



#### A SLICK AND SEXY ACTION-ADVENTURE SOURCEBOOK FOR BESM

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"Now that the Sailor Moon RPG is coming out" I told Jim Crocker one day at the Underworld, "I'll be workingfull-time with the company. David and I really have to start getting some supplements published for Big Eyes, Small Mouth. First up: Big Robots, Cool Starships."

"What then?" Jim asked.

"Not sure, really. Something action oriented, I think."

"You should come up with some rules for the genre of my favourite show, Gun Smith Cats. And Riding Bean. You know... something with lots of hot rods and gun bunnies."

"Hot Rods and Gun Bunnies, *eh? That's an excellent title, Jim.*" I paused for a moment before continuing. *"How about writing it for me?"* 

These books just keep getting bigger and bigger. The original *BESM* was intended to be a lean, mean, no-frills multi-genre game engine; it was under 20,000 words in 96 pages. *Big Robots, Cool Starships* was significantly larger at 29K in 112 pages. Now *HRGB* weighs in at a hefty 49K in 128 pages. Believe me when I say that I had no intention of publishing a supplement for *BESM* that was more than twice the length of the original book, but cutting this book any smaller would not do the genre justice. It's our first book of the new millennium (unfortunately a little late), and I'm sure that you will agree that it is also one of our best.

"A Slick and Sexy Action-Adventure Sourcebook for BESM" — or the definitive anime RPG book for the "guys-with-cars" and "chicks-with-guns" genre. This supplement features new methods for creating character outlines, suggestions concerning the appropriateness of particular Attributes and Defects (including new listings), rules for skill use within BESM's Tri-Stat System<sup>TM</sup>, a point-based template system for customizing weapons and vehicles, expanded genre-specific combat rules, campaign suggestions for theme/rating/sex intensity, alternative campaign settings for atypical games, a US-Canada border smuggling operation adventure ("Dangerous Toys"), and an appendix detailing the laws and regulations for firearms and motor vehicles in Japan, America, and Canada. Kudos to Jim Crocker and David Pulver for capturing the atmosphere of this action genre with their sharp writing, beneficial rule amendments, and exhaustive research.

Thanks to all those who waited anxiously for this book. Keep an eye on our website for updates regarding our publication schedule for the year 2000 and beyond (http://www.guardiansorder.on.ca). Don't forget to join our Tri-Stat<sup>TM</sup> electronic mailing list: send an e-mail message to tristat-subscribe@guardiansorder.on.ca to sign up. We have some great things planned for the *BESM* line this summer, and would like you to be a part of it!

Mark C. MacKinnon January 2000



# HOT RODS AND GUN BUNNIES

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Chapter I introduction



*Hot Rod* is the term coined by American car aficionados to describe the heavily-modified cars favoured by amateur racers. *Gun Bunnies* is the fanciful nickname for attractive young women who, despite their cute appearance, are extremely dangerous with a firearm. In the last few decades, an entire sub-genre of modern action-adventure anime has been built around cool action heroes whose stories are driven by hot wheels and punctuated by hot lead. This book is designed to help *Big Eyes, Small Mouth*<sup>TM</sup> players and GMs run such modern action anime campaigns using the Tri-Stat System<sup>TM</sup>.

Japanese animators have never made any secret about their own fascination with America's twin icons, the gun and the automobile. Tatsuo Yoshida, the creator of the 1966 heroes-in-a-race car drama *Mach Go Go Go (translated as Speed Racer)* remarked that the series was:

"... based strictly on our all-out adoration of America. A defeated people witnessed American GI's riding around comfortably in their jeeps. American movies showed a life of abundance in the average household... It was absolutely unbelievable, like in the Superman comics."

Speed Racer empowered the viewer on a more reality-based level, taking the excitement and high technology of robot anime but bringing it to a contemporary setting. Its legacy is shown in many other more recent series. The most successful has been *City Hunter*, which chronicles the adventures of "sweeper" (gun for hire) Ryo Saeba and his female partner Kaon Makimura in Tokyo's mean streets. *City Hunter* has spanned near-endless manga volumes (1985-1991), a long-running anime series (1987-1991), and a number of movies and specials, including a live action version starring Jackie Chan. *City Hunter* helped set the tone for modern action anime with its blend of equal parts gritty realism, over-the-top gunplay, and outrageous physical comedy. The main character spends as much time chasing skirts as he does the bad guys, despite beings regularly punished by his partner Kaori's trademark 100-tonne hyper-dimensional hammers.

The *Burn-Up* series (1991) and its sequels are a typical example of the girls-with-guns element in this genre. They present a mostly-female team of beautiful and lethal police officers who act as a crack SWAT unit. As with *City Hunter*, their adventures range from comic to deadly serious. In contrast, vehicular action takes centre stage in *You're Under Arrest* (1994), a largely non-violent buddy-cop series starring two young female traffic cops with a shared love of souped-up mini-cars and hot bikes.

Biker gangs are another part of this genre, for just as the United States has its outlaw motorcyclists, Japan has its own wild bunch: the bosuzoku (wild-running tribes). The adventures of "honorable" *bosuzoku* and their nastier rivals are chronicled in a couple of anime shows, such as the *Bomber Bikers of Shonan* (1986), while *Wild* 7 (1994) follows the adventurers of a crooks-turned-motorcycle-cops. Biker gangs also figure prominently in some science fiction anime, notably *Akira* (1988), *Bubblegum Crisis* (1987) and *Megazone 23* (1985).

The ultimate cars-and-guns action emerges in Kenichi Sonada's work. His anime OAV *Riding Bean* (1989) is a fast-paced tale of an invincible Chicago outlaw getaway driver named Bean Bandit, as he battles ruthless kidnappers and clueless cops. Sonada spun off the characters and situations into a lengthy manga and anime series. *Gunsmith Cats* (1991) starred Rally Vincent, a bounty hunter, gun shop owner, and weapons expert and her pal, Minnie May, the cutest explosives expert on the planet. They battle gunrunners, drug smugglers and Russian assassins while trying to avoid trouble with the law. While it has its share of humour, *Gun Smith Cats* is played mostly straight, with obsessive attention to the real-life details of the cars and guns the characters use.

# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Anime is often willing to take on adult themes, sometimes for comic effect, and sometimes with deadly seriousness. *The Professional: Golgo 13* (1985) follows a completely amoral anti-hero as he coolly assassinates whomever his bosses want dead. Loyalty and morality are like any other weapon in his arsenal: used when needed, discarded when inconvenient to the mission at hand. The violent, adult-theme anime and manga epics

*Crying Freeman* (1988) and *Sanctuary* (early 1990's) both feature the stories of Asian crime organizations and the bloodshed and intrigue associated with them. The relationship between two gay cops is the subject of *Fake* (1996), a show that proves mature themes can be handled with a sense of humour without resorting to stereotyping.

Hong Kong action films have also influenced anime. Their highly kinetic style translates well to animation, and the grandiose vision and intricate choreography of the best Hong Kong directors can take a cartoon and bring it to life with live actors. John Woo's "heroic bloodshed" masterpieces *The Killer* (1989) and *Hard Boiled* (1992) showcase the honourable hit men and ballet-like gunplay associated with the director and his main leading man, Chow Yun Fat. The other Hong Kong star whose

> films are readily available is Jackie Chan. *Police Story HI: Supercop* (1992) is widely available in America, while *Armour of God II: Operation Condor* (1991) features one of the wildest car chases ever filmed, as Jackie literally flips over rafters to avoid flying cars. The best example of an anime inspired by the Hong Kong style is the recent *Kite* (1998), which also owes something to the French thriller *La Femme Nikita* (1991). This brutal tale of a teenage girl assassin has some of the most spectacular — and violent — action sequences of any recent anime.

Of course, anime in which the characters rely on their skill with guns and vehicles also extends into science fiction and horror. Kei and Yuri of the *Dirty Pair* (1985) are perhaps the ultimate gun bunnies, even though their adventures are set in the far future rather than modern day. Many mecha stories (a genre covered in the *Big Robots, Cool Starships*<sup>TM</sup> Sourcebook) also portray cops, outlaws and street level gunfights. An excellent example is *Ghost in the Shell* from 1995. Recently, a number of quality shows have carried the traditional hardboiled bounty hunter story into outer space in series such as *Outlaw Star* (1998) and *Cowboy Bebop* (1998).

# USING HOT RODS & GUN BUNNIES

Hot Rods & Gun Bunnies (HRGB) is the second in a series of genre source books for Big Eyes Small Mouth (BESM). It adds rules that assists GMs who run campaigns featuring cops, robbers, cars, and guns. HRGB is not just for modern and near-future cops and robbers campaigns, however. The detailed combal rules and Tri-Stat<sup>TM</sup> Skill System are designed to add flavour to any campaign. The use of skills can help individualize characters without sacrificing the quick and simple rules that make BESM easy to play.

Chapter Z Character Gration



This chapter offers guidelines for using the *Big Eyes, Small Mouth* system in conjunction with this supplement to create a character who fits the theme of *Hot Rods & Gun Bunnies* modern day action.

#### STEP 1: GM DISCUSSION

Talk to the GM about game specifics, including genre, setting, campaign duration, story boundaries and expected time commitment. See *BESM* page 11.

#### STEP 2: CHARACTER OUTLINE

Decide on the basic archetype or stereotype for the character you wish to play. You should focus on one or two of the character's main personality traits. See *BESM* page 12.

#### STEP 3: ASSIGN STATS

Roll 2 dice and add 10 to the result. Distribute the total among your character's Body, Mind and Soul Stats. Stats cannot be lower than 1, nor higher than 12. See *BESM* page 13.

#### STEP 4: CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES

Distribute 10-20 Character Points among a number of Character Attributes appropriate to your initial outline. Attribute levels range from 1 to 5. See *BESM* page 15.

#### STEP 4A: CUSTOMIZED GEAR

If your character took the Personal Gear Attribute (page 16), select their gear. Additional details and options for vehicles or weapons are found in *Chapter 3: Boom and Vroom*.

#### STEP 5: CHARACTER DEFECTS

You are encouraged to take up to 3 Defects appropriate to your anime character. This will provide you with more role-playing opportunities, and give you Bonus Points to use for acquiring additional Character Attributes. See *BESM* page 36.

#### STEP 5A: SKILL POINTS

If your GM chooses to use the Skill System, your character will receive 20 starting Skill Points, plus a number of additional points if you assigned your character the Highly Skilled Attribute. Use the Skill Points to acquire Skills and specializations relevant to your character outline. Skill Levels range from 1 to 6. See page 24.

#### STEP 6: DERIVED VALUES

Calculate your character's three derived values — Combat Value, Health Points and Energy Points — using different Stat Value averages. See *BESM* page 42.

#### STEP 7: BACKGROUND POINTS

Earn 1-3 Background Points by giving the GM a background history, an important character story, or a character drawing. Background Points are used to acquire additional Character Attributes. See *BESM* page 45.



## STEP 1: GM DISCUSSION

Since your GM has decided to run a *Hot Rods and Gun Bunnies* game, you should have a good idea of what types of characters are appropriate. There are plenty of variations on the *Hot Rods & Gun Bunnies* theme. Discuss with the GM what type of game and character you would like to play. For example, if you have a burning desire to play a police officer, make sure the GM is not intent on a campaign that focuses on race-car drivers, jewel thieves, or bounty hunters. (Additional guidance for the GM on campaign types is provided in *Chapter 4: Hot Rods and Gun Bunnies Campaigns.*)

**EXAMPLE:** The GM gets together with Susan and Bill, his two players. The GM wishes to run a Hot Rods and Gun Bunnies-genre game. After discussing their preferences, they agree that their new campaign will be about crime fighters in a modern day city. It will be a serious, action-oriented game focusing on gritty, street-level adventures.

## **STEP 2: CHARACTER OUTLINE**

Certain character archetypes are especially appropriate to a *Hot Rods & Gun Bunnies* campaign. If you are unsure of what kind of character you wish to play, you may find the ideas given below quite useful. These archetypes also make suitable NPC sidekicks or villains.

#### ASSASSIN

The character is a professional killer. An assassin may be a mob hit man, a vigilante, or someone who works for a clandestine government agency, such as the CIA. Classic archetypes include the veteran contract killer who develops a conscience after harming an innocent, and the teenage girl who is recruited and trained as a lethal weapon.

#### BODYGUARD

The character is in the personal protection business. He or she may be on long term assignment to a particular important person, or be hired on an emergency basis by people who think they are in danger. A bodyguard will often travel to exotic places. In anime, bodyguards usually specialize in beautiful clients of the opposite sex.

#### **BOUNTY HUNTER**

The character hunts down bail jumpers and the occasional escaped criminal. Often this is only a parttime job. In the modern world, bounty hunters do not have a license to kill, but in other settings, the quarry may be "wanted dead or alive". For expanded ideas, see Bounty Hunting and Bail (page 111).

#### COP

The character could be a city cop, a county sheriff, or a member of a special agency such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF), the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) or the Secret Service. Officers will have specific assignments, whether they are an ordinary beat cop, or belong to a special division such as homicide, burglary, traffic, vice, or Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT). In smaller police departments, officers may do double duty — for example, they might work as beat cops, but also be on volunteer call for the SWAT team. Special taskforces may also be formed to deal with specific problems or major cases.



#### COURIER/SMUGGLER/TRUCKER

The character may be a smuggler who specializes in contraband like guns and drugs, or be a "getaway" driver for bank robbers. He or she might also specializes in transporting legal but valuable or dangerous cargoes; this category would include an armoured car driver or one of the armed "suicide jockeys" that transport hazardous nuclear material for the Department of Energy. The character will often own or operate a customized vehicle.

#### EXPLOSIVES EXPERT

The character has a superior skill with explosives and sometimes a fondness for hand grenades or rocket launchers. He or she may have gained legal experience as a police officer or military bomb disposal expert, an army or special forces demolitions specialist, a movie pyrotechnics specialist, or a civilian construction/building demolitions expert. Terrorists and safecrackers also need explosives skills.

#### FUGITIVE

The character is a criminal wanted by the authorities. Cops, bounty hunters, secret agents, or even the military (if the character is a deserter) may be trying to track him or her down. A fugitive has often been framed, or believes he or she had a good reason for committing any crimes. A fugitive adventurer may travel from town to town, working as a mercenary or just helping people, while staying a few steps ahead of the law. An entire group of characters may be fugitives, especially if they broke out of jail together.

#### GANGSTER/YAKUZA

The character is a member of a criminal organization, and maybe an enforcer, smuggler, assassin, or even the bosss' son or daughter. A classic archetype is the disillusioned crook who has decided to end a life of crime, but is pressured into doing "one last job" or who "knows too much" for the mob to allow him or her go quietly. A character may also be an ex-gangster who has gone straight, but still has many criminal contacts.

#### INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

The character is a reporter for a newspaper, magazine or TV station. He or she is usually on the crime beat, or may be trying to uncover a major political conspiracy.

#### MECHANIC, GUN DEALER OR GUNSMITH

This is the character who keeps the hot rodders and gun bunnies supplied with what they love best. An NPC with this background may be a supporting character or love interest, while a character will usually have an additional occupation (racer, bounty hunter, etc.) that motivates him or her to get out of the shop and into the mean streets. Perhaps the garage or gun store is falling on hard times. Due to the risk of armed robbery in the United States, many gun shops are heavily fortified (bars, reinforced store fronts, etc.) and gun shop staff will often carry pistols.

#### MERCENARY OR SWEEPER

The character is a hired gun. He or she might be an actual mercenary soldier who has fought in third world conflicts, or a "sweeper" (a term popular in anime) who is willing to take on almost any job. The character will often perform a mix of bodyguard, bounty hunting and private investigation jobs.



#### **PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR**

The character is a detective-for-hire. The meat of private investigation is routine photographic surveillance and tailing ("I need proof that my husband is cheating on me!") but characters may have more interesting offers, such as investigating industrial espionage, or re-opening criminal cases the police have abandoned. A private eye may run his or her own agency, or be a member of larger firm. Most jurisdictions require private investigators to be officially licensed. Many P.I.s are ex-cops.

#### RACER

The character is a race-car driver. He or she will usually specialize in a particular class of vehicles (Formula One, motocross, stock cars, etc.). As with a mechanic, he or she may have a sideline that leads to other adventures, such as acting as a courier or vigilante.

#### **REPO MAN**

The character is a specialized bounty hunter who tracks down people who have skipped on their car payments. A repo man may be a skilled driver, a good detective, or both.

#### SECRET AGENT

The character is a member of a spy agency such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), or a branch of a law enforcement agency (like the FBI) specializing in domestic counter-intelligence (chasing spies) or counter-terrorism. Secret agents will often operate in foreign countries, sometimes undercover. In the post-Cold War era, they may be called upon to assist law enforcement in tracking down terrorists, international drug dealers, or arms smugglers that cross international borders. The character's relationship with his or her agency will be important, since that agency generally has substantial resources. A former agent or defector might be on the run from their old colleagues.

#### VIGILANTE

The character is a crime fighter who takes the law into his or her own hands. A vigilante may be obsessed with righting a particular wrong (such as destroying a specific crime syndicate) or just fighting crime in general. He or she will usually have a "secret identity" to avoid being arrested. A vigilante might also work for someone else, such as a rich industrialist determined to fight terrorists by forming a team that hunts them.

### PROFILING AND M.O.

The GM can make the Character Outline step more interesting by encouraging players to "profile" their characters. A Profile includes the information a player might use to identify the character if he or she were describing the character to a police officer. Players should try to answer the questions they think someone else might ask if they were trying to identify the character. What does he or she look like? Any distinguishing physical characteristics? Scars or tattoos? What are his or her hobbies? Does he or she own a pet? What kind of car does he or she drive? What does he or she do? What sorts of people does he or she associate with? Where did he or she grow up? Players should try to list whatever differentiates the character from everyone else. The Character Profile on Page 114 has blanks in which players can record this kind of data.

The second part of a character's Profile is the M.O, a three or four sentence description of your character's typical Method of Operation. The character's M.O is how he or she typically reacts to most situations, and what people can generally expect from him or her most of the time, even if it is "the unexpected". M.O is a term usually applied to crooks, but in *HRGB*, it applies equally to all characters.



## COMMON BACKGROUND

It is very useful for the GM and players to agree on a common background, which gives their characters a reason to be together. For example, the GM may ask the players to be cops from a certain precinct or crooks who did time in the same penitentiary. By working with the GM in this way, the players help create adventure ideas, as well as Supporting Characters that will make the game more interesting and inclusive.

**EXAMPLE:** Susan really likes her BESM character of Peneekie, the crime-fighting student (BESM, page 12). She decides to play a grown-up version of Peneekie, in her mid-twenties. Peneekie joined the police force after high school, and is now a city cop. The GM approves the idea, and Susan goes to work on her outline.

Peneekie grew up in the city, in a poor neighbourhood plagued by gangs, and had many run-ins with them while she was a high school student. After graduation, she entered the police academy. Her pistol instructor discovered she had a natural aptitude for handgun shooting, and she has since developed her own unique style of combat, combining martial arts moves with gunplay. Susan writes Peneekie's profile:

Officer Peneekie: Asian-American Female. Age 24. Height: 160 cm. Weight: 60 kg. Hair: Black. Eyes: Brown (wears contact lenses). Distinguishing Marks: Pierced ears, appendix operation scar on abdomen. Hobbies include raising guinea pigs and rabbits, karate classes and marksmanship practice, volunteering at community youth centre. Drives a three-year old imported American motorcycle.

Known relatives and Close Associates: Her mother, 58 years of age, lives in the suburbs with her older sister, who is married to a businessman and has two children. Her closestfriends are her partner, Officer Ryu (with whom she attended the Academy), her pistol instructor, Mr. Hark, and her best friendfrom high school, Felicia, who still lives in town and works as a social worker at the Community Centre where Peneekie does volunteer work.

Officer Peneekie's MO: Officer Peneekie typically reacts to trouble with a calm head and almost always goes "by the book". Her great respectfor veteran officers means she will tend tofollow their orders, even if she has some reservations. She is a skilled hand-to-hand combatant, and competent in the use ofher sidearm, which she prefers to use only against vehicles. She has a particular interest in gang-related cases, and tends to pursue them more zealously than any of her other police work.

The GM knows that Bill's character Ryu is also a young police officer. The GM suggests they share a common background: Ryu and Peneekie attended the police academy together, and have been assigned to the same police station, where they are partners. The players agree, and Susan adds this data to her profile. The GM gives Susan's Profile and M.O a quick once-over. He decides Officer Peneekie will work quite well for the campaign he has planned, so he tells Susan to go ahead and assign her Stats.

# **STEP 3: ASSIGN STATS**

Characters in modern action anime tend to be defined more by their skills than their general physical characteristics. For this reason, when players assign Stats the GM should encourage them to create characters with Stats no higher than 10 (World-Class-Ability). Higher Stats should have a very good rationale and GM permission.

The GM lets Susan keep the same Stats her *BESM* character originally had: Body 7, Mind 3, Soul 9 (see *BESM*, page 14 for how Stats are determined).



# **STEP 4: CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES**

A *Hot Rods & Gun Bunnies* character in a modern campaign should usually be designed on 10 or 15 Character Points (see *BESM*, page 15). GMs intending to set a campaign in the modern world may require characters to take genre-appropriate Attributes, and discourage them from choosing Attributes inappropriate to the genre.

#### **GENRE-APPROPRIATE ATTRIBUTES**

The majority of *BESM* Attributes are suited for modern day action heroes (and villains). **Table 2-1: Genre-Appropriate Attributes** lists Attributes that are "in genre" for such characters. Three new Attributes are available: Gun Bunny, Highly Skilled, and Personal Gear. The Highly Skilled Attribute supersedes the existing Acrobatics and Focused Combat Attributes. If adding Skills to an existing *BESM* campaign, see Attribute Replacement, page 18.

#### **GENRE-MODIFIED ATTRIBUTES**

In order to fit certain Attributes smoothly into the *Hot Rods & Gun Bunnies* genre, some modifications are desirable. These Attributes are listed on **Table 2-2: Genre-Modifier Attributes.** 

TABLE 2-1: GENRE-APPROPRIATE ATTRIBUTES	TABLE	2-1:	GENRE-APPR	ROPRIATE	ATTRIBUTES
-----------------------------------------	-------	------	------------	----------	------------

Appearance Damn Healthy! Energy Bonus Flunkies Heightened Senses Massive Damage Own a Big Mecha Powerful Mind Strong Soul

Art of Distraction Divine Relationship Extra Attacks Fortified Body Highly Skilled More Powerful Mecha Personal Gear Speed Unique Character Attribute



For the suggested alterations, refer to Modified Attributes (page 17).

Own a Big Mecha and More Powerful Mecha are described in the *BESM* Sourcebook *Big Robots, Cool Starships.* They are included here for GMs who wish to combine material from both books.

#### **GENRE-INAPPROPRIATE ATTRIBUTES**

A number of Attributes (see **Table 2-3: Genre-Inappropriate Attributes**) are out of character for the modern-day action genre, either because they involve fantastic powers or futuristic technology. Players should not take these Attributes without prior GM approval.

TABLE 2-3: GENRE-INAPPROPRIATE ATTRIBUTES		
Item of Power	Magic	
Own a Big Robot	Psionics	
Shape Change	Size Change	
Special Attack	Special Defense	

If the GM wants to run a "cross-genre" game (for example, gun-toting, magic-using cops battling demons) he or she can freely ignore any of these restrictions.

**EXAMPLE:** Susan's GM has decided to give the players 15 points with which to acquire Character Attributes. The GM asks the players to select Attributes from **Tables 2-1** and **2-2**. Susan chooses 2 Levels of Appearance (she wants Peneekie to be very cute) for 2 points. Since Peneekie has been fighting gangs since



she was a young teenager, she also takes two Levels of Combat Mastery (4 points). Susan adds 2 Levels of Highly Skilled (2 points) as a result of Peneekie's high-school experience combined with her more recent police training. She will also have the Gun Bunny Attribute at Level 2 (2 points) to represent her special firearms style, choosing the Lightning Draw and Steady Hand abilities. A police officer will have various specialized gear, so Susan takes 2 Levels of Personal Gear (2 points). With the last three Character Points, Susan gives Peneekie Powerful Mind Level 1 (1 point, increasing her Mind to 4) and Speed Level 2 (2 points).



#### **NEW ATTRIBUTES**

Three new Attributes are available: Gun Bunny, Highly Skilled and Personal Gear. Unlike Attributes in *BESM*, these are rated on a six-Level rather than five-Level scale.

#### GUN BUNNY

#### COST: 1 Point/Level

The Gun Bunny Attribute allows a character to perform over-the-top feats involving firearms. The Attribute is not limited to female characters — men can be gun bunnies as well. Each Level gives the character one Gun Bunny ability.

#### DEAD EYE

The dice-roll penalties that the character suffers is greatly reduced when firing at pinpoint targets, such as partial armour, weak points or vital spots, or when shooting at longer-than-usual ranges. This ability is useful for snipers and assassins. The penalties for aiming or longer-than-usual ranges are halved (see page 72 for these penalties).



#### LIGHTNING DRAW

The character can draw a gun from a holster and fire in the same round with no penalty. A character will otherwise take a round to ready his or her weapon.

#### ONE BULLET LEFT

The character will always have a single bullet in their gun, even after an extended fire fight. In games using the "dramatic ammunition" rules (see page 74), a character with this Attribute has a single bullet left in their gun when the GM declares that they are out of ammunition, which they may use as they choose.

#### PORTABLE ARMOURY

The character will always have easy access to any weapon required for a particular task, including illegal weapons and accessories not available to the general public. The actual weapons and accessories must still be acquired via the Personal Gear Attribute (page 16), but remarkably, the character can access them whenever he or she needs to, instead of being forced to return to where they are normally stored. Characters with Personal Armoury may also make field modifications on their weapons, switching gun modifications as needed at any time, instead of having to bring them to a workshop or gun store, as they usually do (see pages 51-54 for more information on gun modifications).

#### STEADY HAND

This is the ability to use Gun Combat or Heavy Weapons Skills with ease while the character is on a moving vehicle or otherwise engaged in complex stunts. This greatly reduces the penalties a character normally suffers for firing from a moving vehicle. Character with this skill may also use weapons in conjunction with their use of the Acrobatics Skill. The penalty for shooting while moving is halved.

#### TWO GUN

The character can effectively fire with two pistols (or machine pistols, or any other gun which can be used one-handed) at once at the same or different targets, suffering half the penalty for attacking with two weapons.

#### WEAPONS ENCYCLOPEDIA

The ability to recall the vital statistics and important quirks of practically all known firearms. This includes, but is not limited to, its general level of reliability, as well as all vital statistics like ammunition capacity, calibre, model year, possible outfitted accessories, etc. Characters without this ability will only have such information on weapons they actually I own or use regularly, and will need to successfully roll a Mind-based Military Science (hardware recognition) Skill check to recall important details.

- **LEVEL 1** The character has one Gun Bunny ability.
- LEVEL 2 The character has two Gun Bunny abilities.
- LEVEL 3 The character has three Gun Bunny abilities.
- **LEVEL 4** The character has four Gun Bunny abilities.
- **LEVEL 5** The character has five Gun Bunny abilities.
- **LEVEL 6** The character has six Gun Bunny abilities.



#### HIGHLY SKILLED

#### Cost: 1 Point/Level

This Attribute is used in conjunction with the Skill system described on page 24. A character with this Attribute is more experienced or better trained than an ordinary person, and as a result has more Skill Points (see page 24) than an average human adult. Skill Points are used to acquire individual Skills, such as Gun Combat or Driving. Extending this Attribute beyond Level 6 is quite possible, and provides a further 10 additional Skill Points per Level. (For example, Level 11 would provide 110 Skill Points.) Acquiring multiple Levels of the Highly Skilled Attribute is the ideal method of creating a versatile character.

LEVEL 1	The character gains an additional 10 Skill Points.
LEVEL 2	The character gains an additional 20 Skill Points.
LEVEL 3	The character gains an additional 30 Skill Points.
LEVEL 4	The character gains an additional 40 Skill Points.
LEVEL 5	The character gains an additional 50 Skill Points.
LEVEL 6	The character gains an additional 60 Skill Points.

#### PERSONAL GEAR

#### COST: 1 point/Level

Characters should never be required to sacrifice Character Points for items that are utterly mundane in the campaign setting (such as clothing, personal cassette players, wristwatches, televisions, etc). The Personal Gear Attribute is used to acquire items to which the average person might not have easy access, such as weapons, vehicles, or specialized professional or adventuring equipment. This Attribute differs from Item of Power (*BESM*, page 24) — the gear must be something commonly manufactured in the campaign world and thus cannot include alien technology, secret prototypes, magic items, or superartifacts. Licenses or permits that are difficult to acquire may also qualify as personal gear, as may highquality false identity papers.

Although characters may have items that are owned by the organizations to which they belong, they must still acquire these items as part of Personal Gear if they will make regular use of them. Thus, a police officer would use Personal Gear for a pistol, police car or handcuffs, even though these items are the property of the police department. The GM has final say over whether the game utility of an item requires a character to use Personal Gear to have regular access to it.

Each Level of the Personal Gear Attribute permits a character to take one major and four minor items. Alternatively, the character can replace one major item with four extra minor items. Use the guidelines below to differentiate between major and minor items:

#### MINOR ITEMS

A minor item is something that is hard to get or is expensive. In a modern-day setting, it is either available in a store but costs about an average person's monthly pay, or is cheaper but needs a license or black market contact to acquire. It is something with which an average police detective might be issued, for example. Suggestions: ample prescription drugs, cell phone, a simple phone tap or bug, night vision goggles, camping gear, burglary tools, standard lock picks, a tool kit or a cheap personal computer. Ordinary pistols, shotguns and rifles (see pages 42-43) are usually minor items of Personal Gear. Non-standard items that modify or improve other items of gear, but are not functional by itself (like a scope for



a rifle, a silencer for a pistol, a supercharger for an automobile, or bullet-proof tires on a limousine), are also minor items. A regular automobile driver's license would not count, but a pilot's license would definitely qualify as a minor item.

#### MAJOR ITEMS

Major gear are items which are exceptionally hard to find, very expensive, or illegal for civilians. An average soldier or spy might be issued with these items, however. Items that cost a few months pay (or more) such as a boat, car, motorcycle or truck, electronic lock picks, darkroom, top-of-the-line computer, science lab, or workshop are major items. Many paramilitary and most military weapons, such as assault rifles and rocket launchers can also be considered major items.

- **LEVEL 1** The character possesses 1 major item and 4 minor items.
- LEVEL 2 The character possesses 2 major items and 8 minor items.
- **LEVEL 3** The character possesses 3 major items and 12 minor items.
- LEVEL 4 The character possesses 4 major items and 16 major items.
- **LEVEL 5** The character possesses 5 major items and 20 minor items
- LEVEL 6 The character possesses 6 major items and 24 minor items.

## **MODIFIED ATTRIBUTES**

The following guidelines are suggested to ensure that the Attributes Cybernetic Body, Own a Big Mecha, More Powerful Mecha, and Unique Character Attribute remain appropriate to the genre:

#### CYBERNETIC BODY

An actual cybernetic body is only appropriate in a cross-genre or futuristic campaign. However, modern-day action anime sometimes features characters (generally villains) who have trick prosthetic limbs with special abilities. A prosthetic body part will have no real sensation, since it is not connected to the nervous system. It will be considered a "distinguishing characteristic" in the character's profile. It will function as an actual body part, within the limitations of its design. For example, an artificial hand will let a character to perform most normal actions he could with a regular hand (albeit somewhat more clumsily), but a gun hand (see below) would prevent him from using the hand to grasp and lift anything. With the GM's permission, a character may take Cybernetic Body at Level 1 or 2 to represent such a "trick" replacement part, with the following effects:

- **LEVEL 1** The limb offers the character a small advantage. Examples include a hollow leg or arm that could be used to conceal an appropriately-sized item, an exceptionally hard limb that could be used as an effective club, or a fireproof artificial hand.
- **LEVEL 2** The limb offers a moderate advantage to the character. Examples include a gun or blade attachment that could replace a normal hand (or foot), greatly increased gripping strength in one hand, a glass eye that contained a miniature spy camera, or a steel trap-like metal jaw that replaced the character's teeth.

Taking Defects, such as Awkward or Marked best reflects the disadvantages of prosthetics. Some characters may be as graceful or competent with a prosthetic as they were with the original body part, and thus do not suffer from any significant Defects as a result.

A prosthetic with no "trick" abilities does not count as an Attribute.



