenging table (page 57-58); magnifying glass or spectacles; 1-6 pencils and/or pens; an empty record book.

Transport: Mount of choice with saddle blanket and harness or canoe or kayak or dinghy.

Outrider

While the road warrior sticks to four wheels, you prefer two. As an outrider, you've ridden a souped-up, lightly-armed motorcycle at insane speeds along the highways and dirt tracks of the wilderness, operating as a rapid scout and courier for your community. Sometimes you ranged slightly ahead of the hauler convoys and their battlecar escorts, looking out for trouble. Other times you operated on your own, relying on the speed and nimbleness of your ride to get you through. It's dangerous work, and road rash is one of the lesser dangers you face, but it's certainly never boring.

Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 2, Lore 1, Melee 1, Notice 1, Shoot 1, Stealth 1, Survive 1, Tech 1.

Armor: Light (motorcycle leathers, leather gloves; leather boots; helmet)

Weapons: Pistol crossbow (and 12 bolts) or wrist crossbow (and 12 bolts) or handgun of choice (fully loaded).

Gear: Binoculars or collapsing telescope; a few essential mechanic's tools (puncture repair kit, wrench, etc.).

Transport: 12 vehicle points to purchase a customized motorcycle (fully fueled).

Pit Fighter

The roar of the crowd, the surge of adrenaline, the clash of weapons, the howl of triumph, all are familiar to you, a pit fighter in a bartertown's brutal arena. Whether you were sold into slavery, forced into the arena for crimes you may or may not have committed, or were one of the rare few to volunteer for the bloody spectator sport, you soon learned to fight to survive. It's a savage, often short existence. You've seen your share of blood, both your own and that of others. You've stared death in the face

and punched it, fought fellow gladiators, mutants, and wild beasts, all for glory, wealth, or freedom.

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Heal 1, Intimidate 2, Melee 2, and choose two Skills from Criminal 1, Notice 1, Ride 1, Sleight 1.

Armor: Light (a sparse selection of leather straps, metal plates, and sections of mail, possibly with a helmet or metal mask).

Weapons: Three melee weapons of choice (fully fueled/charged if powered).

Clothing: Sandals or boots; pants or loincloth; vest or cloak.

Raider

Might makes right. As a raider, you live that aphorism. You take what you want when the opportunity presents itself, and care little for the hardship and suffering you cause. In your eyes it is survival of the fittest, and you are fit to survive. You've ridden or driven with a nomad pack, living a barbarous existence, pillaging, stealing, and sowing misery. You've thought little about tomorrow, cared for little beyond your stripped-down boat, motorcycle, buggy, or truck, because you know all too well that life is nasty, brutish, and short.

Skills: Boat 1 or Drive 1 / Brawl 1 / Criminal 1 or Scavenge 1 / Intimidate 1, Melee 1, Notice 1, Shoot 1, Stealth 1, Survive 1, Tech 1.

Weapons: Crossbow of choice (and 12 bolts) or firearm of choice (fully loaded); two primitive melee weapons of choice.

Clothing: Pants or loincloth; shoes or boots; gloves; shirt or vest; hat or hood or scarf or helmet.

Gear: A few essential mechanic's tools (puncture repair kit, wrench, etc.).

Transport: 12 vehicle points to purchase a customized jet ski or speed boat or dune buggy or motorcycle or truck (fully fueled).

AREN'T RAIDERS BAD GUYS?

Let's face it, nomads and raiders aren't exactly pleasant. In fact, they're downright selfish, violent, and vile. They do make excellent villains, however, and what's more, you can still play a raider. Well, sort of. It's a time-honored tradition in action genres and RPGs to play the reformed villain; that is, the bad guy who has turned good. Perhaps he finally developed a conscience and remorse? Maybe a revelation about his pack has set him on the path of revenge against them? The Raider Pursuit allows Players to create such a character.



Chapter 5

Road Warrior

When you turn the ignition on your battlecar and the powerful engine rumbles to life, you know you are where you belong. You've roared down the highways between bartertowns, your hands on the wheel of your armed and armored automobile. You've delivered VIPs with speed and security, provided protection to hauler rigs transporting goods and people, taken on raiders and other armed threats to your community beyond the safety of its walls. You've fought, crashed, suffered and come back for more; whether you want to admit it or not, it's in your blood.

Skills: Brawl 1, Drive 2, Notice 1, Shoot 2, Tech 1, and choose three Skills from Athletics 1, Heal 1, Lore 1, Melee 1, Scavenge 1, Survive 1.

Armor: Light (metal/mail reinforced jacket and pants *or* motorcycle leathers; possibly a helmet).

Weapons: Handgun of choice (fully loaded); knife.

Clothing: Shirt *or* vest; gloves; boots.

Gear: Small metal toolbox; a few essential mechanic's tools (wrenches, tire iron, small oil can, etc.).

Transport: 20 vehicle points to purchase a customized automobile (fully fueled).

Scavenger

Many people wisely shun the twisted ruins of the cities of the Before Time. You're not one of them. Indeed, you've drawn your livelihood from the wreckage of the past, clambering through shattered remains, examining, liberating anything and everything of potential use and value. Even after all this time, treasures and raw materials can still be uncovered if you know where to look. You've always kept your Geiger counter and gas mask handy, constantly aware of the dangers of *things* lurking amid the rubble, but you still dream of the day when you'll unearth a forgotten cache or other great find.

Skills: Athletics 1, Lore 1, Notice 1, Persuade 1, Scavenge 2, Survive 1, Tech 1, and choose two Skills from Brawl 1, Boat 1, Criminal 1, Heal 1, Melee 1, Ride 1, Shoot 1, Stealth 1.

Weapons: Crossbow of choice (and 12 bolts) *or* firearm of choice (fully loaded); melee weapon of choice (fully fueled/charged if powered).

Clothing: Pants; shoes *or* boots; shirt *or* vest; coat *or* jacket *or* cloak; hat *or* hood *or* scarf.

Gear: Crowbar; gas mask; Geiger counter, assorted scavenging tools (hammers, saws, files, pliers, wrenches, etc.); large pack; (1-6)+4 rolls on any Scavenging tables (but you can't roll on any single table more than once).

Sentinel

Militiaman, lawman, guard: you've served as one of your community's defenders, facing threats outside and in. You've guarded the walls, ever alert, keeping a watchful eye on outsiders entering your community, assuming you'd even let them in. You've tried to make sure the laws of the community are enforced, remaining alert for anything that might threaten the peace and security around you, whether you did so through means subtle or overt. If anything bothered you, though, it was the knowledge that not all sentinels are loyal to others; too many are loyal to themselves or those who hold influence over them.

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Intimidate 1, Melee 1, Notice 1, Shoot 2, and choose three Skills from Boat 1, Heal 1, Lore 1, Persuade 1, Ride 1.

Armor: Light (roughly padded *or* leather jacket and pants with selective metal plate/mail reinforcement; possibly a helmet).

Weapons: Bludgeon of choice; knife; bow/crossbow of choice (and 12 arrows/bolts) *or* firearm of choice (fully loaded).

Clothing: Pants; shoes *or* boots; shirt *or* vest; coat *or* jacket *or* cloak; hat *or* hood *or* scarf.

Gear: Binoculars *or* collapsing telescope.

Shaman

As a shaman, you've been the spiritual heart of your tribe, the keeper of the traditions and rites, the healer and advisor. It is a position of great responsibility and power, giving you the fear or respect of your tribesmen, and a strong voice in matters of importance. When a course is not clear, you use ritual means to seek advice, interpreting omens, divining the future, and suggesting such rituals as might benefit the desired course of events. Where needed, you employ a little trickery to impress your fellows, but only ever for the greater good of the tribe, of course.

Skills: Boat 1 *or* Ride 1 / Heal 1 / Intimidate 1 *or* Persuade 1 / Lore 1, Notice 1, Sleight 1, Survive 1, Zoofinity 1, and choose two Skills from Brawl 1, Melee 1, Shoot 1, Stealth 1.

Weapons: Knife.

Clothing: Hide pants *or* loincloth; leather vest; hide moccasins *or* sandals *or* boots; fur *or* woven wool *or* canvas cloak/blanket; tribal jewelry such as beads in the hair, necklaces, and armbands/wristbands; headdress.

Gear: Pouch of assorted dried herbs and dubious ingredients; pestle and mortar; small pouch of bones *or* pebbles *or* rune stones used for divination.

Transport: Mount of choice (and saddle blanket and harness) *or* canoe *or* kayak.

Skulk

A scoundrel, thief, or assassin, you've employed stealth, a deft hand, and some less-than-honest skills to ply your trade. You may have stolen from the tyrannical or greedy to aid the downtrodden, or fought a silent battle in the night against the corrupt in your community. You may have even hired yourself out as a troubleshooter - as the proverb goes, "Set a thief to catch a thief." But you know that few skulks are so selfless. Most steal to benefit themselves. Most kill for profit. Few care who they hurt with their actions.

Skills: Athletics 1, Criminal 2, Notice 1, Sleight 2, Stealth 1, and choose three Skills from Brawl 1, Intimidate 1, Lore 1, Melee 1, Persuade 1, Shoot 1.

Weapons: Bludgeon of choice *or* chain of choice; bow/crossbow of choice (and 12 arrows/bolts); knife.

Clothing: Pants; shoes *or* boots; shirt *or* vest; coat *or* jacket *or* cloak; hat *or* hood *or* scarf.

Gear: Crowbar; basic lock picks; 1-6 rolls on any of the Scavenging tables (but you can't roll on any single table more than once).

Wastelander

You're something of an outsider in your community, content to spend days, sometimes even weeks, wandering the wilderlands beyond the safety of its walls. In fact, you feel more at home in the wilds, comfortable with your own thoughts and company, living under the stars, trapping and hunting, only returning to the settlement when necessary. As familiar with the lands surrounding your home as you are, you also hire yourself out as a guide or scout. Some people might find it a lonely calling, but you're only content outside settlement walls.

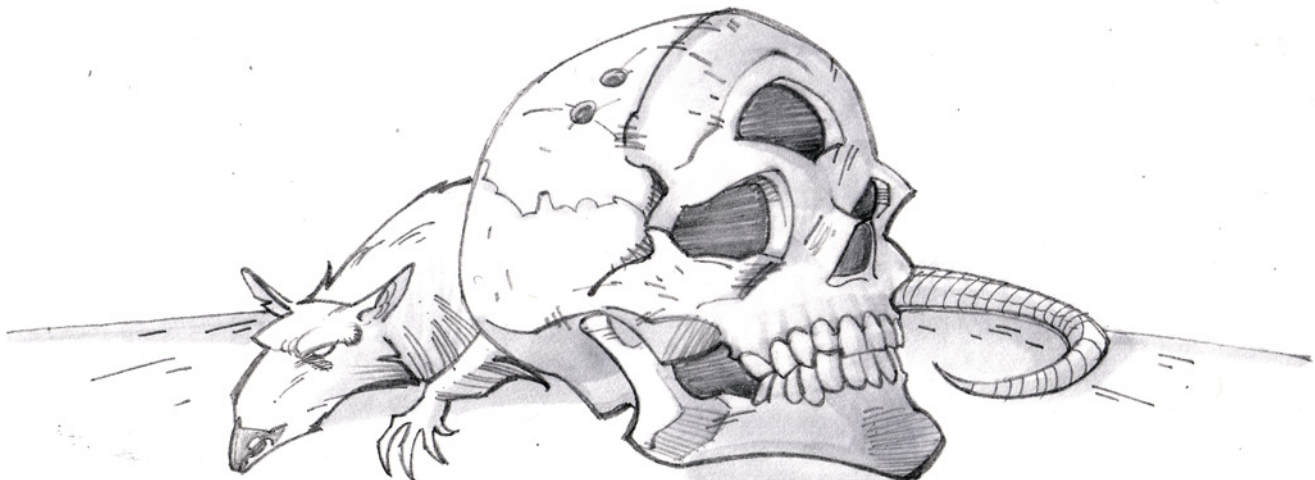
Skills: Athletics 2 / Boat 1 *or* Ride 1 / Notice 1, Stealth 1, Survive 2, Zoofinity 1, and choose two Skills from Brawl 1, Heal 1, Melee 1, Shoot 1, Zoofinity 1.

Weapons: Bow/crossbow of choice (and 12 arrows/bolts) *or* rifle of choice (fully loaded) *or* shotgun of choice (fully loaded) *or* spear of choice; knife.

Clothing: Leather *or* fur tunic; gloves; boots; pants; shirt; coat *or* jacket *or* cloak; hat *or* hood *or* scarf.

Gear: Flint and steel *or* box of matches (20) *or* lighter (fully fueled); waterskin (full) *or* canteen (full); ball of twine; 50-ft. coil of rope; 1-6 furs.

Transport: Mount of choice (and saddle blanket and harness) *or* canoe *or* kayak *or* dinghy.



CHAPTER 6

FUEL INJECTION!

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes represent a character's raw abilities, rather than actual skills or training - their raw strength, overall health, keenness of senses, and so on. Attributes are part of the core of the V6 Engine, with levels in each Attribute showing how many dice need to be rolled for tasks using those Attributes (V6 Engine Basics, pages 61-63).

In *Atomic Highway* we define each Attribute like this:

Muscle

Muscle is a character's physical strength. It is used:

To lift, push, pull, and perform other feats of raw physical power.

- To increase the Damage of some weapons and attacks.
- To calculate a character's Health.

Understanding

Understanding is a character's intelligence, reasoning, and memory. It is used:

- To solve puzzles, recall facts, and perform other feats of intellect.

Tenacity

Tenacity is a character's determination and willpower. It is used:

- To resist influence or intimidation.
- To calculate a character's Health.

Appeal

Appeal is a character's natural charisma and allure, though it does not represent purely physical attractiveness. It is used:

- To bargain, lie, convince, lead, and/or otherwise influence others.

Nimbleness

Nimbleness is a character's physical coordination, speed, balance, reflexes, and manual dexterity. It is used:

- To perform most physical actions, such as climbing, running, and jumping.
- To determine who acts first in action situations.

SO, HOW STRONG AM I?

Actual weights are not really in the spirit of Atomic Highway, but here's a basic look at the sorts of limits a character's Muscle can stretch to in terms of lifting unbalanced things over the character's head:

Muscle	Lift
1	a coyote
2	a large dog
3	a slim adult
4	a muscular thug
5	a heavy cruiser motorcycle



Toughness

Toughness is a character's fitness and general endurance. It is used:

- To resist poison and other health risks.
- To calculate how long a character can hold their breath.
- To calculate a character's Health.
- To determine how quickly a character heals.

Senses

Senses is a character's overall sharpness of sight, hearing, smell/taste, and touch. It is used:

- In any situation where the senses are dominant, such as noticing faint sounds, detecting the subtle taste of poison in a meal, and so on.

Attribute Ratings

The range of Attributes for human adults in the V6 Engine is 1-5, with 2 representing the "average" adult. The table at the bottom of the page provides handy descriptors for each level of each Attribute.

SKILLS

While Attributes provide raw potential and ability, it is Skills that harness that raw potential, and even a single level of Skill can make a significant difference to a character's chances of success.

Like Attributes, Skills are rated on a scale of 1-5, with most starting characters having a rating of 2-3 in important Skills:

Skills are presented along with the names of the Attributes most commonly used with them, in order of commonality of use. Because Skills can be used with any appropriate Attribute depending on the situation and use, these guidelines are not absolute.

Level	Description
1	Novice
2	Competent
3	Professional
4	Veteran
5	Master

Example 1: Rex sprints for a closing door, trying to reach it before it is closed and locked! He rolls *Nimbleness/Athletics* because speed is the issue!

Example 2: Rex is running cross-country, desperately trying to beat a rival to the gates of the nearby bartertown! Because a long distance is involved, it's more an issue of endurance than speed, so *Toughness/Athletics* is more appropriate.

Example 3: Rex is trying to swim across a raging river, forcing through against the pull of the water! His strength is really needed here so *Muscle/Athletics* is appropriate.

Example 4: Jane is trying to sneak past an inattentive thug nearby, so rolls *Nimbleness/Stealth*.

Example 5: Jane uses local brush and dirt to try and camouflage her motorcycle from view, and so uses *Understanding/Stealth* because it relies on thought not personal coordination.

Athletics

Athletics is used for climbing, jumping, sprinting and long-distance running, accurately throwing and catching, and swimming. It specifically includes the use of thrown weapons such as rocks and spears.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness, Muscle, Toughness

Boat

Operating water-going and submersible vehicles from canoes to sailing boats, jet-skis to submarines, falls under the Boat Skill.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness, Understanding, Toughness

Brawl

Striking someone with an unarmed attack such as a kick, punch, headbutt, bite, or elbow, or with a weapon that is an extension of a natural attack, such as a spiked glove, uses Brawl.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness, Muscle

Lvl	Muscle	Understanding	Tenacity	Appeal	Nimbleness	Toughness	Senses
1	Weak	Dim	Spineless	Unappealing	Clumsy	Frail	Dull
2	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
3	Athletic	Bright	Confident	Personable	Agile	Fit	Alert
4	Strong	Gifted	Driven	Charismatic	Adroit	Vigorous	Watchful
5	Powerful	Genius	Indomitable	Enthralling	Acrobatic	Tireless	Vigilant



Chapter 6

Criminal

Criminal covers techniques for breaking and entering premises, picking locks, disabling alarms, as well as locating ne'er-do-wells such as fences and other lawbreakers.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness, Understanding

Drive

Any land vehicle can be driven using Drive, be it motorcycle or automobile, armored personnel carrier or truck.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness

Heal

Patching up wounds, setting bones, providing medicines suitable to aid the fight against illness or poisons, all are part of Heal.

Usual Attributes: Understanding

Intimidate

Intimidate is used to frighten, interrogate, or among the villainous, torture.

Usual Attributes: Appeal, Muscle, Understanding

Lore

Knowledge of the Before Times such as historical events, daily life and culture, common technologies, natural history and geography, are all neatly encapsulated by Lore, as is the ability to read and write. Characters without the Lore Skill cannot read or write.

Usual Attributes: Understanding

Melee

Blades, bludgeons, and other handheld weapons are effectively wielded using Melee.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness, Muscle

Notice

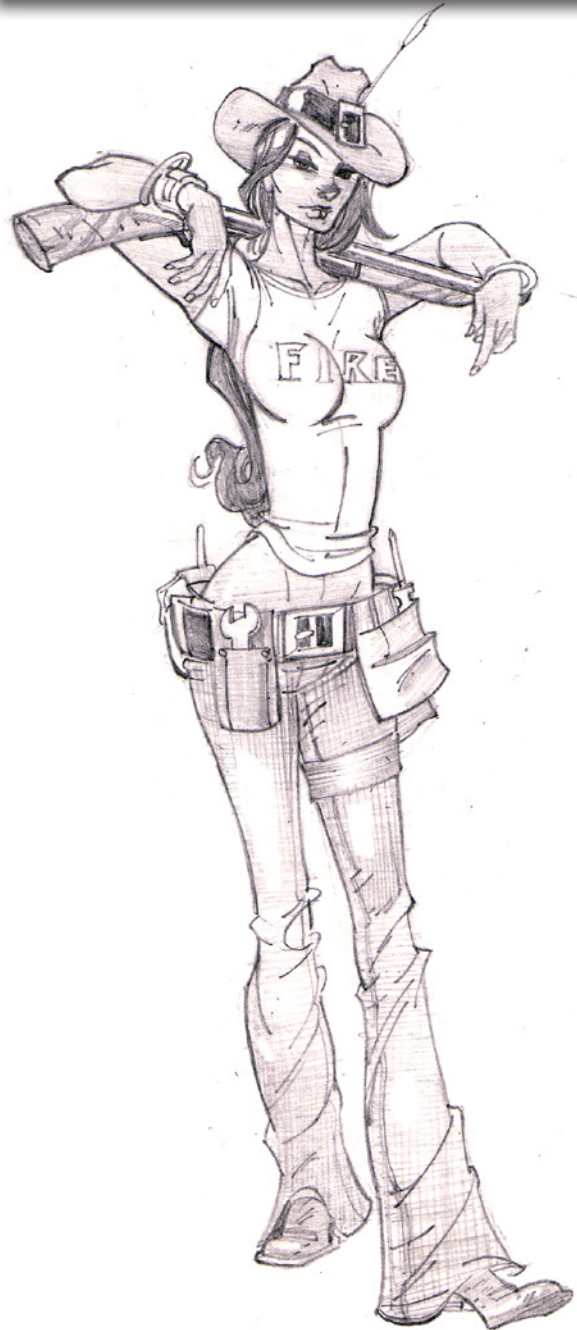
Notice is useful for detecting the faint aroma of poison in a drink, spotting the beast lying in ambush ahead, hearing the whisper of a blade being drawn in the shadows, and other uses of the senses.

It also limits how many Reactions you receive each Round.

Usual Attributes: Senses, Understanding

WHAT ABOUT COMMON KNOWLEDGE?

There is no specific Skill to cover what the character knows about their general life and world around them. Rather, if it's something most people would know, such as what settlements are close to their home and roughly what they're like, simply assume they do. Otherwise, use the most clearly related Skill (Persuade is used to barter, for instance, so Understanding/Persuade might be used for common knowledge about local markets) or make an Attribute-Only roll using the character's Understanding.



Hauler

Persuade

Manipulating others, bartering and bargaining, convincing them with truth or lie, are all uses of Persuade.

Usual Attributes: Appeal, Understanding

Pilot

Pilot is used to fly any airborne vehicles including hang-gliders, autogyros, helicopters, airships, balloons, and jets.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness, Understanding

Ride

Riding a living beast such as a horse, camel, or something more exotic such as a mutant moose, including controlling a mount while in combat, uses Ride.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness

Scavenge

Scavenge covers knowing where to look for certain useful materials and items in Before Times locations such as ruined cities, rusted factories, how to remove them safely, and knowing what is likely to have barter value. See page 54 for the scavenging rules.

Usual Attributes: Understanding, Senses

Shoot

Bows, crossbows, pistols, rifles, machine guns, grenade launchers, artillery pieces, all such ranged weapons use Shoot.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness, Understanding

Sleight

Sleight encompasses quick-fingered deception and deftness, and is used for picking pockets, palming small objects, performing feats of legerdemain, or cheating while gambling.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness

Stealth

Remaining unseen, moving silently, making use of camouflage, these are uses of Stealth.

Usual Attributes: Nimbleness, Understanding

Survive

Keeping alive and healthy in a wilderness environment uses Survive, including locating and purifying water and food, tracking, basic knowledge of local flora and fauna, starting fires, and creating or finding shelter.

Usual Attributes: Understanding, Senses

Tech

Tech is used to operate obscure or complex Before Times machinery and electronics, jury-rig or build devices, and repair implements and devices ranging from automobile engines to personal computers.

Usual Attributes: Understanding, Nimbleness

Zoofinity

Breeding, taming, rearing, training, and calming beasts be they wild or domestic, normal or mutant, uses Zoofinity.

Usual Attributes: Appeal, Understanding, Tenacity

SO, HOW FAST CAN I RUN?

The V6 Engine doesn't particularly concern itself with precise measurements of a character's running speed because just like in the movies, characters running reach their destinations as quickly or slowly as plot and drama dictates. If you want to know who reaches a certain point first, simply have the characters involved roll Nimbleness/Athletics in a Competing roll if speed is the main issue, or Toughness/Athletics if long distances are involved.

CREATING MORE SKILLS

The Skills in Atomic Highway are broad in their coverage and include only those Skills most likely to see use. Other Skills exist, of course; if someone wanted an artistic character, it would be entirely reasonable to simply write the new Skill name, Art, on their character sheet and allow them to spend Skill points on that Skill. Any new Skills suggested should be suitably broad and avoid overlap with existing Skills, with the GM having the right to permit or disallow them.



CHAPTER 1

GET YOUR FREAK ON!

Mutations

The Final War was a holocaust of mass death and suffering, with the unleashing of untold numbers of chemical, nuclear, and biological weapons upon the Earth. In the Real World, nearly every resulting mutation from the stew of engineered viruses, chemical mutagens, and intense radiation would be harmful and terrible, with a very small minority of mutations being neutral or only marginally useful - but this isn't the Real World. In *Atomic Highway*, more pronounced and radical biological mutations occurred, and alongside the horrors were mutational wonders. Let's look at the ways your freak can be unique.

All mutant characters possess the following Flaw:
Flaw – Mutie

Dealing with most humans, individuals known to be mutants suffer a one level Difficulty increase to any rolls to Persuade. Among those humans disgusted by mutants, that penalty increases to two levels, or three levels if the humans are actively hostile to mutantkind.

The mutant can also expect to be subject to some bigotry, subtle or otherwise, and may even be a target for violence or scapegoating.

Roll	1-2	3-4	5-6
1	Amphibious	Leaping	Regenerative
2	Armored	Natural Weapons	Stealthy
3	Echolocation	Night Vision	Swift
4	Enduring	Patagia	Toxic Saliva
5	Enhanced Sense	Prehensile Appendage	Wall Crawler
6	Hypermobility	Prehensile Feet	Winged

Determining Mutations

Roll two dice, place the results in either order, and cross-reference the previous chart. A second Mutation, if wanted, also requires a roll on the Flaw chart below.

Determining Flaws

Roll two dice, read across first, then down; you don't get to choose the order.

Roll	1-3	4-6
1	Color-blind	Fragile
2	Cosmetic Flaw	Light Sensitive
3	Cosmetic Flaw	Partial Biped
4	Cosmetic Flaw	Selective Diet
5	Crude Hands	Slow
6	Dull Senses	Speech Impediment

Example: Tom rolls 1, 3. He can keep that result or switch the numbers to 3, 1. This gives him a choice of the Echolocation (1,3) or Leaping (3, 1) Mutations. He selects Leaping and decides that his character has furless vaguely rabbit-like legs! Boing!

Pleased with the result, he opts to roll for another Mutation, recognizing he must take a Flaw as well. He rolls for the Mutation first and gets 2, 5. He selects Enhanced Sense, and rolls 1: Hearing. Going with the theme he elects to have long, hairless, mobile ears. Now he has to roll for his new Flaw, however, and rolls 4,4 in that order, getting the Selective Diet Flaw. Rolling for his restricted diet, he rolls a 3, so he's a herbivore. He chuckles at the coincidences, and notes that he has rabbit-like buckteeth as well, and decides his character will be called Jack Rabbit.



Mutations

Mutations are described in the following format:

Name of the Mutation.

Benefits: What benefits the Mutation provides, if any.

Flaw: Any accompanying natural Flaws the Mutation has.

Possible Traits: Most Mutations have distinct physical traits, and sample possibilities for how the Mutation might be described are provided. If the entry is *None*, the Mutation does not alter the character's outward appearance, lucky mutant.

Amphibious

Benefits: The character can hold their breath for Toughness x 50 rounds, and has Athletics 6 automatically for swimming only.

Possible Traits: Cetacean-like blowhole; paddle-like tail; partial webbing on fingers and toes; streamlined and hairless body form.

Armored

Benefits: The character has some form of natural armor with Protection 2, and can wear other armor over it.

Possible Traits: Pangolin-like scutes; rhinoceros-like tubercles; skin studded with osteoderms.

Echolocation

Benefits: Using echolocation the character can form an effective three-dimensional mental picture of their surroundings and so can operate in even absolute darkness. This mental image is simple and cannot pick up any light frequency differences such as hue, tint, or shade.

Possible Traits:

Bat-like ears and nose leaf; bulbous melon on forehead.

Enduring

Benefits: The character calculates their Health with (Muscle + Tenacity + Toughness) x 3.

Possible Traits: Bizarrely broad; giant; unnaturally thick skeleton.

Enhanced Sense

Benefits: The character has Senses 6 when it comes to using a specific sense, such as vision, hearing, or smell. Roll a die:

1-2 Hearing: The character uses Senses 6/ Notice to hear things, including sounds on frequencies inaudible to normal humans.

Possible Traits: Beast-like ears; overlarge ears.

3-4 Smell: The character can use Senses 6/ Notice to track by scent, notice subtle odors, and recognize individuals by scent.

Possible Traits: Animal-like nose; overlarge nose.

5-6 Vision: The character can use Senses 6/ Notice to spot things, and can even use weapons such as rifles at Distant Range without the need of a telescopic sight. This Mutation does not improve their ability to see in conditions of dim or no light, however.

Possible Traits: Animal-like eyes; overlarge eyes.

Hypermobile

Benefits: All of the character's joints are extremely elastic and flexible, and their clavicle is free-floating.

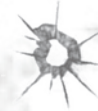
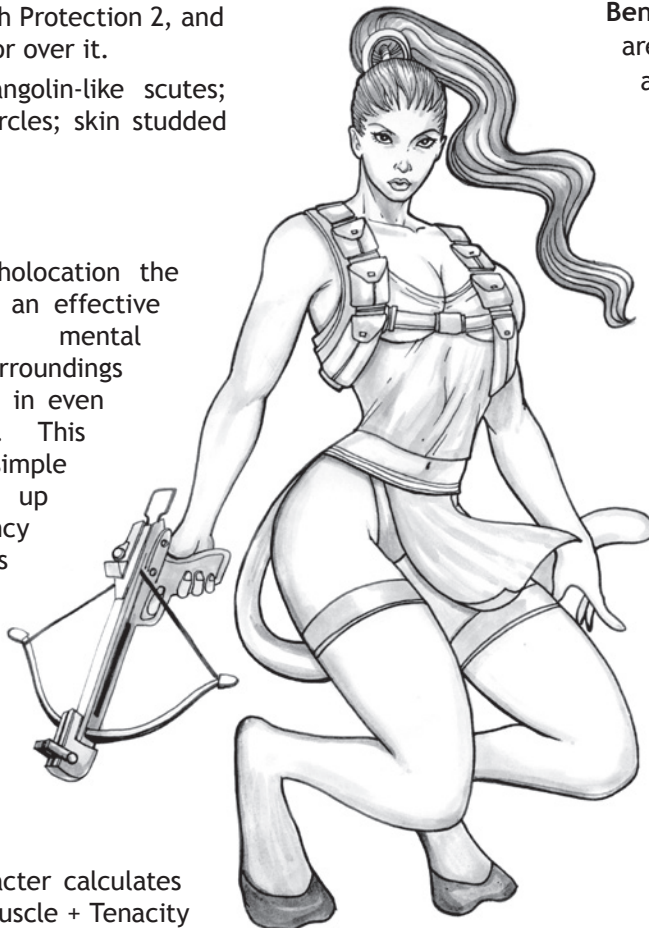
They can contort their limbs in unnatural directions, squeeze themselves through openings large enough for their head to fit through, and fold themselves into spaces as small as 16 inches on every side. Unless special measures are taken to constrain them, they can escape most bonds with little difficulty, can hide in places most people would not think to look, and can enter or exit places through openings most individuals would consider impossible.

Possible Traits: None.

Leaping

Benefits: The character has Athletics 6 for jumping and leaping, and can leap as far as 3 yards up or 10 yards across with no roll required.

Possible Traits: Bestial legs.



Chapter 7

Natural Weapon

Benefits: The character has a dangerous natural weapon, attacks with it using Brawl and causes Muscle + 2L Damage.

Possible Traits: Bone spurs; claws; fangs; horns; tusks.

Night Vision

Benefits: The character can see as well in conditions of low light as they can in daylight, but vision in darkness is monochrome, and provides no benefit in pitch blackness.

Possible Traits: Animal eyes; bulging eyes.

Patagia

Benefits: The character has gliding membranes that stretch along their sides from wrist to ankle. With arms and legs outstretched, the character can glide some distance given sufficient height, typically three times as far as the height they leapt from, e.g., someone leaping from atop an 80-yard tall tree could glide 240 yards before reaching the ground.

Possible Traits: Patagia.

Prehensile Appendage

Benefits: The character has a long tail, trunk, or other extra appendage capable of grasping things and supporting their own weight. They can hang from things while keeping both hands free, can hold and wield simple items such as bludgeons, using their appendage if desired, and find it provides an extra die bonus to Nimbleness/Athletics rolls when climbing. It does not grant any extra Actions.

Possible Traits: Elephantine trunk; prehensile tail

Prehensile Feet

Benefits: The character can hold and manipulate things with their feet largely as though they were extra hands, gaining an extra die bonus to Nimbleness/Athletics rolls when climbing. Obviously, holding and using things held in the feet while walking is impossible, and while standing is still difficult (increase Difficulty by 1), and items requiring two hands to wield cannot be held and operated by both feet while standing either.

Note: Winged characters gain this Mutation for free.

Possible Traits: Monkey-like feet.

Regenerative

Benefits: Any Damage from or beyond the character's halfway Health point is healed naturally at a rate of their Toughness in boxes per day (if Lethal), or

Toughness in boxes per hour (if Non-Lethal).

Any Damage up to the character's halfway Health point is healed naturally at a rate of their Toughness in boxes per hour (if Lethal), or Toughness in boxes per minute (if Non-Lethal).

Possible Traits: None.

Stealthy

Benefits: The character has Stealth 6 for purposes of moving quietly.

Possible Traits: Digitigrade legs and paw pads.

Swift

Benefits: The character has Athletics 6 for running.

Possible Traits: Beast-like legs; extra legs; very long legs.

Toxic Saliva

Benefits: The character's saliva is a paralytic venom. A successful bite attack injects it:

Toxin	Toxicity/Amount
Toxic Saliva	3/bite

Possible Traits: None.

Wall Crawler

Benefits: The character has Athletics 6 for climbing, even applicable to sheer, flat surfaces and ceilings. Movement is at a crawling pace.

Possible Traits: Fingers and toes covered with setae; small suction cups on wrists and ankles.

Winged

Benefits: The character's arms and hands have become bat-like wings, enabling them to fly as fast as if they had Athletics 6. Maneuvering uses Nimbleness/Athletics. To compensate for the loss of ordinary hands/arms, the character gains the Prehensile Feet Mutation for free.

Flaw: The character cannot use their normal arms/wings for anything except flying; they are entirely reliant on their feet for using tools. In flight, the feet can manipulate objects as well as human hands, but the Difficulty for any tasks using them while grounded is increased by 1 due to the clumsiness involved. Additionally, the character cannot wield objects and walk at the same time, and cannot wield or use items requiring two hands while trying to stand.

Possible Traits: Bat-like wings and prehensile feet.



Flaws

Flaws are described in the following format:

Name of the Flaw.

Hindrance: What problems the Flaw imparts.

Possible Traits: Most Flaws have distinct physical traits, and sample possibilities for how the Flaw might be described are provided. If the entry is *None*, the Flaw does not alter the mutant's outward appearance.

Color-blind

Hindrance: The character cannot perceive colors in the red-green spectrum, making reds, oranges, yellows, and greens all appear as shades of yellow, and blues and purples all appear as shades of pale blue.

Possible Traits: None.

Cosmetic Flaw

Hindrance: The character has an obvious but harmless physical trait.

Possible Traits: Crest; dangling proboscis; extremely long tongue; fur; hairless; long neck; loose, sagging skin; mane; odd hair color/patterning; odd shaped ears; odd skin color/patterning; shedding skin; snout/muzzle; sparse, bristly hair; strange bodily proportions (such as a short torso and long arms); strange eyes; strong, musky odor; tail; vestigial limb; whiskers.

Crude Hands

Hindrance: The character's hands are ill-equipped for fine manipulation. When performing tasks requiring significant manual dexterity they have Nimbleness 1 and cannot apply the benefits of a Skill to such tasks.

Possible Traits: Malformed hands; paw-like hands.

Dull Sense

Hindrance: The character has Senses 1 when it comes to using a specific sense, such as vision, hearing, or smell, and cannot apply the Notice Skill to tasks using that sense. Roll a die:

1-2 Hearing: The character uses Senses 1 to hear things. On the positive side, loud noises do not unduly bother them.

Possible Traits: Miniscule ears; no outer ears.

3-4 Smell: The character uses Senses 1 to notice odors and tastes, and find nearly everything they eat bland. Bad smells don't bother them, however, and they can eat most foodstuffs.

Possible Traits: Tiny nose.

5-6 Vision: The character uses Senses 1 to spot

things. They treat all Ranges as being one level higher, and so cannot target things at Distant Range even with vision enhancement, and require vision enhancement to target things at Long Range.

Possible Traits: Dull, milky eyes; tiny eyes.

Fragile

Hindrance: The character calculates their Health with (Muscle + Tenacity + Toughness) x 1.

