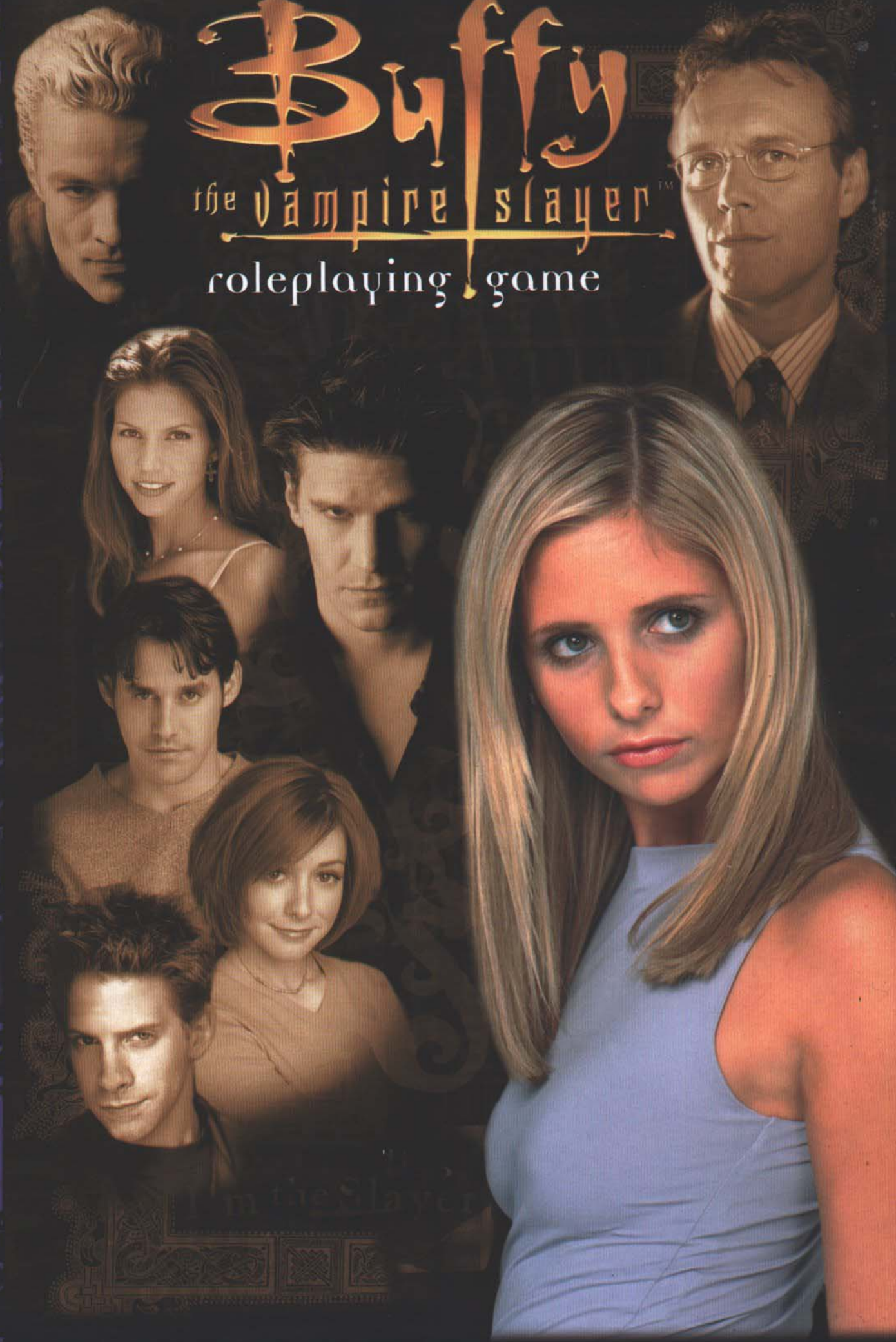


CORE RULEBOOK

Buffy

the vampire slayer™

roleplaying game



I'm the Slayer

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Eden Studios

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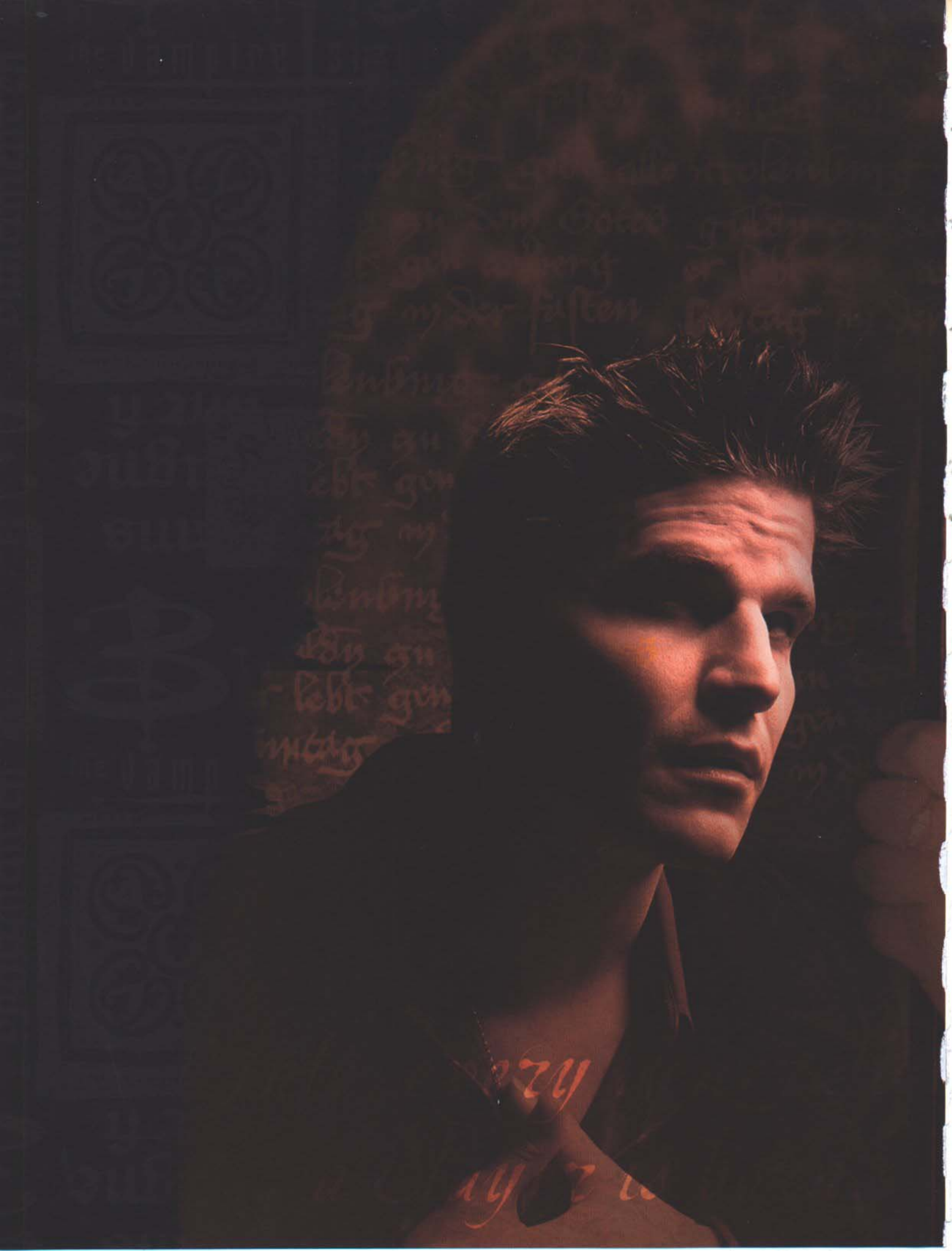
In every generation there is only one slayer. Get home before dark.
Comments and questions can be directed via the Internet at www.btvsrpg.com, via e-mail at eden@edenstudios.net or via letter with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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The waiting

by christopher golden

"This bites."

A strong wind blew across Crestwood Cemetery, whispering the dark secrets of the dead as it passed amongst the tombstones and whistled through the cracks in the walls of each crypt. But Buffy Summers wasn't listening. She knew each of the thirteen cemeteries in Sunnydale, California as though they were her own back yard—hell, she spent more time in the boneyards than she did at home—and being amongst the graves of the town's dead had lost its ability to induce even the tiniest shiver.

There was a lull in the wind, and somewhere not far off she heard the creak of a rusty hinge. Though she knew it was merely the resettling of one of the crypt doors or the one on the maintenance shed, her imagination filled in so many other images. A chill ran up the back of Buffy's neck.

'Kay, she thought. Maybe just one itty-bitty shiver.

Buffy smiled to herself. In a freaky way, it was good to know she was capable of a good old-fashioned wiggins, the fear of creepy nothing. After all, she had dealt with so many somethings in the last few years, ever since she had learned what she was.

The Slayer. The one girl in all the world chosen by powers beyond her reckoning to combat the forces of darkness. Chosen. It had its pros and cons, no doubt about that. On the plus side, there was the whole super-human thing—strength, speed, quick healing, those things didn't suck. On the other hand, being the Slayer meant she had a duty to hunt monsters until one of them killed her. Given the hazards of the job—being public enemy number one as far as the nasty ol' forces of darkness were concerned—the killing thing was pretty much guaranteed to happen sooner than she would like.

Buffy figured one hundred was a nice round number, but she'd be lucky to make it out of her teens.

Even that did not haunt her as much as it might have—as much as it had when she had first learned that she was Chosen. Like all Slayers, she had a Watcher to guide her. Giles was tops with the demony knowledge, and had given her the combat training she needed, but he was more than that. This was his fight too. He looked out for her. Plus, unlike most Slayers, Buffy had not accept-

ed the idea put forth by the Council of Watchers that to be an effective Slayer she had to alienate all her friends.

Screw that.

Nope, what was bothering her more than anything on this warm spring night when a hard breeze was blowing in off the Pacific was that she was stone cold bored.

Buffy slumped against a granite grave marker and thumped her head back against the stone. Bored, bored, bored.

"This really bites," she muttered to the darkness and the dead.

Sunnydale was right on top of the Hellmouth, a place where the barrier between the human world and the demon dimensions was worn thin. It was a like a magnet, drawing monsters from all over. Nearly every night she patrolled the town looking for trouble, and most of the time she found it in some form or another. Somehow she managed to work in some hang time with Willow and Xander, not to mention her Mom.

But there was no patrolling tonight. Even though she could think of a dozen things she should have been or would rather have been doing instead, tonight, all she could do was wait.

So she sat here with her back against the gravestone—feeling the engraved letters of a dead man's name on her back—and she waited and she stared at the freshly turned earth of the grave across from her, and she wondered when Sasha Kopeki was going to come back to life.

An image swam up into her mind of Sasha in her cheerleading uniform. The girl had graduated high school the previous spring and had been attending UC Sunnydale, but Buffy only remembered her from the time she herself had briefly been part of the cheerleading squad. Sasha hadn't been the prettiest girl on the squad and she had certainly not been the best, but when it came to smile-wattage and team spirit, the dead girl was second to none.

Was being the key word there, Buffy thought. Sasha's pretty much second to everyone these days. The girl had been killed by a stray vamp who had wandered into Sunnydale to check out the Hellmouth, and to find out if



Buffy

the vampire slayer™

the Slayer was really as tough as they said. Buffy had already dusted the moron, proving the point.

But Sasha was unfinished business.

With a sigh, the Slayer rested her head against the tombstone again. Her eyes began to flutter closed. Almost the moment they did, she heard the soft sound of dirt sprinkling to the ground. Of digging.

Buffy's eyes snapped open and she glanced over at Sasha's grave. Slender white fingers jutted from the freshly turned earth, clawing at the dirt around them, destroying the dead girl's French manicure. A wave of sadness passed through Buffy for the excitable cheerleader with the blinding smile. But Sasha was dead now.

It was her fingers that bored their way up from the dirt, her hands that burst from the ground, her arms that thrust forth and dragged the rest of her body from the grave. But Sasha was dead.

The corpse crouched beside the hole it had burrowed up from its coffin, clad in a simple and elegant black dress. Sasha's blond hair had been arranged lovingly in her casket but now it was crusted with moist earth. Buffy thought she saw a worm dangling near the dead girl's ear.

"About time," Buffy told her. "I thought I was gonna go gray waiting for you. And, brrrr at that thought."

Sasha whipped around to face her, rising up almost to her full height but still somehow feral. Yellow eyes glared at Buffy in the darkness. The girl's face was not at all the way Buffy remembered, but that was no fault of memory. It had more to do with the metamorphosis her features had undergone, the way that her forehead and cheeks had become ridged and cruel and inhuman.

Vampiric.

The undead girl grinned, then, but instead of the perfect smile Buffy recalled her mouth was twisted in a predatory rictus, flashing deadly fangs.

"I remember you," the vampire said, voice raspy from disuse. The voice of the grave.

Buffy stood across the disturbed grave from Sasha and reached inside her zippered sweatshirt for the stake she carried in the pocket sewn in there.

"No you don't," the Slayer said.

Confused, the vampire frowned, lips curling back savagely from those fangs. "Yeah. I do."

"Those aren't your memories," Buffy told her, a horrible revulsion roiling in her gut. "They belong to Sasha."

"I am Sasha," the vampire hissed.

"No you're not," Buffy replied calmly. "You're just the

thing that's living off her corpse. Like a maggot."

With a roar of fury, the vampire lunged across the open grave, fingernails hooked into claws, features contorted with demonic ferocity. It leapt at Buffy, who spun out of its way. Sasha rushed her from behind and Buffy took a single step backward—toward the vampire—and shot an elbow into its face. Sasha's surgically reconstructed nose exploded in a gush of blood and a splintering of bone.

Buffy leaped into the air, spun around and shot a high kick at the vampire's face. It staggered backward and fell over the gravestone Buffy herself had been leaning against for the past two hours. The vampire's legs were splayed, the hem of its burial dress hanging like a curtain over the front of that stone. The Slayer leaped over the marker and landed on the vampire's chest, plunging the stake into the dead girl's heart.

Sasha whimpered once, eyes locked on Buffy's.

"I remember you," she whispered.

Then she exploded into a cloud of cinder and ash that was swept away by the warm Pacific breeze.

"No you don't," Buffy said to the night, to the darkness. "No. You don't."

Then she turned and strode quickly from the cemetery, wanting to put it behind her as quickly as possible. She would go to the Bronze, where she hoped to find her friends hanging out, maybe dancing, depending on what band was playing tonight. With them she would laugh, and in laughing, she would begin to forget, and she would fill her life up with the things that mattered, the things that reminded her what she was fighting for.

Buffy would talk, and she would move, and she would dance. She would use the time she had in this world, and she would not be bored. Nothing about being Chosen bothered her more than those times when boredom set in, when she had to sit in the graveyard and wait.

Nothing was worse than the waiting.





I It's the Slayer's World, We Just Play Here

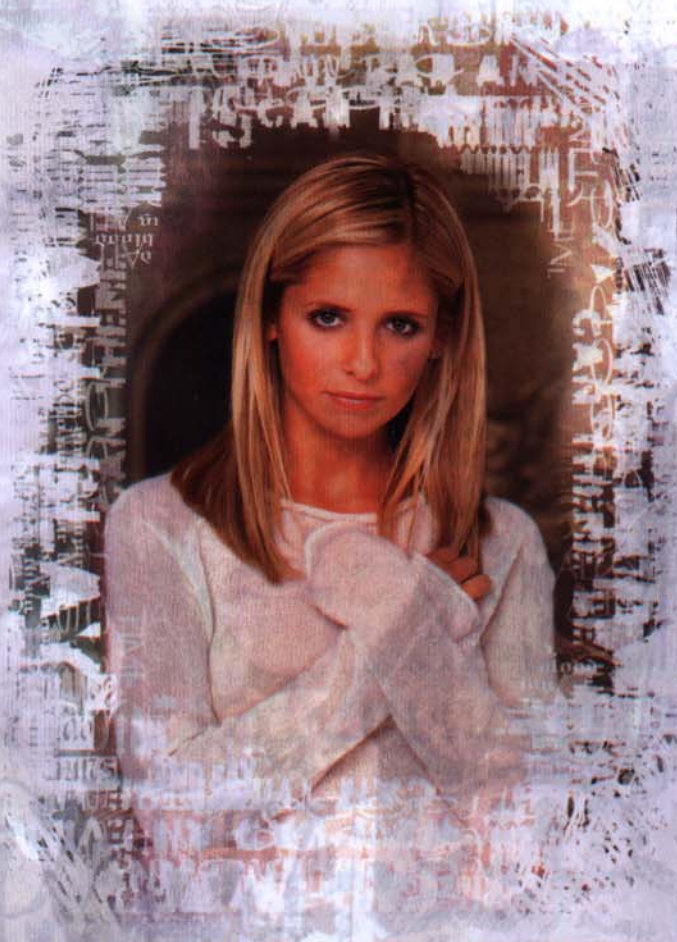
McNamara: You telling me my business?

Buffy: This is not your business. It's mine. You, the Initiative, the boys in the Pentagon, you're all in way over your heads. Messing with Primeval forces you have absolutely no comprehension of.

McNamara: And you do?

Buffy: I'm the Slayer. You're playing on my turf.

—4.21 Primeval



WHAT THE—?

So, the cover image caught your eye, or your Buffy fanaticism compelled you, or maybe some college freshlings knocked a pile of books from the top shelf onto your head—whatever the reason, you decided to flip through, and now read (of all things!) the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* roleplaying game (BVS RPG) corebook. Isn't that special. You have just embarked on your own personal roleplaying trip.

The roleplaying veterans among you—those gaming grognards—know most of this intro stuff already. And those familiar with Unisystem games will find very little new here. You folks can skip ahead to the other juicy bits of this chapter, or even straight to character creation in **Chapter Two: Some Assembly Required**. Nothing for you to see here. Move along, move along.

Now that those types are outta here, we can fill your heads with all sorts of nonsense about roleplaying, with no fear of contradiction. First off, it's an easy way of making major bundles of cash. Just send a ten-dollar bill to us at . . .

Buffy: Spike, what are you doing here?

Spike (between blows): Same reason as you and your cub scout here, I wager. Wanted a spot of violence before bedtime.

—5.4 Out of My Mind



Buffy

the vampire slayer™

Not buying that, are you? Okay, in truth, a roleplaying game is about shared storytelling. You get together with several friends and create a tale. In the case of the *BtVS RPG*, there's a bunch of large incisors, staking and good fashion sense involved, but that's not all. Unlike any other kind of game, your group's story can take you, the characters and the Buffyverse anywhere you want it to. The action takes place in your imaginations, and the story is told through your interactions. There are truly no limits. The great thing about roleplaying games is that the direction of the story and the creative choices are all about you. Seriously, you rule!

Each of you creates a character, an alternative persona that becomes your "in game" role. This is your Cast Member. You choose the character's strengths and weaknesses, abilities and limitations, and—in particular—personality. During the course of the game, you make this Cast Member's decisions, utterances and actions. You put words in her mouth, spring in her step, and joy in her heart. Or maybe you just brood a lot and kick butt. No sweat, that's a valid lifestyle choice too.

If you like, you can play any of the characters from our favorite TV show (ah . . . Buffy, duh?). Or you might make something up, say Trep, the old homeless man, or Biff, the muscle-headed jock, or Glenda, the spacey goth gal, or any number of other folks. Whatever you do, know that you've got a bit of an edge. You are one of the good guys, the white hats, the champions—or at least are helping the heroes as a loyal and trusted Scooby. Now, that's not to say your creation won't have a dark side . . . or two. It wouldn't be the Buffyverse without making with a little darkness. Again, that's up to you.

THE DIRECTOR

All the players and Cast Members are important, but one of you is extra special, and it's most likely you who are reading this book right now. What . . . you knew that already? Figured as much. The special player is called the Director. The Director stands slightly apart (and maybe upwind) from the other players because she does the bulk of the . . . well . . . game directing. That's right, the Director is the first among the creators. She actually sets the scene, plots the plot, details the descriptions and engages in other nifty alliterations. She makes the game go by providing fun stuff for the Cast Members to do, not the least of which is ensuring that everyone has something to dust on a fairly regular basis.

The Director also casts and speaks for the other characters—anyone that the Cast Members meet in their adventures. If these folks are neutral or even helpful to

the Cast, they are called Guest Stars. A Guest Star could be the homeless guy on the street who witnessed the vamp attack, the perky cheerleader assaulted by the youth-sucking demon, the old witch who has an ancient tome for sale, or someone more mundane . . . or more twisted. These folks come into the Cast Members' lives, do their part for the plot and leave. Unless, of course, they are recurring types; a Cast Member could even fall in love with one of them and she could become a regular. Hey, it happens a lot in the *BtVS* TV show.

If the Director-controlled characters are out for Cast Member blood . . . or worse, they are called Adversaries. These include the vamps, demons and other nasties—up to and including the Big Bad. These folks deserve a thorough dusting. How that happens is up to the Cast Members.

Buffy: Har— (snort) Harmony has mi—minions?

Xander: Yeah, that was pretty much my reaction.

Buffy: I'm sorry . . . I just . . . (new laughter) Harmony has minions!

Xander: And Ruffles have ridges. Buffy, there's actually a more serious side to all this . . .

Buffy (eyes tearing): I sure hope so. I'm having trouble breathing.

—5.2 *The Real Me*

All rules decisions are handed down by the Director (usually with some discussion from the other players—we like to think of it as enlightened despotism here). She figures out how and when to use the game mechanics and decides the outcomes of certain rolls. She makes sure things don't get bogged down in all that "I shot you, no you didn't, yes I did, nyah, nyah, nyah" stuff we used to get such a kick out of as kids. All that rules stuff is covered much more in the rest of this book.

Finally, the Director may provide the gaming room, the padded deluxe gaming seats and some major snackage. Depends on how generous she is feeling. Or how much the other players try to suck up by kicking in that stuff. Most Directors are all in favor of players doing the sucking up thing.

GAME SESSIONS

Game sessions in the *BtVS RPG* can take anywhere from a couple hours to an entire weekend (depends on how crazed you are about the whole thing). There is no formal start or end—that's up to the Director and players to decide. Also, in roleplaying, no one gets to brag about being the winner. The flip side is that no one has

IT'S THE
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WE JUST PLAY HERE



to be the loser. The objective is to create a story, engage in some spontaneous and often hilarious conversations, and have a good time with friends. And no, no electronics of any kind are necessary. Pretty uncivilized, eh?

Now, don't go thinking there is no structure here. It's no madhouse, I tell you. The game is divided into Episodes, resolved in one or more couple-hour gaming sessions. These are plotlines or linked subplots that make up a single story, just like each hour-long TV show. Episodes and their related story arcs may be strung together to form a Season, and several Seasons lead into the Series, the whole story created by the interaction between the players' Cast Members and the Director.

Or you could just play one session and bash some bad-teeth types. We suspect that, once you get started, you'll want to play again. Roleplaying games are insidious like that. Again, it's all up to you.

GETTING STARTED

Buffy: It's my first day! I was afraid that I was gonna be behind in all of my classes, that I wouldn't make any friends, that I wouldn't have last month's hair! I didn't think there'd be vampires on campus. And I don't care.

—1.1 'Welcome to the Hellmouth'

Okay, I'm sold, you say, let's stop yapping and get slaying.

Hold on there, Skippy, gotta couple things to gather first. The key thing is this book, but you're already covered on that, right? Otherwise, this whole thing gets way too metaphysical. One more thing—having the book isn't going to do it. You, or at least the Director, is going to need to read it, or at least flip through it a bit. Go on, it won't hurt a bit. It's got pretty pictures, lots of show quotes and some cool parts. Honest.

You also need to shout out to some friends, get them to break away from their Xboxes and come over to hang. You need some paper, pencils (or pink pens with feathers sprouting from the top—whatever floats your boat), and some dice.

Dice indeed! You've no doubt seen the small cubes with dots (called pips, if you must know) or numbers on them. They can be found in old copies of *Monopoly*, *Parcheesi* or *Trivial Pursuit*. Heck, you could even bust them out of their confining bubble in *Frustration* or *Trouble*. Always wanted to do that, eh?

Anyway, those cubes are called six-sided dice. We gaming pros refer to them as D6s. D6s are good, but

useless for the *BtVS* RPG. The real heavyweights of this game are the D10s, or ten-sided dice. These puppies are usually stocked in hobby game stores—such as the place you picked up this very tome. They are also found in some bookstores or department stores. They are way big with the angst-ridden vampire roleplaying set (if you care). If you can't find them, call or email us. We'll hook you up.

Finally, you might want to gather some markers or poker chips. You could use those little plastic gems left over from all those *Magic* or *Pokemon* card games. Or even better, toothpicks! You could call them Little Mr. Pointies. Whatever you decide, you will need something to record Drama Points. Those suckers (Drama Points, not Little Mr. Pointies) are going to save your Cast Member's butt at some point. So it's important to know how many you've got. We'll get into Drama Points in **Chapter Three: Rules, Borders and an End Zone**.

Okay, that's a wrap. You're all set up and ready to slay. Have fun, and don't forget the medieval hardware.

The unisystem

The game part of the *BtVS* RPG is handled by the **Unisystem**. The **Unisystem** helps players and Directors decide what options are available at any given moment in the game, and the success or failure of any character's actions. These rules are presented in detail in **Chapter Two: Some Assembly Required** and **Chapter Three: Rules, Borders and an End Zone**.

Although the **Unisystem** is designed to handle any kind of roleplaying game—in any setting, with any theme—each particular game has its own flavor. For the *BtVS* RPG, a cinematic, high-adventure tone is crucial. Face it, folks in the Buffyverse do things that "normal" types just couldn't imagine. The action is fast and furious, and nobody needs or wants to sweat the details. We are not even going to talk about the trajectory of fire, or the scatter pattern of grenades. Not that there's anything wrong with that, if you are into that stuff. We just want to get with the slaying and staking around here, and not get bogged down in that stuff.

The **Unisystem** is also the heart of several other games covering magic and horror themes. You can also find out more about them at www.edenstudios.net.



SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Giles: Something's coming, something, something . . . something is, is gonna happen here. Soon!

Buffy: Gee, can you vague that up for me . . . ?

—1.1 Welcome to the Hellmouth

The *BtVS RPG* covers a lot of ground. From rules to stats to descriptions to background, it's full of chocolatey goodness. We break it down for you nice and simple though. Here's how.

CHAPTER ONE: IT'S THE SLAYER'S WORLD, WE JUST PLAY HERE contains these introductory sections, some notes about roleplaying, a list of conventions and a brief recap of Seasons One through Five of the *BtVS* TV series.

CHAPTER TWO: SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED covers character creation. From type to abilities to drawbacks to powers, all the choices are here for the taking. We also present several ready-to-go Cast Members, called Archetypes. A tweak here, a name there, and you are ready to play. Finally, all the game stats for your favorite Slayer and Scoobies are here.

CHAPTER THREE: RULES, BORDERS AND AN END ZONE is the rules chapter, the heart of the *Unisystem*. Here you learn how to play the game, when to use dice, what they mean and how to keep your Cast Member from getting fanged. Details on character development and experience are given, and those so-important Drama Points are explained.

CHAPTER FOUR: PLAYING WITH PRIMAL FORCES gives you the lowdown on the major mojo. Magic is a strange and wondrous thing in the Buffyverse, but it's not a sure thing. Good stuff is possible, but the down side is big-time bad news.

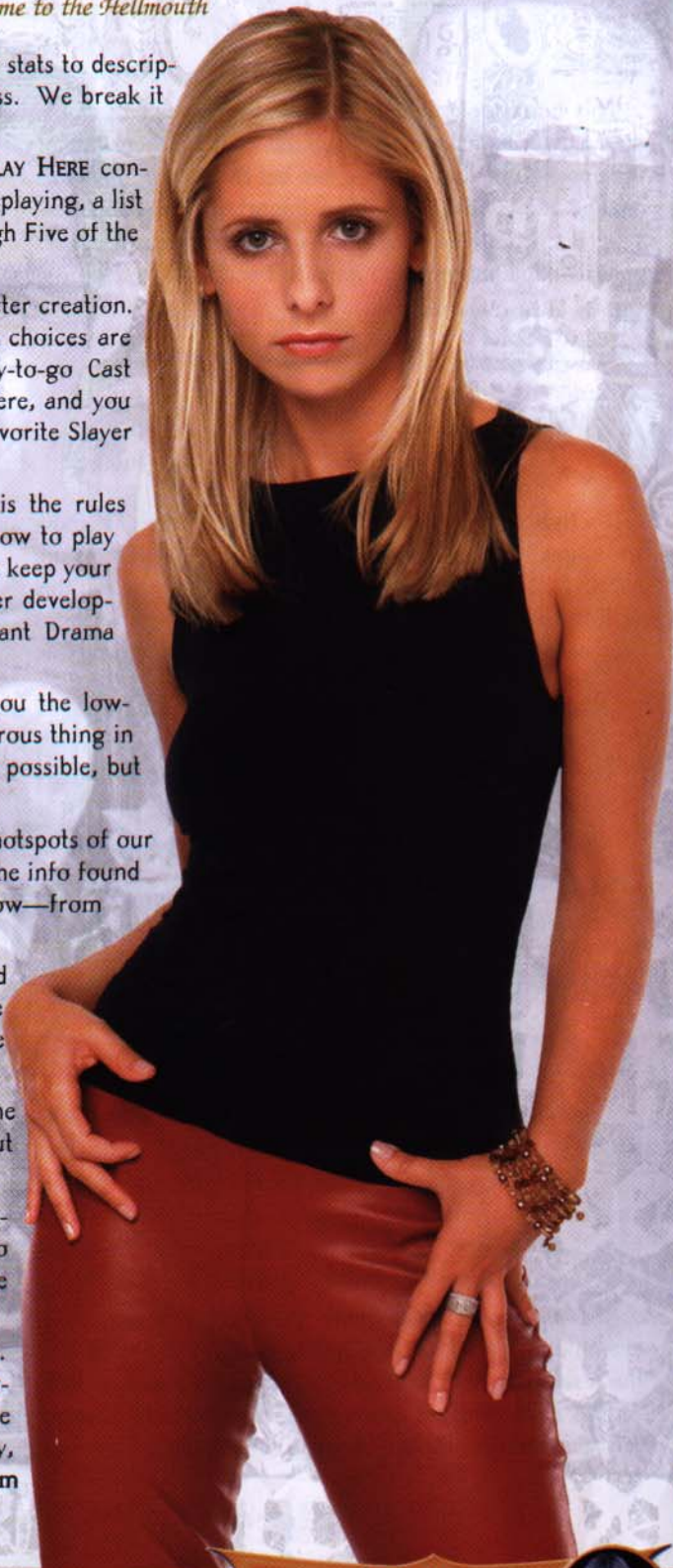
CHAPTER FIVE: SUNNYDALE AFTER DARK runs down the hotspots of our favorite left coast town. Set the scene in style with all the info found here. Also, the major Guest Stars of the *BtVS* TV show—from Joyce to Amy to Jonathan—are presented.

CHAPTER SIX: CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT details the bad guys. The vamps, demons and assorted other ickies are all stat-ed out and described. The Big Bads from the first five seasons are also covered. Beware.

CHAPTER SEVEN: EPISODES, SEASONS AND DRAMA is for the Director. These guidelines help you Joss wanna-bes out there create storylines and run games.

CHAPTER EIGHT: SWEEPS WEEK is a fleshed out adventure for your *BtVS RPG* game. Heads up, Directors, no creating needed. Hand out the Archetypes and make with the playing.

APPENDIX contains the lowdown on Buffyspeak. Want to enhance your dialogue, spice up your conversation or just confuse the old folks? We've got the goods here. Also, useful charts and tables, a glossary, an index and conversion notes from other *Unisystem* games are presented.



IT'S THE
SLAYER'S WORLD,
WE JUST PLAY HERE



CONVENTIONS

We have taken certain liberties here to make this book easier to follow. Do try to follow along. You'll thank us later. Really.

TEXT

This book looks different depending on what's going on. As words make up the bulk of what's in here (hence the appellation "book"), you can bet that when the words change their look, something important just happened. The text you are reading now is standard text. It covers general explanations, and narrative sections.

Willow: All set. You have a plan?

Buffy: Spill it on her, try and make it look natural.

Xander: We're right behind you. Only . . . further back.

—1.3 *Witch*

It's those pithy sayings that make the *BtVS* TV show so engaging. All hail Joss and his writing team. Anyway, as you probably noticed, quotes appear like this with the speakers name up front. The citation includes the season and episode separated by a period, and the title just after.

Other words are set off from the standard text like this. These boxes contains additional, but tangential information, or game play aids and tips.

Other words are set apart in this way. These boxes detail Guest Stars or Adversaries that may be used in Stories, if you want.

DICE

As you've probably noticed, dice are central to the *BtVS* RPG. We already mentioned that D10 means a ten-sided die. When a number appears before the notation, that number of dice should be rolled, and their results should be added together. For example, 2D10 means roll two ten-sided dice, and generate a result between 2 and 20.

Multipliers are given after the dice notation. For example, 3D10 x 4 means roll three ten-sided dice, add the results together, and multiply that total result by four. As the math whizzes among you have already guessed, this generates a number between 12 and 120.

GENDER

You English majors know that the guy reference (he, him, his) is customarily used for both male and female. Lots of folks think that's part of the whole male domination societal thing, and don't like it muchly. On the other hand, saying "he or she" all the time is clumsy and way-too-PC for us. Given that this is a book about vampire Slayers—you know "the one girl in all the world who . . ."—we're going to use the gal reference (she, her) whenever a generic designation is needed. That ought to wig out some tightly wrapped grammarian somewhere.

MEASUREMENTS

For those of you who don't travel much, the U.S. measurement system (feet, yards, miles, pounds, etc.) is not used in most countries. The metric system is actually predominant in much of the world. Still, Buffy is in California and, until it rolls off into the ocean, the left coast is part of the U.S. So, we are going parochial and using the Imperial system. For our worldly aficionados, rough conversions may be found by multiplying miles by 1.5 to get kilometers (instead of 1.609), equating meters with yards (instead of 1.094 yards), halving pounds to get kilograms (instead of multiplied by 0.4536), and so on. The *BtVS* RPG is about story and dialogue, not statistics and dimensions. All that measurement stuff won't come up very often anyhow.

BUFFYVERSE

Tara: You think you know . . . what's to come . . . what you are. You haven't even begun.

—4.22 *Restless*

Now we get to the part of the show that's intended for *Buffy* neophytes. The *BtVS* legions know most of this stuff already. We learned it by slavishly devoting ourselves to our videotape library. "No, dear, I'm not goofing off watching *Buffy* reruns. I'm working and studying. No really . . ."

The Buffyverse is an on-going project. Joss and gang continue to surprise and delight us with new stories every week. Still, we need to set some limits around what's covered in this book. Since Season Six is going on as we write, we will only include information from Seasons One through Five. Never fear, there's plenty to work with in the first 100 episodes.

COSMOLOGY

Yah, yah, it's a pretentious, new-agey kind of word, but it's a good one. Cosmology means the study of the universe, or cosmos. For us, it means the central whys and wherefores of the Buffyverse. How things came to be, in a big way. Given that we are talking supernatural Buffy stuff, maybe "mythology" is a better word. But that makes it all sound so . . . fictional. Can't have that.

Giles: This world is older than any of you know, and contrary to popular mythology, it did not begin as a paradise. For untold eons, demons walked the earth; made it their home . . . their hell. In time they lost their purchase on this reality, and the way was made for the mortal animals. For Man. What remains of the Old Ones are vestiges: certain magicks, certain creatures.

—1.2 The Harvest

One of the more prominent "vestiges" was the vampires.

Giles: The books tell that the last demon to leave this reality fed off a human, mixed their blood. He was a human form possessed—infected—by the demon's soul. He bit another, and another . . . and so they walk the earth, feeding. Killing some, mixing their blood with others to make more of their kind. Waiting for the animals to die out, and the Old Ones to return.

—1.2 The Harvest

But it's not as grim as all that. Sometime after the "Old Ones" left, and vampires began, a Slayer was born. "One girl in all the world . . . one born with the strength and skill to hunt the vampires . . ." stop me if this starts to sound familiar. The earliest known Chosen One appears to have lived back in the days when our kind was more *Homo* and less *sapiens*. Since then the line has been unbroken. Whenever a Slayer was killed, another arose to take her place.

Now, it may be that the Slayers worked alone for a time, relying only on their own innate strength, dexterity and cunning. At some point, however, the Slayers were joined by Watchers—mentors, loremasters, good with the rules, regulations and research. To this day, each Slayer has been assigned a Watcher, with the intent that the knowledge of prior times be passed along with the power and abilities.

So the Slayer, aided by her Watcher, hunts vampires, demons and other nasties. These less-than-genteel types

are found all over—Cleveland appears to be particularly afflicted—but they really like to hang in one very special place. Oddly enough, it's in southern California, in a town called Sunnydale. It's first described as the "mouth of Hell," and that name kind of stuck.

Buffy: . . . this town is a mystical whoosit?

Giles: Yes. The Spanish who first settled here called it Boca Del Infierno—roughly translated: Hellmouth. A sort of portal from this reality to the next.

—1.2 The Harvest

And if it's good enough for the monsters, it's the place for any right-thinking Slayer and her Watcher. Funny how that works.

PREVIOUSLY, ON BUFFY

Riley: But you've killed a—You did the thing with that—Uh, you drowned. And the snake! Not to mention the . . . daily . . . slayage of . . . Wow.

Buffy: It's no big, really. Hey, who wants ice cream?

Riley: Buffy. When I saw you stop the world from, you know, ending, I just assumed that was a big week for you. It turns out I suddenly find myself needing to know the plural of apocalypse.

—4.12 A New Man

A brief recap of the first five seasons of the *BVS* TV show follows. This is not an episode guide, but merely an overview of the storyline, describing major events in the lives of our heroes from Buffy's arrival in Sunnydale to her death (second death that is, but who's counting).



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SEASON ONE

Giles: All right, I'll just drop in my time machine, go back to the twelfth century, and ask the vampires to postpone their ancient prophecy for a few days while you take in dinner and a show.

Buffy: Okay, at this point, you're abusing sarcasm.

—1.5 *Never Kill a Boy on the First Date*

Our hero, Buffy Summers, arrives in her new town, Sunnydale. She is a very attractive and witty sophomore in high school—a transfer from her former school after she was “asked to leave” due to burning down the gym. Buffy’s mom, Joyce, opens an art gallery and tries to move on after divorcing Buffy’s father, Hank.

Buffy hopes to leave her Slayer past behind her and just be a normal teen, but she finds that rough going almost immediately. The new librarian, Rupert Giles, reveals himself as her new Watcher. Buffy avoids him initially, but her role as the Slayer cannot be cast aside. Giles starts as an invaluable source of paranormal information, and quickly becomes her surrogate father figure.

Three high school students soon make a place for themselves in Buffy’s life. Willow Rosenberg is a shy, bookish nerd, but she’s kind, pretty and talented, and Buffy comes to care deeply for her. Xander Harris is a klutzy, insecure smart-aleck, and Willow’s best friend. Willow would like to be more, but Xander is teenage-oblivious to it all.

With Giles, Willow and Xander form the core of the Scoobies or Slayerettes, Buffy’s support group. Cordelia Chase is the antithesis of Willow and Xander—a stunning, stuck-up Ms. Popularity.

Although determined to avoid the three “losers,” she is slowly drawn into their Slayer activities, primarily as a result of shared dangers from Sunnydale High’s phenomenal casualty rate. It’s the whole Hellmouth thing, you know.

Three others bear mentioning—Amy Madison, and Principals Flutie and Snyder. Amy is a shy, cowed girl whose mother, Catherine, is a powerful witch. Catherine switches bodies with Amy in order to relive the glories of her cheerleading past. Catherine is defeated and trapped in a cheerleading trophy. Amy regains her body, and that is the last we see of her . . . for now. Principal Flutie is a touchy-feely educator type, who is soon eaten by primal hyenas and replaced by Principal Snyder, a cynical, mean disciplinarian. Both give Buffy grief for her violent tendencies and frequent absences.



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A recurring theme in Season One is responsibility. Buffy does what she has to, survives and keeps her friends safe, but continually struggles against her Slayerhood. Not until the very end does she embrace her fate and gains power as a result. This theme will arise again in the series.

A major event occurs in the first season for Buffy: she falls in love. Now, it's Buffy of whom we speak, so it can't be a nice, normal boy. Her love, Angel, is a vampire. He is definitely one of the good guys, but are we talking dark side or what? Falling in love and sharing that love as a teenager is hard enough. Making it work with a vampire adds that extra zest of tragedy that will become so familiar as the series progresses. Turns out that Angel was the despicable horror Angelus for most of his 240 plus years of unlife. Only recently (roughly 80 years ago—recent for a vampire at least) was he cursed with a soul after torturing and killing a Romany woman. He feels remorse big time now and determines that his place is at the side of the Slayer working to right demon wrongs. He's mostly dark and brooding, but despite that captivating personality, he and Buffy steadily grow closer.

Buffy isn't the only one for whom heart strings are pulled. In Season One, we meet Jenny Calendar, the Sunnydale High computer-science teacher. She turns out to be a "technopagan" not entirely unfamiliar with the secret world of the Scooby Gang. She is hip, plugged-in and socially adept—all things that Giles is not. Indeed, Giles displays a deep phobia of computers, Jenny's life's work. Still, Giles is smitten and Jenny reciprocates. It's all very awwhhh.

The meta-plot of the first season involves the Master, an ancient and powerful vampire who attempted to open the Hellmouth in years past. This failed spectacularly and trapped him in a limbo between the human and the demon dimensions. Through various means the Master attempts to accumulate the power necessary to break through the barriers and free himself to do that voodoo that he do so well. As that would bring carnage and other unpleasanties, Buffy and the Scoobies work very hard to keep it from happening.

Two of the Master's minions come to have a continuing role in the series. The first is Darla, his favorite. She stars in the first scene of the show, and turns out to be Angel's sire—vampire-speak for the one who makes you into a vampire. She ultimately attempts to bring Angel back to the dark side, but is staked and dusted after a climatic battle in the seventh episode. As will happen again in the series, death is not all it's cracked up to be. We will see Darla again (though mostly in another series).



The second minion is the Anointed One. He is a vampire child created by the Master as his primary weapon against the Slayer. The Anointed One's powers are unclear. Aside from bearing the mantle of the Master's chosen successor, his major job is luring Buffy to the Master at the prophesied time. That's the prophecy what states "the Master shall rise and the Slayer shall die."

And thus we come to the season finale. Contrary to her hero persona, Buffy shows great fear and we begin to understand some of the downside of being a Slayer. She tries to fight the Master, and after a very one-sided battle, he kills her and escapes his imprisonment. (Calm down, remember my death point a couple of paragraphs ago . . .) Xander performs CPR on Buffy as Angel "has no breath," and she revives. By all rights, she should be weak. In fact, she feels different, stronger. Things are starting to look up.

The Hellmouth is located under the Sunnydale High library of all places—Giles' home base. The gang gathers there only to find the Hellmouth opening, and a large tentacled creature emerging. Buffy fights the Master on the roof, the Scoobies fight the creature below. It ends well, and the group heads out to celebrate. What? You were expecting maybe a blow-by-blow account? Buy the DVD, chum.

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SEASON TWO

Giles: Oh, forgive me . . . Xander, Cordelia, this is Kendra. It's rather complicated, but she's also a Slayer.

Cordelia: Hi. Nice to meet you.

Xander: A Slayer, huh? I knew this "I'm the only one, I'm the only one" thing was just an attention-getter.

—2.10 'What's My Line, Part 2

The major new arrivals to the Hellmouth in Season Two are Spike and Drusilla, a duo of English vampires who knew Angel over one hundred years ago. Spike, a.k.a. "William the Bloody," is a sarcastic peroxide blond punk—the Sid Vicious of the undead. His love Drusilla is a wraithlike romantic driven by visions and whatever odd notions come into her mind. She was a young girl on the verge of becoming a nun when Angelus drove her insane by killing her entire family right in front of her. The two vamps of viciousness have been together as a couple for a long, long time, and still possess the passion of newlyweds. They cruise into Sunnydale looking for sanctuary with the Anointed One until the weakened Drusilla can be restored to full health. Spike, who has fought and killed two Slayers in his time, agrees to take out Buffy in exchange for a place to lay low in peace. Failing to do so due to his own impatience, Spike begins to seek the Anointed One's forgiveness, but gives up in the middle. He grabs the boy vamp and tosses him to daylight. Exit one presumed Big Bad. Joss and company set us up to view things one way, and then take a sharp turn into unpredictability. This won't be the last time this happens.

Spike quickly takes over leadership of the vampires in town and sets his mind to getting revenge on the Buffster. He tries everything from ambushes to hiring ancient orders of demon assassins to resurrecting the Judge, who can't be killed by any weapon forged.

As it turns out, the thing which comes closest to destroying the Slayer is the person who means most to her. When she and Angel make love (Buffy's first time), the gypsy curse on him is broken, and his soul is lost again. He reverts to being the monstrous Angelus, breaking her heart before joining with Spike and Dru and trying to end the world.

Oh, and the evil trio tries to kill the Scoobies and those closest to them. As it happens, Buffy receives some unexpected help near the end of the season—Spike agrees to set up Angelus for her if he and Dru are allowed to escape and never return to Sunnydale. In the end, Buffy is forced to kill Angel to save the world just after he regains his soul and love for her. Can you say ouch?

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Season Two brings some great new characters to the mix. Daniel Osbourne, also known as Oz, is the stoic, sensitive lead guitar player of local band *Dingoes Ate My Baby* and replaces Xander as the love of Willow's life. He's also a werewolf, but emphatically Not a Monster. Werewolves are people too . . . most of the time.

Kendra is something of a surprise addition to the cast, a second Slayer from a small Caribbean island who became "active" when Buffy died briefly in the battle against the Master. Like many Slayers before her, she dies quickly at the hands of Drusilla. Ethan Rayne, an old friend from Rupert Giles' shady past, is an English sorcerer who worships the dark forces of Chaos. He causes trouble and disappears on a fairly regular basis.

An overarching theme for the second season concerns love gone wrong. Angel's soul is removed and he becomes a horror once more, wreaking havoc on the Scoobies and causing untold heartbreak for Buffy. Giles and Jenny's budding relationship is soured when each discovers the other has been keeping dangerous secrets. In the first of the series' greatest tragedies, Jenny is lost to the nightmare that is Angelus. Xander's habit of falling for monsters continues when he and Cordelia start dating (don't tell her we said that). This goes wrong as well when Cordelia finds herself losing social status in Sunnydale for dating a loser like Xander.

Even Spike and Dru have their problems when Angelus returns to the bad guy fold. Although not quite as bad as the effect this has on Buffy, the addition of an older, stronger and more despicable rival frustrates Spike, who is temporarily stuck in a wheelchair as a result of an epic battle with Buffy. When Angelus tries to end the world, Spike goes to Buffy and offers a truce, not only because he likes the world, but because Angelus is putting the moves on his girl. The cold-blooded killer starts his faltering journey towards redemption because of a girl.

What can we say? Love makes you do the wacky.



SEASON THREE

Faith: Keep dreaming. No one can stop the Ascension. Mayor's got it wired, B. He built this town for demons to feed on and come graduation day, he's getting paid.

—3.17 *Enemies*

It's senior year for the Scooby Gang. We begin with Buffy, or "Anne," since she is using her middle name to get away from her life. She has run away from home, from slayage, and from dealing with the death of her first love, Angel. She is working at a seedy restaurant and living in an even seedier apartment. Of course fate rarely deals you an even hand. No sooner than you can say "Chosen One," Buffy is dragged into Hell, literally, to fight demons that prey on the young innocents of the streets. Realizing she cannot cheat fate, Buffy returns home. It's that whole responsibility theme rearing its ugly head again.

At home, the Scoobies have been doing their best to keep up the missing Slayer's duties. Giles chases every lead, while Willow, Xander and Oz do their best in the Slaying department. When Buffy returns home, they are happy to see her, but it is a happiness that is tinged with hurt. In the face of nearly immediate crisis, however, Buffy and her friends pull together, stop the madness, and begin the process of healing and forgiving.

Things return to normal, or what passes for normal on the Hellmouth, when three visitors come to Sunnydale. Faith, the new Slayer called when Kendra died, is everything Buffy is not. Carefree, enjoying the hunt and the kill, Faith plays by her own rules. Mr. Trick, a suave vampire of the new order, comes for Faith, but stays for Buffy. And the most unexpected of all, we have the return of Angel from Hell.

Mr. Trick is our introductory Big Bad. He starts off by causing Buffy and the Slayerettes no end of problems. But what Mr. Trick succeeds at mostly is getting the attention of Mayor Richard Wilkins III. Mayor Wilkins controls Sunnydale. He knows about the vampires, the demons, and the Slayers. Most importantly, he wants the Slayers taken care of, and we are not talking paying for college here. The Mayor has big plans for Sunnydale. No, not urban renewal; they involve true demons and eating the residents. The Mayor seeks to ascend to demonhood.