#### MORE POWERFUL MECHA AND OWN A BIG MECHA

These expansions of the Own a Big Robot Attribute are described in the *BESM* Sourcebook *Big Robots*, *Cool Starships*. In a modern-day action campaign, GMs should feel free to allow players to take these Attributes and use them to design "real world" vehicles that fit the campaign's scope. For example, a main battle tank or fighter jet would not fit with a law enforcement game in modern Los Angeles, but a customized police helicopter would be suitable.

#### UNIQUE CHARACTER ATTRIBUTE

Any Unique Attribute should be appropriate to the setting. For example, an Animal Companion (such as a police dog) or Magnetic Personality would be quite reasonable, but Immortality or X-ray Vision would be out-of-genre.

### ATTRIBUTE REPLACEMENT

The *BESM* Attributes of Acrobatics and Focused Combat have been replaced by more specific Skills within the new Skill System. Characters should only acquire Acrobatics and Focused Combat if the GM has decided not to use the Skill System.

#### ACROBATICS

If using the Skills System, the Acrobatics Skill and related concentrations replace this Attribute. To convert an existing character, exchange the Character Points used for Acrobatics for one or more Levels of either the Fortified Body or Highly Skilled Attributes. If the character takes the Highly Skilled Attribute, a majority of the Skill Points gained from that Attribute should be used to acquire Acrobatics Skill Levels or Specializations.

#### FOCUSED COMBAT

If using the Skill System, the various Combat Skills replace this Attribute. To convert an existing character, use the Character Points spent on Focused Combat to acquire Levels of the Gun Bunny or Highly Skilled Attributes instead. If the character takes the Highly Skilled Attribute, they should use a majority of the resulting additional Skill Points to acquire Combat Skills or Specializations.

## STEP 4A: SELECT PERSONAL GEAR

In *HRGB* campaigns, most characters will take the Personal Gear Attribute. In this Step, the player should select the Personal Gear that a character possesses using the guidelines described under the Personal Gear Attribute (page 16).

A variety of vehicles, firearms, and body armour are described in *Chapter 3: Boom and Vroom*, along with guidelines for further customizing them.

**EXAMPLE:** Susan selects Peneekie's Personal Gear. With two Levels, she gets two major and eight minor items. She takes a heavy auto pistol (a major item) and a fancy condo downtown that she owns from an inheritance (a major item). For her police work, she is issued soft body armour, chemical mace, a collapsible night-stick, and a portable radio. Personal minor items include an laser sight accessory for her auto pistol (see Customizing Firearms, pages 51-54), a City Transit Card to ride the busses and train just by showing it, some rubber bullets (see Ammunition, pages 49-51), and season tickets to the ballet (with good seats). Peneekie does not take a squad car. She knows that Bill wants his character Ryu to be a skilled driver with a customized hot rod police cruiser, and thus Susan will leave acquiring that particular item to him.



Modern heroes are rarely flawless. In keeping with the *HRGB* genre, it is recommended that the GM require all players to take at least one Character Defect. As with Attributes, certain Defects are more appropriate for an *HRGB* campaign than others.

#### **GENRE-APPROPRIATE DEFECTS**

Those Defects that are "in genre" for modern-day action characters are summarized on **Table 2-4: Genre-Appropriate Defects.** A number of new Defects have been added that are especially suitable for modern-day games (see New Defects, page 20).

#### GENRE-MODIFIED DEFECTS

These Defects (see **Table** 2-5: **Genre-Modified Defects**) may be suitable in the *HRGB* genre provided that certain limitations or modifications are applied to them. See Modified Defects on page 23. Conditional Ownership and Less Powerful Mecha are described in the *BESM* Sourcebook *Big Robots, Cool Starships*. They are included here for GMs who wish to combine material from both books.

#### GENRE-INAPPROPRIATE DEFECTS

TABLE 2-4: GENRE-APPROPRIATE DEFECTS	TABLE 2	2-4: 0	ENRE-A	PPROP	RIATE	DEFECTS
--------------------------------------	---------	--------	--------	-------	-------	---------

AwkwardDelicate EEasily DistractedEmpty MiHollow SoulInept ComLess Powerful MechaMarkedNemesisOn ParoleOwned by a MegacorpPhobiaRed TapeSkeleton iSignificant OtherSpecial RedUnique Character DefectUnskilledWantedState State State

Delicate Body Empty Mind Inept Combat Marked On Parole Phobia Skeleton in the Closet Special Requirement Unskilled

#### TABLE 2-5: GENRE-MODIFIED DEFECTS

Conditional Ownership Owned by a Megacorp

Less Powerful Mecha Special Requirement

#### TABLE 2-6: GENRE-INAPPROPRIATE DEFECTS

Involuntary Physical Change

The Defects listed on **Table 2-6: Genre-Inappropriate Defects** are not especially appropriate to a modern-day action adventure game, characters should not take them for their characters without GM approval, unless the GM is running a cross-genre campaign.

Cursed

**EXAMPLE:** Susan needs at least one Defect for Officer Peneekie. She decides to assign Peneekie two Defects to give her a few extra Character Points. Peneekie is a police officer in a large metro department, and must complete a certain amount of paperwork associated with her cases, including a report every time her weapon is fired. This is pretty routine, and the department usually backs its officers, so it is only a minor inconvenience. Susan assigns Red Tape (1 BP). Peneekie also has a sister, Atsuko, who works at the local community centre as a counsellor and social worker. Peneekie also volunteers at the centre. In order for Atsuko to save rent, the two of them live in Peneekie's condo. Atsuko's job often gets her into dangerous situations, and will play an important enough role in Peneekie's life that Atsuko counts as a Significant Other (2 BP). Together, these Defects give Peneekie a total of 3 BP with which to acquire additional Attributes.

Susan decides Peneekie is both tough and lucky, so she gives the character 1 Level of Damn Healthy! and one Level of Divine Relationship. With her last BP, Susan chooses 1 Level of Powerful Mind, representing Peneekie's growth since high school, which further raises her Mind Stat to 5.

## CHAPTER 2 CHARACTER CREATIO

## NEW DEFECTS

The following Defects have been added to those available in *BESM*. Although they are intended for a *HRGB* game, they may be added to games in other genres with GM approval.

#### MARKED

A character is considered Marked if his or her body hosts a permanent and distinguishing design or blemish that may be difficult to conceal. The design may be a family symbol, and identifying birthmark, a permanent scar, or a unique If the mark is not tattoo. considered out of the ordinary (such as freckles or a common tattoo) this Defect does not Traditional Japanese apply. gangsters (Yakuza) wear identifiable tattoos which would count as a Marked Defect.

- 1 BP The mark is easily concealable because it is small or in an inconspicuous location.
- 2 BP The mark is difficult to conceal because it is large or in an obvious location.

#### NEMESIS

The character has someone in his or her life that actively interferes with goal achievement on a regular basis. This Nemesis can take several forms. He or she could be professional rival, such as another race-car driver of equal or better skill who enters the same races as the character. The Nemesis may be a romantic difficulty, such as the cute receptionist who is always dating the other officers instead of the character. The Nemesis could also be personal; for example, the drug kingpin whom the character arrested as a rookie may now be directing attempts on the character's life from prison. Criminal characters can also use this Defect to represent a particular police officer who has decided that arresting the character is the most important goal of the law.



The Nemesis should be someone who makes the character's life difficult frequently (and can not be easily removed) but the Nemesis does not need to be a mortal enemy. The Nemesis might be someone the character loves very much, but one who they cannot avoid. An overbearing mother who lives at home with the character, or a nosy kid brother who follows the character no matter where he or she goes are examples of this type of Nemesis. If for any reason the Nemesis goes away, the GM should create another Nemesis, unless the player also wishes to use experience points to eliminate the Defect permanently.

- 1 BP The Nemesis is not trying to actively harm the character or only interferes infrequently
- 2 BP The Nemesis is actively trying to harm the character and/or interferes frequently

#### ON PAROLE

This Defect is mainly for criminal characters, but is also appropriate for ex-felons who are trying to "go straight". A character On Parole has been released from some kind of incarceration and is free to try to live in society as long as he or she meets certain conditions. These conditions usually indicate that the character can not travel outside the immediate area without permission, must show evidence of a regular job, and is not allowed to associate with any known felons. Additionally, he or she will not be able to purchase a gun legally. Depending on the character's crime, parole conditions might vary. Paroled characters have often committed a crime against property or a minor crime of violence. Convicted murderers rarely receive parole until decades after their crime, and a character's background should reflect this.

A parole officer usually oversees parole and reports to the authorities on the activities of the character. The GM controls the parole officer as an NPC, and will decide how harsh or lenient the officer will be when dealing with the character, based on the number of points gained from the Defect. Violation of parole generally means returning to prison to serve the remainder of the character's sentence, plus possible additional time depending on the nature of the violation (and whether any criminal activity occurred during the parole time). As with similar Defects, the player and GM should work out exactly what the conditions and penalties associated with the Parole are before the game begins.

- 1 BP The character is on Parole for a relatively minor crime, or the Parole is not extremely restrictive, or the Parole Officer is lenient when keeping track of the character.
- 2 BP The character is on Parole for a major offence, or the Parole is extremely restrictive, or the Parole Officer is diligent when keeping track of the character, or a combination of all of these.

#### **RED TAPE**

The character has to negotiate his or her way through a complicated bureaucracy in order to accomplish tasks. This Defect is generally associated with characters who are members of law-enforcement organizations that require paperwork, but large criminal organizations may also require a character to receive permission from several levels of bosses before undertaking certain high-profile jobs, such as a "hit". Red Tape also includes whatever measures the character must take "after the fact" to appease the organization to which he or she belongs. For example, a cop may need to fill out a report every time his or her weapon is fired, or may have to follow a complicated series of steps to obtain a search warrant. A criminal may be required to pay a percentage of his take to the local crime boss or face some very strict penalties.

- 1 BP The Red Tape only impedes the character before or after a major action (but not both) or the Red Tape is easy to manage most of the time.
- 2 BP The Red Tape impedes a character both before and after a major action, and/or is very difficult to manage most of the time.



#### SIGNIFICANT OTHER (S.O.)

A character with this Defect has someone for whom he or she will go out of their way to keep safe from harm, even at the risk of his or her own life. The S.O. should be a regular fixture of the campaign. An aunt visiting for two weeks from the old country or a political candidate in town for a campaign junket is a plot complication and not an appropriate S.O. The character's sense of obligation towards the S.O. is enough that the character will take great pains to ensure his or her safety and well-being. Examples include spouses and steady boy or girl friends, immediate relatives (parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, perhaps very close cousins) and close co-workers (such as a cop's partner). It is acceptable for a character to take another character as an S.O., provided the players role-play this relationship appropriately. In this case, the S.O. relationship is always worth just 1 BP, but is treated as a 2BP Defect by the GM in terms of the frequency with which it affects the game.

- 1 BP The S.O. is rarely placed in grave danger, or appears only infrequently
- 2 BP The S.O. is often placed in grave danger, and/or appears frequently

#### SKELETON IN THE CLOSET

The character has a dark secret. Exposure of this secret could cause harm to the character in the form of public humiliation, loss of a job, arrest, or even physical harm. The number of BP gained from this Defect is based on how severe the consequences of having the secret revealed would be. The secret must be important enough that the character will take active steps to keep others from learning of it. If the Skeleton is ever revealed, the character will suffer the associated consequences. Additionally, the GM will replace it with an appropriate Defect or Defects worth at least as many BP as the Skeleton in the Closet Defect. For example, Bill gives his character, Officer Ryu, a Skeleton in the Closet: he decides that Ryu was in a street gang in his youth, and was responsible for accidentally killing another gang member. Ryu blamed the death on a rival gang, which started a gang war that eventually fragmented his gang. Ryu moved to a different part of town, where he got his act together, reformed, and became a cop. If this information were discovered, he would face manslaughter or murder charges, as well as reprisals from those involved in the gang war. However, the incident occurred a few years ago and there is little overt evidence, so the GM grants Ryu 1 BP. The GM decides that if the secret is revealed, Ryu will lose the Skeleton in the Closet Defect, but depending on the circumstances gain either the Nemesis or Wanted Defect (depending on who discovers the secret).

- 1 BP The Skeleton is very difficult to discover, the consequences of discovery are minor, or the character's reputation will be impacted minimally.
- 2 BP The Skeleton is relatively easy to discover and/or the consequences of discovery are major and/or the character's reputation will be seriously impacted.

#### UNSKILLED

The character has less training or experience than the average starting character. For each BP the character gains from this Defect, he or she loses 10 Skill Points. Characters who have the Highly Skilled Attribute may not take the Unskilled Defect.

- 1 BP The character has 10 fewer starting Skill Points.
- 2 BP The character has 20 fewer starting Skill Points.



#### WANTED

The character is a marked man or woman, with either the law or a powerful organization such as a criminal syndicate having placed a price on his or her head. Any criminal character whose face can be found "on the post office wall" or whose appearance is publicized by a national television show would certainly be considered to have 2 Levels of Wanted. Being Wanted is different from having a Nemesis. There is no single person devoting his or her life to annoying or hunting down the character, but the character will have to conceal his or her identity or move around regularly to avoid having complete strangers calling the police or hunting the character, depending on the circumstances.

- 1 BP The incentive offered for hunting the character is minor. For example, he or she may be wanted on outstanding warrants, but there may be no actual reward posted, or a fairly small reward.
- 2 BP The reward or other incentive offered to hunt the character is significant.

## **GENRE-MODIFIED DEFECTS**

These Defects may be available, but should be adjusted in certain ways to conform to the modern day action genre.

#### OWNED BY A MEGACORP

In the *HRGB* genre, this will usually apply to a non-corporate organization from which the character cannot easily retire, such as a secret government agency or the mob.

#### SPECIAL REQUIREMENT

In a modern-day game, this can be taken to mean a character who is either addicted to a drug, or needs certain drugs to live a normal life. A character who is a drug addict may go to great lengths to ensure that he maintains an adequate supply, and may suffer withdrawal if that supply is severed. Lack of the requirement will prevent the character from performing the activities in which he or she might otherwise wish to engage.





# STEP 5A: SKILL SYSTEM

Skills are intended to better define characters that lack the "super abilities" which are found in some anime genres. Your character's Skills represent his or her extensive training and experience in a particular

field. Skill Points, not Character Points, are used to acquire Skills. A starting character will usually receive 20 Skill Points, plus an additional 10 Skill Points for each Level of the Highly Skilled Attribute (page 16) that he or she possesses. A character with the Unskilled Defect (page 22) has 10 or 20 fewer Skill Points. Non-player characters created by the GM may have any number of Skill Points. Minor characters will usually have only 5-15 Skill Points, for example, while a major, recurring villain may have 50 or more.

The different Skills are divided into Levels 1 through 6. Increasing the value of a Skill by 1 Level requires 1 or more Skill Points, depending on the Skill. The higher the Skill Level, the better your character is at that Skill, and the broader his or her knowledge within the field.

In the Tri-Stat System<sup>TM</sup>, the point cost of a Skill is based on its utility in the genre, and not the difficulty of learning the Skill. Thus, within the *Hot Rods & Gun Bunnies* genre, action-oriented Skills are fairly costly at 3-6 Skill Points per Level, while other Skills (which are less likely to come into play in a game

TABLE 2-7:	GENERAL SKILLS
Acrobatics	Architecture
Artisan	Biological Science
Boating	<b>Business Management</b>
Computers	Controlled Breathing
Cooking	Cultural Arts
Demolitions	Disguise
Driving	Electronics
Forgery	Gambling
Interrogation	Law
Linguistics	Mechanics
Medical	Military Science
Navigation	Performing Arts
Physical Science	Piloting
Poisons	Police Science
Sleight of Hand	Social Sciences
Sports	Stealth
Urban Tracking	Visual Arts
Wilderness Survival	Wilderness Tracking
Writing	

TABLE 2-8	COMBAT SKILLS
Gun Combat	Heavy Weapons
Melee Attack	Melee Defense
Ranged Defense	Thrown Weapons
Unarmed Attack	Unarmed Defense

about cops and criminals) only require 1-2 Skill Points per Level. The Skill's description indicates game effects, and the Stat most relevant to the Attribute's use should a Stat check dice roll be needed (see *Appendix 1: Skill Use*).

SKILL LEVEL 1 Trained. The character has had some training and practice within the Skill.
SKILL LEVEL 2 Well-Trained. The character has had moderate training and practice within the Skill.
SKILL LEVEL 3 Expert. The character has had significant training and practice within the Skill.
SKILL LEVEL 4 Veteran. The character has had extensive training and practice within the Skill.
SKILL LEVEL 5 Master. The character has had exhaustive training and practice within the Skill.
SKILL LEVEL 6 Grand Master. The character has unparalleled ability and knowledge within the Skill.



Skills are sub-divided into General Skills and Combat Skills to help highlight the importance of combat knowledge within the genre. Both use the same basic system. They are separate so that GMs who like the fast and simple original *Big Eyes, Small Mouth* combat rules can keep them but still have more

detailed rules for investigations and other non-combat activities. Alternately, GMs who want a game with lots of combat and car chases may choose to use Combat skills, but use basic Stat rolls for non-combat activities.

Most General and Combat Skills have a number of associated "specialities", which describe the different ways that the Skill may be used. For example, Gun Combat is divided into Autofire, Pistol, and Rifle. When you assign a Skill to your character, choose one of the listed specialities or create a new speciality with GM approval. Your character will be significantly better in the chosen specialization than he or she will be in the other aspects of the Skill. A specialization is usually recorded in parenthesis after the Skill, for example, "Gun Combat Level 3 (pistol)".

Instead of improving a Skill by one Level, it is possible to take an extra specialization. Each extra specialization costs only one Skill Point, regardless of the point cost of the Skill. If your character has Skill Points to spare, you may find it advantageous to add an extra Skill Level rather than take



many extra specializations. For example, Law at Level 3 with the American Civil speciality costs 6 Skill Points (2 Skill Points/Level). Adding the American Family speciality would cost an additional 1 point (7 points total), while adding the American Family and International specialities would cost an additional 2 points (8 points total). However, the cost of increasing the entire Law Skill by one Level also costs 2 Skill Points (8 points total), and may thus be more beneficial than just acquiring the two additional specialities.

Game mechanics for using Skills in game play are described in *Appendix 1: Skill Checks* (page 101), but there is no need to worry about them while designing a character — simply choose those Skills that most closely fit your character concept.

Skills are not necessary for routine tasks that an average person knows how to accomplish. The bachelor cop who cooks macaroni and cheese for dinner does not need to make a Cooking Skill roll to accomplish this. On the other hand, if he wants to impress a date with chicken cordon bleu served with a delectable medley of exotic vegetables, the GM might require a roll. A player does not need to assign his character's Skill Points to a particular Skill to justify some familiarity within the field. Even a Level 1 Skill assignment reflects a significant amount of training, and will demonstrate that your character is quite knowledgeable or capable in the chosen area. If a character has only limited capabilities with any Skill, he or she should not possess any Levels in the Skill. For example, anyone can throw a punch or fire a gun without necessarily having any real skill. A character that knows how to drive a car safely on city streets does not automatically need the Driving (car) Skill, nor does someone with a first year university course in physics necessarily have Physics Skill. A character who is a "natural" or "prodigy" in a particular field may have a high Skill Level after only a small amount of formal training.



# CHAPTER 2

## **GENERAL SKILLS**

#### ACROBATICS

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Body SPECIALIZATIONS: Balance, Flexibility, Jumps, Tumbling

The ability to perform gymnastic feats including jumps, flips, bends and contortions.

#### ARCHITECTURE

**COST:** 1 Skill Point/Level

**RELEVANT STAT:** Mind

SPECIALIZATIONS: Aquatic (including oil rigs), Bridges, Small Buildings, Skyscrapers, Fortifications

Knowledge of construction methods, architectural drafting, etc. A successful use of this Skill can also find weak points in constructions, or help in locating old structural plans.

#### ARTISAN

**COST:** 2 Skill Points/Level **RELEVANT STAT:** Average of Body and Soul

SPECIALIZATIONS: Leatherworking, Metalworking, Tailoring, Woodworking

This Skill represents a character's ability to work with a variety of materials to produce useful and aesthetically pleasing objects.

#### **BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE**

COST: 2 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind SPECIALIZATIONS: Bacteria/Viruses, Botany, Ecology, Genetic Engineering, Physiology, Zoology

This field covers scientific knowledge of how living things function.

#### BOATING

COST: 3 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Varies SPECIALIZATIONS: Hovercraft, Large Ships, Small Boats, Submarines

The ability to safely operate a watercraft.

#### **BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

**COST:** 2 Skill Points/Level **RELEVANT STAT:** Mind or Soul **SPECIALIZATIONS:** Accounting, Banking, Fraud, Marketing, Recruitment, Securities, Small Business

The ability to run part or all of a business, as well as knowledge of how businesses operate (useful for detectives investigating money laundering or fraud). If characters run their own businesses, the GM can assume it is profitable if they make a successful Skill check every month. If not, they may be losing money, and need to accept a special assignment to pay the bills or risk bankruptcy. For mercenary groups or private detectives, this Skill is useful for locating new employees.



#### COMPUTERS

**COST:** 4 Skill Points/Level

#### **RELEVANT STAT: Mind**

SPECIALIZATIONS: Artificial Intelligence, Databases, Intrusion/Security, Networks, Programming

Practical knowledge of computer use. Computer engineering (hardware) is covered by Electronics.

#### CONTROLLED BREATHING

**COST:** 1 Skill Point/Level

**RELEVANT STAT: Body** 

#### SPECIALIZATIONS: Cyclic Breathing, Holding Breath, Slow Heart Rate

This Skill represents the ability to control respiratory functions in order to maximise breathing efficiency, or to perform tricks such as "playing dead".

#### COOKING

COST: 1 Skill Point/Level

**RELEVANT STAT:** Mind or Soul

SPECIALIZATIONS: Ethnic, Exotic, Fast Food, Gourmet, Home

The ability to prepare tasty meals, and find the best ingredients when shopping.



CULTURAL ARTS

 COST: 2 Skill Points/Level
 RELEVANT STAT: Mind
 SPECIALIZATIONS: Art Appraisal, Archaeology, History, Literature, Occultism, Urban Legends Knowledge of aspects of human culture.



#### DEMOLITIONS

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level

#### **RELEVANT STAT: Varies**

SPECIALIZATIONS: Artificial Structures, Bomb Disposal, Natural Structures, Safe Cracking, Underwater

The ability to set explosive charges without getting hurt in the process, or inflicting undesired collateral damage. It is also used for deactivating explosives set by someone else.

#### DISGUISE

COST: 3 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Varies SPECIALIZATIONS: Costume, Make-up, Prosthetics

The ability to change one's personal appearance, in an attempt to deceive others.

#### DRIVING

COST: 6 Skill Points/Level

#### RELEVANT STAT: Body

SPECIALIZATIONS: Car, Big Rig (large tractor/trailer trucks), Motorcycle, Van (includes small trucks)

The ability to operate a powered ground vehicle. Skill checks are only necessary in difficult situations, such as performing vehicular stunts, avoiding hazards, etc. Police generally specialize in Car, Motorcycle, or Van.

#### ELECTRONICS

 COST 4 Skill Points/Level
 RELEVANT STAT: Mind
 SPECIALIZATIONS: Communications, Computers, Consumer Electronics, Robotics, Security, Sensors The ability to maintain, repair, build, modify (and at high levels, design) electronic equipment.

#### FORGERY

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind. SPECIALIZATIONS: Electronic Documents, Handwriting, Paper Documents

The ability to counterfeit documents and papers. This Skill can be used in conjunction with the Computers Skill.

#### GAMING

COST 2 Skill Point/Level RELEVANT STAT Mind or Soul SPECIALIZATIONS: Board Games, Gambling/Card Games, Computer Games, Military Simulations, Role-Playing Games

The ability to play various games and simulations well.



#### INTERROGATION

COST: 3 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind SPECIALIZATIONS: Drugs, Physical, Psychological

The ability to convince someone to provide information against their will. Can also be used to help withhold information when being Interrogated by another.

#### LAW

COST: 2 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind SPECIALIZATIONS: Civil, Criminal, Customs, Family, International, Political

This Skill reflects knowledge of legal procedure and practice. GMs may assume that anyone with Level 3 or more has a license to practice law. In addition to lawyers, many police officers and politicians have the Law Skill at Level 1 or 2. All specializations, except International, are specific to one country or region only (for example, "Japanese Criminal Law").

#### LINGUISTICS

COST: 2 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind SPECIALIZATIONS: Any one language, Code Language, Sign Language, Braille

Reflects an aptitude for languages and their historical usage. Additionally, a character will be able to speak and write one foreign language at Level 1, two at Level 2, three or four at Level 3, five to eight at Level 4, nine to twelve at Level 5, and more than twelve at Level 6.

#### MECHANICS

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level

**RELEVANT STAT:** Mind (sometimes Body)

SPECIALIZATIONS: Aeronautical, Armourer, Automotive, Gunsmith, Locksmith, Micro, Traps

The ability to maintain, repair or build mechanical and electro-mechanical devices. This also includes knowledge of tool use, welding, etc. Armourer applies to heavy vehicle-mounted weapons, while Gunsmith covers personal weaponry.

#### MEDICAL

**COST:** 3 Skill Points/Level

RELEVANT STAT: Mind (sometimes Body)

SPECIALIZATIONS: Acupuncture, Dentistry, Diagnosis, Emergency Response, Homeopathy, Pathology,

Pharmacy, Surgery, Veterinary

This Skill reflects knowledge of how to heal the human body. A typical general practitioner would usually specialize in Diagnosis, while most police officers or paramedics specialize in Emergency Response.



CHAPTER 2 CHARACTER CREATION

#### MILITARY SCIENCES

COSt: 3 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind

SPECIALIZATIONS: Hardware Recognition, Intelligence Analysis, Logistics, Strategy, Tactics

The character has military-style tactical, staff, or leadership training. SWAT (or other tactical police units) often include individuals who pick up similar skills (and often recruit ex-military personnel).

#### NAVIGATION

COST: 3 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind SPECIALIZATIONS: Air, Highway, Sea, Urban, Wilderness

The ability to read maps or use specialized navigation equipment. The Navigation Skill will help a character find the fastest/safest route to a destination.

#### PERFORMING ARTS COST: 1 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Average of Body and Soul SPECIALIZATIONS: Comedy, Dance, Drama, Public Speaking, Singing The ability to perform well before an audience. With the GM's approval, a successful Skill check can

The ability to perform well before an audience. With the GM's approval, a successful Skill check can temporarily increase the character's effective Level in Art of Distraction by one.

#### PHYSICAL SCIENCE

COST: 2 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind SPECIALIZATIONS: Astronomy, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Physics

Scientific training in the way the universe works, including the necessary mathematical background.

#### PILOTING

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Body

**SPECIALIZATIONS:** Heavy Airplane (usually multi-engine), Helicopter, Jet Fighter, Light Airplane (usually single-engine), Lighter than Air Craft, Space Plane

The ability to operate air vehicles. Skill checks are normally only necessary when performing an unusual manoeuvre, avoiding a hazard, piloting an unfamiliar aircraft, etc.

#### POISONS

COST: 2 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind SPECIALIZATIONS: Natural, Synthetic

This Skill represents the character's ability to recognize, concoct, apply, and neutralize a variety of poisons and toxins.



#### POLICE SCIENCES

**COST:** 4 Skill Points/Level **RELEVANT STAT:** Mind **SPECIALIZATIONS:** Ballistics, Criminology, Forensics

This is the science behind detective work. Criminology focuses on studies of criminal behaviour and strategies, while forensics covers evidence gathering (including hair-and-fibre, fingerprint and DNA-based identification techniques).

#### SLEIGHT OF HAND

COST: 2 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Body

SPECIALIZATIONS: Card Sharking, Lock Picking, Pick Pocketing, Stage Magic

A character with this Skill (also known as prestidigitation) has superior manual dexterity, greater than that suggested by his or her Body Stat. This includes the ability to perform "magic" tricks, palm small objects, cheat at cards, plant an item on someone, etc.

#### SOCIAL SCIENCES

**COST:** 2 Skill Points/Level

**RELEVANT STAT: Mind** 

SPECIALIZATIONS: Anthropology, Politics, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology, Theology

Understanding of the way people function in society, as well as societal behavioural patterns.

#### SPORTS

COST: 1 Skill Point/Level RELEVANT STAT: Body (sometimes Mind or Soul) SPECIALIZATIONS: Baseball, Basketball, Cricket, Hockey, Volleyball, others

The ability to play well with others in a team-sporting event with specialized rules.

#### STEALTH

**COST:** 4 Skill Points/Level

RELEVANT STAT: Body (sometimes Mind)

 $\label{eq:specializations: Camouflage, Concealment, Silent Movement} Movement$ 

The ability to disguise objects or people so that they blend into their surroundings. This also includes the ability to conceal small objects on one's person, and the ability to move silently.

#### URBAN TRACKING

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level RELEVANT STAT: Mind SPECIALIZATIONS: Academic, Corporate, Residential, Underworld

Urban Tracking is the ability to "shadow" someone through an industrialized, populated area, or to find certain people in a particular sub-culture or environment by asking the right questions.



CHAPTER 2

#### VISUAL ARTS

COST: 1 Skill Points/Level

**RELEVANT STAt:** Varies (often the average of all three Stats)

SPECIALIZATIONS: Animation, Drawing, Painting, Photography, Sculpting, Video

The ability to produce a work of fine or commercial art in a particular visual field.

#### WILDERNESS SURVIVAL

COST: 1 Skill Points/Level

RELEVANT STAT: Mind (sometimes Body)

SPECIALIZATIONS: Arctic, Aquatic, Desert, Forest, Jungle, Mountain

The ability to find food and shelter in the outdoors, to avoid natural hazards, and to identify wild plants and animals.

#### WILDERNESS TRACKING

**COST:** 1 Skill Points/Level

RELEVANT STAT: Mind (sometimes Soul)

SPECIALIZATIONS: Arctic, Aquatic, Desert, Forest, Jungle, Mountain

The ability to successfully trail or track someone or something while outdoors in a rural or wilderness setting.

#### WRITING

COST: 1 Skill Point/Level

RELEVANT STAT: Average of Mind and Soul

SPECIALIZATIONS: Academic, Fiction, Journalistic, Poetic, Technical

The ability to communicate ideas or emotions in a written work.

## **COMBAT SKILLS**

GUN COMBAT

COST: 6 Skill Points/Level

RELEVANT STAT: None (uses Attack Combat Value)

SPECIALIZATIONS: Autofire, Pistol, Rifle

The ability to accurately shoot with a hand-held firearm, and to keep it properly maintained. Autofire applies to firing bursts of fully automatic fire from any gun, whether it is a small submachine gun, a big assault rifle, or a heavy machine gun. Pistol applies to firing single shots from a handgun. Rifle applies to firing single shots from guns with a shoulder stock, including rifles and shotguns. This is an Attack Combat Skill.



# CHAPTER 2

#### HEAVY WEAPONS

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level

RELEVANT STAT: None (uses Attack Combat Value)

**SPECIALIZATIONS:** Artillery (indirect fire weapons, such as howitzers), Gunnery (heavy machine guns, tank guns and other vehicle-mounted direct-fire weapons), Launchers (rocket and missile launchers)

The ability to accurately fire vehicle-mounted or tripod-mounted weapons, such as a tank cannon or heavy machine gun, and to perform routine maintenance. This is an Attack Combat Skill.

#### MELEE ATTACK

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level

RELEVANT STAT: None (uses Attack Combat Value)

**SPECIALIZATIONS:** Axe, Baton/Club, Knife, Improvised Weapons (chairs, lamps, ladders, etc.), Polearms (spears, naginata, etc.), Sword, Whips/Chains

The ability to attack effectively with a hand-to-hand weapon. This is an Attack Combat Skill.

#### MELEE DEFENSE

COST: 4 Skill Points/Level

**RELEVANT STAT:** None (uses Defense Combat Value)

SPECIALIZATIONS: Axe, Baton/Club, Knife, Improvised Weapons (from the nearby

area), Polearms (spears, naginata, etc.), Sword, Whips/Chains

The ability to defend well with a melee weapon. By acquiring different levels of the Melee Attack and D e f e n s e S k ills, a character's personal style can be simulated. For example, a conservative fighter would have high levels of Melee Defense, while an aggressive attacker would specialize in Melee Attack. This is a Defense Combat Skill.



#### RANGED DEFENSE

COST: 6 points/Level RELEVANT STAT: None (uses Defense Combat Value) SPECIALIZATIONS: Personal (on foot), Air Vehicle, Ground Vehicle, Water Vehicle, Space Vehicle.

The ability to avoid ranged attacks. This Defense Combat Skill does not enable a character to actually dodge bullets. Rather, it is a combination of situational awareness and tactical movement, as well as knowing when to keep moving (to present a more difficult target), and when to drop for cover.