Possible Traits: Hollow-boned; skeletal; small.

Light Sensitive

Hindrance: The character suffers a 1 level increase in the Difficulty of any tasks attempted in conditions of bright light, including normal daylight, when not wearing protective eyewear.

Possible Traits: Albino; pale, milky eyes.

Partial Biped

Hindrance: The character can stand and use his arms normally, but drops to all fours to walk or run, prohibiting the use of tools while doing so.

Possible Traits: Ape-like gait.

Selective Diet

Hindrance: The character can only derive nutrition from a restricted type of foodstuff. Roll a die:

1-2	Carnivore:	Meat
3-4	Herbivore:	Vegetation
5	Hematophag:	Blood
6	Insectivore:	Bugs

Possible Traits: All teeth blunt; all teeth sharp; no teeth but has a long sticky tongue; only teeth are sharp incisors.

Slow

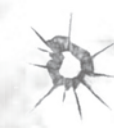
Hindrance: The character has Nimbleness 1 for running and cannot apply the benefits of a Skill to such tasks.

Possible Traits: Malformed legs; missing leg; stunted legs.

Speech Impediment

Hindrance: The character's speech is extremely distinctive and frequently hard to understand. This must be roleplayed, and complex sentences or words may require listeners to make Understanding Attribute-Only rolls to decipher what was said.

Possible Traits: Malformed mouth; odd muzzle-like mouth; strange tongue.



CHAPTER 8

CROSSBOWS & CARBINES!

Arms & Armor

Weapons, armor, and other implements of destruction and protection are often all that stand between a character and death. This chapter provides armor, and weapons. Grab 'em while you can!

R.A.D. SAYS: THERE'S NO OTHER EQUIPMENT LISTED!

Atomic Highway doesn't waste space by providing long lists of normal equipment or descriptions of everyday items; you don't need us to tell you what a knife is, or what rope is used for. Only if some clarification is particularly useful or necessary do we provide such information. Anything you encounter in your everyday life may be found, and the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) provide plenty of examples.

Armor

Personal armor increases the wearer's survivability by decreasing or eliminating the damage they suffer from attacks. Armor protects against Lethal and Non-Lethal Damage equally. There are three broad categories:

Light Armor: Protection 2

This is basically motorcycle leathers or roughly padded garments or anything a bit tougher but far less covering, such as typical pit-fighting garments.

Medium Armor: Protection 4

This is tougher armor, such as football-style body armor, mail, and reinforced leather, covering vital locations, or even light bulletproof vests. It can be somewhat cumbersome in some situations at the GM's discretion.

Heavy Armor: Protection 8

This is the highest level of personal armor, such as a suit of mail and plate, or heavy ballistic military armor. It doesn't impede, but can be very cumbersome for swift movement, and can get hot and heavy rapidly. Prolonged wear can result in an increase in Difficulties at the GM's discretion, especially for more primitive heavy armor.

Shields

When it comes to parrying attacks, shields provide a real edge to the wielder. Whether a metal road sign welded to a rough handle, or a wooden board secured with metal bands, a shield provides a 1 die bonus to the user's attempts to parry with it. A shield can even be used to punch an opponent in the face, a maneuver called a shield bash. The downside, of course, is that the character cannot use anything requiring two hands while holding the shield.

Melee Weapons

Light, Medium, Heavy

Light weapons are smaller and/or slimmer and lighter, and rely on finesse more than power. Medium weapons are typical weapons of their type, weighty but not overly so, and easily wielded in one hand. Heavy weapons are exactly that: larger, longer, and heavier versions requiring two hands to wield effectively.

Bludgeon, Blunt or Vicious

A blunt bludgeon is a club, mace, hammer, or other blunt implement that lacks damage-enhancing protuberances - a baton or nightstick is a good



example. A vicious bludgeon, on the other hand, is one designed to inflict more serious damage, such as a baseball bat with long nails driven through it, or wrapped in barbed wire, or a club studded with animal claws.

Flail

A flail is essentially a chain to which bludgeoning heads are attached.

Ranged Weapons

Assault Rifle

Assault rifles are the standard issue combat arms of the world's militaries, capable of firing single shot or burst fire using ammunition such as 5.56mm NATO.

Ballista

A ballista is nothing more than a huge, oversized crossbow, mounted on a tripod or other fixture.

Blowpipe

A blowpipe's dart doesn't cause any real damage, but is usually coated in a toxin that does.

Crossbow, Wrist

The wrist crossbow is a tiny crossbow mounted atop a wrist bracer. Compared to a regular crossbow, it does much less damage with its smaller bolts, but does leave the firing hand free.

Grenade Launcher, Light

This may be a standalone 40mm break-open grenade launcher, or a 40mm launcher that can be fitted beneath the barrel of an assault rifle.

Grenade Launcher, Heavy

A mounted weapon, the heavy grenade launcher is also

a Burst fire weapon, launching salvoes of grenades.

Handgun, Light

Common examples include .38 Special revolvers, and .22 Long Rifle automatics, most of which are small and easily concealed.

Handgun, Medium

The most typical example is the ubiquitous 9mm semi-automatic beloved of militaries, law enforcement, and civilians alike.

Handgun, Heavy

Heavy handguns are the likes of the famous .357 Magnum and .44 Magnum, semi-autos and revolvers alike.

Machine Gun, Light

This covers the typical Squad Assault Weapon, a 5.56mm man-portable machine gun.

Machine Gun, Medium

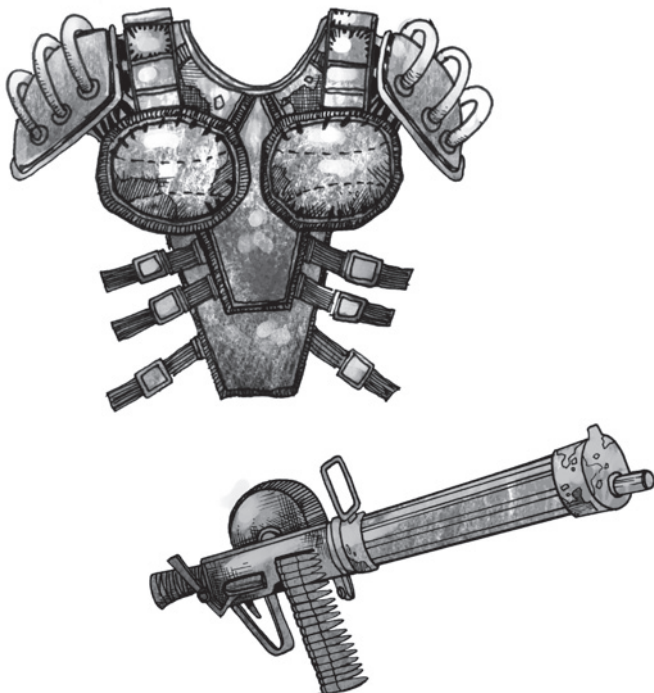
The medium machine gun is the typical heavier machine gun chambered for a round such as 7.62mm NATO. Man portable but often a real burden, and frequently vehicle-mounted.

Machine Gun, Heavy

Chambered for awesomely powerful rounds such as .50 Browning Machine Gun or spitting out lead at staggering rates of fire like an M134 minigun, a heavy machine gun is typically too big to be considered man-portable by anything other than a small team. It is a frequent vehicle-mounted and anti-vehicle weapon, however.

Rifle, Light

Light rifles are almost always chambered in .22 Long



UM, WHAT DOES IT WEIGH OR COST?

Atomic Highway doesn't bother itself with encumbrance rules, so there's no need to worry about item weights. Rather, the rule of common sense should apply if a character's carrying capacity is a concern. Constantly calculating how much weight a character carries is time better spent playing the game.

As for costs... well, given that currency, wages, and market values are meaningless concepts in the post-apocalyptic world, with bartering for goods, favors, and services now the economic norm, specific costs aren't listed or tracked either. The worth of a good is based solely on what someone is willing and able to trade for it, and its value to them is extremely dependent on their circumstances.

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Rifle, the most extensively and widely manufactured ammunition in the world, and are used for pest control and recreational shooting.

Rifle, Medium

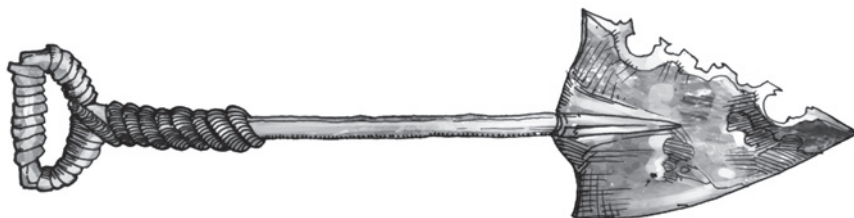
Medium rifles are good general, all-round rifles, semi-automatic and bolt-action, chambered for rounds such as .223 Remington.

Rifle, Heavy

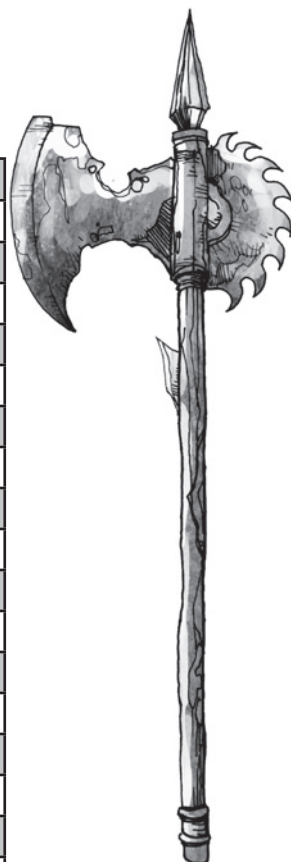
Heavy rifles are used mostly for big-game and chamber ammunition such as .308 Winchester, .30-06, and .300 Winchester Magnum.

Trebuchet

This massive medieval siege weapon can batter walls, fortifications, or vehicles by hurling massive rocks.



Melee Weapons	Dam	Max Rng	Cap	Rld	Hands	Burst
-Primitive (Muscle/Melee)						
Axe, Medium	M+8L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Axe, Heavy	M+10L	Melee	-	-	2	-
Bayonet (attached)	M+6L	Melee	-	-	2	-
Bludgeon, Blunt, Medium	M+4N	Melee	-	-	1	-
Bludgeon, Blunt, Heavy	M+8N	Melee	-	-	2	-
Bludgeon, Vicious, Medium	M+4L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Bludgeon, Vicious, Heavy	M+8L	Melee	-	-	2	-
Chain, Heavy	M+4L	Melee	-	-	2	-
Flail, Medium	M+6L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Flail, Heavy	M+8L	Melee	-	-	2	-
Pistol Whip	M+1N	Melee	-	-	1	-
Rifle Butt	M+4N	Melee	-	-	2	-
Rock	M+2L	Short	-	-	1	-
Shield Bash	M+2N	Melee	-	-	1	-
Spear, Long	M+8L	Melee	-	-	2	-
Sword, Heavy	M+10L	Melee	-	-	2	-
-Primitive (Nimbleness/Melee)						
Axe, Light	M+6L	Short	-	-	1	-
Bludgeon, Blunt, Light	M+2N	Melee	-	-	1	-
Bludgeon, Vicious, Light	M+2L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Bullwhip	entangle	Melee	-	-	1	-
Chain, Light	M+2L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Flail, Light	M+4L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Hook	M+2L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Knife	M+2L	Short	-	-	1	-
Net	entangle	Melee	-	2	2	-
Spear, Short	M+6L	Short	-	-	1	-
Sword, Light	M+4L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Sword, Medium	M+8L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Staff	M+6N	Melee	-	-	2	-



-Powered (Muscle/Melee)	Dam	Max Rng	Cap	Rld	Hands	Burst
Chainsaw, Gasoline	M+10L	Melee	20	3	2	-
Drill, Portable	M+4L	Melee	20	3	1	-
Hedge Trimmer, Gasoline	M+4L	Melee	20	3	2	-
-Unarmed (Muscle or Nimbleness/Brawl)						
Brass Knuckles	M+1L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Claws/Fangs/Horns/Spurs	M+2L	Melee	-	-	1	-
Normal Bite	ML	Melee	-	-	0	-
Punch/Kick/Headbutt	MN	Melee	-	-	0	-
Ranged Weapons						
-Firearm (Nimbleness/Shoot)						
Assault Rifle	10L	Distant	30	1	2	✓
Blunderbuss	10L	Short	1	3	2	✓
Handgun, Light	6L	Short	10/6**	1	1	-
Handgun, Medium	8L	Short	12/6**	1	1	-
Handgun, Heavy	10L	Short	10/6**	1	1	-
Handgun, Black Powder	10L	Short	1	3	1	-
Machine Gun, Light	10L	Distant	100	1	2	✓
Machine Gun, Medium	12L	Distant	100	2	2	✓
Musket, Black Powder	12L	Long	1	3	2	-
Nail Gun	4L	Short	100	2	1	-
Rifle, Light	6L	Long	10	1	2	-
Rifle, Medium	10L	Distant	5	1	2	-
Rifle, Heavy	12L	Distant	20/5***	1	2	-
Shotgun, Double Barrel	12L	Short	2	1	2	✓
Shotgun, Pump	12L	Short	8	1	2	✓
Submachine Gun	8L	Short	30	1	2	✓
-Heavy (Understanding/Shoot)						
Ballista	24L	Long	1	5	2	-
Flame Thrower	12L/4L*	Short	5	2	2	-
Grenade Launcher, Light	grenade	Long	1	1	2	-
Grenade Launcher, Heavy	grenade	Distant	30	2	2	✓
Machine Gun, Heavy	24L	Distant	100	2	2	✓
Rocket/Torpedo Launcher	75L	Distant	1	2	2	-
Trebuchet	60L	Long	1	10	2	-

Weapon Tables Key

Dam: Damage; some special Damage types are explained in later sections

Max Rng: Maximum Range

Cap: Ammunition Capacity (or rounds of operation before recharge/refuel if powered)

Rld: Reload Time (Actions)

Hands: How many hands you need to wield the weapon

Burst: If the weapon is Burst/Buckshot fire capable

M: Muscle

N: Non-Lethal Damage

L: Lethal Damage

*** Initial/Continuing Fire Damage**

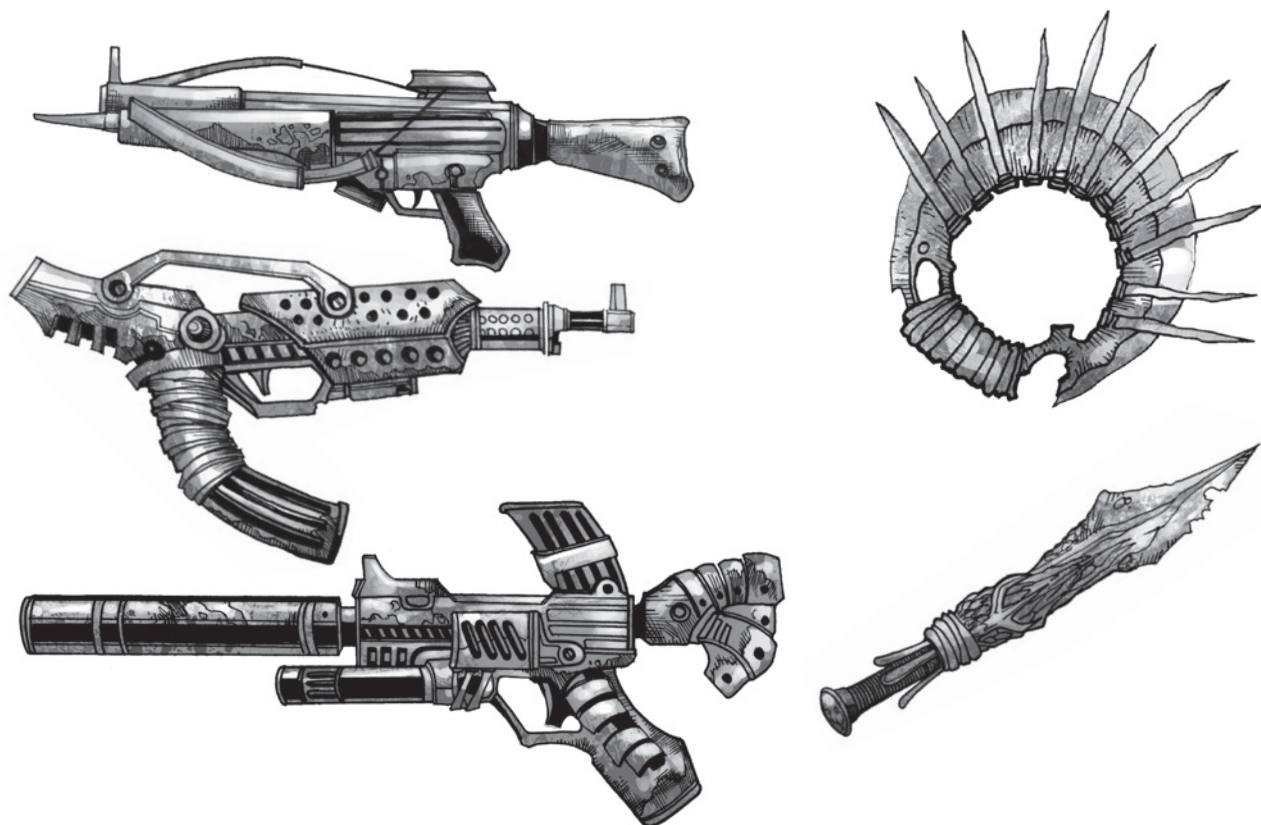
**** Semi-Auto/Revolver**

***** Semi-Auto/Bolt-Action**



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	Dam	Max Rng	Cap	Rld	Hands	Burst
-Primitive Missiles (Nimbleness/Shoot)						
Blowpipe	toxin	Short	1	1	2	-
Bow, Short	8L	Short	1	1	2	-
Bow, Long	10L	Long	1	1	2	-
Crossbow, Wrist	2L	Short	1	1	1	-
Crossbow, Pistol	4L	Short	1	1	1	-
Crossbow, Light	8L	Long	1	2	2	-
Crossbow, Heavy	10L	Long	1	3	2	-
Sling	4L	Short	1	1	1	-
-Thrown Weapons (Nimbleness/Athletics)						
Axe, Light	M+6L	Short	-	1	1	-
Bolas	entangle	Short	-	1	1	-
Boomerang	M+4N	Short	-	1	1	-
Boomerang, Edged	M+4L	Short	-	1	1	-
Grenade/Mine/C4, Fragmentation	20L	Short/-	-	1	1	-
Grenade, Smoke	smoke	Short	-	1	1	-
Grenade, Teargas	toxin	Short	-	1	1	-
Knife	M+2L	Short	-	1	1	-
Lasso	entangle	Short	-	3	2	-
Rock	M+2L	Short	-	1	1	-
Spear, Short	M+6L	Long	-	1	1	-



CHAPTER 9

AUTOGYROS & AUTOMOBILES!

Vehicles & Customization

Presented here is a wide selection of vehicles characters may own or encounter in *Atomic Highway*, followed by rules for customizing them during character creation.

Know Your Ride!

Vehicles in *Atomic Highway* use the following Attributes:

Muscle: The vehicle's raw power/size.

Nimbleness: The vehicle's handling. Characters maneuvering a vehicle use the lower of their own or the vehicle's Nimbleness.

Toughness: The vehicle's resilience.

Speed: The vehicle's general speed and acceleration. Speed for land and watercraft ranges from 1-5, but may go as high as 10 for a rare few aircraft using the standard rules for Attributes Over 5 (page 62). MPH values are provided as rough guidelines for typical top speeds.

Health: The amount of punishment the vehicle can take: (Muscle + Toughness) x 15, barring customization.

Armor: The vehicle's resistance to Damage.

Weapons: Any weapons fitted to the vehicle.

Gear: Any special gadgets or items fitted to the vehicle.

FUEL CONSUMPTION AND CAPACITY

Carefully tracking fuel capacity and consumption, like encumbrance, is time better spent on the more enjoyable aspects of play. At the start of each session, the GM secretly rolls a single die for each PC vehicle. A result of 1 means that the vehicle runs out of fuel at some point during that session, whether because it runs dry, the gauge was faulty, or it sprang a fuel leak. A Plot Tweak (Using Fortune, page 65) can be used to ignore this result.

Vehicle Attribute Ratings

The range of Attributes for most vehicles in the V6 Engine is 1-5. The following table provides handy descriptors for each level of each Attribute:

Level	Muscle	Nimbleness	Toughness	Speed	Top MPH
1	Motorbike	Heavy Truck	Motorbike	Scooter	80 mph
2	Family Car	Family Car	Family Car	Family Car	120 mph
3	Muscle Car	Sport Car	SUV	Muscle Car	160 mph
4	Van	Sport Bike	Light Truck	Super Bike	200 mph
5	Heavy Truck	Motocross Bike	Heavy Truck	Formula 1 Car	240 mph



Chapter 9

Aircraft

Autogyro, Open/Cockpit

RAF 2000 GTX SE, RFD Dominator, Xenon Gyroplane

Muscle 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 1

Speed 1

Passengers: Pilot/Pilot +1

Health: 30

Flaws: No Cover/-

Cost: 4/6

Hang Glider, Powered

Hidden Mountain X1, Mosquito NRG, Sky Gear Zenon

Muscle 1

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 0

Speed 1

Passengers: Pilot

Health: 15

Customizations: Glide

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 3

Automobiles

Dune Buggy/Sandrail

Chenoweth, Meyers Kick-Out Manx, Sand Bullet

Muscle 2

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Speed 1

Passengers: Driver +1

Health: 75

Customizations: Off-Road Capable

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 8



Family Sedan

BMW 3 Series, Ford Focus, Honda Accord, Toyota Corolla, Volkswagen Golf

Muscle 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Speed 2

Passengers: Driver + 3

Health: 60

Cost: 9

High Performance Sports Car

Ferrari F430, Lamborghini Murciélago, Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren

Muscle 2

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 2

Speed 4

Passengers: Driver +1

Health: 60

Cost: 11

Muscle Car

Chevrolet Camaro, Dodge Challenger, Dodge Charger, Ford Mustang

Muscle 3

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Speed 3

Passengers: Driver +3

Health: 75

Cost: 11

Pickup

Chevrolet Silverado, Dodge Ram, Ford F-150, Toyota Tundra

Muscle 3

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Speed 2

Passengers: Driver +4

Health: 90

Cost: 12

Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV)

Ford Explorer, Jeep Grand Cherokee, Toyota Land

Cruiser

Muscle 3

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Speed 2

Passengers: Driver +7

Health: 90

Customizations: Off-Road Capable

Cost: 13

Van, Cargo/Passenger

Chevrolet Express, Ford E-Series, Ford Transit, Mercedes-Benz Sprinter

Muscle 4

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Speed 1

Passengers: Driver +2/Driver +11

Health: 105

Cost: 11/13

Motorcycles

ATV (All-Terrain Vehicle)

Can-Am Outlander Max 800R, Polaris Sportsman 800, Suzuki King Quad 750 Axi, Yamaha Grizzly 700

Muscle 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 1

Speed 1

Passengers: Driver

Health: 30

Customizations: Off-Road Capable

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 5

Cruiser

BMW R1200C, Harley Davidson Fat Boy, Honda VTX1300R, Suzuki Boulevard C109R

Muscle 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 1

Speed 2

Passengers: Driver +1

Health: 30

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 5



Chapter 9

Dual-Sports Bike

BMW R1150GS, KTM 990 Adventure

Muscle 1

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 1

Speed 2

Passengers: Driver +1

Health: 30

Customizations: Off-Road Capable

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 7

Speed 1

Passengers: Driver +1

Health: 30

Customizations: Off-Road Capable

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 7

Super Bike

Ducati 1198, Honda CBR1000RR, Kawasaki Ninja ZX-10R, KTM 1190 RC8, Suzuki GSX-R1100

Muscle 1

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 1

Speed 4

Passengers: Driver +1

Health: 30

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 8

Motocross Bike

Honda CRF450R, KTM 450 EXC, Yamaha YZ450F

Muscle 1

Nimbleness 5

Toughness 1



Trucks

Bus/Coach

Alexander Dennis Enviro300, MCI D4500CT, Mercedes-Benz Tourismo, Prevost X3-45

Muscle 4

Nimbleness 1

Toughness 4

Speed 1

Passengers: Driver +56

Health: 120

Cost: 15

Hauler Truck

Daimler Freightliner, International Lonestar, Kenworth W900, Mack Pinnacle, Mercedes-Benz Actros, Peterbilt 389

Muscle 5

Nimbleness 1

Toughness 5

Speed 1

Passengers: Driver +4

Health: 150

Cost: 14

Medium Truck

GMC Topkick, International DuraStar, Isuzu Forward, Mitsubishi Fuso, Volvo FM

Muscle 4

Nimbleness 1

Toughness 4

Speed 1

Passengers: Driver +1

Health: 120

Cost: 10

Watercraft

Cabin Cruiser

Chris-Craft Corsair 45, Sunseeker Portofino 47

Muscle 3

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Speed 1

Passengers: Pilot +4

Health: 90

Cost: 11

VEHICLE SPEED VS. CHARACTER SPEED

Vehicles are simply faster than all but a few animals can hope to be. A vehicular Speed of 1 can barely be matched by a sprinting cheetah, and the natural world only has a few creatures that can comfortably match vehicular speeds, such as a diving peregrine falcon equal to vehicular Speed 4, or the spine-tailed swift which manages vehicular Speed 1-2 in level flight!

Canoe

Muscle 0

Nimbleness 1

Toughness 1

Speed 2 (character speed)

Passengers: Rower +1

Health: 15

Dinghy, Small

Muscle 0

Nimbleness 1

Toughness 1

Speed 1 (character speed)

Passengers: Rower +2

Health: 15

Jet Ski

BRP Sea-Doo GTI, Kawasaki Jet Ski 800 SX-R, Yamaha FX Cruiser SHO WaveRunner

Muscle 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 1

Speed 1

Passengers: Pilot +1

Health: 30

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 4

Kayak

Muscle 0

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 1

Speed 2 (character speed)

Passengers: Rower

Health: 15



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Powerboat

Nor-Tech Supercat 5000, Outerlimits 42 Legacy

Muscle 3

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Speed 2

Passengers: Pilot +4

Health: 90

Cost: 12

Speedboat

Chris-Craft Silver Bullet 20, MasterCraft PS 197

Muscle 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Speed 1

Passengers: Pilot +3

Health: 60

Cost: 8

Miscellaneous Vehicles

Bicycle

Mongoose Tyax, Raleigh Diamondback XSL

Muscle 0

Nimbleness as Rider

Toughness 0

Speed as Rider's Muscle + 2 (character speed)

Passengers: Rider

Health: 10

Customizations: Off-Road Capable

Flaws: No Cover

Cost: 2

Tractor

Fendt 700 Vario, John Deere 7230 Premium

Muscle 3

Nimbleness 1

Toughness 3

Speed 1

Passengers: Driver

Health: 90

Customizations: Off-Road Capable

Cost: 9

Your Vehicle!

So, you've selected a vehicle and now you want to turn it into a road warrior's mobile weapon? Let's get to it!

Selecting and Customizing a Vehicle

Choosing and customizing your character's vehicle is easy:

- 1) Select an appropriate vehicle from the previous section. Pay the vehicle's cost from your character's vehicle points, retaining any excess points.
- 2) Select appropriate Flaws for your vehicle, adding any bonus points gained to the excess points retained in Step 1.
- 3) Spend your excess vehicle points on desired Customizations, in agreement with your GM, bearing in mind where weapons and gear can logically and realistically fit. See *Where Do I Fit All This Junk?* opposite.
- 4) Make any statistical modifications to your vehicle caused by the Customizations and Flaws.
- 5) Describe physical changes to the vehicle that fit the Customizations and Flaws selected.
- 6) You're done!

Example: *Tim is playing a road warrior, and is selecting and customizing his character's vehicle. His character has 20 vehicle points to spend on an automobile, including any Customizations. Looking the automobiles over, he decides he wants a muscle car, which he decides is a '68 Ford Mustang GT Fastback, one of his favorite historical autos. This sets him back 11 vehicle points. He now has 9 left. Not wanting any Flaws, he skips straight to buying Customizations for his character's Mustang. He opts for some decent armor, and picks Medium Vehicle Armor at a cost of 2, deciding that it's plated in rusted iron, reducing his excess points to 7. Choosing offensive devices, he decides to have a Heavy Machine Gun fixed firing forward on the outside driver side, describing it as a 7.62mm M134 minigun. This costs 4 more points, leaving him only 3. He chooses Increased Speed (his character's Mustang has a supercharger fitted!), adding 1 to the muscle car's Speed, a Ram (a heavy iron scoop!), and an Oil Slick Dispenser at the rear (which he describes as dropping fragile metal spheres of oil, using up his remaining 3 points. Here's his finished muscle car:*

'68 Ford Mustang GT Fastback

This ancient Mustang is covered in scarred, rusted metal plates. Its rumbling V8 is boosted with a supercharger that bulges from the top of the hood. The multiple barrels of a minigun run alongside the passenger side of the classic auto. The front of the car is fitted with slab-like metal ram, while an oil slick



dispenser is fitted beneath the trunk at the rear of the car, ready to ruin any pursuer's day.

This battlecar is illustrated on the front cover of the game.

Muscle 3

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Speed 4

Passengers: Driver + 3

Armor: 11

Weapons: Heavy Machine Gun (fixed, forward), Oil Slick Dispenser, Ram.

Health: 75

Total Cost: 20

WHERE DO I FIT ALL THIS JUNK?

Given the huge variety of possible body shapes and configurations for vehicles, it'd be impossible to tell you exactly how many weapons can be mounted, or what size and type can fit where. Given this, it comes down to common sense and agreement between the GM and Player on how much customization can be done. For instance, a motorcycle without a sidecar probably hasn't got enough space for more than one or two fixed weapons, and certainly can't mount a turret. A family sedan, on the other hand, can probably mount a single pivoted machine gun on the roof, a pair of fixed weapons on the hood/wings, and two dispensers on the rear of the car.



Chapter 9

Customizations

Customizations are presented as follows:

Name

Description and benefits.

Requirement: If a vehicle has to meet a certain minimum Attribute level to possess the Customization.

Possible Reasons: Examples of possible descriptions for the Customization.

Cost: How much the Customization costs in vehicle points.

Emergency Parachute

The aircraft is fitted with an emergency parachute system that can rapidly be deployed when the vehicle is plummeting groundward. It's an uncontrolled descent at the whims of the wind, but it beats crashing.

Cost: 1

Emergency Sail

The vehicle is fitted to accept a removable sail of the sort you might find on a ship. Given strong enough winds, the sail can be fitted to propel the vehicle at relatively low speed, in those situations where fuel is low (or nonexistent).

Requirement: Muscle 3 or less

Cost: 1

Glide

Even when not powered, the aircraft is able to fly for considerable periods by gliding and riding thermals.

Cost: 1

Increased Muscle

The vehicle's Muscle is increased by 1.

Possible Reasons: Rebores engine, heavier frame.

Cost: 1

Increased Nimbleness

The vehicle's Nimbleness is increased by 1.

Possible Reasons: Four-wheel steering, improved suspension, responsive controls.

Cost: 1

Increased Toughness

The vehicle's Toughness is increased by 1.

Possible Reasons: Reinforced frame, tougher materials.

Cost: 1

Increased Speed

The vehicle's Speed is increased by 1.

Possible Reasons: Larger engine, limiter removed, reduced weight, supercharger, twin turbo.

Cost: 1

Off-Road Capable

GM-applied environment modifiers for rough terrain are ignored in all but the most extreme cases.

Possible Reasons: Half-track, large tires, suspension lift.

Cost: 1

Oil Slick Dispenser

Driver-operated mechanism covers the road behind the vehicle in a pool of oil. A pursuing driver must make a roll to Keep Control! (page 81). It can be used once before needing a refill.

Cost: 1

Passenger Cage

The passenger section of the vehicle is separated from the driver by a cage of wire, bars, and/or toughened glass, and its passenger doors cannot be opened from the inside. Ideal for ferrying unwilling guests.

Cost: 1

Pivot Mount

Provides a fixed pivot mount on the vehicle for a single weapon, allowing it to be directed by its gunner. An interior pivot mount can only be directed outside in a firing arc of 180 degrees or less, with little elevation; an exterior one (essentially an open platform) can be swiveled to fire anywhere within 360 degrees, or tilted to fire straight up. Interior pivot mounts benefit from the gunner being inside the vehicle and its armor, however.

Cost: 1

Pivot Shield

Provides Major Cover (Cover, page 72) in a single direction to a gunner using an exterior pivot-mounted weapon.

Cost: 1

Pivot Turret

Encloses an exterior pivot mount in the same armor as the vehicle, granting it the combined benefits of interior and exterior pivot mounts, without the restrictions of the former.

Cost: 2



Ram

Halves the Damage the vehicle suffers from its own ramming attacks, frontal collisions, and ramming attacks against its front.

Possible Reasons: Ram prow, reinforced bull bars, thick armor plating on the nose.

Cost: 1

Rider Cockpit

Fits an enclosing cockpit to a motorcycle or other vehicle with the No Cover Flaw, negating it and thus providing Major Cover to its rider/pilot and passengers.

Cost: 2

Roll Cage

Halves the Damage passengers suffer in a crash, reducing it to a quarter if they are buckled in.

Cost: 1

Sidecar

Requirement: Motorcycle

Adding a sidecar provides space for one more passenger, and allows the motorcycle to be fitted with a pivot mount and associated weaponry, as well as a pivot shield or small turret on the sidecar. On the downside, it reduces the motorcycle's Nimbleness by one.

Cost: 1

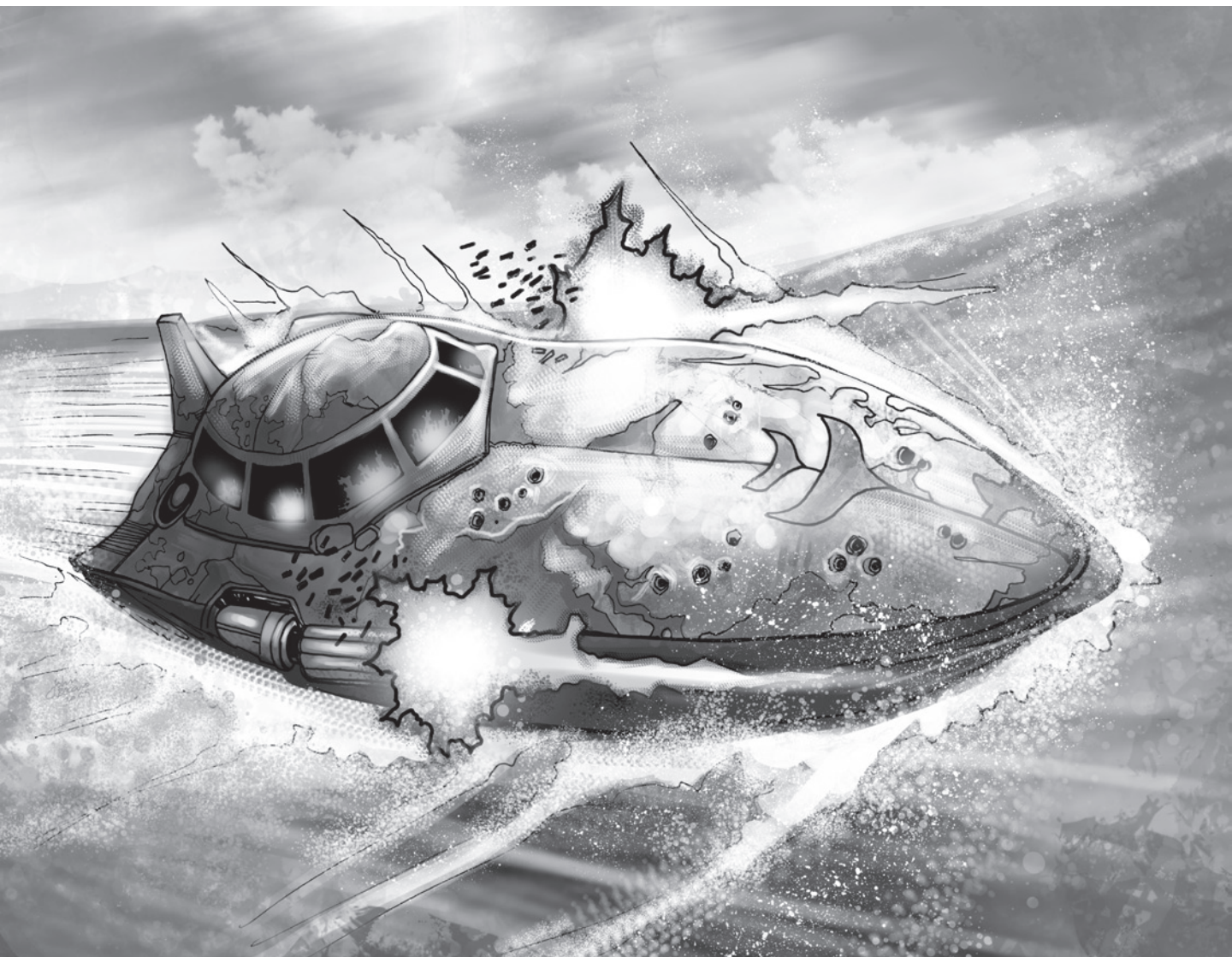
Small Arm Mount

Provides a mount for a personal firearm, such as an assault rifle, allowing it to be used and fired as a fixed vehicular weapon.