Season Three explores themes of moving from childhood to more adult roles, and the responsibility that entails. The Scoobies, as well as the Mayor, are moving on to higher and supposedly better futures. Naturally, this causes no end of angst for Buffy. She feels that she isn't going anywhere. Despite good test scores, she can't go off

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to any colleges: her duties bind her to Sunnydale. Add to this her renewed (postponed?) relationship with Angel. He will never change; she will grow old and die (maybe not in that order). Yep, it's never easy for the Buff.

Subject to a secret test for her 18th birthday, Buffy is rendered powerless by Giles per the Watchers Council's orders, and must fight a vampire without super strength. Giles first administers the serum to rob Buffy of her powers and set up the test, but later relents, tells all and seeks forgiveness. The Watchers fire Giles for this moment of humanity. Buffy succeeds at killing the vamp, but a wedge is driven between Slayer and Watcher. A new Watcher arrives—prim, proper and largely impotent Wesley Wyndam-Pryce. Buffy still defers to Giles, and Faith ignores Wesley. As the season progresses Buffy decides that she will no longer take orders from the Council.

We see growth and change in the other characters as well. Willow is progressing toward powerful witchdom. A demon posing as Hansel and Gretel nearly gets her, Buffy and Amy Madison burned at the stake by their moms (minus Amy's who is still statuesque, if you get my drift). Amy escapes by turning herself into a rat. With no way to change back, she takes up residence in a Habitrail in Willow's room. We get to see Xander stand on his own, despite his "Zeppo" status. And we see Willow's and Xander's long running affection for each other spill over into romance. Although it is a brief flickering, the consequences are long lasting. Oz and Willow split, temporarily. Xander and Cordelia's split is permanent and has initially nasty side effects.

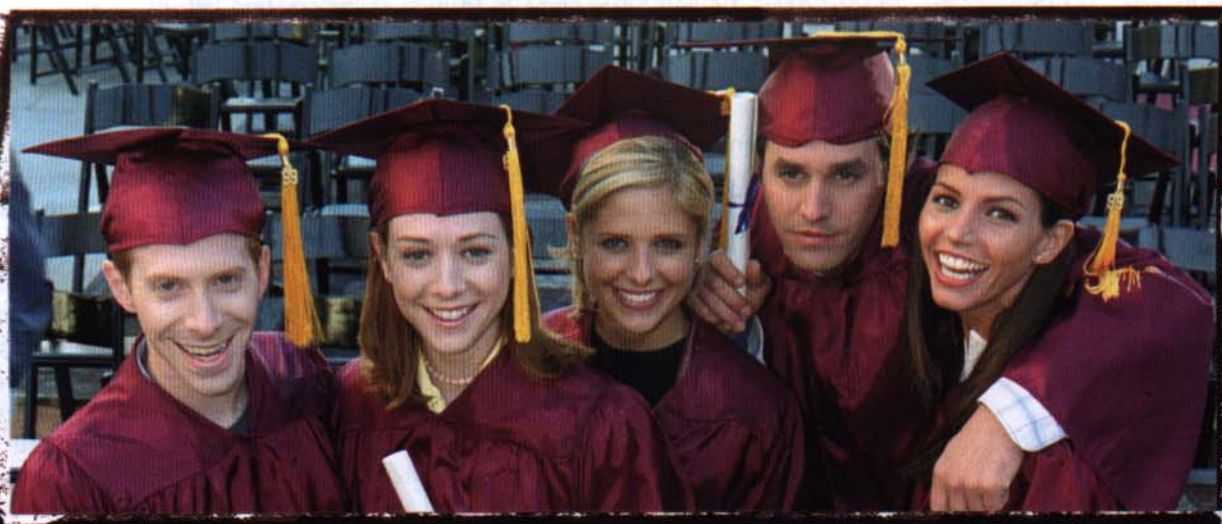
We also meet the vengeance demon Anyanka, summoned by Cordelia's pain over Xander's betrayal. She grants Cordy's wish, a Sunnydale without Buffy. Cordy (and the viewers) find themselves in a Bizzaro Sunnydale where the Master rose, and Willow and Xander are his most feared vampire lieutenants. Anyanka is stopped by Giles who destroys her power source. With it gone, Anya is trapped in the Sunnydale we know. She returns later with "feelings" for Xander and a very direct courting approach. Xander is man enough (well, has enough teenage hormones running rampant) to forgive her less-than-savory past. They develop into a nice couple.

In Faith, the next Slayer, we encounter the second great tragedy of the series. She falters and falls after she accidentally kills the deputy mayor. Fearing Buffy will rat her out, she decides to stand alone, and then with the Mayor.

Buffy and Angel must face their own growth as well, and Angel decides they cannot be together—it's not right for Buffy. So Angel plans on leaving right after the Mayor's Ascension (assuming they survive it). But a poison arrow from Faith nearly kills him, and Buffy must get the only thing that can cure her love—the blood of a Slayer. Buffy puts Faith in a coma, but cannot get her blood to Angel. Buffy offers herself instead and lands in the hospital room next to Faith's. Through their gift of Slayer visions, Buffy and Faith exchange words and Buffy learns what she needs to do to defeat the Mayor.

During the course of the season, Buffy takes a more open stance in her Slaying. It does not go unnoticed. At the prom, Buffy learns what she has meant to her class.





Jonathan (reading): "Whenever there was a problem or something creepy happened, you seemed to show up and stop it. Most of the people here have been saved by you, or helped by you at one time or another. We're proud to say that the Class of '99 has the lowest mortality rate of any graduating class in Sunnydale history. And we know at least part of that is because of you." So the senior class offers its thanks, and gives you, uh, this. It's from all of us, and it has written here, "Buffy Summers, Class Protector."

—3.20 The Prom

At graduation, Buffy gathers together not only her friends, but the entire student body to fight the demon-ascended Mayor. In the pivotal scene, the parents run away, but the kids stand to face and overcome their fears. In the end, Principal Snyder gets eaten and Sunnydale High blown up. They don't do transitions lightly in the Buffyverse.



SEASON FOUR

Buffy: I'm psyched for college, definitely. I'm just wondering how it's gonna work with my extracurricular activities. I've gotta make sure it doesn't take the edge off my slaying.

—4.1 The Freshman

With Season Four, great change comes to the lives of Buffy and the Slayerettes. Angel leaves Buffy and goes to Los Angeles seeking his own way to make up for his past. Cordelia does the same to pursue her acting career. Buffy, Willow and Oz enroll at UC Sunnydale, and Buffy has a difficult time adjusting at first. Xander languishes in a series of dead-end jobs; Anya continues her pursuit of him with single-minded zeal. Giles has his own difficulties adjusting to life as a non-librarian, and to the fact that Buffy seems to need his guidance less and less.

Early in the season we meet Riley Finn, Buffy's psychology class teaching assistant and secretly a member of the Initiative, a top-secret military organization with the mission of capturing and studying "sub-terrestrials." His boss, and Buffy's psych professor, is Dr. Maggie Walsh, a cold and driven woman with a mission within the Initiative secret even to Riley. Walsh's Project 314 has created Adam, a modern-day Frankenstein's Monster, made from human and demon parts and more than a match for Buffy. Walsh soon begins to see Buffy as a threat to her plans and Project 314, and goes so far as to send Buffy to her death in the guise of an assignment for the Initiative. Naturally this fails (the show's called *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, not *Maggie the Monster Maker*), and the betrayal costs Walsh her surrogate son, Riley, when



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he deserts. Walsh never gets to see Project 314 and Adam come to fruition as the creation kills its creator. Having decided that humans are far too feeble to rule the planet, Adam embarks upon a mission to create an army of cyber-demonoids. And folks think state universities are little more than never-ending party-time.

One of the major plotlines of Season Four is Buffy's quest for a new love in her life. After her history with Angel and a disastrous one-night stand with a philanderer named Parker, Buffy is ready for a nice, normal guy. As we have mentioned before, fat freaking chance! Riley Finn appears to be that boy, but both Buffy and Riley keep secrets from each other. When it finally comes out that Riley is one of the super-secret Initiative Commandos, it initially causes tension between them, but their relationship grows and strengthens as they discover that they share a common goal.

The fourth season considers the value of family and friends in a number of ways. At first unsure of her ability to cope with life after high school, Buffy quickly finds that it is something she can handle in part because it's not something she has to do on her own. Over the course of the season, various things cause the gang to drift apart—Buffy's relationship with Riley, Xander's absence from the college scene and Willow's education in all things witchy. And let's not forget the clever efforts of Spike to drive a wedge into the group. Riley also has an extended family within the Initiative: his fellow soldiers Graham and Forrest, the way Adam perceives him as a brother and Dr. Walsh as their mother. In the end, however, Buffy and her friends come back together, where they belong.

Spike returns, accompanied by Harmony Kendall, one of Cordelia's cronies from Sunnydale High School and a recent addition to the ranks of the undead. Spike fails in his quest to use the Gem of Amarra to kill Buffy, and is later captured by the Initiative and implanted with a microchip that prevents him from hurting humans. He eventually realizes that the chip doesn't stop him from hurting his fellow demons, a discovery that brings back some of that Spike bluster we all know and love. Over the course of the season, we see Spike go from one of Buffy's most dangerous foes to a somewhat reluctant ally.

Partway through the season, Oz meets a fellow werewolf, the lovely Veruca. Compelled by supernatural hormones . . . and probably good old-fashioned ones too, he does the werewolf nasty with her, breaking Willow's heart in the process. Veruca tries to kill Willow but ends up dying at Oz's hands (paws?) instead. Unsure of where the line is between the man and the beast, and deathly afraid of bringing further danger to the gal he loves, Oz decides



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SEASON FIVE

Dawn: She still thinks I'm Little Miss Nobody, just her dumb little sister. Boy, is she in for a surprise.

—5.2 *The Real Me*



to leave Willow and Sunnydale until he can come to terms with himself. He returns later in the season, but finds that Willow has found someone new. Tara Maclay is a shy young woman and also a Wicca. She and Willow notice each other first in a wanna-be-Wicca campus club. Over time, they form a bond due to their magic, their sweetness, and . . . you guessed it . . . shared danger. In one of the most deft pieces of writing in an astoundingly deft series, Willow and Tara come to share more than friendship in a totally natural and believable way. Serious reminder of the Jenny and Giles awwhhh moments from Season Two. When faced with a choice, Willow decides Tara is her true love. Heartbroken, Oz again leaves, this time for good.

The climactic showdown of the season begins with Adam invading the Initiative's secret base and letting loose all of the demons they have captured. Adam takes control of Riley through a chip in his chest, placed there by the not-so-late Dr. Walsh, newly reanimated as one of his undead minions. Buffy and the Slayerettes try to reason with Colonel McNamara, Walsh's replacement as head of the Initiative, but to no avail. Wholesale slaughter ensues as the demons wreak vengeance on the scientists and soldiers who imprisoned them. As Riley struggles against his programming, Buffy takes on Adam with the magically combined aid of Willow, Xander and Giles. Proving the old adage that the whole is greater than its parts, she rips Adam's power source right out of his chest. With Walsh dead, the Initiative program and Project 314 in a shambles, the military decides to declare the program a wash.

Season Five begins in left field. We start off with a surprise non-introduction of Dawn, Buffy's never-before-seen sister. The gang acts as if she's always been there, although Buffy notes that she does seem a bit more annoying lately. It doesn't take long for the minor irritations to mount, and Buffy seeks supernatural answers. Dawn is actually a mystical Key, hidden as the teenage girl, complete with memories, family photos, and a crush on Xander. The world has been reshaped to accept her as Buffy's younger sister. Now that's some major mojo working there.

Why hide a Key in the Summers' normally danger-filled household? The Order of Dagon, monks with more magical power than fashion sense, knew that an ancient god was hunting for it, so she could unlock the gates to the hell dimension from which she was expelled. The Slayer is the only one who can protect it, but she must accept responsibility for it fully and completely. Naturally, Glorificus, or Glory, as the evil god is known, quickly tracks her prize to Sunnydale.

Giving the Slayer and Scoobies a hand this season is Riley Finn, who stayed in Sunnydale with Buffy after the Initiative left town, and Spike, whose chip implant puts a leash on his more violent tendencies. Another character of note, despite his brief appearance, is Warren, the robotics genius who has unusual women problems—his android ex won't leave him alone. After Buffy shorts . . . er, sorts things out, Spike forces Warren to build a love-bot with the Slayer's image to be his plaything (ew!). Warren runs for cover soon after, and we hear no more from him . . . this season.

Among Season Five's themes is the obligation relationships put on us. Buffy has the supreme responsibility (as the Slayer, her obligation extends to the entire world), but all the Slayerettes experience a maturing of their relationships, and the deepened responsibility that goes with it. Xander and Anya become much more serious, moving into an apartment together and planning the future, with Xander holding down a "real job" and Anya leaping enthusiastically into the role of money manager. Willow and Tara repeatedly prove their devotion to each other, although Tara's concerns about Willow's increasing power provoke a disastrous encounter with Glory. Spike grows from "creepy stalker" to an actual asset in his attempts to impress the Slayer, even acting as guardian

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for Dawn on several occasions. He finds, to his horror, that he has deep feelings for the Slayer, and will go to nearly any length for her. Xander becomes a "voice of reason," which is quite amazing considering his hormonally driven antics of previous years.

Of course, not every relationship matures in a positive manner. Giles begins to feel unneeded in Buffy's world, and contemplates returning to England. Riley comes to realize his feelings for the Slayer are not reciprocated in a way he would like, which leads him to dangerous habits. He ultimately decides to return to active duty in Central America. Buffy arrives at his departure point too late to stop him. Drusilla reappears in Sunnydale just long enough to confirm that Spike is lost to her forever. Spike throws Harmony out of his crypt for good. These plot developments reflect a theme of loss, and the sense of despair that is brought on by these heartaches. This theme returns again and again in Season Five.

Many elements from early in the season have long-reaching ramifications. Spike's Buffybot is reprogrammed and plays a crucial role in defeating Glory. The increasingly crowded mental ward at Sunnydale General turns out to be the construction crew for the Big Bad. Willow's witchcraft grows more and more powerful—from a nosebleed-provoking teleportation spell to effortless lightning bolts. All in all, Joyce's medical problems are the worst of the bunch.

Glory is Buffy's most dangerous Big Bad to date. She is physically superior to the Slayer (a warehouse falls on her, and all she is concerned with is her outfit), leaves a trail of lunatics in her wake, and wears some very daring dresses. She has a group of servant demons—groveling little things—to watch the Slayer and track down clues. She was trapped on Earth only through the betrayal of a pair of equally powerful gods who ruled her home with her. To all appearances, she is unstoppable.

Giles contacts the Watchers Council (who of course take the opportunity to put Buffy through more of their famous tests—don't they have anything better to do in England?), but other than identifying Glory as a god, they offer no solution or even hope. Simultaneously, the Knights of Byzantium arrive, seeking to kill the Key (that's Dawn, remember) rather than let Glory find it. Then, of course, things get really bad.

Joyce had experienced several increasingly severe headaches early in the season. Eventually, a CAT scan reveals a tumor. Surgery removes the cancer, and all was thought to be well.



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Then, an aneurysm unexpectedly takes Joyce's life. The loss of her mother devastates Buffy, and all the Scoobies take it hard, as could be expected. Dawn attempts to resurrect her mother, but aborts the spell before anyone could see what had come back from the grave.

Now Buffy feels the extreme pressure of not only protecting Dawn from Glory, but also caring for the more mundane issues of passing classes and getting to school on time. Previous concerns about balancing her Slayerhood with a normal life are thrown to the wind. Buffy is overwhelmed, and as Glory closes in on the Key, the only solution is to flee Sunnydale. Her loyal friends, now including Spike, don't let her go alone.

Naturally, it doesn't work. Outside of town, the Knights ambush the crew, and Giles is gravely wounded. Willow surrounds their hideout with a magical forcefield, but the Knights bring in clerics to break through. When all seems darkest, Glory finally reveals a weakness—her presence on Earth is only possible by sharing a body with Ben, an intern who had cared for Joyce in the hospital

and flirted with Buffy at the Bronze. As Ben, Glory is vulnerable and mortal, if the Scoobies can bring themselves to murder an innocent. Otherwise, the only way to close the portal that would rip the earth apart is the blood of the Key—Dawn.

Her failed relationship with Riley, her mother's death, the sheer power of Glory, and her increasing questions about her place in the normal world weigh on Buffy enormously. As Glory finally kidnaps Dawn, Buffy is overwhelmed by guilt and despair. Only through the magical aid and council of Willow does she pull out of her mental "vacation." The Scoobies make a plan and swing into action, but not before Xander proposes to Anya (mortal danger is so romantic...). Almost everything goes as hoped—Glory is beaten and transforms back into Ben. Giles, out of sight of the others, takes Ben's life, ensuring that Glory will never return. Even so, one of Glory's worshippers manages to cut Dawn and open the portal. The world is about to end.

Buffy: I don't know about you guys, but I've had it with super-strong little women who aren't me.

—5.15 *I Was Made to Love You*

As the final battle climaxes, Buffy realizes that her blood will close the portal, and almost welcomes the opportunity to sacrifice herself. She spends her last moments with Dawn, reminding her how important she is, and that she must bear even further loss for the sake of the world. Buffy then leaps into the gate. It closes, leaving her limp body behind.

At the very end, we see a tombstone. It reads simply "Buffy Anne Summers. Beloved Sister. Devoted Friend. She saved the world. A lot."



IT'S THE
SLAYER'S WORLD,
WE JUST PLAY HERE





2 Some Assembly Required

Buffy: Accelerated healing powers come with the Slayer package. And the boyfriend who comes complete with combat medical training? That's just a Buffy Summers bonus.

—5.7 *Fool for Love*

To slay, you need a Slayer.
Or a Slayerette.

This chapter deals with creating Cast Members: the stars of the show. Cast Members are the roles you—the players—assume in the game; they may be larger-than-life heroes making a stand against the forces of darkness, or regular people facing the unknown. You are limited only by your imagination—and the casting needs of the Director.

CASTING CALL

Willow (to Colonel McNamara as he's searching their equipment): It's a gourd.

Giles: A magic gourd.

Colonel McNamara: What kind of freaks are you people?

—4.21 *Primeval*

Casting is a pretty important step, and it involves both you and the Director. Let's face it, the *BtVS* TV show wouldn't be anywhere near as much fun if the entire Cast consisted of fat hairy guys named Bob. You need an interesting Cast to make a good Series, and the casting process is the way to do it.



The Director should help and guide you through character creation. She should start by giving you an idea of the setting and the needs of the Series. This may be as general as "the game starts on a bus making a stop in Sunnydale. Your characters have to be on that bus, for whatever reason" or as restricted as "the game is set in a high school in the Midwest. All the Cast Members have to be students or teachers at the school, and at least half of you have to be students. I need one Slayer and one Watcher; the rest of you can be anything else, but no

vampires or demons are allowed." In some cases, the Director may simply hand out pre-generated characters (see Archetypes, pp. 60-83) and have all of you pick and choose. On the other hand, if you want to make your own character, as long as you don't come up with something wacko like "I'm Adam's clone body. Can I have two miniguns instead of one?" we say the Director should let you go with it.

Depending on the game, some choices may not be appropriate. If the game is set in Sunnydale, a Conan the Barbarian type might not work—although with creativity as your guide you can certainly give it a shot. Teamwork between you and the Director is pretty important here—there's a thin line between unnecessary limits on your creativity on one hand and entirely incompatible characters making the Director's carefully plotted game unplayable on the other.

Chapter Seven: Episodes, Seasons and Drama provides your Director with advice for developing a *BIVS RPG* Series and storyline-appropriate characters. But before she heads off to read that, you both should read through this chapter. There's plenty of good stuff here. For example, right below we have several options a Director may want to consider for her Casting Calls. You and she probably want to read them first.

THE SCOOPY GANG

This is the option if you want to take on the mantle of Buffy and Company, and fight for truth, justice, and the butt-whuppin' way. The Original Cast is listed later (see pp. 84-97). The Director can just photocopy the character sheets and hand them out. Run through the explanation of the character sheet so the terms are familiar to everyone (see p. 28), and you are all ready to go.

On the plus side, you know what you are getting, assuming you are fans of the show (and really, who isn't?). On the down side, the options are limited. What happens if two people want to play Buffy, or Spike? If everyone can pick a character and be happy, then it's not a bad idea; otherwise, someone will be unhappy, and unhappy players make for unhappy games, sleepless nights and tooth decay (not necessarily in that order).

Another problem is that the Original Cast is made up of experienced and powerful characters. For those not wholly familiar with the game system, it might be a good idea to start with less kickin' characters. Now, weaker versions of existing characters can be used (Buffy at the start of Season One was a lot less skilled and strong than she was by the end of Season Five, for

example, and compare Willow the sweet nerd of Season One with the wickedly dangerous witch of Season Five). Each character has notes for altering the Original Cast to represent earlier versions of our beloved heroes and heroines (see pp. 96-97).

A NEW CAST

Willow (about Buffy): Guess she's out with Riley. You know what it's like with a spanking new boyfriend.

Anya (re: Xander): Yes, we've enjoyed spanking.

—4.13 *The I in Team*

Plenty of room in the Buffyverse for other Casts, of course. It takes a bit more time, but another level is added to the game when you create your own characters. That way you get the character you want, and you can introduce different character concepts into the Series.

Before creating brand new Cast Members, you may want to think about the basic concepts behind them. What kind of role will the Cast Member play? Righteous knight, comic relief, loyal punching bag, or something else? You can use the characters from the *BIVS* TV show for inspiration ("I want a witch that's as strong as Willow, but who has more of a Faith attitude," for example), or come up with original concepts. Don't sweat it if inspiration is lacking, however. Sometimes the concept behind the Cast Member develops after character creation, in the course of the game. In that case, just get all the numbers down and do a basic personality sketch for now.

Sources of inspiration for new characters include movies, TV shows and fiction. Want to have your favorite movie action hero drop by Sunnydale? If the Director approves, it shouldn't be too difficult to do. Some characters work better than others, of course. Hero types work best (private detectives, supernatural hunters or nosy FBI agents with a yen for the paranormal). Sitcom characters with a tweak here and there might make interesting Slayerettes (think of the cast of *Friends* running into vampires—at least one of them could make an interesting witch). Cartoon characters . . . not so much. Still, goofy is good—at times.

Instead of creating a character from scratch, players can also use the ready-made Archetypes (see pp. 60-83). They are pre-generated Cast Members that can be customized and thrown into action with little or no work. Again, check out the meaning of the terms and numbers (see p. 28) and you are ready to go.

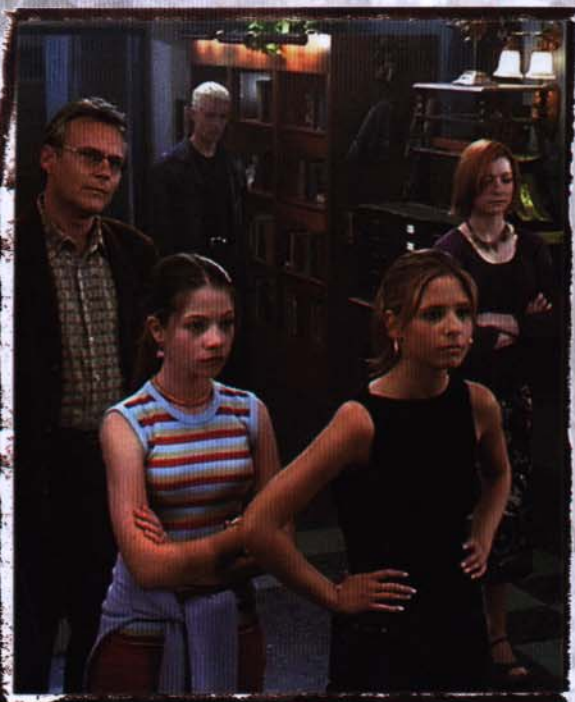


THE COMBINATION

If neither option is perfect (i.e., somebody's still whining), the Director may allow some of you to select members of the Original Cast and some to create your own. That should keep everyone happy (those still whining should be handed a pacifier, or maybe a ball-gag). Again, remember that most of the Official Cast are more skilled and powerful than beginning characters. If you have Season Five Buffy running around in the game, the Hero types are going to feel like Scoobies. To fix that, you should use the earlier versions of the Cast, or the Director should allow your new characters to start out with higher abilities and skills.

ASSIGNING CHARACTERS

Another possibility is to have the Director create the Cast herself and then let you pick from that "short list." This is the easiest way to make sure the Cast fits the storyline the Director wants. Then again, this option puts more responsibility on the Director, who makes all the casting calls. This could be good or bad. Just like using the Scooby Gang, some of you may not get the character you want. Furthermore, you might feel deprived of your "fundamental right" to play your own creation. Directors should try to be flexible and sensitive to your needs. They may not want to pull a Principal Flutie here, but they definitely should avoid the Principal Snyder approach.



SLAYER OPTIONS

Faith: I'm Faith.

Oz: I'm gonna go out on a limb and say there's a new Slayer in town.

—3.3 Faith, Hope And Trick

And here we arrive at the \$50,000 question. Who gets to be the Slayer? After all, the name of the show is *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, not *As Sunnydale Turns*. However, it's not necessary for the Slayer to be the most important character, or for the rest of the Cast to be bit players. Still, the Slayer is a choice part. The Director can handle this in a number of ways.

THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE: This restricts players to the "canon" of the Buffyverse. Buffy is the Slayer, and with the exception of Faith (currently enjoying the hospitality of a correctional facility), she's the one and only Slayer available to play. If the Cast does not include Buffy or Faith, then nobody gets to play a Slayer. There's nothing particularly wrong with this: there are plenty of possible Series that do not involve Slayers. For example . . . *Angel*. The game could deal with the Initiative or the Watchers, or maybe the adventures of a coven of witches or a gang of amateur vampire hunters. Even so, players who have their hearts set on playing the Blonde One . . . er . . . the Chosen One will be disappointed.

THE REPLACEMENT SLAYER: Here the Director makes a few changes in the official history of Sunnydale. This assumes that the current Slayer (Buffy or Faith) has suffered an untimely demise (like, say, at the end of 5.22 *The Gift*). That would allow a brand new Slayer to rise in her place. This would still limit the field to one Slayer (unless both Buffy and Faith were no longer among the living and the Director assumed that a new Slayer would appear for each of them—something that runs counter to the show's canon, by the way—the official assumption is that the Slayer line runs through Faith, not Buffy). Still, it gives the Chosen Player a little more leeway. The Archetypes section has a sample Slayer (see p. 60) that can be used for inspiration or played as is.

AND THEN THERE WERE THREE (OR FOUR, . . .): Okay, this bends a few of the "rules" almost to the breaking point, but it's kind of legal. When Buffy was clinically dead in 1.12 *Prophecy Girl*, Kendra became the Slayer, and then there were two Chosen "Ones." When Kendra died, Faith became a Slayer, keeping the total at two. So the Director can take this a step or two further, and allow for several Slayers in a game.



Let's say that during the events of 3.21-3.22 Graduation Day (where Buffy nearly kills Faith, and Angel almost kills Buffy when feeding off her) either or both of the Slayers suffered clinical death. This way, there could be one or even two more Slayers running around. That gives the Cast as many as four Chosen Ones to play. This is not "canon" by any means, and the show is certainly getting away from the "multiple Slayers" theme, but it's close enough for government work, and if a couple of players want to be Slayers, this is probably best. If the Director chooses this option, in the name of all that's good and decent, please don't dress up the Chosen Four in little sailor outfits and name them after assorted celestial bodies.

ANYTHING GOES: Finally, Directors can toss canon out the window (thud), and do whatever makes them (and you) happy. Maybe there is a Slayer born on every continent, or every large city, and once a year there is this huge SlayerCon. Or a Chosen Six rather than a Chosen One (again, no sailor outfits, please). Or male Slayers, or animal Slayers—you could have Slayer-Man, Slayer-Woman and Slayo the Slayer-Dog! The Game Police won't come knocking down your door if you are part of a game with any of the above, but some may be disappointed if the game diverges too much from the basic themes of *BtVS*. Directors are advised to talk things over with you players and make sure you are up for such canon-breaking.

THE CREATION PROCESS

The Unisystem uses a "point system" to create characters. Basically, you "buy" different abilities by spending character points. The better or more powerful a characteristic is, the more "expensive" it is. Some negative features, known as Drawbacks, do not cost any points. Instead, they have a negative value—by acquiring them, you actually get more points to buy other things. Keep in mind, of course, that these Drawbacks limit or hurt your character in some way, so loading them on carelessly is not a good idea.

Not everything is based on points, either. Some character elements are creativity-driven: your character's concept (what kind of person she is) and personality, as well as her name and history. These depend wholly on your imagination.



THE CHARACTER ELEMENTS

Walsh: It took the patrol team 42 minutes to track you and you neutralized them in 28 seconds.

Buffy (glances at Riley behind Walsh): I was just lucky.

Walsh: I see. (Riley starts to smile) Well. . . still. Very impressive.

Buffy: I was just being modest with the whole "lucky" thing. You got that, right?

—4.13 *The I in Team*

Characters in the *BtVS* RPG have four basic elements. Some elements are conceptual (what kind of character is she?) while others are numerical attributes (what are the character's actual abilities?). As you make each selection, you narrow down the possibilities of the character, until you finally have a clearly defined fictional individual, ready to go out and start kicking demon derriere.

1. **Type:** The Character Type determines the general power level and nature of your character. Heroes are tough and skilled. White Hats are normal people who depend on their wits and luck to survive.
2. **Attributes:** What are your character's natural abilities, both mental and physical?
3. **Qualities and Drawbacks:** What innate advantages or penalties affect your character?
4. **Skills:** What does your character know?



THE CHARACTER SHEET

Life Points: This measures how much damage Buffy can take before she risks unconsciousness or death.

Drama Points: Allow the character to do cool stuff, like killing a monster in one shot or avoiding certain death. Don't spend them all in one place!

Attributes: These show how strong, fast and smart Buffy is. The human average is 2; with a Strength of 8, Season Five Buffy is far, far stronger than a normal man.

Skills: These reflect knowledge and training. A competent martial artist has a Kung Fu Skill of four; Buffy has the Kung Fu Skill at nine.

Success Levels Table: When a roll is called for, look the result up on this table, then tell the Director how many Success Levels you got.

Combat Maneuvers: The character's favorite attack types, how much damage they do, and the bonus to the roll. Add the Success Levels of the attack to the damage.

Buffy
the vampire slayer
roleplaying game

LIFE POINTS
 DRAMA POINTS
 EXPERIENCE POINTS

CHARACTER NAME Buffy Anne Summers
 CHARACTER TYPE (Very) Experienced Hero
 DESCRIPTION _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	8	INTELLIGENCE	3
DEXTERITY	9	PERCEPTION	4
CONSTITUTION	8	WILLPOWER	6

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +3	Fast Reaction Time
Hard to Kill 9	Nerves of Steel
Psychic Visions	Slayer

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	9	KNOWLEDGE	3
ART	0	KUNG FU	9
COMPUTERS	0	LANGUAGES	0
CRIME	3	MR. FIX-IT	1
DOCTOR	2	NOTICE	5
DRIVING	0	OCCULTISM	4
GETTING MEDIEVAL	8	SCIENCE	1
GUN FU	0	SPORTS	1
INFLUENCE	3	WILD CARD	0

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (1D10 + DEX) _____
 PERCEPTION (1D10 + PER + NOTICE) _____

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	Bonus	Damage	NOTES
Axe	17	40	Slash/stab
Crossbow	17	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	14	16	x5 vs vamps
Dodge	18	—	Defense action
Grapple	20	—	Resisted by Dodge
Jump Kick	15	27	Bash; Acrobatics + Dexterity roll first
Kick	17	18	Bash
(Groin Kick)	14	18	Ouch!
Punch	18	16	Bash
Quarterstaff	17	27	Bash
Spin Kick	16	20	Bash
Stake	17	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	14	16	x5 vs vamps
Sweep Kick	17	8	Bash; target prone
Sword	17	32	Slash/stab
(Decapitation)	12	32	x5 damage
Thrown Stake	16	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	13	16	x5 vs vamps
Toss	12	8	

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
13-14	3	GOOD
15-16	4	VERY GOOD
17-20	5	EXCELLENT
21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

NOTES _____

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Qualities and Drawbacks: These are bennies and problems the character has. Buffy has good looks, but a tragic love life and a ton of enemies. The good stuff costs points to get; the bad stuff gives you points to get more good stuff.

There is only one slayer
get home before dark

CHARACTER TYPE

As we mentioned (you were paying attention, right?), creating a character involves allocating a number of points to various aspects of that persona. Your gal's Character Type determines how many points you have to "spend" on each character component your character-building "budget," in accountant-speak.

Character Type also goes a long way toward giving the Season (or the first several Episodes at least) a tone and scope. For example, if your Director wants a Series involving characters roughly as powerful as Buffy and friends in Season One, she should have you play with one Hero (maybe two, if you count Angel) and several White Hats. To simulate the capabilities of the Season Five Original Cast, Experienced Heroes would be the order of the day.

HERO

Giles: Can you move?

Ben: Need a . . . a minute. She could have killed me.

Giles: No, she couldn't. And sooner or later Glory will re-emerge and make Buffy pay for that mercy . . . and the world with her. Buffy even knows that, and still she couldn't take a human life. She's a hero, you see. She's not like us.

—5.22 The Gift

Heroes are here to kick booty and take names. Use this Character Type to create men and women of action. Slayers, experienced Watchers and Initiative Commandos are Hero types; they have skills and abilities well above the norm. Outside the Buffyverse, tough cops who rarely need backup to make an arrest or gals who wear mystical gloves are examples of this type.

Attribute Points: 20
Quality Points: 20
Drawback Points: up to 10
Skill Points: 20
Drama Points: 10



HERO

WHITE HAT

Evil Willow: I love this part.

Evil Xander: You love all the parts.

(Evil Xander knocks Cordelia cold.)

Evil Willow: No fun. She didn't even hardly fight.

(Oz's van squeals to a halt nearby.)

Evil Xander: Aw, swell. It's the White Hats.

—3.9 The Wish

White Hats are regular people who find themselves fighting the supernatural. They don't have Kewl Powerz or special training, but they start the game with more Drama Points, allowing them to survive against insurmountable odds. Beginning Slayerettes and Watchers should use this Character Type. Other possibilities include nosy reporters who make a habit of chasing ghouls and monsters, and the proverbial teenagers driving psychedelic vans in the company of strange dogs.

Attribute Points: 15
Quality Points: 10
Drawback Points: up to 10
Skill Points: 15
Drama Points: 20



WHITE
HATS

EXPERIENCED HERO

Buffy: This is how many apocalypses for us now?

Giles: Oh, well . . . uh . . . six at least. Feels like a hundred.

—5.22 The Gift

These are full-fledged cinematic heroes, with incredible skills and abilities. If some of you are using characters from the Original Cast (see pp. 84-97), the rest should use this template so your characters aren't overshadowed. Experienced Heroes should not be used alongside Hero and White Hat characters, unless the Director wants to have a significant power gap between Cast Members. This is the Type you would use to create Special Forces soldiers who can fight an entire army with a knife, immortal wandering swordsmen, and bio-engineered super-soldiers from a bleak future. Lest you get cocky with these worthies, however, remember that the Director will be ratcheting up the power level of the bad guys too.

Attribute Points: 25
Quality Points: 25
Drawback Points: up to 10
Skill Points: 40
Drama Points: 20



EXPERIENCED
HERO



ATTRIBUTES

Travers: Agility, clarity, stamina, and strength. These are the qualities that the Slayer must possess to do her job.

Buffy: 'What came after agility?'

—5.12 Checkpoint

Attributes are inborn characteristics of your character: her strength, intelligence, senses and so on. By selecting a set of Attributes, you are defining the limits of what the character can and cannot do. So, if you "buy" a very low Dexterity for your Cast Member, do not be surprised if she tends to fall down, break dishes and suck at juggling.

BUYING ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are purchased using Attribute Points (imagine that!). Those points are set by your Character Type (see p. 29).

Attributes can be "bought" up to level five on a one-for-one basis (i.e., Strength 3 would cost three points, Strength 4 four points, and so on). Attributes above level five are more expensive: three points per additional level. You should not purchase an Attribute past level six, the effective human maximum (buying an Attribute up to level six would cost eight points). Beings with supernatural abilities (Slayers, vampires, demons and the like) can have Attributes above six.

At the other end, at least one point must be put into each Attribute.

So, a White Hat has 15 points to distribute among the six Attributes. You can have three Attributes at level two (average), and three at level three (somewhat above average). Or you could drop an Attribute to one, and get one at four. This character would really shine in one aspect, is above average at a couple other things, sucks at one thing and is average for the rest. Season One Willow, for example, was not exactly Muscle Woman (Strength 1) but she was very smart (Intelligence 4).

A Hero has 20 points. With that, you can go with four Attributes at level three and two at level four. This creates a balanced character good at most things. Or you could keep three Attributes at average level and have two at level five and one at level four, for someone who is extremely gifted in certain areas.

The meaning of numbers

Level 1: The character is below average in this Attribute. Strength 1 indicates a poor physique, either a petite or flabby, sedentary person. Dexterity 1 indicates clumsiness, someone likely to drop things—not to be trusted with delicate manual work unless the person has trained very hard to do so. Characters with a Constitution 1 are delicate and often in poor health. Intelligence 1 is below average—not mentally challenged, but certainly a bit slow on the uptake. Perception 1 depicts someone not very aware of her surroundings, likely to miss what's before her face. Willpower 1 results in a person who is easily intimidated and influenced by others, a follower instead of a leader, and somebody who is likely to succumb to temptation. In other words, Attributes at level one are not flattering. If your character has an Attribute at level one, she is going to be pretty feeble at some things.

Level 2: This is the average for human beings. Most people in any given group have Attributes at this level, typically with one or two at levels one or three. Nothing wrong with being average, but the character is unlikely to shine with such Attributes unless her skills are so high she can compensate.

Level 3: This is above average but not extraordinary. Strength and Constitution 3 show some athletic aptitude—somebody who works out at least three times a week, or a natural athlete who has not taken time to develop her talent. Characters with Dexterity 3 are graceful—good dancing partners, grabbed near the beginning in pick-up sports, unlikely to suffer from butter fingers or Klutz Syndrome. Intelligence 3 indicates a bright person who can easily learn new skills, if she has the temperament to do so. With Perception 3, a character has good senses and intuition, and is not easily fooled or confused. Characters with Willpower 3 are rarely bluffed or bullied under normal circumstances.

Level 4: An Attribute at this level is well above average. Very few people, perhaps one out every ten in a random group, have one or two Attributes at this level. Strength and Constitution 4 can be found only in athletes (including the



THE SIX ATTRIBUTES



best football players in a large high school or college campus), extensively trained Special Forces soldiers, and other people who spend a large amount of time and effort keeping in shape. A Dexterity 4 would only be common among gymnasts, acrobats, dancers and other talented and graceful individuals. Mental Attributes at level four indicate near genius (Intelligence), highly acute senses and intuition (Perception), or an "iron will" (Willpower).

Level 5: This is the "practical" human limit. People at this level are extraordinarily talented, able to perform complex and difficult feats with little practice. While people with Attributes at level five are not record breakers, they are among the best and the brightest. In a small or medium-sized community, only a handful of people have one or two Attributes at this level, and they are likely to be well known for their strength, wisdom or toughness. Cities, large college campuses, and groups of demon fighters have more of these extraordinary individuals, but even there they are not common.

Level 6: This is the true human limit. A few people with "freakish" attributes may exceed it (to level seven), but they are a handful even among the teeming billions living in the 21st century. Characters with one Attribute at level six are very rare, something on the order of one in ten thousand, or less. People with more than one Attribute at level six are perhaps ten times less common, and so on.

Level 7+: Now we are talking superhuman. Someone with Strength 7 would be as strong as a horse; a Dexterity 12 connotes inhuman grace; and so on. These folks can perform at a level that normal folks can hardly comprehend. Be afraid. Be very afraid.

STRENGTH

Buffy: Things won't ever be exactly the same, but once I... get back to... full...

Xander: Give you a hand with that, little lady?

Buffy: You're loving this far too much.

Xander: Admit it. Sometimes you just need a big strong... uh, Will? Gimme a hand?

—3.12 *Helpless*

A measure of your character's physical power, Strength determines how much damage she inflicts with hand-to-hand weapons, how much weight she can carry, and how much damage and exertion she can withstand before collapsing. Strength is useful to people who do a lot of heavy lifting or anybody likely to enter hand-to-hand combat—in *BtVS*, the latter is pretty much the norm. Characters apt to have a high Strength include athletes, manual workers, and soldiers. A low strength indicates either small size and body weight (cough—Snyder—cough), or just a lack of exercise.

The Strength Table shows how much a character of any given Strength can lift without much effort. Higher weights can be raised (assume a maximum lifting weight—for brief periods—equal to double the Lifting Capacity), but a nail might be broken or a spleen ruptured in the process.

strength table

strength

lifting capacity

1-5	50 lbs x Strength (Strength 5: 250 lbs)
6-10	200 x (Strength - 5) + 250 lbs (Strength 10: 1250 lbs)
11-15	500 x (Strength - 10) + 1500 lbs (Strength 15: 4,000 lbs/2 tons)
16-20	1,000 x (Strength - 15) + 5,000 lbs (Strength 20: 10,000 lbs/5 tons)
21-25	1 ton x (Strength - 20) + 5 tons (Strength 25: 10 tons)
26-30	2 ton x (Strength - 25) + 10 tons (Strength 30: 20 tons)





DEXTERITY

Dexterity indicates your character's physical coordination and agility. It helps with any task that requires motor control and precision, from performing card tricks to shaking booty to feeding knuckle sandwiches (Dexterity helps to land the punch; Strength determines how much it hurts the punchee). If you want to do cartwheels—or try those kewl moves you saw in *The Matrix*—you'd better have a high Dexterity (and some help from the script).

CONSTITUTION

This Attribute shows how physically hardy or healthy your character is. Constitution is important when it comes to resisting disease, damage, and fatigue. It is also used (along with Strength) to determine how much of a pounding your Cast Member can take and still keep ticking. Constitution also comes into play with skills that involve endurance, like swimming and long-distance running. Constitution is useful for people in strenuous and dangerous jobs (firefighting, Slaying, being a Slayer's friend).

INTELLIGENCE

Snyder: You've got the brains, he's got the fast break. It's a perfect match.

Willow: Match? You want us to breed?

Snyder: I want you to tutor him.

—3.16 *Doppelgängerland*

Brains good. This mental Attribute determines your character's ability to learn, correlate and memorize information. The higher her Intelligence, the easier it is for her to employ "scholastic" skills. Also, this Attribute is used to understand and interpret information. Note that intelligence and education are two separate things; you can be brilliant but illiterate. Education is covered by your character's skills, which determine what she has learned in her life. Watchers and other intellectual types tend to have a high Intelligence level.

PERCEPTION

When a vamp you've never seen before tries to suck your blood, Perception might help you spot her before she strikes. This mental Attribute governs the five senses of the character and is important for wannabe detectives (to spot those important clues), people with enemies (to see or hear them coming), and mystical or psychic types (to detect "disturbances in the Force").

WILLPOWER

This Attribute measures your character's mental strength and self-control, and her ability to resist fear, intimidation, and temptation. If you don't want to run away screaming like a little girl the first time a vamp flashes its fangs at you, Willpower is your friend. Any supernatural ability that tries to control or influence victims is resisted by Willpower. It can also be used to intimidate and dominate others through sheer force of will.

ATTRIBUTE BONUSES

Some Qualities (like Slayer) provide bonuses to one or more Attributes. These modifiers are applied after Attributes have been purchased normally. For example, if you spend five points on Dexterity, and your character has a Quality that adds a +1 to Dexterity, a level six Dexterity is the final result.

LIFE POINTS

Life Points represent your character's physical health. The Strength and Constitution of the character are the determinant factors; a big muscle-bound athlete can survive more punishment than a pencil-necked, cold-catching nerd. Life Points determine the amount of physical damage the character can take before being unable to function.

Life Points are determined by adding the character's Strength and Constitution, multiplying the result by four, and adding 10—or you can skip the math and just consult the Life Point Table on the next page. This formula is for human beings (and human-like beings, such as Slayers and vampires). Some creatures have different Life Point totals (many demons are much tougher than normal humans, for example, see p. 175).

The Hard to Kill Quality (see p. 39) is a good way to increase Life Points. Players should figure out Life Points at the end of character creation after all Attributes have been figured out normally.

Life point table constitution

strength	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	18	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54
2	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58
3	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62
4	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66
5	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70
6	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74
7	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78
8	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82
9	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86
10	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86	90

QUALITIES & DRAWBACKS

Willow (re: Faith): She's like this cleavagey slut-bomb walking around going, "Ooh. Check me out, I'm wicked cool. I'm five by five."

Tara: Five by five? Five what by five what?

Willow: See, that's the thing. No one knows.

—4.15 *This Year's Girl*

Qualities are innate characteristics that give the character an advantage or positive trait. Being a Slayer is a Quality—Slayers are stronger, faster and tougher than normal human beings. They have bad things going for them, too (lots of enemies, for one), but the ability to kick butt tends to outweigh the bad stuff. Qualities cost Quality Points to acquire.

Some Qualities are package deals—your character buys one Quality but gets a number of benefits, or some benefits and some downsides. Jock, Nerd, Slayer and Vampire are all examples of these package Qualities. In general, your character is limited to purchasing one of these types of Qualities. Now, if you want to play a Nerd-Watcher or Nerd-Werewolf, talk it over with your Director. You might be able to pull that off. Directors, watch this carefully. Jock-Nerds, Werewolf-Slayers, or Vampire-Werewolves are highly suspect. Even so, we don't recommend laughing in anyone's face (that would be rude).

Drawbacks are characteristics that somehow limit or detract from the character—bad eyesight, emotional problems, or being oh-my-god-it's-hideous ugly, for example. Drawbacks have values. When Drawbacks are acquired, the character gains extra points that can be used to buy Qualities or skills. Think of the extra points

as a little reward for making the character a bit more three-dimensional and entertaining than some plain-vanilla, "nothing wrong with me" bloke.

Beginning characters are limited to 10 points in Drawbacks. That does not mean players have to get 10 points' worth of Drawbacks; most will probably end up with less than that.

CHANGES DURING PLAY

After creating the character, some (use common sense) Qualities and Drawbacks may be acquired or lost in the course of a game. For example, a scarring wound could reduce the character's Attractiveness, or a change in fortune might increase or decrease the character's Resources or Social Level. When such a change is brought about during play, no experience points (see p. 131) are needed to purchase them. If players want to purposefully change a Quality or Drawback, they must spend experience points and come up with a good reason for the change. This intentional change is somewhat restricted, however (see p. 133).



new qualities & drawbacks

The Quality and Drawback list presented in this chapter is far from exhaustive, although it covers most of the basics. In many cases, a "new" Quality or Drawback can be an extension or variation of an existing one. The value of the characteristic should be balanced out by the benefits or penalties it gives the character. Most Qualities or Drawbacks should be worth between one and three points; only the most powerful or crippling of them should have a value of four or higher, unless they are "combo" Qualities like Slayer or Initiative Commando. These "combos" often include Attribute bonuses; each Attribute bonus costs one character point, with the maximum bonus being +5 to any one Attribute.

List of Qualities & Drawbacks

ACUTE/IMPAIRED SENSE

2-POINT QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

Oz: It's Willow. She's nearby.

Cordelia: What? You can smell her? She doesn't even wear perfume.

Oz: She's afraid.

—3.8 *Lovers Walk*

Some people have the eyes of a hawk, or the ears of a bat. Which is kind of yucky when you think about it. Others are near-sighted, hard of hearing or otherwise impaired. Characters with this Quality have one sense that is more (or less, if it's a Drawback) refined and sensitive than the rest. Normally, the five senses are represented by the Perception Attribute. Acute or Impaired Senses indicate one or more are higher or lower than normal for a person with that Perception Attribute.

When bought as a Quality, an Acute Sense gives your character a +3 bonus to any Perception-related roll that relies on that particular sense. If acquired as a Drawback, Impaired Sense give a similar -3 penalty to Perception-related rolls.

Some Impaired Senses (hearing and sight in particular) can be easily corrected by glasses, hearing aids and similar devices (though no doubt some insensitive high school student will give you a hard time about it). If the impairment is eliminated by the use of such devices, the Director

should reduce the value of the Drawback to one character point. As long as your character's glasses or hearing aid or whatever is on, she is fine. If, say, a vampire knocks the glasses off, she won't be able to see very well (Cast Members should probably wear contacts or those I'm-an-ancient-librarian-type glasses straps). It is possible to have more than one type of Acute or Impaired Sense, or, for example, to have Acute Hearing and Impaired Eyesight, or a similar combination of senses. For obvious reasons, you cannot select both the Impaired and Acute versions of the same sense (but "duh" for asking).