#### THROWN WEAPONS

**COST:** 4 Skill Points/Level **RELEVANT STAT:** None (uses Attack Combat Value) **SPECIALIZATIONS:** Blades, Grenade, Rocks

Accurate throwing of weapons or objects to hit a target. This is an Attack Combat Skill.





**EXAMPLE:** Susan's GM will be using the Skill System. Peneekie will start with basic 20 Skill Points, plus 20 more Skill Points from her Highly Skilled Attribute, for a total of 40 Skill Points. To reflect Peneekie's police training, Susan gives the character 1 Level of Gun Combat (pistol), 1 Level of Law (criminal), and 1 Level of Medical (emergency response). Susan decides Peneekie was a Junior Olympic gymnast several years ago, so she acquires 1 Level of Acrobatics (tumbling), and her combat style also translates into 1 Level of Ranged Defense (personal). Peneekie spent her youth in a rough neighbourhood and was taught karate and stick-fighting by her grandfather, and also trained in the use of a police baton at the Academy. She takes 1 Level of Melee Attack (club/baton) and 1 Level of Melee Defense (club/baton), plus Unarmed Attack (striking) Level 1 and Unarmed Defense (striking) Level 1. Susan does not want Peneekie to be a one-dimensional combat-oriented character, so she also gives the young police woman 2 Levels of Performing Arts (dancing). This leaves her with 1 extra Skill Point, which she decides to use to purchase an extra Specialization in Acrobatics: Balance, in recognition of the Silver Medal on the Balance Beam she earned in the regional High School Championships.

# STEP 6: DERIVED VALUES

Players calculate their characters' Derived Values exactly as in *BESM*. Since Skill Levels represent modifiers to the dice rolled by players, and not changes in the Derived Values, they do not affect the actual Combat Value.

**EXAMPLE:** Peneekie's Stats yield an Attack Combat Value of 7 [(7+5+9)/3]. This is increased by 2 for her Combat Mastery Level 2, giving her an Attack Combat Value of 9, and a Defense Combat Value of 7 (9-2). With a Body Stat of 7 and a Soul Stat of 9, Her Health Points equal 80 [(7+9)x5]. Her Level of Damm Healthy! adds 10 points, for 90 Health Points total. With a Mind Stat of 5 and a Soul Stat of 9, Peneekie's Energy Points equal 70 [(5+9)x5].

# STEP 7: BACKGROUND POINTS

The GM may wish to add atmosphere by referring to a character illustration as a "mug shot" or a character story as a "police report".

**EXAMPLE:** Susan decides to explore Peneekie's background before the game begins. She writes details of Peneekie's childhood growing up in a rough neighbourhood, and being raised by her grandmother. She also produces a diary entry detailing how Peneekie was robbed as a little girl at knifepoint and how this one incident changed herfrom a happy little girl into an adult in one day. The GM likes both the background details and the story, and awards Susan 2 BP. Susan uses them to acquire another Level of the Highly Skilled Attribute (giving Peneekie 10 more Skill Points) and one more Level of Personal Gear.

Peneekie gets four more minor items and one major item. Peneekie will have a motorbike (her major item) along with a professional first aid kit, a high-tech motorcycle helmet, a cellular phone and a speed rig (page 54) for her pistol. With her 10 remaining Skill points, Susan acquires Driving (motorcycle) Level 1 (6 points) and Urban Tracking (residential) Level 1 (4 points).

Susan's character is complete. Officer Peneekie is readyfor herfirst day on the beat. See page 36 for an example of her character sheet.


# CHAPTER 2

### **CHARACTER NOTES**

### STATS AND DERIVED VALUES

Player Name Susan	Body Stat 7				
Character Name Peneekie	Mind Stat 5				
Method of Operation Calm and "by 1	the Soul Stat 9	Soul Stat 9			
book". Has great respect for veter	rans Health Points 90				
and follows orders well. Skilled fig					
Interested in gang related crimes.	Attack Combat Value 9				
Description Asian-American, age 24					
160 cm tall, 60 kg, black hair, bro		Skilled)			
eyes (wears contacts), pierced ear	s, Background Points Awarded 2				
and appendix scar on abdomen.	Total Character Points Peneekie				
CHARACTER A	TTRIBUTES AND SKILLS				
Character	Character				
Attribute or Skill Leve		Level			
Appearance 2	Powerful Mind	2			
Combat Mastery 2		2			
Damn Healthy! 1	Acrobatics (tumbling, balance)	1			
Divine Relationship 1	Driving (motorcycle)	1			
Highly Skilled 3	Gun Combat (pistol)	1			
Gun Bunny 2	Law (criminal)	1			
- Lightning Draw, Steady Hand	Medical (emergency)	1			
Personal Gear 3	Performing Arts (dancing)	2			
- heavy auto pistol (with laser sigh	ht Urban Tracking (residential)	1			
and speed rig), rubber bullets, fan	ncy Melee Attack (club)	1			
condo, soft body armour, chemical	Melee Defense (club)	1			
mace, collapsible night stick, porta	able Ranged Defense (personal)	1			
radio, city transit card, season	Unarmed Attack (striking)	1			
tickets to ballet, motorbike, first	aid Unarmed Defense (striking)	1			
kit, motorcycle helmet, cellular pho	one				
Снава					
Defect Bonus Poi	ints Defect Bonu	s Points			
Red Tape 1	and the second sec				
Significant Other 2					





Guns and cars both play a very important role in *HRGB*-style anime shows: not only are they the main tools characters use to accomplish their goals, but often they are the focus of their lives. This chapter provides rules for characters and GMs to use vehicles and weapons in their games.

## GUNS

Characters may start with guns if they have the Personal Gear Attribute (page 16). A specific gun will be either a major or minor item of Personal Gear (see **Table 3-1: Weapon Templates**, page 46). Characters may add custom features to guns (see Customizing Firearms, pages 51-54) to further modify them or better represent real-world firearms. Each custom feature added will generally count as an additional minor item of Personal Gear.

#### HOW GUNS WORK

A gun is a weapon designed to use the expanding gasses produced by a chemical propellant to fire a solid projectile accurately over a distance. In most modern firearms, the ammunition consists of a solid projectile (usually a lead bullet) loaded into a larger brass cartridge case that contains a powder which acts as a propellant when ignited. At the base of the case is a primer, a tiny explosive charge.

Guns are often described in terms of calibre, for example, a .38 calibre pistol or a 7.62mm rifle. Calibre is the diameter of the inside of a weapon's barrel (the bore) and thus a measure of how large a bullet it fires. Calibre is given in either fractions of an inch (for many older American firearms) or in millimetres (for example, 9mm) for most other designs. Calibre is also used to measure the size of a bullet and designate the ammunition that can be fired ("a .45 bullet"). However, ammunition with the same calibre can be very different. For example, a cartridge for a rifle is usually much longer than a pistol, with this extra length packing in more propellant, allowing the bullet to travel faster and hit harder. Thus, a .223 rifle bullet does more damage than a .45 pistol.

Different types of ammunition with the same calibre are distinguished from one another in various ways: by original manufacturer (such as .45 ACP for Automatic Colt Pistol), by user (7.62mm NATO) or by following the calibre with the cartridge case length (5.56mm x 45mm). Often the same cartridge can go by different names. Thus, .308 Winchester, as used in the M14 and FN-FAL battle rifles (and many hunting rifles) is also known as 7.62mm NATO and 7.62mm X 51mm. As its longer cartridge case indicates, it is more powerful than 7.62mm x 39mm Russian (used in the AK-47 assault rifle).

A gun consists of two major parts, the barrel and the receiver. The receiver is the mechanical part of a gun. It "receives" a cartridge from a magazine, loads it into the firing chamber, and holds it in place until the shooter pulls the trigger. This activates a hammer, which drives a firing pin into the base of the cartridge. This sets off the primer, which in turn ignites the propellant in the cartridge. The propellant burns very rapidly, producing expanding gasses that force the bullet out of the cartridge and down the gas-tight gun barrel and out of the weapon.

The longer the gun barrel, the higher a velocity a given bullet can reach. Gun barrels are usually rifled, with grooves inside engineered to make a bullet spin, for accuracy. An exception to this are shotguns, in which rifling is not used, as they are designed to fire cartridges containing multiple small pellets rather than bullets.

When a gun fires, it produces recoil. Guns normally have a pistol grip, shoulder stock, or both to control recoil and steady the user's aim. A gun with a shoulder stock is sometimes called a "long gun" to distinguish it from a hand gun, which has only a pistol grip. Guns with both a shoulder stock and pistol grip are sometimes called "assault-style" weapons, after the visually distinctive feature of military assault rifles.

Once a modern gun fires, it is necessary to reload ("chamber") another cartridge. Exactly how a gun's receiver does this is referred to as the "action" of the weapon.



In a revolver-action weapon, the cartridges are stored in a rotating cylinder in the centre of the receiver, which usually holds about six cartridges. After each is fired, the action of pulling the trigger rotates the cylinder, bringing another cartridge into line with the gun's hammer, ready to fire. When all the revolver's cartridges are fired, the cylinder is swung open, old cartridges are extracted and new cartridges manually inserted. (Older "single-action" revolvers require manually cocking the hammer between each shot.)

In bolt-action, lever-action, or pump-action guns, individual bullets are held in an internal tube or fixed magazine attached to the weapon, holding 5-10 cartridges. The user must work a lever, bolt, or pump between each shot to eject the empty cartridge and load (chamber) a new one.

In a semi-automatic (or "auto-loading") weapon, cartridges are typically stored in a detachable springloaded box magazine, holding anywhere from 5 to 50 cartridges. The receiver taps either the energy of the recoil or gas produced by the firing and uses it to work a mechanism that automatically ejects the empty cartridge and loads a new one, allowing the user to fire each time the trigger is pulled. After a magazine is empty, it can be quickly ejected and a new full magazine inserted, allowing fast reloading. (An empty magazine can also be refilled one bullet at a time.)

A fully-automatic weapon (a machine gun) works the same way as a semi-automatic, but fires continuously as long as the trigger is held down, until the magazine is out of ammunition. Most full-automatic weapons use box magazines, but some larger machine guns use a drum or a belt of linked cartridges instead. A majority of full-automatic weapons (with the exception of large machine guns) are "selective-fire," allowing the weapon to be switched from full-automatic to semi-automatic action.

Single shot action weapons hold only one round of ammunition at a time; after the loaded round is fired, the casing (if any) must be ejected and a new round manually loaded. Weapons of this type often have a "break-down" mechanism: at the flick of a level, the barrel flips down from the receiver, ejecting the spent shell to allow a new round to be inserted into the firing chamber. Sporting guns (with or without multiple barrels), and guns firing extremely large, powerful ammunition, often have this action type.

Most guns have some sort of safety feature (either a switch or decocking lever) that prevents the gun being fired when the safety is on. (GMs may have characters with the Inept Combat Defect and no Gun Combat Skill occasionally forget to remove the safety before firing.) Anyone who fails to "safe" their weapon (or unload it) before holstering it risks having it go off by accident if the character falls or bumps the gun.

Guns can take a fair bit of abuse and still work, but all guns should be stripped down and cleaned periodically to reduce the chance of a malfunction. As a general rule, the GM can assume any character with Gun Combat Skill maintains his or her weapons.

#### AVAILABILITY AND LEGALITY OF GUNS

The legality of firearms varies dramatically from nation to nation. In some countries, including the USA, firearm laws also vary at the state or local level. *Appendix 2: Laws and Regulations* (page 104) provides an overview of United States, Canadian, and Japanese firearms restrictions.

If a character acquires a gun through Personal Gear it presupposes that he or she has found either a legal or illegal way to obtain it. The GM may choose to restrict availability of weapons based on the local gun control laws (for example, preventing characters in a Japanese setting from starting with machine guns). However, in many anime shows, even Japanese characters have machine guns or rocket launchers. The GM may prefer to let characters have whatever Personal Gear weaponry fits their character outline, but be prepared for the police (or the characters' superiors, if they are the police) to come down hard if characters blatantly violate the law with a too-flagrant display of illegal firepower.







# GUN TEMPLATES

In *HRGB*, guns have been grouped into classes (such as "autoloading pistol") and specific templates ("light auto pistol") based on their form and function, rather than listing the exact make and model. See **Table 3-1, Weapon Templates** (page 46) for actual weapon statistics, and whether a weapon is a major or minor item of Personal Gear.

#### AUTOLOADING PISTOLS

An autoloading pistol is a semi-automatic weapon (fires one shot per pull of the trigger) with a pistol grip and no shoulder stock. It is a handgun, designed to be fired one-handed (although a two-handed grip is often used). It uses a detachable box magazine that slides into the pistol grip. This normally holds from 7 to 15 cartridges of larger calibre but shorter length (and thus less power) than a rifle's cartridge. Older pistols are single-action, and their hammer must be cocked before firing; newer double-action pistols cock themselves once the trigger is pulled. (The length of a combat round is long enough that the time this takes is unimportant, but the noise of a single-action weapon being cocked can be a give-away.) The three autoloading pistol templates are:

#### LIGHT AUTO PISTOL

A fairly small handgun firing a relatively low powered cartridge (.22 LR, .25, .32, .380, etc.). It is more concealable than larger pistols (+1 penalty on dice rolls to notice a concealed gun) and more comfortable for an inexperienced shooter. Examples: AMT Backup, High Standard, Walther PPK. Year 2000 cost: \$300+US.

#### MEDIUM AUTO PISTOL

A typical handgun, designed to fire a big bullet at modest velocity (such as .45 ACP) or a smaller bullet at higher velocity (9mm Parabellum, .40 S&W). Examples: Beretta 92, Browning High Power, Cz 75, Glock 17, Glock 21, H&K P7, Luger, M1911, Makarov, SiG 229, Smith & Wesson M39, etc. Year 2000 cost: \$400+US.

#### HEAVY AUTO PISTOL

A large-frame handgun that fires a powerful round such as .357 magnum, .44 magnum or .50 AE, or a rifle cartridge. A heavy auto pistol can still fit in a shoulder holster, but makes a noticeably larger bulge (-1 bonus on any dice roll to notice a concealed gun). Examples: Auto-Mag, Desert Eagle. Year 2000 cost: \$500+US.

#### REVOLVER

This is a handgun with a revolver action. Its cylinder typically holds six cartridges. Revolvers can be easier to find on the street than autoloading pistols, and were the mainstay of most American police departments for many years, although since the 1970s, more police forces have adopted autoloading pistols. Revolvers are simple to operate and reliable, since a misfire can be cleared by simply pulling the trigger and bringing a fresh round into line. (Clearing a jam in an autoloading pistol takes longer.) The two revolver templates are:

#### REVOLVER

The typical civilian or police revolver, it fires .38 special ammunition. Examples: Ruger Service 6, Smith & Wesson M10, etc. Year 2000 cost: \$300+US.



#### MAGNUM REVOLVER

A large-frame revolver firing a more powerful cartridge such as .357 magnum, .41 magnum, .44 magnum or .454 Casull. It makes a bigger bulge than a normal revolver under a jacket (-1 bonus on any dice rolls to notice a concealed gun). Examples: Colt Python, Ruger Blackhawk, Smith & Wesson M29, Taurus 454. Year 2000 cost: \$500+US.

#### RIFLES

A "long gun" with a rifled bore, shoulder stock and a relatively long barrel (compared to pistols or shotguns) that fires one shot for each pull of the trigger. It requires two hands to use. A rifle is designed for accurate aimed fire, and is usually effective out to at least 500 metres. Modern rifles may be either semiautomatic or use a manual bolt-action (or, occasionally in light rifles, a lever or pump action). Cartridges are stored in either an internal or detachable box magazine, usually holding between 5 and 20 rounds. The four rifle templates are:

#### LIGHT RIFLE

A light-weight sporting rifle firing a relatively low-powered cartridge, such as .22 Long Rifle. The most common civilian rifle. Year 2000 cost: \$200+US.

#### **MEDIUM RIFLE**

A rifle firing an intermediate cartridge like .243 Remington, 5.56mm NATO or 7.62mm x 39mm Russian. Often these are civilian semi-automatic versions of assault rifles. Examples: AR-15, SKS. Year 2000 cost: \$400+US.

#### HEAVY RIFLE

A rifle firing a powerful cartridge like .308 Winchester (7.62mm NATO) or .30-06. It may be a standard hunting weapon, or a civilian semi-automatic version of a battle rifle. Examples: Remington 700 series, Ml Garand. Year 2000 cost: \$500+US.

#### ANTI-MATERIAL RIFLE

A big, heavy rifle firing the same cartridge as a heavy machine gun (.50 BMG). The ultimate macho weapon, they are used in conjunction with a telescopic scope to enable military snipers to engage light vehicles or command posts. Example: Barret M-82, RAI 500. Year 2000 cost: \$5,000+US.

#### MACHINE GUNS

A machine gun (or more precisely, an "automatic weapon") is a gun capable of full-automatic fire, either in sustained or short bursts. The term "machine gun" is used throughout *HRGB* in preference to "automatic weapon", as it is the term that American gun laws, cops and crooks usually use. The seven machine gun templates are:

#### ASSAULT RIFLE

A rifle-configuration selective-fire machine gun with a pistol grip, detachable box magazine and shoulder stock, often firing the 5.56mm x 45mm NATO (.223 Remington) or 7.62mm x 39mm Russian cartridges. Assault rifles are the standard infantry weapons of modern armies. Examples: AK-47, M-16, SteyrAUG. Year 2000 cost: \$600+US.

#### BATTLE RIFLE

A heavy assault rifle firing a more powerful cartridge, usually 7.62mm X 51mm (.308 Winchester). Battle rifles suffer a considerable recoil when auto-fired, reducing accuracy, so shooters often switch the



weapon to semi-automatic fire. Although a military weapon from the 1950s to the 1970s, battle rifles have been replaced in most armies by the assault rifle, whose ammunition is notably lighter (allowing soldiers to carry more of it). Examples: FN-FAL, H&K G-3, M-14. Year 2000 cost: \$800+US.

#### SUBMACHINE GUN (SMG)

A compact machine gun with a pistol grip and shoulder stock, an SMG fires pistol-calibre ammunition from a box or drum magazine. Most SMGs are selective fire weapons that can also be set to fire single shots to conserve ammunition. They can be concealed, but this requires a long coat — they will not fit in an ordinary holster. This concealability makes them favourites of criminals. The fact that they fire a less powerful round than assault rifles (and so are less likely to blast through a wall and injure a bystander) makes them popular with SWAT and counter-terrorist units. Examples: H&K MP5, Ingram M10, Sterling, Thompson, Uzi. Year 2000 cost: \$500+US.

#### MACHINE PISTOL

A pistol-format submachine gun without a real shoulder stock, although it may have a front hand grip. When auto-fired, a machine pistol usually has a higher recoil (and thus less accuracy) than an SMG. A machine pistol can be carried in a shoulder holster, but is bulkier than a normal handgun (-1 bonus on any dice rolls to spot it). Examples: Beretta 93R, Mini-Uzi, H&K MP5K, Ingram M11, Skorpion. Year 2000 cost: \$500+US.

#### LIGHT MACHINE GUN (LMG)

A military squad support weapon, firing the same cartridge as an assault or battle rifle. It has a heavier barrel (that can be easily removed and swapped with another if it overheats) to permit sustained auto-fire, as well as a folding bipod rest. An LMG usually feeds from a belt or drum of 50-100 cartridges rather than a box magazine. It is meant to be fired while lying prone with the weapon resting on its bipod. Examples: FN MAG, H&K 21, M60, M240. Year 2000 cost: \$5,000+US.

#### HEAVY MACHINE GUN (HMG)

A powerful, large calibre (typically .50 BMG) belt-fed machine gun fired from a tripod or a vehicle mount. It is too heavy to use without its mount. When transporting it on foot, it is broken down into three loads: gun, tripod and ammunition. Examples: Browning M2HB, Russian NSV. Year 2000 cost: \$10,000+US.

#### **MINI-GUN**

A Gatling-type machine gun that uses an electric motor to operate its action and has six rotating barrels. As the weapon fires, a new barrel is rotated into line with the receiver, thus ensuring that no one barrel overheats. This allows an extremely rapid rate of fire, up to 100 rounds per second! However, a minigun also requires a heavy battery pack to operate, and will rapidly use up all the ammunition that a person can carry. A light mini-gun fires a 5.56mm round and is (barely) man-portable, while a heavy mini-gun is tripod or vehicle mounted. The light mini-gun shows up much more in anime and action movies than in real life (very few were actually built). Year 2000 cost: \$20,000+US.

#### SHOTGUNS

Shotguns resemble rifles, but are larger calibre (18.5mm for a typical shotgun) and have smooth rather than rifled barrels. They are designed to fire cartridges holding multiple pellets, known as shot, but can also be loaded with other types of ammunition. A shotgun is devastating at close ranges, as the shot disperses in a widening pattern after leaving the barrel of the weapon. (The exact pattern is controlled by the shotgun's "choke") However, shot loses effectiveness very quickly at longer ranges, and is less effective at penetrating armour than a rifle bullet. Instead of calibre, shotguns are rated for "gauge" (the number of pure lead balls the same diameter as the shotgun's calibre that will weigh one pound). Shotguns are usually

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pump-action or semi-automatic (some can be switched from one mode to another). In game terms, there is little difference, but a pump-action does require two hands for operation and makes an intimidating noise when the slide is racked to load a new shell. The three shotgun templates are:

#### SHOTGUN

A basic 12-gauge shotgun, either a pump-action, or semi-automatic with an internal small-capacity magazine (5 to 8 shells), but can also be single shot action (often with two barrels). Shotguns are common civilian weapons, and are carried in most American police cars. Examples: Ithaca 37, Remington 870 (pump action); Remington 1100 and SPAS 12 (semi-auto). Year 2000 cost: \$400+US.

#### HEAVY SHOTGUN

A big 10-gauge shotgun. Example: Ithaca Roadblocker. Year 2000 cost: \$600+US.

#### ASSAULT SHOTGUN

A 12-gauge shotgun with a semi-automatic action, assault-styled pistol grip and a high capacity box or drum magazine. Examples: Beretta MSP, Street Sweeper, Striker. Year 2000 cost: \$800+US.

#### **GRENADE LAUNCHERS**

These are low velocity, short barreled weapons that fire a 30mm or 40mm grenade with an explosive or chemical Filler. A grenade launcher must usually be manually reloaded after each shot, hence it is somewhat slow firing compared to a rifle or shotgun. Grenades fired by a grenade launcher cannot be used as hand grenades, and vice versa. Most modern grenade launchers are designed to be attached to the underside of an assault rifle or battle rifle, but some older models (resembling short, big-bore shotguns) are built to be used independently. They can fire various grenades. In urban situations, the most likely to be used are explosive concussion grenades and tear gas. Examples: M203 (under-rifle version), M79 (shotgun-style grenade launcher). Year 2000 cost: \$400+US.

#### LIGHT ANTI-TANK WEAPON (LAW)

A small, single-shot man-portable rocket launcher or recoilless rifle. It fires a shell or rocket with a large calibre (66mm to 85mm) high-explosive shaped charge warhead capable of destroying a lightly armoured or unarmored vehicle or blasting through the side or rear armour of a modern tank. Some models (like the M72 or RPG 18) have a dangerous rocket back-blast that can ignite fires behind the gunner, while more modern designs (like Armbrust) do not. Most LAWs are good for one shot, then the launcher is thrown away. Example: Armbrust, AT-4, M72 LAW, RPG-18. Year 2000 costs \$500+US.

#### NON-LETHAL WEAPONS

These non-lethal weapons are intended to disable or incapacitate people without causing permanent injury. In some areas they are legal, in others they are not.

#### PEPPER SPRAY OR MACE

A chemical irritant spray which is deployed from a small can. Year 2000 cost: \$20+US.

#### STUNNER

This is a hand-held device that, when touched to a victim, produces an electric shock intended to daze or knock out its target. Year 2000 cost: \$100+US.

#### TASER

This weapon fires a dart into the victim, which is connected by a cable to a battery in the weapon. After the victim is hit, the battery discharges an electric shock. Year 2000 cost: \$300+US.



		and the second	1: WEAPON TEMPLAT		
WEAPON	DAMAGE	ABILITIES	DISABILITIES	Skill	ITEM
Anti-Material Rifle 20 Assault Shotgun 15		none Spreading	Static*	Gun Combat (rifle)	major
Assault Shotgun			Low Penetration, Short Range*	Gun Combat (rifle)	major
Assault Rifle	10	Auto-Fire	Limited Shots (6)*	Gun Combat (autofire)	major
Battle Rifle	15	Auto-Fire	Inaccurate, Limited Shots (6)*	Gun Combat (autofire)**	major
Grenade - concussion	15	Area-Effect	Inaccurate, Limited Shots (3), Slow*	Heavy Weapons (launcher) or Thrown Weapon (grenade)	minor
Grenade - tear gas 15		Area-Effect Inaccurate, Limited Shots (3), Slow, Stun, Toxic*		Heavy Weapons (launcher) or Thrown Weapon (grenade)	minor
Heavy Auto Pistol	10 ·	Concealable	Short Range	Gun Combat (pistol)	major
Heavy Machine Gun	20	Auto-Fire, Long Range	Static, Tripod*	Gun Combat (autofire)	major
Heavy Mini-Gun	15	Auto-Fire, Spreading	Limited Shots(6), Static, Tripod*	Gun Combat (autofire)	major
Heavy Rifle	15	none	none*	Gun Combat (rifle)	major
Heavy Shotgun 20		Spreading	Limited Shots(4), Gun Combat (rifle) Low Penetration, Short Range*		minor
		Area-Effect, Penetrating	Inaccurate, Limited Shots(1), Slow, Static	Heavy Weapons (launcher)	major
Light Auto Pistol 5 Conceal		Concealable	Low Penetration, Short Range	Gun Combat (pistol)	minor
Light Machine Gun	15	Auto-Fire	Static* Gun Combat (autofire)		major
Light Mini-Gun 10		Accurate, Auto-Fire, Spreading	Limited Shots (6), Static*	Gun Combat (autofire)	major
ight Rifle 5 none		none*	Gun Combat (rifle)	minor	
Magnum Revolver 10		Concealable	Limited Shots(6), Short Range	Gun Combat (pistol)	minor
Machine Pistol 5		Auto-Fire, Concealable	Inaccurate, Limited Shots(6), Short Range	Gun Combat (autofire)**	minor
Medium Auto Pistol 5 C		Concealable	Short Range	Gun Combat (pistol)	minor
Medium Rifle	10	none	none*	Gun Combat (rifle)	major
Pepper Spray 10		Concealable, Irritant, Stun	Melee Range, Limited Shots(6), Toxic	none	minor
Revolver	5	Concealable	Limited Shots(6), Short Range	Gun Combat (pistol)	minor
Shotgun	15	Spreading***	Limited Shots(6), Low Penetration, Short Range*	Limited Shots(6), Gun Combat (rifle) Low Penetration,	
Stunner	10	Stun	Low Penetration, Melee	Melee (improvised)	minor
Submachine Gun	5 Auto-Fire		Limited Shots(6), Short Range	Gun Combat (autofire)	minor
Taser	10 .	Stun	Low Penetration, Short Range, Slow	Gun Combat (pistol)	minor



#### NOTES FOR TABLE 3-1: WEAPON TEMPLATES

\* requires two hands to wield properly. \*\* if firing single shots, ignore the Auto-Fire Ability and the Inaccurate and Limited Shots Disabilities. \*\*\* Some shotguns are "double barrelled" and can fire both barrels at once. If so, treat as Autofire, but a maximum of two hits can be scored. Double Barrelled shotguns are single shot action and have the Limited Shots (2) Disability.

**Damage** is how much damage the weapon inflicts. The character's Attack Combat Value will be added to this number to determine total attack damage.

Abilities or Disabilities are any special capabilities or limitations the weapon possesses. See Notes on Weapon Abilities and Disabilities below.

Skill is the Skill and Specialization that provides a bonus when firing the weapon.

Item is whether the weapon counts as a major or minor item of Personal Gear.

#### NOTES ON WEAPON ABILITIES AND DISABILITIES

#### ACCURATE

The weapon gets a -1 bonus to the attack roll.

#### AREA-EFfECT

The attack affects anyone near the target as well as the target itself. All affected characters are allowed a Defense roll (diving away from the blast, or, if driving, swerving away). However, a successful Defense only halves the damage unless the GM rules there is adequate cover. The blast radius can be assumed equal to one metre for every three full points of damage the weapon inflicts.

#### AUTO-FIRE

The weapon is a machine gun. It scores a number of hits equal to the difference between character's Attack Combat Value and the modified attack roll (minimum one hit, maximum 5). For example, if the attacker had an Attack Combat Value of 7 and rolled (after modifiers for Skill and other conditions) a 5, he or she would score 2 hits. If he or she rolled a 6 or 7, only one hit would be scored. The defender's chance to avoid the attack is derived in a similar way: a successful defense roll will defend against a number of hits equal to the difference between the Defense Combat Value and the defense roll (minimum one hit avoided). An auto-fire weapon can also be used to "spray" an area, attacking two adjacent targets rather than one target. To do so, the attacker must make two attack rolls, each at a +2 penalty to hit. No more than two hits may be scored on each target. Assault rifles, battle rifles, machine pistols and SMGs can also fire semi-automatically (if not out of shots). In this case, ignore the Auto-Fire Ability and the Limited Shots Disability and (for battle rifles and machine pistols) its Inaccurate Disability.

#### CONCEALABLE

The weapon can be hidden under a normal suit, jacket, dress or similar clothing. The heavy auto pistol, magnum revolver, and machine pistol are a bit harder to hide: a -1 bonus on dice rolls to notice them. The light auto pistol is easier to hide: a +1 penalty on dice rolls to notice it. The snub nose option (page 54) adds an extra +1 penalty to notice a weapon, cumulative with these modifiers. The GM should require a Body Stat check to spot a concealed weapon hidden under a jacket, dress, coat, etc. and only roll if someone is specifically looking for concealed weapons. Apply a -4 modifier if the searcher is performing a pat-down (often referred to as "frisking" someone). Submachine guns, as well as some long guns with certain features, can be hidden under a long coat. A Body Stat roll with a -2 bonus should be required to notice such a weapon; a pat-down will automatically succeed.



#### INACCURATE

The weapon suffers a +1 penalty to the attack roll. In the case of a battle rifle or machine pistol, ignore this penalty if fired semi-automatically (see Auto-Fire).

#### IRRITANT

The subject must make a Body Stat roll or be partially blinded and distracted (+2 penalty on all rolls to do anything) for a number of rounds equal to the amount by which he or she failed the roll.

#### LIMITED SHOTS

The weapon either burns through the ammunition the owner can carry at a very fast rate, or has a low ammunition capacity and cannot be quickly reloaded. Otherwise, the user is assumed to be loading and firing during the round. "Shots" for Auto-Fire weapons means "attacks" (each one being a burst of fire). The player or GM should keep track of how many attacks a weapon with Limited Shots has made. After it has reached its limit, it cannot be fired again until the character has taken time (GM's option) to locate extra ammunition and reload, should such ammunition be available. For more on ammunition, see the Dramatic Ammunition Rules on page 74.

#### LOW PENETRATION

The attack has difficulty punching through armour. If using the Type B armour rules, armour is doubled against its damage. For example, body armour that normally stopped 4 points of damage would stop 8 against this attack. If using the Type A armour rules, the armour Health Points are reduced by one point for every two points of damage inflicted.

#### MELEE

This is a hand-to-hand weapon that must touch the victim, and thus is usable only if the victim is within melee range (about one metre away).

#### PENETRATING

The weapon is specially designed to punch through armour, such as an anti-tank missile's shapedcharge explosive warhead. If using Type A rules, armour only offers half its normal protective value (round down) against the weapon's attack, or, if using Type B rules, armour Health Points are reduced by two for every point of damage inflicted.

#### SHORT RANGE

The weapon has an effective range out to no more than 50 metres (Short). A weapon that does not have a range listed is assumed to have a medium effective range (about 500 metres). Tank cannon, artillery and similar weapons (see *BRCS*) may be Long Range, with an effective range of several kilometres. Note that most weapons can shoot further than their effective range at a penalty to hit.

#### SLOW

The attacker must take an action before the weapon can be fired to aim, ready, load, or otherwise prepare the weapon. This counts as a combat action, which means that unless a character has the Extra Attacks Attribute, he or she will be limited to one attack every other round if using a Slow weapon.

#### SPREADING

The weapon fires a spray of pellets, such as a shotgun blast, or possibly a lot of bullets. Such an attack is hard to avoid, so the defender suffers a +1 penalty to his or her Defense roll. Additionally, one other target in the path of the attack may also be attacked (GM's option). A roll to hit the extra target is required as well.