Cost: 1

Smoke Dispenser

Driver-operated mechanism which fills the air behind the vehicle with dense smoke every Round for 3 Rounds. Vehicles attempting maneuvers/attacks



Chapter 9

within the smoke increase the Difficulty of appropriate Actions by three levels. It can be used once before needing a refill.

Cost: 1

Solid Tires

Solid tires cannot be punctured.

Cost: 2

Tire-Burster Dispenser

Driver-operated mechanism which covers the road behind the vehicle in a shower of metal caltrops, glass, or sharp fragments of scrap. A pursuing driver must make a Nimbleness/Drive roll to avoid them or have their vehicle's tires shredded (Get the Tires!, page 80-81). It can be used once before needing a refill.

Cost: 2

Vehicle Armor, Light

Requirement: Muscle 1

Protection: 8

Cost: 1

Vehicle Armor, Medium

Requirement: Muscle 2

Protection: 11

Cost: 2

Vehicle Armor, Heavy

Requirement: Muscle 3

Protection: 14

Cost: 3

Vehicle Armor, Extra Heavy

Requirement: Muscle 4

Protection: 17

Cost: 4

Vehicle Armor, Extreme

Requirement: Muscle 5

Protection: 20

Cost: 5

Weapon, Ballista

Requirement: Muscle 2

Cost: 1

Weapon, Flame Thrower

Requirement: Muscle 2

Cost: 2

Weapon, Grenade Launcher, Heavy

Requirement: Muscle 2

Cost: 3

Weapon, Grenade Launcher, Light

Requirement: Muscle 1

Cost: 1

Weapon, Machine Gun, Heavy

Requirement: Muscle 2

Cost: 4

Weapon, Machine Gun, Light

Cost: 1

Weapon, Machine Gun, Medium

Requirement: Muscle 1

Cost: 2

Weapon, Rocket/Torpedo Launcher

Requirement: Muscle 1

Cost: 5

Weapon, Trebuchet

Requirement: Muscle 4

Cost: 4

Weapon Link

This customization links a pair of weapons to fire together (Linked Weapons, page 80).

Cost: 1

Wheel Spikes

The hubs of the wheels are fitted with rotating spikes or blades. When sideswiping (or being sideswiped by) another vehicle these increase the normal damage multiplier from x2 to x5, for purposes of damaging the other vehicle only. The vehicle bearing the wheel spikes still only takes the normal x2 Damage.

Additionally, with a successful Nimbleness/Drive roll, the driver can use the wheel spikes to attack the tires of another vehicle, destroying a tire each time such an attack is successful.

Cost: 2



Flaws

Flaws are presented as follows:

Name

Description and penalties.

Possible Reasons: Examples of possible descriptions for the Flaw.

Bonus Points: How many extra vehicle points the Flaw provides.

Decreased Muscle

The vehicle's Muscle is decreased by 1.

Possible Reasons: Lightweight, weak engine.

Bonus Points: 1

Decreased Nimbleness

The vehicle's Nimbleness is decreased by 1.

Possible Reasons: Half-track, ruined suspension, unresponsive steering.

Bonus Points: 1

Decreased Toughness

The vehicle's Toughness is decreased by 1.

Possible Reasons: Battered frame, flimsy paneling, shoddy welding.

Bonus Points: 1

Decreased Speed

The vehicle's Speed is decreased by 1.

Possible Reasons: Overburdened, weaker engine.

Bonus Points: 1

No Cover

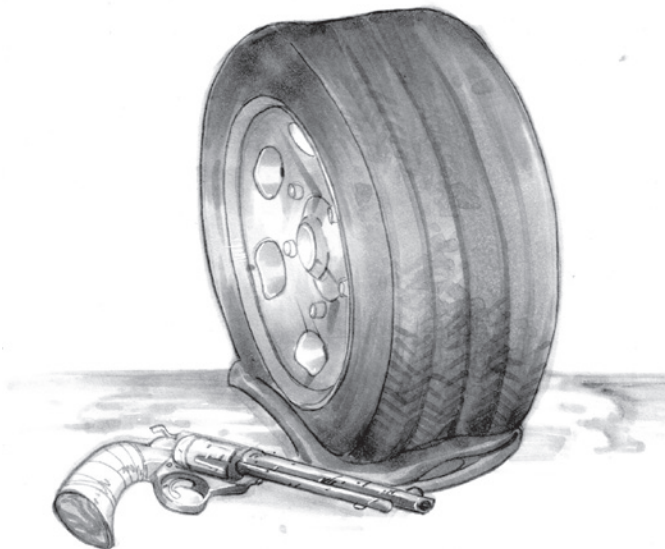
The operator and passengers of this vehicle do not have the benefit of their vehicle providing them any Cover for ranged attacks targeting them and are Ridden Vehicles (page 81) for Damage purposes. This Flaw is negated by the Rider Cockpit Customization.

Possible Reasons: Vehicle reduced to little more than framework and engine.

Bonus Points: 2

ADDING CUSTOMIZATIONS IN PLAY

Adding more customizations to a vehicle during a campaign or adventure is certainly possible, but in most cases requires access to an appropriate workshop or garage, or at least a sheltered area and applicable tools. It also obviously requires that the mechanic possesses the necessary material or weapons on-hand to conduct the customization. Although how long such work will take depends greatly on the complexity of the customization, a loose rule of thumb is 1-6 days + 1 day per Cost of the customization. The Difficulty is usually equal to half the Cost of the customization, rounded up. During this time the vehicle is extremely likely to be unavailable, which may present problems. Plus, of course, employing a skilled greaser or somehow hiring a garage may be a challenge itself.



CHAPTER 10

DIGGING IN THE DIRT

SCAVENGING

Scavenging for artifacts in the ruins of the past can turn up all manner of things immediately useful or of potential barter value. The ruins, while seldom intensely radioactive now, are still not healthy places to stay for extended periods, and most of the obvious and easily accessible locations have already been picked clean. Furthermore, many of the creatures that have managed to adapt and thrive in the ruins may be terribly mutated or unpredictable, and many tribes of degenerates have also established themselves in the shells and tunnels of the past. Finally, scavengers are notorious for their rivalry, and frequently take a very dim view to anyone scavenging in “their claim,” with theft and violence often resulting.

Although almost anything may be unearthed while scavenging, provided below are a dozen Scavenging tables for various types of goods and materials, as well as a selection of various locations and the Scavenging tables most likely to be rolled on when searching them.

Larger finds, such as most salvageable vehicles, should be placed at the GM’s discretion.

When picking through a specific wreck or digging through old ruins, an individual or small group can only make one die’s worth of scavenging rolls per day of game time, and the GM might rule that the wreck or ruin has been picked clean at any point. A scavenging roll is either an Understanding/Scavenge or Sense/Scavenge roll, depending on whether they have a general idea where to look, or are relying on spotting potentially interesting things. Every Success on a scavenging roll gives them a single roll on one appropriate Scavenging table of the GM’s choice for

the sort of ruin or wreck they are investigating. Table results are read across, then down. Results that don’t make sense for the specific location should be rerolled or replaced by anything the GM feels is appropriate. To determine condition where appropriate, roll one die and consult the following table:

Roll	Condition
1-2	Damaged, but repairable
3-5	Battered/Used but otherwise fine
6	Immaculate

Example: Rex and Jane are carefully picking over the ruins of a mechanic’s garage. A mechanic’s garage is ideal for rolls on the Automotive and Tools/Industrial Supplies Scavenging tables. A die roll results in 2, meaning they can only make two scavenging rolls today in the garage, so the GM has them make a roll each.

Jane scores a single Success, and her Player rolls on the Automotive Scavenging table getting 4, 2: Headlights. She rolls a die as indicated by the entry, getting 3. She has found three headlight bulbs! She rolls their condition, getting 5; they’re a bit scratched, but otherwise they’re okay.

Rex now makes his scavenging roll, and gets a single Success as well. The GM tells him to roll on the Tools/Industrial Supplies Scavenging table. Rex’s Player rolls 2, 2: Cans Exterior Paint! The Player rolls 4 for quantity, and so has found 4 cans of spray paint in various colors. Rolling for condition, he gets 6! The cans are as good as new, completely unused!



Sample Scavenging Locations

Antique Store (Antiques)
 Automobile (Automotive)
 Bookstore (Library)
 Cargo Train (Any)
 Clothing Store (Apparel)
 Construction Site (Tools/Industrial Supplies)
 Farm (Farming, Lawn/Garden)
 Freightier (Any)

Garden Store (Lawn/Garden)
 Gas Station (Automotive, Foodstuffs)
 Home (Apparel, Foodstuffs, Housewares)
 Hospital (Apparel, Automotive, Foodstuffs, Housewares, Medical)
 Hardware Store (Housewares, Lawn/Garden, Tools/Industrial Supplies)
 Laboratory (Medical)
 Library (Library)

Antiques			
	1	2	3
1	Phonograph & 4-24 Vinyl Records	1-3 Precious Metal Artifacts	1-6 Antique Dinner Plates
2	2-12 Collectible Knick-Knacks	1-3 Precious Gemstone Artifacts	1-6 Antique Cups
3	Transistor Radio	1-3 Precious Metal Jewelry	1-6 Antique Plates
4	Black/White Television	1-3 Precious Gem Jewelry	1-6 Antique Bowls
5	Early Video Game Unit	Security Camera	3-18 Antique Cutlery Pieces
6	8-Track Player & 4-24 Tapes	Alarm System	1-3 Antique Can Openers
	4	5	6
1	1-6 Black Powder Firearms	Sewing Machine	Manual Hand Mixer
2	1-6 Functional Melee Weapons	35mm Film Projector & 1-6 Film Reels	Antique Coffee Maker
3	1-2 Functional Replicas of Ancient Armor	Polaroid Camera & 2-12 Rolls of Film	Antique Motorless Lawn Mower
4	1-6 Historical Costumes	Mechanical Calculator	Manual Printing Press
5	Antique Bicycle	Mechanical Cash Register	Antique Iron
6	Manual Telescope	Mechanical Typewriter & Ink	Antique Mechanical Washing Machine

Apparel			
	1	2	3
1	1-6 Boxer Shorts	1-3 T-Shirts	1-3 Slacks
2	1-6 Briefs	1-3 Shirts	1-3 Shorts
3	1-6 Thongs	1-3 Sweatshirts	1-3 Skirts
4	1-3 Bras	1-3 Sweatpants	1-3 Minskirts
5	1-6 Socks	1-3 Tank Tops	1-3 Dresses
6	1-6 Tights/Stockings	1-3 Denim Jeans	1-3 Denim Overalls
	4	5	6
1	1-3 Gloves	1-3 Raincoats	1-3 Pairs Flip-Flops
2	1-3 Caps	1-2 Ponchos	1-3 Pairs Work Boots
3	1-3 Hats	1-3 Pairs High Heels	1-3 Ties
4	1-3 Jackets	1-3 Pairs Shoes	1-3 Pairs Sunglasses
5	1-3 Trench Coats	1-3 Pairs Sneakers	Business Suit
6	1-3 Fur Coats	1-3 Pairs Boots	Tuxedo/Gown



Chapter 10

Mechanic's Garage (Automotive, Tools/Industrial Supplies)

Military Base (Automotive, Foodstuffs, Housewares, Medical, Military, Sporting/Outdoors)

Museum (Antiques)

Outdoor Outfitter (Sporting/Outdoors)

Pharmacy (Medical)

Police Station (Automotive, Military)

Restaurant (Foodstuffs, Housewares)

Shopping Mall (Apparel, Foodstuffs, Housewares, Sporting/Outdoors)

Truck Stop (Automotive, Foodstuffs)

Truck Trailer (Any)

Automotive			
	1	2	3
1	Rooftop Cargo Carrier	1-6 Dashboard Ornaments	1-3 12v Car Batteries
2	Trailer Hitch	1-6 Bottles Engine Cleaner	1-6 Jumper Cables
3	2-12 Assorted Tools	1-6 Bottles Fuel Additive	2-12 Bottles Motor Oil
4	Portable Battery Charger	1-6 Bottle Car Shampoo	1-6 Oil Filters
5	2-12 Automotive Tires	1-6 Bottles Degreaser	1-2 Car Jacks
6	2-12 Truck Tires	1-6 Bottles Car Wax	2-12 Bottles Automatic Transmission Fluid
	4	5	6
1	1-6 Replacement Mirrors	1-2 Basic Tool Sets	2-12 Bottle Brake Fluid
2	1-6 Headlights	Air Ratchet & Mini Compressor	3-18 Brake Pads
3	1-6 Fuses	1-3 Tire Irons	1-6 Canisters Body Filler
4	1-6 Tubes Adhesive	2-Ton Shop jack	1-3 Overalls/Boiler Suits
5	1-6 AC/DC Outlet Converters	1-2 Wet/Dry Shop Vacuums	2-12 Windshield Wipers
6	2-12 Car Air Fresheners	1-2 Lockable Tool Cases	2-12 Air Filters

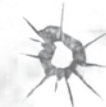
Farming			
	1	2	3
1	1-6 50lbs. Bags Feed Grain	Tractor	Large Fuel Tank w/ 50-300gal. Gasoline or Diesel
2	1-2 50lbs. Bags Viable Seed	Tractor Plow Attachment	2-12 Bottles Motor Oil
3	1-3 50gal. Metal Barrels	Tractor Sprayer Attachment	Gas Powered Generator
4	1-2 80gal. Metal Troughs	Tractor Seeder Attachment	50ft-300ft Industrial Hose w/ Various Fittings
5	1-6 5gal. Plastic Buckets	Tractor Tiller Attachment	1-3 High Power Torch Lamps
6	1-6 8gal. Metal Buckets	Tractor Harvester Attachment	CB (Citizens' Band) Radio Unit
	4	5	6
1	200ft-1200ft Barbed Wire	1-6 Brooms	1-3 Long-Handled Axes
2	50-300ft Chicken Wire	1-6 Pitch Forks	Hammer & 50-300 Nails
3	50ft-300ft Plastic Twine	1-6 Shovels	Manual Staple Gun & 50-300 Staples
4	50ft-300ft Heavy Rope	1-6 Post Hole Diggers	1-6 5gal. Buckets Industrial Cleaner
5	1-6 Pulleys & Hooks	1-6 Rakes	1-6 Scrub Brushes
6	1-3 16ftx20ft Tarpaulins	1-6 Long Scissor Tongs	1-6 Cans Outdoor Paint & Brushes



Foodstuffs			
	1	2	3
1	1-2 Jars Cocoa Powder	1-3 Bottles Red Wine	3-18 Cans Beer
2	1-6 Jars Pickles	1-3 Bottles White Wine	1-2 Kegs Beer
3	1-6 Military M.R.Es (Meals Ready to Eat)	1-3 Bottles Whiskey	2-12 Cans Soda
4	5gal. Tub Corn Syrup	1-2 Bottles Vodka	2-12 Cans Diet Soda
5	1-6 Bags Dried Beans	1-2 Bottles Tequila	1-3 Vac Packs Ground Coffee
6	1-6 Jars Honey/Molasses	1-2 Bottles Liqueur	1-3 Vac Packs Powdered Milk
	4	5	6
1	1-6 Cans Beans	1-6 Cans Nuts	1-2 Cans Condensed Milk
2	1-6 Cans Fruit	1-3 Bags Rice	1-2 Vac Bags Beef Jerky
3	1-6 Cans Vegetables	1-3 Bags Pasta	1-3 Jars Jam/Preserves
4	1-6 Cans Meat	1-2 Gallon Bottles Cooking Oil	1-3 Bags Sugar
5	1-6 Cans Soup	1-2 Bottles Sauce/Ketchup	1-2 Bottles Vinegar
6	1-6 Canned Puddings	1-2 Packets Salt	1-2 Packets Black Pepper

Housewares			
	1	2	3
1	1-6 Plates	1-6 Bath Towels	Toilet Seat
2	1-6 Mugs	1-6 Bed Liners	Space Heater
3	1-6 Bowls	1-6 Curtains/Blinds	Pedestal Fan
4	1-6 Glasses	1-2 Rugs	Garbage Can
5	3-18 Pieces Cutlery	1-6 Pillows	Steam Cleaner
6	1-2 Can Openers	1-3 Blankets	Vacuum Cleaner
	4	5	6
1	1-6 Packs Laundry Soap	Toaster Oven	1-3 Iron Skillets
2	1-3 Bottles Bleach	Blender	1-3 Pots/Pans
3	1-6 Bottles Dish Soap	Coffee Maker	1-3 Spatulas
4	Bag Dishwasher tablets	Standing Mixer	Griddle Pans
5	1-3 Bottles Gen. Cleaner	Microwave Oven	Wok
6	1-6 Scrubbing Sponges	1-6 Kitchen Knives	Kettle

Library Media Type Chart	
Roll	Media
1-3	Paper Book
4	Audio book Cassette/CD
5	Interactive DVD
6	Special Media, e.g. Microfilm or Braille



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Library			
	1	2	3
1	1-3 Cookbooks	1-6 Entertainment Mags	1-3 Encyclopedia Volumes
2	1-3 DIY Books	1-6 Sci/Tech Mags	1-3 Dictionaries
3	1-3 Puzzle Books	1-6 Fashion Mags	1-3 Thesauri
4	1-3 Self Help Books	1-6 Newspapers	1-3 Technical References
5	1-3 Biographies	1-6 Homecare Mags	1-3 Medical References
6	1-3 Horror Books	1-6 Fitness Mags	1-3 Science References
	4	5	6
1	1-3 Mystery Books	1-3 Romance Books	1-3 Math References
2	1-3 Literature Books	1-3 Pieces Classical Music	1-3 Sociology References
3	1-3 Fantasy/Sci-fi Books	1-3 Pieces Western Music	1-3 Psychology References
4	1-3 Humor Books	1-3 Pieces Alternative Music	1-3 Religious References
5	1-3 Pop Culture Books	1-3 Pieces Dance/Pop Music	1-3 Historical References
6	1-3 Poetry Books	1-3 Pieces Rock/Metal Music	1-3 Military References

Lawn/Garden			
	1	2	3
1	2-12 Plant Pots	1-6 Bottles Fertilizer	Hedge Trimmer
2	Solar Powered Lamp	1-6 Bags Potting Soil	Lawn Mower
3	Hedge Clippers	1-6 Bottles Weed Killer	Riding Lawn Mower
4	Pruning Shears	Wheelbarrow	Weed Wacker
5	1-3 Shovels	1-3 Rakes/Forks	Can of Gasoline
6	Rain Barrel	50ft Garden Hose	Bottle of Motor Oil
	4	5	6
1	1-3 Trowels	1-3 Cans Insect Repellent	Lawn Sprinkler
2	1-2 Boxes Rodent Poison	1-3 Boxes Matches	Lawn Umbrella
3	1-3 Bottles Insecticide	1-3 Lighter Wands	Inflatable Paddling Pool
4	1-6 Bags Charcoal	1-6 Bottles Lighter Fluid	1-6 Folding Chairs
5	3-18 Citronella Candles	Large Grill	Collapsible 10ftx10ft Pavilion
6	Leaf Blower	Lawn Table	Large Ice Chest

Medical			
	1	2	3
1	2-12 Bottles Painkillers	Portable Defibrillator	4-24 Toothbrushes
2	1-6 Bottles Depressants	Oxygen Canister & Breathing Mask	4-24 Tubes Toothpaste
3	1-6 Bottles Anti-Depressants	2-12 Surgical Tools	1-6 Cans Shaving Gel
4	1-6 Bottles Antibiotics	1-6 Rolls Fiberglass Casting Tape	1-3 Electric Razors
5	2-12 Bottles Cold/Flu Medicine	1-6 Bottles Disinfectant	3-18 Disposable Razors
6	1-3 Packs Laxatives	Blood Pressure Gauge & Cuff	3-18 Fingernail Grooming Kits

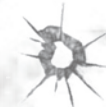


	4	5	6
1	1-6 Bottles Stomach Medicine	1-3 Stethoscopes	2-12 Bottles Shampoo
2	1-6 Boxes Adhesive Bandages	1-6 Thermometers	1-6 Cans Deodorant
3	1-6 Rolls Gauze Bandages	1-3 Otoscopes	2-12 Bars Soap
4	1-3 First Aid Kits	1-3 Boxes Surgical Gloves	1-6 Cans Hairspray
5	Folding Wheelchair	1-3 Scrubs	1-6 Combs/Brushes
6	1-3 Pairs Crutches	1-6 Plastic Splints	2-12 Tubes Sunscreen

Military Ammo Type Chart	
Roll	Ammo
1-2	Light
3-5	Medium
6	Heavy

Military			
	1	2	3
1	1-2 Light Handguns	1-2 Pump Shotguns	1-2 Light Ballistic Vests (Medium Armor)
2	1-3 Medium Handguns	1-3 Submachine Guns	Heavy Ballistic Vest & Helmet
3	Heavy Handgun	1-2 Light Machine Guns	1-2 Night Vision Goggles
4	1-2 Light Rifles	Medium Machine Gun	1-3 NBC Suits (Nuclear, Biological, Chemical)
5	1-3 Medium Rifles	Heavy Machine Gun	1-3 Gun Scopes
6	1-2 Heavy Rifles	1-3 Assault Rifles	1-6 Bayonets
	4	5	6
1	1-6 Combat Knives	100-300rds. Rifle/MG Ammo*	1-6 Grenades, Fragmentation
2	Flame Thrower	100-300rds. Rifle/MG Ammo*	1-6 Grenades, Smoke
3	Grenade Launcher, Light	100-300rds. Rifle/MG Ammo*	1-6 Grenades, Teargas
4	Grenade Launcher, Heavy	100-300rds. Handgun/SMG Ammo*	1-6 Mine, Fragmentation
5	Rocket Launcher	100-300rds. Handgun/SMG Ammo*	1-6 Blocks C-4 Explosives x/ Detonators
6	1-6 Water Canteens	1-6 Combat Uniforms	1-2 Dress Uniforms

Sporting/Outdoors Ammo Chart	
Roll	Ammo
1-4	Light
5-6	Medium



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Sporting/Outdoor Goods			
	1	2	3
1	1-2 Swiss Army Knives	1-6 Emergency Flares	1-6 Water Canteens
2	1-3 Fishing Rods & Reels	1-2 Folding Stools	2-Man Tent
3	1-2 Binoculars	1-2 Propane Camp Stoves	4-Man Tent
4	1-3 Flashlights	1-2 Portable Propane Tanks	1-3 Sleeping Bags
5	2-12 Sports Balls	1-6 Fire Starter Kits	1-2 Folding Cots
6	1-6 Tennis Rackets	1-2 Portable Propane Grills	1-3 Thermal Blankets
	4	5	6
1	Set Climbing Gear	1-2 Sets Skis and Sticks	Pump Shotgun
2	Set Arctic Gear	1-2 Snowboards	Light Rifle
6	1-2 Sets Snorkeling Gear	1-3 Skateboards	Medium Rifle
4	1-2 Sets Hockey Gear	1-2 Bicycles	12-36 Shotguns Shells
5	1-3 Sets Football Gear	1-3 Pairs Rollerblades	20-60 Rifle Rounds
6	1-2 Sets Golf Clubs	1-3 Pairs Iceskates	Short Bow & 2-12 Arrows

Tools/Industrial Supplies			
	1	2	3
1	2-12 Rolls Duct Tape	1-6 Cans Wood Stain	2-12 PVC Pipes
2	1-2 Ratchet Sets	1-6 Cans Exterior Paint	2-12 Metal Pipes
3	1-6 Hammers	1-6 Cans Paint Thinner	1-6 Tubes Epoxy Putty
4	1-2 Crowbars	2-12 Brushes/Rollers	1-6 Tubes Silicone Rubber
5	1-6 Adjustable Wrenches	2-12 Boxes Screws	2-12 Boxes Nuts & Bolts
6	1-2 Sledgehammers	1-6 Bags Plaster Mix	2-12 Boxes Nails
	4	5	6
1	Mechanical Repair Manual	Nail Gun	1-2 Propane Torches
2	Basic Carpentry Manual	Drill	Chainsaw
3	Electrical Repair Manual	Air Compressor	1-2 Tape Measures
4	Basic Plumbing Manual	Portable Generator	1-2 Bolt Cutters
5	Car Maintenance Manual	Staple Gun	1-3 Saws
6	Gardening Manual	1-3 Screwdriver Sets	1-2 Pick Axes



CHAPTER II

IGNITION!

V6 ENGINE BASICS!

This section covers the rules that are central to nearly everything in *Atomic Highway*. If you can read and understand these basics you'll already know enough to get to grips with the game without too much difficulty. Let's get started!

The V6 Engine

We call the rules used to run games of *Atomic Highway* the V6 Engine, short for "Victory6" because it uses six-sided dice exclusively, and because we thought it sounded cool.

Characters in the game, both those played by the Players (PCs) and those run by the GM (GMCs), frequently attempt all manner of dramatic, crazy, and death-defying actions. They leap from the rooftop of one speeding car to the next, try to shoot the snarling savage leaping at them, or attempt to convince the angry mob to release the pitiful mutant they've chased down.

R.A.D. SAYS: CHANCES OF SUCCESS

The V6 Engine system is set up so that characters succeed at tasks far more frequently than they fail. The average human (Attribute 2) with a competent level of skill (Skill 2) has a 75% chance of succeeding at a Difficult task. Even a clumsy novice (Attribute 1, Skill 1) has a 33% chance of succeeding, this dropping to 16% if they have no skill at all.

If you find that success comes too easy for your tastes as a group, simply increase the number of required Successes by 1. So, two Successes are needed for Difficult tasks, 3 Successes for Extreme tasks, and so on (Tougher Tasks, page 64).

WHEN TO ROLL, WHEN NOT TO ROLL

If you have characters rolling for every action, it gets pretty boring very quickly, wasting a lot of time that could be spent getting to the good stuff. All the things anyone can do without much difficulty, such as opening a door, climbing a ladder, driving normally, and so on don't need to be rolled for. Of course, if your character is trying to desperately clamber up an old rickety ladder with a terrible mutant beast snapping at his heels, that's an entirely different story, definitely requiring a roll of the bones.

The V6 Engine is set up with the assumption that you only roll when a task is actually difficult. Rolls should only be called for when the outcome is in doubt, the task being attempted is difficult, or it's important and dramatic. In short: ONLY ROLL WHEN THE TASK IS DIFFICULT, IMPORTANT, AND/OR DRAMATIC!

Using Skills

Most character actions are taken using Skills, such as Melee when wielding a club in an attempt to bludgeon a ravening freak, or Intimidate when trying to frighten a sniveling toady into revealing what he knows of the raider chief's plans. All such rolls follow the same process, as detailed here, so let's take a look. (Don't worry, it looks more complicated than it really is.)

1) Consider the Action

Consider what your character is trying to do and how they are trying to do it.



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Example: Rex is attempting to frighten a local thug into revealing to whom he sells his ill-gotten gains. He lifts the thug off the floor physically, and clenches his hand into a menacing fist inches in front of the thug's face while snarling, "Talk!"

2) Select Attribute

Select the most obvious Attribute your character is using in their attempt. The Skills section lists the most common Attribute used with each Skill.

Example: If Rex was trying to frighten someone with sheer force of personality he'd use the Appeal Attribute, but in this case he's using a bit of brute strength and threat of violence, so Muscle is more appropriate.

3) Select Skill

The Skill descriptions will give you plenty of guidance here, but in most cases this is pretty obvious, such as Drive for operating a car, or Persuade when trying to barter some scavenged goods with a tradesman in a bartertown.

Example: According to the Skill descriptions, Intimidate is the Skill to use when trying to frighten or interrogate, and continuing our example with Rex, it's the obvious choice here.

If no existing Skill seems appropriate and it's clearly something for which skill is necessary (such as drawing a detailed portrait), simply make the roll as if your character had no Skill (see Step 5). If it's something for which no skill is needed, such as lifting a car engine block, it's an Attribute-Only roll.

4) Roll Attribute Dice

Roll a number of six-sided dice equal to the Attribute, with each 6 being a Success. Any dice that naturally come up 6 can be rerolled, and if they come up 6 again they add another Success. This can be repeated until the die rolls lower than 6.

Example: Rex has Muscle 4, so his Player rolls four dice. He gets 2, 3, 4, and 6! One Success! He rolls that 6 again but only rolls a 2, so no extra Success unfortunately.

5) Add Skill Points

You can use your character's Skill level as a finite number of points with which to "bump up" the results of one or more dice to achieve more 6s - more Successes are better. You can split the Skill levels your character has however you want among the dice, so if they possess the Skill at Master level (5) you could add 2 points to one result, and 1 point to each of three others; or 1 point to each of five results; or all 5 points to a single result, or however else you want.

ATTRIBUTES OVER 5

While the adult human range of Attributes is 1-5, some beasts and mutants possess Attributes beyond the human range, extending as high as 10! You do not roll up to 10 dice, however. When an Attribute is over 5, you roll five dice as normal, then add a single automatic Success to the result for every Attribute point in excess of 5. These extra levels of Attribute past 5 do not add to the results in Step 5 for Attribute-Only rolls.

Example: A mutant beast with Muscle 7 makes an Attribute-Only roll, and rolls five dice (the maximum), getting 1, 2, 3, 5, 5, using their 5 Attribute points to turn the 3, 5, and 5 into three Successes! Their 2 Muscle points in excess of 5 are added to the result as automatic Successes for a total of five Successes!

You can neither reroll bumped-up 6s to gain more Successes, nor bump up rerolls that are a result of natural 6s. Nice try though.

You have access to your character's Skill points for any and all actions they take using that Skill. Skill points do not run out, they "renew" with each roll.

If your character does not have the appropriate Skill, they do not have any Skill points to add, and only get Successes from their Attribute dice roll.

Example 1: From our example above, with one success already rolled, Rex also has Intimidate 3, so his Player chooses to add those three points to the 3 result he rolled, making another 6! Two Successes total!

Example 2: Garran the traitor (Nimbleness 2) tries to leap over a pit while fleeing Gunmetal Jane! He rolls 2, 5. No Successes! Luckily though, he has Athletics 1, and his Player makes the obvious choice to add that 1 to his 5, bringing it up to 6, a single Success! Garran makes the jump!

Example 3: Gunmetal Jane (Nimbleness 4) in hot pursuit, tries the same jump. Her Player rolls 1, 2, 4, and 4. No Successes either! Fortunately, she has Athletics 4, and using the 4 points she has to play with, the Player adds 2 to each 4, bringing them both up to 6! Two Successes and Jane sails gracefully over the pit with room to spare!

Using Attributes Only

Sometimes characters try things that rely purely on raw natural ability, not upon skills or training. Fighting off the effects of poison, or trying to hold on to a chain while dangling perilously from an autogyro - such actions are Attribute-Only rolls.

Attribute-Only rolls follow the same process as



Using Skills above, but obviously don't have an applicable Skill to add. Instead, the Attribute is used both for the number of dice rolled and the number of points that can be added in Step 5.

Example: *Garran topples a rusting hulk as Jane closes with him, causing it to fall on her, trapping her leg! With no friends nearby, she has to try to lift the debris off her trapped leg unaided. She has Muscle 2, and no Skill is appropriate to just lifting things. Her Player rolls 2, 4. No Successes, but with Muscle 2 she can add two points to her results and wisely adds them to the result of 4, making it a 6, a Success! With a grunt of effort, Jane lifts the debris just enough to slide her leg out.*

Bad Things Happen

When all the dice in a given roll come up 1, something bad has happened. The action hasn't necessarily failed as a Master (5) Skill can turn even a pitiful 1 into a Success, but something disastrous has happened as decided by the GM. This should be potentially dangerous or embarrassing, but not outright lethal, and should depend on what was being undertaken. For example, a lockpick might break off in a lock, preventing any further attempt to pick it. A spiked club might get stuck in the door behind the opponent you were trying to strike. You might trip as you try to show off your athletic skill and land in a disheveled heap.

Example: *Garran fires his pistol at Jane, chuckling viciously! He rolls his Nimbleness 2 and gets a pair of 1s! Not only has he failed miserably to shoot her because his Shoot 2 is not good enough to create a Success, something bad has happened! The GM decides that Garran accidentally drops his gun, sending it sliding across the floor!*

Competing Rolls

Your character attempts to dodge beneath the horrific mutant's swinging claws! The gunslinger locks eyes with his nemesis, the first to flinch, the loser! When two or more characters pit their Skills or Attributes directly against each other, the winner is determined via Competing rolls.

In such cases, every character involved follows the Skill or Attribute-Only use rules above, following these steps in order to determine the winner:

- 1) If only one character achieves any Successes, they win.
- 2) If two or more competing characters achieve Successes, the character with the highest number of Successes wins.
- 3) If characters have the same number of Successes,

the character with the highest Skill being used wins.

4) If characters have the same level of Skill, the character with the highest Attribute being used wins.

5) If characters have the same Attribute value, the contest is a tie, with no clear winner, as interpreted by the Gamemaster - two knife-fighters might lock blades momentarily, for example.

Example: *Jane and Garran are engaged in a bitter fight, both diving madly for the gun lying in the dirt nearby! Both roll Nimbleness/Athletics, with the winner being the one to grab the gun! The GM rolls Garran's Nimbleness 2 and gets 1, 5! No Successes, but he adds his single point of Athletics to the 5 to bring it up to 6, a single Success! Jane's Player rolls her Nimbleness 4 and gets 2, 4, 5, 6! A single Success! She tries a reroll on the 6 but only gets a 1. She then*



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uses her Athletics 4 to boost the 5 up to 6 and the 4 up to 6 as well! A total of three Successes! Far more than Garran's single Success. Jane grins triumphantly as she snatches the gun from beneath Garran's outstretched hand and levels it at his ugly mug!

Tougher Tasks

In the majority of cases, acquiring a single Success is enough to succeed at a task, but sometimes things are more challenging. It can be hard enough to pull off a tight maneuver in a speeding car, but if you have to do it when the roads are rain-slicked and you're running on only three good tires, things get much trickier. In these situations, the GM may require more Successes in order to perform the task, using the guidelines at the bottom of the page.

Teamwork

It's possible for multiple characters to cooperate on a task such as trying to push a derelict old truck over the edge of a chasm. In these situations, use the following rule:

Use the highest individual Attribute and Skill ratings of the characters involved, but add an extra die and extra Skill point for each character beyond the first aiding the event. The number of characters capable of working together on the same task simultaneously should be limited by common sense; only so many individuals can try to lift the same boulder at the same time, for instance. Characters assisting in tasks

ONLY USE THE HIGHEST MODIFIER

Calculating every possible modifier to an action slows things down. Just use the highest modifier possible rather than add them all together (i.e., modifiers don't "stack") - it's a lot faster and easier.

requiring the use of a Skill must possess that Skill to provide help.

Example: Jane and Rex work together to break down a locked wooden door, shoulder charging it at the same time! No Skill is applicable, but Rex has the highest strength with Muscle 4. Because he's being aided by one other individual, his Player adds an extra die to make it Muscle 5 for the attempt, and he can modify his results with up to 5 points instead of his normal 4. Rex's Player rolls getting 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6! One Success! Because the door is barred on the other side, the GM has ruled that at least three Successes are needed to break it down, so Rex's Player spends 2 of his Muscle points to raise the 4, and 3 of his Muscle points to raise the 3, giving him the three Successes needed! Under the combined assault of Rex and Jane, the reinforced door bursts open!