ADDICTION

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

Willow: Who would pay to get bitten?

Anya: It's been going on for centuries. Humans hire vampires to feed off them. They get off on the rush.

Giles: And the danger. Traveling in the underworld can become addictive for these people.

—5.10 *Into the Woods*

Don't do drugs, kids. If your character does drugs, she's likely to become an addict, and that's a bad thing. You've all seen the after-school specials and know the score about addiction. Still, a big component of *BtVS* is tragedy, and addiction is that in spades. If you want to go there, an addicted character's gotta have something (drugs, liquor, smokes) and she's gotta have it bad.

The value of this Drawback is determined by the severity of the addiction and the relative effects of the drug or substance. Since this isn't the Drug Awareness Week Roleplaying Game, we won't cover all the gory details. Directors should adjudicate the game effects of a "high" on a character. This can range from a small penalty for being slightly "buzzed," to the complete stupor of a heroin trip. A rough guide would be a penalty equal to the Addiction Point Value of the Drawback (heavy use of marijuana imposes a -3 penalty to all rolls). In the game as in real life, drugs are dangerous and unpredictable, and an addict character is often unable to control herself.

addiction point value table

Habitual drinking or smoking: 1 point.

Heavy drinking or smoking, light use of marijuana or LSD: 2 points

Heavy use of marijuana or LSD: 3 points

Alcoholism, habitual use of barbiturates or cocaine: 4 points

Habitual use of heroin, heavy use of barbiturates or cocaine: 5 points

Heavy use of heroin: 6 points

The Addiction Point Value Table gives guidelines for the value of a given type of addiction. Directors should modify these values as desired.

When an addicted character hasn't gotten her usual "fix," she suffers from debilitating withdrawal symptoms. Most mental actions (e.g., any rolls using Intelligence, Perception or Willpower) are at a penalty equal to the value of the Drawback (so, a character with a 2-point Addiction suffers a -2 penalty to most mental actions) until the addict can get what she needs. The most severe drugs (like heroin) also produce strong physical effects; such addicts have a withdrawal penalty of -3 to all physical actions in addition to the above penalty on mental actions.

Unlike some Drawbacks, this problem cannot be overcome easily. Generally, the best a character can hope to do is to deny her craving "one day at a time." Getting rid of this Drawback should never be a matter of saving up enough points to "buy it off." Resisting the craving requires a series of daily Willpower (doubled) rolls. The first few rolls suffer no penalty. After a number of days equal to the character's Willpower have passed, add a penalty equal to the value of the Drawback. If the character blows any of the rolls, she'll do whatever it takes to get her fix. If no fix is available, she goes through the withdrawal penalties. And so on. Once ten straight days of successful Willpower rolls have passed, the character may lower the Addiction Point Value by one. And it starts all over again. Not a fun situation to be in, but if the struggle to overcome the addiction is roleplayed well, it should earn the character some Drama Points.

ADVERSARY

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

Spike (re: the Scoobies): This is the crack team that foils my every plan? I am deeply shamed.

—4.9 *Something Blue*

Your character has pissed someone off. And not pissed off in a "I'm not speaking to you" way—more like a "I'm going to really kill you" or "I'm going to make your life a living hell" kind of way. In the Buffyverse, Adversaries are an occupational hazard. You can't just stake vamps without word getting out, and the vamps are not going to take it lying down.

The more powerful the Adversary is, the higher the value of this Drawback. Directors should determine if an Adversary is appropriate to the game in question. If the Adversary is unlikely to appear frequently, the Director can reduce the point value or disallow it altogether. The

Master, for example, is worth zero points as an Adversary after 2.1 *When She Was Bad*, since he's dust in the wind. Individuals are valued at one to three points as Adversaries, depending on their resources and abilities. A normal person grants one point; a new vampire two points; a Green Beret or a veteran vampire three points. An organization may be worth three to five or more points, depending on its power. A gang of thugs garners two points, the police department of a city three to four points (depending on its size and competence), and a national agency like the CIA five points or more. A large supernatural group like the Order of Taraka could give six or more points; that would apply only if the entire Order is after the Cast Member—and your character's life expectancy is going to mondo suck.

You should have a good reason why your character has earned the enmity of the Adversary. Your Director can then weave this enemy into the Season in any way she sees fit. Alternatively, you can select the Drawback and leave it to your Director to decide who the Adversary is.

Killing the Adversary is not usually enough to eliminate the Drawback—your Director will see to it that another Adversary of similar value rears its ugly head shortly afterwards. That's the way it works in the show, after all. Most Cast Members in Sunnydale should have a minimum Adversary 2, representing the local supernatural community that thrives around the Hellmouth. Slayers and their ilk have a permanent Adversary figured into the point cost of their Quality.



AGE

2-POINTS/LEVEL QUALITY

Anya: For a thousand years I wielded the powers of the wish. I brought ruin upon the heads of unfaithful men. I offered destruction and chaos for the pleasure of the lower beings. I was feared and worshipped across the mortal globe and now I'm stuck at Sunnydale High! A mortal! A child! And I'm flunking math.

—3.16 *Doppelgängerland*

Some beings have been alive and active for several life spans; they could be demons, ancient undead, or other-worldly game show hosts. Ancient characters are very powerful, having refined their abilities with centuries of practice. This Quality assumes that the character has powers or natural abilities, like vampirism, that allowed her to survive this long (such powers must be purchased separately).

Each level of Age adds one century to your character's life span. Truly ancient supernaturals (a millennium old or older) have ten or so levels of Age, and are extremely powerful. As such, they are not appropriate as Cast Members in most games.

The Age Quality only refers to periods during which the character was active. Many supernatural beings have long periods of "down time," times when they were in stasis (a fancy term for chillin' in a big way). If you want to create a character from a truly ancient period, be our guest; add as many levels of Age as you can afford, and consider the rest of the time to be "down time" for whatever reason. The bonuses your character gets are restricted to those levels of Age bought, however.

Age gives your character more points to put into skills. Each level of Age grants one point per level of Intelligence to put into skills, to a maximum of four per level. Age is not without its downside, however. Over time, enemies and secrets are accumulated, and these always seem to outlast friendships and renown. For each level of Age, the character must take one level of either Adversary or Secret and gains no character points for this Drawback.

ARTIST

2-POINT QUALITY

Willow: And I haven't been a nerd for a very long time! Hello?—dating a guitarist, or I... was.

—4.11 *Doomed*

Your character's an artist, someone unusually talented and creative. Artists end up forming bands that don't

suck (*Dingoes Ate My Baby*, post sausage-fingers phase), painting masterpieces, writing Great American Novels, and doing other cool stuff like that.

Artists get a +1 to any two mental Attributes (Intelligence, Perception or Willpower); the bonuses cannot be stacked onto one Attribute, and the limit remains six for humans. They also get a +1 to (what else?) the Art Skill. Artists tend to be a bit sensitive and emotional, though; they have a -1 penalty to Willpower rolls to resist crying or losing their temper, or otherwise letting their emotions rule.

ATTRACTIVENESS

1-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

Xander: Somehow I don't think a girl that looks like that's gonna be lonely for too long.

Willow: Definitely not.

—5.15 *I Was Made to Love You*

This Quality or Drawback determines the character's looks (or lack thereof). The average person has an Attractiveness of 0. Attractiveness typically ranges from -5 to +5 in humans. A +1 or +2 make the person stand out in a crowd. At +3 or +4, we are talking model-good looks. At +5, the pulchritude borders on the heart-stopping. On the other hand, at -1 or -2, the person has homely features, or unsightly blemishes or scars. At -3 or -4, the character is downright repulsive. At -5, break out the paper bag—looking at the character is almost painful.

For some strange reason, most of the students at Sunnydale High seem to have Attractiveness of +1 or better. Must be the Hellmouth's influence . . . (though the cynical might chock it up to ratings).

A positive Attractiveness helps when dealing with people of the right sex or sexual persuasion. If you're "looking good" enough, a few come-hither glances may help you get backstage at a rock concert, avoid traffic



tickets, get your flat tire changed and so on. Add your character's Attractiveness bonus to any activity (usually Influence Skill rolls) where persuading people is a factor. Negative attractiveness works the opposite way, except when the purpose is to intimidate someone; people are more scared of an ugly mug than a pretty face.

Attractiveness costs one point per level if bought as a Quality, or adds one extra character point if acquired as a Drawback. After character creation, Attractiveness can change only by events that modify the character's entire appearance, either through scarring or plastic surgery, or growing up in the right places if your character starts out young enough ("Look ma, I've got breasts now!").

CLOWN

1-POINT DRAWBACK

Xander: Oh, forgiveness is my middle name! Well, actually it's LaVelle, and I'd appreciate it if you guard that secret with your life.

—1.4 Teacher's Pet

Wise guy, eh? The Clown refuses to take things seriously and is always coming up with jokes and wisecracks, even at the most inappropriate moments. Perhaps your character is deeply insecure and tries to gain other people's acceptance through humor, or she simply delights in keeping folks off-balance with her comments. The biggest problem these characters have is that they cannot keep their mouths shut even when they know a joke will only work against them.

Clowns are generally accepted and liked during situations where their quirky humor is not out of place (parties and other social gatherings, or among friends). Their sense of humor gets them in trouble during tense and dangerous situations. Another problem the Clown faces is people often do not take her seriously even when they should.

CONTACTS

VARIABLE QUALITY

Spike: I've never used this bloke's services myself, but there's talk. Word is he knows everything there is to know about resurrection spells.

—5.17 Forever

You know the routine—make a phone call to the right people and you get information, special supplies, some cash, or even the proper make-over regimen. This Quality gives your character those phone numbers. The

more helpful the contact is, the higher the Quality's point value. For any and all Contacts, the Director determines whether or not the Contact is available at any given time. Generally, the more time your character has to reach or get word to her Contact, the more likely the Contact will come through.

A Contact that only provides hints, rumors or gossip costs one point. If the Contact usually provides reliable information and helps the character out in small ways (offering a ride, letting the character spend the night over, or getting a background check on somebody), this Quality sets you back two points. Actual allies who help the character in any way they can run three to five points, depending on the Contact's resources (the full weight of the Watchers Council, for example, would cost five points—note that most Watchers don't get that much support in the field).

COVETOUS

1- TO 3-POINT DRAWBACK

Cordelia: I have a dream. It's me on the cheerleading squad, adored by every varsity male as far as the eye can see! We have to achieve our dreams, Amy. Otherwise we . . . wither and die!

—1.3 Witch

Everybody wants stuff. A Covetous character wants stuff really badly, and will do almost anything to get it. She may be motivated by love of money, lust for sensual satisfaction, hunger for power, or the search for glory. Whatever she desires, she will do almost anything to get it, limited only by any sense of caution or morality she may have—and in some cases, not even by that. A Covetous character usually refrains from breaking her own moral code or the laws of the land in the pursuit of her goals, but if a golden opportunity presents itself, the temptation may just be too great.

There are four types of covetousness: Greedy (money and wealth), Lecherous (sexual relations), Ambitious (power and influence), and Conspicuous (fame and renown). It is possible to covet two or more of those things, but each additional source of desire adds but a single point to the value of this Drawback.

The Covetous Drawback has three levels of severity, worth one, two and three points respectively.

MILD: The first level is relatively mild. Your character knows what she wants and she spends a great deal of time and effort to attain her goals, but she won't break her own rules or those of society to do so. This is a 1-point Drawback.



SERIOUS: The second level is stronger—presented with enough temptation, your character may act even if it goes against her better judgment or morality. She may resist if the action she contemplates is truly wrong and reprehensible—stealing credit for a heroic deed performed by a friend, for example—but resisting requires a Willpower (doubled) roll, at a penalty of -1 to -3 if the temptation and possible rewards are great. This is a 2-point Drawback.

DESPERATE: The third level is the strongest—a desire so strong that it often overwhelms any scruples your character may have. When presented with temptation, she can only avoid acting by making a Willpower roll, with penalties ranging from -1 to -5 depending on the size of the prize. For a high enough reward, your character will turn on friends or loved ones, and even betray her principles. This is a 3-point Drawback.

DEPENDENT

2- OR 3-POINT DRAWBACK

Joyce: Buffy, if you're going out, why don't you take your sister?

Buffy & Dawn (in unison): Mom!

—5.1 *Buffy vs. Dracula*

Your character has a relative or someone who is close to her—perfect for the villains to terrorize, hold hostage or otherwise use and abuse. Joyce Summers and the early version of Dawn are perfect examples of Dependents. If your character has one Dependent, she gets two points. More than one Dependent is worth three points—sorry, five siblings may be a bunch, but they just don't give you any more points.

EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

1- OR 2-POINT DRAWBACK

Faith: Ronnie, deadbeat. Steve, klepto. Kenny . . . drummer. Eventually, I just had to face up to my destiny as a loser magnet. Now it's strictly get some, get gone. You can't trust guys.

—3.7 *Revelations*

Does your character have difficulty relating to others? Does she get depressed often, wear dark clothing, or listen to a lot of weird music? If the answer is yes, she might have an Emotional Problem or two. Those with Emotional Problems react in unreasonable ways to certain situations and problems. The reaction can be anger, pain or anguish, typically more extreme than normal. People get wiggy for the strangest reasons.



Characters in the Buffyverse often overcome their limitations. Emotional Problems can be overcome during play, but this should always be roleplayed. If you are able to convey the inner struggle of your character over the course of several Episodes, the Director might allow her to eliminate the Drawback without having to “pay” any experience points to do so (see p. 133). And there's probably a Drama Point (see p. 126) or two in it for you as well.

DEPRESSION: Your character's emotional problems make the very act of living a chore. Common symptoms include sleep problems (either oversleeping or insomnia), severe procrastination (to the point that the sufferer may lose her job or get kicked out of school), and a lack of interest in anything. A character with Depression suffers a -1 to most Tasks, and tends to avoid becoming involved. This is a 2-point Drawback. A severe shock may snap someone out of this state for a while (a life-threatening crisis could do it), but the character will sink back into inactivity afterwards. Certain drugs and psychiatric treatment can reduce the effect of this problem (which also reduces its value to one point).

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY: These clingy types are overly dependent on others. Once they make a friend, they want to hang around her all the time. When involved in a relationship, they are excessively needy. This behavior tends to freak friends and relations. This is a 1-point Drawback.

FEAR OF COMMITMENT: Whenever your character starts feeling too close to somebody, she becomes afraid and pulls back. Maybe she is afraid that if she lets somebody get too close, they will hurt her, and it's . . . just . . . not . . . worth the pain. Or perhaps she fears that if she reveals too much about herself, the other person will see the “real her” and be appalled or disgusted. This makes it very difficult to have a healthy relationship with either friends or lovers. This problem is a 1-point Drawback.

FEAR OF REJECTION: When this person experiences rejection (or thinks she has been rejected), she feels hurt

and angry. People with this problem may be afraid to make friends or approach those they are attracted to, and if their fears come true, they harbor a great deal of resentment and anger. This is a 1-point Drawback.

FAST REACTION TIME

2-POINT QUALITY

Dawn: We can't all be born with big fancy Chosen One reflexes, you know.

—5.5 No Place Like Home

Most people freeze when something bad is about to happen (like . . . I don't know . . . when a large reptile boy lunges out of the dark at you). Not someone with this Quality—the lucky one rolls away and punches ol' scaly as soon as it bares its teeth at her. In combat, contact sports or other physical confrontations, characters with this Quality gain a +5 bonus for Initiative purposes (see p. 108), modified by common sense (Fast Reaction Time cannot help the target of a sniper half a mile away, for example). This Quality also provides a bonus of +1 on Willpower Tests to resist fear.

GOOD/BAD LUCK

1-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

Dawn: Any luck?

Willow: If you define luck as the absence of success—plenty.

—5.20 Spiral

If your character enjoys Good Luck, Fortune smiles on her far more often than on most people. Whenever she needs a break, there is a good chance that circumstances will conspire to give her one. If your character suffers from Bad Luck, on the other hand, Murphy's Law ("if anything can go wrong, it will") always applies to everything she does. Good Luck points are like low-key Drama Points (see p. 126), but have the advantages of being reusable and you can use them whenever you want.

Each level of Luck counts as a +1 bonus (or -1 penalty) that can be applied to any roll, after the die is rolled, once per game session. Multiple levels can be added together for a big bonus on one roll, or spread around several different actions. For example, if your character has three levels of Good Luck, she can get a +3 bonus on one action, a +1 bonus to three actions, or a +2 bonus for one and a +1 bonus for another.

With Good Luck, you decide when it comes into play. Bad Luck, however, is in the hands of the Director, who chooses when it affects a given roll. Directors should

exercise caution and good judgment when applying Bad Luck. If they use Bad Luck for meaningless rolls, the Drawback becomes little more than a minor inconvenience. On the other hand, applying Bad Luck to Survival Tests (see p. 121) or other critical rolls is a good way to alienate folks. Make the Bad Luck count, but don't abuse anyone. We're trying to get you all to have fun here, not create angst (well, not out-of-game angst).

For example, Jenna has a 2-point Bad Luck Drawback. At one point in the Episode, Jenna takes aim with her gun as an enemy attempts to flee the area. The character's mission will be much harder if the villain escapes, but Jenna is in no immediate danger, so the Director tells Jenna that a startled bird flies in front of her, spoiling her aim. A -2 penalty is applied to Jenna's shot.

HARD TO KILL

1- TO 5-POINT QUALITY

Xander (about Adam): He's not worried you might kill. . . oh, say. . . him?

Buffy: No. He's really not.

—4.21 Primeval

Characters with this Quality are extremely tough, and can withstand an amazing amount of damage before going down. Even after they are severely wounded, medical attention has a good chance of reviving them; scarred but alive. This Quality is bought in levels. Level five is the highest possible for human beings; Slayers and some supernatural beings can have more levels. Each level of Hard to Kill adds three Life Points to your character's Pool. Additionally, each level provides a +1 bonus to Survival Tests (see p. 121). Probably every character in a *BtVS* RPG Series should have a couple of levels of this Quality—after all, nobody in the show gets killed by random punches, falls, or even impalement by metal spikes. If you have any Quality points left over, you should invest them here. Your character will thank you.



HONORABLE

I- TO 3-POINT DRAWBACK

Xander: Whoa! Hey! This is war, isn't it? If there's one thing I've learned from Sergeant Rock it's that in war there are rules . . . or at least there should be if you're as honorable as you think you are.

—5.20 Spiral

Your character follows a code of behavior, and will not break it lightly, if at all. The more restrictive and rigid the code is, the higher its value. Honor Girl should almost never break the code's rules, no matter what the cause. In a life-or-death situation where honor must be ignored, your character might do so, but even then a Willpower (not doubled) Test is necessary to overcome the psychological barriers reinforcing the code of honor.

MINIMAL: Your character does not lie or betray friends or loved ones, or people she respects. Anybody else, especially people from groups they dislike or are prejudiced against, is fair game. This is a 1-point Drawback.

SERIOUS: This code of honor is more complex, and applies to everyone, friend or foe. Your character always keeps her word and does her best to fulfill any promises she makes. She will not betray the trust of others once she has accepted it. She may be reluctant to give her word except in a good cause (at least a good cause as she sees it), because once it has been given she will abide by it. This is a 2-point Drawback.

RIGID: Your character lives by a strict set of rules that controls most of her actions towards others. In addition to all the other restrictions above, she will refuse to participate in acts of betrayal such as ambushes, striking a helpless or unsuspecting foe, or cheating in any way. Lying is anathema, and she will only do so in cases of extreme need. Even then, she will feel guilty and will not do a very good job at deceiving; any tasks requiring lying will have a -2 to -6 penalty, determined by the Director. This is a 3-point Drawback.

HUMORLESS

1-POINT DRAWBACK

Giles: I can assure you, Mrs. Post, this is the finest occult reference collection—

Gwendolyn Post: —this side of the Atlantic, I'm sure. Do you have Hume's Paranormal Encyclopaedia? The Labyrinth Maps of Malta?

Giles: It's on order.

Gwendolyn Post: Well, I suppose that you have Sir Robert Kane's Twilight Compendium?

Giles: Oh! Uh . . . Yes, I . . . Yes! Yes, I do.

Gwendolyn Post: Of course you do.

—3.7 Revelations

She without the funny, lacking the ability to laugh at life, and taking everything with the utmost seriousness. Other people's attempts at humor leave her cold or annoy her. Most people find this facet of her personality to be unattractive or bothersome. Clowns and practical jokers most likely select the Humorless as their favorite target. Many Watchers seem to share this problem, with some noted exception (Giles, for one, although his wit is so dry you shouldn't light a match near it).

INITIATIVE COMMANDO

4-POINT QUALITY

Riley: The problem is, what kind of girl is going to go out with a guy who's acting all Joe Regular by day, and then turns all demon-hunter by night?

Graham: Maybe a peculiar one?

—4.7 The Initiative

The Initiative (see p. 153) is a secretive government organization dedicated to fighting and studying (of late, mostly fighting) HSTs, or Hostile Sub-Terrestrials—bureaucrat-speak for monsters. The front-line soldiers of the Initiative are recruited from the military, given special training and all kinds of cool toys, and sent out into the night to fight the good fight.

Without additional charge or value, Initiative Commandos gain +1 to any two physical Attributes, to a maximum level of six (the bonuses cannot be stacked on a single Attribute); Fast Reaction Time or Situational Awareness (pick one); three levels of Hard to Kill (an additional two levels can be acquired by spending points during character creation); and a 3-point Obligation (or, if they quit, a 3-point Adversary or 3-point Secret).



JOCK

3-POINT QUALITY

Larry: This is our year, I'm telling you. Best football season ever. I'm so in shape, I'm a rock. It's all about egg whites. If we can focus, keep discipline, and not have quite as many mysterious deaths, Sunnydale is gonna RULE!

—3.1 Anne

The character is a sports fan, but not the type that does sports sitting in front of the TV while downing chips and beer (not that there's anything wrong with that). Jocks spend much of their free time practicing and working out, often to the detriment of their schoolwork. They can be your typical loud and obnoxious football players, or quiet, intense types with Olympic ambitions.

Without additional charge or value, Jocks gain +1 to any two physical Attributes, to a maximum level of six (the bonuses cannot be stacked on one Attribute); two levels of the Sports Skill (and at least one more level must be purchased on top of that); and a -1 penalty to all rolls involving intellectual abilities (anything using the Intelligence Attribute), except where the Sports Skill is involved.

LOVE

2- OR 4-POINT DRAWBACK

Willow: Malcolm, Moloch... whatever he's called. The one boy that's really liked me, and he's a demon robot. What does that say about me?

Buffy: It doesn't say anything about you.

Willow: I mean, I thought I was really falling...

Buffy: Hey, did you forget? The one boy I've had the hots for since I've moved here turned out to be a vampire.

Xander: Right, and the teacher I had a crush on? Giant praying mantis?

—1.8 I Robot, You Jane

The character's love life is the stuff songs are made of—whether it's the pop of Britney Spears or the thrash of Marilyn Manson is up to the storyline, of course. A Cast Member with this Drawback starts the game with a relationship or develops one shortly after the Season begins (usually during the first or second Episode). This love may or may not be reciprocated; your character might be in love with someone who barely knows she exists. Whenever the character has to choose between following her heart or her head, she must make a Willpower (not doubled) roll at a -3 penalty. This Drawback is worth two points.



TRAGIC LOVE: As above, but any romantic relationship the character develops ends badly. This can happen in two possible ways: something bad happens to the character's beloved, or the character has an unfortunate tendency to fall for the wrong people (like Xander's propensity for dating praying mantises, Inca mummy women, etc.). Tragic Love can be a good source of Drama Points (see p. 126) and is a 4-point Drawback.

MENTAL PROBLEMS

1- TO 3-POINT DRAWBACK

Willow: Thanks for coming with. Hunting for a psychopathic superbitch is definitely in the above and beyond category.

Tara: It's okay, really. So, what do we do if we find her?

Willow: Run, flee, maybe skedaddle. We're not here to engage. This is strictly recon.

—4.15 This Year's Girl

Your character has some major malfunction. Maybe her parents abused her, or she is in dire need of some Prozac. The short circuit could be quirky or downright insane, depending on how severe the problem is. Some common Mental Problems follow.

COWARDICE: Your character is more afraid of danger and confrontation than normal people. She may shun danger altogether, or only risk it when she's sure she has the upper hand. Use the value of this Drawback as a penalty to rolls to resist fear.

CRUELTY: This is a person who actually likes to inflict pain and suffering. At the lower level, she reserves this for people who have angered or attacked her, but at the highest level she is a sadist with no feelings of remorse (this is probably not appropriate for most Cast Members, but is typical among vampires and demons).



DELUSIONS: Your character believes something that just isn't true—she might be a confirmed racist, or convinced that spirits whisper words of wisdom only she can hear (note that in the Buffyverse this might not be a delusion after all).

The higher the value of the Mental Problems, the more severe and debilitating it is. Generally, Cast Members should not have Mental Problems worth more than two points, although playing the lunatic can be fun every once in a while.

MILD: The hang-up is controllable and your character seldom allows the problem to control her during times of crisis, especially when friends and loved ones are involved. People may not even know something is wrong with the character. This is a 1-point Drawback.

SEVERE: The problem is severe, and affects your character's daily life. Anybody who knows the character realizes or strongly suspects that something is wrong with her. This is a 2-point Drawback.

DERANGED: The character is clearly deranged, with no regard for such considerations as the law, the safety of others, or the integrity of her immortal soul (you know, little things like that). That does not mean she is completely berserk. She may control herself out of fear of being stopped or discovered by the law or other major threat, but when no such fear exists, watch out.

MILITARY RANK

1-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

Commando #1: Containment area's been breached. Hostiles are loose.

Colonel McNamara: How many?

Commando #1: All of 'em, sir.

—4.21 Primeval

Your character is in the armed forces. High rank has privileges; soldiers or sailors obey your character's orders. On the other hand, low-ranking soldiers are at a disadvantage; they get ordered around, and disobeying is not a good career option. The value of Military Ranks ranges from -1 to +9, and costs one point per level (or grants one point at the lowest level). Keep in mind that high Rank also entails numerous duties that may restrict your character's actions even more than very low Rank. The Ranks Table in the next column shows titles used in the U.S. Army. Other service ranks, and the rank names of foreign countries, vary greatly.

Rank Table

Rank Level Description

-1 Private

0 Corporal

1 Sergeant

2 Sergeant First Class

3 Lieutenant

4 Captain

5 Major

6 Lieutenant Colonel

7 Colonel

8 Major General

9 General

MINORITY

1-POINT DRAWBACK

Buffy (commenting on the Lesbian Alliance poster Riley just hung): Is there something you want to tell me?

Riley: What? Oh, yes, I am a lesbian.

Buffy: Well, it's good that you're so open about it.

—4.9 Something Blue

A Minority is considered a second-class citizen because of race, ethnic group, religion or sexual preference. She is a member of a small or disadvantaged group, disliked by the establishment types. People of the dominant group tend to act negatively towards her; many are automatically suspicious, fearful or annoyed at her for no reason other than what she is. This Drawback has a 1-point value to reflect the relatively enlightened 21st-century America, where people cannot be denied service in a restaurant because of the color of their skin (in most places, at least). In other settings, where prejudice has the full weight of the law and tradition behind it, this Drawback might be worth two to three points.

MISFIT

2-POINT DRAWBACK

Tara: Yeah, you learn her source, and we'll introduce her to her insect reflection. (Everyone stares at her.) Th-that was funny if you, um, studied Taglarin mythic rites . . . and are a complete dork.

—5.6 Family

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Dorks, squibs, freaks and geeks—all names for the misfits of society. In school or out, they are the losers, the people who seem to have a permanent “Kick Me” sign tattooed on their foreheads. They are to bullies what fire hydrants are to dogs. Misfits don’t do very well with social interactions; they have a -2 penalty to Influence Tasks. They also attract the attention of any cruel or abusive character.

NATURAL TOUGHNESS

2-POINT QUALITY

Dawn: I mean, you’ve got that whole super-strength thing. And you’re just as tough as Buffy is. Maybe tougher. Even Buffy thinks so.

Spike (taking interest): She . . . She does?

—5.14 Crush

Your character is tougher than normal, able to take a punch without flinching. She has four points of Armor Value (see p. 121) against blunt attacks, such as fists, baseball bats, dropping pianos and the like. Bullets and slashing attacks are unaffected by this armor, however. This Quality is common among professional boxers, bouncers and Jackie Chan types.

NERD

3-POINT QUALITY

Willow: Even I was bored. And I’m a science nerd.

Buffy: Don’t say that.

Willow: I’m not ashamed. It’s the computer age. Nerds are in. They’re still in, right?

—1.12 Prophecy Girl

Your character is one of the smart, maybe brilliant types, more comfortable with a book or a computer than with other people. Nerds don’t have many friends (except maybe online), but hey, in a few years they will make their first million bucks and will be able to buy new friends.



Nerds gain +1 to any two mental Attributes, to a maximum level of six (bonuses cannot be stacked on one Attribute); +2 skill levels to be added to any one of the following: Computers, Knowledge, or Science; -1 penalty in any roll involving social situations (due to either prejudice against them, or their own social ineptitude). These characters are prime candidates for the Emotional Problems or Misfit Drawbacks.

NERVES OF STEEL

3-POINT QUALITY

Willow: Next thing I know this crazed vamp is like running right at me and I know if it gets past me there’s no telling who’s in danger next.

Tara: Come on, you have fun. Admit it—living the Scooby life.

Willow: I was going for a kind of stoic bravery but yeah. And it was exciting with the ceiling coming in and everything . . .

—4.17 Superstar

A character with this Quality is almost impossible to scare. Whether she is too dumb or too tough to be frightened is open to question, but she remains unruffled even in the face of unspeakable horrors. This is often key in keeping dry cleaning bills down. She is immune to fear except when confronted with the strangest supernatural manifestations, and gains a +4 bonus to her rolls even then.

OBLIGATION

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

Riley: It’s not just a job.

Buffy: It’s an adventure, great. But for me, it’s destiny. It is something that I can’t change, something that I can’t escape. I’m stuck!

—4.11 Doomed

Some rights are accompanied by duties. An Obligation must be followed to various degrees, and grants a number of points depending on the strictness of its dictates. Members of secret societies or special agencies (like the Watchers and the Initiative) often have an Obligation to their group. Failure to fulfill one’s duty can lead to trouble—demotion, loss of job and health benefits, harsh words . . . sometimes it can even be downright dangerous to say “no” to one’s secret puppetmasters.

MINIMAL: Obeying the basic precepts of the organization or creed and not betraying its members are the major points here. This is worth no points. Members of the Watchers who do not have a specific assignment have this level of Obligation. Rear-echelon Initiative



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personnel (scientists far from the front lines) also get no points for this level of Obligation.

IMPORTANT: Your character is expected to routinely risk herself for the organization, and go above the basic precepts of the membership. Watchers expected to hunt the occasional vampire (typically for research purposes) would have this level of Obligation. An Important Obligation is worth one point.

MAJOR: The welfare of the organization is placed above that of your character. She is always on call, and does not have time to pursue a normal job (unless it's a cover for the real assignment) or much of a personal life. The penalties for disobedience or selfishness are severe, and may include death. This is worth two points. Watchers assigned to a Slayer would have this level of Obligation.

TOTAL: Your character is expected to die for the organization, if need be. Missions are extremely hazardous, and she is constantly in danger of imprisonment, torture or execution. This is worth three points. Initiative Commandos and Slayers have this level of Obligation (which is already included in their Quality value, so you can't take it again . . . but "A" for effort).

OBSESSION

2-POINT DRAWBACK

Giles: Yes, I-I must consult my books.

Xander: Oh, eight minutes and thirty-three seconds, pay up. I called ten minutes before you'd consult your books about something.

—2.1 *When She Was Bad*

A particular person or task dominates your character's life, to the exclusion of most other things. To pursue her Obsession, she will go to almost any length (as limited by her morality). She may neglect other duties, both personal and professional, to pursue that which fascinates her. The "obsessee" may be a person (who may or may not be aware of your character's feelings, but who almost certainly would be upset about their intensity) or a task (like getting revenge on somebody, or performing some important or notorious feat).

OCCULT LIBRARY

VARIABLE QUALITY

Willow: Once again I'm banished to the demon section of the card catalog.

—1.9 *The Puppet Show*

In magic, it's not who you know that matters, it's what tomes you have access to. Characters who want to practice

the mystic arts should have at least a book or two on the subject—this is not the kind of thing that you can make up as you go along, not if you want to live long (or in a form other than a newt). The larger the library is, the more this Quality costs. Keep in mind that if one Cast Member (or Guest Star) has a big Occult Library, the other characters may benefit from it, but the owner has some control over it (i.e., they are her books, and she may not want to share whenever the other characters feel like doing some occult research). Sometimes it's good to have one's own "stash" of arcane lore. The levels are discussed below.

MINIMAL: Your character has one, count it, one book of magic, and maybe a few scribbled notes her Aunt Agatha left behind. The book has some 11-20 spells (the Director secretly rolls a D10 and adds 10 to the result); each time your character researches a spell successfully (see p. 138), mark it off. Eventually, she knows all the spells in the book, and there are no more. One book is not enough to help her much with research into the identity of monsters or demons, so research rolls are at a -3 penalty (see p. 103). This level costs one point.

GOOD: The character has a modest occult library, with several books on assorted esoteric subjects, maybe even the *Time-Life* series. This library gives no bonus or penalty to research rolls, and holds as many as 31-40 (D10 + 30) spells all told. Cost is two points.

IMPRESSIVE: A good collection, including some very rare tomes of hidden lore. Rolls to identify monsters are at a +1 bonus, and as many as 60 (D10 + 50) spells can be researched. Cost is three points.

AMAZING: Giles' collection, which filled a whole section of Sunnydale High's library, qualifies. Monster research rolls are at +2, and pretty much any number of spells can be contained there. A character with such a library should have a minimum Occultism Skill 3, unless she just doesn't read and just likes to collect books for the pretty pictures in them. This costs five points.

PARANOID

2-POINT DRAWBACK

Spike: Buffy's looking for you?

Harmony: Of course! That's why I'm on the lam. Didn't you hear? I'm totally her arch-nemesis.

—5.4 *Out of My Mind*

"They" are out to get you. Trust no one. Everything is a conspiracy and everyone is keeping secrets. Your character never knows when somebody is going to turn against her, but she knows they all will, sooner or later. A paranoid character expects treachery at every turn, and rarely trusts



even her friends and relatives. Now in the Buffyverse, where monsters exist and secret organizations have run centuries-old conspiracies, being paranoid is somewhat healthy. However, a character with this Drawback is seriously bent. This makes her testimony less likely to be believed, even when she is speaking the truth. Paranoid characters often suffer from Emotional and Mental Problems (their point values are determined separately).

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

2-POINT QUALITY

Buffy: Boy, that just paved over Memory Lane, didn't it?

—4.4 Fear, Itself

A photographic memory grants your character an uncanny ability to remember things. After reading a book, she can quote passages without missing a word, and she almost never forgets anything. The Director will provide information that your character would remember whenever it is necessary. Also, your Cast Member receives a +1 bonus to any skill roll where memorizing facts is useful, such as Knowledge and Science. Finally, any rolls where memory plays a role gain a +1 to +3 bonus, at the Director's discretion. Oh, and gambling against these card counters extraordinaire is probably a bad idea.

PHYSICAL DISABILITY

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

Spike: Have fun.

Angelus (bending to Spike's ear): Too bad you can't come with, huh? I'll be thinkin' of you.

Spike: I won't be in this chair forever.

—2.14 Innocence

Your character is the victim of one of life's hideous twists—crippled by accident, disease or birth defect. She may suffer from limb loss, spinal column damage, or any number of tragic impairments.

MISSING OR CRIPPLED ARM/HAND: The hand in question cannot be used to grab or hold objects. Any task requiring two hands is at a disadvantage (-3 or worse) or simply impossible. This is a 2-point Drawback. A character with a prosthetic hand can overcome some of these problems, reducing the Drawback to one point in value.

MISSING OR CRIPPLED LEG/FOOT: Your character is unable to walk or run normally. With the help of crutches or a cane, she can move at up to one-third normal speed (see p. 103). Hand-to-hand combat rolls are at a -2 penalty. This is a 3-point Drawback. Modern pros-

thetics can reduce the penalties, increasing speed to up to half-normal, and reducing combat penalties to -1. This reduces the Drawback value to two points.

MISSING OR CRIPPLED ARMS: Both arms are missing or crippled. Your character cannot use any tools normally. Some people with this handicap have learned to use their feet with great skill to compensate for their loss, but it still sucks—big time. This is a 4-point Drawback.

MISSING OR CRIPPLED LEGS: Your character is unable to walk. Without the help of a wheelchair, the best she can do is crawl or roll on the ground. This is a 4-point Drawback.

QUADRIPLLEGIC: Paralyzed from the neck down, almost all physical activities are impossible. A special wheelchair, operated with the neck or mouth, can help your character move around (if the unfortunate has access to such instruments). Someone needs to take care of her basic needs, from feeding to changing. This highly debilitating trait is an 8-point Drawback.

PSYCHIC VISIONS

1-POINT QUALITY

Xander: Your dreams are getting wicked accurate, Buff. You wouldn't happen to see me coming across some big cash? Or possibly knowing the love of a woman? In a full-body sense?

—2.19 I Only Have Eyes For You

She who can see the future in visions or dreams. Most of the time, the visions are not very clear, nor do they happen very often, and they cannot be activated on purpose—they just happen. No rolls are needed. Directors should make the visions or dreams ambiguous and use images and situations from your character's life. The visions should reflect her current problems and worries. Friends and enemies may pop up in the visions, offering advice, vague threats, or deep philosophical comments. The Director can use the visions to drop hints about upcoming events—the rise of some great evil, the possible arrival of an Apocalypse, a surprise visit by Crazy Uncle Morty, and other fun stuff.

RECKLESS

2-POINT DRAWBACK

Willow: Tomb go boom.

Xander: Yep, Captain America blewed it up real good. All by his lone-wolf lonesome.

Giles: Rather reckless of him.

Xander: I'd say very rather.

—5.8 Shadow



A Reckless character is supremely overconfident and impulsive, willing to take incredible risks, often without thinking of the consequences (can you say "Faith?"). Most of the time, she never looks before she leaps—and gets into all kinds of trouble as a result. A Reckless character prefers to act first and think about it later. She says what's on her mind with no consideration for diplomacy or courtesy, rushes into dangerous situations, and rarely wastes time on second thoughts. Reckless does not necessarily mean suicidal, however. Acting on impulse no doubt puts the character in jeopardy, but doing something that is clearly lethal is not roleplaying, it's just stupid.

RECURRING NIGHTMARES

1-POINT DRAWBACK

Xander: Whose nightmare is this?

(Giles sees a headstone. Turns ashen.)

Giles: It's mine.

—1.10 Nightmares

Your character is plagued by terrifying dreams that relive some traumatic experience, or are just frightening and disturbing. Every night, the Director may check to see if your character suffers from nightmares. They may be imposed at the Director's discretion, or may be rolled randomly (a roll of 1 on a D10 means the character experiences a nightmare that night). On any night when the character is afflicted by the nightmare, she suffers -1 to all rolls the following day as a result of exhaustion.

RESISTANCE

1-POINT PER LEVEL QUALITY

Willow (concerned): Buffy, you're sick.

Buffy: No, I feel fine. I mean, I'm . . . the world's spinning a little bit, but I like it, it's kinda like a ride.

Cordelia: Half the school's out with this flu. It's a serious deal, Buffy. We're all concerned about how gross you look.

—2.18 Killed by Death

Some people are just innately better at ignoring the bad things life (or the unliving) throws at them. This ability allows your character to fend off the effects of a particular type of harm. Each different type of Resistance Quality must be purchased separately. Some examples are presented below, but others may be devised by you or the Director.

POISON: Your character has a cast-iron stomach; add the level of this Resistance to any Constitution rolls to resist the effects of poison.

DEMONIC POWERS: For some reason, your character is able to resist the supernatural abilities of some types of demons. She adds her Resistance level to any rolls against being controlled or dominated through supernatural means. This includes the hypnotic powers some demons and vampires have.

PAIN: Each level of this Quality reduces the penalties associated with severe wounds, and adds to Willpower and Constitution rolls to stay conscious when severely injured (see p. 121).

RESOURCES

2-POINTS/LEVEL QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

Anya: Crap! Look at this—now I'm burdened with a husband and several tiny pink children, and more cash than I can reasonably manage.

Xander: That means you're winning.

Anya: Really?

Xander: Yes, cash equals good.

Anya: Ooh! I'm so pleased. Can I trade in the children for more cash?

—5.2 The Real Me

Money is funny—you can never have enough, it seems. Having a big bank account can help with a lot of life's troubles, although it may be less helpful for fighting the supernatural (still, it's way more prestigious not to have to buy your crosses and crossbows off the rack). A character's level of Resources determines how much material wealth she has access to. This trait varies widely. Some levels are described below. In the case of a student or other person dependent on parents or guardians, the resource level detailed applies to that older type. Whether your character has access to these assets at any given time is a matter for the Director and the plotline.

DESTITUTE (-5): Has the clothes on her back, ten dollars' worth of stuff and maybe a shopping cart. Lucky to scrounge a few dollars a month.

MISERABLE (-4): Personal wealth of about \$100 worth of property (including the clothes on her back). May live in public housing, or might be homeless. Might earn \$100 a month.

POOR (-3): Personal wealth of some \$500 in property and lives in low-income housing. Has an income of \$500 a month or what she gets from welfare.



HURTING (-2): Personal wealth of about \$1,000 in property, and lives in a small apartment in a bad part of town. Has an income of about \$1,000 a month before taxes.

BELOW AVERAGE (-1): Personal wealth of \$5,000 in property (including an old vehicle, perhaps), and lives in an apartment. Has a pre-tax income of \$1,500 a month.

OKAY (0): Personal wealth of \$15,000 in property. Has an income of \$2,500 a month before taxes.

MIDDLE CLASS (+1): Personal wealth of \$50,000 in property (will usually include a partially paid-for house or condominium as well as a new or slightly used car). Has an income of \$5,000 a month before taxes.

WELL-OFF (+2): Personal wealth of \$300,000 in property. Has an income of \$10,000 a month before taxes.

WEALTHY (+3): Personal wealth of \$700,000 in property. Has an income of \$40,000 a month.

RICH (+4): Personal wealth of \$2,000,000 in property. Has an income of \$50,000 a month.

MULTIMILLIONAIRE (+5): Personal wealth of \$5 million in property. Has an income of \$200,000 a month.

Each additional level adds an additional \$5 million in property and \$200,000 to monthly income.

ROBOT

5-POINT QUALITY

Tara: Do you have any books on robots?

*Giles: Oh, yes. Dozens. There's an enormous amount of research we should do before—
No, I'm lying. I haven't got squat. I just like to see Xander squirm.*

—5.15 *I Was Made to Love You*

Your character is a robot, endowed with artificial intelligence by its creator. Robots in the Buffyverse are intelligent, but typically don't have a will of their own, being restricted by their programming. Some robots eventually become independent operators, however, often with tragic results. Also, a disembodied demon has managed to inhabit a robot body in the past; a human being might find her mind or soul trapped in a robotic frame as well. This Quality assumes the character is an independent robot. Notorious Robots include Moloch the demon (1.8 *I Robot, You Jane*), Ted the perfect boyfriend (2.11 *Ted*), April the love-bot (5.15 *I Was Made To Love You*), and the ever-delightful Buffybot (5.18 *Intervention*).

Robots get +4 to Strength, +1 to Dexterity and +2 to Constitution (these scores can exceed normal human levels). Figure Life Points as usual, but the robot cannot heal damage normally. Instead, she must be repaired. Anybody with Science Skill 3 or higher can fix a robot. Each Success Level in a Science and Intelligence roll restores one Life Point per Constitution level of the robot; each repair attempt takes one hour. When a robot falls "unconscious," she has been deactivated. She may recover consciousness (like any other unconscious character) on her own, or require the help of someone with the Science or Mr. Fix-It Skills, at the Director's discretion.



SOME ASSEMBLY
REQUIRED



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SECRET

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

Ethan: Oh, and we all know that you are the champion of innocents and all things pure and good, Rupert. It's quite a little act you've got going here, old man.

Giles: It's no act. It's who I am.

Ethan: Who you are? The 'Watcher, sniveling, tweed-clad guardian of the Slayer and her kin? I think not. I know who you are, Rupert, and I know what you're capable of. But they don't, do they? They have no idea where you come from.

—2.6 Halloween

There exists a dangerous and hidden fact about your character. This could be a secret identity or a shady past. The more damaging the secret if it became known, the higher the value of the Drawback. For example, damage to your Cast Member's reputation and livelihood would be worth one point; a threat to her well-being (she might be arrested or deported if the truth were known) two points; life, limb and lymph nodes three points. Some Slayers have a Secret identity (Buffy's concern about hiding her powers varied over time).

SHOWOFF

2-POINT DRAWBACK

Glory: Pay attention! I am great and I am beautiful, and when I walk into a room all eyes turn to me, because my name is a holy name, and you will listen!

—5.6 Family

The whole world is the Showoff's audience, and she loves to perform for it. She never misses a chance to cast the spotlight on herself or her accomplishments, while quickly excusing or covering up her mistakes. A Showoff loves public acclaim, or at least the respect of her peers. Most of the time, she simply makes sure people notice her, but on occasion she might try a bit too hard to attract attention to herself and her deeds. This Drawback is slightly more complex than the Covetous (Conspicuous) Drawback, and the Showoff is less likely to betray her principles in order to hog the spotlight.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

2-POINT QUALITY

Buffy: Besides, I can just tell something's wrong. My spider sense is tingling.

—1.8 I Robot, You Jane

The observant almost always knows what is going on around them, and can react with uncanny quickness to the unexpected. These characters gain a +2 bonus to any Perception-based roll to sense trouble or danger in the immediate surroundings. It is very hard to be stealthy around them; the same bonus applies to resist any Crime or Acrobatics rolls made to sneak up on them.

SLAYER

16-POINT QUALITY

Buffy: I'm the Slayer. (Riley looks blankly.) Slay-er. Chosen One. She who hangs out a lot in cemeteries. (He shrugs, apologetically.) You're kidding me! Ask around. Look it up. Slayer, comma, The.

—4.11 Doomed

You know the spiel—she is the Chosen One, fights vampires and demons, spends nights in cemeteries, sewers and other not-so-popular spots, and so on. Slayers are transformed into something more than human; they are stronger, faster and more resilient than your average pro boxer. They recover from severe injuries very quickly, too—keeping a Slayer down is not easy. They are not immortal, though. Slayers generally lead short, violent lives—as a career path, it's never going to beat oceanography. But nobody chooses to be a Slayer; it's something that just happens, like getting hit by lightning or winning the lottery, except less fun than either. Slayers get the following goodies.



- +3 to Strength, Dexterity and Constitution and +2 to Willpower. These bonuses can raise the Slayer's Attributes above the human maximum of six. Also, none of the Slayer's physical Attributes can be below four after bonuses are applied.
- Fast Reaction Time, Nerves of Steel, and five levels of Hard to Kill (and can buy an additional five levels on top of that). On the down side, they get an automatic Adversary (Demons and Vampires), worth five points. The duties of the Slayer count as a 3-point Obligation Drawback.
- +1 free level of the Getting Medieval and Kung Fu Skills (they must also spend at least one point apiece on those skills, for a minimum beginning level of two in each).
- Damage is regenerated at a rate of one Life Point per Constitution level, every hour. Slayers recover from injuries unnaturally fast.
- Sense the presence of vampires nearby (within 100 feet) by concentrating for five seconds (one combat Turn) and making a Perception (not doubled) roll (some Slayers don't bother, they use fashion sense instead).

Slayers cannot get the Jock or Initiative Commando Qualities; their Attribute bonuses already reflect intensive physical training. They cannot have the Watcher Quality, either, for rather obvious reasons.

SORCERY

5-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY

Nigel: 'Magical proficiency level?

Willow: Oh, uh, high—high level. Very high. One of those top levels.

Tara: Five.

Nigel: And you're registered as practicing witches under the names as you gave them to me?

Tara: R-r-r-registered?

—5.12 Checkpoint

Some people have the spark of magic. They can use the dark arts more easily than normal students of the occult. Your character's Sorcery level is added to spell-casting rolls (see p. 142). It is also used for other witchcraft powers, like telekinesis and sensing the presence of magic. Characters with Sorcery can cast some spells faster than normal, allowing them to actually use magic in the middle of a fight—your basic witch-fu. Magic and the role this Quality plays in it are described in Chapter Four: Playing With Primal Forces.

TALENTLESS

2-POINT DRAWBACK

Willow: A dramatic scene is the easiest way to get through the talent show, because it doesn't require an actual talent.