#### STATIC

The attacker cannot move (or defend) on the same round that the attacker fires this weapon, either due to the weapon's bulk, recoil, or complex aiming procedure. The attacker may not even make Defense rolls on the round the weapon is fired — if he or she has already done so, the weapon may not be fired.

#### STUN

The damage cannot kill. Lost Health Points are recovered at one point every minute, rather than the normal one per hour.

#### тохіс

The damage only affects living things. If a . character has a gas mask, he or she will be unaffected.

#### TRIPOD

The weapon is too big to be fired from the shoulder or hip. It must either be mounted in a vehicle or set up on a tripod prior to firing, and removed from it before transportation. Either task takes two combat rounds. The entire weapon needs a crew to transport on foot: one person should carry the gun, another the tripod, and a third person the ammunition. The GM can ignore this for characters with Body Stat greater than 10 or the Super Strength Sub-Attribute (see *BRCS*) and let them lug the weapon on their own, or fire without a tripod at a +2 dice roll penalty.

#### OTHER TYPES OF AMMUNITION

It is assumed that characters have access to ammunition of whatever type they need for their standard weapons. Standard ammunition for autoloading pistols, revolvers, rifles, and machine guns is a lead bullet; this type of bullet is called "ball" in military parlance. Standard ammunition for shotguns is shot. If characters have more than one type of ammunition, each extra type that is carried counts as a minor item of Personal Gear.



#### ARMOUR PIERCING (AP)

This is a bullet specifically designed to punch through armour, using a steel or tungsten core rather than jacketed lead. Some brands of armour-piercing ammunition are Teflon-coated, but contrary to myth, the coating on AP bullets has nothing to do with the armour-piercing qualities — it simply helps protect the rifling inside the gun from the tougher material from which the bullet is made. Weapons using AP bullets are assigned the Penetrating weapon ability (page 48). AP bullets are somewhat less lethal against flesh, and thus the actual damage is always halved (round up) after the effects of armour are considered. These bullets are available for autoloading pistols, machine guns, shotguns, revolvers, and rifles. AP pistol or revolver ammunition ("cop killer bullets") are usually illegal.

#### **BIRD SHOT**

The statistics given for shotguns assume they are using buckshot, which is the usual combat load. If using birdshot (with a greater number of smaller pellets) damage is reduced by 5 points but the target suffers a + 1 penalty on his or her Defense roll. Bird shot is available for shotguns.

#### BLANKS

A blank is a cartridge without the bullet that also has a reduced powder load. A blank normally does not deliver any damage when fired, but if the gun's muzzle is directly in contact with someone, the hot gasses expelled can still be dangerous or fatal. When a character is using a blank-firing gun in combat, the gun is treated as if it is firing a rubber bullet, but range is limited to Melee Range. Blanks are available for autoloading pistols, machine guns, revolvers, rifles, and shotguns.

#### HOLLOW POINT (HP)

This is a bullet designed to expand after entering a target, doing greater damage as a result. Hollow Point bullets are known by various trade names, and include bullets described as "expanding", "dum-dum", or pre-fragmented rounds such as "safety slugs". HP ammo is standard issue in many police departments, since the rounds are better man-stoppers and are less likely to pierce walls and injure bystanders on the other side. The Hague Convention prohibits HP bullets for military use in international conflicts. Hollow Point bullets have less armour-penetrating power: armour protection is doubled against the bullets (if using Type B), or the armour Health Points are only reduces by one point for every two points of damage inflicted (if using Type A). These disadvantages are cumulative with any Low Penetration modifiers. However, if even one point of damage that a person or animal suffers (the bullets "mushroom" inside living tissue). No extra damage is inflicted on machines or structures by HP bullets. If all damage failed to pentrate the armour, then no extra Health Points are lost. HP bullets are available for autoloading pistols, machine guns, revolvers, and rifles.

#### RUBBER

These are bullets encased in rubber or plastic, which are designed to be "less lethal". A weapon using rubber bullets automatically suffers from the Low Penetration disability (page 48) and delivers 5 fewer points of damage. Thus, a gun that normally delivers 5 damage plus the attacker's Combat Value with regular bullets would inly inflict damage equal to Combat Value alone with rubber bullets. A character struck by a rubber or plastic bullet who would otherwise be killed can be assumed to be only knocked out or injured, unless the attack was fired at very close range (Melee Range), or was the result of a critical hit. Rubber bullets are available for autoloading pistols, machine guns, revolvers and rifles, and for shotguns firing slug ammunition.

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# Chapter 3 BOOM AND VROOM

#### SHOTGUN SLUGS

A shotgun can fire big bullets instead of shot. Police will often use slugs to stop cars or blow open barricades. When using slugs, a shotgun loses both the Spreading Ability and the Low Penetrating Disability. Slugs are available for shotguns only.

#### **INCENDIARY SHELLS**

Special shells are also available for shotguns; these shells contain phosphorous chemicals that convert the shotgun into an improvised flamethrower. Damage is reduced by5 points, but if any damage penetrates armour, the target receives fire damage, and suffers 1/10 (round up) the basic damage per round for the next five rounds. This damage is also very distracting, imposing a +2 penalty on all dice rolls. The ammunition tends to foul the gun after use, however. Any further shots fired before the gun can be carefully cleaned suffer a +1 Attack roll penalty, and the gun will jam on any roll of 11 or 12 (requiring cleaning before the gun can be reused). These shells are available for shotguns only.

**EXAMPLE:** Peneekie has a heavy auto-pistol. She wants to have both normal and rubber bullets available for use, which would count as a minor



item of Personal Gear. Herfriend, Ryu, has a magnum revolver, which he always loads with hollow point ammunition. Since Ryu does not have regular access to normal ammunition, this does not count as a minor item.

#### CUSTOMIZING FIREARMS

These are options that can be added to different types of weapons to enhance performance or otherwise alter them. Each accessory or feature normally counts as a minor item of Personal Gear. Some options are considered "mundane" (their advantages and disadvantages cancel), and thus do not count as a minor item.



Options for weapons are classed as either accessories or features. A feature is a change to the basic weapon template that reflects a particular factory model of weapon, or extensive after-market customization. This requires Mechanics (Gunsmith) Skill to install, and may require several hours or more. An accessory is something that can be easily attached or removed from the weapon within a few seconds to several minutes. Weapon options are assumed to be available for any class of weapon unless otherwise noted.

#### ACCURIZED

#### Modification Type: Feature

The weapon has been specially modified (custom grips, better aligned sights, polygonal rifling, heavier barrel, etc.) to improve its accuracy. This is typical of target pistols and competition or sniper rifles. This modification grants a -1 bonus to any Attack roll when firing single shots, but no bonus if used with Auto-Fire. An accurized weapon must be in excellent condition with its sights precisely aligned, and will lose its bonus if knocked about, dropped, or otherwise mistreated.

#### BAYONET

#### Modification Type: Accessory

The weapon is fitted with a lug to accept a bayonet (included with this option). When attached, the weapon is a bit more awkward, but it can be used in melee combat as a spear. When detached (requires one round), the bayonet is also usable as a knife. A bayonet is available for any rifle, assault rifle, or battle rifle. **BIPOD ATTACHMENT** 

#### Modification type: Accessory

When the bipod is unfolded, the weapon is treated as if it is Accurate (cumulative with any other Accurate bonuses) and Static. The weapon must be fired at rest with the shooter lying prone behind it. Folding or unfolding the bipod requires one round. A bipod is available for any rifle, assault rifle, or battle rifle.

#### BRASS CATCHER

#### Modification Type: Accessory

This attachment collects cartridges as they are fired out of the weapon, and thus either saves them for hand-loading or prevents any incriminating ballistics evidence from being left behind. A weapon cannot be bolstered if it has a brass catcher attached. A brass catcher is available for any rifle, assault rifle, battle rifle, or submachine gun.

#### **BRIEFCASE-FIRING**

#### Modification Type: Accessory

The weapon is designed to be concealed in and fired from a briefcase or attache case without removing it, using a hidden trigger in the case handle. The weapon must be either a autoloading pistol, machine pistol, or a submachine gun. The weapon suffers a +1 penalty to the Attack roll when fired from within a brief case. The gun can usually be undamped from the case and used normally (takes two rounds). GMs may use similar rules for umbrella guns or other disguised weaponry.

#### CARBINE-FORMAT

#### Modification Type: Mundane Feature

The weapon has a shorter barrel and stock. A carbine format subtracts 1 point from damage but allows the weapon to be concealed under a long coat (see Concealable weapon ability, page 47) as if it were a submachine gun. The dice roll bonus for anyone performing a body search is increased from -2 to -3, however. A carbine-format weapon is available for any light, medium, or heavy rifle, or any assault or battle rifle.



#### FLASH SUPPRESSOR

#### Modification Type: Accessory

The hot gasses produced when a bullet is fired are quite visible at night. A flash suppressor is a long device that can be attached to the end of a weapon, masking this signature. A weapon with a flash suppressor attached cannot be concealed. A flash supressor is not available for a grenade launcher, LAW, taser, stunner, minigun, or pepper spray.

#### FLASHLIGHT ATTACHMENT

#### Modification Type: Accessory

This attachment allows any weapon to be used with a flashlight, and permits illumination of targets at short range so that they can be targetted by attackers without any penalties for darkness. Of course, someone using a flashlight at night can also be seen at a greater distance.

#### FOLDING OR TELESCOPING STOCK

#### Modification Type: Feature

When folded, a weapon is handier and more concealable. Unfortunately, a weapon with this feature also suffers from the Inaccurate Defect (+1 dice roll penalty) when firing at targets at over half its effective range. It requires one round (one attack if the character has the Extra Attacks Attribute) to fold or unfold the stock. If the weapon is also carbine-format, sawed-off, or a submachine gun, there is an extra +1 penalty to any roll to spot the weapon while concealed, which is cumulative with other modifiers. This feature can be assigned to any rifle or shotgun, or the assault rifle, battle rifle or submachine gun.

#### LASER SIGHT

#### Modification Type: Accessory

A laser sight projects a small, bright, dot of laser light exactly where the weapon is pointing, which helps the attacker determine whether or not he or she is on target. In game terms, the attacker receives a -1 bonus to their appropriate Gun Combat Attack roll in situations where they can see the laser dot on the target (usually up to Short Range unless combined with a scope). The laser dot is also quite intimidating. Modern laser sights are quite small, and clip onto the front of the barrel. Laser sights with an infrared beam (visible only to people with night vision scopes or goggles) are also available; the shooter looses the intimidation value, but gains stealth. This is available for any gun.

#### NIGHT VISION SCOPE

#### Modification Type: Accessory (counts as 2 minor items)

This scope uses thermal imaging or light intensification technology to "turn night into day". This functions exactly like a regular scope, except that it also eliminates any penalties for darkness.

#### SAWED-OFF BARREL

#### Modification Type: Feature

This modification is for shotguns only. Sawing off the barrel of a shotgun means that it is more easily concealed, but is also shorter ranged. A sawed-off shotgun can be concealed under a long coat (see Concealable weapon ability, page 47) as if it were a submachine gun. At up to Melee Range (5 metres or less) it has a wider spread of pellets (-1 bonus on Attack rolls), but suffers -5 penalty to damage at ranges beyond Melee Range.



#### SNUB-NOSE

#### Modification Type: Mundane Feature

A snub-nose is a shorter-barrel versions of any autoloading pistol, revolver, or machine pistol. The weapon suffers a +1 Attack roll penalty at any range greater than 5 metres and delivers less damage (-1 to damage), but is substantially easier to conceal (+1 penalty on a dice roll to spot the hidden weapon, cumulative with other bonuses or penalties of the weapon).

#### SCOPE

#### Modification Type: Accessory

A telescopic sight mounted atop the weapon gives the shooter an extra -1 bonus to his or her Attack roll when taking an entire turn to aim at a target. This bonus only applies to targets further away than Melee Range (over 5 metres). See Extra Aim (page 73). Scopes are available for all guns.

#### SILENCER

#### Modification Type: Accessory

A silencer, or more technically, a sound-suppressor is a tube that attaches to the weapons barrel and reduces the noise the weapon makes while firing. Silencers are restricted or illegal in most jurisdictions, as their use implies espionage or assassination. A silenced weapon cannot be heard at a range of greater than 5 metres unless a nearby character makes a successful Body Stat check. The GM should modify this roll for conditions such as ambient noise, range, and Heightened Senses. Autoloading pistols, machine pistols, submachine guns, and rifles may be fitted with silencers. A silenced weapon cannot be concealed or holstered until the silencer is removed, which requires one round.

#### SPEED LOADER

#### Modification Type: Accessory

A speed loader is a device that holds a number of revolver cartridges and permits them to be rapidly inserted into a cylinder. If a character has this minor item, he or she can ignore the Limited Shots disability of any revolver.

#### SPEED RIG

#### Modification Type: Accessory

A speed rig is a special holster that allows a character easier access to his or her weapon. In game terms, it provides the character a -1 bonus to any Body Stat check to fast draw a holstered pistol (see Fast Draws, page 73). Speed Rigs can be purchased for autoloading pistols, revolvers, and machine pistols. This accessory can be assigned twice to represent a trick spring-loaded holster worn on the arm that can quickly deposit a small gun (such as a light pistol) or knife into the character's hand (a -4 bonus to fast draw Stat checks.)

#### TRIGGER LOCK

#### Modification Type: Mundane Feature

An integral lock that prevents the gun from being used without the right key or combination. It takes an extra round to unlock the gun before it can be ready to fire. In some areas, trigger locks may be required by law on some or all firearms.



### **VEHICLE TEMPLATES**

Whether it is a souped-up hot rod, a mighty big-rig tractor-trailer, a shiny black limousine, or a sleek racing bike, a vehicle is not just a means of transportation, but a way that the character can express his or her own individuality or demonstrate exactly how cool he or she is.

This section describes the standard vehicles likely to appear in a modern-day action game. Some vehicles are suitable for use as personal vehicles by characters or villains, while a desperate hero or villain may commandeer others (such as a city bus) when no better transportation is available. This section concentrates on general types that are in common use, rather than providing individual statistics for specific models. All costs are approximate values, which can vary greatly.

Each vehicle counts as a major item of Personal Gear, with the exception of the motor scooter and ultra-light (minor items). These basic templates can be modified using the Customizing Vehicles guidelines (pages 59-63). Using the customization options, the vehicle can be further modified to match the character's personal vision (adding options such as supercharged engines or armoured glass windows) with each option normally considered to be as a minor item of Personal Gear.

EXAMPLE: Bill wants his character, Ryu, to have a police car. Bill decides a police cruiser is simply a passenger car with special options. A passenger car counts as a Major Item of Personal Gear.

#### AUTOMOBILE

The basic motor vehicle of the 20th century. Automobiles have four wheels and are normally powered by a gasoline internal combustion engine. Standard features on modern vehicles include headlights, seat belts, air bags, and air conditioning.



#### PASSENGER CAR

An ordinary compact or mid-sized auto. Cars are available in coupe (two doors, often with a hatch back and extra cargo space), sedan (four door) or station wagon (extra room in back, but reduced rear visibility for driver) body styles. Year 2000 cost: \$12,000+US. For an expensive luxury car, add custom options such as Big Engine and Luxury Interior.

#### SUB-COMPACT CAR

A small, somewhat cramped passenger car. It seats four, but with a lot less comfort than a comparable mid-sized vehicle. It is easier to park, but not as robust. Year 2000 cost: \$10,000+US.

#### PICKUP TRUCK OR SPORT/UTILITY VEHICLE

A light truck with cab seating (2-3 people), off-road suspension, and four-wheel drive and either an open cargo bed (pickup truck) or extra passenger capacity (sport/utility vehicle). Year 2000 cost: \$20,000+US.

#### RACE CAR

A dedicated race car (such as a Formula 1 racer or funny car) with a long, aerodynamic body, a single seat and very powerful engine. Such a vehicle is not "street legal". Race cars are "hangar queens" that require periodic maintenance every few hours just to keep their finely-tuned engines and transmissions in working order. Year 2000 cost: \$100,000+US.

#### SPORTS CAR

A car with good aerodynamics, a powerful engine, and superior transmission and suspension. Some sports cars carry two people, while others sacrifice already-meager cargo space to carry an extra person or two in cramped back seats. Year 2000 cost: \$50,000+US.

#### STRETCHED LIMOUSINE

An oversized passenger car. It will usually have a number of posh features, such as a luxury interior. Year 2000 cost: \$50,000+US.

#### VAN

A light panel truck or mini-van, with one or two big rear doors and sliding side doors. Use this template with appropriate customization for ambulances. Year 2000 cost: \$15,000+US.

#### MOTORCYCLE

A two-wheeled bike powered by a gasoline engine. Standard features include headlights.

#### MOTORBIKE

A big bike with a reasonably powerful engine. A second person can usually be carried without much difficulty. Year 2000 cost: \$3,000+US.

#### SCOOTER

A small bike with an anemic engine. Scooters are very common in Japan, where the law requires that a cyclist be able to right his or her own motorized bike if it tips. Scooters are suitable for a single rider only. Year 2000 cost: \$1,000-3,000US.

#### **DIRT BIKE**

A motorbike designed for off-road operations. Dirt bikes include the Off-Road Suspension option (page 61) at no extra cost. Year 2000 cost: \$4,000+US.



## Chapter 3 BOOM AND VROOM

#### OVERSIZED VEHICLE

A big ground vehicle with six or more wheels, usually powered by a diesel engine rather than a gasoline engine (diesel fuel is cheaper, and less flammable). Standard features include headlights, seat belts, airbags, and air conditioning.

#### **BIG RIG**

An 18-wheel tractor-trailer combination, with a powerful tractor cab designed to tow a big trailer. With trailer, a big rig may be 20 metres long. Pick one of these options for the cargo area: flat bed (open cargo), van (enclosed cargo), refrigerated ("reefer"), tanker. If the trailer is unhooked from the "fifth wheel" (this takes at least two rounds outside the vehicle to do this) the rig's speed can increase by 10-20 kph. Year 2000 cost: \$60,000+US.

#### BUS

A city, school, or excursion bus. In action anime, these usually make their appearance when someone hijacks or plants a bomb on them. A typical bus seats 35-45 people (with plenty of standing and cargo room) and is about 10-15 metres long. Year 2000 cost: \$50,000+US.

#### HEAVY TRUCK

A large truck, bigger than an ordinary van. Pick one of these options for the cargo area: flat bed (open cargo), van (enclosed cargo), refrigerated ("reefer"), tanker. A heavy truck may also be a cement mixer, dump truck, street cleaner, fire engine, etc. Year 2000 cost: \$30,000+US.

#### HELICOPTER

A rotary winged vehicle. Modern helicopters are usually powered by a gas turbine engine, and require a pilot's license to operate. They have a horizontal main rotor that provides lift and (by tilting the helicopter) propulsion, and a small vertical tail rotor to act as a stabilizer. A helicopter is capable of executing vertical takeoffs or landings, and hovering. Standard features include landing lights (treat as headlights), seat belts, and often air conditiong.

#### LIGHT HELICOPTER

A small helicopter that can carry a couple of people. This is a typical news or police helicopter. Year 2000 cost: \$100,000+US.

#### UTILITY HELICOPTER

A larger helicopter that is often a civilian version of a military troop-carrying model. These choppers are designed to carry a dozen people or a decent cargo load. Helicopters of this sort are often used as air ambulances. Year 2000 cost: \$1 000 000+US.

#### AIRPLANE

An airplane relies on wings for lift and a propeller or jet engine for propulsion. It requires a smooth, flat runway for takeoffs and landings. While airborne it must maintain a minimum speed (usually about 1/10 its maximum speed) to avoid stalling. A pilot's license is required for anything beyond an ultra-light. Standard features include landing lights (treat as headlights), seatbelts, emergency parachutes, and often air conditioning.

#### LIGHT AIRPLANE

A single-engine propeller-driven passenger airplane, capable of operating out of grass strips or landing on a smooth stretch of highway if necessary. Light aircraft are a favorite of drug runners. Use Piloting (Light Plane) Skill. Year 2000 cost: \$100 000+US.



#### ULTRA-LIGHT

A small one-man powered hang-glider that is used mainly for recreation. Year 2000 cost: \$10 000+US.

#### SPEED BOAT

Boat designs come in a variety of shapes, depending on their desired function. Speed boats have sleek hull designs and powerful engines in order to travel at high speeds. Standard features include a VHF radio (treat as a CB radio), convertable tops, running lights, and lifejackets.

#### RECREATIONAL SPEED BOAT

A medium-sized powerboat, usually with an outboard engine. These boats are often used for waterskiing. Year 2000 cost: \$10 000+US.

#### OFF-SHORE RACER (OR "CIGARETTE BOAT")

These large race boats, usually measuring between 10 and 18 metres in length, are used in offshore racing. Smugglers often utilize these sleek, fast boats to transport illegal goods. Year 2000 cost: \$80 000+US.

TABLE 3-2: VEHICLE TEMPLATES								
VEHICLE	SPEED	мв	SIZE	PEOPLE	Cargo	ARMOUR	HEALTH POINTS	Skill
Big Rig	150	-2	4	2	10 ton	5	80	Driving (big rig)
Bus	120	-2	4	30-50	1 ton	5	80	Driving (big rig)
Compact Car	160	-	2	4	100 kg	5	55	Driving (car)
Dirt Bike	140	+1	1	2		5	50	Driving (motorcycle)
Heavy Truck	150	-1	3	2	5 tons	5	75	Driving (van)
Light Airplane	350	+1	2	4	250 kg	5	60	Piloting (light airplane)
Light Helicopter	200	+1	2	3	250 kg	5	60	Piloting (helicopter)
Motorbike	180	+1	1	2	50 kg	5*	50	Driving (motorcycle)
OffshoreRacer	180	-	3	6	500 kg	5*	75	Boating (small boat)
Passenger Car	160	-	2	5	200 kg	5	60	Driving (car)
Pickup Truck	160	-	2	3	1 ton	5	70	Driving (car)
Race Car	300	+1	1	1	-	5	55	Driving (car)
Recreational Speed Boat	80	+1	2	3-4	100 kg	5*	60	Boating (small boat)
Scooter	120	+1	0	1	25 kg	5	40	Driving (motorcycle)
Sports Car	200	-	2	2	200 kg	5	60	Driving (car)
Sport/Utility	160	-	2	6	200 kg	5	70	Driving (car)
Stretched Limousine	160	-1	2	6	500 kg	5	70	Driving (car)
Ultra-Light	100	+1	1	1	1.	0.	40	Piloting (light airplane)
Utility Helicopter	200	-	3	6-9	1 ton	5	70	Piloting (helicopter)
Van	150	-1	3	6-10	1 ton	5	70	Driving (van)



#### NOTES FOR TABLE 3-2: VEHICLE TEMPLATES

**Speed** is the top speed in kilometres per hour. Pickup trucks, sport/utility vehicles and dirt bikes move at half speed off-road. Other ground vehicles are road-bound and can move a maximum of one-quarter speed off road.

**MB** is the Maneuver Bonus. +1 means a +1 bonus to Initiative dice rolls (only), while a -1 or -2 means that penalty is applied to both Initiative rolls and to Defense Combat Value.

**Size** is the vehicle's mass and volume. "1" means the vehicle is about the size of a motorcycle — you could drive it through a house's door, or stow it in the back of a van (weighs up to 500 kg). "2" means it is about the size of a car or pickup truck, and you can park it in a normal garage (weighs 1-5 tonnes). "3" means it is the size of a large truck (uses multiple parking spaces, often weighs 6-10+ tonnes when loaded). "4" means it is even larger, such as a big tractor-trailer combination that might haul 20+ tonnes.

People is how many people the vehicle is designed to seat, including the driver or pilot.

**Cargo** is how many tonnes (t) or kilograms (kg) of cargo the vehicle can typically carry without suffering movement penalties.

**Armour** is the number of damage points that the armour stops. All vehicle armour is Type B. An \* indicates the armour only protects the vehicle, not the driver or passengers.

No range is listed, since all vehicles except the ultra-light can operate for 3-10 hours before requiring refueling. The ultra-light's endurance is under one hour. Oversized vehicles (trucks, big rigs, busses) usually burn diesel fuel, while most other vehicles use gasoline.

#### CUSTOMIZING VEHICLES

Options can be added to different types of vehicles to enhance performance or give them additional capabilities. Unless otherwise noted, each accessory count as one minor item of Personal Gear and can only be taken once.

Note that Engine Rebuild, Turbocharger, and Big Engine have approximately the same effect in game terms. However, a super-fast vehicle may have all three options assigned.

#### AIRFOILS

An aerodynamic feature (airdams, spoilers, etc.) that improves traction by increasing the downward force on a car. Gives a -1 dice roll bonus to any Driving (car) Skill Roll at speeds over 100 kph. Airfoils available for any automobile.

#### ARMOUR

The vehicle is retro-fitted with armoured panels, Kevlar inserts, and bullet proof glass on the windows. The extra weight reduces top speed by 20 kph but increases the vehicle's Armour rating from the usual -5 to a full -10. Armour is available for any vehicle except an ultra-light aircraft, and counts as a major item of Personal Gear.

#### **BIG ENGINE**

An uprated engine, such as a big V8 in a passenger car, or a V12 in a sports car. The engine can differentiate an ordinary passenger car from a luxury model, or a basic sports car from a racer. A big engine adds 20 kph to top speed of any vehicle.



#### BURGLAR ALARM

If a door, trunk, or window is opened without the proper key, an alarm will sound to alert (and annoy) everyone in the vicinity. Defeating the alarm requires a Mind/Electronics (security) Skill check. Marginal failure means the thief realizes he or she cannot disarm it while a worse failure means will trigger the alarm. Alarms are available for autos, light airplanes, helicopters or oversized ground vehicles.

#### CITIZEN'S BAND (CB) RADIO

With a range of a few kilometres, truckers favour CBs for exchanging information on road conditions, speed traps, and general gossip. Unlike a personal cell phone, a CB broadcasts to everyone in the area — it is not useful for private communication, but is great for distress calls. A similar option can be taken for taxi dispatcher radios. A CB radio can be installed in any vehicle..

#### CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

These electronic gadgets include small TV sets, a vehicular computer, fax machines, etc. A cassette or CD player in a car can be considered a fairly mundane item. Electronics can be added to any vehicle, provided the size seems reasonable.

#### CONVERTIBLE TOP

The vehicle with this option has a removable or retractable plastic, fibreglass, or fabric top. Removing the top gives a better view and nice breeze, but also means that the driver and passengers are now "partially exposed", and are at the mercy of the weather. Exposed occupants are also completely unprotected from overhead attacks and can be attacked (bypassing vehicle armour/health points) more easily from front, side or rear (+2 Attack roll penalty). On the plus side, those occupants can also fire out of the vehicle without any difficulty, and jump in or out more easily. This feature is available for autos; recreational speed boats and most offshore racers automatically possess this option.

#### DOOR MOUNT

This option is a post and bracket for mounting a light or heavy machine gun out a helicopter's or van's open side door.

#### ENGINE REBUILD

A rebuild is major custom upgrade to the engine, rather than just simply increasing its size. In a car, this may involve removing and completely cleaning the existing system (including "hot tanking" the engine block in a chemical bath to remove grime), then adding various modifications (known as "blueprinting"). Other engine "buzz-words" include forged dome pistons, tunable fuel injection, strengthened rods and bearings, adjustable or hot cam socket, tubular headers, custom intake manifolds, big valves, and a bored out throttle body. This option adds 20 kph to the top speed of any vehicle.

#### FURNISHINGS

Furnishings include a mini-bar, mini-fridge, kitchenette, chemical toilet, bunk bed, etc. For larger furnishings (kitchenette, bunks, etc.) each one added also requires replacing one or two seats, depending on the size. Furnishings can be added to any vehicle with Size 2 or more.

#### GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS)

This option uses satellite systems to provide precise navigational coordinators, which prevents the vehicle from becoming lost. Naturally, it is still possible to miss a turn through human error. A GPS can be added to any vehicle.



#### HIDDEN CARGO SPACE

This space is used in vehicles that are designed to smuggle goods across borders or past highway patrols. Up to 10% of the vehicle's cargo capacity can be considered "hidden" under fake panels and bogus fixtures. Hidden space can be added to any vehicle with cargo capacity.

#### **IMPROVED BRAKES**

This option includes are high quality brakes, drag chutes or spiked tires that allow the vehicle to stop faster than normal. Those breaks provide a -2 dice roll bonus to Driving Skill checks on any manoeuvre where sudden, sharp deceleration is important. Improved breaks can be added to any ground-based vehicle.

#### IMPROVED SHOCKS

Some vehicles have high quality or adjustable shock absorbers or springs, which provides an extra -1 dice roll bonus to Driving Skill checks in any circumstance where the suspension would be important (such as crossing over obstacles).

#### LIGHTS AND SIREN

Any vehicle can be fitted with a noisy siren and flashing lights. This option can also provide a powerful spot search light.

#### LUXURY INTERIOR

Leather upholstery, lots of chrome, extra head room, or other items on a vehicle is a sure way to impress someone special. A plethora of luxury options are available for most vehicles.

#### MANUAL TRANSMISSION

There are two types of transmissions: manual and automatic. An automatic transmission is assumed to be standard issue for automobiles (but not other vehicles), and means that the gear mechanism changes by itself. In a manual transmission, the driver must shift the gears on his or her own, usually with a stick and the clutch pedal. In the case of automobiles, a manual transmission gives an additional +1 dice roll penalty to characters who are trying to do something else while they drive, such as shoot a gun. If, however, a vehicle with an automatic transmission and one with a manual transmission are competing in a race, the GM should give any driver who has both the Driving Skill and a manual transmission an extra -1 dice roll bonus to reflect the greater speed control the manual transmission provides. This is a mundane option for autos.

#### NITROUS OXIDE TANK

This option adds a nitrous oxide tank and push-button injection system. Nitrous oxide (laughing gas) can be injected into the engine, which releases more free oxygen and improves cylinder pressures and engine temperature. This action allows extra fuel to be burned in a more controlled fashion, resulting in a quick power boost for a short sprint. A single injection adds 30 kph to speed and +1 to Initiative on any round it is used. A tank can be used for up to five rounds before depleting the nitrous oxide bottle. This performance enhancer is available for any vehicle except helicopters.

#### **OFF-ROAD SUSPENSION**

A raised suspension and special tires allow the vehicle to drive cross-country at two-thirds of the onroad top speed. However, the extra suspension weight also means -5 kph to road speed. For airplanes, this option corresponds to Rough-Field Landing Gear that lets the aircraft land without a proper runway. Offroad suspension is available for any ground vehicle or light aircraft.



#### PINTLE MOUNT

A pintle mount is a bracket for mounting a light or heavy machine gun on the vehicle's roof or deck. The gunner must be exposed to fire the weapon. This mount is available for any ground vehicle with a convertible top or sun roof, any pickup truck or heavy truck with a flatbed cargo area, or any speed boat.

#### POLICE-BAND RADIO

This radio allows the driver to communicate on police and emergency frequencies. If the cops find one of these in a vehicle, they may be a little suspicious, however. This radio is available for any vehicle.

#### PONTOONS

Pontoons allow an aircraft to land in, or take off from, water. The extra air drag reduces the aircraft's top speed by 5 kph. Pontoons are available for any helicopter or light airplane.

#### RADAR DETECTOR

A detector can warn the driver if

a police radar trap is within a few kilometres. Recent models also detect police laser scanners. Although radar detectors are illegal in many jurisdictions, the are available for any vehicle.

#### ROTATING LICENSE PLATE

With a flick of a switch, the license plate can flip to reveal an alternative identity for a vehicle. This is an illegal modification that is available for any auto or oversized ground vehicle.

#### SIDECAR

Sidecars are attached to motorcycles, which allows an extra person to ride. This option reduces the top speed by 10 kph and gives a -1 Initiative penalty (canceling the bonus a cycle normally receives). A motorbike sidecar requires three rounds to attach or detach.

#### SLICK TIRES

A vehicle may be outfitted with flat racing tires (no grooves) for better traction. Slicks give a -1 dice roll bonus to any Driving rolls on smooth, dry tracks, but unfortunately have a poor grip on wet roads: an additional +2 dice roll penalty is assigned to any penalties suffered by a vehicle for the weather conditions. Slicks are available for any ground vehicle.

#### SMOKE SCREEN

This option releases smoke behind the vehicle, obscuring view in a cloud about 10 meters in diametre. The screen will last for 1-6 rounds depending on the wind. At GM's option, a character caught in a smoke screen might be required to make a successful Driving Skill check to avoid an accident if the smoke

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obscured oncoming traffic, obstacles, or a bend in the road. A fully charged smoke screen is good for three rounds of use, and is available for any auto or oversized ground vehicle.