Using Fortune

It happens time and again, the heroes beat staggering odds to save the day or avoid an unpleasant fate. The arch-villain conveniently escapes to plague the

Successes	Difficulty	Examples
1	Difficult	Pulling a Bootlegger turn during a chase. Shooting someone in a firefight. Leaping safely over a several-yard wide chasm
2	Extreme	Jumping a motorcycle over a half-dozen car lengths. Hitting a target at Long Range Running up a wall and then backflipping up and over an opponent.
3	Arduous	Pulling a Bootlegger turn under the flatbed of a moving semi. Shooting a pistol from someone's hand. Running along a narrow beam while being shot at.
4	Tremendous	Driving an automobile on two wheels between two fast moving semis. Severing a sturdy rope at a short distance with a single gunshot. Reaching the ground safely by bouncing from wall-to-wall in a narrow space between buildings.
5+	Heroic	Jumping an automobile into a barrel roll over the top of a moving vehicle while firing. Ricocheting a bullet off a wall to strike an opponent behind Complete Cover. Leaping off a moving semi trailer to land on the seat of a motorcycle racing past at high speed.



heroes another day. In books and movies, it's because everything occurs as set out in a preordained plot - but that's not the case in roleplaying games. To represent that level of plot immunity and jaw-dropping luck, Major characters in *Atomic Highway*, namely the PCs and any important villains, have something called Fortune.

PCs start each game session with 5 Fortune, but Players may earn more in play. Unspent Fortune cannot be saved from session to session, so be sure to use it! Fortune can be spent after any roll.

During play, Fortune can be spent by the Players or GM to gain any of the following benefits at the listed costs:

Gain Extra Successes (1 Fortune per extra Success): You can add an extra Success to a character's action. This can ensure at least one Success or add to those already rolled. Extra Successes gained with Fortune cannot be used to offset Bad Things Happen.

Example: Attempting to sneak past a guard dog, Jane rolls and scores one Success. As it's a Competing roll, the guard dog rolls and gets three Successes, meaning it will notice Jane easily! Realizing she simply cannot afford to be noticed, her Player spends 3 Fortune, raising Jane's Successes to four, enough to beat the dog's total. Jane manages to sneak past the alert hound.

[Optional] Perform Dual Action (2 Fortune): Ordinarily characters may only attempt a single Action in a given Round, but by spending 2 Fortune, a character can attempt two Actions in the same Round, either simultaneously or in a particular order, at no penalty. They might kick one opponent while shooting another, for example. A character cannot perform concurrent Actions and dual Actions in the same turn.

Example: Jane is surrounded by slavering freaks and wants to take them down quickly. Her Player spends 2 Fortune, and describes how Jane launches a kick at the head of one opponent while she fires her pistol at another! Her Player makes a separate roll for each Action.

Plot Tweak (2 Fortune): You can make a minor tweak or addition to the current in-game environment or situation that somehow benefits the character. Any tweaks should be somewhat believable in the given circumstances.

Examples: Rex just happens to find a rusted but usable hammer on the shelf in that decrepit shack when he most needs one. Jane suddenly realizes that the chains the raiders wrapped her in are partly rusted through on one link, and won't be too hard to break and escape.

Plot Twist (5 Fortune): You can make a significant twist or change to the current situation that somehow benefits a character. These twists should have some

level of vague plausibility as anything too ridiculous can ruin the entire game. This use of Fortune should be carefully considered, and its inclusion should be agreed to by the whole group before play.

Examples: The jailer who comes to feed Jane just happens to be someone who owes her their life and will help her escape. The defeated villain's body cannot be found, indicating he likely survived or escaped against all odds.

Reduce An Opponent's Successes (2 Fortune per Success removed): You can remove a Success from a character's roll. This can cause them to fail entirely.

Example: Rex is engaged in an arm-wrestling contest with a local bruiser, his reputation on the line. Both contestants are equally matched in all ways, and both achieve two Successes! Wanting this contest done with, Rex's Player spends 2 Fortune and removes one of the bruiser's Successes, reducing him to one Success, making Rex the clear winner.

Reduce Injury/Damage (1 Fortune): You can remove some Damage from a character or vehicle equal to half its normal full Health. Lethal and Non-Lethal Damage are treated equally, and you cannot raise the character's or vehicle's Health above its normal maximum.

Example: Jane has been pretty badly mauled in a savage fight with a mutant cougar, and though victorious, has been reduced to 3 Health, a fraction of her full 16 Health. She spends a Fortune and immediately gains back 8 Health (half of her normal full total), bringing her up to 11 Health. Grimacing, wiping away blood and dust, the pained and bloodied Jane rises to her feet in surprisingly good shape given the fight, looking worse than she actually feels.

Reroll Bad Things Happen (3 Fortune): You can completely negate the bad incident that occurs when you roll all 1s on your dice by rerolling. In the unlikely event you reroll all 1s again, reroll until you get a result that isn't all 1s.

Example: Rex is attempting to leap from the top of a speeding automobile to a nearby truck. To his Player's horror, all the dice rolled come up 1! This could be disastrous in the circumstances, so the Player spends 3 Fortune and rerolls.

R.A.D. SAYS: MAKE IT TACTILE!

Rather than just record and tick off Fortune gained and spent, we recommend you use something more tactile to represent these points. Nuts and bolts, glass beads, spent bullet casings, coins, pebbles, whatever you like. It adds to the fun of the game to be given or discard Fortune this way.



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Earning Fortune

Although every Player character automatically begins a session with 5 Fortune, it is possible for Players to earn more Fortune for their characters during or even before play sessions. If your group agrees that you demonstrate any of the following, you can be awarded an extra Fortune in each case, but cannot retain more than 10 at any given time:

Cool Dialogue: You come up with a particularly cool or witty and original one-liner, comeback or phrase that your characters says.

Example: Upon beating a local bully, your character says, "Don't worry... with a face as ugly as yours, no one'll notice the bruises."

Cool Stunts/Descriptions: You come up with an evocative or creative description of something your character does.

Example: Your character is fighting Lord Gigantus, muscle-bound leader of the local raiders! You state, "My character dives between Lord Gigantus' legs, rolling as he lands to come up behind the raider chief, a savage smile on his face!"

Dedicated Play: You show dedication to the game and everyone's enjoyment.

Examples: You host the game at your house, you bring snacks that everyone can share, you illustrate characters or scenes from the sessions, you maintain a journal or wiki of the events of the sessions.

Good Characterization: You portray your character's personality traits memorably and accurately, even going so far as to portray them that way when doing so makes their life difficult.

Example: You originally described your character as being sarcastic and bitter, and even have them make snide remarks when sweeter words would be more likely to convince someone to help them.

Good Problem Solving/Creative Thinking: You come up with creative and viable solutions or plans to the obstacles that your character encounters in-game.

Example: Imprisoned in a concrete bunker, you come up with a remarkable and viable escape plan using only the everyday items scattered around you.

Good Team Play: You show that you place the success of the PC group ahead of the success of your own individual character.

Example: Your character discovers a perfectly preserved assault rifle from the Before Times but rather than keep it, gives it to the Player Character who can best use it to the benefit of everyone.

Heroism: You put your character's life in jeopardy to do the right thing. No awards for doing so if it unnecessarily imperils the other PCs though; there's a fine line between heroism and brash stupidity.

Example: Your character tries to buy time for innocent townsfolk to escape some rampaging mutant monstrosities, valiantly laying his life on the line to protect them.



Outrider



CHAPTER 12

PEDAL TO THE METAL!

Action!

Action forms the heart of many roleplaying sessions, whether it's a pulse-pounding battle, death-defying stunt, or tarmac-blistering chase. When the action heats up, things call for a little more attention (as you'll see below).

Round and Round and Round We Go!

To keep things manageable and ensure everyone gets a turn at doing something, action is broken down into units of time called Rounds. Each Round represents a few seconds of time for the characters, but will take much longer to resolve in real time, as every character involved gets a turn. Let's look at the process of a Round step-by-step:

1) Initiative! – Who Goes When?

The order in which characters take their turns during a Round is called Initiative. Every character involved in a scene, Major or Minor, gets to take a single Action on their turn in the following order:

- Characters take their turns in order from the highest Nimbleness value to the lowest unless someone has been ambushed or otherwise surprised (Surprise!, below).
- When characters have the same Nimbleness, Major characters take their turns first, followed by Minor characters.
- If Major characters have the same Nimbleness, the PCs go first followed by the GMCs.
- If any PCs have the same Nimbleness they take their turns in order of seating, clockwise from the GM left to right.

- Waiting

A character can wait to perform their Action later in a Round in anticipation of a particular event. When a character waits they can take their Action at any point later in the Round, assuming the situation they were waiting for occurs.

Example: Jane has Initiative over Garran, and her Player says, "If Garran so much as flinches, Jane pulls the trigger of the pistol she has pointed at him." On Garran's turn, the GM describes how Garran suddenly lunges at Jane! Jane, having waited for just such a possibility, immediately resolves her shooting Action before the GM rolls to see if Garran can wrest the gun from her.

- Surprise!

Now and again characters either stumble upon potential opponents unexpectedly, sneak up behind them to take them down quickly, or ambush enemies in order to gain the element of surprise. Noticing an ambush typically involves a Competing roll of the victim's Sense/Notice vs. the ambusher's Nimbleness/Stealth (if sneaking) or Understanding/Stealth (if lying in ambush).

Opponents who stumble upon each other are both momentarily surprised, but can act normally afterwards. Similarly, if a sneaking attacker or hidden ambusher is noticed, combat proceeds normally. Things get nasty, however, if someone fails to notice the hidden assailant before they launch their attack. Someone successfully ambushed or unknowingly blindsided completely loses their ability to act for the entire Round, meaning they cannot perform Actions or Reactions until the start



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of the next Round. It really sucks to be surprised.

Example 1: A couple of hungry morlocks lie in wait behind some rubble for the unsuspecting Rex and Jane as they cautiously make their way through the twisted ruins of a nuked city. Chunks of rubble clutched in their pallid hands, the morlocks hope to ambush Rex and Jane by hurling the rocks at them before they can react. The GM makes a single Understanding/Stealth roll for the morlocks to see how well they are hiding, gaining two Successes! Jane's and Rex's Players roll Senses/Notice to see if they notice the morlocks, but neither achieves more than one Success. The morlocks leap out from behind some crumbling concrete taking Rex and Jane by surprise! Rex and Jane can only stand agog for the first Round as the bug-eyed muties throw jagged pieces of masonry at them! The morlocks roll Nimbleness/Athletics, both achieving a single Success which Jane and Rex cannot make any kind of defensive rolls to avoid! Jane loses 4L Health as the rock crunches into her shoulder, and Rex loses 4L Health as well as the second morlock's rock gashes his thigh! Ouch!

Example 2: Having survived the morlock's initial ambush, Rex and Jane now spring into action as the morlocks charge them, gibbering and drooling! Jane has Nimbleness 4, Rex Nimbleness 2, and the morlocks' Nimbleness 3, so they take Actions in the following order: Jane, Morlock 1, Morlock 2, Rex.

R.A.D. SAYS: SEATING ORDER

You can save a lot of time by having the Players sit in order of their character's Nimbleness clockwise from the GM around the play area.

OPTIONAL RULE – ROLLING FOR INITIATIVE

If your group wants Initiative that's a bit more random, and is prepared to spend a bit more time determining it, have each character involved roll a die and add their Nimbleness. Characters then act in order from highest to lowest, regardless of whether they are Major or Minor. Ties go to the highest Attribute, and if they are still tied, they are assumed to have their Actions occur simultaneously.

2a) Action!

The Player of the character acting first describes the Action the character is performing and rolls for it if necessary.

A character's Action may be any single act that can be performed in a few seconds. You might choose to have your character attack, draw a weapon, reload a gun, get to your feet, or dive into cover, for example. A turn may also be spent continuing to perform an ongoing task. If the ongoing task requires significant attention, it consumes the Player's Action; otherwise it may be performed concurrently (see below).

Example: Not wanting to become lunch for some tunnel-dwelling cannibal degenerates, Gunmetal Jane whips her pistol up and fires at the first of the onrushing freaks! Her Player rolls Nimbleness 4 and applies Jane's Shoot 4 to gain two Successes!

Concurrent Actions

It is possible to perform more than one task at a time in V6. Provided at least one of the tasks doesn't qualify as a standard Action (e.g., requires little thought, attention, or sudden change) both tasks can be carried out, as dictated by common sense.

Example: Blazing down the highway in a souped-up auto, Rex sees a mutie raider at the side of the road ahead. Gripping the wheel firmly, he sticks his shotgun out of the side window and fires at the bandit! Because he doesn't have to perform any particularly difficult or sudden driving maneuvers at this point, it's fine for him to keep on driving while he fires. Of course, if he suddenly finds he has to swerve, he isn't going to be doing any shooting at the same time...

2b) Reaction!

If appropriate, a character can respond to the Action being performed on them, resisting with an appropriate Competing roll. For example, someone resisting intimidation might roll Tenacity. Such natural, passive resistance does not require an Action and can be used as often as needed.

OPTIONAL RULE – DUAL ACTIONS

Ordinarily characters may only attempt a single Action in a given Round, to keep things quick and simple. If the group agrees that they want the option to attempt multiple Actions, you can use the following rule: By spending 2 Fortune, a character can attempt two Actions in the same Round, either simultaneously or in a particular order, at no penalty. They might kick one opponent while shooting another, for example. A character cannot perform concurrent Actions and dual Actions in the same turn.



Actively resisting, on the other hand, such as dodging, blocking or parrying attacks is more limited. A character being attacked may only make a limited number of Reactions during a Round, up to their Notice. Reactions may be used any time during a Round whenever the character is attacked and do not count toward the character's Action limit.

Example: Seeing Jane about to send hot leaden death its way, the morlock instinctively ducks during its charge as she levels her pistol at it, using one of its three possible Reactions this Round! The GM rolls the morlock's Nimbleness 3 and applies its Brawl 2 achieving a single Success! Not enough to avoid Jane's shot!

2c) Outcome!

The result of the Action should be determined at this point. If the Action was something such as trying to convince a suspicious bar owner to help out, or an attempt to disarm a booby trap, the GM will know if the attempt has succeeded or not based on whether or not enough Successes were obtained.

Example: Jane's pistol bucks in her hand as the bullet she fired slams into the onrushing morlock! The pistol's Damage is 8L which, multiplied by the two Successes on her attack, strips the mutie of 16L Health! As it only had 14 Health, Morlock 1 is sent shrieking to the ground, dead!

3) Next!

Start the process again for the next character in the Initiative order!

Example: Jane's turn over, Morlock 1 would have acted now, but is obviously incapable of doing so, what with being dead. The process now begins with Morlock 2 as it leaps at Rex, its filthy nails reaching for him!

ACTIONS

The following section outlines some common combat Actions.

Brawl

Depending on the attacking character's preferred style of fighting, unarmed attacks such as punches, kicks, and headbutts are made using Nimbleness/Brawl (if the attacker relies on swiftness and graceful moves), or Muscle/Brawl (if the attacker relies on raw power).

Brawling Damage is typically Non-Lethal unless claws, fangs, or other vicious natural weapons are brought to bear in which case it becomes Lethal.

Example: Morlock 2 attempts to sink its claw-like nails into Rex! The GM rolls 1, 2, 4 for its Nimbleness 3 and adds its Brawl 2 Skill to the 4 to make one Success! Rex naturally tries to block the morlock's claws as a

OPTIONAL RULE

REACTIONS REDUCE ACTIONS

If your gaming group wants a little more realism in their dodge/parry/block rules beyond simple success or failure, you can use the following entirely optional rule: have each Success on the Reaction negate a single Success on the Action.

Example: Seeing Jane about to send hot leaden death its way, the morlock instinctively ducks during its charge as she levels her pistol at it, using one of its three possible Reactions this Round. The GM rolls the morlock's Nimbleness 3 and applies its Brawl 2 achieving a single Success! Not enough to avoid Jane's shot, but enough to reduce her two Successes to only one!

Reaction using his Muscle/Brawl. He rolls his Muscle 4 getting 5, 6, 6, 6! An amazing three Successes! There's no need to add his Skill levels or try for any extra Successes, because his roll already soundly defeats the morlock's attack! His heavily muscled arm raised before him, Rex blocks the leaping morlock in mid-air, causing its grasping talons to fall far short of his flesh!

- Trip/Shove

A character can attempt to shove or trip an opponent, sending them crashing to the ground. This uses Muscle/Brawl or Nimbleness/Brawl and does no Damage, but forces the victim prone if they fail their Reaction against it.

- Grapple

Unarmed combatants can attempt to grapple and pin opponents using Muscle/Brawl. Once a grapple is successfully made, if the grappler wishes simply to maintain the grapple, they must use their Action, but no roll is required.

R.A.D. SAYS: BE DESCRIPTIVE!

Few things are so boring as action in a roleplaying game that boils down to repetitive, flavorless declarations and constant readings of numbers and Successes. "I hit him." "I dodge and get two Successes." Bleh. Add spice and excitement to the actions of characters by describing them in dynamic and imaginative ways: "I clench my fists together and swing them like a jackhammer at the thug's jaw!" "I duck beneath his flailing blow, laughing at his poor fighting skills!" Apart from sounding far cooler and fueling the imagination, you may even be awarded a bonus Fortune for a particularly evocative description (Earning Fortune, page 66).



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A grappled character cannot undertake any actions requiring their arms, cannot walk or run, and cannot make defensive Reactions. They can use their Action in a Round to try to kick or headbutt their attacker (Competing Nimbleness/Brawl roll) or use their own strength and skill to break free (Competing Muscle/Brawl roll).

Example 1: Finally, it's Rex's turn! His steely arms whip out and attempt to wrap around the morlock, pinning it in a grapple! Rex obtains two Successes, and the squirming morlock's Reaction only gives it one Success! Despite its best efforts, Morlock 2 is now struggling within Rex's grasp!

Example 2: A new Round now begins. Jane spends her Action quickly looking around in case there are more morlocks nearby and even with two Successes doesn't notice any because there are none. The grappled morlock, struggling madly, tries to simply force its way free from Rex's grasp, gaining a single Success, Rex's Reaction is to maintain his grip which he does with two Successes!

- Bear Hug

Someone successfully grappling an opponent can use their next Action to squeeze and crush them in a bear hug or other damaging lock. This only works on weaker Muscle characters and automatically does Non-Lethal Damage equal to the grappling character's Muscle.

Example: Now it's Rex's turn again! Rex's muscles stand taught as he strains to apply his might to the morlock, automatically crushing it in his arms for 4N Damage (the same as his Muscle)! The pale monster's eyes bulge in pain!

- Slam

A grappling character can pick up someone they've grappled and hurl them to the ground, or into a nearby wall or other hard surface. This Action doesn't require a Skill roll to perform, automatically does Non-Lethal Damage equal to the grappler's Muscle, and results in the victim being prone.

Melee

Attacks using handheld weapons such as knives, clubs, and spears are made using Nimbleness/Melee (if the weapon relies on deft moves) or Muscle/Melee (if the weapon relies more on sheer power). Melee Damage is typically Lethal unless weapons designed to subdue, such as heavily padded batons, are used.

Example: With a new Round beginning, Jane gets to act again. Satisfied no other morlocks are nearby, she pistol-whips the pinned morlock to finish the situation quickly. Because it is grappled, it cannot attempt to dodge or otherwise negate her attack. She gets 3 Successes on her attack which multiplies the 4N Damage for the pistol whip to 12N; enough to take the foul creature down to 0 Health, rendering

it unconscious. It obviously misses what would have been its Action now, and Rex lets it slump limply to the dust. "Let's get moving," he mutters.

Shoot

Bows, crossbows, and firearms are common means of doing targets harm. Such attacks are nearly always made using Nimbleness/Shoot and commonly inflict Lethal Damage.

Throw

Sending a spear, knife, rock or other thrown weapon accurately through the air uses Nimbleness/Athletics. Suffice to say, such weapons are almost always Lethal.

- Range

The V6 Engine is generally unconcerned with range, assuming that most firefights occur within a fairly short range. There are only three Range bands in V6: Short (the normal conflict range), Long, and Distant (which can only be used by appropriate weapons in conjunction with vision enhancement). Look at the example Range illustrations below for visual guidance. Attacks at Long Range are Extreme, and those at Distant Range are Arduous.

Ranged weapons can only be used effectively up to their maximum Range, so a throwing knife can only be used at Short Range, for example, while a rifle can be used at Short Range, Long Range, or even Distant Range if a scope or other vision-enhancing device or Mutation is used.



BEING PRONE

A character down on the ground must spend an Action if they wish to get to their feet. While prone, the Difficulty of any appropriate rolls they make is increased by one level.

Example: Rex, much to his surprise, wakes to find an assassin standing over him! He attempts to kick the assassin, but finds it more difficult than he expected, and must achieve at least two Successes.



- Aiming

If a character takes the time to aim at their target, they can increase their chances of hitting it. Add an extra die to the attack roll for every Round spent aiming, up to a maximum of two extra dice.

- Sprays and Buckshot

Some ranged weapons are capable of striking multiple targets in a single attack, such as shotguns firing buckshot or submachine guns firing sprays of bullets. When using these weapons to fire sprays or buckshot, the attacker adds two extra dice to his initial attack roll and any Successes are split by the GM among up to three targets in very close proximity. Sprays must be declared before the attack is made.

A spray consumes five rounds of ammunition, except in shotguns where buckshot consumes a single shell.

Example: Rex has managed to get on the wrong side of some rabid apocalypse cultists, and three of them are now charging towards him from some distance away, knives drawn. Not wanting to face all three in close quarters, he raises his submachine gun ready to spray them with lead! He spends a Round aiming at the cluster of madmen, intent on making his attack count. As they bear down on him he fires! His Player rolls Rex's Nimbleness 2 plus an extra die for the Round spend aiming and two extra dice for the Spray, getting 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. He uses Rex's Shoot 3 to raise the 5 and 4 up to 6 each. Two Successes! As he is firing a Spray the GM rules that two of the cultists are struck, both suffering a Success!

- Bursts

Fully automatic weapons such as machine guns can strike a single target with several rounds fired in a concentrated burst. When using such weapons to fire a concentrated burst, the attacker adds two extra dice to his initial attack roll. Bursts must be declared before the attack is made, and consume five rounds of ammunition.

Example: Having shot two of the onrushing cultists, Rex concentrates a burst of fire on the final fanatic, hoping to take him down! His Player rolls Rex's Nimbleness 2 plus an extra two dice for the burst getting 1, 4, 4, 5. He uses Rex's Shoot 3 to raise the 5 and one of the 4s up to 6 each. Two Successes! The zealot is caught in a burst of bullets!

Specific Locations

Attacks can be targeted at specific locations such as shooting out an automobile's tire, or attempting to disarm someone. The smaller and more mobile the target, the greater the Difficulty as set by the GM.

Example 1: Jane spots Rex a short distance away, clambering madly up a rope pursued by a posse of cultists. She decides to try and sever the rope below Rex with a gunshot, and the GM declares it a Tremendous Difficulty (four Successes will be needed)! Jane spends a Round aiming to gain a bonus die and rolls it with her Nimbleness 4 getting 1, 3, 3, 5, and 6. A reroll fails to produce an extra 6. She uses her Shoot 4 to create two more Successes for a total of three. Still not good enough, so Jane's Player opts to spend a Fortune point to obtain the fourth Success. With a single awesome shot, the rope below Rex is severed and the cultists plummet to their doom.

Example 2: Jane is sick of being challenged by upstarts looking to make a name for themselves. A brash youngster has called her out. She really doesn't want to hurt the kid, and opts to try and shoot the pistol from his hand.

Pit Fighter

The GM decides such a small target is an Arduous Difficulty, requiring three Successes. Jane's Player rolls Nimbleness 4 getting 1, 4, 5, and 6, with the reroll gaining no extras. Luckily, Jane's Shoot 4 easily turns the 4 and 5 into Successes,



ENTANGLING WEAPONS

Some weapons, such as lassoes, nets, and bolas entangle targets. These attacks are made as normal for the weapons concerned, but rather than cause damage they impair their victims. Entangled characters cannot undertake any actions requiring their arms, cannot walk or run, and cannot make defensive Reactions. Getting free requires either a successful Muscle Attribute-Only roll (Extreme Difficulty) to burst free in a single Round, a cutting implement and two Rounds spent slicing the bindings, or at least three Rounds of steady, intelligent disentanglement.



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creating the needed three. To retain his grip on the pistol, the GM rolls the kid's Nimbleness 3, getting 1, 2, and 2. Not remotely enough to keep his grip - the kid's eyes widen as his pistol is shot from his hand.

Cover

Cover makes it more difficult to strike an opponent. Look at the example Cover illustrations below for visual guidance. Attacks on a target in Partial Cover increase the Difficulty one level, and those at a target with Major Cover or better increase the Difficulty two levels.

Visibility

Conditions of poor visibility increase the Difficulty of appropriate actions. Poor visibility such as a moonlit night or dazzling sunshine increases the Difficulty one level. Bad visibility such as a moonless night or light fog increases the Difficulty two levels. Truly obscuring or blinding conditions such as total darkness or extremely heavy fog increases the Difficulty three levels. Certain Mutations help offset or ignore these penalties.

REACTIONS!

Defending Yourself

A character can defend themselves against as many attacks in a Round as they have levels of Notice Skill. They cannot actively defend against attacks beyond that limit in the same Round, so fighting more opponents than your Notice Skill level becomes increasingly perilous. The decision to use a Reaction may be made after the outcome of an attack is known.



DOUBLE THE FUN!

WIELDING TWO OR MORE WEAPONS

Wielding two weapons (or more for certain muties!) in V6 is just a matter of style; it does not provide extra attacks or Actions, but instead simply presents some natural benefits and drawbacks. On the upside, if one weapon is disarmed, the character already has another ready, they have a choice of which weapon to attack with, and they can potentially fire more shots before reloading if they're using two ranged weapons. On the downside, they can't perform any Action requiring at least one free hand or both hands, can't use a shield, and can't use any implements or weapons that require two hands to use.

Example: Rex has Notice 3. In the midst of a barroom brawl he finds himself surrounded by five angry locals, two armed with clubs. He hefts a broken chair leg to use if necessary, but wants to keep this fists-only if possible. He can make Reaction rolls to try and dodge or block up to three of their attacks on him this Round, thanks to his Notice 3, but he won't get to actively defend himself against his fourth or fifth assailants.

- Blocking

A character can attempt to block unarmed attacks against them using Nimbleness/Brawl or Muscle/Brawl if they are not armed. An unarmed individual



cannot block armed attacks against them though.

Example: Having Initiative over his five attackers, Rex goes on the offense and delivers a punishing uppercut to one local's jaw, knocking him out! Unfortunately, that still leaves four angry locals. The first local jabs at Rex's kidneys, gaining a single Success. Rex uses his first Reaction to try to block the strike and gains two Successes thanks to his high Muscle/Brawl levels. He blocks the local's weak blow!

- Parrying

Intercepting an attacker's strike with your own weapon or shield is a parry. Successful parrying uses the character's Nimbleness/Melee or Muscle/Melee depending on the implement being used to parry.

Shields provide a bonus die for the parry attempt.

Example: One of the two club-armed locals tries to bludgeon Rex, and much to Rex's annoyance, gains one Success. Rex, now angry, attempts to parry the club with the chair leg he is holding, and no longer playing around, uses his Muscle/Melee, achieving two Successes and blocking the local's attack with a resounding crack of wood!

- Dodging

Getting the heck out of the way is always a viable Reaction to an attack, and uses a character's Nimbleness and the highest of their Athletics, Brawl, or Melee Skills.

Example: Another of the four locals takes a wild punch at Rex, and feeling cocky, he tries to show off by dodging the blow! The local achieves a single Success with his attack. Luckily, even when using his lower Nimbleness 2, Rex's high Brawl wins through, and he ducks beneath the wild swing! The last local prepares to rush Rex with his cudgel, and Rex has no Reactions left!

- Hitting The Deck

Sometimes it pays to hurl yourself to the ground, especially where explosions are concerned! A character reacting in this way rolls to Dodge. Each Success acquired reduces the Damage of the explosion by 10.

Example: A grenade lands at her feet, and Jane throws herself to the floor as it goes off in a roar of flame and shrapnel! She rolls Nimbleness Attribute-Only, getting two Successes! This reduces the grenade Damage by 20 down to 0! She picked up a few scratches, perhaps, but is not really hurt.

- Keeping Your Balance

If someone tries to trip or otherwise unbalance a character and make them fall (Trip/Shove, page 69), they can use a Reaction to maintain their balance by using Nimbleness/Athletics.

- Maintaining Your Grip

When a disarm attempt is made, the targeted

character can try to maintain their grip on their weapon or other implement. Keeping hold of anything uses the higher of Nimbleness or Muscle in an Attribute-Only roll, with an extra die being added for items being held with both hands.

Boom! - Explosives

Explosives are indiscriminate weapons; they deal an equal amount of Damage to anything caught in their blast areas, but characters can use a Reaction to try and reduce the amount of Damage they suffer by Hitting The Deck (see above).

The blast areas of explosives are left deliberately vague to suit the action movie style of play, but assume that a grenade or similar small explosive will damage anyone in an area the size of a small room, for example. Larger explosives spread across appropriately larger areas.

OUTCOMES!

Damage

Most PCs and GMCs in *Atomic Highway* have a Health Track of boxes equal to (Muscle + Tenacity + Toughness) x 2 unless modified by a Mutation or Flaw.

Example: Rex (Muscle 4, Tenacity 3, Toughness 3) has 20 boxes in his Health Track.

As Damage is taken the boxes are crossed off, left to right, top to bottom.

Lethal Damage such as that caused by knives, bullets, and so on is marked in each box with a X.

Non-Lethal Damage such as bare fists and padded batons is marked in each box with a \. If all Health boxes have been marked, and more Non-Lethal Damage is received, return to the beginning of the Health Track, marking any \ boxes with a / (thus converting it to a Lethal X).

When a character's Health is reduced to half its natural total, they are so injured as to suffer an increase in Difficulty of one level on any rolls they make.

Example: When Rex is reduced to 10 Health (half his full natural 20) he is badly hurt, and everything becomes one level more difficult due to the pain and impairment.

At 0 Health the character is knocked out (if the Damage was Non-Lethal or a mixture of Lethal and Non-Lethal), or unconscious, down and dying (if all the Damage was Lethal).

A dying character must be stabilized within a number of Rounds equal to their Tenacity + Toughness or die.

Stabilization requires at least a single Success on an Understanding/Heal Action. Stabilization can only be attempted once.



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- Calculating Damage

The Damage an attack inflicts depends on the type of weapon being used and how well the attack was made, as follows:

Weapon Damage x Number of Successes on the attack.

Example: Gunmetal Jane takes a shot with her pistol crossbow at a raider nearby, achieving 3 Successes with her attack! She inflicts 4L Damage x 3 for the Successes, for a total 12L Damage! The unfortunate raider only had 12 Health, and so is immediately unconscious, down and dying from the superior shot!

- Armor

Armor reduces the total Damage inflicted by an amount equal to its Protection.

Example: A thug slashes Rex with a knife, inflicting 4L Damage! Luckily, Rex was wearing Light Armor for once, in the form of some rough leathers. Light Armor has Protection 2, and so Rex only loses 2L Health.

- Knockdown

Any character suffering Damage in a single attack equal to at least half their full natural Health is immediately knocked prone.

Example: Rex retaliates against the knife-wielding miscreant, and punches him dealing an impressive 8N Damage! Because the thug only had 14 Health to being with, he has suffered more than half his natural Health in a single blow and is knocked off his feet!

Healing

All characters heal naturally, given time, but medical aid certainly helps speed up the process.

- Natural Healing

Unless a mutant is Regenerative, characters heal at the following rates:

Any Damage from or beyond a character's halfway Health point is healed naturally at a rate of their Toughness in boxes per week (if Lethal), or Toughness

in boxes per day (if Non-Lethal). This must be healed before Damage up to the halfway Health point is recovered.

Any Damage up to a character's halfway Health point is healed naturally at a rate of their Toughness in boxes per day (if Lethal), or Toughness in boxes per hour (if Non-Lethal).

Example: The thug Rex hammered decided that running away was the safest option rather than facing Rex, and lies low to recuperate. The first box of (Non-Lethal) Health he heals is the eighth one, which is in the second half of his Health Track. He recovers that initial box in a day thanks to his Toughness 2. He then recovers 2N Health per hour for the rest of his Damage boxes as they are in the first half of his Health Track, so a further 3 hours sees him none the worse for wear. After 27 hours of rest, he's as right as rain.

- Medical Healing

A single patient can only be medically treated once per day. Each Success on a healer's Understanding/Heal roll restoring 1 Health instantly, treating Lethal and Non-Lethal damage equally.

HAZARDS

Weapons are far from being the only dangers to a character's health in *Atomic Highway*. The world is a hazardous place, and the characters are just as likely to have to battle against the elements as fight a raider horde.

Drowning and Suffocation

A character can hold their breath for a number of Rounds equal to their Toughness x 10 if they have time to take a good lungful of air. If they are unexpectedly submerged or strangled, however, they can only last their Toughness in Rounds before they start to suffocate. Suffocating characters take 2 points of Non-Lethal Damage per Round, passing out when they reach 0 Health.

Falling

A character falling takes 10 Lethal Damage per level they fall, using the following illustration as a guide. Double or triple the Damage for falls onto more dangerous surfaces such as jagged rocks. A successful Nimbleness/Athletics roll can reduce the Damage by 2 per Success.

Fire and Acid

Fire is justly respected; not only can brief contact burn, but it can also ignite flammables, causing even more harm.

The Lethal Damage inflicted depends on the size/intensity of the fire with which the character was burned. If a character is wearing anything flammable it ignites, and the fire then continues to burn, doing

NAMELESS HORDES!

Let's face it, if you're dealing with a horde of Minor opponents, keeping track of all of their Health can become tedious. For those instances where the opponents only really exist to slow down the PCs or make the PCs look cool as they mow through clusters of bad guys, there's the Nameless Hordes rule! Rather than track Health, simply rule that a single Success on any kind of attack by a Major character is enough to take the nameless individuals out of the fight. Whether they're dead or unconscious depends on how they were attacked.



Continuing Damage each Round until extinguished. A Round of doing nothing but beating the flames and rolling in the dirt, or jumping in the water usually does the trick.

Armor protects against the initial Damage, but not the continuing Damage.

Fire	Initial/Continuing Damage
Torch	4L/2L Damage
Campfire	8L/3L Damage
Bonfire	12L/4L Damage

Acids and similar caustic substances work exactly the same way but neutralize naturally after a die roll of Rounds, or earlier if removed or doused with water, for example.

Toxins

Poisons, drugs, alcohol, dangerous gases from chemical spills, all can have deleterious, even deadly effects on a character. Toxins have differing Toxicity ratings, and cause Damage per minute equal to their Toxicity unless the affected character succeeds at a Competing Toughness roll against the substance's Toxicity. In some cases the Damage is actual Lethal Damage, but in others it represents intoxication or impairment represented by Non-Lethal Damage.

Toxin	Toxicity/Unit	Type
Alcohol	2/drink	Non-Lethal
Smoke Inhalation	2/Round	Lethal
Snake Venom	3/bite	Lethal
Teargas	4/Round	Non-Lethal

WHAT ABOUT DEHYDRATION, DISEASE, EXPOSURE, RADIATION, OR STARVATION?

Although all these hazards can and do claim lives, they are, simply put, not fun or exciting ways to have characters face impending doom. They aren't heroic, and typically take days or weeks, even months to take their full toll. It's one thing to have a character stagger out of the wastelands, partially starved and dehydrated (simply reduce them to one die of Health) than have an adventure end with, "Sorry, you're too far away from help to ever make it to safety. You die of exposure and dehydration."

While it's not cool to have characters die in these situations, the GM can impose penalties to characters' actions in wilderness surroundings if the Survive Skill is not effectively used.

Example: A local bartertowner has been bitten by one of the local mutant rattlers! The first Round he rolls his Toughness 2 Attribute-Only vs. the venom's Toxicity 3. He gets no Successes while the venom gets 1. He loses 3L Health that minute. Another minute passes and he rolls again, still no Successes! The venom gets another Success and inflicts a further 3L Health Damage. The poor bartertowner has now lost half his Health, and suffers the usual increase in Difficulty to all his rolls. Things don't look good.