—1.9 The Puppet Show

The Talentless individual is totally lacking in creativity and artistic talent. Maybe she is too stolid and practical, or maybe she just doesn't have the imagination to do anything artistic. This Drawback does not just affect her ability in the arts, but also in many social skills where flair and creativity are necessary.

Your character has a -3 penalty when trying to do anything artistic. This penalty does not affect Tasks where other people's art is judged; many expert critics are Talentless. When she does try to create something, however, the best she can hope for is a mediocre result. In addition to the penalty, the character can never get more than one Success Level in artistic pursuits, regardless of how high her skill levels or rolls are. People with this Drawback also make poor liars, charmers or social butterflies. The same penalty applies to such skills as Influence—a lack of creativity affects the ability to lie convincingly, for example.





TEENAGER

2-POINT DRAWBACK

Anya: What a day. Gimme a beer.

Bartender: I.D.

Anya: I'm eleven hundred and twenty years old! Just gimme a friggin' beer!

Bartender: I.D.

Anya: . . . gimme a coke.

—3.16 *Doppelgängland*

Life sucks when you're a teenager. You feel like an adult, and you want plenty of adult things, but you don't have the legal rights of an adult. Characters under the age of 18 get this Drawback (sure, you still can't drink until you're 21, but life is hard—suck it up). Most of the problems teenagers face are social. Most adults instinctively distrust and look down on them, they have a lot of legal restrictions, and they have parents or guardians bossing them around. And then there's all that angst and heartbreak of their so-called lives, but that's a different show.

VAMPIRE

12- OR 15-POINT QUALITY

Adam: You fear death. Being immortal, you fear it more than those to whom it comes naturally. Vampires are a paradox.

Vampire: OK, we're a paradox. That's cool.

Adam: Demon in a human body. You walk in both worlds and belong to neither. I can relate. Come. We have a lot to talk about.

—4.16 *Who Are You?*

For the most part, vampires are irredeemable monsters, unable to control their lust for blood and death. Normal vampires have high levels of the Mental Problems (Cruel) Drawback, and for the most part are not fit for human company. There is nothing very sexy or appealing about

a demon in human drag who considers people little more than meals-on-legs. So far, the TV show has revealed only two exceptions: Angel, whose soul was restored by a Gypsy curse, and Spike, prevented from harming humans by a chip implanted in his brain. Even they are one short step away from devolving into their monstrous selves (Angel if he ever experiences "true bliss," and Spike after a short surgical procedure). Playing a vampire as a Cast Member (other than Angel or Spike) would be very difficult. You and the Director must agree on how or why the vampire can control her inner demon. Whatever the explanation, the cost to play a "humane" vampire is 15 points. Normal vampire characters would cost 12 points, but unless the Director wants to have a murderous monster in the Cast, that's not an option.

Vampires gain +3 to Strength, +2 to Dexterity, +2 to Constitution, and two levels of Hard to Kill (they can have as many as 10 levels in total); take only one-fifth damage from bullets (other weapons hurt normally); recover from injuries at the rate of one Life Point per Constitution level every hour (fire damage regenerates at the rate of one Life Point per Constitution level per day). Vampires are vulnerable to sunlight, holy symbols, stakes through the heart, and beheading (see pp. 167-169).

WATCHER

5-POINT QUALITY

Gwendolyn: You telegraph punches, leave blind sides open and, uh, for a school-night slaying, take entirely too much time. Which one of you is Faith?

Faith: Depends. Who the hell are you?

Gwendolyn: Gwendolyn Post, Mrs. Your New Watcher.

—3.7 *Revelations*

The Watchers are members of a secretive society that oversees and trains Slayers and future Slayers. Members are trained in the basics of vampire hunting, although they are not supposed to fight the undead directly. Instead, the Slayers do the dirty work. Exceptions do occur, however. Giles has fought at Buffy's side many times, for example.

Watchers get +1 level to any one physical Attribute (the Attribute levels still cannot exceed six, however) and two levels of the Getting Medieval Skill as a result of their training in the arts of Slaying. They also have access to vast amounts of memorized occult lore, which gives them a +2 to any roll related to learning more about a given demon, vampire or other supernatural creature.



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WEREWOLF

3-POINT DRAWBACK OR 6- OR 12-POINT QUALITY

Buffy: And you're sure it was a werewolf?

Xander: Well, let's see, um, six feet tall, claws, a big old snout in the middle of his face like a wolf.

Um, yeah, I'm sticking with my first guess.

Oz: Seems wise.

—2.15 Phases

Your character is afflicted with the curse of the werewolf. During the full moon, she is transformed into a bestial creature, predatory and aggressive. Some werewolves learn to control their transformation and retain some control over their inner beasts, but for the most part this is a curse, not a boon. In their animal form, werewolves have +4 to Strength, +2 to Dexterity, +2 to Constitution (this affects their Life Point totals normally), and can bite and claw victims, inflicting (2 x Strength) points of base damage (Slash/stab). Wolfies also have very sharp noses, and get the Acute Senses (Smell/Taste)

Quality; if the character already has that quality, the bonuses stack together. A victim bitten by a werewolf has to pass a Willpower (doubled) roll, or become cursed as well.

If the Director is in control of your character's werewolf form, this is a 3-point Drawback. Otherwise, this is a 6-point Quality. Some lycanthropes can transform themselves at will and are not limited to the full moon—the cost of this ability is 12 points.

ZEALOT

3-POINT DRAWBACK

Jinx: The Knights of Byzantium are like ants. First you see one, then two . . . then the picnic's ruined.

—5.13 Blood Ties

A zealot is a person whose beliefs (political, religious or personal) are so strong that they dominate her life and behavior. She is willing to sacrifice anything, including her life (or the lives of others) in service to the ideals she holds dear. This character is a danger to herself and others, and shows a total disregard for the law whenever it conflicts with her beliefs. Mad cultists, wild-eyed crusader types (like the Knights of Byzantium) and other mixed nuts qualify for this Drawback.



SOME ASSEMBLY
REQUIRED





SKILLS

Xander: It happens that I'm good at a lot of things. I help out with all kinds of . . . stuff. I have skills and . . . stratagems . . . I'm very . . . (to Anya) help me out.

Anya: He's a viking in the sack.

—4.20 *The Yoko Factor*

How does the Slayer get to kick ass, do somersaults and look good doing it? Why can Giles speak a whole bunch of languages? What is the difference between Willow and Xander when it comes to academic achievement? The answer, my friend, is their skills. Skills are learned abilities, the result of training, study or experience. In general, anything that can be taught is considered a skill. The character's background, education and life experiences determine what skills she would be likely to have.

Skills are broken down into broad categories. Rather than assign a skill to different types of guns, for example, the Gun Fu Skill covers the ability to fire anything with a trigger. This is not realistic, but reflects the reality of TV shows like *BtVS*. It also makes character creation easier: rather than having to look at a huge list of skills for your character, you can look at your character sheet and decide which of the 18 skills in the list are appropriate. The specifics are left to your imagination. If your Cast Member is an intrepid jungle explorer, her Science Skill would reflect mostly an expertise in botany and biology, and her Knowledge Skill would deal mainly with geography and exotic cultures. A criminal lawyer may have a Crime Skill that lets her identify and communicate with assorted underworld types, but she may not be able to pick a lock.

BUYING SKILLS

To acquire skills, use the character points allocated to the skills category as determined by the Character Type. Skills cost one point per level for levels one through five. After level five, each additional level costs three points. For example, Lorna wants her character to have the Driving Skill. She decides that the character is an excellent driver—in fact, she could race cars for a living! Such expertise would require a skill of five or higher. Lorna decides to go for broke and give the character a Driving Skill 7. This costs five points for the first five levels, and six points for the other two, for a total of 11 character points. Lorna's character will be an ace driver, but she is unlikely to have very high skills in anything else.

The meaning of skill numbers

Like most numbers in the Unisystem, high is good and low is bad. The higher a skill level, the more proficient the character is at using that skill. In general, a level one indicates a beginner or amateur, somebody who has just learned the rudiments of the skill. A level two or three represents general competency—the ability to perform average tasks with ease. A level four or five indicates extreme competence in the subject, the result of a lot of study or practice. Higher levels indicate true mastery of the skill or craft, and the ability to perform the most difficult tasks with relative ease. A master of Kung Fu would have a skill level in the 7-10 range, for example.

ACROBATICS

Xander: First of all, what was with the acrobatics? How did that happen?

Oz: Wasn't Andy Hoelich on the gymnastics team?

Xander: That's right, he was! Cheater!

—3.1 Anne

Beloved skill of cheerleaders, circus performers and Slayers, this is the ability to perform tumblers, somersaults and other complex maneuvers. It is also used to dodge attacks, climb obstacles, and perform similar tasks of agility. Acrobatics can replace Crime when trying to move silently (use the higher of the two skills for sneaking around attempts).

USING THE SKILL: Acrobatics is used with Dexterity to perform most maneuvers, including avoiding close combat attacks and gunfire. When jumping for distance, climbing or swimming, use Strength and Acrobatics instead.

ART

Oz (reading): "Dingoes Ate My Baby played their instruments as if they had plump polish sausages taped to their fingers..."

Freddy: Sorry man.

Oz (after a beat): Nah, its fair.

—3.18 Earshot

Ever wanted to create some masterpiece for the ages, or just have your CD go platinum? All you need is a high enough level in Art. All the arts are covered by this skill: music, painting, sculpture, creative writing, and so on. That does not mean your character knows all artistic skills though. When creating the character, decide which art or arts are the character's specialty. Oz's Art Skill is almost exclusively focused on his music, for example, although his songwriting ability probably helps him a lot with any other writing assignments.

USING THE SKILL: There are two types of rolls that use this skill. First, to create art, use Intelligence and Art for writing and painting, Dexterity and Art for dancing or playing an instrument, or Constitution and Art for singing. The Success Level determines how good the creation or performance, for things like music or dance, is. To judge someone else's art, use Perception and Art.



COMPUTERS

Willow: Crack a government encryption code on my laptop? 'Easy as really difficult pie. Why?

—4.20 The Yoko Factor

This is the nerdy art of keyboard slinging for fun and profit. With this skill your character can make computers do what she wants, including both programming and hacking. People don't need this skill to use a computer. Just about anybody can find the "on" switch and use a mouse. The Computers Skill lets your character do fun things like breaking into confidential databases, writing her own programs, programming her VCR and other cool stuff.

USING THE SKILL: Intelligence and Computers to write a program or hack into a secure system. For hacking, the system's security imposes penalties, from -1 for a high school record system to -8 or worse for the FBI database. Perception and Computers help diagnose software or hardware problems without having to call a help line and being on hold for two to three days.

CRIME

Xander: Aah!

Cordelia: God!

Xander: We're doing crime here! You don't sneak up during crime.

—3.4 Beauty and the Beasts

Sometimes your character needs to break into a suspicious student's locker, or maybe find an important clue in someone's pants . . . pocket. Breaking and entering, skulking around, picking pockets—if it's illegal, this skill covers it, with two major exceptions: computer hacking uses the Computers Skill, and conning people depends on the Influence Skill. Your character doesn't have to be a criminal to have this skill; cops, private investigators, some Slayers, and other honest but street-wise folks have it as well.



Buffy

the Vampire Slayer™

USING THE SKILL: Dexterity and Crime are used for things like moving stealthily (although Acrobatics can replace Crime here), lifting someone's wallet, and picking locks. Victims resist such activities with their Brains Score, or Perception and either Notice or Crime (whichever is better). Intelligence and Crime are used to identify criminals and street contacts (as modified by familiarity with the local criminal scene).

DOCTOR

Joyce (voice breaking): Doctor says it's too early to be concerned.

Buffy: Right. No concern.

Joyce: Just a shadow.

—5.8 Shadow

After a tough fight at one of Sunnydale's cemeteries, it pays to know some first (or second or third) aid. This skill covers the ability to heal injuries and cure disease through modern medicine. A full-fledged doctor has a skill of four or higher. Anything below that represents some training in first aid or emergency treatment. This is a good skill to have after a tussle with vampires, or a sparring bout with a Slayer.

USING THE SKILL: An Intelligence and Doctor roll is used to treat injuries; each Success Level restores one Life Point of damage (only one roll per patient per day). The victim also does not lose any more Life Points from bleeding and such. Perception and Doctor can be used to diagnose a medical problem, or determine the cause of death of some unfortunate victim.

DRIVING

Cordelia (screams): Where are the keys?

Xander: We should be moving! Let's go!

Cordelia (finds the keys): Oh, I got 'em! Got 'em!

—2.15 Phases

Indispensable in California, land of the highway, this is the ability to sit behind the wheel of a car or motorcycle and get it to go the way you want. This skill covers all wheeled vehicles, although if your character is not familiar with a specific vehicle (trying to drive an 18-wheeler or a motorcycle if she has only driven cars before), rolls will be at -2 to -5 or worse. Your character can't pass Driver's Ed without at least one level in this skill.

USING THE SKILL: Dexterity and Driving for your basic high-speed chases, dodging rush hour traffic and other complex maneuvers (there is no need to roll for routine driving, unless you are Buffy). Use Intelligence and Driving for basic mechanic maintenance stuff—for the big stuff, you'll need the Mr. Fix-It Skill.

GETTING MEDIEVAL

Giles: You must first become proficient with the basic tools of combat. And let's begin . . . with the quarterstaff. Which, incidentally, will, uh, require countless hours of vigorous training. I speak from experience.

Buffy: Giles, 20th Century? I'm not gonna be fighting Friar Tuck.

—1.7 Angel



When a fist is not enough, it's time to break out some old-fashioned sharp metal whatsits and start a-hackin' and a-slashin'. This skill is used for all archaic weapons, from swords and quarterstaves to crossbows and throwing axes. It also covers driving stakes into the hearts of those pesky vampires. Slayers, Watchers, vampires and demons are proficient at the ancient art of dismembering people with sharp objects. Most Slayerettes quickly learn how to use these weapons too—Slayers are a bad influence that way.

USING THE SKILL: Dexterity and Getting Medieval cover most combat maneuvers. Feints use Intelligence (or Perception) to recognize them. There're a whole bunch of kewl Combat Maneuvers that use Getting Medieval (see pp. 109-113).

GUN FU

Cain: The name's Cain. I'm the one with the gun, which means I'm the one who gets to do the interviewing.

—2.15 Phases

Guns don't kill people; the not-so-ancient art of Gun Fu does (oh, bullets help, too . . . a lot). This skill covers your basic things that go "bang"—shotguns, pistols, and the like. Still, in the Buffyverse, guns don't come into play very often (see p. 116).

USING THE SKILL: Dexterity and Gun Fu for pointing and shooting. Aiming slows your character's attack to the end of the Turn, but you add the Success Levels of a Gun Fu and Perception roll to the shooting roll. Intelligence and Gun Fu help clear a jammed gun.

INFLUENCE

Xander: Yeah. Let me get a double shot of, um . . . of information, pal.

Buffy: Three priests. They call themselves . . .

Xander: The Bringers.

Buffy: Bringers, Harbingers. They have a "no eyes" kinda look.

Willy: Doesn't ring a bell.

Xander: How about I ring that bell for you? Does the threatening come now?

Buffy: Maybe you shouldn't help.

—3.10 Amends

The ability to deceive, seduce, intimidate or manipulate people for kicks and giggles . . . or money . . . oh yeah, or a good cause. Influence allows your char-



acter to pick up somebody at a bar, scare people into giving up important information, or otherwise persuade others to do what she wants.

USING THE SKILL: Intelligence and Influence for fooling, scamming or fast-talking others. Willpower and Influence to intimidate people. If your character is trying to seduce somebody, for example, any Appearance and Charisma levels act as bonuses or penalties to the roll. By the same token, a Slayer finds it a lot easier to intimidate someone if she lifts him over her head; the proper circumstances add bonuses or penalties (in the one to five range).

KNOWLEDGE

Giles: It's a reliquary. Used to house items of religious significance. Mostly commonly a finger or some other body part from a saint.

Buffy: Note to self: religion: freaky.

—2.9 What's My Line?, Part One

All non-scientific disciplines are covered by this skill. History, sociology, psychology and the like are part and parcel of this skill. Knowledge can be useful in identifying the background of vampires and other creatures. For example, if you know a vampire was sired during the 17th century, it might be helpful to know what was going on in the 17th century. Knowledge can also help with occult research, and it lets characters say cool stuff like "This gauntlet is Late Medieval, probably from Florence; the markings are unmistakable." Chicks really dig that.

USING THE SKILL: Knowledge is used with Intelligence for the most part. Knowledge Skill rolls often add their Success Levels to Occultism or Influence rolls.



KUNG FU

Buffy: So then Kathy's like, "It's share-time." And I'm like, "Oh yeah? Share this!" (punches the air a few times)

Oz: So either you hit her or you did your wacky mime routine for her.

Buffy: Well, I didn't do either, actually. But she deserved it, don't ya think?

Oz: Nobody deserves mime, Buffy.

—4.2 *Living Conditions*

Call it brawling, martial arts, fisticuffs, or flailing your arms around wildly, this skill covers the art of using your hands and other assorted body parts to hurt your fellow man (or critter). Kung Fu is indispensable for Slayers and anybody who hangs around them for any amount of time. It's also very useful around bullies and in bar fights.

USING THE SKILL: Dexterity and Kung Fu for hitting someone or avoiding being hit—many Combat Maneuvers (see pp. 109-113) are based on this Skill. Intelligence and Kung Fu may be used to identify a fighting style, or to feint an opponent. Perception and Kung Fu counter such feints.

LANGUAGES

Willow: Right, don't you have to speak it in Sumerian or something?

Giles: I do speak Sumerian. But it's not that. Only an experienced witch can incant it and you have to be within striking distance of the subject.

Xander (to Buffy): See what you get for taking French instead of Sumerian?

Buffy: What was I thinking?

—4.21 *Primeval*

If you want *hablar español*, or sound good ordering at a French restaurant, or read the Old Church Latin edition of the Necronomicon, you need to learn a few languages. This skill covers any language other than one's native tongue.

USING THE SKILL: This skill is used differently from the rest. Each level of Languages indicates fluency in one language (player decides which ones). When trying to decipher some arcane inscription, use Intelligence and Languages. In the Buffyverse, knowing a few languages really helps understand even the languages your character doesn't know.

After character creation, picking up new languages is difficult. This skill cannot be improved unless your character spends several months studying (see p. 133 for improving the Languages Skill through experience).

MR. FIX-IT

Tara: At least she didn't do too much damage.

Xander: Are you kidding? Double-glazed windows ain't cheap. Also, the jamb has to be completely rebuilt—Oh dear god, I'm the grown-up who sees the world through my job. I'm my Uncle Dave the plumber. I must be shunned.

—1.12 *Prophecy Girl*

If it's broken, those with this skill can fix it. If it ain't broken, they can improve it (sometimes into not working at all). If it just ain't, they can build it. Mr. Fix-It covers all technical and craft skills, from carpentry to mechanics to setting up electronic equipment. This is what your character needs if she wants to rebuild the engine of that old mean machine she's tricking out, or to make sure the *Dingoes Ate My Baby* concert comes through loud and clear. Adventure-wise, she could use this skill to set up elaborate and interesting traps.

USING THE SKILL: Perception and Mr. Fix-It for spotting a problem. Intelligence and Mr. Fix-It to do the repairs or construction work.

NOTICE

Buffy: Her fashion sense screams predator.

Willow: It's the shoulder pads.

Buffy: Exactly.

—1.4 *Teacher's Pet*

Need to get a clue? This is the skill. Without Notice, your character might miss the bloody handprint on the wall, the vampire sneaking past the window, or the oh-so-friendly smile from Daisy in Chemistry. This is the skill to have for spotting a critter lying in ambush around the corner or when you absolutely, positively need to find Waldo.

USING THE SKILL: Perception and Notice to spot things. Intelligence and Notice to remember something your character saw before but didn't realize was important until now.





OCCULTISM

Willow: 'Well, I've been going through her files, and researching the black arts, for fun, or educational fun, and I may be able to work this.

—2.21 *Becoming, Part One*

Forbidden knowledge, the black arts, the stuff you only find in outlawed books or some really dark heavy metal songs. This is the skill of the truly arcane. It includes things like the basics of vampire-slaying (what works and what doesn't), identifying demons and their weaknesses, researching spells and rituals, and otherwise learning Things Man Was Not Meant to Know. Access to a good arcane library is a huge help (see p. 44). Your character needs the Occultism Skill before she can become a proficient magician.

USING THE SKILL: Intelligence and Occultism to recognize or research some supernatural name. Perception and Occultism to identify a creature on first sight. Occultism is also used to cast spells, with bonuses from the character's Sorcery Level, if any (see p. 49).

SCIENCE

Chris: 'You know what the key is? If Dr. Clark doesn't understand your experiment he gives you higher marks so it looks like he understands your experiment. (reads Willow's entry) "The Effects of Sub-Violet Light Spectrum Deprivation on the Development of Fruit Flies"? (smirks) That should do the trick.

—2.2 *Some Assembly Required*

You can't blind them with science unless you know science. This skill covers all your basic sciences—physics, biology, chemistry and so on. It can come in handy when dealing with the supernatural, if only to figure out if something is really supernatural. Characters with this skill earn the privilege of saying "That's just scientifically impossible" a lot. At higher levels (five and above), weird science is possible—things like robots and a spray that will clean up those most-troublesome stains.

USING THE SKILL: Intelligence and Science for most things, from mixing a chemical formula to inventing a new device to repairing a broken thingamajig. Perception and Science are used to spot science-oriented clues, like identifying an unusual biochemical residue.

SPORTS

Willow: Daryl Epps. Chris' older brother. He was a big football star. All-State two years ago. He was a running . . . He was a running . . . Uh, someone who runs and catches.

—2.2 *Some Assembly Required*

The ability to hit a ball with a stick, throw a ball, or do other things that may or may not involve balls. All sports are covered by this skill, except things like boxing and martial arts, which use Kung Fu, and gymnastics, which is part of Acrobatics. In a pinch, Sports can be used instead of other combat skills to do things like swing a baseball bat at a vampire's head or tackle a monster—if you really want to get that close to an icky.

USING THE SKILL: Depending on the nature of the sporting event, one of the three physical Attributes is used. Coordination- and agility-based tasks (throwing a baseball) depend on Dexterity, brute force activities (weight lifting or tackling) relies on Strength, and endurance sports (marathon running) use Constitution.

WILD CARD

Let's face it, some of you might notice that some skills are not covered in the list above (and you're probably right). To take care of that problem without resorting to fisticuffs, we have the unsung 18th skill on the list—the Wild Card. This is your fill-in-the-blanks skill—it can cover anything you wants, with one caveat. The Wild Card Skill cannot be broader than the pre-existing skills (Weapons, for example, which would cover both Gun-Fu and Getting Medieval, would earn a "nice try, bozo" award).



COMBAT MANEUVERS

Walsli: It's only our methods that differ. We use the latest in scientific technology and state-of-the-art weaponry, and you, if I understand correctly, poke them with a sharp stick.

—4.12 A New Man

You will have noticed by now a list of Combat Maneuvers on your character sheet. If not, go back and put a few more points into the Notice Skill. These are your character's preferred moves. You can find a list of Combat Maneuvers in **Chapter Three: Rules, Borders and an End Zone** (see pp. 109-113). Head over there and pick the ones you want for your character. Before filling in this list, you should become familiar with the rules on these puppies. Combat Maneuvers have three elements.

BONUS: This is the total of your character's appropriate Attribute, skill and modifiers. The bonus is what you add to the die roll to determine how well the attack or defense worked.

DAMAGE: This lists the base damage of the Maneuver (if the Maneuver does any damage). Add any Success Levels of the roll to the base damage.

NOTES: This adds any special effects of the attack. A stake through the heart, for example, does a lot more damage to vampires than to humans (although it's not good for humans, either).

DRAMA POINTS

Buffy: Oh, sorry. It's just been a really weird day.

Xander: Yeah! Buffy died, and everything!

Willow: Wow! Harsh.

Giles: I should have known that wouldn't stop you.

—1.12 Prophecy Girl

Sometimes a character needs to succeed at something, no matter what the odds against it are. In a movie or TV show, the scriptwriter just decides the character succeeds, period. In the *BtVS RPG*, we simulate this with Drama Points. When you use a Drama Point, your character gets a huge bonus to her chances—think of it as the universe lending a helping hand. The impossible shot hits the target, the charging vampire trips and falls right into the stake, the bullet that hit your character was deflected by a lucky coin pendant hanging from her neck . . . all those things are possible when you spend a Drama Point. The ups and downs of Drama Points are covered in **Chapter Three: Rules, Borders and an End Zone** (see pp. 126-131).

Characters start with a set amount of Drama Points depending on their Character Type. White Hats get more beginning points because that's what they do best.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Lily: So how come you came up with Anne?

Buffy: It's my middle name.

Lily: Lily's from a song. Rickie picked it. I'm always changing anyway. Chantarelle was part of my exotic phase.

Buffy: It's nice. It's a mushroom.

Lily: It is? That's really embarrassing.

Buffy: Um, well, i-it's an exotic mushroom, if that's any comfort.

Lily: Well, before that, I was following this loser preacher and calling myself Sister Sunshine.

—3.1 Anne

These are the little things that mean so much—appearance, name and the like. These touches bring life to your Cast Member and make her more than a list of numbers on a sheet of paper.

NAME: What's in a name? Among other things, it can provide some insights into your character's background and personality. An ethnic name can provide some depth. A weird first name, like Nicodemus, probably led to a lot of bullying as a kid. A nickname can add color (too many nicknames, of course, and your character may end up sounding like a refugee from *The Sopranos*).

APPEARANCE: You can go the "Police APB" route and be content to provide height, weight, eye and hair color, and the like, but some details make your character more memorable. A neat idea is to "cast" your character: "the part of my character will be played by such-and-such actor (or singer, or any public personality)." This provides a quick visual frame of reference. Everybody knows what the Austrian former bodybuilder turned into action hero looks like, for example. If everybody does it, the Director could even do a little Cast List: "Starring Harvey K. as Johann the Watcher, Christina A. as Josie the Vampire Slayer, and a young Brad P. as Luke the Werewolf."

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS: Maybe your character has some distinctive habit or mannerism—her hair is always a bit messy and tends to fall over her eyes, or she always looks nervous or uncomfortable around strangers. Any scars, tattoos or piercings that are easily noticeable? How does your character normally dress? What kind of music is in her CD collection (or even albums if you are one of those ancient Watcher types)?

Hey, guess what? You're set to go. The stars of the show have been cast, and it's time to get the cameras rolling and the action started.

ARCHETYPES

Giles: 'We few . . .

Giles/Spike: 'We happy few . . .

Spike: 'We band of buggered . . .

—5.22 *The Gift*

On the next two dozen pages, you will find a number of ready-to-play characters—four Heroes and eight White Hats—complete with stunning pictures. The characters have their own story and background, and can be used as-is or modified by players as they see fit. The Archetypes are designed to be used in a Sunnydale-based Series, but they could easily be placed in a different setting. Enjoy!

THE ORIGINAL CAST

After the Archetypes are presented all in a row, the Original Cast stats appear (see pp. 84-97). From the sublime to the ridiculous, we give you the Scooby Gang—from the Buffster herself (if you don't know who that is, put the book down and slowly walk away) to Xander, the Zeppo no more. The characters are presented as they were at the end of Season Five or when they left the show, whichever comes first. Some of these characters (Cordelia and Angel, for example), have gone on to bigger (if not necessarily better—there's plenty of trouble in LA, as it turns out) things in *Buffy's* sibling show, *Angel*. Their updated numbers will be featured in the book dealing with that show (coming soon to a store near you). For those seeking less buff versions of our heroes, we have added some guidelines (see pp. 96-97) on playing the characters during earlier seasons



SOME ASSEMBLY
REQUIRED



New Slayer

ARCHETYPE

CHARACTER TYPE HERO

Life Points 72 Drama Points 10

Attributes (20)

Strength 6 (3 levels part of Slayer Quality)
Dexterity 7 (3 levels part of Slayer Quality)
Constitution 5 (3 levels part of Slayer Quality)
Intelligence 5
Perception 3
Willpower 5 (2 levels part of Slayer Quality)

Qualities (20)

Attractiveness +1 (1)
Fast Reaction Time (Part of Slayer Quality)
Hard to Kill 6 (1; 5 levels part of Slayer Quality)
Nerves of Steel (Part of Slayer Quality)
Situational Awareness (2)
Slayer (16)

Drawbacks (5)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (Part of Slayer Quality)
Emotional Problems (Fear of Rejection) (1)
Misfit (2)
Obligation (Part of Slayer Quality)
Secret (Slayer) (2)

Skills (20 + 5 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 3	Knowledge 2
Art 0	Kung Fu 5 (1 level part of Slayer Quality)
Computers 0	Languages 0
Crime 0	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 2	Notice 3
Driving 0	Occultism 2
Getting Medieval 5 (1 level part of Slayer Quality)	Science 4
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 1	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers

Bonus

Base Damage

Notes

Dodge	12	-	Defense action
Kick	11	14	Bash
Punch	12	12	Bash
Stake	12	12	Stash/stab
(Through the Heart)	9	12	x5 vs vamps
Thrown Stake	11	10	Stash/stab
(Through the Heart)	8	10	x5 vs vamps



BACKGROUND ON THE NEW SLAYER

I had it all planned out. I was going to go to med school to become a doctor, same as my Dad. I dissected the frogs, studied, had no life, studied, took all the advanced placement courses, studied some more. It wasn't all that great, but I was going to cure cancer one day. It was my Junior year, and I was on the fast track to valedictorian. I didn't have many friends—okay, two friends, but I was going to cure cancer.

Then this weirdo showed up, starts talking about the Chosen One. Namely, me. So I sprayed him with Mace and called the cops, but he got away. I kinda feel bad about it now, but I thought he was some sort of abductor-creep.

That night I met my first vampire. It was freaky and violent and ended when I ripped its head off and it turned into dust. The old weirdo showed up again and told me he could explain everything. I didn't Mace him that time. He told me he was a Watcher and I was a Slayer.

Now, he's teaching me all the secrets of slaying assorted critters. I was always on the verge of failing gym, but ever since I became a Slayer, I can arm wrestle football players and win. I used to need glasses, and now my vision is 20/20 or better, although I still wear glasses to protect my secret identity . . . hey, it worked for Clark Kent, didn't it? I spent a lot of time trying to come up with a medical explanation for all of this—the vampires, my superpowers, and all the rest. No luck. I'd like to do a vampire autopsy, but you don't get a lot out of examining dust.

Now I don't know if I'm going to live long enough to go to med school, or cure cancer. The way I see it, vampires and demons are like a cancer on the planet, and I'm excising them. That makes me feel a bit better. Not great, but better. Every time I stake a bloodsucker, I remove another tumor.

Quote: "Let me guess—cause of death was catastrophic exsanguination. No wounds or signs of violence except for two lesions next to the carotid. I'm stunned."

ROLEPLAYING THE NEW SLAYER

Unlike some other Slayers, you are not afraid to do your own research. Problem is, sometimes you try a little too hard to find a natural explanation for the things you run into. Before your transformation, you were shy and withdrawn; people didn't pick on you much, but they largely ignored you. So you are used to being an outsider, and being a Slayer has not hurt your social life too much. Hunting vampires is starting to hurt your grades, however, and your parents are getting worried. They think it might be a boy, or maybe drugs. If they only knew . . .

Former Initiative Agent

Life Points 53

Drama Points 10

ARCHETYPE

CHARACTER TYPE HERO



Attributes (20)

Strength 4 (1 level part of Initiative Commando Quality)
Dexterity 6 (1 level part of Initiative Commando Quality)
Constitution 3
Intelligence 3
Perception 3
Willpower 3

Qualities (20)

Acute Senses (Hearing) (2)
Contacts (3)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Good Luck +2 (2)
Hard to Kill 5 (2; 3 levels part of Initiative Commando Quality)
Initiative Commando (4)
Natural Toughness (2)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Situational Awareness (Part of Initiative Commando Quality)

Drawbacks (6)

Addiction (Habitual Smoker) (1)
Adversary (HSTs) (Part of Initiative Commando Quality)
Fear of Commitment (1)
Honorable (2)

Resources -1 (2)

Skills (20 + 6 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 2	Knowledge 0
Art 0	Kung Fu 3
Computers 0	Languages 1
Crime 2	Mr. Fix-It 1
Doctor 2	Notice 3
Driving 1	Occultism 1
Getting Medieval 3	Science 0
Gun Fu 5	Sports 0
Influence 2	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers

Bonus Base Damage Notes

Big Knife	9	12	Slash/stab
Big Pistol	11	15	Bullet
Dodge	9	-	Defense action
Punch	9	8	Bash
Kick	8	10	Bash
Shotgun	11	20	Bullet
Stake	9	8	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	6	8	x5 vs vamps

BACKGROUND ON THE FORMER INITIATIVE AGENT

I've been on the front lines of the secret war against the HST threat. The Initiative recruited me just out of Ranger school. I had been hoping to end up somewhere in Special Forces, but they made me an offer I couldn't refuse. The first time I saw a sub-terrestrial bare its fangs at me, I knew I was fighting the good fight. Demons and worse things were prowling the Earth, and we were the ones to stop them.

For a couple years things were great. It was dangerous—we took heavy casualties—but it was what we had signed up for, and we didn't complain. Our team was one of the best; most times we had the highest kill ratios in the Initiative. As usual, the guys with the guns weren't the problem; the rear-echelon bastards were the ones who screwed up everything. Starting with all the mad doctors who were conducting experiments with the monsters. While we were busy fighting the damn critters, Dr. Walsh was making brand-new ones.

I was on leave when the creature from Room 314 destroyed Initiative HQ. I lost a lot of good friends there. Then the government buried the whole thing as if it never existed. I was given two options: honorable discharge or a transfer to Fort Bragg. I took the discharge. For some reason, I'd lost my faith in the government and the Army. Also, I had some scores to settle.

I don't have the equipment and support I did in the force, but I kept a few toys while I was with the Initiative. Now I'm doing what we should have been doing from the get-go. Locate the hostiles. Terminate the hostiles. Repeat as needed. I've found a few people who have the same mission. Most of them are civilians, and they wouldn't have lasted a week in basic training, but their hearts are in the right place. The only problem is, I have to get a civvie job soon. Ammo isn't cheap, and I'm definitely in a target-rich environment.

Quote: "Once Alpha Team is decisively engaged with the hostiles, Bravo Team will infiltrate enemy HQ. (Off blank looks of companions) Sorry. The Slayer and I'll attack the guards, and you three will sneak into the crypt. Better?"

ROLEPLAYING THE FORMER INITIATIVE AGENT

You are a modern-day warrior, trained in the latest weapons and tactics. Sometimes, though, guns and low-light goggles aren't as useful as a silver cross and your basic pointy stick. You are used to having more support—full radio contact, snipers backing you up, even the occasional air strike when you were hunting in remote areas—but you are a civilian now, and have to deal with it.

You always try to have a positive attitude—it boosts the morale of the group, and it helps you keep your cool. Sometimes you try to impose some semblance of discipline among the team, but that never works. Your new friends think you should relax a little, but you have seen—and done—too much to ever let your guard down like that.

Archetype Demon Hunter

CHARACTER
TYPE
HERO

Life Points 53 Drama Points 10

Attributes (20)

Strength 4
Dexterity 4
Constitution 3
Intelligence 3
Perception 2
Willpower 4

Qualities (20)

Acute Sense (Hearing) (2)
Attractiveness +1 (1)
Good Luck 4 (4)
Hard to Kill 5 (5)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Resistance (Demonic Effects) 5 (5)

Drawbacks (6)

Adversary (Demons) (2)
Impaired Senses (Vision, uses contacts) (1)
Mental Problems (Cruel) (1)
Recurring Nightmares (1)
Secret (Hunter) (1)

Skills (20 + 6 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 3	Knowledge 2
Art 0	Kung Fu 2
Computers 1	Languages 1
Crime 3	Mr. Fix It 0
Doctor 1	Notice 3
Driving 2	Occultism 2
Getting Medieval 5	Science 0
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 1	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base	Damage	Notes
Axe	9	20		Slash/stab; one-handed weapon
Big Knife	9	12		Slash/stab
Dodge	9	-		Defense action
Kick	5	10		Bash
Punch	6	8		Bash
Pigsticker	9	6		Slash/stab
Sword	9	16		Slash/stab
Thrown Knife	8	6		Slash/stab



BACKGROUND ON THE DEMON HUNTER

I guess you could call it the family business. There was this great-uncle of mine, name of Sid, who was a demon hunter until he disappeared under suspicious circumstances. I stumbled into his writings—and the biggest collection of antique knives and other exotic cutlery I'd ever seen—while rummaging in my grandparents' attic. At first, I thought it was all fiction, or the insane ramblings of an old man, but I checked on one of Uncle Sid's buddies in a retirement home. The old guy could barely sit up, but his memory was fine. He taught me everything he could—from how to wield swords and knives to ways of identifying demons and their weaknesses. It was a weird summer.

I met my first demon when I was back in school. It was an evil little thing that looked like a cross between a monkey and a lizard. It preyed on young children and stole pieces of their souls, leaving them incapable of loving or feeling any positive emotion. I cornered it in a back alley and chopped it to pieces with a cleaver. Got a little carried away there; the fear and rage got to me, and I found I kept hitting the monster long after it was dead. I still have these nightmares of me in that alley, laughing or screaming—I can never tell which—while I keep cutting into the screeching creature. My uncle wrote that one of the biggest dangers facing demon hunters was getting to like the violence too much. "In our vocation," he said, "the greatest danger we face is becoming the very thing we fight." Of course, he's probably dead, so what does he know?

Sometimes I worry I started this whole demon hunting gig way too early. I was a Junior when I made my first kill and now I just can't stop. It seems like every week there's some new monster, critter or blood-sucking fiend out there. I've seen both innocents and guilty fall and sometimes it seems like there's blood everywhere in my life. I'd like to quit someday, and maybe try to have a normal life. Doesn't seem to be in the cards though. I got skills and abilities and a job to do. The good thing is that I'm not the only one doing the hunting anymore. Still, my new partners—my new friends—need my help. So for now I keep my blades sharp, and wait for the next horror show to start.

Quote: "You're one ugly freak. When I'm done with you, you're gonna look a lot worse."

ROLEPLAYING THE DEMON HUNTER

Demon hunters are a bit like Slayers, except they don't get the superpowers and their death rate is much higher. You didn't realize how tough demon hunting would be, but now you feel compelled to continue. Since you killed your first demon, your mood has become dark and brooding, which doesn't make you very popular with most people. You come across as quiet and intense, somebody haunted by a dark secret. The only time you seem to come alive is during a hunt, when the thrill of the chase awakens something inside you. You don't like the person you are becoming, but you don't know how to change.

ARCHETYPE

Martial Artist

CHARACTER TYPE

HERO

Life Points 53 Drama Points 10



Attributes (20)

Strength 4 (1 level from Jock Quality)
 Dexterity 5 (1 level from Jock Quality)
 Constitution 3
 Intelligence 2
 Perception 4
 Willpower 4

Qualities (20)

Attractiveness +2 (2)
 Fast Reaction Time (2)
 Hard to Kill 5 (5)
 Jock (3)
 Nerves of Steel (3)
 Resistance (Mind Control) +5 (5)

Drawbacks (6)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (3)
 Minority (1)
 Reckless (2)

Skills (20 + 6 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 4	Knowledge 1
Art 1	Kung Fu 5
Computers 0	Languages 1
Crime 0	Notice 3
Doctor 0	Occultism 2
Driving 1	Science 0
Getting Medieval 4	Sports 4 (2 levels part of Jock Quality)
Gun Fu 0	Wild Card 0
Influence 2	

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	10	-	Defense action
Jump Kick	7	15	Bash; Acrobatics + Dexterity roll first
Kick	9	10	Bash
Punch	10	8	Bash
Spin Kick	8	12	Bash
Stake	9	8	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	6	8	x5 vs vamps

BACKGROUND ON THE MARTIAL ARTIST

The Temple of the White Crane was my home, hidden away from the cities and chaos of the outside world. I was raised by monks; they taught me the Way of the Crane. I am ashamed to say I wasn't a very good student. I was always getting into fights and acting without thinking. Life at the temple was not for me. I wanted to see the world. The monks blamed satellite TV for my rebelliousness; maybe they were right. One day, the Elders of the Temple told me my fate lay elsewhere. I was to go to America, as an exchange student.

I didn't know what to expect. Most of what I knew about America came from TV. I was looking forward to cheap Internet connections, easy women and snowboarding. I was worried about crazed gunmen, biker gangs and rogue cops. I knew that the West would be different from the things I knew at home.

At first, it went well. Things were different, but not too bad. My English wasn't as good as I thought it was, but I learned quickly. Women weren't as easy as I thought, but not everybody had a gun, or was interested in chasing me with a car.

Nobody mentioned the place was full of monsters, however. That was most surprising.

It started the night I saw an inhuman thing attacking a woman on the street. The monks had told me stories about demons and ghosts. I thought they were stories, until I saw the real thing. I reacted without thinking, and attacked the monster with all the martial arts moves I knew.

I was nearly killed. If the Slayer hadn't arrived, I would have died. She had moves like something out of a John Woo movie, except they were real. Most impressive.

After that, besides worrying about fitting in, making the swimming team, and getting good grades, I started patrolling at night with the Order of the Scooby (I still don't know who is this Scooby they speak of). I have discovered that the mental exercises the monks taught me will shield my mind from supernatural influences. And I am learning a lot of new combat moves. I think the monks of the White Crane would be proud of me.

Quote: "What is the sound of my right foot smacking your left cheek? Let's find out."

ROLEPLAYING THE MARTIAL ARTIST

You like to act first and ask questions later. Studying and research are not your strong suit; you'd rather be playing soccer or kicking vampire butt. After a fairly strict childhood, you want to enjoy all the good things you missed out on, although you are still bound by the Temple's strict code of honor. Despite your best efforts, you have a low resistance to advertising, and try too hard to be trendy.

In addition to martial arts training, the temple monks taught you how to use meditation techniques to resist mind control. Vampiric or demonic powers that affect the mind have a much harder time affecting you. If you would only use your mind more often, you'd be fine.

Watcher

Life Points 34 Drama Points 20

ARCHETYPE

CHARACTER TYPE

WHITE HAT

Attributes (15)

Strength 3
Dexterity 3 (1 level part of Watcher Quality)
Constitution 3
Intelligence 4 (1 level part of Nerd Quality)
Perception 2
Willpower 3 (1 level part of Nerd Quality)

Qualities (10 + 1 from Drawbacks)

Nerd (3)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Watcher (5)

Drawbacks (7)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (3)
Honorable (1)
Humorless (1)
Talentless (2)

Skills (15 + 6 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 2	Knowledge 3 (2 levels part of Nerd Quality)
Art 0	Kung Fu 3
Computers 0	Languages 3
Crime 1	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 0	Notice 2
Driving 2	Occultism 4
Getting Medieval 3 (2 levels part of Watcher Quality)	Science 1
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 1	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers

	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Axe	6	15	Slash/stab
Crossbow Shot	6	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	3	16	x5 vs vamps
Dodge	6	-	Defense action
Punch	6	6	Bash
Stake	6	6	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	3	6	x5 vs vamps



BACKGROUND ON THE WATCHER

I remember my induction to the Council like it was yesterday. The secret handshakes, the knowing smiles—greeting a fanged monstrosity chained in a dungeon in Scotland. It was scary, thrilling, challenging and scary (did I mention that?). At that moment, I was proud of my studies and training, grateful for the opportunity the Council had presented me, and I knew more than ever before that I was born to rid the world of the monstrosities.

Naturally, my first question after the induction was “Well? When do we exterminate the bloody blighters?” Clearly that was the wrong tack to take. Although I knew as much from my training, the Council took pains to remind me that’s not what we do. We’re the bloody Watchers—we observe, we serve and we wait. The stark truth is that we have young girls to do all the fighting for us. Stuck in my craw. Did during training, did after induction, still does now. No matter, I couldn’t walk away, not after what I’d seen.

I couldn’t keep silent, either. I complained. I spoke up at meetings. I even drafted a seven-point memorandum demanding we take direct action, and outlining the means and methods of doing so. There’s one Slayer, after all. She cannot do it alone. Watchers are not as strong or able, but we are, or at least can be, a legion.

I expected to be sacked for my behaviour—shown the door or sent somewhere nice and distant. The Falklands perhaps. Instead, I got packed off to America to work with the new Slayer. At the time, I couldn’t tell if it was a reward or a punishment.

To tell the truth, after meeting the Slayer, I still don’t know. I started giving her the standard speech—all mysterious and ominous—and she sprayed me with tear gas. She’s definitely not the meek and respectful type. Still, neither am I. Perhaps the Council expected the experience would teach me a lesson.

We’ll just see about that.

Quote: “Never mind me! It’s only a broken arm. Now go finish it off before it escapes!”

ROLEPLAYING THE WATCHER

Younger than Giles, you are new to being a Slayer’s Watcher. You are steeped in Watcher traditions, but also a rebel within the Council. You want to take an active part in the hunt for the supernatural instead of being a mere observer. While committed to teaching and guiding the Slayer, you are also a lot more likely than other Watchers to go along on patrols.

Given your take on the war against the supernatural (all outlined in your memorandum), you are aggressive and dedicated. You think nothing of patrolling with your Slayer, and using all who join your battles to their utmost (and perhaps beyond) capacity. No doubt that’s going to get you and them in trouble someday.

Psychic

Life Points 25

Drama Points 20

ARCHETYPE

CHARACTER TYPE

WHITE HAT



Attributes (15)

Strength 1
Dexterity 2
Constitution 2
Intelligence 3
Perception 3
Willpower 4

Qualities (10 + 3 from Drawbacks)

Attractiveness +1 (1)
Hard to Kill 1 (1)
Psychic Visions (1)
Sorcery 2 (10)

Drawbacks (7)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (3)
Charisma -1 (1)
Clown (1)
Fear of Rejection (1)
Recurring Nightmares (1)

Skills (15 + 4 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 4	Knowledge 3
Art 2	Kung Fu 2
Computers 0	Languages 1
Crime 0	Mr. Fix-it 0
Doctor 0	Notice 4
Driving 2	Occultism 1
Getting Medieval 0	Science 0
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 0	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	6	-	Defense action
Punch	4	2	Bash
Telekinesis	6	2 x Success Levels	Bash or Slash/stab

BACKGROUND ON THE PSYCHIC

Everything was fine until they threw a bucket of blood at me on prom night . . . just kidding, I'm not that kind of psychic. On a good day, I can levitate a puppy (the puppies hate it when you do it, though). I can also see the future, kind of—nothing good like next week's lotto numbers; more like who's going to get killed tomorrow, demons being born, that kind of stuff. I wonder why I don't dress up like Marilyn Manson, wear two pounds' worth of makeup and do that piercing thing. Then again, I see too much darkness in my visions; no need to carry it around the rest of the time.

I know what you're thinking—just an expression; I can't read minds, or I'd open my own Psychic Pals Network. You're thinking, how come I look so normal? It's called acting. When I feel like screaming my head off, I smile sweetly, and push all the bad feelings deep inside me where they can't get out. Trying to prevent the horrible things in my visions helps, too. Whenever I save somebody I saw dying in a vision, it's as if I'm giving Fate the finger. That'll teach it to screw with my head.

My first vision came on my twelfth birthday. I dreamt that Sarah, my best friend, got run over by a school bus. I woke up crying, but thought it was just a dream. Until it happened for real. Sarah died, just the way I saw it.

I didn't freak out. I had an official, oh-my-God mental breakdown, complete with ambulance and paramedics carting me out of the house. I spent most of the next year on medication—no visions, but I was as lively as a bowl of boiled broccoli. When I was finally off the meds, I started having the visions again. I also discovered I could move things around with my mind. My first episode had taught me a valuable lesson—if you let people know something is wrong, you'll end up strapped to a gurney on your way to a hospital. So I kept my mouth shut.

The visions got crazier and crazier. Instead of accidents, I saw creatures attacking people and sucking their blood. I couldn't just sit there. I knew something bad was happening and that I had to do something, anything. Tried not to think too much about what would happen once I found the monsters . . . couldn't help but think that I'd probably just be another victim. Fortunately, when I did work up the guts to actually check out my visions, I met other people who knew something weird was going on. Some of them were weirder than me. I felt right at home.

Quote: "I sense approaching chaos and terror. Ah . . . Tuesday, right on schedule."

ROLEPLAYING THE PSYCHIC

Deep down, the visions and power scare you. You know you are different and you often feel very alone. Deeper down, you know you have a great deal of mystical potential. So far, it has only manifested itself in the form of telekinesis and psychic visions, but if you apply yourself, you could become a powerful psychic. You are beginning to feel that your gifts are not just a random fluke . . . that you actually have a destiny, and one that could be for good. For the time being, you are too busy dealing with the visions and the existence of vampires to make any long range plans or engage in any mystical research or training. Perhaps your new friends can help in that area.