#### SPECIAL TIRES OR PUNCTURE-RESISTANT

Tires may be designed with various special abilities. These include solid puncture-resistant tires that run while flat (halve dice roll penalties for losing a tire) or special snow tires (reduce or negate any penalties that the GM may assign for manoeuvring on snow or ice). Any ground based vehicle can be equiped with special tires.

#### STRETCHERS AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

This option differentiates ambulanes from regular vehicles. Each stretcher replaces two seats for passenger capacity purposes. Medical equipment can be added to any van or utility helicopter.

#### STRIPPED

These vehicles are carefully stripped down to improve their power to weight ratio. In a car, this might mean removing glass from side windows (replacing them with nets), taking out the headlights, stripping out the doors (the driver will now climb through the window), modifying the seats, and otherwise removing items that are required for regular driving but unnecessary or unsafe for a high-speed race. Stripping a vehicle will add 20 kph to top speed if the vehicle is still "street legal" or 30 kph if enough stuff is removed so that the vehicle cannot meet minimum safety standards. All vehicles, except an ultra-light, can be stripped.

#### SUN ROOF

A sun roof is an open hatch in the top of the vehicle, which can be added to any car or van. Characters who lean out the opening can be attacked, but receives a benefit for partial cover (+2 modifier to the attacker's dice roll). A sun roof is available for any auto or oversized ground vehicle.

#### SUPERCHARGER

A supercharger is designed to increase an engine's power. The supercharger uses a belt-and-pulley mechanism linked to an engine's crankshaft. It functions by forcing extra air and fuel into the engine's combustion chambers. A supercharger adds 20 kph to top speed and the extra acceleration gives a +1 Initiative bonus. Superchargers count as two minor items, and are available for any vehicle except a helicopter or ultra-light.

#### TOW WINCH

A winch allows the vehicle to tow other vehicles of equal or smaller size (similar to pulling a trailer — see Trailer below). A winch is available for any pickup truck or oversized ground vehicle.

#### TRAILER

A trailer lets the vehicle tow extra cargo. A typical trailer is designed for a car or van and can hold a half-tonne (for a car-sized trailer) or 1-2 tonnes (for a larger trailer). The vehicle's top speed will be reduced by 25 kph and it will have a -1 Initiative penalty while towing the trailer. Trailers can be added to any auto or oversized vehicle.

#### TURBOCHARGER

This device uses the engine's exhaust stream to drive an air compressor ("fan"), which increases the engine's power output. This extra power adds 20 kph to top speed, but there is no extra Initiative bonus, due to "turbo lag" — the delay it takes for the turbocharger to respond. Tuberchargers are available for any vehicle except a helicopter or ultra-light.



# OTHER ITEMS

This section describes some other items of Personal Gear that characters may wish to acquire.

#### **GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES**

These are hand-held explosive weapons that are thrown at a target by the user. Their use requires the Thrown Weapons (grenade) Skill. All of these explosives count as minor items except a satchel charge, which is treated as a major item. Smoke grenades are legal, and dynamite sticks can be legal for people in the construction industry. All other explosives are usually illegal.

#### CONCUSSION GRENADE

This grenade is filled with high explosives. 15 points of damage is delivered to everyone in a 5-metre radius who fails a defense roll. Even if the defense roll is made, some blast damage will still be suffered (7 points) unless there is sufficient cover (GM's option). If cover is available, a successful defense roll might indicate that the character reached safety and avoided injury.

#### TEAR GAS GRENADE

This grenade bursts to fill a room-sized area (5 metre radius) with non-lethal (usually) irritant gas. Damage is the same as concussion grenade, but is "stun only" — it wears off after a few minutes, and it does not affect non-living things or anyone wearing a gas mask. Anyone exposed to the gas also suffers a +2 penalty on all dice rolls due to irritation if they fail a Body Stat check. This penalty lasts for a number of rounds equal to the amount by which the roll was failed. Tear gas grenades also release a lot of smoke and may occasionally (GM's option) start fires if they explode next to paper or other flammable substances.

#### FLASH-BANG GRENADE

These special grenades produce a super-firecracker effect, stunning people with sound and light. This weapon is a favourite of hostage-rescue teams. No physical damage will be suffered, but the victims must make a Body Stat check or be blinded and deafened for a number of combat rounds equal to the difference between the roll and their Body Stat. The character suffers a +1 Body Stat dice roll penalty if he or she is right next to the grenade when it explodes. Characters wearing anti-flare goggles (such as a welding mask) and ear protectors will receive a -4 bonus to their Body Stat check to avoid the grenade's effects.

#### SMOKE GRENADE

This grenade fills a room-sized area (5 metre radius) with non-toxic chemical smoke for 3 to 8 rounds (depending on wind). Anyone without night vision goggles or a night vision scope will suffer a +2 dice roll penalty when attacking a target obscured by smoke.

#### DYNAMITE STICK

This explosive functions like a concussion grenade, except the blast covers only a 3 metre radius, and the damage is 10 points (5 points if a Defense roll is made).

#### SATCHEL CHARGE

This is a knapsack full of plastic explosive or multiple dynamite sticks. The explosion is treated as a concussion grenade, but the blast covers 8 metres and the damage is 25 points (12 points if a Defense roll is made). Unlike a grenade, a satchel charge is too heavy to throw far, so its range is limited to melee range — the attacker will be caught in the charge's own blast unless it has a timer. Use Melee Attack (improvised) Skill to sling a satchel charge onto a moving vehicle.



#### TIMED OR REMOTE DETONATOR

This device is used to explode a satchel charge (or other bomb) from a distance, either at a specific time or in response to an electrical or radio signal. Attaching the detonator to the explosive and properly setting it requires a Mind-based Demolitions Skill check, with failure indicating a late or premature blast.

#### BODY ARMOUR AND PROTECTIVE DEVICES

There are two main kinds of body armour used on the mean streets: soft body armour and tactical armour. Either type of armour only covers some of the body, leaving the face and often other extremities unprotected. An attacker can aim for an unprotected spot in exchange for suffering a penalty on his or her Attack roll (see Targeting an Unarmoured Point, page 71).

Light-weight body armour has been available since about 1973, when Kevlar vests were first introduced. Body armour is not illegal, but police will certainly stop and question anyone they notice wearing tactical armour (or soft body armour as outerwear) on the street.

#### SOFT BODY ARMOUR

This armour is a light-weight ballistic-fibre "flak jacket" or "bullet proof vest". The armour works by catching the bullet in fibres and rapidly distributing the impact energy, turning a potentially lethal penetration into a (sometimes) bruising blow. Armour is usually made of poly-aramid plastic fibres (Kevlar or Twaron) or extended-chain polyethylene (Spectra). A typical vest subtracts 4 points from the damage inflicted on the character, but can be worn concealed under a jacket or coat. Spotting the armour requires a Body Stat check; it will be obvious if anyone does a pat-down search. A minor item.

#### TACTICAL ARMOUR

This armour is a heavy armoured outfit (with a hekmet) of the sort worn by SWAT teams and soldiers. It consists of a rigid ballistic jacket, usually made of composite material such as Spectra Shield (Spectra fibres held in a special Kraton resin), sometimes with ceramic or metal plate inserts. The armour is resistant to nearly all pistol and some less powerful rifle rounds. Tactical armour cannot be concealed — everyone seeing the character will know he or she is wearing body armour. Tactical armour is uncomfortable to wear all the time, and characters will not be able to rest and relax while wearing it. Someone who wears the armour for several hours on a hot day may have to make Body Stat checks to avoid passing out from heat stroke. Tactical armour subtracts 10 points from damage inflicted on the wearer. The armour requires at least three rounds to strap on or take off, and is sufficiently heavy that a character suffers a +2 dice roll penalty on any Swimming Skill checks and +1 Penalty on the Acrobatics and Dancing Skills while wearing it. A major item.

#### LEATHER JACKET OR RIDING SUIT

This mundane item stops 1 point of damage from melee attacks or whiplash/concussion damage (page 69).

#### GOGGLES AND EAR PROTECTORS

This gear provides a -4 dice roll bonus to resist the stunning effects of flash-bang grenades, but prevents the character from hearing any normal conversations. They require one round to put on or remove. A minor item.

#### GAS MASK

A gas mask protects against tear gas and similar attacks, but imposes a + 2 penalty on all dice rolls for actions requiring perpipheral vision. It requires one round to put on or remove. A minor item.



#### **RIOT SHIELD**

Plastic shields are used by police on riot-control duty. These shields provide a -1 bonus to Defense rolls against melee or thrown attacks, but prevents use of any two-handed weapon. A minor item.

#### CRASH HELMET

A helmet reduces whiplash/concussion damage (page 69) by 2 points. A mundane item.

#### ANTI-VEHICLE BARRIERS

Police cars may carry special devices that can be set up to stop vehicles, such as erectable spiked barricades. These devices count as minor items, and usually require two rounds to set up. Any ground vehicle driving over a spiked barricade will get at least one flat tire (see Shooting Tires, page x72) unless it has puncture-resistant tires. GMs may allow Body Stat checks to spot the barricade in time, and allow Driving Skill checks to manoeuvre around them.

# VEHICLE AND CHARACTER MOVEMENT

It is up to the GM to decide whether he or she wishes to keep a detailed track of movement, ranges and distances. In most close-in combat situations, exact calculations of speed and distance are unnecessary. When it is important, assume an average human adult can run about 5 metres per round times his or her Body Stat, modified by his or her Speed Attribute. A vehicle can move, in metres, its current speed in kilometres per hour (kph) each combat round. For example, an ordinary car that is travelling at 100 kph moves approximately 100 metres in one round. In that same amount of time, an average human adult with a Body Stat of 4 can run about 20 metres. This guideline assumes about 3-5 seconds per round, but the GM should feel free to modify any exact speeds when dramatically appropriate.

As a general rule, Skill or Stat checks should never be required for routine vehicle operations, (unless the character is completely unfamiliar with the vehicle, such as a character without Piloting Skill attempting to land an aircraft).

#### VEHICLE ACTION AND DRAMATIC MANEUVERS

If a vehicle is being pursued, a classic tactic is to execute a dangerous manoeuvre, such as flying through a subway tunnel in a helicopter, or weaving through a crowded street on a motorcycle. In game terms, the player describes the manoeuvre his or her character attempts, and makes an appropriate Stat (with any Driving Skill modifiers) roll with a penalty to reflect the move's outrageousness (see *BESM*, page 64). Failure usually results in a crash or accident with damage delivered to the vehicle and perhaps the driver (see Crashing and Falling, page 67). If the character succeeds, the pursuing vehicle may also attempt the manoeuvre, or may break off the chase.

GMs can use the same technique to help slower vehicles catch faster ones during chases — if the pursuing character zips through a dangerous short cut, leaps from building to building, or otherwise attempts something clever, he or she can gain a considerable advantage with a successful Skill roll. If a player fails the roll, the GM should describe some sort of hazard and allow him or her to make a second Stat or Skill roll to avoid a complete disaster. For example, if a pedestrian steps into the street in front of the character's car, a successful roll means that the driver swerves in time and crashes into a nearby fruit stand; failing can result in a dead pedestrian.



On a lengthier chase, a successful Mind-based Navigation Skill check could allow the character to think of a clever short cut, while a failure could trap the character in a traffic jam or similar delay. The GM can modify this based on how well the character knows the area and how detailed the player describes the tactics his or her character is using.

One useful technique involves the GM keeping a general mental note of relative distances (in metres) between combatants or important objectives. For example, if the encounter begins with a couple of SWAT vans 300 metres away from a criminal's getaway car, and in the first combat round the vans race forward 100 metres, then the opponents are now 200 metres from each other. If one vehicle is chasing another, and is 10 kph faster, it will close the distance by roughly 10 metres every round. GMs should not worry about exact speeds and distances — a general idea of the overall distances should be sufficient. Alternatively, GMs can measure ranges in a more abstract fashion: "you can reach him in three rounds, if you hurry" or "you can hit the getaway car with any medium or long range weapon."

The GM can judge how quickly range can be changed based on relative speeds and dramatic necessity. For example, in a chase between two opponents with equal speeds, the GM can let someone who keeps winning initiative gradually gain on his or her opponent. A good way to resolve long distance vehicle chases is for the GM to establish a certain number of combat rounds to arrive at a destination, or, if one vehicle is faster, to escape out of range. Then it becomes a simple matter of staying alive for that long...

#### WILD STUNTS

The GM should permit characters to attempt all manner of crazy stunts with vehicles, with at least some chance of success. Examples can include tilting a car sideways to drive on two wheels in order to get through a narrow opening, crashing through an anti-vehicle barricade, jumping across a gap, performing handstands on a morotbike, driving a car or cycle up a ramp and into the trailer of a moving rig, flying a plane through a tunnel, etc.

In general, the best way to handle these stunts is for the GM to indicate the dice roll difficulty modifier (usually +4 or more) and decide in advance what will happen if the character completely fails (usually receiving damage, spinning off the road, or a risk of hitting another vehicle, building or pedestrian), and then leave it up to the player whether or not to risk the attempt. The penalty for failure will usually be a crash of some sort.

#### **CRASHING AND FALLING**

A vehicle that was racing along the ground when it was crippled or destroyed will swerve out of control and crash. During the course of an adventure, a vehicle may also accidentally (or deliberately) crash into objects along the road, in the sky, or on/in the water.

GMs are free to assess whatever damage they deem appropriate from a crashing vehicle, but most Armour protects against this damage. Similar damage can be applied to a character who jumps or is

TABLE 3-4:	CRASH DAMAGE
Speed	Damage
20 kph	20
30 kph	30
50 kph	40
75 kph	50
100 kph	60
150 kph	70
200 kph	80
300 kph	90
500 kph	100



pushed from a speeding vehicle, or who is struck by one. Unprotected characters involved in crashes exceeding 100 kph will rarely survive.

**Table 3-4: Crash Damage** can assist the GM in determining the damage for hitting the ground, water, a building, or some other immovable object, based on how fast the vehicle was moving during that round. If a speed falls between two damage values, use the greater of the two.

#### SOFT SURFACES

Crashing into a shock-absorbing surface, such as a foam mattress, a net, or a specialized "crash gel" can reduce damage by 20-50 points.

#### CONTROLLED CRASHES

If a vehicle is about to crash, the driver or pilot can make a Driving or Piloting Skill check in an attempt to halve the damage. A +3 dice roll modifier is applied if the vehicle has been crippled, but an attempt to

control a crash is an automatic failure if the vehicle has been destroyed.

#### TABLE 3-5: FALLING DAMAGE

Falling Distance	Does Same Damage As
5 metres to 10 metres	30 kph crash
10 metres to 30 metres	50 kph crash
30 metres to 60 metres	100 kph crash
60 metres to 150 metres	150 kph crash
150 metres to 500 metre	
500 metres (or greater)	300 kph crash

#### FALLING

A vehicle that falls into a solid surface (such as the ground) will also suffer damage. If a flying vehicle is crippled, the pilot must make a Piloting Skill check to regain some control. Success allows the pilot to bring the vehicle down for a crash landing (see **Table 3-4**:

Crash Damage), but failure results in both a fall and a crash.Fall damage is treated as crash damage at a speed that corresponds to the distance that the vehicle fell (see Table 3-5:Falling Damage). Add 5 points of damage per point of Size a falling vehicle possesses.

If the vehicle both falls and crashes, add the derived "falling speed" to the crash speed. If speeds fall between two damage values, use the greater of the two. GMs can also use this chart when characters fall from great heights, although the character should be allowed to make an Acrobatics Skill check at a significant penalty (+2 to +5) in an attempt to halve the damage.



#### RAMMING

Deliberately ramming a person or object that is capable of moving out of the way (such as a human or another vehicle) is resolved as an attack. A ram attempt requires a successful Attack roll by the vehicle driver or pilot to hit the target; likewise, the target can attempt a Defense roll or deliberately accept the collision. If the target succeeds with its Defense roll he or she avoids the attack.

A ram delivers damage to everyone involved, and is based on their relative crash speeds. If the collision was "head on", the speeds of those involved add together. If one vehicle rammed the other from the side, the ramming vehicle's speed would be used. If the ramming vehicle came up behind the other, or side-swiped it, the differences in their speeds would be used. If one vehicle participant is substantially bigger (higher Size) it will inflict double the normal damage and suffer only half damage.

If a human or vehicle suffers at least 50% of its starting Health Point total (before subtracting Armour benefits), the character or driver/pilot must make a successful Body Stat roll (for individuals on foot), or a Driving or Piloting Skill check (for individuals in vehicles) to avoid being knocked aside. If the vehicle deliberately initiated or accepted the collision and is braced for impact, the roll is modified by a -2 bonus.

If a vehicle or character is knocked aside, they spend the next round tumbling, spinning, or swerving wildly off course. A motorcycle will normally be knocked over, sending its rider flying. A person on foot, or a flying vehicle will simply lose their next action (if it survives). However, a vehicle that was moving quickly on the ground may be knocked off the road and crash, which can inflict additional damage (see Crashing and Falling, page 67).

#### WHIPLASH/CONCUSSION DAMAGE

A high speed collision, crash or fall may also damage characters who are riding in or on a vehicle, as they suffer whiplash or impact damage.

A character who is unrestrained (or riding a motorcycle) suffers 5 fewer points of damage than that which was delivered to the vehicle (before armour). If restrained or wearing a seat belt, the character suffers 10 fewer points of damage. A character protected by an inflating airbag suffers 15 fewer points of damage, but will be unable to act on the next round. GMs can assume modern autos have driver and front-seat passenger airbags, depending on the time and place in which the game is set. A vehicle that is knocked off the road may suffer both ram and crash damage. If the vehicle is crippled or destroyed, the characters aboard will suffer additional damage as the vehicle burns or collapses around them (see Occupant Injuries, page 70.).

#### DAMAGE TO VEHICLES

If a vehicle is hit, it takes damage the same way a character does. Most vehicles will have innate armour. Vehicle armour is considered to be Type B armour (see *BESM*, page 58). A vehicle's Armour can stop damage from an opponent's successful attack. The penetrating damage is then subtracted from the vehicle's remaining Health Points, just as if the vehicle were a character.

#### **CRIPPLED VEHICLE**

If a vehicle is reduced to zero or fewer Health Points, it is crippled. A crippled vehicle is out of action, but can eventually be repaired. Until then, none of its equipment works (except emergency equipment, such as ejection seats, and anything out the GM things is dramatically appropriate) including weapons, although its Armour still offers some protection. The vehicle is incapable of sustained powered movement or flight. Consequently, it will crash if it was moving along the ground, it will begin to fall out of the sky if it was flying, or it will start to sink beneath the surface of the water if it was floating.



#### DESTROYED VEHICLE

A vehicle is completely destroyed when reduced as far below 0 Health Points as its starting Health Points total. For example, a vehicle with 20 Health Points would be completely destroyed at -20 Health Points. The movement effects are the same as if it were crippled, except it cannot be repaired and may break up, catch fire, explode or fall apart at the GM's discretion.

#### OCCUPANT INJURIES

If a vehicle suffers damage past the crippling point, it is sufficiently impaired that passengers may take ancillary damage as the vehicle crumples up, burns or explodes. For every two points of damage the vehicle suffers, the occupants take one point of damage. This damage is in addition to whiplash/concussion damage.

#### AIR BAGS

Air bags are are designed to rapidly inflate to reduce front-seat occupant injuries from a crash or collision. When air bags inflate, they offer the protected passenger 15 points of armour against any damage caused by the crash. A "stripped" vehicle will not have air bags.

#### GAS TANK EXPLOSIONS

All vehicles described in *HRGB* use volatile diesel or gasoline fuel tanks, which can catch fire or possibly explode; this tends to happen a bit more in anime than in real life. If a vehicle is crippled or destroyed by an attack, the GM should roll one die: on a 1 or 2 the fuel in the gas tank will ignite violently. A gas tank explosion delivers 60 points of damage to anyone inside the vehicle, plus 15 points per Level of the vehicle's Size. Anyone nearby takes damage as if the explosion was an Area effect attack (see page 47). If the tank fails to explode immediately, it may still erupt later (GM's discretion).

### **GENRE COMBAT**

Combat is an important part of modern action anime. Many of the characters are defined by their ability to handle a gun or win a brawl. This section adds additional considerations to the basic *Big Eyes, Small Mouth* combat system; GMs should feel free to use whichever rules they feel comfortable with and discard the rest.

#### COMBAT RANGES

Characters may be armed with a variety of ranged weapons, and thus GMs will need to know roughly how far they can shoot. For simplicity, weapon ranges are grouped into the four broad categories listed below. It is up to the GM to decide whether he or she wishes to keep a detailed track of ranges and distances.

#### MELEE

The weapon is only usable against adjacent opponents within touching distance (usually 1-5 metres for humans). This is the range for swords, clubs, unarmed combat, etc. A snub-nosed pistol or sawed-off shotgun is most effective at melee range.

#### SHORT

The weapon has an effective range out to about 50 metres. Most unmodified pistols, shotguns, grenades, submachine guns, and all non-gunpowder ranged weapons such as thrown rocks and knives are short-ranged.

#### MEDIUM

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The weapon has an effective range out to about 500 metres. Most rifles, machine guns, and portable rocket launchers are medium-ranged.

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#### LONG

The weapon is effective out to considerable ranges, even beyond the visible horizon. A tank's main gun, long-range missiles and artillery are considered long-range weapons.

#### RANGE MODIFIERS (OPTIONAL)

The distances given for weapon ranges are the effective ranges the weapon can shoot. Many weapons may be fired out to twice that range at a minimum +2 dice roll penalty, or five times the range at a minimum +4 penalty, although the GM may decide that ranges given for some weapons simply cannot be exceeded. These penalties are halved if a character has the Gun Bunny ability Dead Eye (page 14).

#### CALLED SHOTS

Characters using guns (or other weapons) may opt to suffer a penalty to hit in exchange for the chance of ignoring armour or inflicting greater-than-normal damage results. Any called shot must be specified before the actual die roll is made. All penalties for called shots are halved if the character possesses the Gun Bunny ability Dead Eye (see page 14). Several types of called shots are listed below.

Where appropriate, it is possible to combine different called shots. For example, a character can target a vital spot (+4) while firing at an exposed occupant through a vehicle windshield (+2) and aiming for the weak point in his body armour (+2) for a total dice roll penalty of +8.

#### TARGETING A VITAL SPOT

A character can specify that he or she is aiming for a vital spot (heart, brain, spine) of a living opponent, rather than simply shooting at the centre of mass as is usual. He or she suffers a +4 Attack roll penalty, but if successful, the attack scores an automatic critical hit (for damage purposes only: the target may still get a Defense Roll). If the attacker rolls a natural critical hit anyway (a "2"), it is still treated as a normal Critical Hit.

#### TARGETING A WEAK POINT

The same procedure as targeting a vital spot may be used when shooting at most vehicles, aiming for a point such as the engine or fuel tank. A +4 penalty applies, and if successful, the attack is an automatic Critical Hit (for damage purposes only). If a natural critical hit is scored, the result is total destruction of the vehicle.

#### TARGETING AN UNARMOURED POINT

Characters wearing body armour, along with many civilian vehicle templates (except motorcycles, boats, and ultra-light aircraft), have partial armour. An attack can be fired at an unarmored point (such as through a vehicle's window or at a person's unarmored face), but the attacker will suffer a +2 Attack roll penalty. This pinpoint attack must be specified before the dice are rolled, and can be combined with an attack on a vital spot or weak point.

#### TARGETING EXPOSED OCCUPANTS

The driver or pilot on a motorcycle or ultra-light airplane is completely exposed, and thus it is possible to shoot at him or her rather than the vehicle without penalty. This rule also applies to any aerial attack against a speed boat or other open-topped vehicle. For other vehicles, occupants that are visible through windows or the cockpit canopy may be targetted with a +2 Attack roll penalty, just as if they were behind cover. A successful hit means that damage is applied to the occupants rather than the vehicle, and consequently the vehicle's armour does not apply unless the vehicle has the Armour accessory option (page 59).


### CHAPTER 3 BOOM AND VROOM

#### TARGETING TIRES

When firing at a wheeled vehicle, shots can also be aimed at a tire. An attack on a tire is made at a +4 dice roll penalty (or +2 if the attacker has the Dead Eye ability). Armour does not protect tires. If a hit delivers 5 or more points of damage, the tire is blown, but any excess damage is ignored. If a vehicle is in motion when it loses a tire, the driver must make a Body-based Driving Skill roll to retain control of the vehicle, at a +1 dice roll penalty for every 20 kph of speed at which the vehicle was travelling, and a bonus of -1 times the vehicle's Size rating. Failure results in a crash. Each tire that is blown will also reduce a vehicle's top speed by 50% if a motorcycle, 20% if an auto, or 10% if a large, multi-wheeled oversized vehicle such as a heavy truck, bus, or big rig.

#### TARGETING A WEAPON (DISARMING)

A character may attempt to shoot or knock a weapon out of another person's hand. If using a firearm, this requires an attack at a +4 dice roll penalty (+2 if the shooter has the Dead Eye ability). If the attack hits and the opponent fails his Defense roll, the weapon is knocked away (and probably damaged). If using a melee weapon or unarmed attack to knock away the weapon, the penalty is only +2, but the target should

TABLE 3-3: ATTACK ROLL	Modifiers
Attack Situation	Modifier
Character is taking extra aim	-1 (-2 if using scope or night scope)
Character fast-drew the weapon	+3 (0 if Lightning Draw)
Character is firing two one-handed weapons at once:	
• at the same target	+4 (+2 if Two Gun ability)
• at different targets	+6 (+3 if Two Gun ability)
Character is shooting a hand-held ranged weapon while:	
• operating a vehicle	+4 (+2 if Steady Hand)
• a passenger in a moving vehicle	+2 (+1 if Steady Hand)
<ul> <li>performing acrobatics</li> </ul>	+4 (+2 if Steady Hand)
Character is targeting:	
• a vital spot, weak point, tires or hand-held weapon	+4 (+2 if Dead Eye)
• an unarmoured point or exposed character	+2 (+1 if Dead Eye)
Range to target is:	
• up to twice normal	+2 (+1 if Dead Eye)
• up to five times normal	+4 (+2 if Dead Eye)
Target of a ranged attack:	
<ul> <li>concealed by trees or brush</li> </ul>	+1:
<ul> <li>concealed by darkness, a snowstorm, smoke or fog</li> </ul>	+2
taking cover	+1 to +3 (halved if Dead Eye)
Weapon being used has:	
• an activated laser sight	-1
<ul> <li>the Accuracy ability or is accurized</li> </ul>	-1
• the Inaccurate disability	+1
• the snub-nose option (except at Melee range)	+1



be allowed a Body Stat check to retain control of the weapon. If the Body Stat check succeeds, the user will suffer a +2 dice roll penalty on his or her next round to use that weapon (since it is off balance), but will still retain control of it.

Other trick shots should be allowed using similar guidelines. For example, a carefully fired shot intended to disarm a bomb might warrant a + 8 penalty.

#### OTHER COMBAT OPTIONS

This section describes some other actions that characters may take while attacking.

#### EXTRA AIM

A character may deliberately take extra time to aim an attack. If a character aims a ranged weapon for an entire round and does not move or Defend during that period, he or she receives a -1 Attack roll bonus, or -2 if he or she is using a scope (page 54). This aiming time is in addition to the time required for any weapon that is Slow. If an aiming character chooses to make a Defense roll before he or she has had a chance to fire, the character loses the benefit of the extra aim. A character with the Gun Bunny ability Steady Hand must still take a round to get the benefit of Extra Aim, but he or she may move or defend while doing so.

#### FIRING FROM WITHIN A VEHICLE

If a vehicle has an open window, door, or hatch, characters inside can fire at nearby targets with their personal weapons. Firing personal weapons while a vehicle is moving is difficult, however, and the GM should impose a +2 Attack roll penalty, or +4 penalty if the character is also driving or piloting while firing. These penalties are halved if a character has the Gun Bunny ability Steady Hand (page 15). If a character is exposing himself or herself to fire a weapon, he or she can also be fired upon (usually at a +4 dice roll penalty, since the vehicle conceals most of the occupant's body).

#### ATTACKING WITH TWO WEAPONS

A character with a revolver, auto-loading pistol, or machine pistol in each hand may use both at once against the same target, or shoot two different targets. This allows the character to make twice as many attacks as usual. However, each attack is made at a +4 dice roll penalty if all attacks are aimed at the same target, or a +6 penalty if they are aimed at different targets. This penalty is halved if a character has the Gun Bunny ability Two Gun (page 15). If a character has Extra Attacks, this option can only be used with one of the character's attacks, but not with each one of them.

#### FAST DRAWS

Depending on circumstances, the GM can rule that readying a weapon requires an entire round (for example, picking up a rifle, clicking off the safety, and inserting a magazine), or may be readied and fired in the same round. The latter should only be applicable to easy-to-ready weapons such as a holstered and loaded pistol, although an Attack roll penalty (typically +3) may be applied. The GM may also require a Body Stat check to fast draw a weapon without taking an entire round to do it. This penalty is ignored if the character has the Gun Bunny ability Lightning Draw.

#### DEFENSE ROLLS IN VEHICLES

If a vehicle is attacked, the driver or pilot gets to make the Defense roll, which can be modified by the Ranged Defense Skill, and possibly penalized if the vehicle has a negative manoeuvre bonus. If a character in a vehicle is attacked (for example, someone shoots through the windows) they can make their own Defense roll.



# DRAMATIC AMMUNITION

When a character is using most modern fire arms, such as an automatic pistol or semi-automatic rifle, the assumption is made that the character will be slamming a new magazine into the weapon after he or she fires the last bullet, and will have enough magazines on his or her person to last through the game's action. Since a round represents from three to ten seconds, there is plenty of time to reload without it using an attack.

The "Limited Shots" disability is applied to certain weapons where, in anime or action movies, characters must occasionally pause to reload or dramatically toss their weapon aside to find a new one. Limited Shots as applied to auto-fire weapons represents the character rapidly using up all the magazines he or she carries (an Uzi fired on full automatic can empty its magazine in two or three seconds!). It can also be applied to revolvers and pump action shotguns because of the six round limit on most such weapons, and the need to reload each shell or cartridge individually when the weapon is empty (characters can get around this limit for revolvers with the Speed Loader accessory). Limited Shots is applied to heavier weapons such as rocket launchers or grenades because these weapons ammunition is bulky and a character usually has only a few shots.

In anime, a character proficient with guns can often go the length of an entire episode without ever once stopping to reload. While it is possible for the GM and players to keep track of every shot fired, it is recommended that GMs in *HRGB* be lenient in terms of ammunition usage. The "dramatic ammo" rules assume that when characters and NPCs reload, they do it between actions, slapping a magazine into a pistol or jamming a shell into a shotgun as they crouch behind cover or plan their next shot.

The dramatic ammunition rules leave players free to describe their actions in terms of an anime combat, with bullets flying and scenery being destroyed left and right, as opposed to an exercise in counting shots. The GM has final say over when characters and NPCs run out of bullets or projectiles. The exceptions to these rules are auto-fire weapons and revolvers (which tend to run out of ammo, even in action films), single-shot weapons (like most launchers) and grenades, each of which must be accounted for as it is thrown.

With this rule in effect, if two characters have a running gun battle suddenly find themselves face to face and pull the triggers, this is a good moment for the GM to declare them both out of ammunition. Characters with the Gun Bunny ability One Bullet Left may have a bullet remaining. If they do, they are free to act. If not, they must proceed with an empty weapon.

#### CRITICAL FAILURE AND WEAPON MALFUNCTIONS

The GM may decide that a critical Attack failure (a natural roll of 12) involving a firearm represents an event such as hitting an ally or bystander in the line of fire, dropping the weapon, a jammed or misfired gun, or throwing a grenade but forgetting to pull the pin (allowing the enemy to toss it back). In most cases, it is suggested that the result be a weapon jam.

If a revolver or similar manually-operated weapon jams, it can normally be cleared within one round. If another weapon (particular an autoloading pistol, semi-automatic rifle, or machine gun) jams, the GM may require a Mind-based Gun Combat Skill check to clear it, with one attempt allowed each round. If the roll fails twice in succession, the GM may rule that it requires Mechanics (Gunsmith) Skill to actually repair.

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A *Hot Rods and Gun Bunnies* campaign will usually take place in a modern day setting, unless the GM plans a cross-genre campaign (see page 83). Besides setting, the most pivotal game decision is whether the campaign focus will be on stopping crimes or committing them. The GM and the players should come to an agreement on what type of characters the players would like to play before character creation starts.