- Treating Toxins

A patient who is poisoned can be treated using the Heal Skill. Each Success on the healer's Understanding/Heal roll provides the victim with an extra immediate Competing Toughness roll. A single patient can only be treated for poisoning once per day.







CHAPTER 13

BURNING RUBBER!

VEHICULAR ACTION!

Hauler convoys ramming through barricades! Road warriors driving their armed and armored automobiles into gasoline-soaked duels with crazed raiders, machine guns blazing! The highways of the post-apocalyptic landscape are a deadly arena, one deserving of special attention. Hold on tight, it's gonna be a wild ride!

Operating Your Vehicle!

Driving or piloting a vehicle most frequently uses Nimbleness/vehicular Skill, but the Nimbleness Attribute used is the *lower* of the character's or vehicle's; some vehicles are simply more or less agile than others.

Example: *Pursued by mutie raiders, Jeremy's character, Spook, has pulled the dead driver out of the seat of a hauler truck, and taken his place. Although Spook has Nimbleness 3, Drive 3, he only has Nimbleness 1 for purposes of maneuvering the lumbering battlewagon, the Nimbleness of a heavy truck!*

- Stunts

Performing a stunt or unusual maneuver with a vehicle requires a successful Nimbleness/vehicular Skill roll with the Difficulty set by the GM depending on how hard the stunt is. Here are some sample stunts with Difficulties, and their results:

AUTODUELS AND DOGFIGHTS!

Vehicular action and combat work exactly like regular action and combat, unless noted below.

1) Vehicular Initiative!

- Surprise!

Roaring engines and screeching tires don't really lend themselves to the element of surprise, but there are cases where a vehicle might surprise someone, such as a submersible closing on a boat silently, or an autogyro diving out of the sun at an unsuspecting target. This generally involves a Competing roll of the victim's Sense/Notice vs. the attacker's Understanding/vehicular Skill.

Stunt	Difficulty	Result
Bootleg Turn	Difficult (1)	Land vehicle comes to an immediate stop facing in the opposite direction
Immelmann Loop	Difficult (1)	Air vehicle performs a half loop turn to immediately fly in the opposite direction
Jump, Short	Difficult (1)	Land vehicle makes a short jump of a couple car lengths
Jump, Long	Extreme (2)	Land vehicle makes a short jump over half a dozen car lengths

Example: *Stalking some slavers across the wastes in his powered hang glider, Neal's character, Nicodemus Nail, spots the scum below, camping with their captive cargo next to a mesa. He checks the clip on his mounted assault rifle, and decides to surprise the fiends! He tries to align himself so he dives out of the sun making him far less likely to be spotted, rolling Understanding/Pilot; he gets two Successes! The slaver sentry, watching the horizon, rolls Sense/Notice and gets one Success. Not good enough! The slavers are caught by surprise as a hang glider suddenly comes buzzing out of the sun!*

VEHICULAR ACTIONS!

The following section outlines some common vehicular Actions.

Chases and Races!

Vehicle chases use the standard Range distances:

Close – Short – Long – Extreme

Drivers in a race or chase must keep a running total indicating their positions relevant to each other. To do so, at the beginning of each Round, each driver involved must make a Competing Nimbleness/vehicular Skill rolls, adding any Successes to the

Speed of their vehicle. Each difference of 5 indicates a Range increment.

At the beginning of a chase, the character being chased starts with a total of zero. Each pursuing character is penalized 5 for each Range Increment back, so pursuers starting at Short Range start at -5, while those at Long Range start at -10. For example, when a pursuer at Short Range manages to reduce the difference in totals to zero, then they have closed to Close Range.

A driver who chooses to perform another Action during their Turn doesn't make the Competing roll, but still adds their vehicle's Speed to their total.

Example: *Spook's hauler truck (Speed 1, total 0) is a Short distance ahead of the raiders (total -5), pursuing him in a supercharged buggy (Speed 2) and a motocross bike (Speed 2), and they are gunning it to catch up to him! In the first Round, Spook rolls one Success, and adds the truck's Speed 1 for a total value of 2. The buggy driver rolls two Successes and adds the Speed 2 raising his total to -1. The bike rider rolls one Success and adds the Speed 2 for a total of 3 (total -2).*

The second Round sees Spook, the buggy driver, and biker increase their totals to 4, 4, and 2 respectively.



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His total now equal to Spook's the buggy driver has moved up to Close distance, and drives up alongside Spook's truck!

R.A.D. SAYS: TRACKING VEHICLE DISTANCE

To keep track of how far/close from each other different vehicles are, simply use a sheet divided into seven bands. Place a different marker on the sheet for each vehicle depending on how far away they are from each other, and move them up or down the bands as they close or move away.

Ramming Speed!

Deliberately colliding with another vehicle or victim is a dangerous maneuver. The attack is made using Nimbleness/vehicular Skill and has a base Damage value of (vehicle's Muscle + the difference in Speed between the vehicles) x 5. This is multiplied as normal by the number of Successes on the attack roll.

Both attacking vehicle and target suffer the same Damage unless equipped with a ram prow or armor.

- Sideswipes!

Sideswipes use the same rules as full-on ramming attacks, but the Damage multiplier is only 2.

- Head On!

Treat head-on rams as normal, but see Crashes! (page 81) for Damage calculation.

Example: Thundering forward in the truck, Spook grins savagely as the raider buggy draws up alongside him, and decides to sideswipe it! He rolls Nimbleness/Drive, remembering he can only roll one die due to the limits of the rig! He rolls 4, his Drive 3 easily turning it into a Success! Not keen to match metal with the truck, the buggy driver tries to swerve, but fails to gain any Successes! The difference in Speed between the vehicles is 1, so the sideswipe inflicts 12L Damage ((the truck's Muscle 5 + Speed difference of 1) x 2) on both truck and buggy! The truck's heavy armor easily absorbs the damage, but the unarmored buggy takes a battering, and the driver must now make a Keep Control! Roll or face the chance of crashing.

Shoot!

Vehicular Weapons may be fixed in position or fitted to a pivot, and in each case may be linked to fire simultaneously with another weapon in the same placement.

- Fixed Weapons

Attacking with fixed weapons, such as forward-facing machine guns, uses Nimbleness/vehicular Skill

because hitting with such weapons is more about lining the vehicle up properly rather than actual weapon skill.

Example: The assault rifle on Nail's hang glider is fixed to fire forward, so he nudges the glider left to fire on the hapless slaver sentry! He rolls Nimbleness/Pilot to attack, getting two Successes! As the slaver is surprised, he cannot actively defend, and so has no chance to avoid the 20L Damage from the shot, falling to the ground, dead!

- Pivot-Mounted Weapons

Weapons mounted on pivots or otherwise able to maneuver may be fired normally by the user, using the user's Nimbleness/Shoot.

- Firing From Within A Vehicle

Firing from within a vehicle using a non-mounted or pivot-mounted weapon uses normal attack rules, though the attacker generally suffers a one level increase in Difficulty due to the motion and speed.

- Linked Weapons

Linked weapons fire at the same target simultaneously. Only a single attack roll is needed with any Successes being applied to each weapon to determine Damage.

Example: The raider motocross bike swerves in front of Spook's truck, and Spook hollers madly as he hits the trigger that fires the linked heavy machine guns mounted on the hood! He rolls Nimbleness 1, Drive 3 to attack for the fixed weapons, adding two dice for concentrated Burst fire! He gets 1, 4, 5, his Drive creating two Successes! The rider only gets a single Success to avoid the attack, and so his motorcycle gets blasted! Each machine gun does 12L base Damage, multiplied by the two Successes, for 24L Damage each! With no armor to reduce the Damage, the motorcycle is riddled with bullets, exploding in a ball of fiery twisted metal!

- Cover

Shooting at passengers in a vehicle uses the standard Cover rules depending how much of them is visible (Cover, page 72).

Get the Tires!

- Burst 'Em!

A vehicle running over caltrops or other obstacles likely to rend its tires, such as broken, jagged glass, automatically suffers tire damage (page 82). Roll a die:

1-3 Quarter of tires burst

4-6 Half or more tires burst!



- Shoot 'Em!

Shooting a tire increases the Difficulty of the attack by two levels. Suffice to say, most vehicles in the *Atomic Highway* world have armor fitted to protect the tires.

VEHICULAR REACTIONS!

Evasive Action!

A driver can try to evade attacks in their vehicle freely against as many attacks in a Round as they have levels of Notice Skill. They cannot actively defend against attacks in the same Round beyond that limit.

Keep Control!

If a vehicle drives across a slick surface such as oil, suffers heavy damage in a single attack, or is rammed in any way, the driver must immediately make a Nimbleness/vehicular Skill roll to keep control, unless they actively want to crash. If they fail they can use their Action the following Round to make a second roll to try and bring the vehicle to a safe halt or landing, or crash!

Example: Having been sideswiped by Spook's truck, the raider desperately tries to keep control of his battered buggy! The raider has Nimbleness 2, Drive 2, and rolls... 1, 3! He screams as the buggy surges uncontrollably to the side, desperately trying to bring it to a safe stop! The next Round, he rolls again... 2, 3! The buggy crashes!

VEHICULAR OUTCOMES!

Crashes!

Few things are as likely to make a mess of a vehicle and its occupants as a crash. When a vehicle crashes, it (and whatever it crashes into) suffers Damage equal to its (Muscle + Speed) x 10. If it crashes headlong with a vehicle moving in the opposite direction, the Muscles and Speeds of both vehicles are added together before multiplying, and both suffer the same Damage. Armor and rams help reduce this damage.

Example: The raider's buggy rolls uncontrollably as it crashes! After Spook's sideswipe, it only has 48 Health left. It has Muscle 2, and is currently at Speed 2 and so suffers 40L Damage, rolling onto its side battered and in sore need of repair, but still marginally operable.

- Characters In A Crash

Characters in a crashing vehicle suffer Lethal Damage equal to the vehicle's Speed x 10, half that if they were protected with a roll cage or belted in. Personal armor also protects as normal.

Example: The buggy driver would normally take 20L Damage from the crash, but unlike most of his kind was wise enough to have a decent rollcage! He only suffers 10L Damage from the crash, and crawls from the crashed buggy in a bad way with only 2 Health left!

Damage

Most vehicles have a Health Track of boxes equal to (Muscle + Toughness) x 15 unless customized.

Only Lethal Damage has any real effect on a vehicle; Non-Lethal Damage attacks only inflict cosmetic damage, such as scratches and minor dents and dings.

When a vehicle is reduced to half its full normal Health, it is so damaged as to suffer an increase in Difficulty of one level on any maneuvers.

At 0 Health the vehicle is wrecked, immediately crashing if in motion, and becomes useless for anything save salvage.

- Ridden Vehicles

If you fire at a vehicle being ridden, such as a motorcycle, any Damage caused is first taken from the vehicle, with any excess then being taken off the rider. Actively striking the rider at range requires an attack at a Specific Location, with an appropriate Difficulty increase.

Example: Looking at the Linked Weapons example above, the raider motorcycle was hit by two 24L attacks. Because the motorcycle had 30 Health, it took a full 24L Damage from the first attack as five rounds tore into it, then 6L more Damage (up to its 30 Health total) from the second attack, leaving 18L Damage to apply to the rider. Because the rider only had 12 Health, he also died in the hail of lead.

- Vehicular Armor

Vehicular Armor reduces the total Damage inflicted by an amount equal to its Protection, but also renders the vehicle



Raider

Chapter 13

immune to attacks by weapons with a base Damage value equal to or less than the Protection.

Example: *A roadside raider unleashes a hail of bullets from a heavy machine gun at Spook's truck! Because the base Damage for a heavy machine gun is only 12L the bullets simply bounce off the truck's extremely thick armor (Protection 20)!*

Tire Damage

A burst tire forces an immediate Keep Control! roll (page 81). Additionally, if a vehicle has lost a quarter of its tires, its Speed is reduced one level and maneuvers with it are one Difficulty level harder. If it loses half or more of its tires, it is reduced to Speed 1, and is unable to perform anything but the slowest and easiest maneuvers. You can hear the wheels grinding already!

Repair

A vehicle can only be worked on once per day, the repairs taking the full day of work, assuming all the necessary replacement parts are available or can be cobbled together. Each Success on the mechanic's Understanding/Tech roll restores 10 Health.

VEHICULAR HAZARDS

Environment

Sometimes the environment conspires to make taking your vehicle out decidedly problematic. Wheeled vehicles faced with patches of ice or oil are forced to Keep Control! as are surface water vessels facing storms at sea, or aerial vehicles facing strong winds in the air. The frequency and Difficulty of these rolls depends on the severity of the conditions, as determined by the GM.

Fire

Unless fireproofed, a vehicle takes normal Damage from fire, exploding in a ball of flame and crashing when it reaches 0 Health, a casualty of the cinematic, "The fire reached the fuel tank!" moment! Passengers take 18L Damage from the explosion and then suffer the effects of the crash! Crispy pancakes, anyone?

Leaping From A Moving Vehicle

Sometimes there's no option but to get out of a moving vehicle fast, or characters may find themselves ejected from a moving vehicle! Evacuating a land vehicle causes Lethal Damage equal to the vehicle's current Speed x 10. A successful Nimbleness/Athletics roll reduces the Damage by 2 per Success, and armor protects as normal.

Leaping out of a boat causes no damage, but does leave the character in the drink. Leaping out of an aircraft uses the rule for Falling (page 74-75); I hope they've got a parachute!

THUNDERING HOOVES!

Mounted Action!

With the collapse of manufacturing, and decay of decades, many individuals in the ruined world have gotten back in the saddle! Mounted combat and action work just like regular action and combat unless noted otherwise.

Saddle Up!

Riding a mount nearly always uses Nimbleness/Ride, but the Nimbleness Attribute used is the *lower* of the character's or mount's.

- Stunts

A successful mounted stunt, such as a notably high or long jump, requires a Nimbleness/Ride Skill roll with the Difficulty determined by the GM. Here are some sample mounted stunts:

HOW FAST CAN THE MOUNT GO?

Mounts simply don't match vehicles for speed and, just like Player Characters, move as quickly or slowly as necessary for the most part. If it becomes necessary to govern which mount is faster in a chase or race, roll the mount's Nimbleness/Athletics in a Competing roll-off if speed is the main issue, or Toughness/Athletics if long distances are involved

Stunt	Difficulty	Result
Jump	Difficult (1)	The mount leaps an obstacle as high as a man.
High Jump	Extreme (2)	The mount leaps an obstacle up to 3 yards tall.
Leap	Difficult (1)	The mount leaps a car length.
Long Leap	Extreme (2)	The mount leaps up to three car lengths.



MOUNTED ACTIONS!

Attacking From A Mount

Attacking from atop a mount uses the rider's appropriate Attribute, Brawl, or Melee Skill as per normal.

- Charge!

A mounted charge attack is made using the rider's Nimbleness/Melee, but the mount's Muscle is added to the base Damage inflicted.

Example: Iron Ghost grips his clawed battle club tightly and goads his trusty mutant steed into a charge at a mutant hulk ahead! He rolls his Nimbleness/Melee getting a single Success, and the lumbering brute fails to avoid his charge! He would normally do 11L Damage (his Muscle +8L for the bludgeon), but adds his mount's Muscle 4 as well, for a total of 15L Damage instead. As he only achieved a single Success this is not multiplied, but it's still a mighty blow!

Shooting From A Mount

Firing from a moving mount uses normal attack rules, though the attacker typically suffers a one level increase in Difficulty due to the motion and speed.

Mount Attacks

Rather than making an attack themselves, a rider can direct their mount to attack instead. Such an attack uses the mount's appropriate Attribute and Brawl Skill, and does Damage according to its natural weaponry.

MOUNTED REACTIONS!

Mounted Evasion!

A rider can direct their mount to try and avoid as many attacks in a Round as they (the rider) have levels

ATTACKING A MOUNT AND RIDER IN CLOSE COMBAT

If engaged with a mounted foe in close combat, the attacker can simply choose whether he is attacking the mount or rider without penalty.

in Notice. A ridden mount uses its own Nimbleness and rider's Ride Skill as normal to evade. Mounts operating without direction use their own Nimbleness and the higher of their Athletics or Brawl.

Steady Boy!

Mounts, however well trained, can sometimes be spooked. At the GM's discretion, a rider must make an Appeal/Ride roll to control and calm a mount and prevent it rearing and bolting uncontrollably in situations where it is terrified, badly hurt, or faces the likely prospect of such occurring.

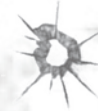
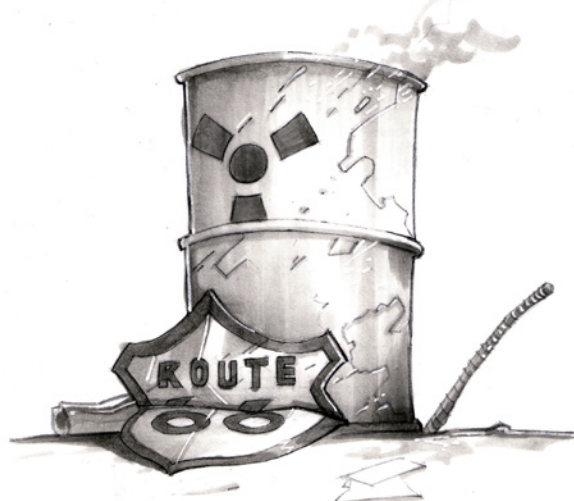
MOUNTED OUTCOMES!

Falling From A Mount

If a rider falls or jumps from a moving mount due to a mishap of some kind they suffer 4 Non-Lethal Damage. A successful Nimbleness/Athletics roll reduces the Damage by 2 per Success, and armor protects as normal.

Ranged Damage To Mounts And Riders

If you fire at a rider on a mount, any Damage caused is first taken from the mount, with any excess then being taken off the rider. Actively striking the rider at range requires an attack at a Specific Location, with an appropriate Difficulty increase.



CHAPTER 14

THE WORLD IN YOUR HANDS

Game Mastering Advice

Well done for making the decision to be the GM! It may seem daunting, but don't worry, we've got your back! Read the Player Advice chapter (Chapter 3, page 16-18), then this chapter, and you'll be as equipped as you can be, but above all relax, try your best, learn as you go along, and go easy on yourself. Trust us, if you take in only the most important parts of being a good GM, the rest will eventually come.

The GM's Duties

So, just what do you have to do as the GM? Glad you asked! Here are the main duties in brief:

- Ensure Fun & Fairness

The single most important duty for the GM is to ensure everyone has fun, yourself included. You should create challenging, exciting adventures with elements of risk for the Players' characters, of course, but you should be fair, and your ultimate goal is to provide excitement and fun for the entire gaming group.

- Create the Adventures

You have to come up with the ideas for the adventures you run for the gaming group, and prepare any materials for the adventures beforehand.

Part of creating adventures is the creation of the setting you intend to run your games in. Details on how to create settings are found in Chapter 15 (pages 92-98).

- Run the Adventures

You act as a narrator of sorts for the Players, play the parts of anyone or anything their characters encounter, Major or Minor, hero, bystander or villain alike. You define the setting around the characters,

the impact of elements such as weather, and judge what impact the PCs' actions have on the world around them. When a Player's character attempts an action, and the results aren't immediately and obviously clear, you judge what actually happened as best as you can. You have the final and ultimate say as to what happened.

Now, let's look at those areas in more detail:

1) Ensure Fun & Fairness

One of the easiest ways to ensure fun for all the Players, is to talk to them before even trying to come up with ideas for adventures. Ask the Players just what sorts of adventures they want to play, and go from there, making sure your adventures contain a good mixture of the elements the various Players want, be they combat, investigation, horror, or anything else for that matter. Remember to avoid any elements Players have noted that they are not comfortable with though; running Players through things likely to offend or disgust them, or which may dredge up bad memories for them, is about as far removed for ensuring fun for all as you can get.

Be fair. Don't play favorites, and try to give all the PCs an equal amount of attention. Now, that doesn't necessarily mean every character has an equal involvement in every adventure, but over the course of all the sessions you run, you should strive to get a decent balance.

Some roleplaying games may advise you to fudge things, to make rolls secretly and ignore the results or pretend they are different results when it suits the



drama of the adventure. Our advice is, don't. Just as you wouldn't be happy with Players cheating, you too should be seen to be above cheating, even if the cheating is in the PCs' favor. Make your rolls in the open, right in front of the Players, and remember that Major characters, including villains, frequently have Fortune of their own which they can spend to influence events. Let the Players use their own cunning, planning, Fortune, and the abilities of their characters to succeed, even if victory comes at a cost. A hard-won victory is far more satisfying than one easily achieved, after all.

WE ALL MAKE THEM

It should go without saying, but be aware that you may simply make mistakes sometimes. If things go awry because of an error on your part, don't be afraid to admit the fault, rewind a little, and start the adventure again at the point things went wrong, but changed appropriately. Don't be bullheaded and simply plow on regardless. Be easy on yourself, especially when learning to GM, and the Players will be more inclined to respect your honesty and your attempt to improve everyone's gaming experience.

2) Create the Adventure

- Get Your Concept

The first step to creating any adventure is to get the basic idea itself. Although we provide a small selection of adventure seeds on page 91, there are plenty of other sources.

Working with the Players to help create their characters, making suggestions and providing prompts as a group, is one fantastic way to come up with adventure possibilities. When a Player writes the background of their character, they may provide useful hooks on which to base your adventures. For instance, if a Player notes that his character's father was killed by a mysterious mutant, you could arrange for clues as to the killer's identity to be found throughout successive game sessions, so that eventually the PC comes face-to-face with the person they hate most in the world.

Another time-honored way of getting ideas for adventures is to steal them. Look at the plots of your favorite novels, films, cartoons, console games, even existing adventures for other roleplaying games, and re-imagine them to suit the setting of your game.

Lastly, be sure to take notes during any game sessions; if something a Player suggests as a possible reason for something sounds cool, jot it down and use it later for yet another adventure. You can acquire a

lot of useful little nuggets this way.

Example: Chris decides that the concept of Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* could easily become an adventure about a rivalry between two raider gangs and the fact that two of their children have fallen in love with each other despite that rivalry and hatred. The PCs may become involved in trying to aid the star-crossed lovers before tragedy ensues, and this could be a great short adventure as an introduction to Atomic Highway.



Road Warrior

Chapter 14

- Outline the Adventure

Taking your basic concept, work out a basic series of possible events that are likely to happen. One of the best ways to do this is to think of the adventure as a movie, with each event being a major scene. Another good approach is to think of the events as being the major parts of a short story, even breaking things down to a beginning, middle, and end if that helps. The beginning sees the PCs get involved and may see them deal with the first minor obstacles. The middle sees increasing involvement, bigger hurdles, and likely even a setback or two. The end sees things coming to a climax, as often as not a major clash with any villains involved, a startling revelation, or a tragedy, the resolution of which brings the adventure to its final conclusion.

As much as possible, try to include elements in the outline that the Players stated they really wanted in their adventures, but don't force them in when they just aren't appropriate as it can feel entirely too strained.

Linking the scenes should be considered next; just how, exactly, do the PCs go from one scene to the next? Do clues or events lead them from one to the other, or do events happen due to other influences and forces, regardless of what the PCs do? In any case, take pains to make sure that the continuation of an adventure never relies solely on a single event, or on the unraveling of a single clue. Luck being what it is, there is always the chance that clue may be missed, or that event not considered important, resulting in the adventure grinding to a halt.

Of course, adventures need not be episodic; the overall plot of an adventure can run across multiple sessions, and may include subplots and other complications as well. However, for a new GM, dealing with a series of discrete adventures is the easiest way to learn the ropes, wrapping up each adventure in turn before the next begins.

Example: *Chris runs with his Romeo & Juliet-inspired concept. He jots down that Tiger Ty, son of the Blood River raider gang warlord, the Red Count, and Rozz, daughter of the warlord Cat Skinner, leader of their hated rivals, the Black Skulls gang, accidentally met when they became stranded in the wastelands, and against the odds, fell in love. Fleeing their gangs to elope, the two lovers find shelter at a humble 'stead for the night before moving on. Unfortunately, both gangs are giving chase, and when the Blood River gang reaches the 'stead, it attacks and razes it to the ground! Enter the PCs! The PCs stumble across the ravaged 'stead only an hour or so after the attack is over. They find few survivors, but the story is revealed to them that the Blood River gang attacked, and is hell bent of tracking down a young male called Ty. The injured survivors give the PCs a description*

of Ty's appearance, noting that he was accompanied by a young woman, that he was clearly excited and nervous, and only stayed one night, heading out before dawn for the nearest bartertown.

While the PCs are doing what little they can for the few survivors, the roar and rumble of distant engines and a cloud of dust, signals the approach of the Black Skulls gang! Massively outnumbered, outgunned, and with no real chance of prevailing against such odds, the PCs and survivors either need to flee, racing ahead of the pursuing gang, or hide and observe. If they race ahead, things can be made exciting by having gang members on fast motorcycles catch up to the PCs ahead of the main mass of gang members, engaging in a running battle! Alternatively, if the PCs stay and observe, they watch the gang members briefly investigate the ruined 'stead before setting off following the tracks left by the Blood River gang. If they manage to overhear any of the gang members scurrying about, they'll hear something about, "Bringing that accursed baggage Rozz back to Cat Skinner." If they manage to interrogate a gang member without alerting the rest of the gang, they do find out that Rozz is Cat Skinner's daughter, gain a description of her, and discover that she has been kidnapped by a member of the hated Blood River gang.

Whether they race there ahead of the Black Skulls gang, or follow after them, the PCs find the bartertown under attack by the Blood River gang when they arrive, and things seem to be a stalemate at the moment. They have to find some creative solution to get past the attacking gang and gain entry to the bartertown if they and any survivors accompanying them, are to reach safety before the pursuing Black Skulls arrive, and possibly find out why the two gangs are on the warpath. If they arrive after the Black Skulls, they arrive to find a ferocious three-way battle occurring, one that is causing obvious devastation to the bartertown! Again, creativity is needed to enter the bartertown amidst the ferocious conflict. If they wait for the dust to settle, the Black Skulls gang emerges victorious, and also breaches the walls of the bartertown, surging into its streets with bloodlust! If the PCs do nothing, the bartertown is laid waste, and two struggling forms are dragged into the central square, a young male and young female matching any descriptions the PCs may have garnered. If they continue to do nothing, Cat Skinner approaches the pair, and raising his shotgun, readies to shoot Ty. At the last moment, desperate to save her love, Rozz throws herself in the way of the shot, dying in Ty's arms to the shock of her warlord father.

Not wishing to face life without his love, and knowing that no good fate lies in wait for him at the hands of the Black Skulls, a weeping Ty commits



suicide by grabbing a shard of glass lying nearby and plunging it into himself, his last whispered words, "You gave your life for me. Now it's my turn." The two lovers lie together in death as Cat Skinner stares, slowly and silently turning to leave with the remains of his gang.

If the PCs manage to enter the bartertown before the Black Skulls arrive, they find themselves in a settlement under siege, a conflict that only intensifies when the second gang arrives. They can help the defenders, try to locate Ty and Rozz, or maybe even do both. If they find the pair, the two youngsters tell the PCs about their love, and their desire to flee their gangs and build a life together. The PCs may decide to turn the pair over to the respective gangs, may try to bring about a halt in hostilities by acting as mediators, may try to smuggle them out, or come up with any number of other plans to bring an end to the attacks or protect the couple. How the adventure evolves and ends depends entirely on their plan of action, but reconciling the two rival gangs is a mammoth task given the longstanding bad blood between them.

- Prepare Only What You Need

Now that you've gotten your concept outlined, you need to spend some time preparing what you need to run it effectively. It can be tempting to go overboard, to try and prepare for every eventuality; resist this temptation. All it will do is result in a lot of extra time and effort that may not be needed and may even be rendered a pointless waste if the Players come up with approaches and solutions you hadn't considered. Just focus on what is absolutely needed, and do no more than sketchily detail anything else, if at all. The more time and effort expended on preparing an adventure, the greater the temptation to railroad Players becomes, and as we point out below, "railroading" is rarely a desirable solution.

Just detail the needed Attributes, Skills, Mutations, Flaws, Gear, personalities and appearances of any Major characters or vehicles involved, only listing those areas in which they are not average, be they inferior or superior. Make a quick note of any obvious mannerisms you can use to immediately define them. Don't waste time writing down anything at which they are average. Also, if none of the entries in the Rogues Gallery & Bestiary (Chapter 16, page 99-112) are suitable, make up general entries for any new critters, or to save time, use an existing bestiary entry, but describe its appearance differently; your Players probably won't notice the difference.

Some folks swear by maps, and may want to sketch out a rough map of any major location involved in the adventure. That's fine, but in the slightly-tweaked words of Robin D. Laws, "The map is not always your

friend." Keep descriptions loose and fast and go with what makes sense, including any sensible Player suggestions. It'll save you more time and can result in a more dynamic and cinematic action event with greater Player input and thus more fun. With such an approach not only will you save yourself some time, you'll become better at winging things as you go along, find yourself less likely to be caught flatfooted as a result, and find yourself increasingly able to run good adventures with reduced preparation time. Don't worry if it's a little hard or intimidating at first, or if you're a little slow shaping events and GMC responses. Remember: go easy on yourself, and it'll all come with practice and time.

You can create extras including props, pictures or portraits of locations and GMCs, and handouts if you want, such as a replica of the old map or letter the PCs find in the adventure, to be handed over to the Players when it's located. These can really lend a game an extra dimension of involvement, but they aren't requirements by any stretch of the imagination. Still, if you find you get a kick out of making handouts and props, go for it.

Example: Chris details Ty, Rozz, the Red Count, and Cat Skinner in full. He uses the standard rogues gallery entries for the raiders, 'stead survivors, and bartertowners. He already detailed the bartertown when creating his setting area, and so doesn't need to do any work on that count. Although used to using maps before, he decides to give it a shot without them. He is ready to run the adventure!

3) Run the Adventure

You're prepared and ready to run, so here's some useful advice on running a game effectively.

- Go Easy On Yourself

Firstly, and most importantly, go easy on yourself. Relax, ease yourself in to GMing, and recognize that not only will you make mistakes, but it's perfectly normal to do so. Just be prepared to recognize them and learn from them. Don't try to do everything at once and struggle; start with what you can comfortably do, and build up your knowledge and skill over time. If you find yourself suddenly surprised or struggling during a session, don't be afraid to call a short break and use those moments to relax. Use the break to think of a way in which to use surprising changes to move the adventure forward, even if it means the adventure going along a path you really didn't anticipate.

- Roll Only When It Matters

Remember that the V6 Engine is set up so that you only have characters roll for their actions when the things being attempted are actively challenging and



Chapter 14

dramatic. Rolls should only be called for when their results matter in some way to the adventure. If a character attempts something easy or only barely challenging, just say, "Well done, you succeed." and keep things moving.

- Adjudicate Results With Fairness & Flair

To be able to start adjudicating results, you need to know the rules of the game. At the very least, you must have a solid grasp of the V6 Engine Basics.

When the results of an action aren't clear, you need to judge what actually happened. When you judge such results you have to be fair and consistent, but should also be creative. Describe the results well, and sometimes make the outcome somewhat unexpected, maybe even adding minor complications such as a ricocheting gunshot knocking over a lantern which is now threatening to engulf the wooden shack in flames. Remember, as the GM, you have the ultimate say as to what happened, but don't abuse this authority, and be prepared to discuss any possible issues openly and maturely with your Players when the session has finished.

- Don't Railroad, Go With The Flow

Be aware that Players have a wonderful habit of surprising their GMs and sending adventures off in unexpected directions, and you know what? That's actually really awesome. Learn to enjoy and appreciate the creativity of your Players, go with the flow, and let the story build itself in such cases; such surprises can result in some of the best roleplaying sessions you'll ever have. Don't try and force a specific adventure path or route on your Players, also known as "railroading." Constraining their choices and actions, arranging blatant in-game events to force them to follow the adventure idea you created - these approaches remove Player choice and character autonomy and, quite frankly, aren't fun.

- Know Your PCs

Keep notes on the various PCs being played. Note any potential hooks in the character backgrounds. Bear in mind any of their Flaws and bring them into play where necessary, as Players frequently forget to do so. Consider what they are and are not skilled at, as this will give you some idea as to their chances of

overcoming certain obstacles and opponents.

- Add Flavor, But Don't Overdo It

Be sure to describe the GMCs the PCs meet, their surroundings, the actions of GMCs and the results of the PCs' actions. Your descriptions are what bring the setting and game to life. Don't overdo it, though. Lengthy descriptions going into minute detail are actually counterproductive; they slow things down and can be quite boring to listen to. They also don't leave enough mental room for the Players to flesh out the descriptions in their own imagination, and increase the likelihood that Players will latch on to some throw-away detail, wasting time to investigate it. Look at the following two examples. The first is overblown, the second just right.

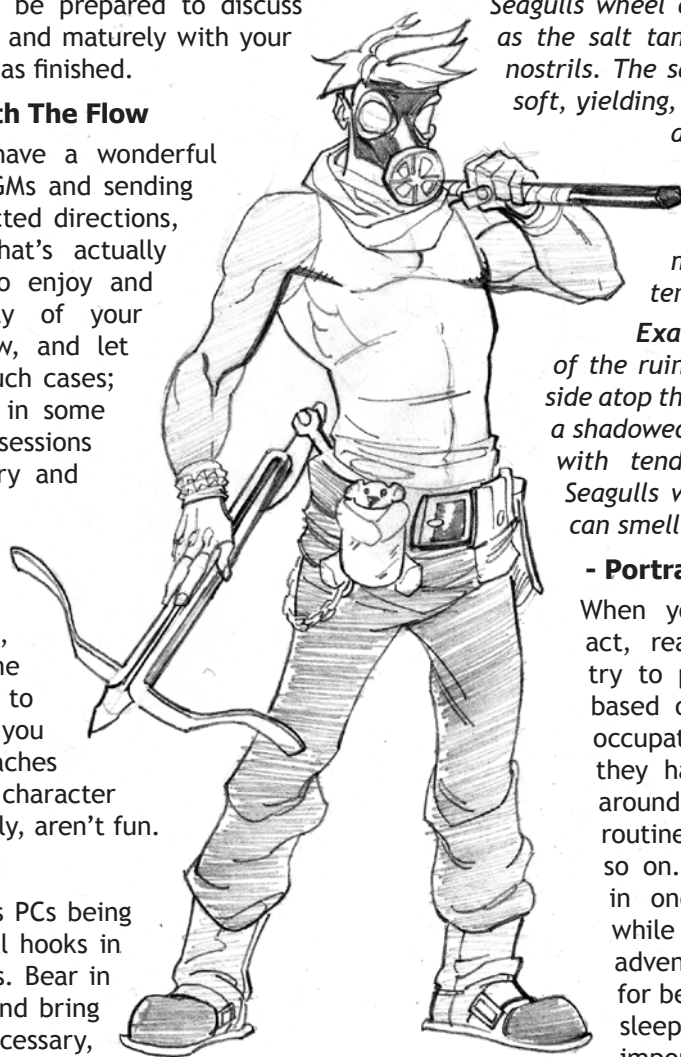
Example 1: The colossal rusting hulk of the ruined cruise ship lies on its side atop the blasted sands of the beach. Patches of ochre rust mar its peeling white surface, a surface textured with barnacles.

Seagulls wheel overhead, cawing angrily as the salt tang of seawater fills your nostrils. The sand beneath your feet is soft, yielding, and as you gaze further, a rent in the ship's belly becomes apparent, a gaping, foreboding hole of shadow, a cavernous mouth festooned with tendrils of dried seaweed.

Example 2: The rusting hulk of the ruined cruise ship lies on its side atop the beach. You notice it has a shadowed rent in its belly covered with tendrils of dried seaweed. Seagulls wheel overhead, and you can smell the sea.

- Portrayal & Consequences

When you describe how GMCs act, react, speak, and so on, try to portray them accurately based on their personality and occupation. Remember that they have lives as well, move around, visit others, indulge in routines of eating, sleeping, and so on. They don't simply stay in one location, unchanging, while the PCs go about their adventures. This is just as true for beasts; they hunt or graze, sleep, and roam. Just as important, unless driven mad by pain, starvation, or rabies, they seldom attack groups larger than themselves, and even then



Scavenger

will tend to retreat in the face of stiff opposition and likely injury. In the minds of most animals, it's better to live and avoid serious injury, seeking easier prey, than to blindly persist in attacking.