Scooby Gang Member

Life Points 41

Drama Points 20

ARCHETYPE

CHARACTER TYPE

WHITE HAT

Attributes (15)

Strength 2
Dexterity 2
Constitution 2
Intelligence 4
Perception 2
Willpower 3

Life Points 37

Drama Points 20

Qualities (10)

Acute Senses (Vision) (2)
Good Luck 3 (3)
Hard to Kill 5 (5)

Drawbacks (7)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (3)
Love (Tragic) (2)
Misfit (2)

Skills (15 + 7 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 2	Languages 0
Art 1	Knowledge 1
Computers 1	Kung Fu 3
Crime 0	Mr. Fix-it 0
Doctor 2	Notice 2
Driving 3	Occultism 1
Getting Medieval 3	Science 1
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 2	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers

Bonus

Base Damage

Notes

Dodge	5	-	Defense action
Kick	4	6	Bash
Punch	5	4	Bash
Stake	5	4	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart) 2		4	x5 vs vamps



BACKGROUND ON THE SCOOPY GANG MEMBER

Yup, that's right. I'm an official Slayerette. I've got no schtick or special powers. I'm a chalk outline waiting to happen. And you know what? I've saved a bunch of lives, including the Slayer's. Sometimes, you don't need super powers. Then again, sometimes—like when a vampire is pounding your face against the curb—you do. The trick is avoiding the curb-in-your-face situations.

How do you become a Scooby, you ask? It's who you know really. You date the wrong person, and next thing you know you're spending Saturday night on a stakeout—in every sense of the word. Or you can stumble onto the Horrible Truth on your own. In Sunnydale, you can't swing a dead cat without hitting some sort of supernatural monster. In my case, it was a little from column A, and a little from column B. I wasn't so much dating as stalking one of the Slayer's crew—not really stalking, sort of following him around hoping he'd notice me . . . okay, technically, it was stalking. Out of nowhere, guys in moldy clothing start attacking him, and all of a sudden I'm in the middle of a kung-fu movie written and directed by Wes Craven. I didn't do too badly, though. I hit a vampire from behind with a garbage can, and I kept it busy by flailing around in its face until the Slayer dusted it. The rest, as they say, is history. Panic-filled, adrenaline-charged, bone-bruising history.

So vampires exist, and demons, and witches, all the stuff I thought was limited to late night TV. It took me some time to get used to the notion—two hours to be exact, one of them in a dead faint—but now I'm okay with it. The fainting episodes are mostly gone, at least. I'm getting plenty of outdoor exercise—sure, it's at night, and we favor sewers and haunted houses instead of track fields, but it beats sitting in front of the boob tube—and I'm learning all kinds of stuff, like the mating habits of the Dra'hak demon (I just love saying Dra'hak). It's some life. I still haven't gotten anywhere with the cutie I was kinda stalking, but I haven't given up hope. We have a lot more in common now.

Quote: "Okay. Here's the plan. I'll jump around and distract the vampire, and while I'm desperately cringing from his claws, you stake him from behind. I know it's not great, but it plays to my strengths."

ROLEPLAYING THE SCOOPY GANG MEMBER

Without super-strength or magic, you have to use your wits and luck to survive. You are best suited to the investigation side of slaying, but you are learning how to use axes and stakes against the creatures of the night. Your biggest weakness is your love for one of the other Slayerettes, a love that seems doomed from the start. Spending time with people in life-threatening situations can move them closer together, though, so you might have a chance after all.

Hey, it's a feeble and desperate strategy for your love life, but you are working through the whole feeble thing, and these are desperate times. At least, that's what everyone's telling you and from what you've seen, they have a point.

ARCHETYPE

Football Player

CHARACTER TYPE
WHITE HAT

Life Points 57 Drama Points 20



Attributes (15)

Strength 5 (1 level from Jock Quality)
 Dexterity 3
 Constitution 3 (1 level from Jock Quality)
 Intelligence 2
 Perception 2
 Willpower 2

Qualities (10)

Hard to Kill 5 (5)
 Jock (3)
 Natural Toughness (2)

Drawbacks (6)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (3)
 Cruel (1)
 Showoff (2)

Skills (15 + 6 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 3	Languages 0
Art 0	Knowledge 1
Computers 0	Mr. Fix-it 0
Crime 0	Notice 2
Doctor 0	Occultism 1
Driving 1	Science 0
Getting Medieval 3	Sports 5 (2 levels from Jock Quality)
Gun Fu 0	Wild Card 0
Influence 3	
Kung Fu 4	

Maneuvers

Bonus

Base Damage

Notes

Dodge	7	-	Defense action
Punt Kick	5	14	Like Spin Kick; needs a running start
Punch	7	10	Bash
Slam-Tackle	10	10	Bash; no Parry; possible target prone
Stake	6	10	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart) 3		10	x5 vs vamps

BACKGROUND ON THE FOOTBALL PLAYER

I'm good at stomping people. That's the skill that'll get me a football scholarship and, maybe, a pro career. When I heard about bloodsuckers prowling the streets of Sunnydale I got pissed off. Dead critters running around killing people . . . that's just wrong. Hell, it's un-American. So I figured on doing some off-field stomping.

We couldn't tell the cops. I'd heard about that Fox show with the FBI agents (never watched it, got better things to do with my weekends), so I knew the government was hiding all evidence of bloodsuckers. So me and some buddies got together, downed a few brews to get us in the right mood, and we went looking for vamps. We found 'em. Problem was, we weren't ready for 'em. I went after a pencil-necked little guy, and he tossed me around like a bag of dirty laundry. I must have sailed a good ten yards before I hit the ground. Meanwhile, the other vamps went through my buddies like a chainsaw through butter. This wasn't no game—no refs stopping the play, no unnecessary roughness penalties, no time outs. I barely escaped with my life.

Hey, I'm no dumb jock. I knew I needed a new game plan. I heard of a gang in school. They were a bunch of geeks and freaks, but they knew about vampire hunting. I'm working with them now. First thing we did was put down my former buddies, who had been turned into vampires—half of the defensive front line and a chunk of the secondary turned into dust. This season's gonna suck. That was tough, but it had to be done. Then we found the bloodsuckers that did the deed, and dusted 'em too.

I'm not too good with the stakes, but I can tackle the vamps and hold 'em down until somebody else pokes 'em. Some of the bloodsuckers are too strong for me. I'm still getting used to fighting hundred-and-twenty pound critters that can bench press small cars. I guess blood is better than protein shakes or even steroids.

I'm not planning on doing this all my life, by the way. This is my extracurricular activity. Some people work on the yearbook—I help save the world on nights and some weekends.

Quote: "All right, are we ready? Let's go do some damage!"

ROLEPLAYING THE FOOTBALL PLAYER

Your life has taken an unexpected turn. You went from worrying about winning games and impressing talent scouts to lurking around graveyards looking for the undead. You're used to being the hero and basking in the spotlight, and you're not happy about having to play second fiddle to the Slayer and other heroic types. To compensate, you try a little bit too hard, and end up biting off more than you can chew. You also try to help psych people up, but your positive attitude can get downright annoying sometimes. Finally, you have been a bully for much of your life, and working side by side with the people you picked on is proving to be a tad difficult.

Hacker

Life Points 26 Drama Points 20

ARCHETYPE

CHARACTER TYPE

WHITE HAT

Attributes (15)

Strength 2
Dexterity 2
Constitution 2
Intelligence 5 (1 level from Nerd Quality)
Perception 2
Willpower 4 (1 level from Nerd Quality)

Qualities (10)

Contacts (Hacker) (2)
Nerd (3)
Sorcery I (5)

Drawbacks (5)

Covetous (Lecherous) (2)
Emotional Problem (Dependency) (1)
Obsession (Techno-Magic) (2)

Skills (15 + 5 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 2	Knowledge 0
Art I	Kung Fu 0
Computers 6 (2 levels from Nerd Quality)	Languages 0
Crime 3	Mr. Fix-it 0
Doctor 0	Notice 3
Driving 0	Occultism 2
Getting Medieval 2	Science 3
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 0	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers

Bonus

Base Damage

Notes

Dodge	4	—	Defense action
Magic	7	Varies	By spell
Stake	4	4	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	1	4	x5 vs vamps
Telekinesis	5	2 x Success Levels	Bash or Slash/stab



BACKGROUND ON THE HACKER

Ever heard about the guy who broke into the IRS site and translated all their text files into Klingon? You bet. That was me. The NSA is still trying to figure out who did it.

Computers are my friends. I can get into any database, anytime. Which is how I figured something major was going on in Sunnydale. I broke into the Hall of Records, and found the murder rate in this little town is higher than most places this side of a war zone. The proportion of missing persons is even higher. I did a little more digging, and discovered one girl seemed to be around all kinds of murders, gang battles, and other strange events.

I thought I was being careful, but somebody discovered I was snooping around. One night, two pale guys knocked at my door and asked if they could come in. I told them I gave at the office, and their faces grew fangs and got all wrinkled up. They didn't seem to be able to come in, but they cut the phone lines and surrounded my place. Good thing I went with a wireless modem as soon as my buddy at Radio Shack could score me one. I didn't think the police would help, so I tried getting in touch with the mystery chick. She didn't have an e-mail address, but one of her friends did, and that's how I met the Slayer. When I saw her dust off the vampires, I said to myself, "Man, those are great FX." When I realized it wasn't FX, I threw up.

Now all my hacking is done for a good cause. I help track down demons and vampires instead of playing tag with the FBI. Sometimes I end up doing some fieldwork, which really isn't my strong suit, but I guess you can't do everything from a desktop, or even a laptop. I've gotten good at bypassing electronic security systems, too, and I can be pretty sneaky from all the nights I rummaged through the garbage of corporate executives to find their passwords.

But what I'm really getting into is techno-magic. After seeing magic in action, it got me thinking about bringing the dark arts into the 21st century. If I can figure a way to run spell-like programs, I could be the first cyber-wizard. "Magic" is a really outdated word, too—how about "Reality Hacking"? So far, the best I've been able to do is to load a bunch of spells on an e-book, so I don't have to lug around fifty pounds of old moldy books. Give me time, though.

Quote: "Unix and unicorn horn, Apache and ambrosia, Geoforce and geomancy. Yep, I got it all and I got it good!"

ROLEPLAYING THE HACKER

You are the typical cyber-punk—your bedroom is cluttered with CD cases, Star Trek memorabilia, and computer components. You built your own workstation from scratch, and are far more comfortable writing a C++ or Java app than asking someone out on a date. After your brush with the supernatural, you've become obsessed with combining magic and technology to create a greater whole. Your initial attempts haven't worked very well, and you've been warned that mixing the occult and computers can have unexpected consequences. You've heard tales of one demon who got converted into software, and the damage it inflicted. That was probably done by a chump though. You know you are better.

ARCHETYPE

Beginner Witch

CHARACTER TYPE

WHITE HAT

Life Points 22 Drama Points 20



Attributes (15)

Strength 1
Dexterity 2
Constitution 2
Intelligence 3
Perception 3
Willpower 4

Qualities (10 + 7 from Drawbacks)

Attractiveness +1 (1)
Good Luck 1 (1)
Sorcery 3 (15)

Drawbacks (7)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (3)
Honorable (2)
Misfit (2)

Skills (15)

Acrobatics 1	Knowledge 2
Art 0	Kung Fu 0
Computers 0	Languages 1
Crime 0	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 1	Notice 2
Driving 1	Occultism 4
Getting Medieval 1	Science 0
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 2	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers

Bonus Base Damage Notes

Dodge	3	—	Defense action
Magic	11	Varies	By spell
Stake	3	2	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	0	2	x5 vs vampires
Telekinesis	7	2 x Success Levels	Bash or Slash/stab

BACKGROUND ON THE BEGINNER WITCH

My grandmother was a witch and the talent must have skipped a generation. Probably just as well, because grandma didn't have a happy life—she ended up in an insane asylum. Better than being burned at the stake, I guess. I didn't even know she was alive. As far as I knew, my grandmother had died a long time ago. So I was really surprised on my fifteenth birthday, when I got a letter from her telling me where she had buried her Book of Shadows—her collection of spells and rituals. She had sensed my potential, even from the loony-bin, and decided it was time to begin my education.

Several letters followed. It was the best correspondence course ever. At first, I followed her instructions as a lark—I was bored, and it was kind of fun pretending to have magical powers. Imagine my surprise when the spells started working. Soon, I could levitate objects, call spirits to me, and do all kinds of neat stuff. I was very careful after the first spell worked. The letters had been very specific about the dangers of using magic casually. But then came the date with Jimmy.

Jimmy seemed like a nice boy. Jimmy stopped being nice when I was in his car, and then he wouldn't take "no" for an answer. He slapped me around, but I managed to get away. When I got home, I opened my Book of Shadows and called forth a spirit of vengeance. I didn't want to kill Jimmy, just give him a good scare. The spell worked too well, though. The spirit not only avenged me, but set the entire town to settling scores, real or imagined. I managed to destroy it—with a lot of help from the Slayer—but by that time four people were dead, including Jimmy.

One of the primary things my grandma taught me was that whatever I did, good or evil, would return to me threefold. She didn't get very specific but her warnings were sure dire enough. I'm not certain what threefold of death is, much less threefold of four deaths, but it sure doesn't sound too good. Being mostly responsible for the deaths of Jimmy and three others hasn't done anything to help my peace of mind, I'm telling you.

While I wait for the bad stuff, though, I plan to do what I can to make amends for the damage I've done. I will use what I know to help people as best I can. Grandma said that magic was a tool, like any other, and could be used for good or evil. I'll try my best. I don't know if that will be enough to pay for my mistakes, but it's a start.

Quote: "Hecate, Diana, Minerva, lend me your power! As I will it, so mote it be!"

ROLEPLAYING THE BEGINNER WITCH

You have the potential to become an extremely powerful witch, and that's not necessarily a good thing. Several people died after one misuse of your powers, and now you only use magic when absolutely necessary. When not using magic, or feeling guilty or worried about it, you are fairly normal—you have your neurotic times and your happy times. Whenever you are dealing with Slayer-related business, you become Miss Driven—all business, no jokes or wisecracks.

Former Vampire Groupie

Life Points 38

Drama Points 20

ARCHETYPE

CHARACTER TYPE

WHITE HAT



Attributes (15)

Strength 2
Dexterity 4
Constitution 2
Intelligence 2
Perception 2
Willpower 3

Qualities (10)

Acute Senses (Vision) (2)
Attractiveness +3 (3)
Hard to Kill 4 (4)
Good Luck 1 (1)

Drawbacks (7)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (3)
Obsession (Hunt Vampires) (2)
Paranoid (2)

Skills (15 + 7 for Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 2	Knowledge 2
Artist 2	Kung Fu 3
Computers 0	Languages 0
Criminal Acts 0	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 0	Notice 2
Driving 1	Occultism 1
Getting Medieval 1	Science 0
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 3	Wild Card (Archery) 5

Maneuvers

Bonus Base Damage

Notes

Bow Shot	7	8	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	4	8	x5 vs vamps
Dodge	7	-	Defense action
Kick	6	6	Bash
Punch	7	4	Bash

BACKGROUND ON THE FORMER VAMPIRE GROUPIE

The angst drew me to them like a moth toward a flame. I hated my life, my parents, school—when I found the Sunset Club, I felt new and different. I was cool! We would dress up in period clothing and quote Anne Rice to each other. We were wicked, hip and oh-so-tragic. The sexual tension ran high but it was perfectly safe. We had other priorities. At first, it was just fun and games; we were playing pretend. When I put on the extra layer of makeup and the black lipstick, I forgot my problems, and I could dream I was an eternal, sensuous hunter of the night. At the Sunset Club, we weren't bored or troubled kids, we were the worshippers of the Lonely Ones—our ever-so-pretentious nickname for vampires. Oh . . . and my parents thought I was crazy, which was a nice bonus.

Then came the night when we met real vampires. They weren't sexy or mysterious. They were murderous monsters. Worse, we were sold out by one of our own. He was going to let the demons devour us for his own gain. How's that for tragic!

Anyway, thanks to the Slayer we survived the experience, but all my illusions were shattered. I might have hated my life, but I sure as Hell didn't want to end up like one of those things. Lonely Ones, my fashionable butt—they were demons wearing human costumes. I made it out of the club with my life, but little of my former hopes and dreams. And I was angry. I wanted to make those monsters pay.

So maybe it's my way to compensate for the loss of my fantasies, or maybe I just need to do stupid crap for no good reason. I enrolled in self-defense classes that summer, and I dusted off my archery set. I used to be a good enough bow shot that my parents had started talking about Olympic tryouts. 'Course, that was before I went into my "dark and moody" phase. I practiced and practiced, and got damn good. I also re-read all my books on the undead, not to imitate them this time, but to figure out their weaknesses.

Well, I got in trouble again. I thought I was all tough and Sigourney-like, but this was no movie, or at least, I wasn't the starring ingénue. I snuck out of my house for a few nights before I spotted my first vamp. I shot it with my bow, but missed its heart. My self-defense classes didn't help me against a thing that's twice as strong as a normal human. I almost ended up as a snack, but luckily the Slayer was around, and she saved my butt a second time. I tell you, it was getting downright embarrassing.

Still, I'm not giving up. I realize I can't do it alone, but I'm not quitting. I got friends now, true friends who put their lives on the line to fight the good fight. I may have been a pathetic vampire groupie, but I'm going to be a wicked vampire killer!

Quote: "Aim for the heart and make sure you hit it. Believe me, I know what missing is like and it's très mal for life, limb and the wardrobe."

ROLEPLAYING THE FORMER VAMPIRE GROUPIE

You still favor the goth look, but have rejected the whole vampire lifestyle. Your experiences have left you with a very cynical outlook, and you are suspicious of everyone and everything. At the same time, you know you have to trust your fellow vampire hunters. You've chosen a tough path, but you are going to stick to it.

ARCHETYPE

Amateur Hunter

CHARACTER TYPE
WHITE HAT

Life Points 42 Drama Points 20

Attributes (15)

Strength 3
Dexterity 3
Constitution 2
Intelligence 2
Perception 2
Willpower 3

Qualities (10)

Good Luck 3 (3)
Hard to Kill 4 (4)
Nerves of Steel (3)

Drawbacks (6)

Adversary (Vampires & Demons) (3)
Attractiveness -1 (1)
Mental Problems (Delusions of Grandeur) (1)
Misfit (1)

Skills (15 + 6 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 3	Kung Fu 3
Art 0	Knowledge 1
Computers 2	Languages 0
Crime 3	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 0	Notice 3
Driving 1	Occultism 2
Getting Medieval 3	Science 0
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 0	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Axe	6	20	Slash/stab; used two-handed
Crossbow Shot	6	16	Slash/stab
(Through to the Heart)	3	16	x5 vs vamps
Dodge	6	-	Defense action
Kick	5	8	Bash
Popgun	3	5	Holy water pistol; vampires only
Punch	6	6	Bash



BACKGROUND ON THE AMATEUR HUNTER

My old town, Santa Roja, was full of vampires, and when I first saw one, I damn near wet myself. You got tough in my neighborhood though, or your life wasn't worth living. So, me and my friends got together, made a plan, and took care of them. Not too bad for a bunch of tenth-graders. We didn't need no old books of magic, no super-powers, none of that stuff. All the secrets of vampire slaying are out in the open: stakes, crosses, sunlight, holy water, removing their heads . . . it's all there in the comics and movies. We never paid much attention before, but hey, if the vamps are real, we figured that the stories about killing them were probably on target. Lucky for us, they were.

So we armed ourselves, got into some hunting clothes, and went after them early one sunny morning. We surprised them (they didn't expect a bunch of kids to come through the roof). And we won. Well, mostly we won. Jose wound up in a coma and Gabriel spent three weeks in the hospital. We blamed it on a rival gang and had to go through a bunch of lame counseling. But the vamps . . . they all got toasted. We kept at it during Junior year. Three other raids, no casualties those times. We figured we were pretty hot stuff.

So in my Senior year, the family decides to move to Sunnydale. I did a little research, and discovered Sunnydale is the only small town with a higher murder rate than Santa Roja. Another vampire nest, I realized, and I got ready for trouble. My hunter friends weren't by my side, but I had the weapons, I had the training, I had the right 'tude.

I was right about Sunnydale. More vampires per square mile than Santa Roja, and they are tough. I made my first kill a week after I got there, but I got the living crap pounded out of me. At first I thought I was out of practice. Second time out, I get thrown through a plate glass window. That hurt. Only reason I didn't get vamped was the two crosses tattooed on the sides of my neck. I got away, but so did the freakin' vampire. Things weren't working the way they were supposed to. Finally, I realized what was wrong. Hunting is a group activity. I needed a new team.

Took me a couple of weeks, but I discovered the local hunters (I knew there had to be some somewhere). They were led by this chick, calls herself the Slayer. So I took over her gang. Well, kinda took over. They weren't that impressed by my credentials. I tell them, "I've done eight vampires" (and I was exaggerating, it was more like two and six assists, but I figured a little exaggeration goes a long way). And they look at me like I'm some bush league kid trying to play in the majors. When they told me how many vamps they had killed, I thought they were full of BS. Now I'm not so sure. They are pretty good, not that I'm going to admit it to them. Got a rep to maintain. So I haven't taken over the gang yet. Give me time, though. One cool thing about this gang, it's full of chicks. I might even score with one of them.

Quote: "All right, bloodsuckers! We're gonna terminate every last freaking one of you!"

ROLEPLAYING THE AMATEUR HUNTER

You are the only one in your school who likes to dress like a militia reject, complete with fatigue pants and combat boots. As far as you are concerned, you learned everything you needed to know about vampires from comic books. You didn't have too many friends in Santa Roja (and they were as weird as you) and you know if you hadn't joined the Slayer's gang, you'd be pretty lonely here.

Buffy

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LIFE POINTS 101
 DRAMA POINTS 10
 EXPERIENCE POINTS



CHARACTER NAME Buffy Anne Summers
 CHARACTER TYPE (Very) Experienced Hero
 DESCRIPTION _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>8</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>9</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>4</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>8</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>6</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>9</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>3</u>
ART	<u>0</u>	KUNG FU	<u>9</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>3</u>	MR. FIX-IT	<u>1</u>
DOCTOR	<u>2</u>	NOTICE	<u>5</u>
DRIVING	<u>0</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>4</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>8</u>	SCIENCE	<u>1</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>1</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>3</u>	WILD CARD	<u>0</u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____
 PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
13-14	3	GOOD
15-16	4	VERY GOOD
17-20	5	EXCELLENT
21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +3	Fast Reaction Time
Hard to Kill 9	Nerves of Steel
Psychic Visions	Slayer

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Lots) 8	Dependent (Dawn) 2
Honorable 2	Love (Tragic)
Obligation (Total)	

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	BONUS	BASE DAMAGE	NOTES
Axe	17	40	Slash/stab
Crossbow	17	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	14	16	x5 vs vamps
Dodge	18	—	Defense action
Grapple	20	—	Resisted by Dodge
Jump Kick	15	27	Bash; Acrobatics + Dexterity roll first
Kick	17	18	Bash
(Groin Kick)	14	18	Ouch!
Punch	18	16	Bash
Quarterstaff	17	27	Bash
Spin Kick	16	20	Bash
Stake	17	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	14	16	x5 vs vamps
Sweep Kick	17	8	Bash; target prone
Sword	17	32	Slash/stab
(Decapitation)	12	32	x5 damage
Thrown Stake	16	14	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	13	14	x5 vs vamps
Toss	12	8	Bash; must Grapple first

Buffy

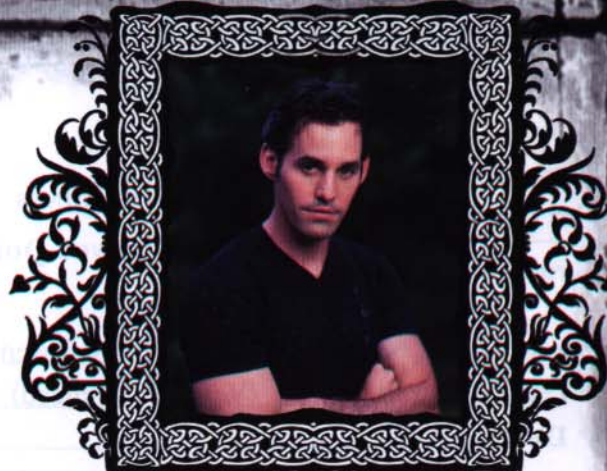
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LIFE POINTS 53

DRAMA POINTS 20

EXPERIENCE POINTS



CHARACTER NAME Alexander LaVelle Harris/Xander

CHARACTER TYPE (Very Experienced) White Hat

DESCRIPTION _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH 3 INTELLIGENCE 2

DEXTERITY 3 PERCEPTION 2

CONSTITUTION 4 WILLPOWER 4

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>5</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>2</u>
ART	<u>0</u>	KUNG FU	<u>5</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>2</u>	MR. FIX-IT	<u>4</u>
DOCTOR	<u>1</u>	NOTICE	<u>4</u>
DRIVING	<u>3</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>3</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>5</u>	SCIENCE	<u>1</u>
GUN FU	<u>1</u>	SPORTS	<u>0</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>1</u>	WILD CARD	<u>1</u>

(MILITARY KNOWLEDGE)

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +2 Hard to Kill 5

Good Luck 5 _____

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Assorted) 4 Clown

Love _____

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____

PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
13-14	3	GOOD
15-16	4	VERY GOOD
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21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	BONUS	BASE DAMAGE	NOTES
Axe	8	15	Slash/stab
Dodge	8	—	Defense action
Kick	7	8	Bash
Punch	8	6	Bash
Stake	8	6	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	5	6	x5 vs vamps

Buffy

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LIFE POINTS 49
 DRAMA POINTS 20
 EXPERIENCE POINTS



CHARACTER NAME Rupert Giles
 CHARACTER TYPE (Very Experienced) White Hat
 DESCRIPTION _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>3</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>5</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>4</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>2</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>3</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>5</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>5</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>7</u>
ART	<u>3</u>	KUNG FU	<u>5</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>5</u>
CRIME	<u>3</u>	MR. FIX-IT	<u>2</u>
DOCTOR	<u>3</u>	NOTICE	<u>4</u>
DRIVING	<u>3</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>8</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>6</u>	SCIENCE	<u>3</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>1</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>3</u>	WILD CARD	<u>0</u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____
 PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
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24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +1	Contacts (Occult) <u>5</u>
Hard to Kill <u>5</u>	Nerves of Steel
Occult Library <u>5</u>	Photographic Memory
Watcher	

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Assorted) <u>5</u>	Honorable <u>2</u>
Impaired Senses (Sight)	Mental Problems (Cruelty) <u>1</u>
Obligation (Major)	

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	BASE BONUS DAMAGE		NOTES
Dodge	10	—	Defense action
Kick	8	8	Bash
Punch	9	6	Bash
Sword	10	12	Slash/stab
Stake	10	6	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	7	6	x5 vs vamps
Crossbow	10	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	7	16	x5 vs vamps

Buffy

the vampire slayer™

roleplaying game

LIFE POINTS 94

DRAMA POINTS 10

EXPERIENCE POINTS



CHARACTER NAME Spike (a.k.a. William the Bloody)

CHARACTER TYPE Reformed? Big Bad

DESCRIPTION _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>8</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>8</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>3</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>7</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>3</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>9</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>4</u>
ART	<u>2</u>	KUNG FU	<u>8</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>5</u>	MR. FIX-IT	<u>2</u>
DOCTOR	<u>2</u>	NOTICE	<u>5</u>
DRIVING	<u>4</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>4</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>7</u>	SCIENCE	<u>0</u>
GUN FU	<u>2</u>	SPORTS	<u>0</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>4</u>	WILD CARD	<u>0</u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____

PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
13-14	3	GOOD
15-16	4	VERY GOOD
17-20	5	EXCELLENT
21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

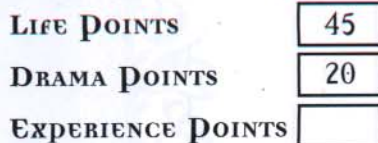
Age <u>2</u>	Attractiveness <u>+3</u>
Fast Reaction Time	Hard to Kill <u>8</u>
Nerves of Steel	Situational Awareness
Vampire (15 pt.)	

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Several) <u>3</u>	Covetous (Lecherous)
Love (Tragic)	Mental Problems (Cruelty) <u>2</u>

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	BASE BONUS DAMAGE		NOTES
Bite	18	24	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Grapple	18	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	15	18	Bash
Punch	16	16	Bash
Spin Kick	14	20	Bash
Stake	15	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	12	16	x5 vs vamps
Sweep Kick	15	8	Bash; target prone
Sword	15	32	Slash/stab



STRENGTH	<u>2</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>3</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>2</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>3</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>4</u>

Age 3	Attractiveness +3
Contacts (Demonic)	Hard to Kill 5

ACROBATICS	3	KNOWLEDGE	3
ART	0	KUNG FU	2
COMPUTERS	1	LANGUAGES	3
CRIME	1	MR. FIX-IT	0
DOCTOR	1	NOTICE	4
DRIVING	2	OCCULTISM	4
GETTING MEDIEVAL	3	SCIENCE	0
GUN FU	0	SPORTS	0
INFLUENCE	2	WILD CARD	10
(DEMON FACTS)			

Covetous (Greedy) 1	Emotional Problems
Love	(Fear of Rabbits) 1
Mental Problems (Cruelty) 2	Misfit
Secret (Ex-demon) 3	

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____
PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

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SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
13-14	3	GOOD
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21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

Buffy

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LIFE POINTS

61

DRAMA POINTS

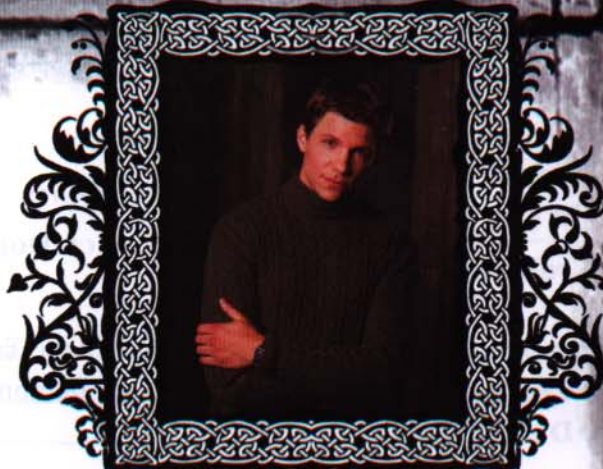
10

EXPERIENCE POINTS

CHARACTER NAME Riley Finn

CHARACTER TYPE Experienced Hero

DESCRIPTION _____



ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	5	INTELLIGENCE	3
DEXTERITY	5	PERCEPTION	3
CONSTITUTION	4	WILLPOWER	4

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	7	KNOWLEDGE	3
ART	0	KUNG FU	7
COMPUTERS	2	LANGUAGES	0
CRIME	6	MR. FIX-IT	3
DOCTOR	3	NOTICE	5
DRIVING	4	OCCULTISM	3
GETTING MEDIEVAL	5	SCIENCE	2
GUN FU	9	SPORTS	2
INFLUENCE	3	WILD CARD	4
		(INITIATIVE TECH)	

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (D10 + DEX) _____

PERCEPTION (D10 + PER + NOTICE) _____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
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21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +2	Fast Reaction Time
Hard to Kill 5	Initiative Commando
Natural Toughness	Nerves of Steel

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Various) 4	Love (Tragic)
Obligation (Total)	

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	BASE BONUS	DAMAGE	NOTES
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Kick	11	12	Bash
Knife	10	10	Slash/stab
Punch	12	10	Bash
Stake	10	10	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	7	10	x5 vs vamps
Taser Rifle	14	5	Bash; knockout (see p. 120)

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LIFE POINTS

26

DRAMA POINTS

20

EXPERIENCE POINTS

CHARACTER NAME Tara Maclay

CHARACTER TYPE White Hat

DESCRIPTION _____



ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>2</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>2</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>3</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>2</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>4</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>2</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>3</u>
ART	<u>0</u>	KUNG FU	<u>2</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>1</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>0</u>	MR. FIX-IT	<u>0</u>
DOCTOR	<u>1</u>	NOTICE	<u>3</u>
DRIVING	<u>2</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>4</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>2</u>	SCIENCE	<u>1</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>0</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>2</u>	WILD CARD	<u>3</u>
		(RIDING HORSES)	_____

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____

PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
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24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +2 Sorcery 3

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Assorted) 3 Emotional Problems
Love (Fear of Rejection)
Minority (Gay Wicca) Misfit

COMBAT MANEUVERS

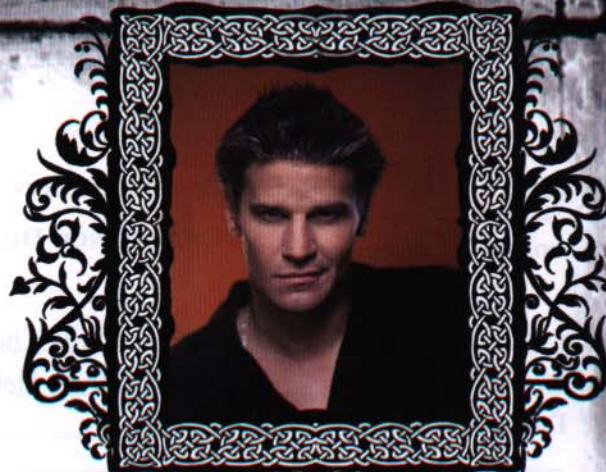
MANEUVER	BASE BONUS	DAMAGE	NOTES
Dodge	4	—	Defense action
Magic	11	Varies	By spell
Telekinesis	7	•	Bash or Slash/stab

• 2 x Success Levels

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LIFE POINTS 94
 DRAMA POINTS 10
 EXPERIENCE POINTS



CHARACTER NAME Angel
 CHARACTER TYPE (Very) Experienced Hero
 DESCRIPTION _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>9</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>8</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>4</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>6</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>5</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>8</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>5</u>
ART	<u>1</u>	KUNG FU	<u>9</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>3</u>
CRIME	<u>4</u>	MR. FIX-IT	<u>2</u>
DOCTOR	<u>2</u>	NOTICE	<u>5</u>
DRIVING	<u>2</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>4</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>8</u>	SCIENCE	<u>1</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>0</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>6</u>	WILD CARD	<u>0</u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____
 PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
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21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Age 3	Attractiveness +3
Fast Reaction Time	Hard to Kill 8
Natural Toughness	Nerves of Steel
Situational Awareness	Vampire (15 pt.)

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Lots) 7	Honorable 2
Love (Tragic)	

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	BASE	BONUS DAMAGE	NOTES
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Kick	16	20	Bash
Punch	17	18	Bash
Spin Kick	15	22	Bash
Stake	16	18	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	13	18	x5 vs vamps
Sword	16	36	Slash/stab

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LIFE POINTS 43
 DRAMA POINTS 20
 EXPERIENCE POINTS



CHARACTER NAME Cordelia Chase
 CHARACTER TYPE White Hat
 DESCRIPTION _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>3</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>4</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>3</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>3</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>3</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>4</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>1</u>
ART	<u>0</u>	KUNG FU	<u>1</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>0</u>	MR. FIX-IT	<u>0</u>
DOCTOR	<u>0</u>	NOTICE	<u>3</u>
DRIVING	<u>2</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>1</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>3</u>	SCIENCE	<u>0</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>6</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>4</u>	WILD CARD	<u>3</u>
		(FASHION)	<u></u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____
 PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
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15-16	4	VERY GOOD
17-20	5	EXCELLENT
21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +4 Hard to Kill 3
 Jock (Cheerleader) _____

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Incidental) 3 Covetous (Greedy) 1
Covetous (Ambitious) 1 Reckless
Showoff _____

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	BONUS	BASE DAMAGE	NOTES
Dodge	8	—	Defense action
Stake	7	6	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	4	6	x5 vs vamps

BUFFY SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Buffy has gotten progressively tougher and stronger from one season to the next. Season One Buffy wouldn't have lasted one round with Glory; Season Five Buffy kicked the Hell-goddess' ass (with a lot of help, but still). Drop Buffy's Acrobatics, Getting Medieval and Kung Fu Skills by one level per season before the fifth (i.e., her Kung Fu goes down to eight during Season Four, seven for Season Three, six for Season Two, and five for Season One). Other Skills should be reduced by one or two levels during Season One, then increased every other Season, give or take.

Her Attributes also increase over time. During Season One, she would have Strength 6, Dexterity 6, Constitution 5 and Willpower 4. Add one to Strength during Season Three, another one for Season Four. Add one to Dexterity on Seasons Two, Three and Five. Add one to Constitution for every Season after the first. Increase Willpower by one at the end of Season One, and by another level at the end of Season Two. The other Attributes don't change. Finally, the Teenager Drawback applies during Seasons One through Four.

WILLOW SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

The biggest change in Willow is her raw power as a witch. In Season One, she has no Sorcery levels. She gains one Sorcery level during Season Two, and two additional levels each season after that, as her power grows dramatically. Additionally, Willow's Willpower goes from four to five during Season Five. Up until Season Three, Willow had the Misfit Drawback. Her relationships with Oz and Tara helped her break out of her shell, though. Until Season Four, she also had the Teenager Drawback.

XANDER SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Drop Strength, Dexterity and Willpower by one level each during Season One, and raise one of them (your choice) by one level each successive Season. Change the Love Drawback to the Tragic version before he and Anya start dating. Add Misfit during Seasons One through Four. Acrobatics, Kung Fu and Getting Medieval start out at zero at the beginning of Season One, but are each up to level 2 by the end of the season. Increase those skills by one each during Seasons Three, Four and Five. Xander's Gun Fu Skill was zero until 2.6 Halloween, when he was turned into a soldier because of the costume he was wearing. The transformation gave him Gun Fu 5 and Wild Card (Military Knowledge) 5—the effect wore off gradually, however (drop each skill by two levels during Season Three and

Four), and now he wouldn't qualify for the Swiss Army. A Director wishing to make Xander a little more badass might let him keep the military skills, however.

GILES SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Giles starts out as your basic Slayerette, but by Season Five he's gotten significantly tougher. Strength, Dexterity, Constitution and Willpower are all one level higher than they were at the beginning of Season One. Decrease any one of those stats by one level for every Season you go back. His combat skills have gone up by two levels each over time (all that sparring with the Slayer, you see), as have his Occultism and Knowledge (all that research under pressure really sharpens the old skills).

SPIKE SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

A few years of sparring with the Slayer and her friends (and enemies) have toughened Spike even beyond his Slayer-slaying level. Decrease his Acrobatics, Kung Fu and Getting Medieval Skills by one each for Season Four, by two each for Season Three and by three each for Season Four.

ANYA SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Before 3.8 The Wish, Anya was a super-powerful demon with reality-changing powers. After that, she's a normal (well, kinda normal) human with no special powers. She hasn't seen that much action during the last few seasons, however, so don't adjust her Attributes or skills regardless of the season you wish to play. Note that with a 1000 years of demonhood behind her, Anya could be considered to have an Age 10 Quality. Given that her powers have been stripped from her, and it's not clear that she advanced during that time (other than gaining a vast store of demon knowledge), we have chocked up that whole period to "down time" (see p. 36).

RILEY SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

During much of Season Four, Riley was hopped up on assorted chemicals to enhance his physical abilities and recovery rate. While under the influence, Riley's physical Attributes were all raised by one level, and his healing rate was equivalent to a Slayer's (although slower overall because even augmented, his Constitution would not match a Slayer's). His skills have gone up since we first met him. During Season Four, reduce his Kung Fu by two levels, and his Acrobatics, Gun Fu and Occultism by one level each.

Buffy

the vampire slayer

OZ SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Drop Oz's Art, Acrobatics, Getting Medieval, Kung Fu and Occult Knowledge by one level each for each season before the fourth. Also, he starts out as an uncontrolled Werewolf (making it a Drawback), but there is some indication he can now control the change, so by the time he leaves it could be considered a Quality (see Werewolf, p. 51).

TARA SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

During Season Four, reduce Tara's Willpower, Sorcery and Occultism Skill by one level each—she's grown in power and ability by working with Willow. She had no Getting Medieval when she started, but she's picked up the skill through exposure to the Slayerette lifestyle. For quite some time, she also had a Delusion (Believes she's a demon), thanks to her family's manipulation.

ANGEL SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

These stats present Angel at the end of Season Three. He's had a few adventures since then (but their affect on his abilities will have to wait for the *Angel* book). Drop his Strength and Dexterity by one level each

during Season Two, and again during Season One. Same for his combat skills. He really gets to hone those only after he starts hanging out with Buffy (he didn't get much practice during his hundred years or so of brooding—rats make for poor sparring partners).

CORDERIA SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Cordelia's time as a cheerleader increased her physical Attributes, which probably saved her life several times after she fell in with the rest of the Scooby Gang. Reduce Strength and Dexterity by one level each during Season One. Reduce Acrobatics, Driving, Kung Fu, Getting Medieval and Sports by one level for Season One. For Season Two, decrease two of those skills and either Strength or Dexterity by one level.

DAWN SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Dawn has only been around for one season, but she's gone through a lot. At the beginning of Season Five, reduce her Acrobatics, Getting Medieval and Kung Fu Skills by one level each.



SOME ASSEMBLY
REQUIRED





Rules, Borders and an End Zone

Xander: People can't do anything they want. Society has rules, and borders, and an end zone.

—4.22 *Restless*

Rules, always with
the rules.

Roleplaying is a bit like playing a board game and a bit like acting in a movie, but without the board or the script. Players sit around a table or in a den as they do for a game and speak the lines for the Cast Members as they might in a movie. You, the Director, set the scene and control the Guest Stars and Adversaries. Dice determine what the results of a given action are. All simple and clear, right? Great, let's play.

Ah, you think there's a bit more to it than that. You're right. Let's talk more.

RUNNING A GAME

Giles: The good-guys are stalwart and true. The bad-guys are easily distinguished by their pointy horns or black hats and we always defeat them and save the day. Nobody ever dies . . . and everybody lives happily ever after.

Buffy: Liar.

—2.7 *Lie To Me*

As we noted in the first chapter, come game time each player needs a character sheet for her Cast Member, a writing implement, some scrap paper and a ten-sided die (or they can share a die, if they feel sharing-like). You Director types should have any notes you've made on the current Episode, this corebook, and other information you think you



might need handy. The rest is done mainly by talking—describing the scene or what the characters are doing or acting out the Cast's dialog.

Your job as Director is to describe the situation. For example, you might tell the players "It's a beautiful morning in Sunnydale. Too beautiful to be going to school, and yet that's where you are. First period is about to start. As you head off to your respective classrooms, someone starts screaming in horror. What do you do?" This is where the Cast Members get busy. The players describe what they are doing and speak for their characters. One might say "Uh-oh. Something wicked this way comes. I head over to see what's going on." Another could respond "I rush to my locker and grab my Official Slaying Kit . . . just in case."

Most of the time, when a player wants her Cast Member to do something, it gets done—talking, walking, walking and chewing gum, leaping up in class and screaming "spiders!" (embarrassing, but not difficult to do). Sometimes however, the outcome of an action is in doubt. Just because a Cast Member wants to stake a vampire for example, does not mean the vampire is going to get staked. That's where the dice and the numbers on the character sheet come in.

THE BASICS

Xander: You don't hide! You're bait! Go act baity.

Cordelia: What's the plan?

Xander: The vampire attacks you.

Cordelia: And then what?

Xander: The vampire kills you. We watch. We rejoice.

—3.1 Anne

In the Unisystem, a die is rolled when a character is trying to do something important, and when there's some chance of things going wrong (see To Roll or Not to Roll, p. 102). You tell the players when to roll and what character sheet numbers to add to the roll. The die roll represents luck and chance; the character sheet numbers are the skills and natural abilities of the Cast Member. The better those skills are, the more likely that the character will succeed. An sharpshooter will hit the target more often than someone who closes her eyes and flinches when a gun goes off. Sometimes, luck allows the untrained to succeed, and the expert to fail—that's where the die rolling comes in.

the basic mechanic is:

D10 roll + Attribute + (Attribute or Skill)

D10: a ten-sided die. Higher is better.

ATTRIBUTE: The character's natural abilities. Use the Cast Member's Strength to see if she can lift a bag of cement over her head or Dexterity to pick someone's pocket. In some situations (lifting something for example), only Attributes are used. Usually in those cases, roll and add the character's Attribute doubled (e.g., if the Cast Member has Dexterity 3, add six to Dexterity-based rolls). In certain cases . . . say, when footing is treacherous or positioning awkward, no skill is used and the Attribute is not doubled. Those are pretty rare circumstances though. Also, sometimes two different Attributes (no doubling) are used instead of an Attribute and Skill. As the Director, this is ultimately your call.

SKILL: The character's learned abilities. Use Kung Fu to punch someone, or Crime to pick someone's pocket. Always use an Attribute alongside a skill.

The player announces what her character intends to do. You tell her what Skill and Attribute to add to the roll. The player rolls the dice and adds the Attribute/Skill combo to the result. If the total, after all modifiers, is nine or higher, the character has succeeded. Otherwise, failure-city.

SUCCESS LEVELS

Anya: Slap my hand now!

Giles: Beg your pardon?

Anya: In celebration.

Giles: Oh . . . (slaps her hand) Yes.

Anya: Ow!

—4.19 New Moon Rising

In some situations, you Director folk need to know more than whether the character has succeeded at something—you need how well she succeeded. When that's the case, check the result against the Success Level Chart on the next page (it's also on the character sheet—handy, no?). The greater the number of Success Levels, the better the character did. Some difficult tasks require more than one Success Level.



success Levels table

roll success Levels description

9-10	1	Adequate
11-12	2	Decent
13-14	3	Good
15-16	4	Very Good
17-20	5	Excellent
21-23	6	Extraordinary
24-26	7	Mind-boggling
27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

EXAMPLE: Giles is doing research (color me stunned) on the latest arrival to Sunnydale, some type of headhunting demon. To see if he can identify the critter, Giles' player rolls a D10 and adds Giles' Intelligence (5) and Occultism (8). The die roll is a two; the total result is 15. Fifteen is greater than nine, so Giles is successful. Some critters are harder to identify than others, however. If the monster is particularly unusual, you as the Director might want to check the Success Levels of the roll. Looking at the Success Levels Table, Giles' player sees that 15 equals four Success Levels, a Very Good result. You decide that four Success Levels are more than enough. "After looking for half an hour or so, you find an ink drawing of the monster in the *Codex Infernalis*," you might say. "It's a D'imangi, known to collect the skulls of their victims. Its tough skin is highly resistant to normal weapons, but it is vulnerable to silver."

EXAMPLE ME AGAIN: Buffy is trapped under a car that an inconsiderate demon dropped on her. To see if she can lift it enough to slide from under it, Buffy's player rolls a D10 and adds Buffy's Strength (8). If Buffy was trying to lift something under normal circumstances, her player would have a bonus equal to double her Strength (16), but you rule that Buffy does not have a lot of leverage, so the player only adds Buffy's Strength once. The die roll is a two, for a total of 10. That is one Success Level—only adequate, not quite good enough to lift the car right away, you decide. "Buffy, you manage to shift the car a little, but you're still trapped. If you keep pushing, you could be free next turn."

life and the meaning of success Levels

So what's the deal with Success Levels? How important are they to the game? What do all those numbers mean, and why should you care?

Most of the time, Success Levels don't matter much. For most things, a result of nine or greater means the Cast Member has succeeded at whatever task was being attempted. Sometimes however, just doing something is not as important as doing it well, and that's where Success Levels come in. Let us elaborate.

CREATIVE STUFF: A music performance, writing a great novel or telling a good lie—how well the character did it is going to be pretty important. One Success Level is pretty mediocre; she didn't do anything wrong, but it didn't look too good. No rotten tomatoes get thrown, but she gets quite a few yawns. If the audience was already hostile or suspicious, whatever was being attempted is not going to work. Two Success Levels is decent—she pulls it off (whatever it is) without a hitch and looked competent doing so. Three Success Levels is a good job—this is where people get real applause and cheers. High fives all around. Four Success Levels gets standing ovations, favorable reviews from most critics, maybe even a record contract. At five and above, she is on fire (in a good way); everything worked perfectly and almost everybody loves what she did.

HURTING AND HEALING YOUR FELLOW MAN: When the character attacks someone, how well she struck influences how much she hurt the target. Add the Success Levels of the attack roll to the base damage of the attack. On the flip side, for uses of the Doctor Skill, each Success Level heals one point of damage.

LENGTHY TASKS: Things that take some time (like breaking down a door or lifting something really heavy) may require the Cast Member to get a high number of Success Levels, usually in the 5+ range. Characters can accumulate Success Levels by trying over and over. For example, you might decide that breaking down a sturdy door requires eight Success Levels. A strong Cast Member could roll well enough to get all eight Success Levels in one or two tries (Buffy, for instance), while a wimpier character (Xander—"Hey, can we go with 'less robust' here?") would take several tries (at one to two Success Levels a pop, it might take four to six rolls before the door breaks).