# GOOD GUYS OR BAD GUYS?

In a Law Enforcement campaign, the characters are fighting criminals, but they do not necessarily need to be policemen; they can also be bounty hunters, private investigators, government agents, urban vigilantes, etc. Their main enemies will be those trying to break the law or get away with injustice. The characters will usually have the law on their side (unless they are vigilantes), giving them access to vehicles, weapons, and backup.

In a Criminal Campaign, the players are the outlaws. They can be anyone from small-time hoods to international smugglers to assassing for hire. Their enemies are not just the police and other lawenforcement agencies trying to apprehend them, but also other criminals. Rival gangs, undercover agents, and even their own organizations may want to rat them out, take a cut of their loot, or extract revenge.

It is also possible to have a campaign where the characters exist in a grey area between law and order — for example, a team of mercenaries that are on the run from the law as they battle other criminals (similar to the 1980's TV show, *The A-Team*).

# RATINGS: CUTE AND FLUFFY OR ADULT?

The next major factor in a campaign that affects both players and GM is tone, or mood. Do the players want the action to be light-hearted and comical, with stars floating around the characters' heads when they get hit, or should the threat of death a real concern? Are the criminals misguided but basically not evil (perhaps chased by a bumbling inspector), or is the gang ruthless enough to do anything it takes to rise to power?

The best way to avoid potential problems is for the GM and players to agree upon a Rating and a Category. The Rating provides the players with an idea of how mature the campaign's themes will tend to be, while the Category will give them an idea of what themes to expect in the campaign, and some general guidelines for Skills that their characters should acquire.



# **RATING THEMES**

#### CUTE-AND-FLUFFY THEMES

These themes are suitable for kids or young teenagers, and anyone who enjoys simple fun. Sex is not discussed, and violence only results in injury, never death. Any death that occurs in the campaign (of a relative or family pet, for example) always happens away from the action of the game. Relationships between characters are placed in simple terms, and are never overtly sexual. Language is ideal and profanity-free at all times. Good and evil are clearly defined and easily identifiable, and good always wins in the end.

#### SERIOUS THEMES

This is the level of the majority of action anime shows. The characters will generally take the events seriously, and know that fights can result in lasting injury and even death. Overtly sexual topics are muted but relationships may develop, and coarse language may be used. Violence begins to become quite realistic, but scenes of cruelty, lingering agony or depravity are not presented. Good and evil may become more complex, and subsequently harder to recognize, although good usually wins in the end. Serious themes are recommended for teenage and older players.

#### MATURE THEMES

Mature themes work best with adult players. Violence can be a real part of the characters' lives, and the results are often graphic. Sexual topics may be frankly discussed, including mature themes such as alternate sexuality and sex-related crime. Villains may be depicted performing acts of outright cruelty or criminal insanity, but violence and criminality should also lead to real-world consequences for those practicing such behaviour. Good and evil is never clear-cut, and can be difficult to define and recognize.

#### ADULT THEMES

Adult games are only for mature, adult players who are comfortable with such issues. There are few limits on the subject matter. Players may create any kind of character they wish, including violent criminals. Violence may be extremely graphic, as may sexual situations in which the characters engage. Sex and violence may also be linked quite closely. Good and evil is almost meaningless, with the whole range of real-world motivations and rationalizations for human behaviour available. Life can be nasty, brutal, and sometime shockingly short, but it need not be completely devoid of moments of humour or hope.

### CATEGORIES: DRAMA. COMEDY, ACTION

Categories are general definitions of the tone of the game and what the characters can expect. By clearly outlining these categories in advance, the players will not expect one thing only to have the GM deliver something else.

#### COMEDY

Comedies are fun, with the primary goal of the game focused on jokes, puns, sight gags, and physical comedy. Serious moments are certainly allowed, but should serve to eventually further the comedic plot. These plots tend to reflect the aspects of the real world that serve their comedic ends, and ignore the rest.

CHAPTER 4 HOT RODS & GUN BUNNIES CAMPAIGNS

#### DRAMA

Dramas explore human relationships. They may have comic moments as well as action moments, but are primarily centred on the ways people affect the lives of others. These plots reflect the real world as realistically as the bounds of their Rating allow.

#### ACTION

An action game highlights the exploits of heroic characters. Comedic and dramatic moments may provide character insight, but the story is primarily concerned with the main characters moving from one battle or adventure to another. These plots may only reflect the aspects of the real world that serve to advance the action of the plot.

Other categories of anime certainly exist, but these three are the main focus of most *HRGB*-style anime. It is possible, however, to have a game that mixes the categories on a scene-by-scene basis. City Hunter is a good example: in one scene, the characters are pulling extra-dimensional hammers out of thin air to bash one another; in the very next, it is a gritty, life or death action without comedy.

### CAMPAIGN STYLE

In conjunction with the Ratings and Categories, GMs and players can clearly define the style of a campaign to best suit their own preferences.

For example, a "cute-and-fluffy law enforcement comedy" campaign might have the players portray students at the Police Academy. NPCs might include one or two bumbling classmates who are always getting the characters into trouble. Their nemesis might be the harsh hand-to-hand combat instructor who enjoys putting the characters through grueling calisthenics to try and get them to quit. Rival classmates are always playing pranks on them so that they will be awarded the Cadet of the Year award instead of one of the characters. The overall level of violence would be low — there may be plenty of action (car chases, guns fired, buildings wrecked, etc.) but very little serious injury.

On the other hand, an "mature law enforcement drama" campaign could also have players portray students at the academy. The bumbling of one of their classmates, instead of comic relief, might result in the death of an instructor on the firing range. The combat instructor trying to get the characters to quit would be far more ruthless, even to the point of genuinely criminally abusive, simply because he has the power to get away with such tactics. The relationships that develop would be intricate and mature in nature, perhaps with sex discussed openly as part of the characters' and NPC's personal lives. As the characters move from of the academy to the streets, they may face the harsh reality of dealing with marginalized citizens who distrust cops, encounter veteran officers suffering job stress that drives them to alcoholism, brutality or suicide, or situations such as child prostitution, drug crimes or violent serial killers. Violence would be real, sudden, and with far-reaching consequences that could haunt the characters for the rest of the game.

# SEX AS A TOOL

Many *HRGB*-style anime shows depict the main characters, both male and female, using their sexuality to help accomplish their goals. This is even more evident of many of the criminals depicted in such anime. It is certainly possible to run an *HRGB* campaign that does not discuss topics of sexuality in any way — GM and players should decide before a campaign starts how such issues will be handled.



The GM may decide that Levels of the Art of Distraction Attribute represent a sexually attractive character's ability to make others notice them through sheer sex appeal. If the GM and players are not completely comfortable role-playing this situation, the GM should make a quick decision as to how interested the target may be in the character, and have the player make a Body Stat check with an appropriate bonus or penalty.

If the characters and GM are comfortable role-playing such a situation, then they should do so, with the bonus or penalty assigned depending on the characters specific actions. The GM should also keep in mind, especially in more mature games, that overtly sexual overtures by characters may have campaign-world consequences that the characters do not consider at the time. If those overtures result in actual sexual encounters, they should always be implied and not detailed during game-play, unless **all** players and the GM are in full agreement that in-game situations of this nature may be fully explored.

Characters who are Easily Distracted by attractive members of the opposite (or same) sex will be even more susceptible to this type of Art of Distraction. The GM should modify the attempt to distract such characters appropriately.

Finally, the GM and players should all agree in advance what the level of sexuality that may be discussed or portrayed in the game. In mature campaigns, it is always possible that a particular crime or type of criminal may have been encountered by a player or GM at some time in their real lives. At **no time** should

a GM character ever force a player's character into a sexual situation (especially a violent or non-consensual one), or vice versa, unless all parties have specifically discussed such situations. The GM should be prepared to stop the game immediately if anyone involved becomes uncomfortable with the situation. However, if care is exercised to ensure that the feelings of both players and GMs are preserved, it is quite possible for mature sexuality to play an important, erotic, and even humorous role in the lives of HRGB characters.



CHAPTER 4

### HOT RODS & GUN BUNNIES CAMPAIGNS

# **RUNNING MYSTERIES**

Law Enforcement-oriented anime shows often feature mysteries that the main characters must solve to advance the plot. Running a mystery scenario requires some advance planning, but if successful, can result in a rewarding game for both players and GM. Mysteries do not necessarily have to involve only law enforcement characters. Criminal characters framed for crimes they did not commit may need to retrace the footsteps of the actual perpetrator of the crime, the pit crew of a sabotaged race-car may have to prove the rival team was behind it all to get their trophy back, etc. There are four basic steps to a mystery through which the players need to advance in order to solve it: Awareness, Investigation, Confrontation, and Resolution.

#### STEP 1: AWARENESS

Before the player characters can start solving a mystery, they need to be aware of the situation. When the GM reveals the mystery to them, there are three pieces of information they need to have: Crime Type, Initial Evidence, and Heroes' Motivations.

#### CRIME TYPE

Was the crime an attempted murder? Theft? Smuggling? Certain characters will often express increased interest in certain types of crimes based on their backgrounds. The characters may be called to the scene, or even witness the event in progress.

#### INITIAL EVIDENCE

The characters need a clue that points to the eventual solution of the mystery. This is the point where the GM may introduce a false clue as well as legitimate evidence. Initial clues can be traditional physical evidence (such as a dead body), a rumor from an informant, or even a series of clues deliberately left by an enemy playing a cat and mouse game with the characters. There should be enough evidence to point the characters in the direction (or directions) that they need to proceed, but not so much that they solve the mystery immediately without needing to investigate. Ideally, the clues should point somehow to at least one additional location the characters must visit before they can solve the mystery.

#### HEROES' MOTIVATION

The motivation defines what the characters have to gain by solving the mystery, and why they would be motivated to investigate to its conclusion. This is perhaps the most important aspect of getting players interested in a mystery, but it is easy for a GM to overlook when he or she has created an interesting story. Players will be much more intent in pursuing the clues if they have a solid reason. Perhaps solving the mystery will earn the characters a big promotion, or possibly they must solve the mystery because they have been framed for the crime. The GM should not resort to threatening the characters too often, however, since it makes them feel as if they are reacting instead of acting. Few players like to feel that they are just jumping through hoops for the GM's pleasure.

#### **STEP 2: INVESTIGATION**

This is the most important part of the mystery, because it is often the hardest to get right. The GM must make things challenging for the players without having them run into dead ends and become frustrated. This task requires a combination of planning and improvisation by the GM. If the campaign has good players, then they will certainly concoct ideas the GM never considered. What may seem obvious to the GM because he or she knows how the story ends might not be obvious to the players participating in the story. Furthermore, what makes little sense to the GM may seem incredibly obvious to the players. The GM must therefore allow the players to find the clues in whatever manner is logical for them. In other words, the GM should have a list of the information (both clues and false leads) the characters are able to uncover. When one of the players comes up with a reasonable way to get that information, the GM should have them make the appropriate Skill check and then reveal what they have learned.

### HOT RODS AND GUN BUNNIES

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**FOR EXAMPLE:** In a mystery plot involving the theft of drugs from a local clinic, there may be several means of obtaining information on the movement of those drugs from the manufacturer to the clinic. The GM should have this basic information available, and reveal it to any of the characters who effectively utilize their skills to track it down. A group of cops might simply walk in and question the staff in the course of the investigation. A criminal character might sneak into the place to get the information. A technically inclined character might hack into the clinic's computer records. An enterprising Private Investigator may try to go out with one of the nurses to find out what he needs to know.

The GM can also have NPCs reveal some clues if it is appropriate to the character's situation. A police detective may, for example, have a number of beat cops performing surveillance or doing door-to-door footwork to gather information. In such situations, the GM can gloss over the routine pavement-pounding and cut to the chase: "Okay, after two days, officer O'Ryan calls you. They've found a witness, and he's in the interrogation room waiting for you." Then it is up to the character to role-play the interrogation and see where it goes from there.

Once the characters have accumulated a sufficient amount of evidence, they will usually draw conclusions regarding who is responsible for the crime. If they simply turn this evidence over to another authority, then their role in the mystery is over, and the GM may skip Steps 3 and 4. The players should be made aware of the results of their labours, however, even if they only read about them in the paper.

#### STEP 3: CONFRONTATION

The Confrontation arises when the characters confront the party or parties that they believe are responsible for their dilemma. It may even be someone with which they had previous contact in their Investigation. The GM should have plans in place for how the confronted person will react. If the characters are correct and they have the right person, then this should be made apparent during the confrontation. This way, even though the guilty party might possibly escape the characters, they have the reward of knowing their investigation led them to the correct result.

If the characters have come to the wrong conclusion, then the confrontation should also bear this out. The wrongly accused party could also react in a number of ways, which the GM should have prepared in advance as well. If the characters realize they have made the wrong conclusion from their investigation, then they will probably repeat Step 2 or Step 3.

#### STEP 4: RESOLUTION

All good mystery plots in literature and the movies usually involve a resolution of some kind. When the guilty parties have been handled in accordance with the characters' M.O.'s, the full details of the mystery, including clues that the players may have missed, should emerge. The guilty party might even confess: "It was a brilliant plan! I'd have gotten away with it if not for those meddling kids!" The characters may even do a bit of further investigating to resolve loose ends. The resolution allows the characters to see the perpetrator's fate, and gives the GM a chance to show off his or her entire plan.

In the real world, mysteries do not necessarily work this way. Many are stalled in investigation, since not enough evidence is accumulated, or the perpetrators simply manage to escape. The GM can also have the perpetrator get away every now and then, either because the character simply cannot manage to track down the proper evidence, or they somehow botch the confrontation. The vast majority of anime heroes always get their man, (or woman) eventually; although it may sometimes take a couple of attempts. Since *HRGB* is meant to capture the feel of those anime shows, the GM should ensure that the players are rewarded for their efforts often enough to make playing in the game fun for all.

CHAPTER 4

### **HOT RODS & GUN BUNNIES CAMPAIGNS**

### MODERN DAY GAME SEEDS

Here are some ideas for starting points for modern day or recent history campaigns using HRGB.

#### LAW ENFORCEMENT GAME SEEDS

#### FINDERS, KEEPERS

The characters are working as repo men, tracking down people who skip payments on their vehicles. They follow some tips to a parked car, but when they open it, they find something in the trunk that should not be there — a dead body and a suitcase full of stock certificates valued at over \$100,000. Do they turn it over to the cops, or decide to go into business for themselves? Who will then be after them?

#### PRISONER TRANSFER

A prison airplane is transporting an extradited terrorist leader or crime boss, and the characters' assignment is to meet him at the airport, and then drive him to the court house jail. Unfortunately, there is a crooked cop in the characters' agency, and the time and place have been leaked. The criminals first try a direct rescue attempt, and when that fails, they capture a school bus full of kids to "trade" for their boss. Can they be stopped?

#### CIVIL DISORDER

A severe and unexpected earthquake, power blackout, or other sudden disaster strikes the characters' city, spreading panic. In the space of a few hours the characters have to contend with looters, help rescue trapped individuals, and deal with pile-ups on the highways as everyone with a vehicle tries to flee of the danger zone.

#### CRIMINAL GAME SEEDS

#### AH, PROHIBITION!

Prohibition was a time when anyone with a bathtub and some chutzpah could become a criminal tycoon! The characters have managed to set up a nice little operation for themselves in Detroit. With some luck, a cousin on the police force, and some college courses in Business Management, they have built their bootlegging operation to a size where money is flowing...all without having fired a single gun shot. Unfortunately, their operation has also caught the attention a certain Mr. Capone a few hours west in Chicago. What Capone notices, Elliot Ness notices too. Suddenly, the characters' lives are far more interesting than they ever wanted. With a little strategy, a lot of luck, and plenty of dynamite, they might be able to keep their enemies after each other long enough for Congress to save their necks by repealing what made the characters rich in the first place.

#### GETAWAY DRIVER

A criminal gang is planning a bank robbery and they want to hire the characters as getaway drivers. The plan looks sound, and the gang's plan should guarantee minimal violence. Unfortunately things go wrong: a guard is shot, and a passing unmarked cop car is on the scene. Do the characters stick with the plan, leave their trigger-happy fellow felons in the lurch, or try a double cross?

#### **KEEP ON TRUCKING**

The characters are hired to transport illegal cargo" across three states. Unfortunately, the "pirated computer chip components" the owner says they are smuggling are actually the precision instruments and fuses that are needed to make a nuclear bomb! Why are the characters shipping them from Seattle to Washington, DC, and who wants them on the other end? What will the characters do when the technoterrorist group who are involved decide they do not want any witnesses left alive?



### ALTERNATE CAMPAIGN SETTINGS

The classic campaign setting for an *HRCB* game is the modern-day world, either in the present, the near future or recent past, and usually in or near a major city, such as Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Hong Kong or Tokyo.

The GM need not be especially familiar with the city or town he or she chooses, but unless the players are very mature and polite, the GM should be more familiar with the area than the players. The last thing a GM, who is concentrating on evoking the mood of a particular setting, needs is a player pointing out his or her mistakes during the game. A GM who plans to use an unfamiliar setting is advised to rent a movie or two set in the chosen location, and pick up a good travel guide of the area (available at most libraries or book stores). The former will help with atmosphere and street-level details, while the latter lets the GM drop the names of landmarks and streets to establish a sense of place. An alternative to using a "real" city is to use a ficticious place. This works nicely in near future games, but it also has a long tradition in comics, manga, and anime.

*HRGB* adventures do not need to be restricted to modern day or near-future cities, however. There are plenty of ways to work the Skill System, new combat rules and vehicle chases into just about any other cross-genre setting. Here are some ideas for keeping the feel of fast moving, gun blazing action in other times and places.

#### ANCIENT JAPAN

Horses are just another kind of vehicle, and Skill System works just fine with Samurai swords and marikigusari. Firearms were introduced into Japan as early as 16th century, so a "gun bunny" might be skilled in the use of bow or a muzzle-loading flintlock. Guns were as much works of art as a samurai's sword, and their complicated mechanisms and low accuracy made them only slightly more effective than other ranged weapons.

Law Enforcement characters could be samurai serving their lord, or (in some periods) members of the shogun's secret police. They may be attempting to apprehend bandits, or suppress or destroy renegade ninja clans. Ronin (masterless samurai) could be the ancient equivalent of cycle gangs, wandering the land terrorizing ordinary citizens. Of course, women were not allowed to be samurai warriors historically, but many were trained in weapons (especially Female ninja were not much more naginata). uncommon than male ninja, and giving the ninja's willingness to use "dishonourable" weapons such as gunpowder bombs, a gun bunny ninja girl with a pair of black powder pistols or grenades is not completely unrealistic...



The potentially harsh regime of an unpopular clan lord (such as Nobunaga) would offer a perfect reason for the characters to be outlaws, whether a benevolent band of Robin Hood types or a murderous band of pirates plying the Sea of Japan. The vehicle chase rules would apply equally on sea as they do on asphalt.

**EXAMPLES:** Ninja Cadets, Ninja Resurrection, Ninja Scroll, Raven Tengu Kabuto, Yotoden. Many samurai movies are also recommended.

#### HIGH FANTASY

The best way to mix cars and guns into a high fantasy campaign is to follow the example of many popular Japanese video games. In such settings (usually taking place on alternative worlds) characters have an eclectic mix of swords, handguns, and spells. Personal transport ranges from riding birds to hover cars, with plenty of normal vehicles also available. Characters are generally on the side of good, but can include mercenaries, smugglers, ex-terrorists, and others with dubious backgrounds. An alternative setting is a near future/magic hybrid game where "the magic has returned" and magnum-packing bounty hunters arrest trolls and necromancers on the mean streets.

EXAMPLES: Hyper Police and numerous video games.

#### RECENT HISTORY

Knowing how to use a gun was never more important than in America's Old West. Characters can be any Western staple: white-hatted lawmen, tough-as-nails saloon gals trying to make an honest living singing for their supper, Pinkerton detectives, or Texas Rangers. A crazy inventor might get the characters to try his new-fangled horseless carriage, allowing characters to participate in the very first car chase!

> There is ample opportunity to wear a black hat, too. Criminal campaigns might feature a gang of daring daylight bank or train robbers, beautiful jewel thieves, or outlaws who are still fighting the Civil War, even though it ended years past.

Plenty of Asians worked for the railroads and in the mines of the Old West, so it is also possible for a martial artist to walk side by side with a sheriff down the street at high noon.

One of the worst times to be an American was one of the best times to be a criminal: the late 1920's and 30's. Prohibition allowed anyone with a still and a tommy gun or two to become a criminal kingpin. Law Enforcement types could be back country revenuers, chasing a couple of crazy (but basically harmless) moonshiner cousins around on dirt roads, or Elliot Ness-style gangbusters, that pursue the toughest, most



violent criminals. In 1920s Japan, there was plenty of action as well, as right wing "super gangster" terrorists waged war against the struggling Japanese parliamentary democracy. At that time police were chasing Russian communist spies and agitators, and struggling against Yakuza gangs.

EXAMPLES: Dagger of Kamui, Sakura Wars, many live action movies and TV shows.

#### MODERN COMEDY

The bumbling officers and their troubles are staples of modern police comedies. Mismatched buddies paired up to solve a particular case can create laughs, as well as provide a great hook for players during character creation. For darker games, violence levels that are excessive to the point of absurdity, as well as lots of spectacularly malfunctioning gear, can generate evil grins.

Inept criminals are even funnier. Whether they are the players, or the players' adversaries, some outlaws cannot seem to get a break. Since criminals are by definition less sympathetic, it is easy to make them the butt of particularly nasty practical jokes, including those that cause bodily harm.

Prison is not usually considered a fun place to live, but GMs who have an odd taste for comedy could run a modern jailhouse adventure in the same vein as the old Hogan's Heroes WWII prison camp comedy. Amazingly stupid guards, rivalry with other inmate gangs, criminal masterminds who are still running their entire empire from behind bars, and the lovably eccentric warden, can fit together to make the ultimate comdey.

Although most of the scenes are played for comedy, some action can still be serious. The goofiest cop in the precinct could turn out to be the best shot when the pressure is on.

**EXAMPLES:** Burn Up W (first episodes), Bomber Bikers of Shonan, Fake, City Hunter, Lupin III, You're Under Arrest!, and Hong Kong movies (especially those with Jackie Chan).

#### MODERN DRAMA

There are almost limitless possibilities for a modern dramatic campaign in the *HRGB* genre. Law enforcement characters can be any kind of cop, agent or PI that they have seen on TV or in the movies, not just in anime. They can be rookies just out of the Academy, or 20-year veterans with a habit of getting suspended for their maverick behaviour. Complex relationships between characters are possible, with the grey area "above the law" in which many law enforcement personnel live explored in depth.

Characters do not need to pack a gun to find excitement in the modern era. Race-car enthusiasts could be part of a team that tests experimental designs all over the world. Players who enjoy an intellectual game might play insurance investigators who try to track cunning and ruthless art thieves.

Criminal campaigns have as many possibilities as there are crimes. Depending on what players desire, the entire gamut of criminal activity from bloodless computer espionage through the most violent gang warfare can be explored. The characters will face not only the police and government agencies that want to bring them to justice, but other criminals as well. There is no honour among thieves, after all.

Payers can develop their characters along dramatic lines, create relationships, and explore issues important to everyone who lives in the modern world. Mature themes of violence, sex, race, crime, and society can all be explored, since the world is one with which the players are already intimately familiar.

EXAMPLES: Angel Cop (first episodes), Cleopatra D.C., City Hunter (when it's not a comedy), Crying Freeman, Gunsmith Cats, Riding Bean, Kite, Sanctuary, Taiman Blues, Tokyo Vice, Wild 7. For racing action, Circuit Angel, Cyber Formula GPX, Legend of the Rolling Wheels and Speed Racer, Numerous live action movies and cop shows can provide inspiration.



#### NEAR-FUTURE

The future is often depicted as a dark, urban landscape, full of virtual reality computer networks, powered armour suits, sexy humanoid cyborgs, deadly terrorists, and take-no-prisoners police squads. While cyberpunk-style ultra-tech adventures are a great game option, the real hot rodding, gun blazing action is the post-apocalypse genre. Depicted in movies such as the Road Warrior and Mad Max, the future is the wild west with big guns and fast cars, as bandits and survivors contend for water, fuel, and the right to live.

EXAMPLES: AD Police, Armitage III, Appleseed, Bubblegum Crisis, Burn Up W, Ghost in the Shell, Mobile Police Patlabor.

#### FAR FUTURE

Although man may very well conquer the stars, it is unlikely he will conquer himself. As long as there are people who want what others have, there will always be conflict. A Far Future campaign may use starships and space fighters instead of big rigs and cop cars, but the Skill System works the same, and a lot of planets seem to look just like Texas or Tokyo.

Space is big. It is easy for a criminal to escape to a different planet outside someone's jurisdiction, and thus if there is no galaxy police agency, the law may be in the hands of corporate troubleshooters or freelance bounty hunters. A far future police precinct might have officers from different species trying to work together. Modern racial problems do not seem so bad in comparison to a city where air-breathers and water-breathers are trying to coexist in the same apartment block. Even in the future, a murder is a murder, whether it happens because of passion, greed, or a cascading failure in the moral subroutine of a cybernetic brain.

Advances in law enforcement techniques will be matched by the ingenuity of criminals. With galactic riches as a prize, even genetic tampering to erase criminal  $\mathbf{N}$ 

traits might not be a sufficient deterrent. Enterprising criminal characters could take up the age-old tradition of piracy, plying the space lanes instead of the Spanish Main. Assassins might extend the tools of their I ide with hunter-killer robots, or may be forced to get up close and personal because defenses against projectile weapons have rendered guns obsolete.

Any type of technology is possible, but the interaction between people (including nonhuman "people") is the most important aspect of the campaign.

EXAMPLES: Cowboy Bebop, Cyber City Oedo 808, Dirty Pair, Iria, Outlaw Star.

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### HOT RODS AND GUN BUNNIES

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#### THIS SECTION IS FOR GAME MASTERS (GMs) ONLY! DO NOT READ THIS CHAPTER IF YOU ARE A PLAYER!

Dangerous Toys is a single-session *HRGB* adventure, set in the modern day. The adventure works best in a Law Enforcement Campaign for 3-6 players. Dangerous Toys is divided into several sections:

#### SETTING

Where and when the adventure takes place.

#### STORY BACKGROUND

The important events that establish the conflicts presented in the story.

#### CHARACTERS

Suggestions about the types of characters that the players should create for the game.

#### IMPORTANT NPCs

The list of important background characters and antagonists the characters will meet.

#### CHARACTER GOAL

Possible actions that can lead the characters to a successful resolution of the adventure.

#### PLOT ELEMENTS

Notable events that may occur during the adventure, places the characters may visit, and challenges the characters may be forced to overcome.

#### CAMPAIGN EXPANSION

Suggestions for expanding the adventure into a law enforcement campaign or mini-campaign.

If the players are creating their own characters, the information in the Setting, Story Background, and Characters sections should be shared with them by the GM as needed. All other information is meant only for the GM, and will be uncovered by the players as the session progresses.

# SETTING

It is December 20th and Christmas is coming. The city of Detroit and the Great Lakes region is suffering through one of the worst winters on record. Statistic say that crime is down in the city over the last decade, although Detroit's police might disagree.

Detroit rests on the shores of Lake Michigan, on the Canada-US border, next to Windsor. Detroit has an extensive waterfront, as well as several housing projects that are among the most poverty-stricken in the country. Extremely affluent suburbs, such as Grosse Pointe, are only a few miles away down Interstate 94. Detroit was once a powerhouse of industry, but after the factories left the city in the late 60s and early 70s, crime and poverty skyrocketed. Corruption in the city government was pervasive, and racial tensions ran high, which sometimes lead to brutal riots. Things have taken a turn for the better in the last few years: the murder rate is down, drug use is in decline, and unemployment is lower than it has been in decades. Unfortunately, the city still has a long way to go, and plenty of those people who benefited from the crime-ridden 70s are still alive.



# STORY BACKGROUND

Over the last six months, there has been a number of shootings involving various gangs across the border, in Windsor, Ontario. This action quickly attracted the attention of Canadian law enforcement agencies, since the guns being used are illegal in Canada. The police, as well as the media, suspect that the guns are coming from the USA, most likely from nearby Detroit itself. No one, however, has been able to determine how the large quantities of automatic weapons are being transported. Several law enforcement agencies in the USA and Canada are co-operating to put an end to the gun trafficking before any civilians are caught in the crossfire.

Unknown to the characters, the guns are being smuggled across the border disguised as toys. A toy company executive with a drug habit has made an arrangement with a Detroit crime gang. In exchange for a continuous supply of drugs, the executive is allowing the criminals to use his company's shipping contacts as a cover for their arms smuggling operation. The guns are taken to a warehouse, where they are painted and altered to look like toys, then smuggled over the border into Canada, where they are sold to Canadian gangs. The plan was going smoothly until a customs officer took a close look at the shipment, and instantly realized that the toys were, in fact, real guns. The driver who makes the cross-border runs offered the customs officer a cut of the profits. The officer had fallen on hard times due to a serious addiction to gambling at the local casino. Eventually, he was forced to take out several large "loans" from a loan shark to continue to feed his addiction, but due to his poor betting habits (which he called a string of bad luck), he had troubles paying back the "loan". To avoid the "penalty fees" of the loan repayment, the customs officer agreed to "look the other way" whenever shipments of toy guns crossed the border. Since then, he has become deeply embroiled in the smuggling operation, ensuring that the shipment of guns clears customs without any problems.





# **CHARACTERS**

This adventure is for 3-6 players, who should each assume the role of members of a Law Enforcement agency from either side of the border (since a joint Canada-US task force is investigating this crime). The characters can belong to the Detroit Police, Michigan State Troopers, Windsor Police, Ontario Provincial Police, or Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Players may also wish to play federal agents such as members of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, the FBI, U.S. Custom Service, or Canadian Customs.

Players could also play private investigators who have been hired by relatives of one of the shooting victims, or perhaps called in by the local police to help with the investigation in "unofficial" ways. At least one of the players in the group should create a character with ties to the Detroit Police Department, to prevent numerous problems for crossing jurisdictional boundaries, although it is not mandatory since all levels of law enforcement have been asked to assist with this case.

12 Stat Points, 20 Character Points, and 20 Skill Points are recommended for character creation.

### IMPORTANT NPCs

#### CLARENCE "Ice TRAY" RANDALL

#### STATS — Body8, Mind 5, Soul 6

- **DERIVED VALUES** Health Points: 80, Energy Points: 55, Attack Combat Value: 7, Defense Combat Value: 5
- ATTRIBUTES Art of Distraction Level 1, Combat Mastery Level 1, Damn Healthy! Level 1, Personal Gear Level 2, Fortified Body Level 3, Strong Soul Level 1, Flunkies (gang) Level 5, Highly Skilled Level 3
- DEFECTS Easily Distracted (Threats, Insults IBP), Wanted (2BP)
- SKILLS Gun Combat (auto-fire, pistol) Level 2, Driving (car) Level 1, Interrogation (physical) Level 2, Melee Attack (knife, improvised weapons) Level 1, Melee Defense (knife, improvised weapons) Level 1, Ranged Defense (personal) Level 1
- **APPEARANCE** Caucasian Male. Age 26. Hair: Brown, close-shaved. Eyes: Brown. Height: 167 cm. Weight: 80 kg. He often wears oversized jeans and a Detroit Red Wings hockey jersey. He wears sunglasses at all hours, along with several large gold chains, and sports a closely trimmed beard.
- **DISTINGUISHING MARKS** Scars from two gunshot wounds (one in neck, one in right shoulder), eight tattoos of various shapes and sizes, including gang name of "Ice Tray" on right upper arm.
- **METHOD OF OPERATION** A Detroit gang leader who is the main force behind the stolen guns being smuggled over the border. He runs the operation from an abandoned factory in Detroit's inner city. As the leader of a violent gang, Tray makes up for his small stature with his utter ruthlessness. He hates cops as well as rich people, and enjoys displaying his feelings when presented the opportunity. He is wanted in connection with 5 murders and 8 attempted murders/assault and batteries. He has vowed to kill anyone who calls him Clarence more than once (after one warning). Tray is typically armed with two medium auto pistols (he prefers Glocks) or, if expecting trouble, an Ingram M10 submachine gun. He carries an ice pick (treat as a knife) in his car. He is easily provoked into violence.