In the same vein, consider the consequences of the PCs' actions: people can be scared by violence, even if it's in their defense. Local militia and sentinels may take a very dim view of anyone fighting in their 'stead or town, and may try to apprehend or put down aggressive or abusive characters. If the PCs take down a Major character, allies of that character, such as friends and family, may take exception to the event, seeking to avenge or to free the character at some point. If the PCs are friendly, and actively help someone, the consequence is that they are likely to be well received by that individual and anyone else who appreciates what they've done. Everything the PCs do, good and bad, has the potential to result in consequences...good or bad...beyond the immediate results. Consider them, and you open up a huge number of possible future adventures.

- Be Balanced

Don't create "no-win" situations for the PCs; they should always have a few means of, if not winning, escaping to regroup and consider another approach. Also, try to balance encounters to give them some chance of prevailing, even if doing so requires some thought and intelligent planning on their part. Certainly, there will be times when they face clearly superior forces with little to no real chance of beating them, maybe at best only delaying them momentarily. In cases where they obviously have minimal chance of success, this should be made clear to the Players so they can think up other responses, such as fleeing or engaging in a hit-and-run style campaign. If you find an encounter in progress actually isn't balanced, don't be afraid to tweak it mid-play, making the opponents weaker, reducing their numbers, or if things have gone seriously awry, stopping, and rewinding things a little to start the conflict again, this time against weaker/fewer opponents.

- Pace! Pace! Pace!

One of the biggest killers of excitement in roleplaying games is a lack of pace. Try and keep things moving, and moving briskly. Don't give the Players too much time to painstakingly agonize over every plan or action, as this just bogs things down and bores anyone not actively involved. When it comes to combat, you need to move things along even more quickly to get that feeling of action across. Keep descriptions even briefer, make them more visceral and dynamic, and don't give the Players too long to think about their Actions. One idea is to limit the time each Player has to state their character's Action. If they haven't described the Action within 10 seconds or so, note that

their PC hesitated and missed their turn that Round, then move on to the next character in Initiative order. Keep it quick, keep it punchy.

- Avoid Saying "No."

When Players ask if their PCs can attempt things, learn to say, "Yes," "Yes, but...," or "You can try," generally avoiding an outright "No." Nothing brings things to a crashing, immediate halt as the word, "No." Before answering a question, ask yourself if it would add to the story or if it's something they'd likely be able to do. Ask yourself if their chances of success are minimal, or you're just not sure. In these cases, "Yes," "Yes, but...," or "You can try" are great answers, and in the latter case, you can add extra requirements or something similar.

Example: Player: "Can my character use his Muscle 1 to shoulder charge the steel door and break it down?"

GM: "Yes, but you'd have to seriously weaken the hinges first, and your character may hurt their shoulder in the process."

- Take Notes

Throughout the course of a game session, take notes of any cool ideas suggested or mentioned by the Players, interesting thoughts that occur to you, GMCs you created and named on the spur of the moment, and so on. This will help you keep a record of elements you can bring in to other adventures, and provides a handy resource for the creation of new plotlines.

R.A.D. SAYS:

HAVE SOME TIME-*SAVING* TIPS!

Here are a couple of handy tips for making your life easier and speeding up play:

1) Coming up with names for GMCs on the fly can be a serious challenge. Have a sheet or two of male and female names culled from name lists on the internet, or your phone book, or what have you, ready and on hand. Just cross off names as you use them.

2) Flipping through a rulebook to find a given rule during a session takes time and can be boring. Stick Post-It notes in appropriate and important sections of the rulebook to make referencing those sections quick and easy.

3) Use pre-generated dice results. You can cut a lot of time by not actually doing any rolling during the session. Either roll and jot down a bunch of numbers in order in your spare time, or even faster, search for a random integer generator on the internet, have it create several hundred or thousand 1-6 results in moments, and print them off. Just cross off the numbers in order as you use them for your dice results.



Chapter 14

The Session Roundup

After a session or adventure finishes, take the time to talk with Players, take notes regarding what they particularly enjoyed and what they want more or less of. These insights will help your GMing skills improve and grow, and lead to more concentrated fun in the future. Share any helpful hints, tips, and advice you have with each other in a friendly, open manner; also make the effort to praise any examples of good play or effort at improvement that occurred. Lastly, award any appropriate Experience, let the Players spend the points to improve their PCs as desired, and bring things to a close.

Common Problems

Certain issues arise time and again in roleplaying games, so here're some suggestions to cope with them.

- Number of Players

The number of Players in a gaming group can become an issue if there are too many to manage easily. Beyond 5-6 Players and a GM, the group's size can become cumbersome, and Rounds take increasingly long periods of time to resolve because so many individuals have turns. In such a case, the group might need to split into two, running on different nights with the same or a different GM. Another possibility is alternating the groups, one playing one week, the other the next, and so on.

Some Players feel it is awkward, maybe even impossible to run good roleplaying sessions with only 1-2 Players and a GM. If you find yourself in such a situation, don't be put off. Rather, stop and consider the fact that many novels, shows, and movies only have a single main protagonist; you're now in that same position. One-on-one roleplay can be massively intense and rewarding as that single Player or pair of Players has the GM's complete focus and attention, the game plays far more quickly, and everything can be more easily tailored to the PCs.

- Missing Players & Canceling A Session

Life being what it is, sometimes a game session has to be canceled. With jobs, other commitments, family, ill health, and so on, not everyone can always make it to every session. The important thing is that the gaming group communicates; it's simply rude not to let folks know if you're not going to attend, or to let them know at the last moment if you've known yourself for some time. This goes for Players and GMs alike (especially GMs on whom everything depends).

How you deal with missing Players is up to you; you might continue an adventure, simply running the session without the missing Player or their character. You might have a trusted Player nominated by the

missing Player run his or her character as well for the session. Whatever you decide, make sure it's agreed on ahead of time so no hard feelings are caused.

A missing GM, of course, means the session is likely canceled, and multiple Players being absent can also mean the same thing. In such cases make sure everyone in the group knows before the session, and if that's not possible, why not use the time to whip out some board games, play cards, or have some fun on the console? The session may have been canceled, but that doesn't mean you can't have fun.

- Replacement & Changing Characters

Playing a character should be fun for a Player. If it's not, there's really no harm in allowing them to change their character for one they want to play more. Similarly, there's no real harm in allowing a Player to tweak or change aspects of their character within the first couple of sessions of play. You may need to talk about the issue if a Player constantly changes characters, but don't get hung up on changes that don't really impact the game for the most part.

Sometimes PCs die, retire, fall ill, become imprisoned, or are otherwise removed from play. Because this can happen mid-session, it's a good idea to have backup characters ready to use, so if possible, spend some time with the Players creating backup characters. Getting the new PC into play is something some GMs agonize over; our advice is, don't. You can introduce them in a session at the next appropriate juncture. The existing PCs might meet the new PC at a bartertown they've just arrived in, or while traveling. They might rescue the new PC from danger, or find themselves fighting alongside the stranger against a common enemy. Any reasonable possibility could be used. Alternatively, just have them start in play like they've always been there; it's a lot easier.

- Problem Players

With the best will in the world, not everyone is capable of gaming well, and not everyone finds that their style of gaming, or approach to manners or hygiene fits in well with a specific gaming group. Such is life. Rather than put up with any problems caused by a Player (or Players), keeping quiet while the enjoyment of the game is being sucked away, actually say something. Try and address the issues between sessions as a group in an open, mature, and adult way. If the issues were simply accidental, and the Player(s) unaware, the chances are good they might take the points onboard and adjust their play to improve the entire group's gaming experience. If they are unable or unwilling to change or compromise, the answer is clear: they need to be told to leave the group. Don't shy away from this, but make sure you do it in a tactful way. Just note that their style of play is incompatible with the group, and that they and the group would be



happier if they went their separate ways. If they're a reasonable individual, they'll understand or things probably wouldn't have reached that point to begin with. If they're not, you're better off without them anyway.

Too many gaming groups put up with problem Players because they want to avoid any confrontation, or because they don't want to feel like they are ostracizing someone. Don't be one of those groups; make sure you have some standards and stick to them. You do no one any favors, least of all problem Players, by putting up with them and suffering in silence.

HOUSE RULES?

The truth is no game is perfect for everyone as tastes in gaming are as varied as the players. Don't be afraid to tweak, change, or remove rules that the group doesn't enjoy for whatever reason. Similarly, don't be afraid to add extra rules or changes of your own devising. These removed/changed/added rules are collectively called "House Rules" and should be agreed and made clear to the entire gaming group before play commences to avoid any misunderstandings. One tip though: give the rules a shot before you decide to actively change any of them; what doesn't seem good when you read it may work better in play than you anticipated, and vice versa.

Adventure Seeds

Use or change any of these adventure seeds as spurs for the creation of your own adventures.

The PCs are hired by the leader of a 'stead or bartertown to track down and eliminate a band of bandits that've been plaguing the settlement. Unbeknownst to the PCs, the bandits are actually rebels, outcasts from the settlement who seek to overthrow its current leader and his cronies. Are they justified in their rebellion and why? Did they deserve to be outcast? Do the bandits have sympathizers in the settlement?

The elderly and young in a settlement have been dying due to terrible poisoning from an unknown source. When the PCs investigate, they find that all have consumed the foodstuffs of an outsider who regularly trades at the settlement. Are the foodstuffs being deliberately poisoned by the trader, or are they contaminated by something? Where is the contamination occurring, and does it pose a threat? If they are deliberately poisoned, is the trader responsible, is it being secretly done by someone else, or has he been

hired or coerced into doing so? If another individual is responsible, who are they and why are they doing it? Someone in the settlement? A rival from outside? Someone with a grudge, justified or not?

The PCs become part of an effort to establish a new settlement. Where is the settlement being located and what resources does it offer? What complications arise to make creating the settlement a risky endeavor, such as raider attacks, dangerous weather, or aggressive local fauna? Are cultists operating within the settlers to influence the creation of a cult-specific locale, and are they benevolent or not? When settlers begin to show up dead, who or what is killing them?

In time-honored fashion, a group of raiders is assaulting a 'stead. The PCs are asked to help save the 'stead, whether by fighting at its walls, engaging the raiders in the wildlands beyond, or tracking the raiders down to their local lair. Things are made more difficult though by the fact that the raiders have kidnapped a handful of 'steaders and think nothing of using them as shields or hostages.

A natural disaster such as a terrible storm, tornado, or earthquake, strikes a settlement the PCs are in, sowing destruction and confusion. The PCs first face the dangers of the natural disaster itself, but then face the prospect of helping people injured, trapped, or lost. They may be asked to help rebuild. What happens if a local group of raiders, mutant beasts or other predators decides to take advantage of the weakened settlement and its broken walls, and attack?

A scavenger has stumbled across a large "boneyard" such as the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group in Arizona, USA or the Grozny Airport in Russia. With so much useful raw material for the taking, not to mention tradable goods such as interior seats, even whole engines that might be made to operate again, the scavenger is keen to exploit his find. Unfortunately, there are several problems. Firstly, the boneyard is inhabited by some highly territorial mutant beasts. Secondly, when knowledge that he has obviously made a major find of some kind gets out, other scavengers and interested parties will try to intimidate, interrogate, dog, and follow him to get their hands on such a valuable site. Enter the PCs. They might be hired to find out the location of the boneyard. The scavenger might cut them in or hire them to act as bodyguards or to clear out the beasts. They might even be an independent group themselves, racing to scavenge what they can while simultaneously scaring off rivals.





CHAPTER 15

BLASTED WASTELANDS

CREATING YOUR INDIVIDUAL SETTING

Now that you've got a good grasp of the core setting elements that characterize *Atomic Highway*, it's time to personalize it, to make it your own and ensure it fits your own tastes in terms of history and location, among others things.

What Has Gone Before — History

Before you can get to the meat of the here and now, it's useful to have a basic idea of what has led to the present, though if you're running one-off adventures or short campaigns, it might not be necessary to have any historical details at all. *Atomic Highway* describes a loosely defined series of events and periods, as follows:

Doomsday — the first day of the Final War.

The Final War — the cataclysmic global war responsible for the post-apocalyptic environment of the game.

The Years of Dark Ice — the period of nuclear winter following the Final War, further ravaging the world.

The Present — when the game is set and run.

What happened and when, how long it lasted, or if events even follow this path, is entirely up to you and your gaming group, your tastes, and how much detail all of you want. Here are a few useful questions, with possible answers to consider and potentially select if you don't already have ideas of your own. Remember, you don't need to get too hung up on precise details or worry about being overly realistic:

- What Sparked Off The War?

An ecological disaster leading to a fierce conflict

over resources that escalated horribly? A simple miscommunication, malfunction or accident that all-too-quickly resulted in horrendous retaliation and counterstrike? A terrorist incident? Simple aggression by one nation toward another, with supporters being actively pulled in on both sides?

- When Did The War Start and What Happened On Doomsday?

A decade or so ago? Yesterday? Today? Tomorrow? A few years or couple of decades in the future? Was it an initial unprecedented display of force, or did it build quickly or slowly?

- What Were The Major Opposing Factions?

Did it start as a civil war? Were individual nations involved, either well-known rivals or unexpected enemies? Were power blocs involved? Were the factions opposed on grounds of ideology?

- How Long Did The War Last Before All Was Ruin?

Days? Weeks? Months? Years?

- How Long Did the Years of Dark Ice Last?

A few years? A few decades?

- How Long Between the Dark Ice and the Now of the Game?

Have folks only recently started to emerge and rebuild? Has it been a few years? Has an entire generation been raised not knowing the hardships of the nuclear winter?

Example: Jason is outlining the history for his Atomic Highway campaign. Looking over the questions and sample possibilities, he decides that in 2029 a large meteorite called Apophis, broke in two on entry into



Earth's atmosphere. Half of it plummeted into the waters off the Atlantic coast of the U.S., creating a mega-tsunami that devastated the Eastern seaboard and caused ruin on coasts worldwide. The other half struck Illinois with a force of several hundred thousand megatons, ravaging it and sending tons of ash into the atmosphere that created an almost immediate nuclear winter scenario, not to mention all the problems caused by the shockwaves, sudden release of super-heated dust, and widespread earthquakes. Over the following year, hostilities between nations only escalated as the nuclear winter sank its claws in, and on April 12th 2030, Domsday marked the start of The Final War. No one is really sure who started it, but nuclear, chemical, and biological death rained down on the planet. Within weeks, the already-injured world was further scarred, the nuclear winter exacerbated, and the former nations of the world no longer existed in any meaningful form. Mass starvation and climate change in the Years of Dark

Ice ensured what little of humankind that survived would emerge into a very different world. Now, a few generations on, the world is starting to recover, and it is this world in which the heroes of Jason's campaign are born.

R.A.D. SAYS:

NUKE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

MAKE STUFF UP!

One of the best ways in which the you can make their setting engrossing and interesting for your gaming group is to use an area you're either intimately familiar with because you live there, or are at least passingly familiar with. It makes the process of coming up with geographical points of interest or adventure far easier and more interesting for the GM as well. Nothing says "It's all gone to hell!" like having the PCs be descendents of themselves scavenging in the ruins of places the Players already know well. So, grab a local map and start nuking!

Alternatively, simply get yourself some plain paper and sketch out the vague geographical area most of your games will take place in, adding some forest here, a river there, a couple of bartertowns over yonder, and so on. Then say it's some obscure place the Players don't know, and get on with playing! It may not be as satisfying and involving as running a game in an area you know, but it provides you with a lot more freedom and latitude.



Sentinel

Land, Air, and Sea— The Environment

In many traditional post-apocalyptic settings, the world became an arid wasteland, plants unable to grow in irradiated environments. In truth, in the wake of the Chernobyl disaster, flora and fauna have demonstrated a remarkable ability to repopulate irradiated areas far more rapidly than was previously considered possible. Even more at odds with older takes on the post-apocalyptic environment, dangerous levels of radiation have been found to subside quite quickly as well.

One thing is almost certain though: significant climate change would result from nuclear winter and its sudden dramatic cooling of the Earth's temperature, with concomitant effects on the weather. In a post-apocalyptic environment, even coastlines may be changed due to increased polar freezing and the retreat of ocean waters, mega-tsunamis flooding many coastal areas, and earthquakes causing significant destruction. So, what does this all mean for your take

on the setting? It means you have a lot of freedom to sculpt the environment and weather to suit your tastes, depending on whether you want to go with the traditional wasteland, realistic reclamation of nature, or something in between.

- Flooding?

Did mega-tsunamis submerge or partially submerge coastal habitations? Did the tunnels and other subterranean sections of cities flood when their systems collapsed? Were any impact craters filled with rain or flood waters, creating new lake environments?

- Deserts?

Were any fertile areas turned barren due to a combination of chemicals and environmental changes? Did existing deserts or arid regions grow larger?

- Flora?

Has nature experienced a boom in growth in some areas, covering them with grasslands, forest, or jungle? Is it struggling, stunted, or mutated due to weather changes, chemicals in the soil, or other pollutants?

- Fauna?

Have animals grown in population with the fall of humanity? Are they thriving or struggling? Have any mutated? Are any eaten by people or vice versa?

- Weather?

Has the weather stabilized, or is it still unpredictable and often extreme? Are there any continuing aberrant weather conditions, such as acidic, chemical-laden rainfall?

- Peculiar Environs?

Has nuclear, chemical, or biological warfare rendered any areas abnormal? Has sand been fused into sheets of glass at the site of a nuclear explosion? Have nuclear strikes created fields of tektites scattered across the barren, irradiated soil? Are there still areas of blackened and stunted plant growth? Are there dangerous pools of water polluted with toxins? Have old quarries and other areas of excavation such as clay works, resulted in oddly shaped hills or tiered basins now flooded with decades of rainfall?

Example: Jason doesn't really concern himself with coastal changes as he's already made up his mind that his games will be set in the Illinois area, but does note that the ruins of Chicago are partially flooded by Lake Michigan. He also decides that although the weather has largely settled, there are still periodic falls of chemical rain that discolor materials, irritate and numb unprotected flesh, and stunt the local flora, and that tornadoes are still a hazard. Lake Michigan is largely devoid of life save for a few hardy mutations of alewife, lamprey, and mussel, all of which are edible, if not particularly tasty.

Finally, he records that there is a 14-mile diameter impact crater created by Apophis in Central Illinois where Springfield once stood, largely barren but scattered with potentially useful tektites, surrounded by prairie land.

Location! Location! Location!

Settlements and Ruins

You've got your brief history sorted, and the geographical area chosen or made up. Now it's time to place or locate your settlements, ruins, and other locations that characters will live in, fight for or against, scavenge, and explore.

If you're using a real area, you've already got a lot of locations set out for you. Towns and cities become ruins to be explored, as do any other sites such as airports and military bases. If you've got a map, a good perusal will present plenty of possibilities. All you need to do now is decide where any new settlements have arisen.

If you're creating an area whole cloth, you can place settlements, ruins, and other places of interest wherever you want.

Some things to consider when locating permanent settlements:

- Resources

Settlements have generally arisen where there are resources to exploit, such as fishing, arable land, building resources such as stone or wood, fuels such as oil or coal, ruins filled with salvageable items, technology, or other materials. 'Steads in particular frequently arise around areas of resources not already being exploited by bartertowns, and remnant enclaves are most common in existing research stations, or places where technology is abundant and easily protected, such as power plants and factories.

- Defense

In the dangerous world of *Atomic Highway*, a settlement's defenses are also important, and many settlements make use of existing features such as rock outcrops, hills, bodies of water, and durable stand-alone man-made structures in their construction. Trog warrens most often occur in areas with existing subterranean networks, be they natural cave networks or man-made systems such as sewers, subways, and underground bunkers.

- Transport

For bartertowns in particular, accessibility and ease of transportation is a concern if they are to thrive as trade hubs. For this reason, many bartertowns arise on or near remaining highways, canals, rivers, and shores.



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Example: Looking over his map of Illinois, Jason immediately notes the selection of major cities that have been nuked or otherwise ruined, including Chicago, Peoria, Rockford, and others, with Springfield itself being flattened by Apophis, of course. He happily notes Naval Station Great Lakes, the U.S. Navy's primary training base, and Scott Air Force Base as other places ripe for adventure and plunder.

He looks at the interstate highways, rail lines, and rivers, and places his first bartertown, New Joliet, near the ruins of Joliet, taking advantage of the crumbling remnants of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, and several highways (including the famous Route 66). Remembering the riverboat casinos there, he quickly decides that one of the casinos, the Empress I, has been moved to the riverside of New Joliet, where it now serves as the home of the bartertown's ruling council. He locates his second bartertown, Black River, on the site of the Wood River Refinery north of St. Louis, where supplies of gasoline and diesel are still drawn out.

He places his first 'stead, Walltop, a fishing and lumber community, atop the Shelbyville Dam. He nestles another inside the northern lip of the Apophis crater, calling it Glass, where tektites are smelted to form blocks, sheets, and shards of rough black glass. He scatters a dozen less unusual 'steads across the map, where stunted corn is farmed, small numbers of cattle are raised, or coal is dug from formerly abandoned mines, but doesn't plan on giving them names unless it becomes necessary to do so.

He locates a mutant trog settlement in the Illinois Caverns of Monroe County, south of Waterloo, grabbing a handy map of the cavern network off the Internet though making a mental note to include trog-made excavations to it. A natural habitat for bats, cave frogs, cave crickets, and salamanders, these are farmed underground, providing food for the small community.

He notes that the Argonne National Laboratory, 25 miles southwest of Chicago and surrounded by forest, is now a remnant enclave, the nearby Fermilab an abandoned ruin.

He stops there, and figures he can easily expand with additional entries as and when need or the mood take him.

On The Move — Nomads

With permanent communities established, you now need to decide if there are any nomadic or semi-nomadic groups such as tribes or raiders, and what their place is in the environment. Some useful questions are outlined below.

- What Are The Tribes Like?

R.A.D. SAYS:

GET YOUR PLAYERS INVOLVED!

Getting your Players involved in some setting design is a good thing to do. Have them tell you what their home 'steads, bartertowns, enclaves, warrens, or tribes are like, what they produce, and any notable traits concerning them such as a strong cult presence, in-fighting between factions, or anything else they might come up with. Have them suggest whether the leaders of their communities are honorable or treacherous, forgiving or merciless, aggressive or peaceable, and how their PCs fit - or don't - into the community.

Not only does this give the Players a more immediate sense of involvement and ownership of the setting, it makes your life as GM a lot easier as the Players will be providing a lot of detail for you, with plenty of potential plot hooks. Besides that, it's a fun exercise in shared creativity, which is a good part of what roleplaying is all about.

Are they relatively peaceful? Do they trade with nearby bartertowns or 'steads? Are there any particular locations they frequent or winter in? Are they constantly moving or only semi-nomadic? Are they isolationists or known to welcome outsiders? Have they ever raided or been known to go on the warpath? Do they have any alliances or rivalries with other tribes or raiders?

- What Are The Raiders Like?

Do they focus their predations on a specifically defined area? Have they caused the downfall of any nearby settlements? Do they take hostages for ransom or slaves for trade, or do they simply revel in slaughter? Have they reached any secret agreements with the leaders of any 'steads or bartertowns? Are they given tribute in exchange for keeping attacks to a minimum? Do they have any alliances or rivalries with other raiders or tribes?

Example: Jason decides to populate the area with a single tribe operating in an area near Lake Michigan, a relatively peaceful tribe of hunters, fishers, and gatherers. This tribe is semi-nomadic and spends a great deal of the time living in a floating settlement called Barge, composed of many vessels lashed together on Lake Michigan's waters. This tribe, the Fishers, trades frequently with bartertowners in New Joliet, and its people are known for their barbed spears, woven nets, and shaven heads.

He also creates a large band of mechanized raiders that operate throughout the region. Violent, aggressive, and seemingly tireless in their attacks on



'steads, travelers, and even the bartertowns from time to time, several hundred members make up the gang. The gang is mutant-only with a hatred of normals, including its infamous leaders, Gog and Magog, powerful conjoined twins.

Beasts, Friend & Foe

Other Threats & Factions

The final stage in creating the outline of your post-apocalyptic environment is to define any other important threats and factions be they secretive or clear and present danger, helpful or harmful.

- Example Threats & Factions

Infighting between the leaders in charge of a community. Feuds between 'steads, bartertowns, or even families within a community. Subversive cult influences in a community. Clashes between rival cults. Armed conflict between settlements, tribes, or raider bands. Groups of mercenaries wandering from employer to employer. Packs, groups, or powerful individual predators, mutated or otherwise, preying on livestock or people. Dangerous Before Times weapons falling into the wrong hands.

Example: Jason really wants a clear mutant threat in at least one area. He notes that a pack of amphibious morlocks dwell in the flooded Chicago Tunnel Company train tunnels, their pallid forms fleeting in the murk from which they are known to spring and attack or drag prey in to drown.

He also creates a cult threat in the form of the Beloved of Apophis, a devious apocalypse cult who have conflated the name of the meteorite with the myth of the Egyptian god and now worship Apophis as a destroying deity. They work toward further destruction in Apophis' name, and seek any weapons or tools they can use to that purpose, be it secretly fostering conflict or participating in acts of overt aggression. He makes a note that the cult symbol is a fiery snake.

Finally, he has an ongoing rivalry between two neighboring 'steads that is threatening to escalate and could all too easily turn bloody.

Satisfied he's laid enough groundwork in an hour or so, and given himself plenty of scope for expansion, he finishes, now selecting a few of the ready-to-use settlements and groups below rather than making up his own, changing and adding names and locations as desired.

Sample Locations

Presented here are a few sample locations you can quickly and easily tweak and drop into most games.

THE WANDERING CHRONICLE

Rather than choosing to focus adventures in a single geographical location, a gaming group may decide to have their characters be wanderers and explorers in the post-apocalyptic landscape.

While it can be tempting for many GMs to flesh out vast areas, even entire nations or continents, we advise against it. Firstly, it's a lot of work, and you may find you don't even use most of it, making it wasted time and energy. Secondly, it's not even particularly necessary; all you really need to know is what the next place the characters visit on their travels is like, and that's typically just a settlement or ruin and its immediate surroundings. If you keep this in mind, you'll find that in many ways, preparation for wandering-based adventures is even easier than normal. Throw in appropriate encounters on the road now and then such as bandits, obstacles, beasts, threatening weather, and interesting locations, and you're golden.

They also serve as good examples of what you can do with settlements you create, and how much detail you may want to create for major sites of adventure. Where options are presented, just pick which one you like the best, be it A or B.

Iron Ring

Settlement Type: Bartertown

Produces: Small craft goods

Self-Sufficient: Steam power

Imports: Everything

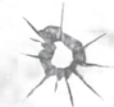
Attitude to Mutants: Tolerant

Population: 976 (215 mutated)

Notable Individuals: Rictus (Tyrant of Iron Ring, Former Raider Warlord), The Gimp (Reigning Champion of the Pit), Old Tess (All-Seeing Crippled Beggar), Marie Szubra (Local Healer and Leader of the Secret Resistance)

Appearance: Bristling with watchtowers, cobbled on panels of metal, wood, and plastic, and surrounded by carefully placed wreckage and blocks of concrete, Iron Ring is a large Before Times sport stadium turned into a heavily defended bartertown. A haze of smoke and steam surrounds the town, belched out by its hodgepodge of steam boilers and engines.

The interior of the stadium is a large open area cluttered with market stalls during the day, but cleared for the popular nighttime pit fighting events. Clustered over the stands of seating are crude huts forming a sprawling maze where most of the populace



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dwells.

Primary Defenses: Reinforced structure, multiple watchtowers equipped with a wide array of different weapons, strategically located obstacles to easy entry, small number of disposable slave warriors, and a ruthless gang of motorized raiders who serve as muscle and militia.

Notes and Secrets: Iron Ring is a particularly rough and violent bartertown run by a raider warlord, Rictus, and his gang of miscreants. Not only does it serve as a nexus of trade, it is a major slave market as well.

Rictus is known to purchase particularly exotic mutant slaves for his personal menagerie, and rumor has it that he is secretly a mutant himself, despite the second-class treatment mutants in Iron Ring receive.

Some of the normal citizens of Iron Ring are covertly meeting and forming a resistance to Rictus and his gang.

Markstown

Settlement Type: 'Stead

Produces: Oil, gasoline, diesel

Self-Sufficient: Electricity, seafood, water

Imports: Everything else

Attitude to Mutants: Friendly

Population: 143 (113 mutated)

Notable Individuals: Greybeard Gunn (head of the settlement, Lore Keeper), Liz O'Keefe (Amphibious mutant and Sentinel leader), Pat (aged Aviator or Road Warrior)

Appearance: **A)** An inland oil well and refinery, heavily fortified with walls of rusted metal sheeting surrounding scattered huts of concrete, stone, and rusted iron, marked by two watchtowers, and an oil-covered water-filled moat.

B) An offshore oil rig and refinery, ramshackle in appearance, jutting up above the waves on four rusted, mesh and barbed-wire encrusted legs. A flotilla of old sea vessels are chained together around it narrowing approach by boat to a single entry point overseen by a pair of watchtowers.

Primary Defenses: **A)** Exterior and interior metal walls, flamethrowers in all watchtowers, moat can be set ablaze, one battlecar.

B) Elevated above the waves on reinforced concrete legs covered in razor-mesh and barbed wire,

watchtowers equipped with flamethrowers, flotilla of chained sea vessels form a sea wall, one armed speedboat, and an armed autogyro.

Notes and Secrets: Defenses are constantly assaulted by **A)** raiders, **B)** pirates, and these frequently attempt to intercept movement to and from the 'stead.

A) The settlement is secretly being undermined by morlock excavations.

B) One of the supporting legs of the oil platform is close to collapse.

Salvation

Settlement Type: 'Stead

Produces: Nothing

Self-Sufficient: Building materials, poor quality vegetables, water

Imports: Everything useful it can

Attitude to Mutants: Friendly

Population: 86 (12 mutated)

Notable Individuals: Pastor David Wrens (calm, steadfast community leader of middle years)

Appearance: A small settlement in the heart of a nuked city's ruins protected by a high, thick wall of reclaimed concrete and stone. A couple dozen humble shacks and gardens struggle to produce meager crops of stunted vegetables. An immaculate old church stands at the heart of the settlement.

Primary Defenses: Surrounding wall, every able-bodied individual is armed with a melee weapon or crossbow in time of need, its extremely positive reputation in the local area has reduced hostilities against the 'stead.

Notes and Secrets: Formed around a church that miraculously escaped the nuclear destruction of the city in which it stood, Salvation is a deeply religious community. It has a reputation for being willing and able to heal and nourish the needy, turning away no one in need, and this means it has become neutral ground of sorts, visited by raiders and travelers in need. Donations are, of course, always gratefully received.

Secretly, one of the core religious tenets of the community is the belief that cannibalism is divine; it's a shame that sometimes the sick and injured die despite the community's best ministrations...



CHAPTER 16

ROADKILL

Rogues' Gallery & Bestiary

Characters can expect to meet many potential friends, foes, threats, and opportunities in their adventures, most of which are fellow humans and mutants. This bestiary provides a selection of ready-to-use characters, humans, natural animals, and mutant horrors.

Nip, Tuck! – Customizing GMCs

While more often than not, the typical individuals presented here will suffice for most encounters, the GM can and should adjust their Attributes, Skills, and all other details when desirable to create memorable and distinctive encounters.

Example: Having waged war with a large raider band, both sides suffering heavy losses, the PCs are meeting with the raider warlord to discuss a truce. The GM takes the typical Raider below, and increases his Understanding to 3 (to reflect his cold cunning), Tenacity to 4 (he's extremely determined and stubborn), and Toughness to 4 (because he's been forged by brutality). He recalculates the warlord's Health to 22. Figuring that the warlord must have had to scare off or fight contenders repeatedly, he increases his Brawl, Intimidate, Melee, and Shoot to 4 each. He increases all of the warlord's other Skills by 1. He gives the warlord Light Armor, describing it as crudely linked chains draped over his scarred musculature, an extra heavy handgun (a battered .44 magnum revolver), and a heavy vicious bludgeon (a baseball bat driven through with nails and reinforced with bands of rusted iron). Finally, figuring that the warlord would drive (or be driven around in) the best vehicle in the tribe, he spends 16 vehicle points to outfit him with an armored, armed dune buggy.

R.A.D. SAYS: NOT ALL ADVERSARIES ARE BLOODTHIRSTY AND RABID!

Just like in real life, the GM should remember that not every adversary is willing to fight, and even among those that do, few are actually willing to fight to the death. Most animals, including humans, will flee or surrender if seriously injured or clearly outclassed; fighting to the death is the domain of the desperate, insane, and those for whom there really is no other option.

Rogues' Gallery

Here are examples of the typical sorts of characters PCs are likely to interact with in their adventures. Such individuals are largely unexceptional, the "average" which makes up the bulk of a given population, and any descriptions are merely guidelines; individuals can and do differ.

WHERE ARE THE DESCRIPTIONS?

Simply put, there aren't any. Does anyone really need to be told what a bear is, what it looks like, where it lives, or what it eats? As long as you've got a basic idea, don't sweat the details.



Chapter 16

Airman

Whether he serves a community, a raider group, or whoever pays, the airman's heart is in the sky.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 2

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Lore 2, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 2, Pilot 3, Scavenge 1, Shoot 3, Stealth 1, Survive 1, Tech 3

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** 2 **Health:** 12

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Armor: Light (roughly padded garments and helmet)

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Pistol Crossbow (Nimbleness, 4L, Ammo 12, Short)

Gear: Clothing, sunglasses, binoculars, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables

Vehicle/Mount: 5 vehicle points to spend on an autogyro or mechanized hang glider. Example:

Open Autogyro Muscle 1, Nimbleness 3, Toughness 1, Speed 1, Pass: Pilot, Health 30, Fixed Light MG (10L, Distant, Ammo 100, Burst), No Cover

Bartertown

The average citizen of a bartertown, engaged in trading, basic craftsmanship, general labor, or crime.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1 / Brawl 2 or Melee 2 (the other at 1) / Lore 2, Notice 2, Persuade 3, Shoot 1, Stealth 1, Tech 2, plus choose one from: Boat 2, Criminal 2, Intimidate 2, Ride 2, Scavenge 2, Sleight 2.

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 12

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short)

Gear: Clothing, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Apocalypse Cultist

A fanatical member of an apocalypse cult. He wants to preach, convert others, and serve the cult.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 3

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Senses 1

Skills: Athletics 1 / Brawl 2 or Melee 2 (the other at 1) / Intimidate 2 or Persuade 2 (the other at 1) / Notice 2, Shoot 1, Stealth 1, plus choose one from: Boat 2, Heal 2, Lore 2, Ride 2, Tech 2

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 14

Mutations/Abilities: 1-4: None, 5: Mutation/Mutie, 6: Two Mutations, Mutie Flaw, extra Flaw

Armor: Light (roughly padded garments and helmet)

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short)

Gear: Clothing, cult symbol/brand/tattoo, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables

Beastmaster

The beastmaster prefers the company of his animals to your presence.

Muscle 3

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Heal 2, Intimidate 2, Lore 1, Melee 1, Notice 3, Persuade 2, Ride 2, Shoot 2, Stealth 1, Tech 1, Zoofinity 3

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Light Crossbow (Nimbleness, 8L, Long, Ammo 12, Reload 2), Short Spear (Nimbleness, 9L, Long)

Gear: Clothing, one die x strips of dried meat and/or bundles of fodder, small leather bag of basic veterinary tools

Vehicle/Mount: Horse

Pet: Large Canine

Greaser

The greaser is always keen to fiddle with new vehicles and devices, but charges well for his services.

Muscle 3

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Drive 2, Lore 2, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 2, Scavenge 2, Shoot 2, Stealth 1, Tech 3

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 14

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Heavy Tool (Nimbleness, 7L), Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Light Crossbow (Nimbleness, 8L, Long, Ammo 12, Reload 2)

Gear: Clothing, welding mask, toolbox and assorted mechanic's and electrician's tools, pot of grease, dozens of nuts/bolts/screws, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables

Healer

Healing is a calling, and most do what they can to help others. Only a rare few are mercenary or worse.