RESISTED ACTIONS

Willow: Poor Buffy. Your life resists all things average.

—4.14 *Goodbye Iowa*

Sometimes, an action is resisted. This usually happens when the character is trying to do something someone else would rather didn't happen. If a character is trying to grab some hair from a potential witch's hairbrush, there is a chance that the girl will notice, for example. Also, close combat is a biggie on the Resisted Action front.

Resisted Actions involve two or more characters. Both make their rolls as above. If one succeeds (gets a total of nine or above) and the other doesn't . . . well, that's pretty easy. If both succeed, the one with the higher total wins. If both fail, nobody accomplishes anything. If you still need a comparison, the lower roll fails more. In case of a tie, the defender (if there is a defender) wins; otherwise it is just a tie. Guest Stars and Adversary characters typically use a fixed value (no roll) for their action (the Muscle, Combat or Brains Score, see p. 104); the Cast Member needs to beat those Scores to succeed at the Resisted Action. If defending, the Cast Member needs to beat or tie those Scores.

EXAMPLE-VILLE: Giles and Wesley are playing darts at the local pub. They each roll and add their Dexterity and Sports Skill. Giles gets a six total; Wesley gets a nine. Wesley wins. If the younger Watcher had gotten an eight total, both would have failed. That's some sad dart-playing. Still, we can't assume that both missed the board on every dart. Since Wesley got the higher of the feeble rolls, at least one of his darts hit the board and he wins the game. The competition can be broken down into several actions (down to a roll for every single throw), or reduced to one roll each for the entire competition. This would depend on how important this particular game of darts is (see To Roll or Not to Roll, p. 102).

GO AGAIN: Angelus is swinging a sword at Buffy. Buffy is trying to be somewhere else at the time. One player (or you as Director) rolls and adds Angelus' Dexterity and Getting Medieval Skill. Total is 20. The other player rolls and adds Buffy's Dexterity and Acrobatics Skill. That total is 18. No Dodge for the Buffster. Angelus hits her. If Buffy had rolled a 20 or better (because she is the defender), she would have dodged out of the way.

WE'RE STILL AT IT: Xander is trying to sneak past Principal Snyder. Xander's player rolls and adds his Dexterity and Acrobatics Skill (he could use Crime too . . . but he's not as good at that). He needs to beat Snyder's Brains Score (13). He gets a 15 total and scoots on by. If Xander's total had been 13, he would have been caught (a tie goes to Snyder, who is in effect "defending" against Xander).

ROLL MODIFIERS

Buffy: And what are we if not women up to a challenge?

Willow: Exactly. I mean, did we not put the "grr" in "girl"?

—4.2 *Living Conditions*

In addition to skill and Attribute levels, other factors may add bonuses or penalties to the roll. Easy tasks gain bonuses, while difficult and complex ones incur penalties. The Base Modifiers Table gives some guidelines. In general, modifiers should be used sparingly; most rolls are going to be Challenging (with no modifiers).

In addition to those modifiers, Drama Points can add bonuses to rolls (see p. 126).

base modifiers table

EASY: +5

MODERATE: +3 to +4

AVERAGE: +1 to +2

CHALLENGING: No modifier

DIFFICULT: -1 to -2

VERY DIFFICULT: -3 to -5

HEROIC: -6 to -9

SHAAH, RIGHT: -10 or worse



To Roll or Not to Roll

Die rolls are useful only when the situation has some dramatic value and where the outcome is in doubt. Keeping rolls to a minimum allows players to get involved in the story. Generally, if the action is routine or not important, rolling shouldn't be involved. Also, some things should be so ridiculously easy that making rolls is a waste of time—no need for Perception and Notice rolls to spot a twelve-foot tall demon running down Main Street, for example. Some basic pointers follow.

GOOD TIMES TO ROLL: Shooting a crossbow bolt at a charging vampire; searching a murder scene for clues; climbing a chain-link fence with three rabid dogs or hell hounds—or rabid hell hounds—in pursuit.

BAD TIMES TO ROLL: Parallel parking; shooting a crossbow bolt at a paper target (unless wagering is involved); searching Dawn's bedroom for a missing sock; climbing a chain-link fence with plenty of time and no pressing circumstances.

Not every situation is going to be as clear-cut as the above, but in general, you should try to keep the action flowing. The less time the players spend rolling dice, the more time they can spend getting into their characters and thinking up Quotable Quotes (see p. 130).

Using Attributes and Skills

Xander: Are you kidding? I put the "semper" in semper fi. I might not be able to assemble an M-16 blindfolded like I used to or pass weapons drill from the mobile infantry... (Giles grabs the pistol and immediately accomplishes what Xander has been trying to do for 10 minutes.) Might as well face it. Right now, I don't have the technical skills to join the Swiss Army. And all those guys ask you to do is uncork a couple of sassy cabernets.

—4.7 The Initiative

As we said, when rolling is called for, you Director dudes decide what skills and Attributes the player adds to her roll. The skill descriptions in **Chapter Two: Some Assembly Required** provide some guidelines. Here we give you a few more words of wisdom directed at Attributes.

STRENGTH: Strength affects how much damage the Cast Member inflicts in hand-to-hand combat, which is very important in the Buffyverse. Beyond that, Strength is used when brute force is key. Lifting a heavy object would use Strength (doubled), or Strength and Sports if the character has some weightlifting background. Strength is also used when trying to tackle someone to



the ground (use it with Kung Fu or Sports) or when breaking free from someone's grip (using Strength (doubled) or Strength and Kung Fu, whichever is better).

DEXTERITY: Most physical actions use Dexterity. Dexterity includes both general agility and nimbleness (for use with Acrobatics and Kung Fu) and fine coordination (for things like Crime).

CONSTITUTION: The least-used Attribute in terms of rolls, Constitution comes in handy when the character needs to resist fatigue, injury and disease. For most of those rolls, add the character's Constitution (doubled). Some Sports rolls (marathon running, for example) use Constitution instead of Dexterity. Constitution also controls things like singing ability (use Constitution and Artist to sing, for example).

INTELLIGENCE: Used in any roll where a character's memory and intellectual ability are important. It helps in such things as deciphering some ancient mystical text (Intelligence and Occultism) or outsmarting an enemy in a brawl (Intelligence and Kung Fu). Sometimes it is hard to decide whether to use Intelligence or Perception in a roll. Rule of thumb: if memory or thinking ability is the most important element, use Intelligence instead.

PERCEPTION: If the roll requires the character to spot something, Perception is the Attribute to use. It measures how aware the Cast Member is of her surroundings. Perception is most commonly used with Notice, but almost every skill can be used with Perception. To wit (trés legal-like, non?), Perception and Kung Fu can be used to detect some weakness in an opponent's fighting style.

WILLPOWER: Willpower is mostly used defensively, but it can also apply to a number of skill rolls. Trying to intimidate others or avoid being intimidated, would use Willpower and Influence, for example. When casting spells, Willpower is the key Attribute (Willpower and Occultism to perform a ritual).

MOVEMENT

Xander: Well, it was dark! And the thing went through the window so quick, and I was a ... little shocked when I saw it, and ...

Cordelia: Go ahead. Say it. You ran like a woman.

Xander: Hey, if you saw this thing, you'd run like a woman, too.

—2.20 *Go Fish*

The *BtVS* RPG is meant to be played fast and loose, with a focus on story and fun. For the most part, precise movement actions are not going to be needed. Simply let the characters get where they want to be and move the action along.

On the rare occasion though, you may decide that how far a character can move in any given Turn (see p. 108) is important. In those cases, add that character's Dexterity and Constitution together. This result is how many yards the character may move in a second (times five for a Turn). Doubling the sum of Dexterity and Constitution shows how many miles per hour that character can run.

Movement concerns may also arise during a chase scene. First, you must decide how much of a lead the chatee has on the chaser. We suggest granting +1 per Turn of head start. Then have the two racers perform a Dexterity (doubled), or Dexterity and Sports Resisted Action. The winner gains +1 per Turn. So if the lead sprinter started with a three Turn head start (+3) and the chaser won the first Resisted Action, the lead would be down to +2. Once the lead is eliminated (brought down to 0), the chatee is caught; if it grows to +5, the chatee gets away.

HITTING THE BOOKS: RESEARCH

Buffy: Looks like Giles has some schooling to do.

Giles: Yes, I must admit I, I am intrigued.

Werewolves, it's ... it's one of the classics. I, I'm sure my books and I are in for a fascinating afternoon.

Buffy: He needs to get a pet.

—2.15 *Phases*

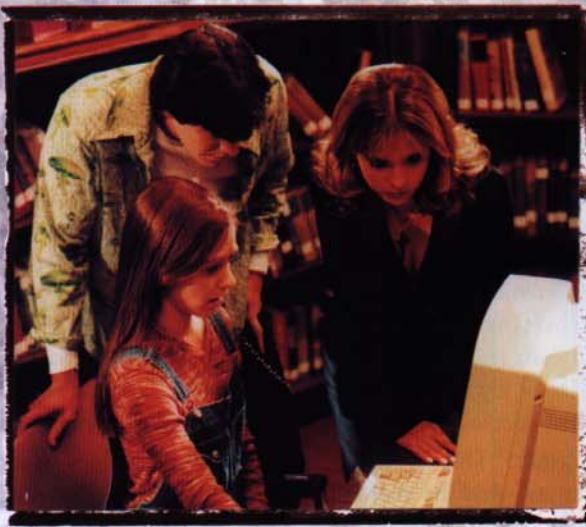
Sometimes the Cast Members can't kick a monster's butt until they know what its vulnerabilities are or even where its butt is. Research, investigation and computer hacking are an important part of any Series. However, most of it is done "off-camera." The show rarely (okay never) spends minutes showing Willow hacking into the

FBI records, or Giles performing a slow-mo page-turning sequence through the *Time-Life* series. And neither should your group. Have the characters roll, figure out how long it's going to take them, allow them a couple of opportunities to come up with witty lines while doing their research and then give them whatever information (if any) they've gleaned.

To research a monster's identity or find a new spell, use Intelligence and Occultism. The Occult Library Quality (see p. 44) is invaluable here—let's face it, you're not going to discover the hidden vulnerability of a Cytorrakkian demon in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, no matter how long you spend reading it. If the characters don't have the right books, the research is an automatic failure. You do not have to tell them that, however. Failure is part of drama, after all. Or you could be kind and allow the Cast Members to figure out the name of the right book or books and send them off on a mini-quest to find them.

Hacking works pretty much the same way, except with Intelligence and Computers ... oh ... and without the books. Some databases are harder to break into than others, but in the Buffyverse little ol' Willow routinely hacks into all kinds of sensitive information, so don't penalize the characters too much. Just like research, hacking happens off-camera most of the time; don't waste time with complex cyberpunk flow-charts (unless that's what you and your group are into, who are we to judge?).

Other types of research and investigation may use Knowledge or Crime instead of the skills noted above. Then there's good old-fashioned legwork—asking questions, following people around, beating up Willy and so on. Those can be roleplayed, especially if the investigator is likely to get herself in trouble.





ABILITY SCORES

Riley: You're really strong. Like, Spiderman strong.

Buffy: Yeah. But I don't stick to stuff. But, yeah.

—4.12 *A New Man*

To keep die rolling to the bare minimum, the basic rules apply only to Cast Members and (if you so choose) important Guest Stars and Adversaries. Rather than roll for every vampire, demon and high school principal that you plotmasters (much more James Bond than Director, eh?) throw in the path of our heroes, the Guest Stars' and Adversaries' Attribute and skill levels are condensed into Ability Scores. The scores are the "roll totals" of those characters. Whenever Cast Members need to fight or outwit these characters, they need to beat the Ability Score number. No dice for them!

Ability Scores are generated by taking the character's Attribute and skill averages and adding six to the total. Most Ability Scores will be in the 9-14 range, but powerful monsters and skilled Guest Stars may have much higher levels.

There are three Ability Scores: Muscle, Combat and Brains.

MUSCLE: This score is used for contests of strength—things like tackles, breaking free from grapples and holds, strangulation and similar brute force situations. Cast Members need to tie or beat the Muscle Score number with their rolls. Muscle is double the Strength level of the character plus six. Some creatures have bonuses for extra limbs (*specially tentacles and other creepy stuff).

COMBAT: This is the number used for attacks and defenses. Add the character's Dexterity level, the average of her combat-oriented skill levels, and six. This score

determines the Success Levels of an attack; add those Success Levels to the base damage of the attack. So, if Vamp X's Combat Score is 17, she has five attack Success Levels; she adds five to the damage of any attack that connects. Nasty critter.

BRAINS: This score applies to all mental and perception abilities of the character or creature. It is used to spot enemies, resist attempts to control or deceive the character, use any magical or supernatural ability, or figure out the Slayer's quips. It typically uses the average of the character's mental Attributes (Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower) and the average of any appropriate skills, plus six.

PAR EXAMPLE: You cast a typical vampire foe with Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Constitution 4, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, and Willpower 2. The Muscle Score is an impressive 16 (Strength (doubled) plus six). Combat is a 12—you decide the vamp's effective skill in combat is two, plus four for Dexterity and the base of six. For Brains, the total is a 10—the average of the critter's mental Attributes is two, with an average skill level of two. If the vampire tries to grapple somebody, she uses the Combat Score + 2 (see Maneuvers Table, p. 238). The Cast Member would have to tie or beat that 16 with her roll and modifiers. To punch somebody, Combat is used; avoiding the unpleasantness that is the vamp's grime-encrusted claws requires a defense roll total of 12 or higher. If our heroes try to sneak past the vamp though, their totals need only be 11 or higher (they have to beat the Brains Score of 10).

For more information on Ability Scores, see the Villains, Henchmen and Innocent Bystanders section in Chapter Seven: Episodes, Seasons and Drama (p. 201).

THE QUICK SHEET

Name: Well, duh.

Every Guest Star or Adversary in this book has its game stats in Quick Sheet form. Just to make sure you know the drill when you get to those babies, here's a quick rundown of what each entry means.

Motivation: What makes the character or critter tick? We're talking high concept rather than detail here. A word or two that describes the character's goals is usually enough. Most monsters are single-issue creatures ("Blood!" "Kill humans!" "Save the whales!" "Phone Home!"). Teenage boys are similar (sex is usually the major concern).

Critter Type: The basic species—Human, Vampire, Demon, Primal and so on.

Attributes: Your basic Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Perception and Willpower (see pp. 31-32).

Name: Joyce Summers
Motivation: Be a good person and mother
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 1, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 10, Brains 13
Life Points: 22
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: —

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Axe	20	20	Slash/stab; uses Heroic Feat (1 Drama Point); two-handed
Dodge	10	—	Defense action
Punch	10	5	Bash



Ability Scores: The Muscle, Combat and Brains numbers the players need to beat with their rolls in order to do something to the joker in question (or avoid having something done to them). See p. 100.

Life Points: How much damage the character or critter can take before slowing down or dying.

Drama Points: Good, bad and neutral folks may have a few Drama Points (see pp. 126-131). That means even a lowly vampire or teenager can land a punch or two.

Special Abilities: Any unique or unusual powers get listed here.

Maneuvers: A list of the most common maneuvers (see pp. 109-113) the creature uses, including scores, damages (including "default" Success Levels from the attack score, but no other modifiers) and notes. Weak or low-ranking characters only have a couple of maneuvers; while Big Bads may have several. For those who want to use dice for Guest Stars and Adversaries rather than relying on their pre-calculated scores, simply subtract six from the scores given, and use that result as the modifier to a roll. Note that damage totals will have to be re-calculated in this case as the Success Levels of the roll (not the set score) will affect the final damage.



FEAR AND LOATHING: GETTING THE WIGGINS

Riley: That might be toxic. Don't touch it.

Xander: Oh, yeah, touching it was my first impulse. Luckily, I've moved on to my second, which involves dry heaving and running like hell.

—5.9 *Listening to Fear*

Life in the Buffyverse can be downright scary . . . and that's on a good day. Whether a character discovers that her date is a flesh-eating insect or sees a vampire digging itself out of its grave, she is likely to wig once in a while. Most of the time, this should be roleplayed rather than determined by rolls—if the characters encounter a corpse, they can react to it as they will. During potential combat situations though, the fainthearted may freeze for a crucial moment, or worse.

When the big hairy scary happens, the characters have to make a Willpower (doubled) roll (Qualities like Nerves of Steel or Fast Reaction Time help). This is called a Fear Test. Applicable modifiers are up to you, but we have provided a handy table just below with suggestions.

If the result of the roll is nine or higher, the character may be afraid or apprehensive, but she can act normally. If the result is eight or less, she wigs out. Use the Panic Table for inspiration.

fear test modifiers chart

Vamp with his "game face" on: -1

Hideous demon creature: Half the creature's Attractiveness, rounded down (e.g., a critter with Attractiveness -7 would give a -3 to Fear Tests)

Splatter factor: -1 for some blood; -2 for a murder victim's body; -3 for R-rated gore; -4 for cult film carnage

Sudden or unexpected encounter: Add -2 to any other applicable modifiers (e.g., the bloody corpse falls out of a locker, the horrific vampire springs from the shadows, and so on).

Familiarity Factor: After seeing it often enough (third or fourth encounter), eliminate the penalty to the roll.

panic table

roll result	effect
7-8	Startled: The character is startled but not paralyzed, and can act normally. Initiative is lost, however; the critter wins Initiative automatically on that Turn.
5-6	Freak out: The character screams and/or flinches away. Only defense actions can be attempted on that Turn and the character cannot go on Full Defense.
3-4	Run Away!: The character takes off running like a spider-eating spine-missing Zeppo for a full Turn, unless cornered, in which case cowering in terror is on the agenda. No attacks are possible and defense actions are at -2. After each Turn (or handful of seconds), a new Fear Test can be rolled (reduce any penalties by one with each successive Turn, until the character snaps out of it).
2 or less	Total Terror: The character is not in control of her actions. She may lose her lunch, pass out or suffer some other oh-so-embarrassing fate.

COMBAT

Buffy: I wasn't gonna use violence. I don't always use violence, do I?

Xander: The important thing is, you believe that.

—2.4 Inca Mummy Girl

Slaying requires fighting—most vampires won't go quietly into the night. Combat in the **Unisystem** uses the same rules described above, but with a few extra features. Combat does not have to dominate a Buffy game, but it just wouldn't be proper to have an Episode without at least a dose of butt-kicking action.

When combat starts, you as Director need to help choreograph the action. Sometimes it's easy (the gang is fighting one big nasty demon) but other times we're talking Initiative containment area breach (running melee involving the Slayer, her friends, commandos and dozens of vampires and demons). The rules presented in this chapter are meant to help keep things flowing; the action should be fast and furious, just like in the show.



keeping it lively

Something isn't right if a typical combat goes like this:

"What do you do?"

"I punch the vampire."

"Roll and tell me what you get."

(Rolls)

"Sixteen—no, seventeen. Five Success Levels."

"Okay, you hit him. Add five to your base damage."

"Er, that's 15 points."

"The vampire is punching you back now. Roll and tell me what you get."

Ugh. Double ugh.

Description, description, description. If you don't create a picture of the action in the minds of the players, action sequences are going to get boring and repetitive. Players should help, too. They should try to describe their characters' actions. The best way to encourage that is to be descriptive and to reward players who go beyond the rules to help create that Buffy-esque feeling we know and love.

Try to visualize the action. Vampires and other monsters have a lot of options. They might try to punch their victims ("The vampire's fist is on a collision course with your head. What do you do?"), or grapple them ("Growling like Xander's stomach

before dinner, the vamp tries to bull-rush you"), or use some improvised weapon ("This vamp's got a baseball bat and he wants to hit your head out of the park"). If the player describes some interesting maneuver ("I duck under the swing and try to redirect the bat so the vampire hits himself in the face"), let her attempt it without penalty, or even give her some bonuses (usually a +1 or +2, or maybe the Success Level of the previous Combat Maneuver or defense roll). For really heroic stuff ("I somersault and walk all over the guy's face, all Matrix-y like"), Drama Points may have to come into play, though.

Describing the effects of the characters' actions also helps the players feel they are kicking butt rather than beating the stuffing out of numbers on a piece of paper. "The look on the vampire's face is major league surprise—just before she explodes in a cloud of dust." "The punch spins the vampire like a top. She knocks over a park bench and lands in a heap." "For a second, it looks like nothing happened. Then the demon's head rolls off her shoulders. That's gotta hurt."

Finally, if you have to choose between rules and fun, go for the fun. Be flexible—no rules system is going to cover all the bases and if your gut feeling tells you that it's better to ignore or modify the rules for dramatic purposes, your gut is probably right.



BREAKING IT DOWN: TURNS, INITIATIVE AND ACTIONS

*Buffy: You guys get to the exits, get 'em open.
(to Riley) You, organize the soldiers and pull
'em back. I'll take point.*

Willow: Are you up to this?

Buffy: I am.

—4.21 Primeval

To make things go a bit easier when the rough stuff starts, the action is divided into segments, known as Turns. A game Turn represents a short bit of time—five seconds or so—during which characters can attack and defend. During a Turn, a normal character can attack once and defend against one attack without penalties. Experienced or fast characters can make more than one attack during a Turn (see p. 114).

Each turn has three phases: Intentions (where the players say what their Cast Members intend to do), Initiative (determining who goes first—not to be confused with the organization of the same name) and Actions (where the fight is resolved and damage, if any, is meted out). A fight usually lasts more than one Turn, unless the characters are really on the ball.

INTENTIONS: At the beginning of the Turn, ask the players whose characters are involved for intentions—what the characters want to do. Intentions can include such things as “I call on the forces of Hecate to let me see things as they truly are,” “I scream like a little girl and try to run away,” or “I launch a spin kick followed by two fast punches.” Decide if the action being attempted is feasible, or if it will take more than one Turn to complete. If there is a problem with the intention, and it’s something the character would know, warn the player. Otherwise, the intention stands.

INITIATIVE: At the beginning of a fight, you the Director determine who attacks first. Common sense is the first determinant of Initiative. What are the circumstances of the fight? If it’s an ambush, for example, the ambushers go first. If a Slayer is attacking a gun-toting goon, and is too far away to grab it, the gunman gets to shoot first. Unleashing a mental or supernatural power goes before a kick, and so on. Generally, mental actions (spells and similar supernatural powers) go first, followed by ranged weapons (guns, crossbows, cruise missiles) and finally by good old punches, kicks, baseball bats and “full copper re-pipes.”

If the situation is less clear-cut (a White Hat chances upon a vampire, for example), the character with the high-



est Dexterity (modified by Fast Reaction Time) goes first. If both sides have the same Dexterity (and they both have or lack Fast Reaction Time), each side rolls a die. The higher roll wins; a tie means both characters act at the same time (really painful if they were punching each other in the face). During subsequent Turns, determine Initiative in the same manner, or award it to the character who has momentum (whoever managed to connect a punch without being hit back, for example).

ACTION: Whoever wins Initiative attacks first (assuming the Intention involved an attack). The target may be able to defend against the attack. Attacks are resolved using the basic game mechanic (see p. 99)—the player rolls a D10 and adds the Attribute and skill involved, plus or minus any modifiers. The defender does likewise, and the higher (or equal if defending) roll gets their way (unless the attacker’s total is below a nine, in which case everyone just stands around looking foolish). When fighting Guest Stars or Adversaries, attacks have to beat (defenses beat or tie) the target’s Combat Score to be successful. After the first attacker is done, the second gets to go (no shocker there), and so on. If an attack hits, damage is determined based on the attack’s base damage, the Success Levels of the attack roll, the defender’s armor and any damage type or other modifiers. This is also when players (and you Directors) can spend Drama Points to get an edge during the fight (see pp. 126-131).

initiative rolls

If your group absolutely, positively needs something more random for their Initiative rolls, have each player involved in a combat roll a D10 and add her character’s Dexterity (plus any Fast Reaction Time bonuses) to the total. The character with the highest total goes first, and so on.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Xander: You don't know how to kill this thing.

Buffy: I thought I might try violence.

Xander: Solid call.

—2.18 Killed by Death

When the time for talk is over, and the time for senseless violence begins, a nice repertoire of action moves can be a real face-saver. Punches and kicks are all right, but spicing them up with flying jump kicks, feints, and the ever-so-important stake through the heart is where the Slayers are separated from the girly-girls. The Combat Maneuver List on the character sheet gives players a place for all the information on the diverse ways in which their Cast Members can inflict pain and suffering on the forces of evil. The most common ways to do unto others before others do unto you are described in detail below. The appropriate roll modifiers, and the base damage inflicted by the various Maneuvers is also listed (damage is discussed more on pp. 116-118). Everything is also gathered in a nice neat reference table in the Appendix (see pp. 238-239). Handy or what?

AIMING: Sometimes it pays to take careful aim—if the character misses the vampire's heart with a crossbow shot, she may not get a second chance. Aiming delays the shot action until near the end of a Turn. The player adds Perception and the appropriate skill (Gun Fu for guns, Getting Medieval for archaic ranged weapons) to the roll or just uses the Brains Score. The shot action roll gets a bonus equal to the Success Levels of the Aiming roll.

BOW SHOT: The Robin Hood maneuver. A character can fire a bow as fast as she can draw and shoot; multiple shots use the multiple actions penalties (see p. 114). A Bow Shot uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 2 roll, or Combat Score - 2, and its base damage is (4 x Strength) points (Slash/stab type; to a maximum of 20). Modifiers due to range are applicable (see p. 115).



BREAK NECK: Before this maneuver may be attempted, the character must succeed at a Grapple (see p. 110). After that, the attacker rolls and adds Strength and Kung Fu, or just uses the Muscle Score. The defender rolls and adds Strength and Constitution. If the attacker's roll is higher, the base damage is (4 x Strength) points (Bash type). If the total damage reduces the defender to -10 Life Points, she must pass a Survival Test (see p. 121) at a penalty equal to the Success Levels of the last attack. If she fails, her neck is broken, with fatal results. If the defender is a vampire and the successful attack reduces it to -20 Life Points, the vampire has to pass the same Survival Test. On the vamp's failure, her head is ripped off and she is dusted—gruesome but pretty impressive.

CATCH WEAPON: Isn't it super cool when Buffy just snatches sharp stuff out of the air? Don't try it at home—it's only for trained professionals. This maneuver uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 5 roll, or the Combat Score - 5. If the catcher's roll is not greater or equal to the thrower's roll, the weapon attack does an additional +5 base damage (nothing like jumping into the flight path of an object built for harm). On the other hand, if the catcher's roll works, she has a weapon all ready to go. And remember, reusing helps save the Earth.

Angelus: That's everything, huh? No weapons, no friends. No hope. Take all that away and what's left?

Buffy (catching blade): Me.

—2.22 Becoming, Part Two

CHOKE: Before this maneuver may be attempted, the character must succeed at a Grapple (see p. 110). After that, the attacker rolls and adds her Strength and Kung Fu, or just uses her Muscle Score. The defender rolls and adds her Strength and Constitution (or again uses the Muscle Score). If the attack result is higher, the base damage is (Strength - 1) points (Bash type). Furthermore, the defender cannot breathe (see Suffocation, p. 122). She is at -2 to all actions—being choked to death can be quite distracting.

CROSSBOW SHOT: Crossbows are easier to use than bows, but they take longer to reload. Usually, it takes one Turn to reload a crossbow after shooting (very hard to do when a vampire is charging). Crossbow Shots use a Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll, or the Combat Score, and do 16 points of base damage (Slash/stab type). Modifiers due to range are applicable (see p. 115).

DECAPITATION: Your basic samurai killing slash; it needs a sword, axe or similar big slashing weapon. Decapitation uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 5 roll, or the Combat Score - 5, but damage is multiplied by five (after Success Level bonuses are added and armor effects sub-



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tracted; damage type is not applied; weapon damage is listed on p. 240). If the damage is enough to kill the victim, the head comes off, and the rating of the show goes up to TV-M. Flashy way to dust vampires (see p. 168).

DISARM: Great for those times when a character needs to borrow someone's knife and its current owner isn't in the mood to share or only wants to let her have it pointy-end first. Disarm uses a Resisted Action with a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 2 roll, or Dexterity and Kung Fu - 3 roll, or the Combat Score - 2 against the target's Parry action.

Buffy (grinning): Broke your arm.

Adam (unconcerned): Got another.

—4.21 Primeval

DODGE: This is where the hero ducks, somersaults or leaps out of the way of an attack. Dodging hand-to-hand attacks can be done once per Turn without penalty; dodging missile attacks (bullets, ninja stars, harpoons) suffers a -2 penalty on top of any other modifiers. Use a roll and add Dexterity and the highest appropriate skill (Acrobatics, Getting Medieval or Kung Fu), or just use the Combat Score.

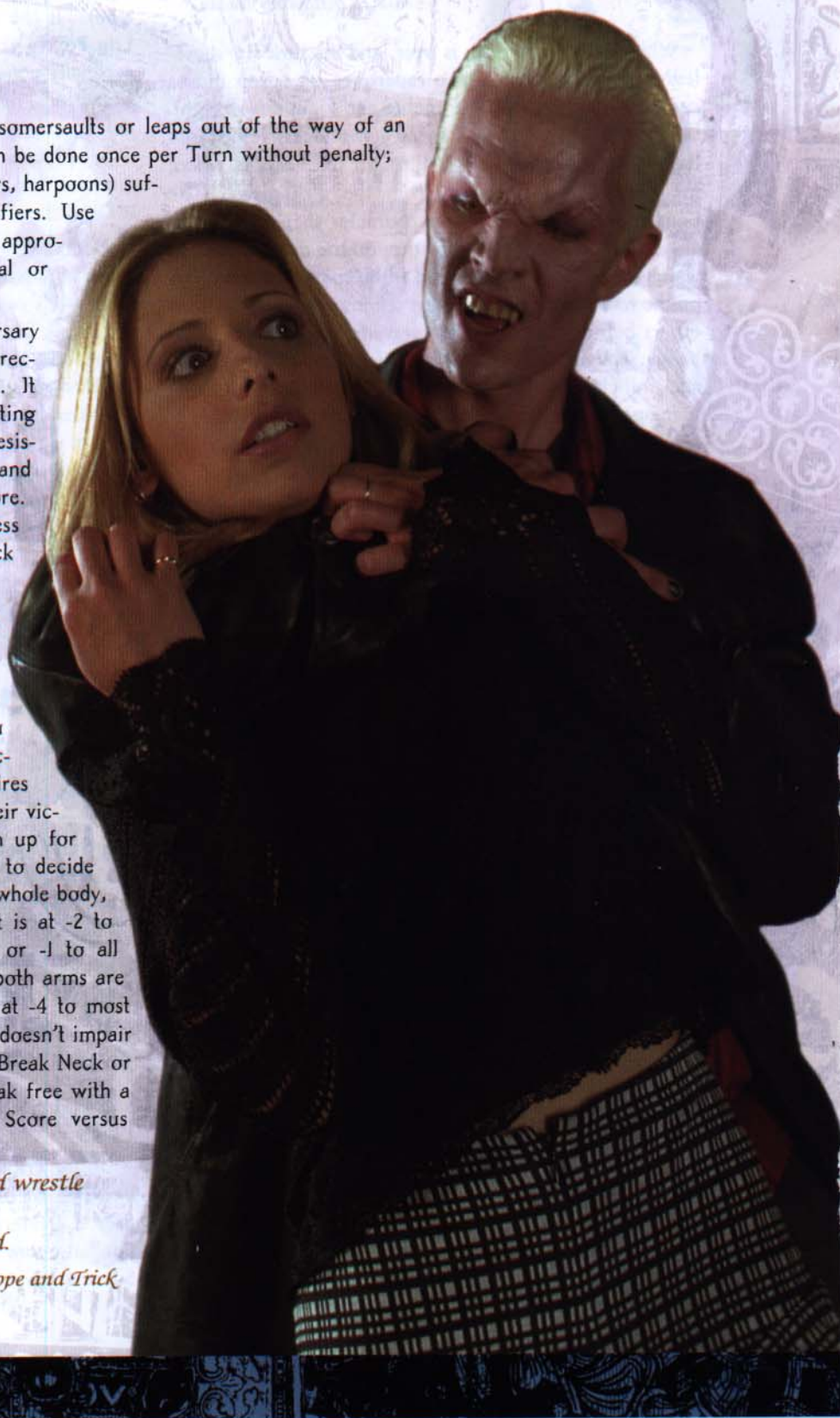
FEINT: The art of faking out the adversary and smacking her from an unexpected direction. A Feint counts as a Resisted Action. It uses an Intelligence and Kung Fu or Getting Medieval roll, or the Brains Score, and is resisted by the target's roll adding Perception and either of those skills, or just the Brains Score. If the attacker wins, she can add the Success Levels of the Feint roll to her next attack action roll against the same opponent.

GRAPPLE: Sometimes a character wants to grab someone and shake 'em until her teeth rattle in her head. She has to grapple them first, though. Grabbing people is fairly easy; use a Dexterity and Kung Fu + 2 roll, or the Combat Score + 2. The victim resists with a Dodge maneuver. Vampires and other goon types often try to grab their victims either to capture them or set them up for some necking action. The attacker has to decide what part of the body to grab: limbs, the whole body, or the neck. When Grappled, the target is at -2 to actions that involve the grappled limb, or -1 to all actions if grappled around the body. If both arms are grappled by two attackers, the victim is at -4 to most rolls, and cannot Dodge. A neck grapple doesn't impair the target, but sets him up for either the Break Neck or Choke action. The victim can try to break free with a Strength (doubled) roll, or the Muscle Score versus another Grapple maneuver.

Buffy: I may not sleep in the nude and wrestle alligators...

Faith: Well maybe it's time you started.

—3.3 Faith, Hope and Trick



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GROIN SHOT: Hitting below the belt may be frowned upon by the old-school pugilists, but they've been dead like forever, so who cares what they think? The attack employs another attack Combat Maneuver, with a -3 penalty to the roll or score. Damage is normal, but a male victim must gain at least one Success Level with a Willpower (doubled) roll (or the Brains Score) minus double the Success Levels of the attack. If not, he is knocked down and unable to do anything for the Turn. Females aren't completely unscathed either, but the Willpower roll (or Brains Score) suffers only a -1 penalty. Every Turn after the first, the character can make a new roll with a cumulative +1 bonus to recover.

The groin shot can be used with several different maneuvers. Kicks are the most common, but depending on the relative positions of the characters, punches, weapon attacks (nobody wants a baseball bat impacting there) and even a head butt (you do what you gotta do sometimes, eh?) may be used.

DEFINITELY EXAMPLE TIME: Willow gets really riled and delivers a Kick to a brand-new vamp (see p. 169) where it counts. After all is said and done, Will winds up with an attack roll of 22 (pretty sweet), or six Success Levels. She does her normal four base points of Kick Bash damage, plus six for the Success Levels, but that's not all folks. The vamp compares his Brains Score (9) unfavorably with double Will's Success Levels (12). Things are not looking good for the bloodsucker.

GUNSHOT: Your basic assault with a deadly weapon. Point towards enemy, pull the trigger. Big boom ensues. Use a Dexterity and Gun Fu roll, or the Combat Score. Base damage varies depending on the gun used (see p. 240), but all benefit from Bullet type damage (see p. 118). Modifiers due to range are applicable (see p. 115).

HEAD BUTT: Sometimes, a character has to use the old noggin in ways not recommended by the Surgeon General. Head butts are very effective if she has Grappled the target first, or in other very close action, because the victim cannot really dodge out of the way. If the Head Butt misses, though, that means she hits the person with the wrong part of the head, and she takes the damage instead of the victim. Head Butts use a Dexterity + Kung Fu - 2 roll, or the Combat Score - 2, and do (2 x Strength) base points of damage (Bash type).

Buffy: Let me answer that question with a head butt.

—4.1 The Freshman

JUMP KICK: To impress friends and smite foes, few things beat a Jump Kick. It's not easy to do, but when done right, it puts the kick back into "butt-kicking." Jump Kicks require two rolls, but count as a single action. The first is a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll, or use the Combat Score, to get airborne; the second is a Dexterity + Kung Fu - 3 roll, or Combat Score - 3. The kick does 3 x (Strength + 1) base points of damage (Bash type), and gains an additional damage bonus equal to the Success Levels of the Dexterity and Acrobatics roll or Combat Score. Of course, if either of the rolls miss, the Jump Kick becomes a Jump Stumble (the Cast Member falls down and loses untold style points). A Jump Kick is the only attack action the character can attempt on that Turn (no multi-actions with this puppy).

KICK: The plain vanilla kick is a simple yet effective way to put a hurting on someone. If a kick is parried, the target has a golden chance to try and Grapple the leg, though. The Kick uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 1 roll, or the Combat Score - 1, but football and soccer players can replace Kung Fu with Sports if they like. Ditto for ballet dancers (use Art instead of Sport). The Kick's base damage is 2 x (Strength + 1) points (Bash type).

KNOCKOUT: Sometimes a character wants to take somebody out without inflicting permanent damage. Any Bash attack (Punches, Kicks, baseball bats, and so on) can be turned into a Knockout attack, using a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 2 roll, or Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 2 roll, or the Combat Score - 2. The total damage of the attack is halved, but the victim has to make a Constitution (doubled) roll (or use the Muscle Score) with a penalty equal to the Success Levels of the Knockout roll, or she goes down for the count. Recovery from a knockout is in your fiendish Director-y hands; the victim may recover in a few turns, or wake up an hour later . . . possibly in captivity.

Giles: Oh, good show, Giles. At least you didn't get knocked out for a change.

—5.1 Buffy vs. Dracula

MELEE WEAPON: This covers swinging swords and axes, stabbing, and other close combat actions that involve sticking foreign objects into other people, or smashing said objects onto them. It uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll, or the Combat Score. Baseball or hockey players can substitute Sports to swing stick-like weapons (fencers and archery enthusiasts use Getting Medieval, though). Since weapons do different types and amounts of damage (see p. 240), each weapon should have its own listing in the Combat Maneuver List.



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PARRY: Your basic blocking move, used to deflect punches, kicks and other close combat attacks. Weapons may only be Parried by weapons; a hand-to-hand attack may be Parried by a weapon and that's going to cause normal damage for that weapon to the bonthead who rushed in unarmed. A Parry uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu roll, or a Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll, or the Combat Score. Thrown weapons can be parried at a -2 penalty. Arrows and crossbow bolts are parried at a -6 penalty. No character can parry bullets unless she arrived in Sunnydale on a transparent plane from some Amazon island.

PUNCH: Closed fist, traveling quickly towards the target. Uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu roll, or the Combat Score, and does 2 x Strength points of damage (Bash type). 'Nuff said.

Buffy: I'm going to have to punch you aren't I?

Willie: Just once and it don't have to hurt, just make it look good.

(Buffy cocks her arm)

Willie: Ohhh. Oww.

Buffy: Not yet. I haven't touched you.

—4.14 Goodbye Iowa

SLAM-TACKLE: The All-American football maneuver that can stop touchdowns or bring down fleeing vampires. Tackles use Strength and Sports rolls, or Muscle Scores, and can be Dodged but not Parried. On a successful hit, the target takes 2 x Strength base points of damage (Bash type) and, if she fails to resist with a Strength (not doubled) roll or the Muscle Score divided by two, she goes down hard. At the end of a successful Tackle, the attacker can Grapple the victim's legs or torso without rolling. Tackling is the only attack that can be attempted on that Turn (no multi-actions here either, nice try).

SPIN KICK: This is a spinning or roundhouse kick, harder to execute but delivering more damage. When a character really wants to leave a mark, she should use a Spin Kick. This move has the same potential problems as the regular Kick, described above. It uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 2 roll, or the Combat Score -2, and does 2 x (Strength + 2) points of base damage (Bash type).

STAKE: Poking someone with a sharp pointy thing is going to hurt no matter who it is. Still, if it's not a vamp, and it's not in the heart, it's no different than using a knife. Stake poking uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll, or the Combat Score, and does 2 x Strength points of base damage (Slash/stab type).



Buffy: Why don't I put a stake through her heart?

Giles: She's not a vampire.

Buffy: You'd be surprised how many things that'll kill.

—3.9 The Wish

SWEEP KICK: Just the thing to slow down a charging demon, the Sweep Kick does little damage but sends foes to the ground by kicking their feet out from under them. This special kick uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 1 roll, or the Combat Score - 1. If it hits, the defender takes Strength points of base damage (Bash type). Further, the defender must resist with a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll, or the Combat Score to keep her feet. If not, she falls down.

TAKEDOWN: This includes judo throws, wrestling moves, trips and similar methods of making an enemy kiss the ground. The Takedown uses a Strength and Kung Fu roll, or the Muscle Score. If the target fails to Parry or Dodge, she hits the mat and takes Strength points of base (Bash type). Otherwise, the defender takes no damage and the Takedown fails.

THROUGH THE HEART: A classic, and for good reason—nothing says "Slayer" better than the traditional wood piercing the cold heart of the undead. This attack has no effect on some creatures, but most things, including people, find it hard to survive after a sharp piece of wood gets stuck in or near the old ticker. Attacking the heart uses the appropriate Combat Maneuver with a -3 penalty, or the Combat Score - 3. Damage to non-vamps is quadrupled (after applying the base damage, Success Levels, armor; this multiplier replaces the damage type modifier). It's even worse for vamps (times five damage), but you have to stick them just right (see pp. 167-168). Through the Heart is used principally with Bows, Crossbows, Stakes, and Thrown Stakes but other implements can and will be used.

THROW WEAPON: The art of taking a properly balanced weapon and throwing it at a target. The range of this attack is two yards plus two yards per Strength level. Throw Weapon uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 1 roll, or the Combat Score - 1, and the base damage varies by the weapon tossed (see p. 240).

Toss: Your basic "pick up victim, then hurl victim across the room just to prove how badass you are" move. The defender must be Grappled first (see p. 110) and the attacker must have a minimum Strength 4. Then, the attacker uses a Strength (doubled) - 4 roll, or the Muscle Score - 4, and the defender resists using a Strength (not doubled) roll or the Muscle Score divided by two. If the attack succeeds, it does Strength points of base damage (Bash type). Also, the defender is tossed one yard for each Success Level in the roll, and is knocked down automatically. If the attack fails, the defender remains Grappled, but takes no damage and doesn't go anywhere. Oh, and the attacker looks pretty silly.

Buffy (cautiously to April): Hi... Listen... maybe you and I should talk. Because, throwing Spike through a window, that's... well, that's good. But in general—

—4.15 *I Was Made to Love You*

WRESTLING HOLD: This is a half-nelson, full-nelson, or pretzel twist, in which the character immobilizes the enemy, usually by grabbing her from behind and twisting one or both arms. This requires a successful Grapple (see p. 110). After that, the defender can resist with a Strength or Dexterity (whichever is better) and Kung Fu roll, or the best of her Combat or Muscle Scores. If the attacker wins, the defender is at -1 to all actions for every Success Level in the attack until she breaks free or the attacker lets her go. Otherwise, the defender remains Grappled.



COMBAT COMPLICATIONS

Tara: Face-punching, I'm not so good with the whole... (imitates throwing punches)

Willow: Swimming?

Tara: Violence.

—4.15 *This Year's Girl*

In the Buffyverse, fights don't happen in neat boxing rings and the rules are less Marquis of Queensbury and more Marquis de Sade. There's no such thing as a fair fight with the undead. Below are some complications that can add spice to Slaying activities.

ATTACKING FROM BEHIND: Psst, a word of advice—if you have to stab somebody, stab her in the back—otherwise it ruins the surprise. A distracted opponent (like a vamp busy strangling a Slayerette) cannot defend against attacks from behind. Targets with Situational Awareness are the exception; they can defend, but at a -2 penalty. At your discretion, other would-be victims may get a Perception and Notice roll before they are bushwhacked; in that case, they can defend with a -2 penalty.

FULL DEFENSE: Sometimes, fighting is not the best option. Going fully defensive allows the character to defend against two attacks at no penalty (and against others if extra actions are available), and gives her a +3 bonus to all defense actions (Dodges and Parries, for the most part). No attacks are allowed on the Turn the character goes into Full Defense mode. This is a good idea for White Hats and Guest Stars (particularly those with Combat Scores below nine) who want to keep their enemies busy until help arrives. Asking for one's mommy doesn't provide any bonuses, but might make the character feel better.

FULL OFFENSE: Here the character attacks recklessly, without worrying about defense. Best reserved for surprise attacks or suicide troops. It's also good when several attackers are going after one target. The character gets a +2 bonus on all attacks in that Turn, but cannot defend against any attacks. Note that for those most feeble of Guest Stars and Adversaries (Combat Score 8 or lower), the only way to have any chance of success when attacking is to go Full Offense, or use a Drama Point (see p. 126).

KNOCKDOWNS AND FIGHTING WHILE LYING DOWN: Getting knocked on one's bottom is a bad thing. When a character is knocked down, she cannot attack for the remainder of the Turn, and defenses are at a -2 penalty. Getting up quickly requires a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll (getting more than two Success Levels does it with that oh-so-cool flip and snap thing). A number of Combat Maneuvers result in a knockdown. Also, any blow that inflicts more than triple the victim's Strength in damage



(before accounting for Slash/stab or Bullet modifiers) may result in a knockdown, at your discretion (only do it if it seems dramatically appropriate).

Buffy: Nothing like gettin' your ass kicked to ... make your ass hurt.

—5.6 Family

MULTIPLE ACTIONS: Characters can attack once and defend once a Turn at no penalty. Fast and furious fighters however, can do more. Those with Dexterity 5 or greater gain extra actions per Turn according to the Additional Actions Table.

Additional Actions Table

Dexterity	Additional Actions
5-6	1
7-8	2
9-10	3
11-12	4
+2	+1 per

For those more formula oriented, subtract four from the character's Dexterity, then divide by two, rounding up. This is the number of extra actions the character may take in one Turn.

The extra actions may be taken as attacks or defenses. As it is difficult to do more than two things at once (or walk and chew gum for some of us), additional actions suffer cumulative penalties of -2. The player only rolls once—successive attacks or defenses each reduce the total by two. If the target defends against any of those attacks, the character cannot continue attacking on that Turn. Again, we summarize with an Additional Actions Penalty Table.

Additional Actions Penalty Table

Action	penalty
First	none
Second	-2
Third	-4
Fourth	-6
+1	-2 per

If a character is faced with more than one attack in a Turn, but has only one defense available (either because she is of insufficient Dexterity, or she has used or plans to use her additional actions as attacks), the undefended

attacks land if the roll is nine or greater. A character without defense actions resists attacks with a zero total.

EXAMPLE ME, BABY: Jamie, a Slayer with Dexterity 7, finds herself in an alley with three vamps. She's in a hurry so she decides to attack each vamp in one Turn. That's fine, her high Dexterity allows her two additional actions in one Turn, which she decides to take as attacks. Still, the second and third suffer penalties. She rolls and adds her Dexterity and Kung Fu; the result is 20. That's over the first vamp's Combat Score of 18, so he gets hit. Jamie's second attack uses the same result (20) but subtracts two and becomes an 18. That ties the second vamp's Combat Score (18 as well), so the blow doesn't land (ties go to the defender). Finally, Jamie does not get her third attack as the second vamp defended successfully against her.

Now Jamie has a problem. She has one defense action available at no penalty. Unfortunately, she has two uninjured vamps in her face. They both swing at her. One she counters with a Parry roll of 19. The other strikes unhindered; his Combat Score (18) is greater than the minimum success total (9), so he automatically connects. Let's hope he's a weak undead.

Multiple Actions Penalties

The basic multiple action rules limit characters to a certain number of actions. This is done for simplicity's sake; in truth, a character should be able to act as many times as she wants in a turn. At the risk of some additional complexity, some of you Directors may decide to handle multiple actions differently.

Cumulative and Universal Penalties: Each additional action declared in the Intentions phase of combat adds -2 to all actions that phase. That means if a character declares four attacks or four defenses in a Turn, each action suffers a -6 penalty (the first attack or defense has no penalty; each one after that incurs a -2). This allows characters to act as much as they want, at the expense of degrading all their actions.

Off Balance Penalties: Under this optional rule, each extra action taken in one Turn imposes a base -2 penalty to all actions in the next Turn. So, a character who takes three additional actions in one Turn suffers a -6 to all actions in the next. Again, the limit on actions is removed, but the frenzy of activity makes the character highly ineffective and vulnerable thereafter.

MULTIPLE OPPONENTS: Numbers count. When two or more attackers gang up against a single target, they get a +1 bonus to all actions for each attacker, to a maximum of +4 for four attackers (more than four attackers just get in each other's way). So, if two vamps attack a Slayer, they each get a +2 to their Combat Score. By the same token, if three White Hats charge a demon, they get a +3 bonus to their attack and defense rolls. On top of this, if the defender doesn't have enough actions to defend against all attacks, they resist those additional attacks with a zero defense roll. Here is another way for below-nine Combat Score characters to have a chance of hitting their opponent—attack in numbers.