#### HAROLD "HARRY" FONSEN

STATS — Body 7, Mind 6, Soul 6

- **DERIVED VALUES** Health Points: 65, Energy Points: 70, Attack Combat Value: 6, Defense Combat Value: 4
- **ATTRIBUTES** Art of Distraction Level 2, Energy Bonus Level 1, Fortified Body Level 2, Personal Gear Level 1, Powerful Mind Level 1, Strong Soul Level 1

DEFECTS — Easily Distracted (greedy 1 BP), Skeleton in Closet (drug habit 2BP)

- **SKILLS** Forgery (paper documents) Level 1, Gun Combat (pistol) Level 1, Interrogation (psychological) Level 1, Business Management (accounting) Level 2, Computers (database) Level 1
- **APPEARANCE** Caucasian Male. Age 38. Hair: black with gray, thinning on top. Eyes: Hazel. Height: 175 cm. Weight, 140 kg. Dresses primarily in mid-priced conservative American business suits. Always wears "20 years of service" tie pin with striped ties.

DISTINGUISHING MARKS - Scar from appendix operation as a teenager.

**METHOD OF OPERATION** — Fonsen is a middle-manager at Big Fun Toys, a huge mass-market toy chain. He has nursed a cocaine habit since the late 80s. Fonsen's bulk and willpower have allowed him to continue functioning despite his addiction. He is selfish and greedy, and will not hesitate to betray or back-stab anyone if he feels it will help him in the long run.

#### MIKE "MEATHEAD" MANLEY

STATS - Body 8, Mind 4, Soul 6

- **DERIVED VALUES** Health Points: 80, Energy Points: 50, Attack Combat Value: 8, Defense Combat Value: 6
- ATTRIBUTES Combat Mastery Level 2, Personal Gear Level 3, Fortified Body Level 3, Highly Skilled Level 2
- **DEFECTS** Unique Character Defect (Hates authority figures 1 BP), Unique Defect (insomnia 1 BP)
- SKILLS Gun Combat (auto-fire, pistol) Level 1, Driving (big rig) Level 3, Melee Attack (baton/club) Level 1, Melee Defense (baton/club) Level 1, Mechanic (automotive) Level 1, Navigation (highway) Level 1, Ranged Defense (ground vehicles) Level 1
- APPEARANCE Caucasian Male. Age 37. Hair: Buzz-Cut red and gray. Eyes: Green. Height: 205 cm. Weight: 105 kg. Dresses in Midwestern blue collar clothing, typically blue jeans, flannel shirt, and baseball cap with trucking company logo. Wears steel-toed work boots at all times. Has a bushy red and grey beard.

DISTINGUISHING MARKS — Tattoo of pierced heart on left upper arm.

**METHOD OF OPERATION** — Meathead is involved in the gun smuggling operation for the thrill of putting one over on Uncle Sam. A Sergeant in the Gulf War, Meathead suffers from a mild case of Gulf War syndrome (insomnia and chills). He believes the Veterans Administration hospitals he has attended have ignored him, engendering his deep resentment towards the US government. Meathead is a good shot and a skilled truck driver. He is also quite ruthless and will not hesitate to put the lives of civilians in danger if he feels it's necessary. Meathead owns his own big rig, customized with a turbocharger. He carries a revolver (.38 special) on him (registered) and a sawed off shotgun under the seat of his truck. His favourite melee weapon is a tire iron (treat as a club). At home (a cabin in rural Michigan), he has a large collection of guns, including an assault rifle.



#### CAPTAIN CHARLES NELSON O'REILEY

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**STATS** — Body 4, Mind 5, Soul 4

**DERIVED VALUES** — Health Points: 45, Energy Points: 60, Attack Combat Value: 3, Defense Combat Value: 1

ATTRIBUTES — Personal Gear Level 1, Powerful Mind Level 1

DEFECTS - Skeleton in the Closet (criminal activity 2BP)

SKILLS — Computers (database) Level 1, Interrogation (psychological) Level 2, Law (customs) Level 2, Linguistics (French, English, Spanish) Level 2, Medical (Emergency) Level 1

APPEARANCE — Caucasian Male. Age 32. Hair: Thinning brown, combed over. Eyes: Brown. Height: 163 cm. Weight: 85 kg. Typically encountered in a Canadian Customs uniform. When off-duty, dresses in button-down shirts, khaki pants and sensible shoes.

#### DISTINGUISHING MARKS - None.

**METHOD OF OPERATION** — Captain O'Reiley is a customs inspector for the Canadian government. He appears to be a very ordinary person but he suffers from a strong addiction to gambling. He believes that, with his next bet, he'll finally "hit the big one". He became involved in the gun-running scheme by accident, and has regretted it ever since. He has entertained the idea of turning Meathead in every time he sees the trucker approaching the Detroit Windsor border crossing, but he needs the money from the smuggling operation to pay back \$100 000 that he owes a loan shark. His fear of the loan shark coming to "collect" has kept him from putting an end to the entire operation. A very persistent character might get O'Reiley to talk if he or she is able to convince him that his debt to a loan shark is not worth the lives the guns are claiming. O'Reiley would insist on total immunity in exchange for any testimony.

#### GANG BANGERS

STATS - Body 5, Mind 3, Soul 4

**DERIVED VALUES** — Health Points: 22, Energy Points: 18, Attack Combat Value: 4, Defense Combat Value: 4

ATTRIBUTES — Personal Gear Level 2, Fortified Body Level 1

**DEFECTS** — Empty Mind (1 BP), Easily Distracted (threats, insults 1 BP), On Parole or Wanted (1 BP)

- **SKILLS** Gun Combat (auto-fire or pistol) Level 1, Driving (car or motorcycle) Level 1, Interrogation (physical) Level 1, Melee Attack (knife or improvised) Level 1, Unarmed Attack (striking) Level 1
- **APPEARANCE** These are typical urban street thugs of the early 2000s. They are of mixed ethnic background, wearing clothing associated with "hip-hop" music artists and modern urban crime movies. Most wear sunglasses, hats, and oversized coats (to better conceal weaponry).

**DISTINGUISHING MARKS** — All members of this gang have their gang names tattooed on their arms.

**METHOD OF OPERATION** — Ice Tray uses these thugs to deal with any "problems" that may arise with the smuggling operation. They are all violent, ill-educated sociopaths, that are quick to pull their weapons in any tense situation. All travel armed whenever possible. Most have criminal records highlighted with violent crimes. They are easily provoked into overreacting, often getting themselves into trouble. In addition to Ice Tray, there should be one gang banger for each characters. If the characters are especially skilled or well-equipped, increase the number of gang bangers so that they still pose a bit of a threat.



# CHARACTER GOALS

- 1. Determine how the guns are getting across the border.
- 2. Make contact with the responsible parties.
- 3. Collect sufficient evidence to make any and all charges against those involved in the crimes stick.
- 4. Apprehend the smugglers and all characters involved in the operation.

### PLOT ELEMENTS

#### 1. THE TOY STORE

"Meathead" is transporting a shipment of guns, but before he crosses the Canada-US border, he must make a few deliveries of other, more mundane cargo (Big Fun Toys action figures, play sets, and even some ordinary toy guns as cover). These ordinary shipments are made to help ensure the cover of the smuggling ring.

While Meathead is making a delivery to a Detroit toy store, an unscrupulous store clerk, Eric Johnson, hoping to get a hold of some extra-rare action figures, "accidentally" unloads a couple of cases which were meant for shipment to Canada. Along with the action figures, the cases contain a box of two "toy" guns — supposedly promotional gimmicks for the "Airborne Ninja Commando" action figure line. The toy guns are actually mini-Uzis loaded with live ammunition.

The characters are taking a break from investigating the gun smuggling operation, and have stopped to visit a coffee shop across the street from the toy store when a hail of gunfire erupts in the store, shattering the front windows. The chaos is caused when two 10-year olds, Blair and Jacob notice the twin-gun toy packages. When Eric's back was turned, the kids took the guns out of their package to play with them. As the kids were pretending to shoot at each other around the store, one of their guns erupted in an explosion of bullets. Fortunately, the first volley hurt no one but now the kids, entertained by the destruction caused by their barrage, began shooting at random.

The kids have Body 2, Mind 3, Soul 4, an Attack Combat Value of 3 and a Defense Combat Value of 1. They have 15 Health Points and 35 Energy Points. They may accidently hit any character that steps into their line of fire — they are not trying to injure anyone. Their indiscriminate fire, however, could easily hit and injure some of the store's patrons before they get to safety.

What do the characters do? Do they spend a few rounds helping civilians out of the way, like the lady whose baby carriage tipped over or the Big Fun mascot whose costume is snagged on a rack? Do the characters move in quickly and attempt to subdue the "gunmen"? Once the characters realize that the gunfire is coming from two kids, how do they react?

This encounter is intended to test the character's ability to remain cool in a difficult situation. They must quickly assess what is happening and find a way to diffuse the situation with as little damage and injury as possible. The kids are completely untrained, but they are caught up in the thrill of the moment. If the characters rush the kids, the two boys will drop their guns and surrender yelling, "We give up! Don't shoot!" If the characters return fire towards the kids, the two boys might fire back in the character's general direction, but more likely, they will run out the backdoor of the store into the alley and attempt to escape. If the kids do leave the building while still armed, this could easily lead to even more panic unless the characters quickly take control of the situation. Fortunately an Uzi magazine holds 30 bullets, and thus it will not be too long before the kids run out of bullets. A calm, patient waiting game might be all that it needed, but every bullet fired by the guns is one more innocent bystander that could be killed. Is there enough time to wait for the two boys to run out of ammo?



#### 2. AFTERMATH

The lights in the store have been shot out, the burglar alarm is blaring, and there is broken glass and doll parts everywhere. The two boys, once apprehended, will co-operate with the characters in every way possible — they were just playing a game and did not mean any harm. The characters will quickly learn that the two guns came from Big Fun Toy's standard "Airborne Ninja Commando" toy gun line. They were painted with bright orange and yellow paint with an orange plastic tip placed over the guns' barrels, making them look like any other toy gun available.

As the characters investigate the scene, they will be approached by the store clerk, Eric Johnson, who is very upset with himself. Johnson will insist the incident was "his fault". He'll explain how the delivery truck came by and he "lifted" some boxes from it and the toy guns were in one of the boxes. Johnson thought the guns looked a little different from the regular models, but how was he to know they were real? Unfortunately, the store clerk shredded and burned the shipment's packing list, to cover his theft of the action figures. The only other information he can give is a description of Meathead and his truck, though he does not know the driver's name (nor his nickname). Eric will help the characters in any way he can, but will not have much more helpful information. At this point, the Detroit Police will arrive and assist the characters in any way they can (though they might do so begrudgingly if the characters are from another branch of law enforcement).

While investigating the scene further, you may wish to plant several red-herring clues. In the end, there are only two real clues available at the scene: the description of Meathead and his truck (which could match a quarter of the truckers in Detroit) and the fact that the shipment originated at Big Fun's warehouse. This should lead the characters to Harry Fonsen's office at Big Fun's warehouse.

#### 3. HARRY FONSEN'S OFFICE

Since Harry is involved in dealing with truckers and freight haulers, he does not work in the shiny Big Fun Corporate HQ downtown — he works out of a small office attached to the Big Fun Distribution Center just west of Detroit. While there are few upsides to Detroit's economic woes, an abundance of warehouse space in the surrounding area is one of them. Harry's office is adjacent to a large warehouse with several big trucks (none matching the description provided by Eric) parked outside. Inside, it is busy throughout most of the day, with truckers meeting with Harry and people on the warehouse floor loading or unloading boxes full of toys. There is a pair of uniformed and armed security guards on the site.

Harry's job is to negotiate with shippers for the best price to transport Big Fun's products. Since he is used to heated conversations, he will handle confrontational characters very well. He will be evasive without ever outright lying. Any time he does not want to answer a question involving facts, he will tell the characters he does not know and does not want to give a wrong answer. He will look into things and get back to them in the future, though he never will.

Regardless of whether the characters are pleasant or not, the only information they will get from Fonsen is that the Big Fun company is "very concerned that someone has sullied our good name, and is vigorously investigating the incident." The toy line in question "has been dropped from the Big Fun line, until we complete the investigation" and they are doing "everything in their power to find out who delivered that particular shipment." Unfortunately, in the holiday season they use thousands of private haulers in addition to the normal shipping companies they use. Since Eric destroyed the records, there is no way that he can determine who was driving that particular shipment. If the characters press, he will claim that he recently suffered a serious computer crash which destroyed ten years worth of records, so tracking this shipment's driver will be "next to impossible". Since the characters will not have a warrant (there is not yet sufficient evidence for one to be granted), they will not be able to check his computer system to verify whether his



claim is true or not. If the characters do search the computer without a warrant, however, they might realize that the database is no longer on the system. A successful Mind-based Computers (Intrusion/Security) check with a +2 dice roll penalty will allow the characters to notice that the database was erased, and not lost in a computer crash. The information, however, cannot be salvaged from the harddrive.

If the characters ask one of the other truckers if they know someone who fits the description given them by Eric, a trucker might inform the characters that they might be looking for a man that goes by the name Meathead. They will let the characters know that he can often be found, when not making shipments, at a truck stop just outside of town. The truckers will not pass along that info if they feel that Meathead will get in any sort of trouble (with the law or otherwise) since truckers tend to stick together. However, if the characters can assure the truckers that they "just want to talk to Meathead", or something similar, they might get them to open up. It is also possible that, in return for making several unpaid speed tickets "go away", a trucker might provide the characters with the info they need.

This is all the information the characters will receive. A search of the distribution centre's grounds and/or warehouse, whether by warrant or "after hours", will reveal no further information on the case. On the other hand, a thorough search of Fonsen's office will reveal a medium auto pistol (a 9mm Beretta) in a holster strapped underneath his desk. The desk drawer contains various standard office supplies, but a bottle of white typewriter correction fluid in the back of his desk drawer has a small spoon instead of a brush attached to the inside of the cap. Inside is a small amount of high quality powder cocaine.

The cocaine is enough to arrest Fonsen, but to make the charges stick (as opposed to just ruining his reputation), the characters must uncover the cocaine through a search warrant. As stated above, there is insufficient evidence for a warrant to be granted, at this point. If the characters attempt to make an arrest regardless, Harry will not resist arrest. Once at the police station, he will use his one phone call to contact Ice Tray to tell him of what has happened. Tray will arrange for bail the following day, anonymously. He also sets the events of "The Big Hit" (see below) in motion.

No matter what happens, Harry will report the character's descriptions and what happened to Ice Tray, who will take matters into his own hands.

#### 4. THE TRUCK STOP

The players might be able to track down Meathead is they find out any information from the other truckers are Big Fun's warehouse. If so, the characters will find Meathead and his 18-wheeler at the large highway truck stop outside the city proper.

Meathead is gruff and tired from an all-night hauling job, and is not in the mood to take any lip from anyone. He will be standing casually against his truck, relaxing while smoking a Canadian cigarette (the health warning label on the cigarette pack will clearly mark it as being a Canadian cigarette). If the characters introduce themselves as law enforcement types, he will answer their questions succinctly, clearly not being in a helpful mood. If asked about gun smuggling or the incident at the toy store, he will lie outright. If asked to account for his whereabouts, he will provide the characters with hand-written mileage logs, all of which are entirely false. They look authentic, but it requires a successful Mind-based Driving (big rig) Skill check at a +2 dice roll penalty to notice the logs do not match the mileage on the truck itself.

Meathead will tell the characters that he was in Canada last night, and if they need proof, he will tell them to call Canadian Customs. He will admit he has done work for Big Fun, but only occasionally when they needed extra trucks. He will admit to having met Harry Fonsen once or twice, but will claim he does not even remember what Harry looks like.



Since there is not yet sufficient evidence to gain a search warrant, the characters will not be able to legally search Meathead's truck. Characters who carefully examine the outside of the truck (which is permitted without a search warrant) may notice that his right front fender has recently undergone some body work. Whatever the characters find once Meathead is on the road, he will use a cell phone to contact Ice Tray and them him what happened. Tray will take matters into his own hands.

#### 5. THE BIG HIT

At this point the characters should have attracted the notice of Ice Tray. Tray wants to end the investigation into his smuggling operation, and will attempt to solve the problem as bluntly as he knows how. He sends some of his "boyz" to "hit" the characters. He wants a textbook drive-by — overkill, lots of property damage, and no concern for those who get in the way.

As the characters are contemplating their next move, a beat-up Cadillac will slowly turn the corner and approach the characters from behind. Characters who make a Mind roll will notice the Cadillac and will see that the windows are being rolled down as it heads towards them.

As soon as it is spotted, or as it pulls alongside the characters, two gang bangers will lean out of the car with machine pistols (micro-Uzis or Ingram M11) and unleash a hail of bullets at the characters. The gang bangers will empty the magazines of their machine pistols in 2 rounds before they attempt to make their get-away. The characters would be very smart to keep their heads down while the bullets fly. However, they might attempt to return fire, which will only cause the gang bangers to attempt their get-away earlier (they will leave at the first sign of resistance). If the car manages to pull away before the characters





incapacitate the driver or disable the car, the characters may decide to pursue their assailants. If the players give chase, the GM should use the rules in *Chapter 3: Boom and Vroom* for a car chase scene as the gang bangers weave in and out of traffic, dive down blind alleys, and doing anything they can to escape.

If the characters manage to take one of the gang members alive, he will talk with little prodding — all the members are young and relatively inexperienced. Any character with the Interrogation Skill gets a -2 dice roll bonus to make them talk on a successful Mind check (if the character is simply questioning the gang banger) or Body check (if they are "working them over"). The gang bangers will eventually tell the characters that they were ordered to kill them as their right of initiation into Ice Tray's gang. They will also tell the characters where they went to meet Ice Tray to pick up the weapons they were promised — an abandoned warehouse which is not too far away from Big Fun's warehouse. Beyond that, the gang bangers know nothing more. They will be surprised if the characters reveal they are law enforcement officers of any kind — Tray told them that the characters were "competition" and needed to be eliminated.

Characters who are from the Metro Detroit police force will know of Ice Tray by reputation. The GM can reveal selected elements of his Profile and M.O. to these players. If the characters access police files or ask street contacts, they will learn more about Ice Tray's criminal record and alleged involvement in numerous unsolved crimes. They will discover that he resides in an area of Detroit to which even the police are reluctant to go — an abandoned housing project that is virtually owned by gangs. He has not been seen there for several days, however, and is obviously lying low.

#### 6. ICE TRAY'S WAREHOUSE

The characters will easily be able to gain a search warrant to investigate the derelict warehouse where the would-be assassins obtained their machine pistols. When the characters arrive, they will find the warehouse virtually empty and abandoned. If any other police officers accompanied the characters to the warehouse, they will soon leave and allow the characters to continue searching the place themselves. The GM may require characters to make successful rolls against their Mind Stats to spot the clues listed below. Appropriate Skills (such as Police Sciences or Mechanics) may be used to modify the rolls as the GM sees fit.

**CLUE 1:** There was a big rig truck here recently. Traces of dirt from its tire treads remain on the floor. This was Meathead's truck, of course, but proving this will be next to impossible (with this clue).

**CLUE 2:** There was plenty of activity here, and it appears that wooden crates were unloaded, opened, and moved. Splinters from the crates can be seen all over the floor.

**CLUE 3:** A recently discarded cigarette pack lies crumpled on the floor. It is a Canadian brand, bearing a Canadian warning label on the packaging. It is the same brand that Meathead was seen smoking earlier. If checked for fingerprints, Ice Tray's and another, unknown set will be found. The other set belongs to Meathead (who, not having a criminal record, does not have his fingerprints on file).

**CLUE 4:** Behind the warehouse, inside a dumpster are cans of orange spray paint, and a few broken red and orange plastic caps similar to those found on gun barrels from the toy store. The orange paint is also the same colour that was used on the guns from the toy store (and lab tests will match the paint).

**CLUE 5:** There is a dent in the side of the garage door frame. Smale streaks of paint are in the dent, which may have come from a vehicle that collided with the frame. The paint is the same colour as Meathead's truck, and lab tests will prove that it is the exact same paint. Also, it will be fairly obvious that the dent is at the same height as the dent on Meathead's fender.



After any additional police units leave, while the characters are searching the warehouse, Ice Tray and his gang will arrive. Furious about the failure of the hit on the characters, he has decided to remove any evidence by torching the old warehouse. He and his gang (one gang banger per character) will arrive in a convoy of three cars. Along with guns, they have several gallons of gasoline in back of one of the vehicles to ensure that the warehouse burns to the ground.

If the characters are in the warehouse, the gang bangers will spot their vehicles outside, unless the characters were careful to concealed them. If the characters are being quiet (or have staked out the warehouse rather than going inside), Ice Tray and his gang may enter the warehouse without realizing the characters are there.

Once Tray realizes that the characters are inside, he will decide to finish the job that his initiates botched and attempt to gun down the characters. While he is violent and dangerous, he is also streetwise and knows when he is outgunned — he will attempt to retreat if things get too bad. If captured, he is willing to "rat out" his business partners, especially O'Reilly (because he is a member of law enforcement himself), but only in return for immunity (though if he is killed any law enforcement characters, this option will not be available). If he gets away, Tray might make a break for Canada, believing that getting out of Detroit will save him. Since the case is being jointly investigated by Canadian and American authorities, the characters will be permitted to follow Tray across the border in an effort to apprehend him.





#### 7. GOING AFTER MEATHEAD

With the evidence found at the warehouse (and possibly any information that Tray might provide), the characters will now easily be able to obtain a search warrant and possibly even an arrest warrant. Meathead will eventually receive about Tray's confrontation with the characters (especially if Tray is apprehended), and will try to make a run for Canada, where he believes he will be out of the characters' jurisdiction. Meathead will realize that the characters are after him just before they arrive. As they show up, he will be making his break for the border. This is an excellent chance for a chase between Meathead's big rig and the characters. Meathead will drive like a maniac, attempting to cause accidents in an effort to slow the characters. If he succeeds in evading the characters, he will ditch his truck in a parking lot, use his gun to steal a car (locking the motorist in the back of his truck) and attempt to evade the police. It is up to the characters to track Meathead and capture him.

#### 8. O'REILLEY

O'Reilly is the one potential victim in all of this. If the characters learn of his involvement in the crime, when confronted, he will immediately break and confess. O'Reilley will not become involved in combat with the characters. He will tell the characters about the entire operation: how he first discovered Meathead was running guns and how he was lured in by the money they offered him to keep quiet and help them.

O'Reilley will surrender to Canadian law enforcement officers, preferring to be tried in a Canadian court rather than the American system. He will, however, agree to testify against everyone involved in the scheme in return for leniency (he will ask for immunity but will settle for leniency if he believes that he will not get off free). His testimony, along with the evidence that the characters should uncover along the way, will be enough to convict everyone involved.

If the characters do not move to arrest O'Reilley quickly, however, he may escape. Once O'Reilley realizes that Tray, Harry, and/or Meathead have been arrested in connection to the gun smuggling operation, he will quit his job and leave Windsor immediately.

#### 9. RESOLUTION

The characters must apprehend all those involved in the gun smuggling operation and collect sufficient evidence to try each of them in court. This may take further investigation if Tray and O'Reilley escape (since they can provide vital testimony).

### CAMPAIGN EXPANSION

The GM may wish to use Dangerous Toys as a springboard for a continuing campaign. Law enforcement characters who make Detroit their home base of operations will need to deal with the aftermath of revenge by Ice Tray's gang. If any of the principle NPCs escape, they can also return to haunt the characters at a later date. Additionally, the characters will be expected to eventually find anyone who avoids arrest. The characters might become special border patrol officers, specializing in international crimes perpetrated in both the USA and Canada. Any characters who accept credit for busting the gun running operation in public may also be forced to deal with the Canadian criminals who were being supplied with weapons. It is up to the GM to decide exactly who they are and how tough they will be.

Appendix I Skill Checks



# SKILL CHECKS

A Skill check is similar to a Stat check (see *BESM*, page 63), except it is used when the task is one that the GM decides would be governed by both a particular Stat and a particular general Skill. For example, if a task required general intellectual ability (such as remembering the name of a person the character had met), only a Mind Stat check would be made. Determining the value of a painting stolen from a museum would also require a Mind Stat check, but this task is governed by the Cultural Arts Skill (more specifically, the Art Appraisal specialization). In role-playing terminology, this task would require a "Mind-Based Cultural Arts (Art Appraisal) Skill Check". A successful Skill check involves the player rolling less than or equal to the relvant Stat Value or Stat Value average on two dice. The degree of the action's success or failure is determined by the difference between the target number and the dice roll (see **Table A1-1: Degrees of** Success).

TABLE A1-1: DEGREES OF SUCCESS	
Roll is greater than the target number by 8 or more	Critical Failure
Roll is 6 or 7 greater than the target number	Extreme Failure
Roll is 4 or 5 greater than the target number	Major Failure
Roll is 2 or 3 greater than the target number	Minor Failure
Roll is 1 greater than the target number	Marginal Failure
Roll is equal to or 1 less than the target number	Marginal Success
Roll is 2 or 3 less than the target number	Minor Success
Roll is 4 or 5 less than the target number	Major Success
Roll is 6 or 7 less than the target number	Extreme Success
Roll is less than the target number by 8 or more	Critical Success

If the character undertaking the Skill check does not possess the Skill that the GM determines is relevant (or necessary), a dice roll penalty should be applied. The penalty can range from +1 for tasks that require little skill and are slightly difficult (such as jumping across a gap between buildings — an Acrobatics Skill), to +6 for tasks that require tremendous skill and are practically impossible (such as rebuilding a big rig engine in a few days — a Mechanics Skill). Tasks that the GM decide are not actually difficult may not receive any dice roll modifier. Conversely, the GM may decide that unbelievably difficult tasks (such as brain surgery, or the translation of ancient hieroglyphics) automatically fail when performed by characters lacking the required Skill. If the character does possess the appropriate Skill (even without the exact specialization), he or she receives a bonus to the Skill check dice roll. This bonus is equivalent to the character's Skill Level (if the task does not fall under his or her specialization) or one more than the character's Skill Level (if his or her specialization does apply). Even skilled characters can suffer or benefit from the difficulty modifiers in **Table 3-4: Dice Roll Modifications** (see *BESM*, page 64). Any difficulty modifiers that are assigned to a character's task are cumulative with his or her Skill Level bonus.

The GM is responsible for deciding which Stat, which Skill, and which specialization is relevant to a particular task, using the Stat and Skill descriptions given in *Chapter 2: Character Creation*. Since these questions can often be tricky, the GM should listen to the players' reasoning why a particular Skill or specialization might apply. The final decision belongs to the GM, however.



The modifiers provided by each particular Skill Level are summarized below:

Skill Level 1	A character is awarded a -1 bonus on the Skill check dice roll if he or she does not possesses a relevant specialty, or a -2 bonus if the character does possess the relevant specialty.
Skill Level 2	A character is awarded a -2 bonus on the Skill check dice roll if he or she does not possesses a relevant specialty, or a -3 bonus if the character does possess the relevant specialty.
Skill Level 3	A character is awarded a -3 bonus on the Skill check dice roll if he or she does not possesses a relevant specialty, or a -4 bonus if the character does possess the relevant specialty.
Skill Level 4	A character is awarded a -4 bonus on the Skill check dice roll if he or she does not possesses a relevant specialty, or a -5 bonus if the character does possess the relevant specialty.
Skill Level 5	A character is awarded a -5 bonus on the Skill check dice roll if he or she does not possesses a relevant specialty, or a -6 bonus if the character does possess the relevant specialty.
Skill Level 6	A character is awarded a -6 bonus on the Skill check dice roll if he or she does not possesses a relevant specialty, or a -7 bonus if the character does possess the relevant specialty.
EXAMPLE:	Peneekie learns from an informant that the notorious Red Sox Gang are planning to hit a

EXAMPLE: Peneekle learns from an informant that the notorious Red Sox Gang are planning to hit a bank at the other side of town. Peneekle's player reminds the GM that it is rush hour and the streets are full of traffic; the driving speed depends heavily upon how well a character can manoeuvre around obstacles. The GM decides this high-speed race requires a Skill checkfor Driving (Motorcycle), which is rolled against Peneekle's Body Stat of 7. The GM decides the task will be difficult (+2 dice roll Modifier). Peneekle has the Driving Skill at Level 1, with a specialization in Motorcycles and thus her Skill bonus is equal to her Skill Level plus one, resulting in a -2 dice roll modifier. If, the GM also gives Peneekle a -1 because of her bike's Manoeuvre bonus, the total modifier applied to Peneekle's dice roll would be -1 (+2 in penalties, and -3 in bonuses). Peneekle's player Susan rolls a 7, which is modified to a 6 — a marginal success. The GM tells Susan that her character arrives just as the bank robber's car screeches into the street outside the Third National Bank.

# WEAPON COMBAT SKILLS

The weapon combat Skills will modify a character's combat dice rolls to the same degree that a general Skill modifies a Skill check. Skills that are described in *Chapter 2: Character Creation* as "Attack Combat Skills" will modify Attack Combat rolls when a character is using the particular weapons or techniques they described. Similarly, Skills described as "Defense Combat Skills" modify Defense Combat rolls. For example, a character with Gun Combat (Pistol) Level 1 receives a -1 bonus to his Attack roll when using any gun, or a -2 bonus when using a pistol.

A character can usually fire a gun or hit someone with a melee weapon (or fist and feet) even if he or she does not possess the relevant Attack Combat Skill. Consequently, attacking or defending characters do not suffer a dice roll penalty; a character without the combat Skill simply does not receive a dice roll bonus. Exception: weapons that use the Heavy Weapon Combat Skill have more complex procedures, and thus unskilled users suffer a +2 Attack roll penalty.

Appendix Z iaws and **Pagulations** 



This appendix illuminates some of the procedures and laws regarding motor vehicle and firearms ownership in the United States, Japan, and Canada. A summary of the "Miranda Warning" made famous by many police shows and movies is also included, along with a section discussing the ins and outs of legal bounty hunting and the differences between Japanese and American legal and police procedures. Unless noted otherwise, all dollar values are in US currency, and are current up to the year 2000.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** actual laws (especially for guns) are very complex, with many exceptions and special cases. The material presented here is highly simplified, and should not substitute for actual legal advice.

### FIREARM LAWS

The laws regulating firearms are important for both criminal and law enforcement characters. Criminals will wish to know what they and their rivals can carry without being busted — and what they can make a profit smuggling. Cops can use gun violations as a tool to crack down on their adversaries, while bounty hunters and private detectives will wish to know what they can legally carry without breaking the law.

This section is a rough guide to firearm laws in the United States, Canada, and Japan, and also serves as examples of different levels of gun regulation. Most other nations are usually more restrictive than the United States but less so than Japan. Note that some nations may have strict gun laws on paper, but very lax enforcement due to corruption, lack of money for policing, or the breakdown of civil order.

Law enforcement agencies and the military are exempt from most of the legal restrictions described below, although local regulations may limit the weapons to which police departments have access. Obsolete antiques (generally pre-1898 "black powder" firearms or weapons using ammunition that is no longer available) and unserviceable weapons are also largely exempt from rules, provided it is difficult to bring them back into a working condition. In the United States, the term "DEWAT" (deactivated war trophy) refers to an unserviceable military weapon in private hands.

#### GUN LAWS IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States is one of the easiest places in the world to legally acquire a firearm. There are over 200 million guns in the US, roughly one for each American, and some estimates suggest more. In a typical year, 30-40,000 people are killed by firearms.

Gun ownership is subject to federal, state and local legislation. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF), part of the Treasury Department, enforces federal firearms laws. Violations of federal firearms laws can result in up to 10 years imprisonment and fines up to \$250,000. Under federal law, the use of a firearm in a violent or drug-trafficking crime is punishable by a mandatory prison sentence of 1 to 20 years. Someone convicted of using a machine gun, silenced weapon or destructive device during a violent or drug-related crime faces mandatory life imprisonment. In federal law, there are two main classes of firearms and accessories: Title 1 weapons and Title 2 ("NFA") weapons.

#### TITLE 1 WEAPONS

"Title 1" weapons are the basic civilian firearms: rifles, shotguns and handguns. The term "Title 1" comes from a section of the Gun Control Act. Title 1 weapons can be purchased in gun shops, at gun shows, or (sometimes) through the mail, provided this does not violate state or local laws.



Unlike many other countries, it is not necessary to have a federal permit or license to own a rifle or shotgun, nor is any federal permit needed to own a pistol. However, it is illegal for gun dealers to sell firearms or ammunition to minors (under 18), and only shotguns, rifles or their ammunition can be sold to people under age 21. It is also against the law to sell guns or ammunition to anyone who has been convicted of serious crimes (a year or more in jail, any drug offense), is a fugitive from justice, a drug addict or mental patient, a non-citizen, dishonourably discharged from the military, or who is under a restraining order meant to deter stalking or domestic violence. Firearms are also restricted by federal law from being carried into some areas, such as federal buildings, court houses, and aboard commercial aircraft.