Muscle 2

Understanding 3

Tenacity 2

Appeal 3

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1 / Boat 2 or Ride 2 / Brawl 2, Heal 3, Lore 2, Melee 1, Notice 2, Persuade 2, Scavenge 1, Shoot 2, Stealth 1, Survive 1

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 12

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Pistol Crossbow (Nimbleness, 4L, Short, Ammo 12), Light Blunt Bludgeon (Nimbleness, 4N)

Gear: Clothing, small pouch of assorted dried herbs and dubious ingredients, first aid box with assorted basic medical supplies, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Vehicle/Mount: Horse or canoe

Hauler

Community employee or mercenary, the hauler risks life and limb to delivery his cargo or passengers.

Muscle 3

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Drive 3, Heal 1, Intimidate 1, Lore 2, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 2, Scavenge 1, Shoot 3, Stealth 1, Survive 1, Tech 2

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Double-Barrel Shotgun (Nimbleness, 12L, Short, Ammo 2, Burst), Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Medium Vicious Bludgeon (Muscle, 7L)

Gear: Clothing, toolbox and essential tools, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables

Vehicle/Mount: 22 vehicle points to spend on a truck. Example:

Hauler Truck Muscle 5, Nimbleness 1, Toughness 5, Speed 1, Pass: Driver + 4, Health 150, Heavy Vehicle Armor: Protection 14, Ram, Fixed Light MG (10L, Distant, Ammo 100, Burst), Pivot Mount + Pivot Shield + Light MG (Nimbleness, 10L, Distant, Ammo 100, Burst)

Lore Keeper

Scholar, tutor, and advisor, the lore keeper sometimes seeks adventurers to explore and gather knowledge.

Muscle 2

Understanding 3

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 1

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1 / Boat 1 or Ride 1 / Brawl 1, Heal 1, Intimidate 1, Lore 3, Melee 1, Notice 3, Persuade 3, Scavenge 2, Shoot 2, Stealth 1, Tech 2

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 10

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Pistol Crossbow (Nimbleness, 4L, Short, Ammo 12)

Gear: Clothing, 6 x assorted books, magnifying glass, 2 pencils, a record book, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Vehicle/Mount: Horse or canoe



Chapter 16

Outrider

The outrider's job is a dangerous one, and they're not apt to stop for anyone when moving.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Drive 3, Lore 2, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 2, Shoot 3, Stealth 2, Survive 2, Tech 2

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** 2 **Health:** 14

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Armor: Light (motorcycle leathers and helmet)

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Wrist Crossbow (Nimbleness, 2L, Short, Ammo 12)

Gear: Clothing, binoculars, small toolkit with a few essential tools, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Vehicle/Mount: 10 vehicle points to spend on a motorcycle. Example:

Dual-Sports Bike Muscle 1, Nimbleness 4, Toughness 2, Speed 3, Pass: Driver + 1, Health 45, Increased Speed, Increased Toughness, Off-Road Capable, Oil Slick Dispenser, No Cover

Pit Fighter

Enslaved, paying for a crime or debt, or a voluntary gladiator, the pit fighter fights for survival and reward.

Muscle 3

Understanding 1

Tenacity 3

Appeal 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Criminal 1, Heal 1, Intimidate 3, Melee 3, Notice 2, Persuade 1, Shoot 1, Sleight 1, Stealth 1

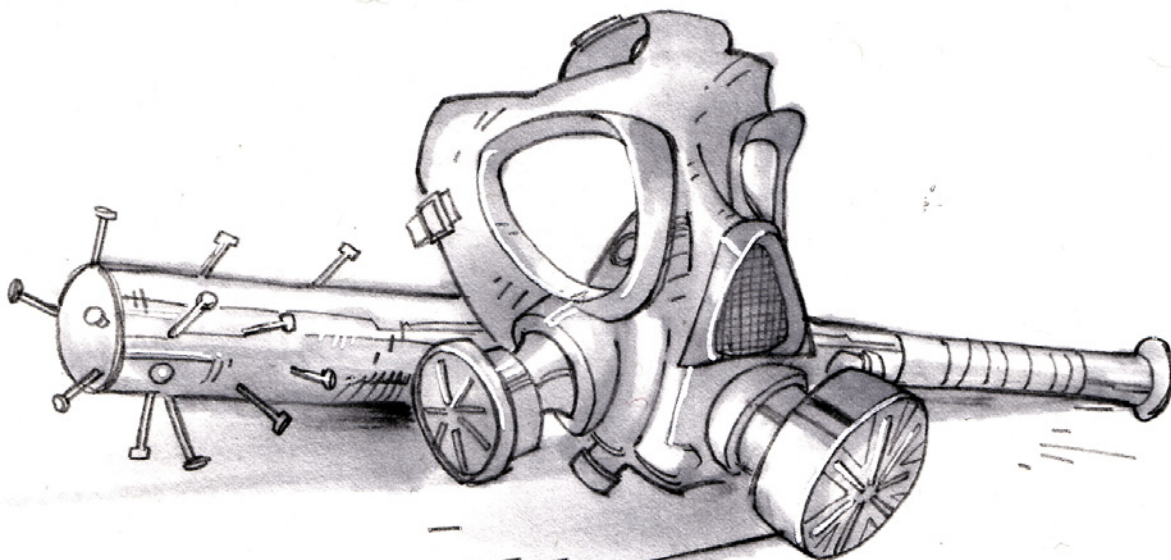
Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** 2 **Health:** 18

Mutations/Abilities: 1-4: None, 5: Mutation/Mutie, 6: Two Mutations, Mutie Flaw, extra Flaw

Armor: Light (sparse collection of leather straps, small metal plates, and sections of mail, possibly with a helmet or metal mask)

Weapons: Brass Knuckles (Muscle, 4L), Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Medium Flail (Muscle, 9L), Net (Nimbleness, Entangle)

Gear: Clothing, dice, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.



Raider

The typical mechanized savage. He wants your stuff and doesn't care if he hurts or kills you to get it.

Muscle 3

Understanding 1

Tenacity 2

Appeal 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1 / Boat 2 or Drive 2 / Brawl 2, Criminal 1, Intimidate 2, Melee 3, Notice 2, Persuade 1, Scavenge 1, Shoot 3, Stealth 2, Survive 2, Tech 1

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: 1-3:None, 4-5:Mutation/Mutie, 6: Two Mutations, Mutie Flaw, extra Flaw

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Medium Vicious Bludgeon (Muscle, 7L), Pistol Crossbow (Nimbleness, 4L, Short, Ammo 12)

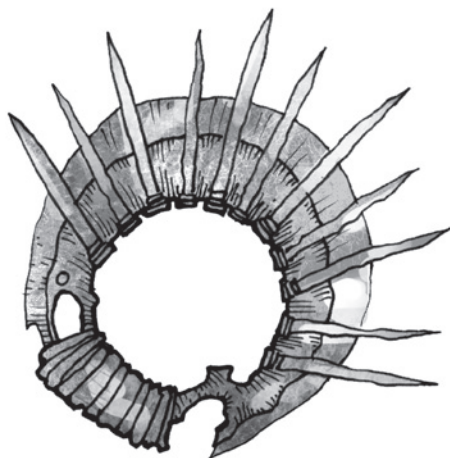
Gear: Clothing, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Vehicle/Mount: 10 vehicle points to spend on a dune buggy, jet ski, medium truck, motorcycle, or speed boat. Examples:

Dune Buggy Muscle 2, Nimbleness 3, Toughness 3, Speed 1, Pass: Driver + 1, Health 75, Pivot Mount + Light MG (Nimbleness, 10L, Distant, Ammo 100, Burst), Off-Road Capable, No Cover

Dual-Sports Bike Muscle 1, Nimbleness 3, Toughness 1, Speed 2, Pass: Driver + 2, Health 30, Sidecar + Pivot Mount + Light MG (Nimbleness, 10L, Distant, Ammo 100, Burst), Off-Road Capable, No Cover

Speed Boat Muscle 2, Nimbleness 2, Toughness 2, Speed 1, Pass: Driver + 3, Health 60, Pivot Mount + Light MG (Nimbleness, 10L, Distant, Ammo 100, Burst)



Remnant

The remnant jealously guards the tech central to his community and believes the old ways are best.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Lore 3, Melee 2, Notice 2, Persuade 2, Scavenge 1, Shoot 3, Stealth 1, Tech 3

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 12

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Medium Rifle (Nimbleness, 10L, Distant, Ammo 5)

Gear: Clothing, gas mask, Geiger counter, and roll twice on any of the Scavenging tables

Road Warrior

Road-going knight, mercenary, thug, or glory hound, the road warrior's life is his battlecar.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Drive 3, Heal 1, Intimidate 1, Lore 1, Melee 1, Notice 3, Persuade 2, Scavenge 1, Shoot 3, Stealth 1, Survive 1, Tech 2

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** 12 **Health:** 14

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Armor: Light (motorcycle leathers)

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Medium Handgun (Nimbleness, 9L, Short, Ammo 12)

Gear: Clothing, toolbox and essential tools, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Vehicle/Mount: 16 vehicle points to spend on an automobile. Example:

Family Sedan Muscle 2, Nimbleness 2, Toughness 2, Speed 2, Pass: Driver+3, Health 60, Light Vehicle Armor: Protection 8, Pair of Linked Fixed Light MGs (10L, Distant, Ammo 100, Burst, Linked), Pivot Mount+Flamethrower (Understanding, 12L/4L Fire, Short, Ammo 5)

Chapter 16

Scavenger

Always happy to trade and on the look out for new sources, the scavenger has little tolerance for rivals.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 3

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 2 / Boat 1 or Ride 1 / Brawl 1, Lore 2, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 3, Scavenge 3, Shoot 2, Stealth 1, Survive 1, Tech 2

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Crowbar (Muscle, 6L), Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Light Rifle (Nimbleness, 6L, Long, Ammo 10), Medium Axe (Muscle, 10L)

Gear: Clothing, gas mask, Geiger counter, assorted scavenging tools, large pack, and roll four times on any of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Skulk

Frequently selfish, sometimes cold-blooded, the skulk may be a thief, killer, thug, or rarely, a revolutionary.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 2

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Criminal 2, Intimidate 1, Lore 1, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 2, Shoot 2, Sleight 2, Stealth 3, Tech 1

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 12

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Crowbar (Muscle, 6L), Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Light Blunt Bludgeon (Nimbleness, 4N), Pistol Crossbow (Nimbleness, 4L, Short, Ammo 12)

Gear: Clothing, crowbar, basic lock picks, and roll six times (for stolen goods) on any of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Sentinel

Dedicated or corrupt, the sentinel is charged with protecting the settlement and keeping the peace.

Muscle 3

Understanding 2

Tenacity 3

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 2 / Boat 1 or Ride 1 / Brawl 2, Heal 1, Intimidate 2, Lore 1, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 2, Shoot 3, Stealth 1, Tech 1

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** 2 **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Armor: Light (roughly padded jacket and pants with small metal plate reinforcements)

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Light Crossbow (Nimbleness, 8L, Long, Ammo 12, Reload 2), Medium Blunt Bludgeon (Muscle, 7N)

Gear: Clothing, binoculars, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.



Trog Skulk

'Steader

The 'steader really doesn't trust you, and unless you're there to trade, you'd better get moving, stranger!

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 3

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 1 / Boat 2 *or* Drive 2 *or* Ride 2 / Brawl 2 / Heal 1 *or* Lore 1 / Melee 2, Notice 2, Persuade 1, Shoot 3, Stealth 1, Survive 2 / Tech 2 *or* Zoofinity 2

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Light Crossbow (Nimbleness, 8L, Long, Ammo 12, Reload 2)

Gear: Clothing, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Tribal Shaman

Spiritualist, healer, and advisor, the shaman's approval or lack can make the difference in tribal dealings.

Muscle 1

Understanding 2

Tenacity 3

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 2

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 2 / Boat 2 *or* Ride 2 / Brawl 2, Heal 1, Intimidate 1, Lore 1, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 1, Shoot 1, Sleight 1, Stealth 3, Survive 2, Zoofinity 1

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 12

Mutations/Abilities: 1-4: None, 5: Mutation/Mutie, 6: Two Mutations, Mutie Flaw, extra Flaw

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short)

Gear: Clothing, decorative necklace, pouch of herbs and dubious ingredients, pestle and mortar, pouch of divination bones

Vehicle/Mount: Canoe *or* Horse

Tribal Brave

Hunter, warrior, protector, the brave is a proud member of his tribe and is suspicious of outsiders.

Muscle 3

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 2

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 3 / Boat 2 *or* Ride 2 / Brawl 2, Melee 3, Notice 3, Persuade 1, Shoot 2, Stealth 3, Survive 3, Zoofinity 1

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: 1-4: None, 5: Mutation/Mutie, 6: Two Mutations, Mutie Flaw, extra Flaw

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Short Bow (Nimbleness, 8L, Ammo 12, Short), Short Spear (Nimbleness, 9L, Long), Medium Vicious Bludgeon (Muscle, 7L)

Gear: Clothing, decorative necklace

Vehicle/Mount: Canoe *or* Horse



Shaman

Chapter 16

Trog

Wary, secretive, the trog tries to survive in his underground settlement, and has rarely seen the surface.

Muscle 3

Understanding 2

Tenacity 2

Appeal 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 2

Senses 3

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Heal 1 / Lore 1 or Tech 1 / Melee 2, Notice 4, Persuade 1, Shoot 2, Stealth 3, Survive 1

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 12

Mutations/Abilities: 1-4: None, 5-6: Hypermobile, Light Sensitive, Night Vision, Mutie Flaw

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short)

Gear: Sparse, easily shed clothing, protective goggles, torch, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Wastelander

The wastelander will willingly trade or serve as a guide, but don't expect him to engage in idle banter.

Muscle 2

Understanding 2

Tenacity 3

Appeal 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 3 / Boat 1 or Ride 1 / Brawl 2, Heal 1, Lore 1, Melee 2, Notice 3, Persuade 1, Shoot 3, Stealth 2, Survive 3, Zoofinity 1

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: 1-5: None, 6: Mutation/Mutie

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 4L, Short), Light Crossbow (Nimbleness, 8L, Long, Ammo 12, Reload 2)

Gear: Clothing, flint and steel, canteen, ball of twine, 50-ft. coil of rope, 2 furs, and roll once on any one of the Scavenging tables (pages 54-60) except Military.

Vehicle/Mount: Canoe or Horse

MAKING YOUR OWN GMCs

Making your own GMCs is an art form, not a science. Use the existing examples as guidelines and assign appropriate Attribute scores, Skills, etc. as fit the concept, bearing in mind the fact that scores of 2 are normal, 3 are solid, and above that is very rare. Likewise, Skills for most GMCs seldom exceed 3. Don't bother fully detailing a GMC's every Skill, Attribute, and other detail, by the way, unless you're sure you'll be using it; you just create more work for yourself than necessary. Finally, if selecting ranged weapons, remember that crossbows are more plentiful than firearms, if only because crafting and trading for reliable ammunition is far easier than finding good condition ammunition for a specific firearm.



Wastelander

Natural Animals

Natural animals continue to inhabit the post-apocalyptic world. Indeed, many have begun to thrive as the world slowly recovers. Like humans, most are not mutated. Roll to see if a given individual animal is mutated, and to what extent:

Roll Mutations

- 1-4** None
- 5** One Mutation and one Flaw
- 6** Two Mutations and two Flaws

You can choose and randomly determine Mutations/Flaws as desired, discarding nonsensical results.

Bear

Black Bear, Brown Bear, Polar Bear

Muscle 6

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 5

Senses 2/6

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Intimidate 4, Notice 3, Stealth 1

Attacks: Bite/Claws 8L **Armor:** none **Health:** 42

Mutations/Abilities: Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapons (Bite/Claws), Night Vision

Boar

Razorback, Wild Boar

Muscle 2

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 3

Senses 2/6/1

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Intimidate 2, Notice 3, Stealth 1

Attacks: Tusks 4L **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Tusks), Night Vision

Flaws: Dull Sense (Vision)

Bird of Prey, Large

Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Harpy Eagle, Lammergeier, White-Back Vulture

Muscle 1

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 1

Senses 2/6

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Intimidate 2, Notice 6, Stealth 3

Attacks: Talons 3L **Armor:** none **Health:** 5

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Vision), Natural Weapon (Talons), Winged

Flaws: Fragile, Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Bovine

African Buffalo, American Bison, European Bison, Muskox, Water Buffalo, Wildebeest, Yak

Muscle 6

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 5

Senses 2/6

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Intimidate 2, Notice 3, Stealth 1

Attacks: Horns 8L **Armor:** none **Health:** 42

Mutations/Abilities: Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Natural Weapon (Horns)

Flaws: Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Canine, Large

Grey Wolf, Large Guard Dog

Muscle 2

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2/6/6

Skills: Athletics 3/6 (running), Brawl 3, Intimidate 3, Notice 3, Stealth 2

Attacks: Bite 4L **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision, Swift

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Canine, Medium

African Wild Dog, Dingo, Guard Dog, Maned Wolf

Muscle 1

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 2

Toughness 1

Senses 2/6/6

Skills: Athletics 3/6 (running), Brawl 3, Intimidate 2, Notice 3, Stealth 2

Attacks: Bite 3L **Armor:** none **Health:** 10

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision, Swift

Crocodilian

American Alligator, American Crocodile, Gharial, Nile Crocodile, Saltwater Crocodile

Muscle 6

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 5

Senses 2/6

Skills: Athletics 2/6 (swim), Brawl 3, Intimidate 3, Notice 3, Stealth 3

Attacks: Bite 8L **Armor:** 2 **Health:** 42

Mutations/Abilities: Armored, Amphibious, Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision

Flaws: Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Deer, Large

Elk, Moose

Muscle 5

Understanding 0

Tenacity 2

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 4

Senses 2/6/6

Skills: Athletics 2/6 (leaping and running), Brawl 2, Intimidate 2, Notice 3, Stealth 1

Attacks: Antlers 7N **Armor:** none **Health:** 33

Mutations/Abilities: Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Antlers), Night Vision, Swift

Flaws: Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Deer, Medium

Caribou/Reindeer, Mule Deer, Red Deer, White-Tailed Deer

Muscle 3

Understanding 0

Tenacity 2

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 3

Senses 2/6/6

Skills: Athletics 2/6 (leaping and running), Brawl 2, Intimidate 1, Notice 3, Stealth 1

Attacks: Antlers 5N **Armor:** none **Health:** 16

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Leaping, Natural Weapon (Antlers), Night Vision, Swift

Flaws: Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Feline, Medium

Cougar, Jaguar, Leopard

Muscle 2

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 2

Senses 2/6/6

Skills: Athletics 4/6 (leaping and running), Brawl 3, Intimidate 3, Notice 3, Stealth 4/6

Attacks: Bite/Claws 4L **Armor:** none **Health:** 14

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Leaping, Natural Weapons (Bite/Claws), Night Vision, Stealthy, Swift

Flaws: Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Feline, Small

Bobcat, Caracal, Lynx, Ocelot, Serval, Snow Leopard

Muscle 1

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 5

Toughness 1

Senses 2/6/6

Skills: Athletics 4/6 (leaping and running), Brawl 3, Intimidate 1, Notice 3, Stealth 5/6

Attacks: Bite/Claws 3L **Armor:** none **Health:** 10

Mutations/Abilities/Flaws: As above

Horse

Mustang

Muscle 5

Understanding 0

Tenacity 2

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 4

Senses 2/6/6

Skills: Athletics 2/6 (leaping and running), Brawl 2, Intimidate 1, Notice 3, Stealth 1

Attacks: Hooves 7N **Armor:** none **Health:** 33

Mutations/Abilities: Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Leaping, Natural Weapon (Hooves), Night Vision, Swift

Flaws: Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Shark, Large

Great White, Tiger

Muscle 7

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 5

Senses 2/6

Skills: Athletics 1/6 (swimming), Brawl 3, Intimidate 5, Notice 3, Stealth 4

Attacks: Bite 9L **Armor:** none **Health:** 45

Mutations/Abilities: Aquatic (Athletics 6 swimming), Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision

Flaws: Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Shark, Medium

Blue, Bull, Hammerhead, Thresher

Muscle 5

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 4

Senses 2/6

Skills: Athletics 1/6 (swimming), Brawl 3, Intimidate 4, Notice 3, Stealth 4

Attacks: Bite 7L **Armor:** none **Health:** 24

Mutations/Abilities: Aquatic (Athletics 6 swimming), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision

Flaws: Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Shark, Small

Blacktip Reef, Whitetip Reef

Muscle 3

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2/6

Skills: Athletics 1/6 (swimming), Brawl 3, Intimidate 3, Notice 3, Stealth 4

Attacks: Bite 5L **Armor:** none **Health:** 18

Mutations/Abilities: Aquatic (Athletics 6 swimming), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision

Flaws: Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Snake, Constrictor

Anaconda, Boa Constrictor, Burmese Python, Reticulated Python

Muscle 3

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 3 (4 climbing)

Toughness 3

Senses 2/6/1

Skills: Athletics 3/6 (climbing and swimming), Brawl 3, Intimidate 2, Notice 3, Stealth 4

Attacks: Bite 5L (then **Armor:** none **Health:** 18
grapples)

Mutations/Abilities: Amphibious, Climber (Athletics 6 climbing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision (actually Infra-Red), Prehensile Appendage (Tail)

Flaws: Dull Sense (Hearing), Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Snake, Venomous

Adder, Cobra, Rattlesnake

Muscle 0

Understanding 0

Tenacity 2

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 1

Senses 2/6/1

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Intimidate 2, Notice 3, Stealth 4

Attacks: Bite 2L + toxin **Armor:** none **Health:** 6

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Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision (actually Infra-Red), Venom (Toxins, page 75).

Flaws: Dull Sense (Hearing), Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Mutant Horrors

Many mutated beasts can be found in the wilderlands of the post-apocalypse, generally the unique, solitary offspring of mundane parents. In a few cases though, mutations have stabilized, producing entire populations of twisted species. Here are some of the most common ones, though you can easily make your own by taking an existing normal animal, adding appropriate Mutations and Flaws, and tweaking Attributes to suit the concept you have.

Abomination

Brutish, almost pitiful freaks, abominations are barely recognizable as they humans from which they are descended. Large, powerful, and hideous, they are shambling humanoids, limbs twisted and uneven, features contorted, their knotted flesh sprouting vestigial limbs and semi-formed parasitic twins.

Robbed of higher intellect by their warped bodies and constant pain, they retain ape-like cunning and reasoning, and while some may be befriended, they always remain unpredictable.

They are opportunistic and notoriously unfussy omnivores, using deformed, bone-laden fists to attack and defend themselves.

Muscle 5

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 2/1

Toughness 4

Senses 2/6/1

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Intimidate 4, Notice 2, Stealth 2, Survive 3, and a rare few have Melee 2

Attacks: Club-Like Fists 7N **Armor:** none **Health:** 36

Mutations/Abilities: Enduring, Natural Weapons (Club-like Fists), Regenerative

Flaws: Crude Hands

Blood Hound

A particularly foul mutation of the Grey Wolf, Blood Hounds still live as pack predators of up to a dozen individuals, but differ greatly from their forebears.

Similar in size and body shape, they are slighter than wolves, with shorter, slicker coats. Though still obviously canine, their ears are larger, their muzzles shorter, blunter. Their most apparent physiological changes are the large membranes of skin that extend between their front and rear paws, allowing them to glide, and their longer, prehensile paws, these traits enabling them to climb well and launch themselves to silently glide from perch to perch.

Vampiric rather than carnivorous, they bring down prey by surprising them with an initial glide, then harrying them as do most wolves, stopping to drink through their tubular tongues only when their prey is dead or incapacitated. Savaged, drained corpses are good indicators that Blood Hounds are in the area.

Muscle 2

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 2

Senses 2/6/6

Skills: Athletics 3/6 (climbing and gliding), Brawl 3, Intimidate 3, Notice 3, Stealth 3

Attacks: Bite 4L

Armor: none **Health:** 14

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision, Patagia

Flaws: Selective Diet (Hematophage)

Loper

Lopers are a scourge, a mutated form of wild horse ideally suited to survival and entirely capable and willing to devour anything edible it comes across, animal or vegetable.

As swift as their equine progenitors, lopers are distinctly different in form. Their forelegs are notably shorter, their hindlegs larger and more powerful, giving them a low bipedal running gait reminiscent of ancient dinosaurs. Their hooves have split, each half becoming pointed, claw-like, ideal for digging out roots or attacking prey, while their teeth are more obviously those of an omnivore now. The loper's tail has become long and muscular, providing balance to their bipedal motion.

Small herds of lopers will uproot vegetation and crops if possible, and run down, attack, and devour any animals smaller than themselves, even using pack tactics to tackle larger prey in lean times. Unfortunately, all attempts to domesticate them have met with failure.



Muscle 5

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 2/1

Toughness 4

Senses 2/6/1

Skills: Athletics 2/6 (leaping and running), Brawl 3, Intimidate 3, Notice 3, Stealth 1

Attacks: Split Hooves 6L **Armor:** none **Health:** 33

Mutations/Abilities: Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Leaping, Natural Weapon (Split Hooves), Night Vision, Swift

Morlock

The subterranean Troggs are among those humans most frequently demonstrating stable mutations, developments that enable them to survive and thrive in their dark, cramped environment. Some, however, have mutated further and degenerated into bestial deep-dwellers. These are the morlocks.

Albino, naked, their skin almost translucent, morlocks have claw-like nails, pointed, overlarge ears, small, sharp teeth, and large, pink, bulging eyes that reflect even the smallest trace of light. They communicate in high-pitched and barely audible shrieks, clambering up and across the walls and ceilings of their cavernous abodes, squeezing almost bonelessly through the smallest of tunnels.

Frightened, even pained by light, they shun the surface world save when food is scarce and their frequent cannibalism threatens to decimate their tribes. In such times they are known to launch stealthy night-time raids on trog and other human settlements, abducting anyone they can; they prefer their food fresh.

Muscle 2

Understanding 1

Tenacity 2

Appeal 1

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 3

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Notice 3, Stealth 3, Intimidate 2, Survive 3

Attacks: Claws 4L, Rock **Armor:** none **Health:** 14 4L

Mutations/Abilities: Echolocation, Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Hypermobile, Natural Weapon (Claws), Night Vision, Wall Crawler

Flaws: Color Blind, Light Sensitive, Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Weapons: Rock, Thrown (Nimbleness, 4L, Short)

Gear: None

Vileture

One of the few threats airmen have to face in the skies, beyond each other, viletures are mutated vultures. Little has changed about their basic appearance, though they are certainly more scabrous and uglier. Rather, their greatest change is their size, many now standing five feet tall, with a wingspan in excess of thirty feet.

Viletures still scavenge, still ride the thermals ever-vigilant for the sick, injured, and weak, but their greater size has made them more confident, more willing to actively hunt and harass, even in the air. Furthermore, their always-corrosive stomach acid is now even more powerful, capable of dissolving nearly any organic matter. They can vomit stinking gobs of it with great force, distance and accuracy as many an airman has discovered to his cost.

Muscle 2

Understanding 0

Tenacity 3

Appeal 0

Nimbleness 4

Toughness 2

Senses 2/6

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Intimidate 3, Notice 6, Stealth 3

Attacks: Talons 4L **Armor:** none **Health:** 7

Mutations/Abilities: Caustic Vomit (Nimbleness, 4L then 2L/Round for die Rounds, Short Range, once per hour), Enhanced Sense (Vision), Natural Weapon (Talons), Winged

Flaws: Fragile, Selective Diet (Carnivore)



Morlock

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Abomination



Loper



Blood Hound

CHAPTER 11

GAS GOUGING

INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE

In the world of Atomic Highway, money is only worth the paper it's printed on ... and there's not much use for paper in the aftermath of the apocalypse. However, oil and gasoline have become almost as precious as life itself, with some willing to kill for a few drops of this precious resource. When it comes to controlling a functioning pipeline, they'll do worse than kill: they'll prosper on the blood of those they enslave to keep it working.

Some time ago, a remnant enclave discovered a labyrinth of tunnels under a quarry, with a previously untapped oil reserve located deep within its inky dark veins. They also discovered a peaceful group of mutants who had taken up refuge within the tunnels, creating a trog warren. The enclave members brokered a deal with the mutants: in exchange for maintaining the pipeline the enclave built to funnel the oil from the quarry to a refining station several miles away, the warren receives a portion of the trade goods acquired from a nearby bartertown in exchange for the refined gasoline. The arrangement has worked well for all involved, until recently...

A group of raiders invaded the quarry, brutally taking control of it and the pipeline. Dozens of mutants, not killed in the attack but unable to escape, were enslaved. The enclave wants to restore the flow of oil, the bartertown is desperate for the gas, and the mutants that did escape want to free their brethren and home ... and perhaps revenge. In order to keep the oil flowing, the raiders have left behind six mutants to run the pipeline, which has been diverted by the raiders to a nearby location they control: the Oasis.

The Oasis was once a massive gas station,

and truck stop that the raiders have turned into a den of villainy, the key attractions being gasoline and gambling, with a brisk side trade in slavery. The raiders have kludged together a small refinery that they run day and night, and they're looking to expand the operation. They've recently acquired a still-functioning locomotive and some tanker cars, and are planning to ship the gas to trade along the railroads still in working order.

There are several ways the Player Characters might enter the scenario:

They can stumble blindly into it. The PCs discover the quarry and the tunnels, either looking for shelter or to scavenge whatever they can.

They may have been paid or "encouraged" by the bartertown to look into the gas stoppage, or by the remnant enclave to find out what is going on with the operation.

They may have heard from a traveler about the Oasis, and have decided to check it out or score themselves some gasoline.

Or, of course, some other way the GM might devise.

Scenario Summary

Few RPG adventure plans ever survive contact with the PCs intact -- which is not necessarily a bad thing. *Atomic Highway* is certainly no exception, emphasizing as it does over-the-top, cinematic action, encouraging the Players to take it "off-road." To help the GM keep the adventure moving down the highway reasonably intact, here's a basic outline of the major events (but feel free to take any exits to uncharted territories

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you and the Players discover along the way!):

1. The PCs discover and/or investigate the trog warren located in the tunnels beneath the quarry.
2. They are attacked by the mutants who survived the raider assault, mistaking the PCs for raiders as they desperately try to save their brethren and themselves.
3. The raiders arrive at the quarry during the mutant attack, making it clear that both the mutants and PCs now have a common enemy.
4. The PCs sneak or retreat out of the quarry, and decide to escape with their lives (quite likely ending the adventure or taking it “off the rails,” or finish the job by serving up vengeance on the raiders one gallon at a time.
5. The PCs raid the Oasis, possibly redirecting the pipeline.
6. They storm the train as it pulls away from the Oasis, filled with raiders, their slaves (including the captive mutants), the raider leader and, of course, hundreds of gallons of gasoline.

Quarry Quarrel

The quarry sinks several hundred feet into the earth, a massive rock-lined pit of dust and dirt. Man-made mountains of rock and slag piled high around the rim hide the single gravel-packed road that spirals down the quarry walls to the belly-bottom of the blasted-rock beast. Looking from the top of quarry, a few 55-gallon drums can be seen, the distance making them appear the size of thimbles. A small shack and a single unmanned roadblock sit near the top of the quarry road, nestled in a small break in the wall of loose rock.

Lookout Shack

The single-room shack contains a toppled-over chair, a broken flashlight (with good batteries still in it), some rubber bands, a few bent paperclips, and some small crude paper targets. Red-brown stains and splashes on the walls suggest that the last sentry may not have enjoyed a peaceful demise.

A dented, lightly rusted pipe, its diameter just wider than a man's shoulders, runs past the shack. Emanating from somewhere deep in the quarry, the pipe runs up the quarry walls and out of the pit into the overgrown grass at the top, snaking toward the horizon farther than the eye can see. It vibrates slightly as something gurgles through it at a steady rate. Any serious investigation will reveal that it is carrying crude oil.

If the PCs investigate the shack and its surroundings further, roll the following skill checks:

Using the **Understanding/Survive** skill, rolling two

(2) successes or more [hereafter condensed in format as Understanding/Survive (2)], the PC determines that the blood was spilled within the past few days.

Understanding/Tech (2), the PC is able to repair the flashlight.

Notice/Senses (1), the PC notices that a newer piece of pipe has been grafted onto the old pipe, traveling in a different direction than the older pipe.

Every ten paces or so along the edge of the crude road leading into the depths of the quarry stands a 55-gallon drum that reeks of oil mixed with lard, with a hint of refined gasoline. This napalm-inspired deterrent is quite capable of killing any invader, the row of barrels standing as a silent mystery that should worry the PCs – become useful weapons to those resourceful enough to consider the possibilities.

Understanding/Tech (2), the PC deduces the contents of the barrels and understands their potential for devastation (20L damage for anyone caught in the blast of an exploding barrel).

Disrupting the pipeline will bring the raiders down on the quarry in about 20 minutes.

Rock Bottom

The bottom of the quarry shows clear signs of a recent raid that ended in violence. Tracks clearly show signs of fast motorized vehicles crisscrossing the area.

Understanding/Survive (2), the PC can make out that five four-wheeled vehicles were engaged in the raid.

Tunnel Of Terror

In a shady corner of the quarry pit, a few loose boards cover the entrance of a tunnel that has been crudely dug into the quarry wall. From the entrance, well-worn tracks and railroad ties run down the center of the tunnel, disappearing into the depths. An old, broken ore cart straddles the rails near the entrance, nearly blocking it, a skeleton of broken wood and pitted metal axles bereft of wheels.

Low-powered bulbs, strung unevenly along the ceiling, give off just enough of a glow to make out the general shape and size of the tunnel. It's barely wide enough for two individuals to walk side-by-side, and is just low enough that many will have to duck slightly as they walk.

Upon entering, the PCs will note signs of habitation as the discarded bones of recent meals crack underfoot. The constant thumping and slushing sounds of liquid moving through the pipeline echo off



the rugged cavern walls.

The poor lighting creates long shadows, eerie pools of inky darkness that play tricks on the eyes, and dust constantly hangs in the air, making the murky light even hazier — all sight-based rolls should have their Difficulty increased by 1, unless the PCs have a light source, or a mutation such as Night Vision.

The mutants left behind to man the pipeline are desperate, and have set up several traps to help them slay the raiders during their next check on the operation.

Loose rock and rubble in the walkways of the tunnel. The mutants have dumped loose rock and debris, scattering it over the major walkways of the tunnel system. This slows movement considerably; any PC attempting to move faster than a walking pace over it must roll **Nimbleness/Athletics (1)**, or stumble and fall to the ground (embarrassing, but not damaging).

The light bulbs lining the tunnel have been rigged with a sticky liquid explosive which can be set off from a distance. As a PC nears a booby-trapped bulb, it begins to burn dimmer than the other lights, then flickers off and on rapidly, and finally, with a bright spark and pop, the entire bulb explodes downward, splattering its sticky, milky gray liquid onto the PCs. A PC hit by the exploding bulb takes 6L fire damage, with 2L ongoing fire damage each round until it's extinguished. A successful **Nimbleness/Athletics** roll halves the damage of the trap, two successes will avoid any damage.

Oil-soaked areas of the cavern that are ready to be set aflame if a PC stumbles over or falls. If ignited, these traps cause 2L fire damage each round until extinguished. A successful **Nimbleness/Athletics** halves the damage of the trap, two successes will avoid any damage.

Murderous Mutant Ambush!

As the PCs make their way through the tunnel, or if they attempt to stop the flow of oil through the pipeline, they will be set upon by four of the six remaining mutants, mistakenly identifying the PCs as raiders. They are scared and desperate, grimly determined to slay the intruding “raiders.” The mutants will wait until the PCs, hopefully softened up by the traps, move deeper into the bowels of the tunnel complex so they won't be able to escape to the surface.

The four mutants have worked themselves into a murderous frenzy that won't be easily halted; trying to reason with these four is nearly impossible, assuming the PCs try, and they won't back down until every “raider” is dead, screaming battle cries such as “Death to the RAIDERS! Life for our LOVED ONES!”

Appeal/Persuade (4), the PC convinces the mutants that the PCs are not raiders.

For the mutants' attributes, skills, and other details use the typical trog GMC entry, but with cosmetic mutations such as fleshy wattles or deformed hands, and the mutation Natural Weapon (Claws). Two older mutants have stayed their hands (and weapons) to maintain the operation of the pipeline; these two may be reasoned with much more easily.

Appeal/Persuade (2), the PC gets the two older mutants to listen. It takes a full round to fully convince the older mutants that they are telling the truth, but once convinced, they'll be able to immediately call off any remaining attacking mutants.