SLAYAGE IN BONDAGE: Sometimes, the bad guys don't just want to kill. Sometimes they want to tie a character up. When tied up, chained or otherwise restrained, fighting is a lot more difficult. If the character's legs are free, she can Kick at no penalty. If she can move (i.e., isn't bound to a stake or chained to a wall), she can also Head Butt people. If her arms are tied in front of her, she can Punch at a -2 penalty. Getting free uses Dexterity and Acrobatics, with penalties from -1 (the bad guys were never in the Boy Scouts) to -6 (a few miles of rope used, or police handcuffs).

GUNS, CROSSBOWS AND OTHER MISSILES

*Buffy: Cool! Crossbow! Huh. Check out these babies.
Hm. Goodbye stakes, hello flying fatality.*

—1.7 Angel

Why resort to fisticuffs when enemies can be dispatched via long distance? While guns are not used very often in the Buffyverse (see Gun Control, p. 116), they are a fact of life.

Generally speaking, missile combat works just like regular combat. Attackers make their rolls or use their Combat Score, and the target tries to defend (usually by Dodging). Dodging gunshots and the like is difficult, though; a Dodge against missiles suffers a -2 penalty on top of any others that are applicable (the character is busy ducking for cover). If there is no available cover, the missile weapon Dodge penalty increases to -4.

RANGE PENALTIES: To keep things simple (this ain't the *Black Hawk Down* RPG, y'know), assume no penalty at Short Range, a -1 penalty to shots at Medium Range, and a -3 penalty to shots at Long Range. Short range is under five yards for pistols and 20 yards for rifles. Medium range is under 20 yards for pistols and under 100 yards for rifles. Long range is up to 50 yards for pistols and up to 300 yards for rifles.

MULTIPLE SHOTS: If shooting doesn't work at first, shoot them again and again. Most guns can fire more than once in a five-second period (in fact, most handguns can be emptied in five seconds). Roll and add Dexterity and Gun Fu; each additional shot uses the same roll, but drops down one Success Level. Bows use the Multiple Actions rules (see p. 114). Crossbows and other single-shot weapons must be reloaded after each shot.





AUTOMATIC FIRE: Automatic weapons (assault rifles and machine guns) can fire a constant stream of bullets until the gun runs dry or the barrel overheats. Trained soldiers fire bursts—controlled gunfire that sends three or more bullets downrange. For bursts, make one attack roll; each Success Level in the roll allows one bullet to hit the target. The base damage for each bullet is modified by armor, and then added together before applying the Bullet type modifier. Success Levels do not affect the damage calculation.

GUN CAPACITY: Typically, handguns are either revolvers (with five to six shots in the cylinder) or semi-automatics (with seven to 15 shots in the magazine). Hunting rifles and shotguns have one to five shots. Assault rifles and sub-machine guns have 20-30 shots in a magazine.

DAMAGE: How Much Does It Hurt?

Buffy: Oh, puffy Xander. I'm sorry, I got—I guess I got carried away. Are you okay?

Xander: I'm alive. I can tell 'cause of the pain.

Buffy: Do you want to sit down?

Xander: I'm not that bendy. I could lean.

—5.15 *I Was Made to Love You*

Land enough punches and kicks on somebody, and something is going to break. Slaying is a dangerous job, and the Cast Members should expect their share of Jumps, cuts and bruises. The occasional visit to the emergency room or even, for extreme cases, the morgue is not out of the question (although usually the Cast visits the morgue as investigators rather than as paying customers).

When an attack hits a defender, subtract the total damage inflicted from the defender's Life Points. Once her Life Point pool is depleted, the character is at risk of losing consciousness or dying. Armor can protect the defender from some harm (see p. 121).

Players should probably write down their characters' Life Points on a piece of scrap paper, and subtract from it rather than erase and scribble on the character sheet (neatness counts, and besides those eraser crumbs are so . . . skeevy).

gun control

Guns are rarely used in the BtVS TV show. Still, many players may opt for the "Rambo Option" when fighting the supernatural, and festoon themselves in military hardware. This is likely to be more trouble than it's worth, though.

First of all, guns are loud. Your typical cemetery fight, using hands, feet and assorted medieval cutlery, does not make enough noise to be noticed by the neighbors (especially in Sunnydale, where people quickly learn not to be too curious). Guns can be heard several blocks away, and a running gun battle soon results in 911 calls and the attention of the authorities. Unless the Cast Members want to engage in open warfare with local and state SWAT teams, gun use is a no-no. Even the Initiative does not use guns extensively, especially in American cities, where the danger of collateral damage is so high.

Second, guns leave a trail. Bullets and guns can be traced to their crimes (and even to crimes that the current user wasn't aware of) through ballistic

forensics. Those using guns wind up with detectable residue on their hands and clothes. Next thing you know assorted law enforcement agents are knocking on the door (or more likely, knocking down the door). Slayers and other supernatural hunters don't want to attract too much attention, because they are much more likely to end up behind bars than they are to convince the authorities that they are fighting the good fight. Guns can be acquired illegally, but that means the characters will be dealing with criminals of assorted types. Not something conducive to long-term profits or health.

Finally, guns aren't very effective against vampires. Bullets hurt vampires, but they take a minimal amount of damage from them (see p. 167). It takes several shots to knock down your typical bloodsucker, which brings us back to the "guns are loud" bit—one shot might be ignored, but five or six are going to be noticed. When it comes to slaying the undead, the old ways work best.

DAMAGE—GO FIGURE

Each attack action has a base damage number or a formula. If it is a number, the base damage is fixed, an inherent characteristic of the weapon—a .45 pistol does the same base damage for everybody (it's very democratic that way). Formulas usually depend on the Strength of the attacker—a punch from a 400-pound demon is going to hurt more than a punch from either Mary Kate or Ashley. Do the calculations once, and write the base damage of the attack on the Combat Maneuver List.

During play, the actual damage inflicted is equal to the base damage, plus one per Success Level of the attack roll, minus any Armor Value possessed by the defender (see p. 121), multiplied by any damage type or other modifier (see below). That's a bit complicated, but once you play through a few combats, it will become much easier. The character sheet has the Success Level Table right by the Combat Maneuver List, so a quick glance provides that information. Quick Sheets have the Success Levels of the Combat Score worked into their damage entries.

EXAMPLE AWAY: Season One Xander has Strength 2. The Kick base damage formula is $(2 \times (\text{Strength} + 1))$; enter two into the formula, and *voilà!* Xander's Kick inflicts a base damage of six points. After an attack roll, he also gets to add the Success Level to this base damage. So if Xander gets two Success Levels on a kick attack, he adds two to his base six, for a total damage result of eight Life Points.

EXAMPLE TWICE: Season One Xander uses a knife in the next combat. Knife base damage is $(2 \times \text{Strength})$, or four for Xander. After an attack roll with two Success Levels, the damage becomes six. Further, a knife is a Slash/stab weapon (see below), so the final damage is doubled to 12 Life Points.

EXAMPLE THRICE: Season One Xander is now loose with a pistol. The gun has a base damage of 12 (no formula this time). Xander's two Success Level attack raises that to a 14. His target is wearing a bulletproof vest, though, which subtracts 10 from the damage, leaving a mere four. Bullet damage—the kind imposed by the gun—is doubled after armor (see below). So, the final damage result is eight Life Points.

TYPES OF DAMAGE

Darla: So many body parts, so few bullets. Let's begin with the kneecaps. No fun dancing without them.

—1.7 Angel

There are four types of damage: Bash, Slash/stab, Bullet and Fire. None of them are good for a body, but they affect people in slightly different ways.

BASH DAMAGE: This covers any attack by a blunt object (fists, two-by-fours, falling safes, and so on). Bash attacks reduce Life Points normally. It is the only type of attack that can be used to knock out a victim (knives and bullets tend to knock people dead). Armor (natural or worn) and the Natural Toughness Quality protect against Bash damage.



SLASH/STAB DAMAGE: Pointy or sharp objects cause blood loss, puncture vital organs, and do other gross and gory stuff. Double this damage against normal humans, after subtracting for armor or similar protection (if any). Weapons with sharp edges can be used to cut off limbs or heads; if a limb is attacked and the damage is enough to reduce the victim to zero Life Points, the limb has been severed (see also the Decapitation Maneuver, pp. 109-110). Slash/stab damage modifiers are not used with attacks Through the Heart (see p. 112) or monster Bite attacks (see p. 166); in that case the Through the Heart or Bite multiplier replaces the Slash/stab damage multiplier.

EXAMPLE THIS: Faith stabs a Watcher and inflicts 26 points of damage. Since the Watcher is human, this is doubled, for 52 points of damage, which likely is going to do it for the poor chap. If the Watcher had been wearing a thick tweed jacket (Armor Value 2), two of the 26 points would have been subtracted, reducing the initial damage to 24, doubled to 48—better, but still not real healthy.



BULLET DAMAGE: Bullets do nasty things to people. They mostly work like Slash/stab attacks, doubling against normal humans after armor is subtracted. Some critters (vampires especially) take very little damage from bullets, however. Bulletproof vests are very good against Bullet damage, but not so good against Slash/stab attacks.

FIRE DAMAGE: Burns are really bad. Fire can scar horribly, and Fire damage heals more slowly than normal. A person on fire takes three points of damage every Turn until somebody puts her out. If more than 20 points of Fire damage are inflicted on a character, some scarring occurs (assuming the victim lives). Fire damage also heals at half the normal rate; the player should keep track of fire damage separately. On the plus side, fire can kill vampires, if they burn long enough.

THE SIMPLE OPTION: If you and your players want to keep things simple, have all damage work the same way as Bash attacks—no doubling effect, no healing modifiers and so on. This option is not very realistic, even in the Buffyverse (when Buffy wields a knife or axe, you know that things are about to get serious), but it is easier to remember.



WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Oz: So, do you guys steal weapons from the Army a lot?

Willow: Well, we don't have cable, so we have to make our own fun.

Oz: I get you.

—2.14 Innocence

The following weapons may be used during the game. Their base damage codes are gathered in a convenient and spill-proof container in the Appendix (see p. 240).

ASSAULT RIFLE: Standard issue military weapon, usually with a 20- to 30-round magazine. Illegal in most places, except for the military and SWAT teams. Can fire bursts. Base damage is 16 points (Bullet type).

AXE: Used by fire departments and medieval knights, although for different purposes. Long-handled axes can be wielded two-handed (add +1 to the effective Strength of the character). Does base damage of 5 x Strength points (Slash/stab type). This drops to 4 x Strength points of base damage when the axe is thrown.

BASEBALL BAT: Basic sporting goods, used in a non-sporting way. Typically used two-handed (add +1 to the effective Strength of the character). Does 4 x Strength points of base damage (Bash type).

Giles: It is a bit of a puzzle. I haven't actually ever heard of someone being attacked by a baseball bat.

Xander: Maybe it's a vampire bat. (off their looks) I'm alone on that one, huh?

—1.11 Out of Mind, Out of Sight

BATON: This covers any small stick—a police baton, a belaying pin, or half of a busted pool cue. Good for smacking people around and making 'em respect authority. Base damage is 3 x Strength points (Bash type).

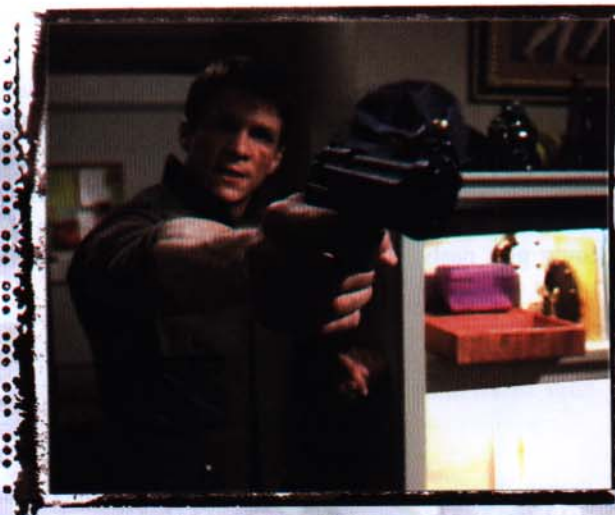
BIG ASS PISTOL: The kind of gun that shoots through buildings. Just the thing to put the Dirty in your Harry. Includes .44 Magnums, Eagle .50 cals, and other massive hand cannons. Often a sign of insecurity: give wearers a hug and tell 'em it's not the size that matters but how you use it—but don't be surprised if you get shot. Big Ass Pistols tend to have a low bullet capacity (under 10 shots). Does 18 points of base damage (Bullet type).

BIG ASS SWORD: A big, heavy sword that must be used two-handed (the +1 to Strength is already built-in). Base damage is 5 x (Strength + 1) points (Slash/stab type).

BIG KNIFE: "You call that a knife?" Your typical ohmy-godthatsabig knife. Does 3 x Strength points of base damage (Slash/stab type).

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Angel (calmly): Put that gun down.

Riley: It's pretty much all I got left, so I'm thinking not. He attacked four of my men, Buffy. I think he's up to his old tricks.

—4.20 *The Yoko Factor*

BIG PISTOL: A big gun, like a .357 Magnum, a .45 Colt, and other "makes big holes in people"-type weapons. Most of these guns have less than 10 shots in their magazines (revolvers have six shots). Base damage is 15 points (Bullet type).

BOW: Neat primitive weapon for killing people at range. The maximum effective Strength when using a bow is five. That means if the user's Strength is greater than five, the base damage tops out at 20. Does 4 x Strength points of base damage (Slash/stab type).

CROSSBOW: See bow. Not as fast, but easier to use and way cool-looking. Base damage is a fixed 16 points (Slash/stab type).

Riley: I don't know. He may have a bunch of swell party tricks but he's still just a vampire. I say we load up with stakes and crossbows and go after him now.

Xander (raises his hand): Second.

—5.1 *Buffy vs. Dracula*

HUNTING RIFLE: Your basic deer-hunting rifle, typically .30-06 or .308 caliber. These weapons usually are either single-shot or have 5-10 rounds in a magazine. Does 20 points of base damage (Bullet type).

KNIFE: Switchblades or easily concealed knives, used by thugs and lowlives. Base damage is 2 x Strength points (Slash/stab type). This drops to 2 x (Strength - 1) points when the knife is thrown.

PIGSTICKER: A little knife. Kinda cute actually, s'long as the handle isn't sticking out of your body. Does 2 x (Strength - 1) points of damage (Slash/stab type). This drops to (Strength - 1) points when the pigsticker is thrown.

PISTOL: Your typical handgun, this covers most police issue weapons (.38s, 9mm, and so on). Revolvers are stuck at six shots per gun; pistols can have as many as 17 rounds in a magazine. Base damage is 12 points (Bullet type).

PISTOL CROSSBOW: A little crossbow with a pistol grip. Needs reloading after each shot. Does 10 points of base damage (Slash/stab type).

POPGUN: Small-caliber, easily concealed gun, used by cheap criminals, little old ladies who want protection and other wimpy gun-owners. Does base 9 points of Bullet damage and generally has 10 bullets.

QUARTERSTAFF: Basically a long stick, very nifty for attack and defense. A pool cue can double as a quarterstaff, and the narrow end makes a decent stake substitute (use Stake damage for the "sharp" end). Used with both hands (damage bonus already factored in). Base damage is 3 x (Strength + 1) points (Bash type).

Giles: . . . Now, you show me good, steady progress with the quarterstaff, and in due course we'll discuss the crossbow. Put on your pads.

Buffy (laughs): I'm not gonna need pads to fight you.

Giles: Well, we'll see about that. 'En garde! (Buffy trashes him.)

Giles (stunned): Good. Let's move on to the crossbow.

—1.7 *Angel*

SHOTGUN: Ssshhh, we're huntin' scwewy wabbits . . . and blowing them into little pieces. Sawed off versions suffer a -2 when rolling, but are easier to conceal. Does base 20 points of Bullet damage and has two bullets.

SPEAR: Pointy thing at the end of long stick. Fairly common in ancient times; very rare nowadays. Used two-



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handed (damage bonus already factored in). Base damage is $3 \times (\text{Strength} + 1)$ points (Slash/stab type). This drops to $3 \times \text{Strength}$ points when the spear is thrown.

STAKE: Usually wood. Usually homemade. Often improvised. Don't leave home with it. Does base $2 \times \text{Strength}$ Slash/stab damage. This drops to $2 \times (\text{Strength} - 1)$ points when the stake is thrown.

SUBMACHINE GUN: Basically a pistol that shoots a bunch of bullets very fast. Nice to have in your corner when the going gets nasty. Can fire bursts, and have 30 bullets. Base damage is 9 points (Bullet type).

Mr. Trick: 'Why do they always gotta be using swords? It's called an 'Uzi, ya chump! Could have saved your ass right about now.'

—3.14 Bad Girls

SWORD: Rapiers, broadswords and other large pieces of cutlery. This also covers katanas and other fancy weapons. Some of these weapons can be used two-handed; in that case, add +1 to the effective Strength of the wielder. Does base $4 \times \text{Strength}$ points of Slash/stab damage.

TASER RIFLE: Used by the Initiative, this weapon fires an electrical charge that does little damage but knocks out most targets, even vampires. When hit, the victim takes some damage from the charge, and must make a Constitution (doubled) roll (or use the Muscle Score) at a penalty of five plus the Success Levels of the attack. On a failure, the victim is knocked out. Even if the target manages to stay conscious, the shock gives her a -2 penalty to all actions (including resisting another shock) for the next four Turns. Multiple shots have cumulative penalties. Base damage is 5 points (Bash type).

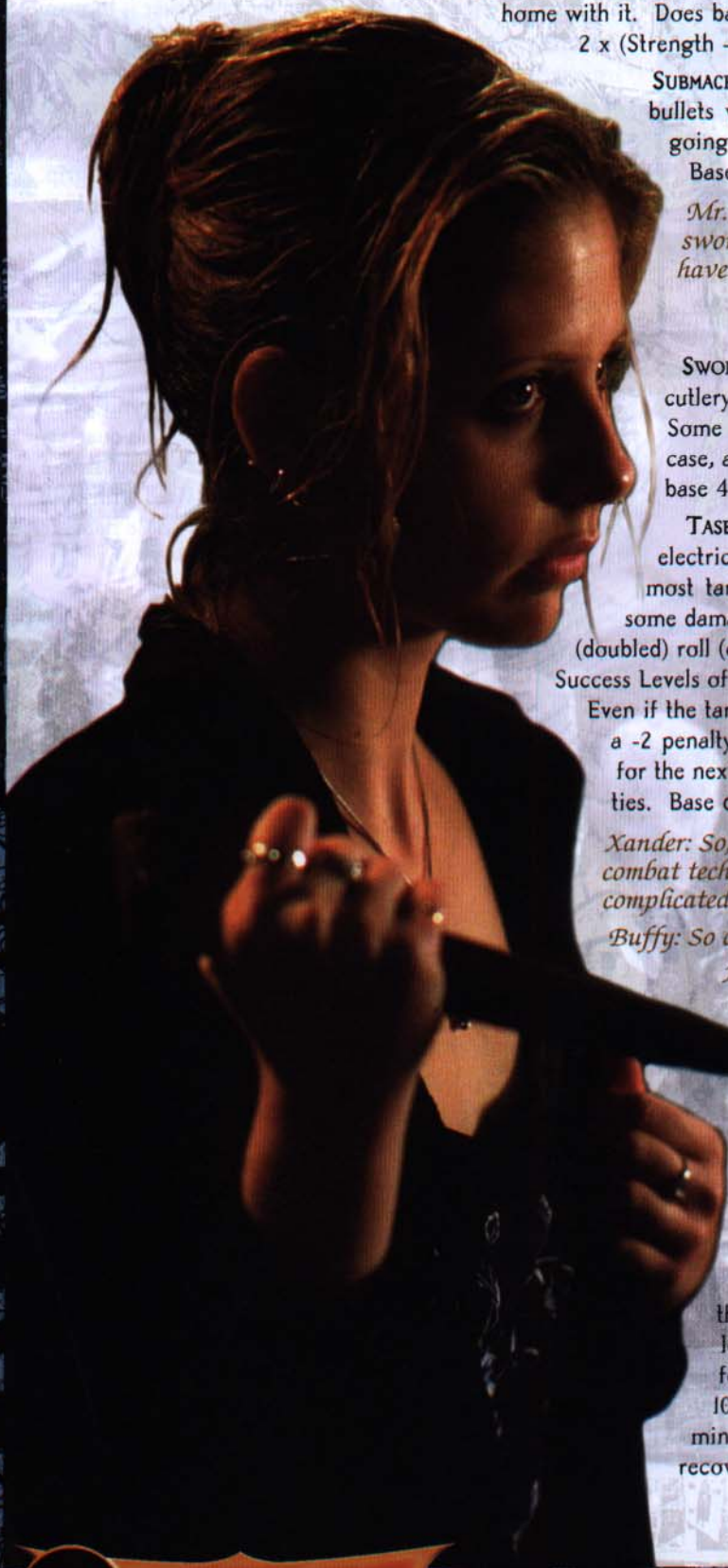
Xander: So, here it is. The latest in state-of-the-art combat technology. I gotta say, it doesn't look that complicated.

Buffy: So can you repair it?

Xander: Sure. As soon as I get my master's degree in advanced starship technology.

—4.15 This Year's Girl

TRANQUILIZER GUN: Great for bringing down animals without hurting them. Also good for dealing with werewolf friends and for taking specimens for the Initiative scientists to play with. A typical dose of tranquilizer is a narcotic poison with a Strength 6 (see p. 122). Each Success Level in the poison roll reduces the victim's Strength by one level. If reduced to 0, the target falls unconscious for one hour. Reduce this unconsciousness time by 10 minutes per Constitution level (minimum of 10 minutes). Vampires and some supernatural beings recover much faster.



ARMOR

Jenny: Oh, God, I am so sorry!

Giles: I think I'm alright.

Jenny: No, you're just in shock.

Giles: No, no, really, I, uh, I don't think it went in too deep. The . . . advantages of layers of tweed. Better than kevlar.

—2.11 Ted

Armor is not very common in the Buffyverse, but cautious demon hunters may decide to avail themselves of it, and the occasional demon or secret society uses archaic armor. Armor works by absorbing or deflecting some of the force of an attack, keeping sharp stuff away from the character's vitals and cushioning against impacts. Armor has, not surprisingly, an Armor Value, a number that subtracts damage from an attack.

Armor has its disadvantages too: it can be cumbersome and it can attract unwanted attention. Even in Sunnydale, walking around in a full knight's suit of armor is going to make heads turn. In addition to the armor described below, some creatures may have natural armor in the form of scaly skin or bony plates.

An Armor Table showing various Armor Values is located in the Appendix (see p. 241).

BAD STUFF: INJURY

Ethan: Sweet child. Now, this may sting a little just at first. But don't worry, that'll go away once the searing pain kicks in.

—2.8 The Dark Age

If a Cast Member is hurt enough, bad things start to happen. Characters reduced to 10 Life Points or below are severely injured, and find it hard to continue fighting; all combat rolls are at a -2 penalty. If reduced below five Life Points, this penalty goes up to -4.

When reduced to zero Life Points or below, unconsciousness or incapacitation (i.e., the character is conscious, but can only lie there and work very hard on breathing) is likely. The player has to make a roll modified by both Willpower and Constitution, at a penalty of -1 for each of the character's negative Life Points. So a character at -4 Life Points (she has taken enough damage to reduce her Life Points to zero, and four more points on top of that) has a -4 penalty to her consciousness roll. The Resistance (Pain) Quality aids consciousness rolls, and reduces wound penalties.

SURVIVAL TESTS: If the character is reduced to -10 Life Points or worse, death is a possibility. She has to make a Survival Test. This uses Willpower and Constitution (just like consciousness rolls), and suffers a -1 penalty for every 10 points that the character is below zero (i.e., a character reduced to -32 Life Points would have a -3 penalty to the Survival Test). The Hard to Kill Quality provides a bonus to Survival Tests. If the character passes the Test, she lives. If she doesn't, she Passes On to the Great Beyond (cue somber music). Remember those Drama Points!

SLOW DEATH: If a character is below -10 Life Points and makes a Survival Test, but doesn't get medical help within a minute, she may still die. Survival Tests are required every minute after the first, at an additional -1 penalty per minute (so after five minutes, the additional penalty would be -5; half an hour later, it would be -30, and even a Drama Point may not be enough to save her). A successful Intelligence and Doctor roll stabilizes the character, and eliminates any need for further Survival Tests (based on that injury).

DYING WORDS AND ACTIONS: Characters who fail a Survival Test are most likely unconscious and incapacitated. This is a huge downer, both for them and for the storyline. Such events should be marked in a significant way—immortalized. Thus, a special rule applies.

If a character dies, the player has the option of performing one last deed, or saying some famous last words, at your discretion. The Last Deed option allows the character to act normally for one or two Turns (no wound penalties apply). Famous Last Words can take as much as a minute (more likely, they should consist of a couple of sentences). These are the character's last acts—make them count.

RESUSCITATION: Some injuries may kill the character, but leave her intact enough for medicine to bring her back. Drowning, gunshot wounds (except to the brain), and similar injuries may not be destructive enough to prevent modern science from saving the character. Common sense should be your guide. If the character was burned to a crisp or killed by a soul-sucking demon that stole her life force, CPR just ain't gonna do the trick. Resuscitation requires a Doctor and Intelligence roll, followed by another Survival Roll from the victim. In addition to all the previous modifiers, the victim gets a bonus equal to the Success Levels of the Doctor and Intelligence roll, and a -1 per five minutes since her untimely demise. Or spend Drama Points—that's what Xander did in 1.12 Prophecy Girl when he literally breathed life into Buffy's dead body.



GETTING BETTER: HEALING AND MEDICAL HELP

Faith-in-Buffy: You're hurt.

Riley: Ahh, um, not that bad, actually. I guess the, uh, drugs the professor gave me really did make me stronger. I'm healing pretty quick.

Faith-in-Buffy: Maybe we should take you for a test drive.

—4.16 'Who Are You?'

The Sunnydale General Emergency Room has some of the best trauma doctors in the country—they get plenty of practice. Any hospital will come in handy whenever a character is severely injured, however. Without medical help, characters may heal from wounds, but very slowly (one Life Point per day). With Drama Points, healing is not much of a problem, though. Characters should be up and around by the next Episode, unless the injuries were truly epic in scope.

For the rest of humankind, injuries heal at the rate of one Life Point per Constitution level every day spent under medical care. Slayers, vampires and other critters heal much faster, at the rate of one Life Point per Constitution level every hour. Some supernatural beings may recover from injury even faster (Sunnydale's Mayor could, for a brief time, heal damage as fast as it was dished out).

MORE BAD STUFF: SUFFOCATION, FALLS, POISON AND DISEASE

Anya: You're pasty and wet and disgusting. They can dig without you.

Xander (groaning): Look—I don't really feel that bad.

Anya: I inflicted a lot of putrefying diseases on men when I was an avenging demon, and you look like you're getting all of them.

Xander (giving in): Ok. I'll stay. But you should go. You could catch it.

Anya (perkily): We'll die together. It's romantic. Let me get your trousers off.

Xander: You're a strange girlfriend.

—4.8 Pangs

Many things can kill a body, including cigarette smoking and high-fat diets. Those are not likely to come up in the course of a Series. The following are.

FALLS: It's not the fall that hurts—it's the sudden stop at the end. Any fall from more than one yard distance

inflicts three points of Bash damage per yard. A Dexterity and Acrobatics roll (or the Combat Score) reduces the fall's effective distance by one yard per Success Level. So a character who gets four Success Levels in her Dexterity and Acrobatics roll would take no damage from a three-yard fall, and would suffer six points of damage from a six-yard fall.

SUFFOCATION: If a character is unable to breathe or doesn't have access to enough oxygen (i.e., underwater), she dies. Human beings die in about two minutes without access to oxygen, although they may be resuscitated with medical help. Go Xander go!

POISON: Poisons have a Strength Attribute. Roll and add double the poison's Strength; this is resisted by the victim's Constitution (doubled). If the poison "wins," the victim is drained of one Attribute level per Success Level in the poison roll. The Attribute depends on the type of poison. Paralyzing agents drain Dexterity, while debilitating venoms might drain Strength. When the Attribute is reduced to zero, the victim is unconscious or incapacitated and the poison starts draining Constitution. When Constitution reaches zero, the victim dies. The frequency of poison rolls depends on how powerful the substance is. Very deadly poisons roll every Turn, while less powerful agents roll once per minute, per hour, or even per day. An Intelligence and Doctor or Science roll may help identify the poison and remove it from the victim. In other cases, it's an antidote or nothing. Some poisons are supernatural and require special forms of antidote.

DISEASE: This works just like Poison, except the Disease rolls (using the Strength of Disease) are usually less frequent (rarely faster than once per hour, and typically once per day). Some diseases do not kill; they just incapacitate victims with fevers, chills and other unpleasantness. Some diseases can be mystical in origin—normal treatments or a call to Dr. Mom will not help.





BREAKING STUFF

Oz: Just a, just a thought, Buffy, but do you think all this ranting is scaring away potential demons?

Buffy: You're right. Ooh! She's even affecting my work, now. She's the Titanic. She's a crawling black cancer. (She brings her foot down on a bench, breaking it in two) She's... other really bad things.

Oz: On the plus side you've killed the bench, which was looking shifty.

—4.2 Living Conditions

Unless it is dramatically inappropriate, characters can break things without having to roll. Smashing a plate glass window or turning an expensive computer into a pile of useless electronic parts does not require rolls or damage calculations. On the other hand, a few important things that could be broken in the course of a game include doors, walls and other obstacles, where time is of the essence. Typically, the Success Levels of a Strength (doubled) roll determine how fast a door will be knocked down. Walls require a certain amount of damage before a man-sized hole is punched into them.

INTERIOR DOOR: Three Success Levels

REINFORCED WOODEN DOOR: Four Success Levels, and they ignore the first Success Level in any one roll

METAL DOOR: Six Success Levels, and they ignore the first two Success Levels in any one roll

REINFORCED METAL DOOR: Eight Success Levels, and they ignore the first five Success Levels in any one roll

INTERIOR WALL: Armor Value 4; 20 points of damage

BRICK WALL: Armor Value 6; 40 points of damage

CONCRETE: Armor Value 10; 80 points of damage

EXAMPLE: Angel is trapped behind a cage-like metal structure and the sun is coming up. Angel goes after the reinforced metal door with abandon. The player rolls and adds Angel's Strength (doubled) (14). Because the first five Success Levels are ignored, the player must roll a five or more to have any effect (19 is six Success Levels). Even then, Angel must amass eight Success Levels total to break through. Hopefully, it's not too close to dawn.





SAMPLE COMBAT

BUFFY AND XANDER'S BIG NIGHT

Buffy (see p. 60), currently being played by Maria, and Xander (see p. 62), played by Peter, are jumped by three tough vampires (Combat Score 17). The vamp attack is unexpected—Xander and Buffy were having a Big Meaningful Chat. The example uses Drama Points (see p. 126), so you might want to skip ahead to that section to brush up.

TURN 1

XANDER/PETER: "And that's why I don't like those Potter books. Maybe if I was ten years younger, and less of a battle-scarred veteran of the supernatural wars . . ."

DIRECTOR: Three shapes emerge from the alley and charge you, moving inhumanly fast. Their fangs gleam in the moonlight. Intentions?

BUFFY/MARIA: Crap. I stake the first one I see.

DIRECTOR: Did you have a stake in your hand?

BUFFY/MARIA: Well . . . er . . . no. Okay, I draw Mr. Pointy from my belt while I kick a vamp in the teeth.

DIRECTOR: Xander?

XANDER/PETER: This is going to hurt. I go full defensive, trying to keep at least one vamp occupied.

DIRECTOR: Sounds good. The vamps go first. They attacked you by surprise. Two of them are going after Buffy. Roll and add your Parry or Dodge.

BUFFY/MARIA: I Dodge. (Rolls die.) Uh, a 1. Well, that's still a 20.

(The Director does some quick figuring. The vamps have a Combat Score of 17. It's two on one, so they each get +2, for a total of 19. Buffy's second defensive move suffers a -2 multi-action penalty. Thus, her defense against the second attack is an 18, not good enough.)

DIRECTOR: You dodge one of them, but the second one gets a punch in. You take 15 points of damage—it could have been a lot worse.

BUFFY/MARIA: I don't like worse. Ouch. (Writes down the damage.) My turn? (Director nods, and Maria rolls again.) Kick plus seven on the roll—25 total.

DIRECTOR: You got him good. Damage?

BUFFY/MARIA: 25 is seven Success Levels, so . . . 23 points.

DIRECTOR: One of the vamps goes flying and lands on its undead butt. Meanwhile, over in Xander's corner . . .

XANDER/PETER: Yep. Rolling my Dodge, +3 for full defense. (Rolls.) A total of 13. Ugh. Not very . . . ah . . . robust.

DIRECTOR: Yup, that's not good enough. The vamp lands a good one, right in the kisser. You too take 15 points of damage.

XANDER/PETER: No I don't. Spending a Drama Point for I Think I'm Okay.

DIRECTOR: Ah, you just manage to roll with that punch. You only take seven points of damage, and you get to keep all your teeth. Oh, and you managed to draw one of the vamps off of Buffy. Good job! Next turn.

TURN 2

DIRECTOR: Okay. Buffy and Xander have a vampire each. And the one Buffy kicked is getting up. He will get back to the fight near the end of the Turn. Intentions?

BUFFY/MARIA: It's Mr. Pointy time. Stake the one in front of me, then reverse the stake and stab vamp #2 as he comes charging in.

DIRECTOR: Okay—the second attack is going to be -2 for multi-action, and -3 for the awkward position. Spending a Drama Point?

BUFFY/MARIA: Yep. +10 to the attack roll, right?

DIRECTOR: Correct. Xander?

XANDER/PETER: I'm going to try and kick this sucker in the groin. Instead of Drama Points, I'm going to burn some of my Good Luck.

DIRECTOR: Okay. Buffy goes first.

BUFFY/MARIA: (Rolls.) Total 20 on Stake Through the Heart, 30 with the Drama Point.

DIRECTOR: And 25 after modifiers on the other vamp. Don't bother figuring out the damage; it's plenty. Perfect one-two combo. Straight thrust into the vamp's heart, and the other one walks right into the back swing. You get a bit of dust on your new blouse, though. Oh, and when you dusted the first vamp, Xander's sparring partner got distracted, so Xander goes first.

XANDER/PETER: Cool. Kicking away. (Rolls.) Nine on the roll, total of 17, and I'll put in +4 for the Good Luck, for a total of 21. Reduced to 18 because of the groin penalty.

DIRECTOR: The vampire hesitated when Buffy started her double dust-up, and now you landed a work boot right where it hurts. Damage?

XANDER/PETER: That'll be 14 points. Five Success Levels.

DIRECTOR: Vamp goes down, clutching at himself. Needless to say, he doesn't attack. Next turn.

TURN 3

DIRECTOR: Two vamps done, the last one is still recovering from the shot to the groin. Intentions?

XANDER/PETER: I take a step back, bow to Buffy, and say "No, no, after you . . ."

BUFFY/MARIA: Stake in the back, going for his heart. The vampire's, not Xander's.

DIRECTOR: Go for it. Don't bother rolling. The vamp's back is to you, and Xander's got him well tenderized. He's not having a good day. Poof. Dust to dust.

BUFFY/MARIA: Sounds good. I turn to Xander and say "But you saw the Harry Potter movie three times."

XANDER/PETER: I pat my bruised face, spend a Drama Point to reduce it to three points of damage, and reply: "Blame Anya for that. She keeps calling me that 'M' word and everything . . ."

DIRECTOR: Meanwhile, back at the library . . .





THE DRAMA POINT SYSTEM

Willow: I'll never forget that thing's face. Its real face, I mean.

Buffy (to Giles): I don't know how you managed to . . . That was the bravest thing I've ever seen.

Giles: The stupidest. But the world continues to turn.

Willow: And no one's ever gonna know how close it came to stopping. Never know what we did.

—3.13 *The Zeppo*

Up to this point, the rules mostly simulate “reality”—the reality where people get punched and lose teeth, and where people fail at the most inappropriate moments and suffer and die as a result. In the Buffyverse (and most action movies and TV shows), the Cast has the scriptwriters on their side. The heroes survive against impossible odds or perform incredible feats at just the right moment, especially when it’s dramatically appropriate. This affects things beyond deeds. Sometimes the cavalry arrives in the nick of time, or a vital clue is discovered just when the characters need it. Then there’s the magical recovery time—up and about the next day. While Slayers have supernatural recovery powers, the Scooby Gang should, by all rights, suffer numerous casualties every time they come into conflict with vampires or demons. Yet, they usually escape with little more than a few bruises. Under “normal” circumstances, Xander and Willow should have gotten killed or been severely injured during Season One. With Drama Points, the Cast can temporarily “short-circuit” reality and perform heroic feats—do the impossible and win the day.

Think of Drama Points as “script aids”—they prevent the heroes from suffering ignominious, meaningless

deaths because of bad luck. They do not make the characters unbeatable, however. For one, players get a limited number of Drama Points, so they have to be used with great care or the characters may exhaust their good fortune before the dramatic finale. Also, the bad guys have Drama Points; this allows even a lowly vampire to threaten a Slayer with a lucky punch, or the head villain to escape certain death.

Characters start the game with 10 to 20 Drama Points. These points are not regained automatically. Drama Points have to be earned. They may be awarded for performing heroic feats. They are also given as “payment” for the times when tragedy or misfortune strikes the Cast. When bad things happen to good people, the Cast may get some Drama Points as a “karmic payment.” Finally, Drama Points are earned when the players help recreate the feel of the *BtVS* TV show, by helping develop storylines and subplots beyond the basic “kill the monster” scenario. White Hats can really shine here, befriending the more heroic types and helping them bear their burdens.

playing it straight

The Drama Point System is not for everybody. Some players just don’t like thinking in terms of Hollywood heroics, and prefer a more realistic approach. Drama Points encourage a certain degree of metagaming, with the players thinking about the rules of the game instead of the actual story their characters are living. While the results are largely positive—the game is meant to simulate the feel of the TV show—the means may not be to everyone’s taste. If you don’t like Drama Points, you can always play the game “straight.” The characters are on their own, to live and die by their talents and the luck of the dice.

Games without Drama Points are grittier and deadlier. The gulf between Heroes and White Hats cannot be bridged; it is recommended that all the Cast Members be either Heroes or White Hats—otherwise, the White Hats get totally upstaged. Injured characters may be incapacitated for long periods of time, and death is much more likely even among Heroes. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but players who want to perform the same feats that Buffy and company make look easy every week on TV are going to be disappointed. As usual, you and the players should talk things over and settle on something that will satisfy the group (happy players keep coming back, and happy Directors keep producing new Episodes, after all).

USING DRAMA POINTS

How can players use Drama Points? Let me count the ways. Five (short count). Used judiciously, they can snatch victory from the fanged jaws of defeat. They include Heroic Feat, I Think I'm Okay, Plot Twist, Righteous Fury, and the ever-popular Back From the Dead.

As the Director, you have veto power over the use of Drama Points. Usually, if something bad is slated to happen to the character, using Drama Points won't help her get out of the situation. The consolation prize, however, is that those situations earn the character extra Drama Points. So, if Buffy is meant to get blindsided and knocked out by a hidden villain, Buffy's player doesn't get to use Drama Points to escape her fate, but instead gets a Drama Point for her troubles. Okay, she's not rolling in puppies, but she does have something.

HEROIC FEAT

Spike (to Buffy): Now might be a good time for something heroic.

—5.20 Spiral

Sometimes, a character really needs to land that punch, disarm the time bomb with ten seconds left on the clock, or shoot the oxygen tank in the shark's mouth before it swims over for a bite. When the Cordelias of the world have to stake a vampire on the first try, invoke the Heroic Feat.

By spending a Drama Point, the character gets a +10 bonus on some value. This can be an attack or defense roll, or any use of a skill, or even for a Fear or Survival Test. The Heroic Feat can also make things hurt more; the +10 bonus is added to the base damage in addition to any Success Level bonuses (then armor, damage type and other modifiers are applied).

A player has to announce her character is using a Drama Point during the Intentions phase of a Turn (see p. 108), or before rolling during non-combat situations.



Also, only one Heroic Feat may be performed in a Turn. It can be used either for attack, defense or damage, but not for more than one of those in the same Turn.

EXAMPLES "R" US: Dawn is being terrorized by a demon. In a burst of desperate speed, she kicks it in the groin. Dawn's player spends a Drama Point, and she gets a +10 to her Dexterity and Kung Fu roll (2 and 1 respectively). Before Dawn's player even rolls the dice, she has a +13 bonus. Not surprisingly, the kick lands, and the demon doubles over with a very surprised expression on its face. Dawn runs. Cue the Slayer.

I THINK I'M OKAY

Xander: Uhh! Ow. I'm ok! I'm, uh... I'm ok! (He looks around.) Where am I okay?

—4.8 Pangs

The bullet didn't hit any vital organs. The character rolled with the impact and the baseball bat didn't crush her skull. The spear got caught in the knight's chain mail and no serious damage was done. Somehow, the injuries that should have killed a character or at least put her out of commission are not as bad as she thought they were. Or maybe she got her second wind—a few bandages on her bloody but largely harmless wounds and she is ready to go. Whatever the rationale, I Think I'm Okay allows Heroes, White Hats and normal humans to get back into action after enduring beatings that would have sent a pro football player to the hospital.

For a mere Drama Point, half the Life Point damage (round down) the character has taken up to that point is healed up. The character is still bloody and battered, but she can act normally. I Think I'm Okay can be used only once per Turn, but it can be used several Turns in a row, each use halving whatever damage remains. If the character had suffered enough damage to be incapacitated or unconscious, however, healing does not necessarily awaken her. You as Director decide if the time is right for the character to revive and join the action. Also, if the injuries were life threatening, you may decide that the character has to go to the hospital at some point, although she can wait until the action (or the Episode) is over.

DELUXE EXAMPLE: A sword-wielding vampire runs Riley through. The wound inflicts 40 points of damage, and Riley had already been injured for another 36 points previously, so he's in really bad shape. Not wishing to see the end of the Initiative Agent, Riley's player spends a Drama Point. The 76 points of damage are reduced to a "mere" 38 points—not exactly unhurt, but not dying, either. The sword must have



missed Riley's vital organs. Next Turn, Riley's player could reduce it even further to 19 points, and a Turn later, to 9 points. This would take three Drama Points, though—a pretty hefty expenditure.

Plot Twist

Demon: Hold it, whoa! Stake me now, and you never find out what I got for ya, huh? Think about it. Demon seeks Slayers, highly unusual?

Faith: Talk fast.

Demon: How would you like to get your hands on the Books of Ascension?

—3.17 *Enemies*

The killer accidentally dropped a valuable clue at the scene of the crime. When the three vampires were about to finish off Buffy, Angel showed up in the nick of time. The local thrift shop just happened to have a copy of the *Pergamum Codex* on a back shelf. Heroes often find help and information from the most unlikely places or at precisely the right time. Once per game session, each character can spend a Drama Point and get a "break." This is not a Get Out of Jail Free Card. If the heroine stupidly walked into a vampires' lair and she is surrounded by a horde of bloodsuckers, a Plot Twist won't allow her to escape unscathed. The vampires might decide to keep her alive, however (after beating her soundly to get some cheap thrills), and her friends might somehow realize where she is and come to her rescue. By the same token, sometimes clues are available, but they cannot be found at that time. If you decide that a Plot Twist is not possible, the player gets the Drama Point back.

Righteous Fury

Adam: You can't last much longer.

Buffy, Willow, Xander, and Giles: We can. We are forever.

—4.21 *Primeval*

I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore. Nothing is more deadly than a pissed off heroine; even the humblest White Hat can become a fearsome enemy if properly motivated. It takes a lot to drive a character over the edge, but when it happens most fictional heroes become unstoppable engines of destruction.

By spending two Drama Points, the character gets a +5 bonus to all attack actions, including magical attacks, for the duration of the fight. These benefits are cumulative with Heroic Feats, above. Problem is, an appropriate provocation is necessary to invoke the Righteous Fury

rule. A player can't decide her character is pissed about the existence of vampires, or global warming, or even the mystery meatloaf they served at school that morning. She needs to be truly provoked—a brutal attack on a loved one, an unexpected betrayal of trust, or crimes so horrible they go beyond the usual vampiric and demonic mayhem.

Back from the Dead

Master: You were destined to die! It was written!

Buffy: What can I say? I flunked the written.

—1.12 *Prophecy Girl*

Sooner or later, everybody dies. In the Buffyverse, it's usually sooner, but sometimes they manage to come back. It doesn't happen often, but it is possible. There are also ways in which a character remains dead, but she (or somebody much like her) can still be part of the Cast. A character who dies may, by spending Drama Points, make a triumphant return. No return from the grave is without complications, however, and not even Drama Points can erase the problems that result from cheating the Grim Reaper.

The sooner the character is back from the dead, the more Drama Points it costs. Coming back next Season costs one Drama Point (that means the player is going to need a new Cast Member until then). Returning for the next Episode costs five Drama Points. Bypassing death in the same Episode as one's demise costs 10 Drama Points. If the Cast Member did not have enough Drama Points to spend, she can pay in installments—all Drama Points she has now, and any Drama Points the character gets in later Episodes, until the debt is paid. Spending the points is not enough; you and the player need to work out the details behind the resurrection. Some possible explanations follow.



MIRACLE AT THE ER: The hard-working docs at Sunnydale General Hospital (or the local body and fender shop) got that heart pumping after some electro-shocks, heart massage, and pure force of will. The character might have seen visions of the future or the past, spoken to dead friends and relatives, or undergone some type of Profound Mystical Experience during the brief time she was dead.

GHOST WITH THE MOST: The character is dead and buried but her soul lives on, and she's not going anywhere. Or the character may rise as some type of undead. Vampires are possible, but it's very hard to be a good vampire. Zombies tend to stink up the place. But maybe some mystical force brings the character back as an undead instrument of vengeance (maybe named after a black carrion bird?). The character gets at least 10 points' worth of new Qualities, and possibly more. Those ain't free, and must be paid for with unspent experience points (see pp. 131-133), or paid in installments with earned experience points.

GREATER POWER: Perhaps some greater power decides that the character has not fulfilled her destiny yet. The reason for the return could be unknown to the character for a while, and thus unexplainable to her friends. The downside is the greater power's motivation. Depending on what's expected from the resurrectee, it might be better to have stayed dead...

TWIN SIBLING: At the character's funeral, before you can say Laura Palmer, there she is, looking sad but perfectly alive! Well, it's not really her, just her long-lost sister/cousin/clone/alternate dimension stand-in/so on and so forth. The character should be adjusted somewhat, to reflect the different life story (some skills or Attributes might be modified).

All these options could be very useful to generate drama. How will the character's miraculous return affect the Series? How will the rest of the Cast react? What terrible price must be paid for the life that has been given back?

spending drama points: some guidelines

So a character has 10-20 shiny Drama Points, and is ready to do the impossible. How many should be spent in an Episode? What happens if the player runs out? While the answers will vary from one gaming group to the next, here are some rules of thumb for both you and the players.

If the player spends all her Drama Points, she may not have them when her Cast Member really needs them. And if she tries to hoard them greedily, her character may get her butt kicked on a regular basis (which may force the player to spend Drama Points to nurse her back to health). It's a balancing act.

Ideally, players should spend no more (and hopefully less) Drama Points than they earn in the game session. That way they have a nice stash saved up for the Final Showdown or some other dramatic moment.

During the typical Episode, players should probably not spend more than five Drama Points apiece—assume a maximum of two points on each of two fights, and one point for some non-combat use. But that's in a "fair" fight. If a group of four White Hats tries to take a couple of experienced vamps, they are in trouble, and may end up spending Drama Points like crazy just to survive. In those cases, it's better to use one Drama Point for a Plot Twist to stop the fight. If you want to keep up the pressure and constantly put the Cast in dangerous situations,

then players may end up spending 10 Drama Points per session. In that case, you are going to have to make good those expenses by giving out more Drama Points than normal.

Players should not use Drama Points frivolously—save them for a fight with the Big Bad or the main villain of the Episode. By using tactics and letting the Heroes go in front while the White Hats maneuver around the fringes, vamps and other low-ranking villains can be defeated without much in the way of Drama Point expenditures.

Remember to scale the enemies to the abilities of the characters. If none of the Cast Members have a Combat Maneuver with a bonus higher than nine, for example, putting them up against a bunch of critters with Combat Scores of 16 (which means the best Cast Member needs a seven or higher on a D10 just to avoid getting hit and an eight or higher to hit the monster) is asking for trouble. That forces the Cast to spend a bunch of Drama Points to win the day.