The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (Brady Bill) requires a five-day waiting period before picking up a handgun after purchasing it. This permits time for a background check (to prevent selling guns to a felon, minor, fugitive, etc.) and allows a "cooling down" period so someone does not purchase a gun on the spur of the moment and then use it. The Brady Bill may, at some point, be replaced by an "instant background check" performed by computer.

Individual states have passed their own laws further regulating certain Title 1 firearms, especially pistols. Individuals transporting guns across state lines will need to be aware of the differences in state law. These differing laws also provide a ready market for gun smugglers, and help explain why illegal guns are often readily available in states that have more restrictive gun legislation than those which do not. The state or local laws that regulate "concealed carry" of firearms are most relevant to *HRGB* characters. In Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio and Wisconsin, it is illegal to carry a concealed, loaded firearm (there may be some exemptions for individuals that require one for their occupation, such as a security guard). Guns being transported on foot or by vehicle must be unloaded and kept in a case. In other states, there are either no such restrictions (Vermont) or concealed carry is allowed if the owner has a (relatively easy to acquire) state or county-issue concealed carry permit. A concealed carry permit usually requires a police background check and passing a short gun-safety course.

All guns manufactured must be marked with an individual serial number. Filing off the serial number is illegal (and can also damage the gun if done carelessly).

#### TITLE 2 ("NFA") WEAPONS

"Title 2" weapons and accessories are those that are regulated by the National Firearms Act (NFA) of 1968. (The name comes from title 2 of the Act). They are also called "class 3" weapons, after the class 3 Special Occupational Taxpayer license that a gun dealer should have to sell them. NFA weapons include all machine guns, shotguns with shortened or sawed-off barrels, silencers and destructive devices. This latter category includes weapons such as explosive hand grenades, Molotov cocktails, and poison gas, as well as heavy weapons such as cannons, mortars, grenade launchers, recoilless rifles, and rocket launchers. Devices such as flare guns are not included. Oddly, flame throwers are not regulated either, but they are not exactly easy to obtain.

The regulations restricting Title 1 weapons apply to Title 2 weapons. In addition, all Title 2 weapons must be federally registered. In order to buy a Title 2 weapon, the sale must first be approved by the BATF, which collects a tax (usually about \$200) on each purchase. The seller must also pay a tax if he or she is not a registered "class 3" dealer. The buyer must be 21 or over, and must fill in and send off a BATF form 4. This requires a passport photo and an indication why the weapon is being purchased (usually "collector"). The prospective buyer must be fingerprinted at local police or sheriff's office, and the officer must sign a statement certifying that the purchaser is not wanted. The dealer will then collect the \$200 tax and mail the paperwork off to the BATF, which does its own background check. After two or three months,



the authorization for the sale will arrive and the gun can be picked up from the dealer. The owner is required to keep close tabs on it (not lend it out, etc.). He or she may not transfer it to another person without going through a similar procedure, or transport it across state lines without telling the BATF.

As long as the weapon is properly registered, the tax paid and the appropriate paperwork is filed, federal law does not prohibit a private citizen from owning a machine gun, silencer or similar device. However, many NFA weapons are prohibited by individual states. In particular, machine guns are either banned outright or very heavily regulated in California, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Washington. The BATF will not approve sales or purchases where they would violate state legislation.

The laws regulating destructive devices (poison gas, anti-tank missiles, etc.) are stricter, and in general, private citizens will not be able to acquire them unless they have an appropriate license to make these sorts of things for the government or foreign export.

#### DEALING IN GUNS

Dealing in guns and ammunition or shipping them across state lines requires a Federal Firearms License (FFL), which involves an application to the BATF and a \$30 fee. The license is good for approximately three years before it has to be renewed. The application takes about 45 days to process, including at least a cursory background check or phone interview. A Federal Firearms License enables its holder to purchase guns and ammunitions from manufacturers at dealer-discounted rates or (sometimes) by mail, and is usually needed to work as a gunsmith. However, the reason not every gun owner jumps at this opportunity is that having an FFL also requires the holder to specify a place of business where the firearms or ammunition are kept, and to permit BATF agents to make unannounced inspections, without a warrant, during its hours. Some states also require additional licenses for gun and ammunition dealers.

A dealer must document each sale, recording the details on a federal form 4473, which identifies the purchaser (some sort of ID is required, usually proof of residence in the state and a driver's license) and also records the make, model, and serial number of the firearm. However, this information is not sent out to the BATF. It is simply kept in the gun shop's records, and it is up to the BATF to come by and examine them if they wish to trace a particular gun used in a crime (identified by its serial number) back to its original buyer. Sales to an individual of multiple handguns within a five-day period require dealer notification to BATF (who will often choose to investigate) although this is done by mail. The reason the BATF are interested in multiple handgun sales is that it might indicate someone who is buying guns for illegal resale (to minors, criminals and so on). Such "straw man" sales (where one person buys a gun for someone not supposed to have it) are a major source of illegal weapons. Violations of dealer record keeping requirements are punishable by a penalty of up to \$1,000 and one year's imprisonment.

Becoming a dealer in Title 2 "NFA" firearms such as machine guns is more difficult. Any FFL holder can deal in individual machine guns provided his or her state has not made this illegal, but he or she must pay an additional \$200 tax on each such weapon. To get around this, the gun dealer must become a "Class 3 SOT Dealer" which costs an additional \$500 per year, and requires a somewhat more stringent background check then a normal license requires, along with a lot of paperwork. Normally such a license will only be available to someone who supplies law enforcement or the military.

Becoming a dealer in destructive devices (explosives, grenades, rocket launchers, etc.) requires a separate "Category 10" Federal Firearms License. This costs \$1,000 per year and is normally only granted to companies who are supplying the government.

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#### THE 1994 CRIME BILL

This legislation held two provisions of interest to gun-owners.

**LARGE CAPACITY MAGAZINE BAN:** Manufacture or sale of new magazines holding more than 10 rounds was banned. Existing "pre-ban" magazines made before 1994 were unaffected, and can still be bought and sold, although at higher prices and reduced availability. For certain types of weapons, legal preban high-capacity magazines are now hard to obtain, but any magazine can be reloaded after it is used.

**ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN:** Sale or possession of post-1994 "semi-automatic assault weapons" was also banned. An "assault weapon" was essentially defined as any gun that had specific military-style features. This made it illegal to buy or sell new semi-automatic versions (lacking auto-fire ability) of submachine guns, battle rifles, machine pistols and assault rifles, or any firearm with any two of these accessories or features: bayonet attachment, flash suppressor, folding/telescoping stock, grenade launcher or pistol grip. It also banned semi-automatic military-style shotguns ("assault shotguns"). As with magazines, the Crime Bill did not limit the ownership or resale of existing weapons. The result: pre-ban weapons have all gone up in price, but still remain available.

#### OTHER LAWS

**AMOUR PIERCING BULLETS:** As of 1986, the "Cop Killer Bullet" legislation — Section 922(a)17(b) — banned any kind of AP round that could be fired from a hand gun. However, people have made handguns in all kinds of exotic calibres, including rifle calibres, and as a result, practically every type of armourpiercing bullet is banned.

**HOLDOUT WEAPONS:** A firearm that cannot be detected by airport security systems or similar devices is also illegal to buy, make, sell, or possess. This explicitly does not apply to military or intelligence agencies, who can develop and possess this sort of weapon. Specially-designed guns that do not look like guns (weapons disguised as pens, for example) are considered Title 2 weapons, although the regulations for their sale are less stringent than those for machine guns, silencers or destructive devices.

**GUNS ON AIRLINES:** Carrying a gun or explosive device on board a plane is serious felony. A gun can be carried in checked luggage provided it is declared, signed in, specially tagged, emptied, and stored in a hard case. Destructive devices or more than a few kilos of ammunition are prohibited. Gun transport on international flights is usually even more restrictive, depending on the carrier and destination. About the only individuals authorized to actually carry a gun on a civilian airliner are sky marshals or other specialized law enforcement agents. The average city cop could not do so.

#### GUN LAWS IN CANADA

Firearm ownership is more restrictive in Canada than in the United States, but it is legal to own some kinds of guns in Canada. Despite these restrictions, there may be as many as 3 to 7 million gun owners in Canada, and from 6-20 million guns (exact estimates vary). About 1 in 3 rural Canadian homes have a gun, but less than 1 in 15 urban homes. Approximately 150-250 people are killed in Canada every year from gun fire.

Violating Canadian gun control regulations (such as carrying a pistol without a proper permit) may lead to a 5-year prison term. More severe violations, such as gun smuggling, will mean at least a 10-year sentence. Someone who is convicted of using a firearm during a crime can expect to have 1-14 years added to his or her sentence (at least 3 years if a repeat offence). It is estimated that 86% of illegal handguns in Canada are imported from the US.


#### **RIFLE AND SHOTGUN OWNERSHIP**

In Canada, only weapons equivalent to US "Title 1" weapons are available at all. Machine guns, AP bullets and destructive devices are completely illegal for private ownership or sale. Any prospective gun owner must possess a firearms acquisition certificate. In order to obtain one, an applicant must be an adult citizen, must pass a full-day firearms safety course, fill in a detailed questionnaire (and in some provinces, multiple letters of reference from appropriate individuals, such as one's employer, police officers, doctors or lawyers), and undergo a police background check. There is a fee of \$50 CAN. A person may fail a background check if they are mentally unstable, have a criminal background, are an illegal immigrant, or have a history of drug, spousal or alcohol abuse.

If the firearms acquisition certificate is granted, the recipient is authorized to purchase shotguns or rifles and their ammunition. Semi-automatic rifles and shotguns are limited to a five-round magazine. Americans entering the country may bring rifles or shotguns with them for hunting or competition, if they declare them at the border and they obey this restriction.

#### PISTOL OWNERSHIP

Getting a handgun is more difficult. The applicant must have a firearms acquisition certificate. He or she may then apply for a pistol permit, and must specify the reason the handgun is needed. Valid reasons are:

1) To protect one's life — but only if the applicant can show that police protection would be inadequate and his or her life is in serious danger. This is rarely granted.

2) For one's occupation. This permit is only granted to individuals who are security guards working for appropriate companies.

3) As a collector. This allows the user to have the pistol at home, but he or she may not carry or move it except under very severe restrictions (in a locked box, for example), and restrictions are placed on use and display of it.

4) For target shooting. Again, this does not permit the user to carry it in public, except in a locked box, and he or she must belong to a registered shooting club

In addition, handguns are limited to 10-round magazine, and snub-nosed weapons are illegal. Visitors entering the country may not bring handguns with them.

#### GUN LAWS IN JAPAN

Firearm laws in Japan are even more restrictive than Canada's, let alone those of the United States. Gun legislation falls under the Gun and Sword Control Act. It recognizes civilian gun ownership as valid for only two purposes: sports competition shooting and hunting. In sharp contrast to the United States, selfdefense is not considered a justifiable reason for firearm ownership.

There are about 100,000 guns (legal and illegal) estimated to be in private hands in Japan. Illegal possession of firearms is punished by 1-10 years in prison. Getting caught using a gun during a crime means 3 years to life in prison, with similar penalties for arms smuggling. 50-80 people are killed in Japan each year by firearms, and about 100-200 people are arrested for gun crimes. A few thousand illegal guns are seized annually, mostly in incidents related to organized criminal gangs. The rarity of guns drives up prices on the black market. An illegal revolver or auto pistol can sell for as much as 200-400,000 yen, or about \$2,000-4,000 dollars, about 20 times the price of a black market pistol in the US.



#### **RIFLE AND SHOTGUN OWNERSHIP**

Ownership of a sporting or hunting weapon requires a license. To get one, the applicant must attend a short safety lecture at his or her neighbourhood police station, pass a safety examination, and register for the license (which is good for three years).

This is only the start of the procedure, however, and only qualifies the applicant to purchase air rifles and air pistols. To own an actual firearm, the would-be gun owner must be over 20 (or 18, if he or she has the support of an official sports organization). The procedure depends on the type of firearm.

A permit for a shotgun requires additional paperwork be submitted to the police, along with passing a (fairly easy) shooting examination and an exhaustive background check. All of this takes 2-3 months. As usual, individuals with a history of mental illness, criminal records, drug addiction or alcohol problems will be denied a license.

A permit for a rifle requires the same process, with the additional requirement of membership in the National Rifle Association of Japan plus a more difficult skill certification examination. The purchase of a large calibre (medium or heavy) rifle is only permitted if the applicant has either owned a light rifle for at least a year or has owned a shotgun for at least 10 years.

Each individual firearm purchase requires a preliminary visit to the gun shop to select the weapon, and then another month's wait while the gun store sends out paperwork to the police. An individual permit is needed for each weapon. After picking up the permit, the gun can finally be taken out of the store. Within two weeks of the initial purchase, the newly-bought gun must then be taken to a police station for a final inspection. Purchase of ammunition requires additional paperwork and police permission. A gun owner is required to keep his or her weapon in a secure, locked cabinet. Firearms must also be taken to the police station once a year for an annual inspection.

#### PISTOL OWNERSHIP

A license for a pistol (for sports shooting only) is very difficult to get. The would-be license-holder must have passed an air pistol test and gain an excellent score in safety and marksmanship. Even if the user has passed the test, the law limits the total number of pistol license holders to 50 at any one time, in all of Japan! Moreover, the pistol is not licensed for concealed carry, and must be transported in a sealed case when going to or from a competition — and stored at a police station for safekeeping when not in use. The odds of meeting a citizen with a legally registered pistol are extremely low.

## MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS

This section describes a few of the laws that apply to motor vehicle operation in the US, Japan and Canada. Characters who are cops on traffic or highway patrol should have abundant opportunities to chase suspects violating any of these regulations.

#### US MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS AND POLICE PROCEDURES

All vehicles must be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and drivers (except those driving on their own property, such as a farm) must be licensed.

Minimum age for a driver's license is 16. Vehicles are usually required to carry a minimum amount of liability insurance. Anyone not having proper coverage involved in an accident, regardless of fault, may have their license suspended.



People operating oversized vehicles (big rigs, busses, etc.) normally require a special commercial driver's license. Professional truck drivers operating interstate or on journeys over about 100 miles (160 km) are required to follow a variety of regulations and paperwork, including a strict limit on the hours they can drive without rest, which is kept in a log book. Exact regulations vary, but about 10 hours behind the wheel or 15 hours "on duty" is a typical limit. They are generally required to perform a pre-trip mechanical inspection for every trip, and log the results. Logs must normally be kept for at least six months before they can be destroyed. If a driver does not properly comply, he or she may be stopped and detained by state authorities and can face heavy fines.

Americans drive on the right side of the road (unlike Japan or the United Kingdom). There is a speed limit of 55 mph (88 kph) on most highways or 65 mph (105 kph) on most designated Interstate highways. In cities and towns this can drop to 25 mph (32 kph). Police speed traps using radar (or laser) to measure speed can be found along highways, but will usually ignore drivers going no more than 10 mph (16 kph) over the limit.

Police stops for traffic violations often catch criminals wanted for other offenses. In areas where drug dealers are suspected, especially near border crossings, police may use "profiles" that are fairly accurate general guidelines for what cars drug-dealers use and how they drive. These are in disfavour in some areas because they are seen as discriminatory (targeting young male Hispanics and blacks with expensive cars, for example). However, the smugglers know this ... so they try to drive safely and avoid attracting attention. As a result, the profile in some areas for a smuggler now includes "two young [minority] males, ordinary, old car, driving under the speed limit". Some officers may consider this profiling absurd, but stopping suspects on the pretext of a "moving violation" is a very real tool of police work. Good reasons to pull a suspect over besides erratic driving include driving too fast, an expired tag, or are in violation of emission standards. Police dealing with suspects who they wish to "get off the streets" or intimidate will often run a check for unpaid parking tickets or similar minor violations, since this gives them an excuse to take the suspect to a police station.

When police stop a suspect in a motor vehicle, they expect the driver to use their turn signal indicators and pull over safely. Suspects will be instructed to remain in their vehicle and wait for the officer's approach, keeping their hands on the steering wheel in full view. The officer will approach from the rear, making it more difficult for him or her to be the target of gunfire. The driver will be asked to provide his or her license, vehicle registration and/or proof of insurance. The officer will observe the suspect closely to ensure that he or she does not pull a weapon from a pocket or glove compartment. Officers can be very cautious, since many officer shootings occur in such situations. If issued a citation, the offender is required to sign the form on the spot; this does not imply any kind of confession.

Speeding or parking violations usually result in fines from \$10 to \$300 (more if the offender failed to stop or drove hazardously). Driving Under the Influence (DUI) of alcohol can be a serious offense. The legal blood-alcohol limit is 0.08% (0.01% if under 21). If busted, penalties are \$400 to \$1,000 in fines and/or 48 hours to six months in jail, or worse if someone is hurt. The state may also impound the vehicle for up to 30 days (and make the driver pay for it). It is also illegal to carry an open container of alcohol (full or empty) in a vehicle's passenger compartment. Many states have seatbelt laws and require cyclists to wear helmets, with additional fines for non-compliance.



#### CANADIAN MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS

These laws are generally similar to US laws. The speed limit on highways is usually 100 kph on major highways, 80 kph on secondary highways, and about 50 kph in cities and towns. Use of seat belts is compulsory, with heavy fines for non-compliance. Radar detectors are illegal in most provinces.

#### JAPANESE MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS

These laws are also similar to US laws: cars must be registered, drivers licensed, etc. The licensing requirements are a little more rigorous (and much more expensive) than in the United States, and as a result, fewer young people have one. For this reason, having a driver's license is much more of a sign of status for youth, so some young people will make the effort to do so even if they do not own a car, to impress their friends (they can, of course, drive a rental). A peculiarity of Japanese licensing rules is that safety inspections (shaken) are required of cars three or more years old every other year, with inspections every year after the car is nine or more years old. The inspection costs about 100,000 yen (around \$1,000) with additional repair costs if the car fails. The obvious effect is that most people buy new cars rather than used ones and replace their vehicles every 4-5 years. Also, any licensee with anything larger than a sub-compact must be able to prove he or she has a private parking place for their vehicle. This tends to discourage car ownership in Tokyo.

Japanese law requires that a motorcyclist be strong enough to right his or her bike if it has fallen over. For this reason, along with the fact that they are exempt from the shaken, smaller scooters tend to be a bit more popular than big motorbikes.

The speed limit is approximately 80 kph on expressways (major toll-road highways) dropping to about 50 kph on minor roads (in big cities, traffic may slow speeds to a crawl). Police and speed traps are occur less frequently on Japanese roads compared to those in America. On expressways, speeds up to 20 kph over the limit are common. Radar detectors are legal.

Drunken driving is very harshly punished in Japan.

Japanese drive on the left side of the road. Gasoline is about five times more expensive in Japan (and many other parts of the world) than it is North America.

### **BOUNTY HUNTING AND BAIL**

The typical modern bounty hunter works for a bail bondsman. For all but the most serious crimes, a suspect who is awaiting trial will be allowed out of jail if he or she can get someone to "post a bond" — that is, put up a certain amount of collateral as bail. Since many suspects do not have several thousand dollars handy, a bail bondsman is someone who offers a short-term loan to a suspect to pay his or her bail in exchange for about a 10% fee.

If the suspect "jumps bail" and fails to appear in court, the bondsman pays the bounty hunter a finder's fee so he or she will be able to get back some of his or her money by forcibly ensuring the client makes a court appearance. A typical finder's fee is 10 to 30% of the total bail. Bounty hunters are most common in the United States, where about 50 to 100 are active at any one time, catching several thousand fugitives every year. A few states (Indiana and Nevada) offer a license and provide bounty hunters some additional protection under law from being sued by outraged bail-jumpers or accidentally arrested by cops who mistake the bounty hunter for a criminal. In other states, bounty hunters must make a "citizen's arrest" which means they could be in serious trouble if they use too much force. Bounty hunting is illegal in Illinois, Kentucky or Oregon and in a few local jurisdictions.

AWS AND REGULATIONS

APPENDIX 2

## THE MIRANDA WARNING

In accordance with the Supreme Court appeal case Miranda v. Arizona, 384 U.S. 436 (1966), a United States law enforcement office must read a suspect his or her Miranda Rights before questioning them about a crime. This is (according to the U.S. Supreme Court) because "the atmosphere and environment of incommunicado interrogation as it exists today (1966) is inherently intimidating and works to undermine the [constitutional] privilege against self-incrimination." A Miranda warning's exact phrasing may vary slightly, but to avoid letting the suspect get off on a technicality, most cops carry a card with the warning written on it (sometimes the back has the same warning in Spanish). It is:

#### MIRANDA WARNING

- 1. You have the right to remain silent and refuse to answer questions.
- 2. Anything you do say may be used against you in a court of law.
- 3. You have the right to consult an attorney before speaking to the police and to have an attorney present during questioning now or in the future.
- 4. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for you before any questioning if you wish.
- 5. If you decide to answer questions now without an attorney present you will still have the right to stop answering at any time until you talk to an attorney.
- 6. Knowing and understanding your rights as I have explained them to you, are you willing to answer my questions without an attorney present?

Reading a suspect his or her rights usually takes two rounds or game time. Action heroes may engage in other activities (cuffing their suspect, for example) while doing so.

If a suspect is asked to make a signed confession, he or she must generally also sign a written statement which reiterates the Miranda warning. Outside of the US, most democratic nations give the subject a similar right to refuse police questioning without a lawyer present, but officers are not required to "read the subject his or her rights".

## LAW AND ORDER IN JAPAN

A serious examination of the Japanese legal system and how it differs from that of America is beyond the scope of this book. The GM can assume most aspects are similar, with a few exceptions.

#### POLICING

This is based around the *"koban"* system, in which beat cops operate from a network of local police boxes (koban) located one per neighbourhood. Each *koban* is assigned a car and a couple of officers. Cops carry batons, and some have pistols as well. Female officers are relatively rare (2%) and normally only assigned to office jobs, traffic patrol, juvenile or undercover duties, although this is slowly changing.



#### CRIME

The Yakuza, the traditional Japanese organized crime families, achieved their greatest power in the 1950s and 60s as a result of the black markets and rationing that followed World War II. Each gang is headed by an *oyabun* who acts as the gang's father figure; under him are various high-ranking *kobun*. Traditionally, they have cultivated an "honourable gangster" image, although this has faded in recent decades. Noted Yakuza idiosyncrasies include a kobun cutting off a finger to show contrition if he displeases or fails his boss, the wearing of colourful tattoos, and driving large black imported cars.

Motorcycle gangs (*bosusoku*) are usually only peripherally involved with the yakuza, preferring to simply make noise, act tough, and rumble with other gangs. However, foreign criminals (Russians, Tongs, Triads, Korean gangsters, etc.) have attempted to muscle in on the Japanese crime scene, which involves all the usual forms of criminal activity (extortion and protection rackets, gambling, prostitution, smuggling). The major drug traffic is in amphetamines imported from other Asian countries, rather than cocaine or heroin. As in much of Asia, drug crimes are punished harshly, and drug use is lower in Japan than in America. In 1992, the *Actfor Prevention of Unlawful Activities by Boryokudan Members* was enacted. It was aimed at yakuza or criminal gangs, similar to U.S. RICO legislation. This legislation designates the term *boryokudan* as a group with a good proportion of members who have criminal records, and gives strong powers to prosecutors and cops in going after them, especially to crush protection rackets and money laundering. This has seriously harmed Yakuza operations.

#### JUSTICE

Japan's public prosecutors have more autonomy than an American D.A., and have considerable power to investigate cases on their own, even without police. They can also decide whether or not a crime should be prosecuted (even if they can prove a crime has been committed). Suspects have similar rights to those in America, but Japanese cops do have a tradition of using more of a "third degree" than is typical in the U.S. to get suspects to confess. Suspects may be detained up to 10 days pending trial. In Japan, there is no trial by jury. Instead, a tribunal of judges handles all cases. As a result, criminal proceedings are often quite rapid. However, Japanese civil trials can take a long time to go to court, since there are many legal obstacles that a defendant with deep pockets use. There is no guilty plea in a Japanese court. The evidence must always be examined even if the subject confesses, but confessions are given considerable weight, and if a first-time offender appears sincerely contrite, he or she will usually get a substantially lighter sentence. Often before a trial (even in serious cases like assault or rape), the defense will try to meet with victims or their families and arrange a settlement based on confession and reparations, to speed up the actual trial or get charges dropped. Japanese courts strongly favour the prosecution, and the conviction rate is very high.

Anyone under age 20 is normally tried in Juvenile court, with lighter sentences. It is much harder for civil or criminal cases to get retrials in Japan, even if new evidence is discovered that might suggest a miscarriage of justice.

#### SENTENCING

In order of severity, the sentences a court can execute are: death by hanging, imprisonment with labour, imprisonment, heavy fines (over 10,000 yen), penal detention (short imprisonment up to 30 days), and minor fines (less than 10,000 yen). Assets involved in criminal acts may also be confiscated. The death penalty is usually only assigned to murder when committed during robberies (rather than crimes of passion). Very few (0-10) death sentences are assigned in a year.

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## HOT RODS AND GUN BUNNIES

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#### HOT RODS AND GUN BUNNIES



#### JIM CROCKER (AUTHOR)

Hot Rods & Gun Bunnies is Jim Crocker's first full-length RPG project. Jim cut his teeth on Hero Games' Adventurer's Club fanzine, and has written Champions material for Gold Rush Games' Heroic Adventures series as well as creating 2 critters and one rascal for Pinnacle's Rascals, Varmints, and Critters for their Deadlands RPG. His contribution to this book was eventually finished despite three weddings (one of them his), two conventions, and his full-time gaming gig as manager of Ann Arbor's Underworld Comics & Games (Michigan). Jim can be reached through his personal e-mail address at jcrocker@aol.com.

#### DAVID L. PULVER (CO-AUTHOR / SENIOR STAFF WRITER)

David was born in Kingston, Ontario and grew up in England, New Zealand and Canada. While in high school, he became fascinated with RPGs and board games, and enjoyed creating his own rules and adventures. David earned his B.A. (History) from Queen's University (Kingston) in 1988, and immediately after graduation decided to embark on a career as a full time game designer, coincidentally discovering anime at exactly the same time. Since then, David has written or co-authored over 25 RPG books (many of them for SJ Games' *GURPS* line) including an Origins Award-winning adventure. Anime has remained one of his major influences: before joining GUARDIANS OF ORDER to work on anime-related projects full-time, David wrote *GURPS Mecha* (SJ Games) and *Bubblegum Crisis: Before and After* (R. Talsorian). David's other writing credits with GUARDIANS OF ORDER include *Big Robots, Cool Starships* (or *BRCS*) and *The Dominion Tank Police RPG and Resource Book*. When not writing or gaming, David enjoys reading SF, fantasy, manga and military history, watching anime, and writing novels. David can be reached through his GUARDIANS OF ORDER e-mail address at david@guardiansorder.on.ca.

#### MARK C. MACKINNON (PRESIDENT AND TRI-STAT™ SYSTEM CREATOR)

Mark was raised in Petawawa, Ontario, and spent many hours in his earlier years designing outrageous boardgames for his friends to play. Now 27, Mark has finished his undergraduate degree in honours applied chemistry at the University of Guelph, but decided to abandon his Master's Degree in favour of running GUARDIANS OF ORDER full time. Additionally, Mark was one of the founding organizers of the *AmberCon North* conventions in Toronto, Ontario (Canada's Amber Diceless Role-Playing Convention) and has been granted the title of "*Amber's Canadian Ambassador Plenipotentiary*" by Erick Wujcik of Phage Press. His writing and publication credits include *Toying With Destruction, Big Eyes, Small Mouth, The Sailor Moon Role-Playing Game and Resource Book* and a couple of chemical journal articles. In his spare time Mark enjoys watching Japanese anime, reading fantasy and SF, playing volleyball, fencing, and playing all kinds of games. He can be reached through his GUARDIANS OF ORDER e-mail address at mark@guardiansorder.on.ca.

#### JEFF MACKINTOSH (ART DIRECTOR)

Jeff was born in the small town of Reddeer Alberta. After a few short years that he scarcely remembers, he moved to Kingston Ontario for 13 years of his life. From there, he moved to Montreal, Quebec and his life changed forever. In Montreal, he realized what he wanted to be — a graphic designer. After a short bout of educational-chaos, he graduated and joined the working world. In 1996, he somehow managed to trick Dream Pod 9 into allowing him to write a *Shadis* article for their *Heavy Gear* game line. The following year, along with further freelance writing in several *Heavy Gear* products, he started a full-time job as the art director of XID Creative and helped develop the *Providence* role-playing game. While there, he got to ply his skills as a graphic designer. He also worked on strengthening his fledgling skills as a writer and now has over a dozen writing credits to his name. In September 1999, Jeff joined the GUARDIANS OF ORDER team in Guelph. Jeff can be reached through his GUARDIANS OF ORDER e-mail address at jeff@guardiansorder.on.ca.

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#### AARON JENKINSON (ARTIST)

New to the field but not the market, Aaron Jenkinson has enjoyed role-playing games from early childhood, and has always found Japanese animation inspiring and imaginative. Formally trained in Graphic Arts, illustration is still his first love, and he maintains a healthy comic book collection. Aaron keeps his skills sharp not only by drawing, but painting miniatures and illustrating his own comic books. Aaron loves manga in all forms from toys to games to anime, and encourages everyone to enjoy the genre. "Comics and animation are the best way to convey the images and stories of your creative mind to a mass group. Role-playing is the best way to share your imagination with friends."

#### LOCKE (ARTIST)

Locke's attention to detail, composition and atmosphere is amazing. He has worked in the comic industry for 6 years under Antarctic Press and EROS comics. Some of his works include, *Helter Skelter, Robotech Vermillion, Shadowgear,* and most recently *Skin Tight.* His website can be found at http://locke.anime.net.

#### DAVID OKUM (ARTIST)

David is a high school art teacher and a freelance artist. He has published anime-related artwork in publications like *Big Robots, Cool Starships* (Guardians of Order), *Ninja High School Annuals* (Antarctic Press), *Contraption* (self-published comic) and *LaRoche* in *Uncommon Works* (Pukka Comics). He has produced numerous T-shirts, posters, novel covers, comic strips and book illustrations. David also creates paintings and exhibits his artwork in commercial galleries and shops. David has an Honours B.A. in Fine Art from the University of Waterloo. David can be reached at dokum@msn.com or at the Okumarts website at http://www.angelfire.com/biz3/okumarts/index.html.

#### FRANCIS TSAI (ARTIST)

Francis Tsai works at a game company in Southern California creating improbable environments and overly fussy sci-fi and fantasy objects and characters. Prior to that, he worked in the field of architecture designing houses, office buildings and monolithic corporate ego-structures. He started his career in college, drawing editorial cartoons, painting murals and airbrushing stuff on cars. After obtaining an expensive and little-used chemistry degree, he spent a few years getting an expensive and more useful architecture degree, which led to a couple of interesting jobs, a couple of really crappy jobs, and a really cool job. When he's not cranking out stuff for work, Francis plays stuff on his guitar, rides his Gravity board and hangs out with his lovely wife Linda. You can find out more than you ever wanted to at www.teamgt.com.

#### LONG VO (ARTIST)

Long Vo worked on PC games and has been a professional web designer and is a freelance artist on the side. He's done cover art for the *Tekken 2* comic book series (for Knightstone comics), has been published in game magazines (Gamer's Republic and PSM) and is currently working on *ECHO* for Dreamwave Productions which will be published through Image comics in March 2000. Long Vo's website can be found at http://scroll.syste.ms.



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#06-003	Sailor Mars vs. Jedite	#06-004	Sailor Jupiter vs. Nephlite
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#### The Demon City Shinjuku RPG and Resource Book (05-001)

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#### The Tenchi Muyo! RPG and Resource Book (07-001)

This RPG focuses on the characters, plots, and settings of the original two *Tenchi Muyo!* OAV series. As part of the Tri-Stat System, the RPG is fully compatible with all Guardians Of Order anime RPGs. The book also features extensive resource and reference sections that offer value to those who do not role-play, but are fans of the show. It is the ultimate English-language guide to one of the most popular anime series, and a book that no *Tenchi Muyo!* fan should be without! By David L. Pulver, Mark C. MacKinnon, Jeff Mackintosh, and Karen A. McLarney.



Yes, I am interested in your anime role-playing games and supplements, featuring the Tri-Stat System! Please send me the products listed below.

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Written by: Jim Crocker and David L. Pulver Additional Writing by: Jeff Mackintosh Edited by: Mark C. MacKinnon and Jeff Mackintosh Graphic Design by: Jeff Mackintosh Artwork by: Aaron Jenkinson, Locke, David Okum, Francis Tsal, and Long Vo







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