The PCs may end up killing all of the attacking mutants, or they might be able to get through the combat without killing them all. Regardless of the outcome, the two older mutants that have been holding back will start screaming “Everyone, stop, this is a mistake! They're not the raiders!”, as a rumble from the head of the tunnel echoes down to where the action is taking place.

The PCs earn one Fortune each for each surviving mutant, letting the Players know that not everything that hinders a character necessarily needs killing.

Raider Request

At the passage's entrance, those few beams of light spindling into the opening are dimmed as a massive metal grill is placed over the opening, drilled and bolted into place by the raiders. If the PCs rush forward they'll see half a dozen raiders working on the grill covering the entrance leaving only a small opening for the pipeline to go through. Behind the raiders are a pair of armed buggies (see page 103). If the PCs left anything outside, including a vehicle, they'll see the raiders stealing it. If a vehicle has been disabled (spark plugs or some other piece taken off by a wise PC to prevent theft — give that Player a Fortune for their foresight), the raiders will simply tow the vehicle away. Only two of the raiders are actually putting the grill into place; the other four are training nasty looking weapons (including an improvised flamethrower) on the tunnel entrance.

The raider lieutenant, a short toad of a man, the entire right side of his face appearing to have been melted by fire, yells, “Boss wants production increased by twenny percent in the next two days! We're gonna start distributin' to all the bartertowns on the tracks! If'n you ever wants to see yer dirty heathen brethern agin, you might wanna git busy makin' the oil flow! Otherwise... wells, let's just say yer kin ain't gonna getta 'otherwise.’”

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Behind him the leader of the raiders, V'Dane Thrasker, a tall man with an even taller mohawk and a metal patch screwed to his skull over his right eye, steps forward with a menacing (left-eyed) glare. He forcibly drags an older mutant man forward by a chain attached to a spiked dog collar, then pushes him to his knees.

The mutant is whimpering as tears roll down his pained face. "Pleeaasse", he whimpers, "I can convince theeemm to goo faster... pleasssee give me a chance."

Thrasker looks into the mouth of the tunnel ignoring the old mutant's pleas. "Yeah, you'll convince 'em..." he snarls, before forcing a small device into the mutant's mouth and covering it with duct tape. A bright light can be seen through the sides of the mutant's cheeks, blinking faster and faster as the seconds tick by.

Understanding/Tech (2), the PC will realize the device is a small timed detonator that is often used as a land mine.

As a high-piercing wail emits from the device, Thrasker coolly turns around and steps away, then the device explodes, killing the mutant.

Thrasker steps back, putting his foot on the body. "In two days I'll have another of your filthy kin come forward to convince you, and they'll keep 'volunteering' to convince you every five minutes from that point until production increases by twenty percent." He turns and walks away.

The PCs can attempt to rush the gate, but doing so is going to be painful and costly as the raiders unleash the flamethrower and a few other nasty weapons; shooting at or through the gate will also likely prove futile, due to the cover it affords the raiders, and might even result in dangerous ricochets.

The PCs can attempt to talk to the raiders, bribe them, or possibly intimidate them, though such attempts require at least 5 successes, given the serious upper hand the raiders enjoy, and the GM should consider spending Thrasker's Fortune to reduce any PC successes due to his hold over his fellow scum.

If the PCs do somehow manage to confront the raiders, use the normal Raider GMC attributes, skills, and general gear for all the raiders, giving one a flamethrower with a six-shot tank. Thrasker's details are found at the end of this adventure, although his Fortune should be spent in such a way as to allow his escape (not necessarily unharmed, however) for the adventure finale.

Escaping The Pit

In the likely event that the PCs find themselves still trapped inside the tunnel with the mutants, there seems to be no apparent means of escape. If any mutants are left alive, they'll explain to the PCs that dozens of mutants were captured by the raiders and carted off to an unknown location — if there are no mutants left alive, in order to keep the adventure moving, this might be a good time to have yet another one step forward from the shadows, hands raised in surrender, to explain what's going on.

If the pipeline doesn't continue producing, the raiders will kill the captives, making it clear that they won't accept any excuses. The workers can't leave to find the other mutants and extract their revenge upon the raiders or the pipeline will falter. However, the mutants have a secret exit, and will share it with the PCs if they swear to find the raiders and save the captives. They can even offer as much refined gasoline as the PCs can carry.

If the PCs convince the mutants that they'll help (good roleplaying in this instance should trump a roll, but a successful **Appeal/Persuade (1)** will convince them), they will be led to an abandoned section of the tunnel system where there lies a broken rickety deathtrap of an ancient elevator strung up with a pulley system. The shaft continues upward into the darkness, disappearing from sight.

Understanding/Tech (2), the PC is able to repair the elevator (although the GM should still keep them in suspense as they ride up, worrying that it will collapse until they reach the top).

If the PCs are unable to repair the elevator they could attempt to climb the shaft to freedom. On a Muscle or Nimbleness/Athletics (3), the PC is able to climb up the shaft.

The top of the shaft feels alive as a gentle breeze caresses the faces of the PCs.

Senses or Understanding/Notice (2), the PC realizes that it isn't a breeze, but the rustling of thousands of batwings from a bat colony clinging to the ceiling of the shaft directly above the elevator.

If they point it upward, the PCs' light source will clearly illuminate the bats overhead, which will awaken and swarm downwards, buffeting the elevator as they thrash about, winging and screeching into the faces and hair of the PCs. In turn, this will cause the PCs to reflexively swing and swipe at the bats rocking the rickety elevator and fouling the pulley, causing it to stop and begin swaying perilously.

As the PCs are swatting away the last of the bats, the swinging of the elevator causes a strand of the



rope carrying it to snap with an alarming twang, which sends the elevator lurching. Every round that the PCs remain in the elevator (after the first strand snaps), another strand will snap. Once five strands total have snapped, the elevator will plummet, crashing to the floor several hundred feet below. The top of the shaft is covered by an old, rusted trapdoor that (theoretically) would have opened as the rising elevator cage tripped it, but dirt and debris have built up on top of it over the years. The PCs will have to climb the sides of the elevator shaft and make their way to the top, and then either trip the door mechanism, or force the trapdoor open to exit the shaft.

Muscle or Nimbleness/Athletics (1), to climb to the top of the shaft from the elevator.

Understanding or Nimbleness/Tech (2), to trip the trapdoor opening mechanism.

Muscle/Athletics (3), to force up the dirt covered planks.

The Oasis

The PCs can find the Oasis in a number of ways:

Track the raiders that left the quarry. **Understanding/Survival (2)**, the PC can find and follow the raiders' trail.

Simply follow the diverted pipeline.

Find/follow other GMCs that are heading for the Oasis.

The Oasis is a massive gas station and convenience store complex located next to what is left of Interstate 90. Made up of 20 pumps, two buildings, three outbuildings (originally for storage), and plenty of parking, this massive spread has evolved through deterioration into a dark shadow of its former glory. The raiders have "frankensteined" the Oasis, breathing life into the dead, creating a monster that thrives on oil, gasoline, and misery.

The entire complex is encircled by a couple dozen evenly spaced 55-gallon drums, each blazing with liquid fire, bathing it in smoke-choked light. Spiked chains and tire shredders also surround the area, except for two entry and exit points which are clear of obstacles, but which are heavily guarded by four raiders apiece. Nearly all the glass in the structures has been broken, with nailed-up boards covering all the gaps in the buildings. Several pairs of armed raiders patrol the rooftops and grounds to handle unruly customers and scare off any potential looters. Hooting, hollering, screaming, and crying fill the air as GMCs engage in all of the activities that the Oasis offers.

Two pumps appear to be working as lines of vehicles, and GMCs line up to fill containers of all sorts. Two guards armed with assault rifles are stationed at each pump, taking great joy in badgering and harassing customers. The strong odors of gasoline and crude pervade the entire complex, along with the acrid smoke from the fires of the encircling 55-gallon drums.

Anyone attempting to enter the Oasis through the entry points is checked out by the raiders who don't seem to care about customers carrying weapons as long as the weapons in question aren't better than the ones the raiders doing the patting down are already carrying. If they notice superior weapons they will attempt to make a forcible trade on the spot. Ultimately, the raiders are only interested in one thing: do potential customers actually have any goods worth trading? If so, customers are allowed into the complex. If the raiders don't feel a customer has anything of value they will often deny them entry. Many customers plead with the raiders to be allowed in, and the raiders take great joy in forcing such individuals to perform dangerous or humiliating stunts to be allowed entry.

The Oasis is a rowdy place, with fights breaking out all the time. The raiders generally don't break up the fights, and wagering often breaks out as soon as the first punch is thrown. However, the raiders deal with anything that delays their influx of oil swiftly and brutally.

PC tactics in approaching the Oasis will vary widely from group to group. Some may try stealth, some may try a direct assault, and some may just try to breeze right in as potential customers (and as long as they don't act overly aggressive they'll easily gain entrance). There is no right or wrong way for a group to approach or attack the Oasis. All raiders in this section, except V'Dane Thrasker, use the typical GMC Raider details.

If attacked, the raiders will attempt to defend the Oasis to the best of their ability, but if the PCs cause enough death or destruction they will flee. Until they see the cause is lost, the raiders will kill anyone and anything that gets in their way, having no qualms about gunning down their customers. They only demonstrate control and restraint around the tanks and barrels of gasoline, doing everything they can to stop them from bursting into flames or exploding.

At the first sight or sound of a well-orchestrated attack, Thrasker will turn tail and run. He has a convenient bolt-hole in his office, and has no compunction about leaving the rest of the raiders to their fate.



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The Main Building

Inside the main building (an old truck-stop diner) of the Oasis, the raiders have set up gambling areas for card and dice games, and everyone's favorite: pit fights where combatants enter a fifteen-foot deep pit which has been lined with broken glass, barbed wire, and a jury-rigged electrified webbing that can be thrown over the pit to dissuade escape. The raiders aren't too picky about where the combatants come from (deadbeats, cheats, mutants, anyone they catch outside the Oasis, and a few truly desperate individuals who volunteer) as long as they keep coming and the gas keeps flowing. The winner of a pit fight receives five gallons of gas. Gurg, the current pit champion, is a hulking mutant brute, eight feet tall with thick, pebbled hide, no hair, no external ears, and a vicious saw-bladed axe (use the typical Pit Fighter GMC details but increase Muscle to 5 and Health to 33, he uses a Medium Axe and so does 13L base damage, and though he doesn't wear armor, has a natural Protection 2).

The majority of the wagering at the Oasis is based on gas or oil. Occasionally a new good or service may spark the interest of the raiders, but fuel is the primary trade good. All of the gambling tables, service areas, and most of the recurring patrons carry around a set of liquid measuring devices (test tubes, gallon jugs, and among the truly wealthy, 5 to 10-gallon gas cans).

There are always six guards on duty in the refining area centrally located inside the main building. It is enclosed in a glass walled room, so that the patrons can see that the gas is pure and not being tampered with. The glass walls also serve as an internal theft deterrent. Anyone caught stealing gas is sent to the fight pit with neither weapons nor armor and receives no winnings even in the unlikely event that they do prevail.

Thrasker's Office

The old manager's office is located in a corner of the main building, and in this office the head of the raiders, V'Dane Thrasker, keeps an eye on the operation using the limited functions of the handful of security cameras that he's managed to have repaired. However, the cameras are not very reliable and frequently malfunction. The cameras give their functioning status away to anyone that knows about tech. Each camera has a green and red blinking lights; green means operational, red means non-operational. There are five cameras in the building, one at each corner, and one at the front entrance. The main entrance camera is not currently working (blinking red), and two of the corner cameras are blinking red as well (GM's choice which cameras are non-operational).

Understanding/Tech (1), the PC understands what the blinking green and red lights indicate.

At the first sign of any trouble, Thrasker will attempt escape via the bolt-hole that he had several captive mutants dig. The bolt-hole, the entrance to which is hidden under two large rolling filing cabinets, connects the office with the train station (see The Lurid Locomotive, below) via an underground tunnel. If Thrasker uses the tunnel the filing cabinets will be out of position, and the PCs will easily see the hole in the ground if they enter the office.

The underground tunnel is of primitive construction. It has been bored by mutant hands, and has a few pieces of timber scattered throughout to provide support. To ensure that the mutants did not booby trap or create weak spots that would cause it to collapse, Thrasker has housed three of the mutants in the tunnel where they have been shackled by their legs. Their deformed, clawed hands have been covered in a sticky resin that has been allowed to harden, making them ineffective as weapons or digging utensils. They have also been gagged with leather strips to stop them from biting through their restraints or making any annoying noises.

Thrasker has rigged a trap in the tunnel to deter pursuers. The third rung of the short ladder has a rudimentary contact detonator built into it. Any significant pressure put on the rung trips a pressure switch that, if released, will detonate explosives causing the first 10 feet of the tunnel near the ladder to collapse.

Senses/Notice (3), to see the wires connected to the trapped rung. However, if a PC steps on the rung they will hear it click.

Understanding/Tech (2), the PC understands if they let pressure off the rung it will activate it.

Each round that a PC is on the trapped rung they must make a Tenacity Attribute-Only roll with a difficulty equal to the number of rounds they have been on the rung to stop themselves from moving, squirming, or doing something that might accidentally set off the trap.

Understanding/Tech (3), to deactivate the charge. Failure sets off the detonator.

The explosion deals 10L damage to anyone on the rung and 5L damage to anyone within 10 feet of the blast (anyone in the office is spared from the explosion).

Nimbleness/Athletics, one success halves the damage, and two successes avoids the damage entirely as the PC jumps or dodges out of the way.

If a PC is standing on the rung while another attempts to disarm the trap, the PC deactivating the detonator must make a **Tenacity Attribute-Only (2)** roll before making the deactivate attempt to make sure their hands don't slip, or accidentally nudge the person on the rung, or to avoid adding any extra weight. Anyone caught in the tunnel collapse takes 12L damage and is trapped in the rubble.

Muscle Attribute-Only (3), the trapped PC pulls or digs themselves free of the rubble.

Any PC that attempts to help free a mutant gains a Fortune Point.

The Outbuildings

Building 1: One outbuilding houses a handful of the mutants that the raiders have kept to sell or trade on the slave market. These mutants have been given the smallest amount of food and water to keep them alive, and a single leaky bucket in a corner acts as their toilet. One submachine gun-armed raider guards this building, but he's more interested in scoring his next cigarette than guarding the mutants.

If freed, or at least questioned, the mutants will explain that several more mutants have been taken to the nearby train for transport to slave auctions in nearby bartertowns.

Any PC freeing or helping to free the mutants should receive a Fortune Point.

The mutants, weak from malnourishment and mistreatment, will be of little use in any fight, and without help from a PC, will do little more than stumble madly toward freedom, and likely death. Any PC that aids the mutants in returning to the quarry should receive a Fortune point.

Building 2: The second outbuilding is the sleeping quarters for the raiders. They sleep in "hot bunks," with one shift of raiders in the bunkhouse sleeping while another is on patrol. When a patrol's shift ends they wake up the sleeping raiders, trade them their standard weapons for the bed, and go to sleep. Raiders only keep special equipment that they may have acquired over time. A GM may add any special equipment that he feels is appropriate for his campaign. There are 12 raiders sleeping here at all times (even during the day).

Building 3: The third building is a long affair that used to be the garage for the Oasis, and continues to act as such. However, it is used more for storage than any actual mechanical work as parts are extremely scarce and valuable. The raiders do have a few parts lying about the garage and a GM can drop in any part that fits their campaign. There are a few tools (screwdrivers, wrenches, car jacks, lug wrenches,

hammers, and a functioning air compressor) scattered about the garage.

There are currently two raiders in here working on a vehicle. If the PCs lost a vehicle to the raiders at the quarry, the two raiders are currently working on it (adding a larger fuel tank). If the PCs did not lose a vehicle, the raiders are working on a large, currently uncustomized, SUV. There are also the three buggies mentioned in the RAIDERS REQUEST section currently parked in or near the garage.

There are four red 5-gallon travel gas cans in the garage that are full.

The Lurid Locomotive

A quarter-mile behind the Oasis are a set of railroad tracks and a train of five cars that bear little resemblance to their original design. Jagged metal sheets crisscross to form patchwork armor over the train, with spikes jutting out at all angles from the body of the huge locomotive, giving it the appearance of a rabid porcupine. The one massive light on its front has been bathed in a light red paint giving this cyclopean "eye" an angry hue.

The engine car has been brought up to a rudimentary working condition, but needs constant tinkering to keep running.

The second car is the most intact of all the cars and appears to have been even more reinforced with metal plates (Protection 17) than the cars behind it. This car houses twenty 55-gallon drums of refined gasoline.

The third car has several planks missing from the sides (Protection 8), and is open to the elements from the top. This car houses twenty 55-gallon drums of crude oil.

The fourth car consists of a flat bed with no walls. On the bed is a functional bulldozer.

The fifth car has a large metal beam down the center of the roof with chains hanging from it. Twenty mutants are chained by their hands to this beam forcing them to stand or hang from their arms. It appears they have been here for quite some time as the smell is overpowering. If a PC enters this car they'll be met by thin whispers from parched lips – "please free us," "the slavers are monsters," "we've done nothing wrong," and "we should be free, not slaves."

Near the train is a small metal shed. This shed appears to be a small storage area for the train and there are a few empty boxes and crates, but more importantly, it is the other end of Thrasker's bolt-hole tunnel.

Four raider guards are on train duty: two circling the train separately on patrol, one resting atop the

Chapter 17

first car behind the engine car, and one sleeping in the train's engine car. Even if awakened by a loud fight breaking out, the sleeping raider will continue to hide, trying to snipe or ambush any PCs that come too close. If the PCs have assaulted the Oasis, then Thrasker has made his way to the engine car (the sleeping raider is obviously awake now!), and the train starts moving as soon as the PCs arrive.

The train will start off moving slowly, but will begin to pick up speed as it moves. Within 12 rounds it will be up to speed (Speed 1), moving quickly enough that jumping on or off will be difficult.

Jumping on: **Nimbleness/Athletics (3)**, the PC leaps on the moving train successfully and takes no damage. Anyone failing this roll takes 10L damage. Personal armor protects as normal.

Jumping off: **Nimbleness/Athletics**, the PC leaps off the moving train, reducing the 10L damage by 2L per success. Personal armor protects as normal.

Nimbleness/Athletics (2), the PC can jump from one car to another while the train is in motion. An unsuccessful PC fails the jump and falls off the train suffering 10L damage. Personal armor protects as normal.

Thrasker has no intention of giving up, and will do everything he can to escape. He may set the mutant car loose in either a bargain with the PCs or as a way of getting them off the train. He'll unhook any car, including the gas, if it will ensure his escape, but he is loathe to give up any car if he doesn't have to. One tactic he will definitely employ if able is to knock over a few drums in the third car to hamper movement.

Nimbleness/Athletics (3), the PC can slip and slide their way through this car. An unsuccessful PC can retry the test each round, but will not be able to get through the car until the test is passed.

As a very last resort, Thrasker will blow up the gasoline in the first car by throwing his lighter into one of the drums but to do this he'll have to set the car free from the engine or he'll blow himself up as well. If the gasoline car explodes, it will do 100L damage to anyone on the train, and half of that for each car length a PC is away from the blast (one car away takes 50L, two cars away 25L damage, three cars away 12L, and anything further than that is outside of the blast radius).

Unhooking a car takes 2 rounds.

Understanding/Tech (3), the PC can disable the locomotive in a manner that it may work again in the future. Failure has no affect on the train.

Gas Gouging At The Pump

The PCs don't have to kill Thrasker or the raiders. They don't even have to destroy the Oasis to be successful, at least in the short term. A well-organized assault on the Oasis will send the raiders running for cover, and allow the PCs to successfully recover the pipeline, and even free the enslaved mutants. However, if Thrasker or the raiders escape it is only a matter of time before they come back looking for revenge – or someone new might take over Oasis operations.

Successful PCs will find their initial contact (bartertown, remnant enclave, other contact) satisfied as long as the pipeline is still intact. The PCs may even wish to take over the Oasis and use it as a base of operations. However, there will be others testing them all the time trying to take it from them. That's the problem in the world of *Atomic Highway*: no matter how hard you work for something, there's always someone that will try to take it from you.

The Locomotive

Muscle 7

Nimbleness 0

Toughness 6

Speed 1

Protection: 11

Health: 195

V'Dane Thrasker

A tall, lean but well-muscled man with an even taller mohawk, with a metal patch screwed to his skull over his right eye. Thrasker is callous, calculating, and vengeful. He is not, however, foolish, and possesses a patience and cunning unrivalled by most other raiders.

Muscle 4

Understanding 4

Tenacity 3

Appeal 3

Nimbleness 3

Toughness 4

Senses 2

Skills: Athletics 3, Drive 3, Brawl 3, Criminal 2, Intimidate 4, Melee 4, Notice 2, Persuade 2, Scavenge 2, Shoot 3, Stealth 2, Survive 3, Tech 2

Attacks: As weapon **Armor:** none **Health:** 22

Mutations/Abilities: None **Fortune:** 10

Weapons: Knife (Nimbleness, 6L, Short), Medium Vicious Bludgeon (Muscle, 8L), Assault Rifle (Nimbleness, 10L, Distant, Ammo 30, Burst Capable)

Gear: Clothing, cigarette lighter

APPENDIX

HUMANOID ANIMALS

Humanoid animals are animals that have mutated into humanoid form, gaining sapience, the ability to speak, and manipulative hands. Their inclusion in *Atomic Highway* is optional and should be decided by the gaming group before play begins.

Creating humanoid animals is slightly different than creating human characters:

1) Rather than having 18 Attribute points to assign in step 2 of character creation (page 19), they have different numbers of points to balance their Abilities/Flaws. Some also have no Skill points with which to customize the character in step 7 of character creation (page 21).

2) They possess a variety of innate Abilities (like the Mutations of the same name) and Flaws. It is possible to play a mutated humanoid animal by rolling for a random Mutation, but this requires the rolling of a random Flaw as well. Results duplicating existing Abilities/Flaws should be rerolled.

Bat

Egyptian Fruit Bat, Ghost-Faced Bat, Greater Bulldog Bat, Pipistrelle, Vampire Bat

Attribute Points: 17

Abilities: Echolocation, Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision, Winged (including Prehensile Feet)

Flaws: Color Blind, Dull Sense (Vision), Fragile, Mutie, Selective Diet (choose one)

Bear

Black Bear, Brown Bear, Polar Bear

Attribute Points: 17

Customization Skill Points: None

Abilities: Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Natural Weapon (Claws), Night Vision

Flaws: Color Blind, Mutie

Boar

Razorback, Wild Boar

Attribute Points: 19

Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Tusks), Night Vision

Flaws: Color Blind, Crude Hands, Dull Sense (Vision), Mutie

Bovine

African Buffalo, American Bison, European Bison, Muskox, Water Buffalo, Yak

Attribute Points: 19

Abilities: Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Natural Weapon (Horns)

Flaws: Color Blind, Crude Hands, Mutie, Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Canine, Large / Medium / Small

Grey Wolf / African Wild Dog, Black-Backed Jackal, Coyote, Dingo, Maned Wolf / Arctic Fox, Bat-Eared



Fox, Desert Fox, Fennec Fox, Grey Fox, Red Fox

Attribute Points: 18

Customization Skill Points: None

Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Night Vision

Flaws: Color Blind, Mutie

Deer/Antelope, Large / Medium / Small

Eland, Elk (Moose) / Caribou (Reindeer), Gemsbok, Mule Deer, Pronghorn, Red Deer, Sambar, White-Tailed Deer / Dik-Dik, Muntjac, Pudú

Attribute Points: 17*/18

Mutations/Abilities: Enduring (Large Deer only*), Enhanced Senses (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Antlers), Night Vision, Swift (Impala, Pronghorn, Springbok, and Thomson's Gazelle only*)

Flaws: Color Blind, Crude Hands, Mutie, Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Feline, Large / Medium / Small

Lion, Tiger / Cheetah, Cougar, Jaguar, Leopard / Bobcat, Caracal, Lynx, Ocelot, Serval, Snow Leopard

Attribute Points: 17

Customization Skill Points: None

Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite), Natural Weapons (Claws), Night Vision or Swift (Cheetah only), Stealthy

Flaws: Color Blind, Mutie, Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Goat/Sheep

Bighorn Sheep, Wild Goat

Attribute Points: 18

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Senses (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Horns), Night Vision

Flaws: Color Blind, Crude Hands, Mutie, Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Gorilla (Hey, we *had* to!)

Eastern Gorilla, Western Gorilla

Attribute Points: 18

Abilities: Prehensile Feet

Flaws: Mutie

Horse

Mustang, Zebra

Attribute Points: 17

Abilities: Enduring, Enhanced Sense (Hearing),

Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapons (Hooves), Night Vision

Flaws: Color Blind, Crude Hands, Mutie, Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Otter

Eurasian Otter, Giant Otter, North American River Otter, Sea Otter

Attribute Points: 17

Mutations/Abilities: Amphibious, Enhanced Senses (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite)

Flaws: Color Blind, Mutie, Selective Diet (Carnivore)

Rabbit/Hare

Black-Tailed Jackrabbit, Cottontail Rabbit, European Rabbit, Snowshoe Hare

Attribute Points: 20

Mutations/Abilities: Enhanced Senses (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Leaping

Flaws: Color Blind, Dull Sense (Vision), Fragile, Mutie, Selective Diet (Herbivore)

Rodent, Small

Black Rat, Brown Rat, House Mouse, Jumping Mouse, Kangaroo Rat, Woodrat

Attribute Points: 17

Abilities: Enhanced Sense (Hearing), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Leaping, Night Vision, Stealthy

Flaws: Color Blind, Dull Sense (Vision), Fragile, Mutie

Seal / Sea Lion, Large / Medium

California Sea Lion, Cape Fur Seal, Grey Seal, Hooded Seal, Leopard Seal, Elephant Seal, South American Sea Lion, Walrus / Common Seal, Harp Seal

Attribute Points: 18 (Medium Seals/Sea Lions) / 17 (Large Seals/Sea Lions)

Customization Skill Points: 2 (Elephant Seals and Walruses only)

Abilities: Amphibious, Armored (Elephant Seal and Walrus only), Enhanced Sense (Smell), Enduring (Large Seals/Sea Lions only), Natural Weapon (Teeth/Tusks), Night Vision

Flaws: Color-Blind, Crude Hands, Mutie, Selective Diet (Carnivore)

APPENDIX

PSYCHIC POWERS

A completely optional addition to the Mutation rules, psychic powers are rare and unusual, and their inclusion in the game should be agreed on by the gaming group as a whole.

When rolling for a random Mutation, roll a die first; if the result comes up 6, roll for a psychic power on the following table instead of the normal Mutation table. You do not need to roll an extra Flaw for a psychic power, but will gain Mutie if it is not already possessed.

Roll	Psychic Power
1	Remote Viewing
2-4	Telekinesis
5-6	Telepathy

Using Psychic Powers

Psychic powers require absolute concentration to use. No other actions (not even Reactions) can be attempted while using them and it is clear to any observers that the psychic is deeply focused, still, and silent. A successful Tenacity Attribute-Only roll is needed to concentrate in anything but optimal conditions of quiet and calm, the Difficulty set by the GM. This roll is required every Round a psychic power is in use, or once per minute outside of combat. Here are some examples:

Difficulty	Surroundings
Difficult	In a quiet bar
Extreme	In a bustling bar or market
Arduous	At a raucous celebration
Tremendous	In the middle of a skirmish
Heroic	In the middle of a battle

Psychic Powers

The magnitude of a psychic's power is determined by their Tenacity as described below.

Remote Viewing

When concentrating on a specific visible location, or a photograph, point on a map, or item, the psychic can view the location as if personally present, or view the most long-term owner of the item in their current location. The psychic can visually move around the location or individual and their surroundings at walking speed, investigating it as if invisible and intangible, able to pass through physical barriers. Only vision is received; sounds, smells, and other sensations are not. The range depends on the psychic's Tenacity.

Telekinesis

Telekinesis is the ability to move things through will alone. How heavy an object the psychic can levitate depends on their Tenacity, and they can move any appropriate item in Short Range in any direction a few yards per Round; not fast enough to inflict harm. Fine manipulation, such as levitating a key into a lock and turning it or pulling the trigger on a firearm, increases the Difficulty of concentration one level. If the psychic can levitate themselves, they can effectively fly for as many Rounds as they can maintain concentration.

Telepathy

A telepath can read the current surface thoughts of anyone they can see within the range their Tenacity provides. Only the thoughts foremost in an individual's brain at that moment can be read. Characters cannot detect the scan of telepathy, but if an individual suspects they are being scanned, they can try to actively control the thoughts being read, requiring a Competing Tenacity Attribute-Only roll between the psychic and target.

Tenacity	Viewing Range	Telekinetic Lift	Telepathy Range
1	1 mile	Key, coin, pebble	Touch
2	10 miles	Handgun, heavy book	Close
3	100 miles	Human child	Short
4	1,000 miles	Adult human or self	Long
5	10,000 miles	Heavy motorcycle	Distant

APPENDIX V6 ENGINE PROBABILITIES

Here are all the percentages for the V6 Engine system.

Attr. 1		Number of Successes						
Skill	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	General
0	83.9	13.1	2.5	0.4	0.1	0	0	16.1
1	67	28.3	4	0.6	0.1	0	0	33
2	50.1	41.6	7	1.1	0.2	0	0	49.9
3	32	57	9.2	1.5	0.2	0	0	68
4	17.4	69.8	10.7	1.8	0.3	0	0	82.6
5	0	83.5	13.7	2.3	0.5	0	0	100
Attr. 2		Number of Successes						
Skill	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	General
0	69.8	22.7	5.5	1.6	0.3	0.1	0	30.2
1	43.1	40	13.1	2.8	0.9	0.1	0	56.9
2	25.1	49.6	18.5	5.2	1.2	0.3	0.1	74.9
3	11.3	55.2	24.7	6.6	1.8	0.3	0.1	88.7
4	2.5	51.2	34	9.5	2.3	0.5	0	97.5
5	0	41.8	41.3	12.5	3.4	0.7	0.2	100
Attr. 3		Number of Successes						
Skill	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	General
0	59.1	27.5	9.5	2.8	0.9	0.2	0	40.9
1	29.9	42.8	18.9	6.5	1.4	0.4	0.1	70.1
2	12.3	45.9	27.9	10	2.9	0.8	0.2	87.7
3	3.5	39.7	36.1	14.1	4.6	1.5	0.5	96.5
4	0.3	30.3	40.8	18.7	7.2	2.2	0.5	99.7
5	0	20.1	43.3	25.1	8.3	2.4	0.8	100
Attr. 4		Number of Successes						
Skill	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	General
0	48.8	32.3	13.5	4.1	1	0.3	0.1	51.2
1	19.1	42	24.3	9.5	3.7	1.1	0.4	80.9
2	6.2	37.5	33.6	15.4	5.5	1.5	0.3	93.8
3	1.4	27.7	36.5	21.8	8.7	2.9	1	98.6
4	0	16.8	37.5	26.5	12.7	4.8	1.7	100
5	0	9.4	35.8	31.8	14.8	5.5	2.7	100
Attr. 5		Number of Successes						
Skill	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	General
0	40.5	33.7	15.9	6.4	2.4	0.9	0.1	59.5
1	13.1	37.4	28.6	13.6	5.1	1.5	0.6	86.9
2	3.5	29.7	33.1	20.6	9	2.9	1.2	96.5
3	0.3	17.6	35	27.8	11.8	5.4	2.2	99.7
4	0	9.6	31.6	30.5	17	7	4.2	100
5	0	4	26.3	33.2	21.5	9.2	5.8	100

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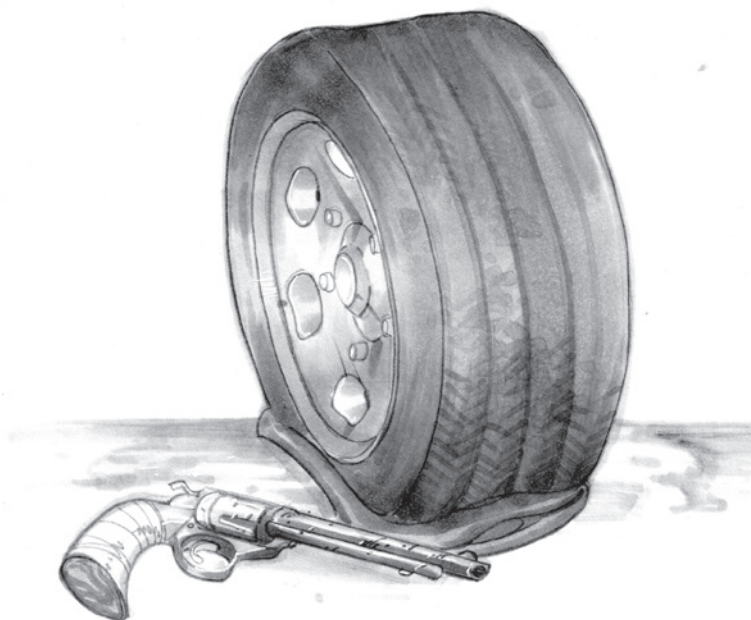
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ATOMIC HIGHWAY

Name: _____ Player: _____

Concept: _____ Race: _____

Rearing: _____ Pursuit: _____

☐ **MUSCLE**

☐ **UNDERSTANDING**

☐ **TENACITY**

☐ **APPEAL**

☐ **NIMBLENESS**

☐ **TOUGHNESS**

☐ **SENSES**

SKILLS

Athletics	00000	Ride	00000
Boat	00000	Scavenge	00000
Brawl	00000	Shoot	00000
Criminal	00000	Sleight	00000
Drive	00000	Stealth	00000
Heal	00000	Survive	00000
Intimidate	00000	Tech	00000
Lore	00000	Zoofinity	00000
Melee	00000	_____	00000
Notice	00000	_____	00000
Persuade	00000	_____	00000
Pilot	00000	_____	00000

DIFFICULTY

Difficulty Rating	Successes Needed
Difficult	1
Extreme	2
Arduous	3
Tremendous	4
Heroic	5+

PORTRAIT

FORTUNE COSTS

Effect	Cost
Extra Success	1
Reroll Bad Things Happen	3
Plot Tweak	2
Plot Twist	5
Reduce Opponent's Success	2
Reduce Injury.....	1
Perform Dual Action	2

MUTATIONS

FLAWS

FORTUNE



ARMOR

Type

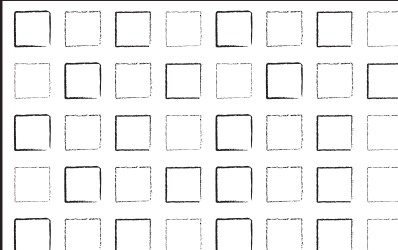
Protection

WEAPONS

Weapon	Attribute	Skill	Damage	Max Range	Capacity	Reload	Hands	Burst
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1 / 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1 / 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1 / 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1 / 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1 / 2	<input type="checkbox"/>

GEAR

HEALTH



Health = (Muscle+Tenacity+Toughness) x _____

POST-APOCALYPTIC ROLEPLAYING!

Civilization came crashing down. Billions died.

A new Dark Age has begun. The descendants of the apocalypse's survivors scavenge the remnants of the Before Times, struggling to build a new life amidst the ruins of the old. In a savage world where the strong ravage and exploit the weak, the survivors' settlements are oases, connected only by convoys of armed and armored vehicles that run the gauntlet of raiders... and worse.

Though the threats of chemical and biological agents and radiation have all but faded, their taint lingers on in every mutant born to man and beast.

This is the world of Atomic Highway.

Atomic Highway is a complete roleplaying game. All you need to play it is this book, a few friends, paper and pencils, and a few ordinary dice.

Features:

- The V6 Engine: a simple, fast-playing game system that emphasizes cinematic, or "movie-style" action, supported with many clear examples.
- Quick and easy character creation rules providing dozens of potential character types. Tear along the shattered highway as a road warrior, track down monstrous threats as a brave tribal warrior, or unearth the wonders of the past as a canny scavenger.
- Rules for mutants and mutations, including optional rules for humanoid animals and psychic powers.
- Straightforward rules for a wide variety of vehicles and modifications.
- A complete bestiary of threats, mundane and mutated.
- Easy-to-use scavenging tables — you never know what you'll unearth.
- A customizable setting with advice and tips on how to create your own post-apocalyptic world.
- Roleplaying and game running advice for Players and Game Masters, new and experienced alike.
- A ready-to-use introductory adventure.