So, as a rule of thumb—maximum expenditure of five Drama Points per game session or Episode (depending on how long the Episode is), with an average of two or three points. If all the players are spending more than that amount on a regular basis, you may need to turn down the heat a bit. If only one player is overspending, then it's probably her problem and not the game's.



EARNING DRAMA POINTS

Once a player spends her Drama Points, they are gone for good. To get more, she is going to have to work for them. Fortunately, they can be obtained in a number of ways.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Characters can use experience points (see pp. 131-133) to buy Drama Points. Heroes can buy them at the rate of two experience points for each Drama Point. White Hats get a discount: they can get one Drama Point for every experience point they spend. This is the most mechanical way to gain more Drama Points, and can result in characters that improve very slowly. Some TV characters never become more skilled over the seasons, so this is okay.

QUOTEABLE QUOTES

Xander: Okay, and the, uh, second problem I'm having . . . "Come and get it, Big Boy"?

Willow: Well . . . W-well, the Slayer always says a pun or-or a witty play on words, and I think it throws the vampires off, and, and it makes them frightened because I'm wisecracking. Okay, I didn't really have a chance to work on that one, but you try it every time.

—3.1 Anne

BTVS is as much about the dialogue as it is about vampire stomping. Coming up with cool, witty lines is not easy. Let's face it, Buffy and Company have a team of talented (and highly compensated) screenwriters working for them, and you and your players don't. Players who put in the effort to come up with a funny and memorable line should be awarded with a Drama Point, once per game session. Both you and the players have to agree that the line is worthy of the reward. Oh, and nobody should get points for parroting lines from the TV show, unless they are used in a particularly creative manner.

HEROIC ACTS

Stomping on vampires does not constitute a Heroic Act—it's part of the usual job description for the Cast. To earn Drama Points, a character needs to perform acts of self-sacrifice for the good of others. The sacrifice should be significant—serious risk of death or injury or some personal loss. This type of act should get one or two Drama Points, depending on how serious the sacrifice was.



WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE

Buffy: You and bug people, Xander. What's up with that?

—2.10 What's My Line?, Part Two

Sometimes, the plot may require that something bad happen to the Cast Members. Someone sneaks up behind the character and clobbers her; the escape car refuses to start; a freak accident allows a villain to escape; the spanking new and very sweet boyfriend turns out to be a brain-sucking demon (no way!). This shouldn't happen often, or the players are going to feel railroaded. When it does, you should "pay" for the privilege by giving the affected characters one to three Drama Points. When this rule is invoked, the players cannot use Drama Points to undo the results—if the villain is meant to get away this time, she has to get away. Ditto if this is their turn to end up as hostages. The more unfair the situation is, the more Drama Points they get, up to three Drama Points for situations where the characters are totally getting hosed by life.

THE AGONY THAT IS LIFE

This is the tragic version of When Bad Things Happen to Good People. When a subplot involving a Cast

Member and her Drawbacks (things like Addiction, Love, and Emotional Problems) results in a tragedy, she should be awarded one to three Drama Points every game session where the subplot comes into play. Losing a loved one (usually through death or abandonment), ending a relationship, fighting to overcome drug abuse—if the subplot could be made into a Movie of the Week starring that Sally gal from *All in the Family*, it is Drama Point-worthy. The players really need to get into character, though. “My character goes to a bar and gets plastered. Oh, woe is me” just ain’t gonna cut it. Roleplay the stages of grief, the lies addicts tell to themselves as well as to their friends and the crisis moments when things come to a head.

Sometimes, an emotional crisis directly affects the character. This happens almost exclusively to Heroes: when their psyches are struck and their self-confidence wavers, they are in serious trouble. When tragedy strikes the character (usually when a subplot reaches its boiling point), she suffers a -2 penalty to all her actions. Even worse, the character cannot use Drama Points for Heroic Feats, Plot Twists or Righteous Fury. This sad state of affairs lasts until the character snaps out of it, usually through the efforts of a White Hat (see Support Your Local Hero, below). These times of grief get the character involved two Drama Points, or three if the crisis lasts for an entire Episode.

See Chapter Seven: Episodes, Seasons and Drama for more ideas and guidelines on introducing subplots into a Series or Episode.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL HERO

Willow (to Riley about Buffy): Then talk. Keep eye contact. Funny is good, but don't be glib. And remember, if you hurt her, I will beat you to death with a shovel. A vague disclaimer is nobody's friend. Have fun.

—4.7 The Initiative

This option is only open to White Hats. In *BtVS*, the Scooby Gang helps the Slayer maintain her balance and even her sanity. Without the friends who know about her problems and support her through them, Buffy would have likely lost her marbles a long time ago. White Hats that roleplay helping other characters through The Agony That Is Life (see above) should get two Drama Points. Use the TV series for inspiration: how many times have Willow and Xander helped the Slayer deal? Giving advice is part of it; the other is to realize there is a problem, learn what is going on, and do something about it.

EXPERIENCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Phillip: The boy? No power there.

Buffy: “The boy” has clocked more field time than all of you combined. He’s part of the unit.

—5.12 Checkpoint

Keep doing something, and you are bound to get good at it. Buffy is stronger and more skilled by Season Five than when she first arrived in Sunnydale. Willow eventually went from being a sweet computer nerd to a powerful witch able to go toe to toe with a Hellgod. Characters improve over time.

At the end of each Episode (or game session if the Episode lasts more than a session), you should give players experience points. These points can be used to improve Attributes or skills, to gain new Qualities or buy off Drawbacks, or to buy Drama Points.

EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

Typically, each player should receive between one and five experience points in a game session. Everybody who participates gets one experience point (call it the “You Drove a Half Hour . . . oh, and Picked Up Twizzlers Before Playing” award). If the characters succeeded in thwarting evil through teamwork, heroic butt-kicking and creative thinking, an additional one or two points should be awarded. Players who stayed in character and helped move the story along should get another one or two points. At the end of major story arcs, another point should be awarded to everyone in the group, plus one more at the end of the Season Finale.



USING EXPERIENCE POINTS

Buffy: Look. If you've been fighting since you were fifteen you'd have a hefty resume' too.

Riley (shocked): Fifteen!?

Buffy (winces): I know, "wow." The point is, that, that we have different amounts of experience. You know. And plus, I do have that whole preternatural Slayer strength deal.

—4.12 A New Man

Experience points help characters improve in several ways. They represent wisdom from fighting and investigating the supernatural (after months of reading occult books, some knowledge is bound to stick, for example), physical improvements due to the Slayer Complete Body and Soul Workout, and learned abilities (maybe something from high school or college managed to stick).

IMPROVING ATTRIBUTES: Swing axes enough and your axe-swinging arm is going to get stronger. Strength, Dexterity and Constitution can be improved through physical training. Explaining improvements in Mental Attributes is a bit harder, but not impossible. Perception can get better if the character learns to pay more attention to the world around her. Willpower improves after undergoing severe ordeals; whatever doesn't kill you only makes you stronger, and all that jazz. Intelligence might get better as a result of maturity and simple exercise—give those neurons a workout and they may start improving.

Improving an Attribute costs double the next level, with a minimum of five. So, raising an Attribute from one to two costs five points; raising it from five to six costs twelve points. The player must pay for each level increase. The Attribute Improvement Cost Table summarizes these costs.

Usually, humans can improve each Attribute by one level and no more. However, if the character starts out the game fairly young (somebody with the Teenager Drawback, for instance), you can allow her to improve Attributes by up to two levels, allowing for those growth spurts that can happen before the character reaches 18. Slayers, Vampires and other special critters are not limited to a one- or two-step increase in Attributes, and can improve them up to level 12. Some beings have Attributes well above level 12, but they are not meant to be Cast Members. They should also be approached very respectfully.

SKILLS: Raising a Skill has a cost equal to the new level times two (i.e., to raise a Skill 3 to Skill 4 costs eight experience points). A Skill cannot be improved by more than one level at the end of a game session. There is no limit to Skill Levels.

Attribute improvement cost table

old Attribute level	new Attribute level	cost
1	2	5
2	3	6
3	4	8
4	5	10
5	6	12
6	7	14
7	8	16
8	9	18
9	10	20
10	11	22
11	12	24
+1	+1	2 x New Attribute Level

skill improvement cost table

old skill level	new skill level	cost
0	1	5
1	2	4
2	3	6
3	4	8
4	5	10
5	6	12
6	7	14
7	8	16
8	9	18
9	10	20
10	11	22
11	12	24
+1	+1	2 x New Skill Level



wherefore art thou, scooby?

After a sufficiently large number of sessions of the *BtVS* RPG, and the experience point awards that follow, White Hats can become quite powerful. They will even begin to make the starting Hero Character Type seem puny. At some point, you may want to call quits to the White Hat's ability to purchase Drama Points with experience points on a one-for-one basis. Declare them at Hero level and require them to spend two experience points per Drama Point. Alternatively, leave them at the same purchase ratio and just throw in a few more nasties. Up to you, really.

Getting a brand-new Skill (i.e., one that is at level zero at the beginning of the game) costs five experience points for the first level. After that, it improves normally. This assumes the Cast Member was able to learn the skill somehow, either by having a teacher or through plain old practice.

THE LANGUAGE SKILL: Language is a special case; no matter how good the Cast Members are, they are not going to pick up a new language from one Episode to the next. To improve this Skill, the character needs to spend at least a month studying each language intensively. Only then can she spend the points to gain it.

QUALITIES AND DRAWBACKS: A few Qualities may be acquired after character creation. Most are inborn, and if a character doesn't have them now, she will never have

them (Acute Senses, for example; vision or hearing rarely improves with time). Unless your players present a very convincing in-game rationale for being allowed to buy a specific Quality with experience points, only the following may be purchased after character generation: Contacts, Good Luck, Military Rank, Occult Library, Resources, Slayer, Sorcery, Vampire, and Werewolf. A character might become an Initiative Commando or a Watcher during the course of a Season, but that doesn't grant her the Quality of the same name (which represents years of training and preparation). In some cases, the Quality costs no points—if the Cast Member becomes rich through her own efforts, she should not be charged for the increase in Resources Level, for example.

Some Drawbacks can be "bought" off, although some reason for the change should be provided. In other instances, a Drawback is imposed on a character for the sake of the storyline. A White Hat might get bitten by a werewolf and become one. That character would gain the 3-point Werewolf Drawback, but would not get three character points to spend elsewhere. It is also possible for a player to take on a new Drawback, and receive the character points for it. For example, the Impaired Senses (Hearing) Drawback might be voluntarily accepted by a character who spends a great deal of time practicing with her loud industrial music band.

DRAMA POINTS: Players can also buy Drama Points with experience points, at the rate of one Drama Point per two experience points spent if the Cast Member is a Hero or Experienced Hero, and one for one if she is a White Hat.





4

Playing with Primal Forces

Willow: Mm, sage. I love that smell. And marnox root. You know, a smidge of this mixed with a virgin's saliva . . . does something I know nothing about.

Giles: These forces are not something that one plays around with, Willow. What have you been conjuring?

—3.3 Faith, Hope And Trick

Mojo Anyone?

The dark (and not-so-dark) arts are part and parcel of the Buffyverse, where anyone with the right books can summon forces from the beyond. Of course, calling on these occult powers does not mean your character can control and use them with impunity. Or even get them a little bit right—and not-right in magic is not right, as Willow might put it. More often than not, magic has unintended consequences. A mispronounced word or a missed cue and the result may be the total opposite of what your character intended. But the real kicker—the thing that drives practitioners straight to over-consumption of ice cream goodies—is that even succeeding does not mean everything works perfectly.

In the hands of those with true power—Witches and Warlocks—magic can do almost anything its wielder desires. Spells can affect hundreds of people at once, reshape reality to suit the magician, and even bring back the dead. There is always a price, however, both for success and failure. You have been warned.



MAGIC: WHAT, HOW AND WHO

Willow: Ignis incende.

Buffy: Willow, check you out. Witch-fu.

Willow: It's no big. You just have to balance the elements, so when you affect one, you don't wind up causing . . . (rain starts) I didn't do it, I didn't do it!

—5.1 Buffy vs. Dracula



Magic is the supernatural power to make changes in the world through an act of will rather than physical action. Magic predates humankind; the demons that ruled Earth in the distant past used a variety of dark magical rituals, and some of these rites have survived, preserved by sorcerers with more guts than good sense. Other magicks appear to be the domain of humanity, powers of the Earth used by the Wise Ones—the Wicca—to heal and protect. The lines between dark and light powers are blurred, however. The intent of the magic's wielder, her skill and strength of will, and plain dumb luck all seem to play a part in determining the difference between a spell that helps or heals, and one that corrupts and destroys.

Magic in the Buffyverse works in a number of ways. Most commonly, spells and rituals are used to appeal to, or invoke, some supernatural entity (including spirits, gods and demons) to produce an effect. Powerful magicians (the true Witches and Warlocks), on the other hand, can use their own will to affect the world directly. Finally, there are objects—leftovers from the demon age or artifacts from different dimensions—that hold great power.

Knowledge is all one needs to perform magical feats in the Buffyverse. Rituals, incantations and old formulae have great power, should one dare to use them. It's like baking a cake—as long as you have the recipe and ingredients, you're all set, more or less. Skill and practice are important, too. Even with a recipe, an inexperienced cook can ruin the cake, and it's the same with magic. And of course, if your character screws up, she often gets something a lot worse than a face full of frosting. Using magic is always dangerous, and the wise only use it as a last resort.

witchcraft and witchcraft

Fans of previous Unisystem games may notice that the magic rules in this chapter are not the ones found in the *WitchCraft* and *Armageddon* roleplaying games. That's because our job here is to depict the Buffyverse in all its glory. Magic in the *BLVS RPG* has to feel, look and work like magic in the TV show. The best way to do that is to start from scratch and come up with a system tailored to the setting.

HITTING THE BOOKS:

MAGIC LIBRARIES

Donny: Uh, are all these magic books?

Giles: Uh, private collection. Uh, books for sale are against the walls over there.

Donny: So all these books got spells in 'em? Turn people into frogs, things like that?

Xander: Yeah, we're building a race of frog people. It's a good time.

—5.6 Family

Your character won't find true magic in the Mysticism section of the local chain bookstore—that's for the wanna-blessed-bes. The real spells are usually found in ancient books, scrolls or stone tablets, often hidden for centuries by dark cults. Then again, the most amazing things are on eBay these days, and a few occult books have been scanned into computer databases (with disastrous consequences).

Access to occult books is essential for a budding magician. Giles' private collection makes Sunnydale one of the top occult research centers on the continent. Less fortunate magicians have to make do with a single book of spells. If the spell is not somewhere in her collection, the magician is out of luck, unless she wants to try and devise a spell on her own.

Creating new spells requires a lot of work and is risky. Re-treading all over the cooking analogy, it's basically like using a lot of recipes to make a new one. Your character might create something really good, or end up with the magical equivalent of chocolate-frosted stuffed-crust olive loaf.

Tara: How'd you do that with the light?

Willow: Oh, you know, you taught me.

Tara: I taught you a teeny tinkerbell light.

Willow: Okay, so I tinkered with the tinkerbell.

—5.4 Out of My Mind

Your Cast Member's best bet is to look up a previously developed spell. Most old spells are tried-and-true formulas, developed over centuries of trial and error (and when we say error, we're talking about the kind of error that leads to the sudden onset of galloping leprosy, spontaneous combustion, rains of toads and other fun stuff). The prudent magician goes for the tried-and-true ways. The daring magician risks making a mistake (which brings us back to the galloping leprosy and other nonsense). True Witches and Warlocks (i.e., people with



the Sorcery Quality, see p. 49) have an easier time improvising spells or casting them "on the fly," but even they have to hit the books for the really impressive mojo.

Characters who want to sling spells around need to have some level of the Occult Library Quality (see p. 44) or know someone who does (this is where being best buds with Giles really pays off). In the latter case, of course, access to the books is going to be limited; they are someone else's books after all, and you know how people hate it when you borrow their books and don't return them. Now imagine if the book revealed how to make an inchworm the size of an SUV . . .

THE RITUAL

Willow: Are we ready?

Cordelia: Stinky herbs are a go.

Oz: Did I mention I didn't take Latin?

Willow: Y-you don't have to understand it. You just have to say it. I hope.

Oz: Right.

—2.22 *Becoming, Part Two*

Once your character has found the right spell, whether motivated by desperate need or self-destructive whim or something in between (that's . . . desperate whim?), it's casting time. Most spells require a ritual of some sort. This can be as easy as reading or speaking the words of

the spell, or as complicated as dancing for three hours under the full moon, wearing nothing but the fur of a freshly killed animal (can you say *blech*?). Most spells use ancient languages—Latin, Sumerian, Sanskrit, or even one of the languages that were old before men walked the earth. Your character needn't be fluent in the language in question, but if she stumbles and mispronounces a word, there's a chance that the spell might go bad—as in "no-longer-have-ears" bad.

Many rituals also require special ingredients or components (the ever popular eye of newt, or the dust of twenty-seven old vampires, or a mint copy of *Superdude Comics* #1). The items are usually destroyed or consumed during the ritual (the sacrifice needed to appease or pay off whatever Powers the sorcerer is invoking), so kiss that valuable *Superdude* comic goodbye. Also, Powerful spells often need rare and unique components (the horns of a demon lord or a supermodel without an eating disorder), so even if your character manages to learn the spell, she still may not be able to cast it.

Rituals usually take some time—no less than a few minutes, and often several hours, or even days. More powerful spells tend to require longer rituals, although the exact length can vary a lot. If the ritual is interrupted before it's completed, the spell will fizzle or worse, have some unexpected effect—sorcerers with weak bladders take note.

AFTERMATH

Buffy: What did you do to her?

Willow: Teleportation spell. Still working out the kinks.

Buffy: Where'd you send her?

Willow: Don't know. That's one of the kinks.

—5.13 *Blood Ties*

Once the ritual is complete, the magic happens. The effects may be subtle (the victim's personality changes over a few hours, for example) or spectacular (your basic rain of locusts, pillars of fire, explosions, or other FX-laden extravaganzas). Much of the time, the spell's effects won't be exactly what the caster had in mind. And even if they are, you can't discount the potential for nasty side effects later on. There's no such thing as a free lunch with magic. The fabric of reality cannot be altered cheaply, and there's always a price to pay. A spell could kill a targeted enemy, for example, but the forces invoked to do the deed may run rampant afterwards, killing indiscriminately. The more powerful the spell, the more likely that there will be unexpected occurrences.



BASIC SPELLCASTING

Willow: I tried to communicate with the spirit world, and I so wasn't ready for that. It's like being pulled apart inside. Plus I blew the power for our whole block. Big scare.

—3.2 Dead Man's Party

So, despite all our doom and gloom, your character is ready, willing and able to use magic. What next? Spellcasting takes some preparation and some thought. Can't just start tossing fireballs left and right at the drop of a top hat, y'know.

GAME LINGO

Magical incantations and invocations have a few features that must be taken into account when using the art of mojo in the game. Each spell has a Power Level. This determines the overall strength of the spell—a spell that helps cure a toothache is less powerful than one that can transmute (as that old lady who turns into a cat likes to say) the population of a small city into barnyard animals, for example. The higher the Power Level of a spell, the more difficult it is to cast properly, and the more damaging the consequences of failure. Additionally, spells have Requirements—the ingredients or ritual components needed to attempt the magical endeavor. Finally, spells have an Effect. This is usually descriptive (“all the body hair is removed from the victim,” for example), but can also include rules concepts like damage inflicted, area affected, and duration.

PURPOSE

Willow: We're doing an early-warning incantation. If anything hellgod-ishly powerful comes within a hundred feet of the shop, then screechy siren things will, you know, screech.

—5.13 Blood Ties

First, your character needs to know what she wants to do. Okay, that's sort of a “duh” statement, but it's not as straightforward as it first sounds. With magic, being specific is key. If the caster's intentions are too vague, the powers invoked by the spell may “interpret” them as they wish, and that's rarely a good thing. “I want to make my ex-boyfriend's life miserable” sucks as a “mission statement.” Such a spell might do almost anything, including killing the caster herself (if her death would make the ex-boyfriend miserable), turning him into a



demon (bad if he holds a grudge), or killing everybody he likes (which may include people the caster likes). “I want my ex-boyfriend's nose to spew a constant stream of mucus for five hours starting at 7pm next Saturday” is much better (pretty gross, granted, but better).

So, what can a magician wish for? In theory, anything; in practice, not so much. Magic can affect living and non-living things, can build and destroy, affect people's minds and manipulate matter and energy. There are limits, however. Making objects appear out of thin air is exceedingly difficult, for example. It is a great deal easier to transform or destroy something that already exists rather than create something out of nothing. Permanent effects are more difficult than temporary ones: your character may be able to turn lead into gold, but the gold reverts to lead a short while later. Healing some diseases may have unfortunate side effects—this is especially true of any problem affecting the patient's mind. The more ambitious the purpose, the harder it is to find a spell that can accomplish it. The best spells have simple and straightforward goals.

Finally, spells that squash enemies like bugs or overwhelm all challenges in the Series are not going to be available for the most part (and when they are, they will exact a high price from those who use them). Other than being silly and rude to the Director who has worked so hard to entertain you, that's way too much of a cop out. Magic cannot solve all or even most problems.



RESEARCH

Willow: How is it you always know this stuff? You always know what's going on. I never know what's going on.

Giles: Well, you weren't here from midnight until six researching it.

—1.7 Angel

Alright, your character knows what she wants, and has formulated it with some specificity. Is she going to get it? That depends on how good her research is. Finding the right spell is often more than half the battle. Spells can be discovered or improvised by enhancing or modifying pre-existing spells.

This step is mostly under the Director's control. Once you decide what type of spell your character needs, the Director must decide two things: Is the spell available, and how difficult will it be to find?

The first part is the trickiest one; does the desired spell exist? Generally speaking, any reasonably effective spell should be available—if the spell works within the plot of the Episode, or at least doesn't get in the way. By the same token, once a spell is "discovered," the Cast will have continual access to it, so the Director must consider whether the spell in question is potentially unbalancing or inappropriate in the long term. Alternatively, the spell may exist, but it may require unique components. Of course, you will not know if the spell is available until your character spends some time looking for it (and how much time is up to the Director and your character's research skills).

If the spell exists, the spellcaster needs to find it. Research is mostly done "off camera" on the *BtVS* TV show, so it should be solved with a couple of rolls in the game. Finding a spell takes one hour per Power Level of the spell, minus half an hour per Success Level in an Intelligence and Occultism roll, to a minimum of half an hour (multiple researchers can combine their Success Levels). Or your Director might just say, "you stay up until 6 am and finally locate the proper incantation . . . oh, by the way, not too long 'til class starts."

In some cases, the spell may exist, but is not in your character's collection. In that case, finding the book (or scroll, or stone tablet or whatever) with the spell would be part of the Episode's plot.

Creating new spells works along the same lines. When combining pre-existing spells to create something new, the Director gets to decide if the right "raw

materials" are available. If they are, then all's well, and your wannabe spell-slinger can devise her own charms and enchantments. If they aren't, then she is wasting her time (although a kind Director might allow her to come up with something less effective than she hoped to get—and a less kind one might let her create a spell that will have some seriously unintended effects).

spells as plot devices

On the *BtVS* TV show, magic is often used as a plot device. These spells are found just in time to save the day or start the trouble the Cast has to deal with during the Episode. They are usually powerful, world-changing, and play a vital role in the storyline, be it good or evil. After playing that role, most of those spells disappear, never to be mentioned again. Some examples include the spell to restore Angel's soul during Season Two, the ritual to locate and retrieve Anya's necklace in Season Three, the invocation that awakened the power of the First Slayer during Season Four, and all the Big Bads' evil hexes to raise Things Man Was Not Meant to Know.

Plot device spells should be given special consideration. Generally, they should be one-shot rituals: they can be used once, and cannot be repeated afterwards, for any number of reasons. Some possible explanations include special requirements (like needing an alignment of stars and planets that only happens once every 6,000 years, give or take), components (a unique item that can never be replaced after being consumed by the spell), or circumstances (the spell that gave Angel his soul back might have been uniquely geared towards him, so trying to use it on another vampire—like, say, Spike—would not work). These special spells should not be too difficult to cast, either, so Success Level requirements can be waived or reduced—some spells just "want" to be cast, and anybody with a modicum of skill can use them (not necessarily a good thing).

Finally, plot device spells should be very rare—one or two per Season are probably as common as they should be. If you player types start waiting for some mega-spell to save the day, your Director isn't doing it right.





PREPARATIONS

Setting up the spell may require very little effort (cracking open a book and reading it, for example), but preparations often must be made beforehand. They include things like setting up a ritual site, finding all the ingredients to be used in the spell, or waiting for the right time (midnight, the full moon, a total solar eclipse, or a Jackson Five reunion). Common elements used in many spells include:

Willow: No candles? Well, I brought one. It's extra flamey.

—4.19 *New Moon Rising*

CANDLES: Electricity is for muggles—magic works best in flickering candlelight, just like grandma used to spell-cast. Many rituals call for lighting a number of candles (four to thirteen, usually), generally arranged in a circle, square or pentagram.

Willow: It's no biggie, she-she just got an amulet and a bloodstone.

Anya: That can create a monster.

Willow: Okay, biggie.

—5.8 *Shadow*

ITEMS: Some spells need specific items to be effective. These objects have a special meaning or inherent trigger. They may be crucial to the ritual's success or they may simply make it easier.

Jenny: The first thing we have to do is form the circle of Kayless. Right?

Giles: Form a circle? But there's only two of us. That's really more of a line.

—1.8 *I Robot, You Jane*

MAGIC CIRCLE: Gather a few of your best friends in a circle, have them hold hands and chant and presto!—they'll definitely think you're insane. In the Buffyverse, that's the way a lot of rituals work, though. Sometimes the circle is drawn on the ground, and if someone smudges or erases the lines, the spell fizzles—or does something unexpected (and keep in mind there are precious few good surprises when you're using magic).

Buffy: What's this?

Willow (nervous): A doodle. I do doodle. You too. You do doodle too.

Buffy: This is a witch symbol.

Willow (caught): Okay. Yeah. It is.

—3.11 *Gingerbread*

OCCULT SYMBOLS: Some spells work better when you paint a few pretty pictures. You've got pentagrams, hexagrams, candygrams, runes, Sumerian cuneiform writing, and Amazon Indian pictographs. Stick figures might do it, but don't count on it.

These preparations are plot-driven, not rule-driven. Most of the time in the show, setting up the spell is no big deal and is done largely off-camera. For minor spells, the prep work should be insignificant. If the preparations are important, then getting it done should be part of the Episode's plot or subplots. Fighting a pack of demons to obtain a mystic crystal, maxing out your credit card to buy that last fragment of the Scroll of Butt-Kicking, or making a pact with dark forces to get what's needed—these can all be possible plots and subplots dealing with the preparation of a spell.

SPELLCASTING

Catherine (in Amy's body): Give me the power.

Give me the dark. I call on you, the laughing gods. Let your blackness crawl beneath my skin.

—1.3 *Witch*

Once everything is in place, casting a spell requires a Willpower and Occultism roll. Drama Points can be used normally (see p. 127) to increase the spell's chance to succeed. If the roll fails (i.e. the total is less than nine), the spell doesn't work—the ritual simply fails. Generally, there's no other down side here; your character just wasted some time, candlepower and pretty speechifying. Actually, it's when the roll succeeds that things get interesting . . . in the sense of the ancient Chinese curse "may you live in interesting times."



The roll's Success Levels are compared to the spell's Power Level. If the number of Success Levels is less than the spell's Power Level, something magical happens—but it may not be exactly what the caster intended. The spell's intent may be twisted or perverted, and the caster may be injured—or even killed—as the magicks draw on her life force to fulfill their purpose. The Director can decide what happens, or she can roll on the Spell Side Effect Table below.

If the roll results in Success Levels greater than or equal to the spell's Power Level, all's well and the spell works. Unless, of course, the spell takes an unexpected turn no matter how many Success Levels were rolled. In some cases, a spell might work too well. But no good and true Director would do something like that, now would she? And I have some rare *Star Wars: Episode I* action figures for sale that you just can't get anywhere else . . .

Casting multiple spells without resting is very difficult, as the magician's will is sapped by the constant strain. Every successive spell cast without a significant period of rest (at least two hours per spell Power Level) suffers a cumulative -2 penalty. So, the second spell of the day is at -2, the third at -4, and so on. Only powerful Witches can cast multiple spells in a row, and even then they'll probably have to burn some Drama Points to keep it up. Even worse, using the same spell more than once adds an additional -1 to the penalties above.

EXAMPLUS TOTALUS: Willow is trapped in a room. The door has several locks on it, and the walls are reinforced steel (although she doesn't know that).

First she tries to unlock the door with a spell. It works, but only one of the locks is released. Frustrated, Willow decides to try and blow out a portion of the wall. That spell suffers a -2 penalty given Willow's fatigue. Reinforced steel says "no way". Realizing now how strong the walls are, Willow returns to the locked door. She attempts the unlock spell again. This time it suffers a -4 penalty due to fatigue, and -1 for repeated use—the total modifier is -5.

magic in combat

In your typical fantasy roleplaying game, magicians are walking artillery pieces, able to fire spells left and right and smite orcs and goblins by the cartload. In the Buffyverse, only Witches and Warlocks can use magic effectively in combat, and even they can't just blast away at their enemies for very long. Magic is mostly the stuff of lengthy rituals and careful preparation, and a fistfight isn't the right place for it. Practitioners should do their spells before or after a fight. During is just not a good time to crack open the old leather-bound edition of *Ye Compleat WicceCrafte* and start chanting.

Any spell that requires a ritual fails if the caster is attacked before the ritual is complete. Witches can use their speed-casting ability (see p. 143) to invoke spells in combat, but even they are hindered by the roll penalties for multiple castings.

spell side effect table

Roll a D10 and add the Spell's Power Level.

roll total result

4 or less	Phew! Lucked out, and the spell still works.
5-7	The spell is delayed. It appears the spell failed, but it will work normally at a time of the Director's choosing (ideally, a dramatically appropriate time).
8-10	The spell works, but it's less effective than expected. The duration, damage or effect is halved (if not applicable, then the spell is delayed as above).
11-13	The spell works, but the caster is damaged by its energies. The magician takes five Life Points of damage per Power Level of the spell.
14-15	The spell affects the wrong target (the Director decides who gets to be the lucky recipient).
16+	Spell has a completely unexpected effect. The magical energies run rampant, often causing physical damage to the area or summoning dangerous entities from beyond our reality. This also happens if the spell is disrupted during a critical point.



Magician, Heal Thyself?

Giles: The truth is, uh, the . . . mystical and the medical aren't meant to mix, Buffy. Sorry, um . . . the human mind is very delicate. Too much can go wrong.

Tara: Yeah, I've heard stories about people trying healing spells . . . if we did something, it could make things a lot worse, Buffy.

—5.8 Shadow

Most fantasy roleplaying games have powerful healing magicks—a cleric says a quick prayer, or a warrior chugs a potion, and presto: wounds disappear, and people are hale and hearty again (until the next time they get clobbered by orcs or what have you, that is). Magic in the Buffyverse doesn't work like that though.

Undoing damage, curing disease and the like are not things that can be done lightly in this setting. At best, magic can accelerate the natural healing process, but trying to instantly cure someone is likely to have serious side effects—for example, a spell that regenerates a wound might also give the patient cancer, as cells start multiplying without rhyme or reason.

Since no healing spells have been used in the TV show, this is open to interpretation of course. We suggest that healing spells, if any exist at all, speed up regular healing (doubling or tripling the normal rate, for example; see p. 122). If you want flashier “poof, you're all healed” magic, you can use the magic damage guidelines (see pp. 144-145) and reverse them for healing effects. Directors should be aware, however, that such a spell will be used regularly and will add a significant non-BtVS “feel” to the Series. On the other hand, it will be very useful in combat, particularly for Scoobies.



EFFECT

Giles: I assume the, uh, all the spells are reversed. It was my first casting, so . . . I may have got it wrong.

—1.3 Witch

Finally, we get to the streams of pretty sparkles, big flashes of light, clouds of smoke, thunderous roars and other heady stuff that happens when a spell goes off. Most spell effects are pretty straightforward—somebody gets turned into a rat, a magical portal opens or closes, a spirit is summoned or exorcised. A few spells have variable effects—the duration or damage of the spell is determined by either the Success Levels of the casting roll or the magician's Willpower.

DISPELLING MAGICAL EFFECTS

Willow: Let the healing power begin. Let my will be safe again. As these words of peace are spoken, let this harmful spell be broken.

—4.9 Something Blue

Some spells have continuing effects (curses, for example) or may even be permanent (some transformation spells). Canceling their effects requires access to the spell itself (ideally taking it directly from the magician's own books) and a spellcasting roll as above with the effective Power Level of the spell reduced by one (it's easier to undo a spell and return nature to its natural state).

There is another way to stop an ongoing magic effect—find the caster and get her to stop the spell, say by cutting off her head or turning her into a sports trophy. Either way, continuing spells stop working, but permanent ones may not. For this reason, and others, wholesale slaughter is discouraged.





Recycling spells

In the *BtVS* TV show, spells rarely make return appearances. In a game though, once a spell effect is out there, players are going to want to use it again. And again. And a few times more after that. This may become a problem.

If the spell in question creates some light or cures acne, it's no biggie. Spells that are not too overpowering don't need much in the way of control, and occult-oriented Cast Members should be able to use them as often as they need. If it's something a little more serious—say, an “Instant Big Bad Kill in a Bottle” spell, there's a problem. This is easily handled as long as the Director prepares things well. Mega-powerful spells should always require a special time and place (someplace that is hard to access, or some time that is very unusual), or special “ingredients” that can't be found regularly (or can only be found once, period).

Alternatively—and this has some basis on the *BtVS* TV show—spells may be one-cast deals. Yep, the Director could rule that a given person has only one shot at casting a spell. Once successful (or not), that person may never cast that exact spell again. This forces players to come up with different methods to modify existing spells or research entirely new magical effects. Not overly “realistic,” mind you, but we dispensed with “realism” a while ago, no?

WITCHES AND WARLOCKS

Giles: Are you a witch?

Jenny: I don't have that kind of power.

—1.8 *I Robot, You Jane*

Anyone can use magic, but Witches and Warlocks live, drink and breathe magic. They are the pros of the magic biz. In the Buffyverse, these powerful humans are able to apply their will directly on reality. They can skip some or even all of the ritual steps and components, at least for the simpler magicks. It's not clear whether this is an inherited trait, but it does seem to run strong in some families. The power can be awakened by exposure to the supernatural—usually (but not necessarily) by studying and practicing magic. A Witch who has mastered her powers can be the match of a Slayer or a powerful vampire. Of course, getting to that level isn't easy, or pain-free.

SORCERY: POWER OF THE WITCH

Willow: I have a shot at being a bad ass Wicca, and what better place to learn?

—3.19 *Choices*

Witches and Warlocks must have at least one level of the Sorcery Quality (see p. 49). A beginner Witch (Willow at the start of Season Three, for example) has one or two Sorcery levels. A powerful Witch may have five or more levels (Willow in Season Five). Sorcery



goes beyond mere spellcraft, and provides a number of special abilities for those who can wield it. Either through practice or because of some inherent power, Witches can use magic more easily than your average student of the mystical arts.

Sorcery is a five-point/level Quality. It's more appropriate for Heroes than Scoobies, but even sidekick types can have a few levels at the beginning of a game. Characters can gain one or more levels of Sorcery after character creation by spending experience points.

WITCH AND WARLOCK POWERS

Willow: How long have you been practicing?

Tara: Always, I mean, since I um, was little . . . my, my mom used to . . . she um . . . she had a lot of power, like you.

Willow: Oh I'm not . . . I don't have much in the way of power. Really, I mean most of my potions come out soup. Besides . . . spells going awry, friends in danger . . . I'm definitely nothing special.

Tara: No, you are.

—4.10 Hush

So what can your character do with all those shiny levels of Sorcery? Among other things, Sorcery helps her improve spell casting, use magic more quickly and efficiently, move objects without casting spells, and, last but not least, gives her that cool solid-black-eyes look that helps make friends and influence people (okay, that last part isn't always a perk).

IMPROVED SPELLCASTING

Buffy (re: Wicca group): Sorry it was a bust. I know you were looking to go further in that department.

Willow: Well, I'd like to float something bigger than a pencil someday . . .

—4.10 Hush

Characters add their Sorcery level to any spellcasting roll (see p. 139), to a maximum bonus of +5. After that, additional levels of Sorcery stop adding up (although they still have other uses). With this bonus, Witches can cast high-power spells with a better chance of success than your typical book-reading spell-flinger. This can come in handy when the final showdown with a Big Bad is at hand.

TELEKINESIS

Willow: It's all about emotional control. Plus, obviously, magic.

—3.16 Doppelgängerland

Witches can move objects with the force of their will. This "telekinesis" does not require spellcasting, just concentration and some effort. It can't be done indefinitely, though. To use this power, the Witch rolls a D10 and adds her Willpower and Sorcery levels. Each Success Level in the roll becomes a point of "Strength" for the telekinetic effect. So, if the roll results in five Success Levels, the Witch could move an object as if she had a Strength 5—good enough to pick up a grown man and slam him against a wall (see p. 31). Lifting and tossing things around requires no additional rolls, but precise tasks (guiding a key into a keyhole, staking a vamp) require a Perception and Dexterity roll, or a roll using Dexterity and an appropriate skill (staking a vamp would use Getting Medieval). These tasks have a -1 penalty because the Witch is manipulating the object at a distance. Tossing small objects at someone also requires a Willpower and Sorcery roll, and must overcome the target's defense roll or score. The damage value of such an attack is two times the Success Levels rolled.

Two or more Witches can combine their power to move very large objects. Witches working together roll as above, and add their combined Success Levels to determine the Strength of the effect.

This power does not last long. Each turn after the first, another Willpower and Sorcery roll must be made, with a cumulative -2 penalty. So the second Turn the roll suffers a -2 penalty; on the fifth Turn, a -8 penalty is incurred. This penalty applies to all further uses of Telekinesis until the Witch gets at least three hours of rest. This ability is good for throwing a few things around, but your character can't go all Carrie with it.

QUICK CASTING

Willow: Thicken.

—5.19 Tough Love

Most spells require the caster to recite a formula or incantation out loud, or perform some type of ritual. All that hooah takes time. Witches can cast some spells almost instantly, with only a single word or phrase, or even just a simple gesture. This won't work on spells that require a very specific ritual and cannot be sped up, but some can be cast in a few seconds (as an action in a Turn). Whether a spell can be quick cast is indicated in that spell's description.



CREATING NEW SPELLS

Sooner or later (say in the first Episode, if not the first game session), a budding occultist is going to want to cast a spell that is not in the list below, and has never been used in the TV show. So how does a well-meaning Director determine details like the spell's Power Level? Have no fear, this section gives enough information to create a new spell in a couple of minutes. Run through the analysis, talking things over with the player, and away you go.

More detailed spell-creation rules will appear in *The Magic Box*, the (what else?) magic supplement for the BVS RPG.

POWER LEVEL

Willow: I've got the basics down: levitation, charms, glamours. I just feel like I've plateaued Wicca-wise.

Buffy: What's the next level?

Willow: Transmutation, conjuring, bringing forth something from nothing. Gets pretty close to the primal forces. A little scary.

—4.4 Fear Itself

To create a spell, first figure out its Power Level. To do that, simply go down the checklist below, pick and choose the appropriate elements, and you're all set. Well, that and a little creativity. Nobody said this creating-spell stuff was going to be entirely brainless. No matter what the Power Level modifiers total, a spell has to have a minimum Power Level 1.

PEOPLE AFFECTED

Willow: I've been charting their essences, mapping out . . . I think . . . If I can get close enough, I may be able to reverse what Glory did. Kind of take back what she took from Tara. It might weaken Glory, or make her less coherent, or make all our heads explode—I'm still working out the details.

—5.22 The Gift

The more people (or pus-monsters . . . or bed-wetting spirits) a spell affects, the more powerful it is. Cursing one person is easier than cursing all of Sunnydale. The same applies to summoning, transforming or infecting spells, just to name a few.

NOBODY: The spell does not directly affect a person—creating a light or producing a spark counts as this type,

even if, say, the spark is used to set a fire that could burn somebody. No modifier to Power Level.

ONE PERSON: +1 Power Level.

2-10 PEOPLE: +2 Power Levels.

UP TO 100 PEOPLE: +3 Power Levels.

A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE IN A TOWN (EVERYONE DOWNTOWN, FOR EXAMPLE): +4 Power Levels.

AN ENTIRE TOWN: +5 Power Levels.

ANYTHING BIGGER: +6 Power Levels.

LIMITED TARGET SELECTION: The spell only affects a specific subset of people—vampires, demons of a given subspecies, Slayers, redheads, etc. -1 Power Level.

EFFECT STRENGTH

Tara: I mean it frightens me how powerful you're getting.

Willow: That's a weird word.

Tara: "Getting"?

Willow: It frightens you? I frighten you?

Tara: That's so not what I meant. I meant impresses, impressive . . .

—5.19 Tough Love

Power Level indicates how powerful the spell is (stunning, no?). Curing someone's hiccups is easier than bringing the dead back to life. Not that anyone would want to do such a gruesome thing . . .

MINOR: Anything that does not significantly alter or damage the subject. The spell may annoy or amuse, but not kill or heal. Examples: causing an unsightly rash; inflicting one point of damage per Success Level; creating a small globe of light. No modifier.

NOTICEABLE: The effect is strong enough to injure people, break things, and produce impressive lightshows. Objects (and living beings) cannot be transformed (either physically, mentally or spiritually), just harmed or healed. Examples: inflicting damage equal to the magician's Willpower for every Success Level; shattering all the glass or other fragile objects in a room or a small house; starting a large fire. +1 Power Level.

SEVERE: The effect can alter a person's emotions and senses, inflict severe injuries, and reshape (but not transform) matter. Beings from other dimensions can be summoned at this level. Examples: paralyzing a victim (reduce Dexterity by one per Success Level); inflicting damage in the amount of Willpower (doubled) per Success Level; changing a person's feelings (a love spell, or turning grown people into teenagers); shattering or



molding rock or metal; creating illusions that fool at least three senses; striking somebody blind, deaf, or mute; summoning a demonic minion; raising a zombie. +2 Power Levels.

MAJOR: The spell can transform living beings, reshaping their very essence and soul. Destructive spells are very . . . well . . . destructive to both living and inanimate things. A spell of this level can summon a dangerous spirit entity. Examples: turning a person into an animal or demonic creature; summoning a powerful demon (not quite Big Bad level, but lieutenant/chief henchman types); changing the properties of a material—turning metal as soft as mud or “hardening” air into a barrier; inflicting damage at a rate of three times Willpower points of damage per Success Level. +3 Power Levels.

AWESOME: The spell can do incredible things, like restore a vampire’s soul, throw lightning bolts, create impenetrable walls of force, or summon a demon that will eat the world. Examples: inflicting five times Willpower points of damage per Success Level; bringing back the dead; summoning a Big Bad-level creature. +5 Power Levels.

Combining effects is difficult but may be done. Each added effect of the same or lower power increases the effect level by one. For example, transforming someone’s body and mind (turning someone into a demon who thinks like a demon is more powerful than turning somebody into a demon while keeping her mind and soul intact) accounts for two Major-level effects and suffers an Awesome-level modifier. Combining Awesome-level effects is asking for trouble, if it’s even possible. No such spell should go off without some dire repercussions, no matter what the “witchie’s” Sorcery level. Some things, you just don’t mess with.

DURATION

Willow: It feels, and looks, like the ionizing spell is wearing off.

—4.13 The I in Team

How long a spell lasts can be important. Spells that harm or destroy don’t have a duration—they cause their damage and are done with—but most other spells have a “shelf life.” The longer the effects last, the more powerful the spell is. The Success Levels of the casting roll play a role here.

MEANINGLESS: Duration is not a factor in this spell; the effect happens and the magic is gone. No modifier.

SHORT: One Turn per Success level. -1 Power Level.

MEDIUM: One minute per Success Level. No modifier.

LONG: One hour per Success Level. +1 Power Levels.

VERY LONG: One day per Success Level. +2 Power Levels.

PERMANENT (OR UNTIL DISPELLED OR CANCELLED): +3 Power Levels.

Bolt of Apollo

Alright, let’s take the spell creation rules for a spin. Say your character is a hotshot Witch and she wants to find a spell that lets her blast vampires. “Slayers have stakes. I want to have a cool ‘blast vampires’ spell.” Your Director says, “Not unreasonable.” Besides, she knows that you get cranky when she says no.

Your Director decides that the spell is about as damaging as a regular weapon, with a few extra whistles, and should not be too unbalancing. Your Witch won’t be able to cast it a lot, not without using lots of Drama Points, and it could make a neat “signature move” for the character.

“Make an Intelligence and Occultism roll to see how long it takes you to find the spell,” she says. Then you and she start going down the checklist. For people affected, you pick “one”—the spell can affect one vamp at a time. That gives the spell a base Power Level 1. On the other hand, only vampires are affected, so the Limited Target Selection modifier applies, bringing it back down to zero.

Next you turn to Spell Effect. It seems to be Severe—it does a base damage Willpower doubled (eight points in this Witch’s case) per Success Level. So, if the roll gives your character three Success Levels, the spell inflicts 24 points of damage to the vamp, and the spell is especially damaging to vampires. Your Director decides it acts as fire, making the damage hard to heal. Severe Effects increase the Power Level by two; since an additional feature of the same level (lasting damage) is added, this raises the effect level to Major, for a total of +3 to the Power Level.

Duration is meaningless—the spell strikes, does damage, and it’s over, and no Requirements apply either, so the base Power Level plus modifiers is three. “The spell is called the Bolt of Apollo,” your Director explains when you are done rolling for research. “When you cast it, you can throw a piece of sunlight that will toast vampire flesh.”



SPELL REQUIREMENTS

Buffy: Giles, where would she be casting these spells?

Giles: Oh, she needs a, a sacred space. A-a-a pentagram, um, large pot.

—1.3 Witch

The more complex the requirements of the spell, the lower the Power Level. That means that some very powerful spells can be cast fairly easily—as long as all the ingredients and requirements are in place.

NO SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Just recite a few magic words, and perhaps use some simple ingredients (candles, herbs and spices, last week's copy of *TV Guide*), and you're all set. No modifier.

LENGTHY RITUAL: The spell needs a ritual lasting anywhere from half an hour to several hours. Not even Witches can cast the spell any faster than that. -1 Power Level.

RARE INGREDIENTS: The spell requires some hard-to-find materials. Examples: human sacrifice, a rare magical artifact, a body part of a specific demon (most demons are really uncooperative about giving up body parts), and so on. -2 Power Levels.

WAY-RARE INGREDIENTS: This requirement is not unique, but it's close. There won't be many on any given continent, if not dimension. Examples: the feathers from an endangered species of bird; ancient relics found only in museums or really good occult collections; a normal, living girl that has dated Xander. -3 Power Levels.

RESTRICTED USE: The spell can only be cast under very specific conditions. This limit should prevent the spell from being cast more often than once or twice a year. -4 Power Levels.

WAY-RESTRICTED USE: The spell can only be used once, or once every several years (at least five years, and maybe centuries or millennia). This effectively allows one chance to cast the spell for the entire Series. Alternatively, the spell needs a one-of-a-kind ingredient. Once it gets used, the spell can never be cast again. Use it wisely grasshopper, 'cause you'll only get to try it once. -5 Power Levels.



SPELL LIST

We'd love to list every spell used in the first five seasons of the *BtVS* TV show in this book. Unfortunately, it would end up competing with the Yellow Pages in thickness. We don't want to leave you hanging though, so here're a half-dozen spells that can be useful in a game, or can serve as inspiration to recreate other spells from the series or make up new ones. They are presented in order of Power Level.

REVOKE INVITATION

Willow: . . . his verbes, consensus rescissus est.

Buffy (flatly): Sorry, Angel. I've changed the locks.

—2.17 Passion

QUICK CAST: No

POWER LEVEL: 3

REQUIREMENTS: Moss herbs (burned during the ritual), some holy water, crosses, and a Latin incantation rescinding the invitation.

EFFECT: Say, for one odd reason or another, you invite a vampire into your home. This can lead to no end of trouble. In those cases, this spell fixes your mistake and prevents that particular bloodsucker from darkening (or at least moving beyond) your doorstep again. Once successfully cast, the vamp is again incapable of entering your dwelling. Of course, another invite undoes the whole thing, and you are back at mistake one.

THESPIA'S DEMON DETECTION

Willow: Well this one should be really fun too.

We conjure the goddess Thespia to help us locate demonic energy in the area.

Tara: The goddess Thespia. Are you sure we're ready for that?

Willow: You and me! This is beneath us.

—4.14 Goodbye Iowa

QUICK CAST: No

POWER LEVEL: 4

REQUIREMENTS: Four crystals and some string to define a square representing the area to be searched, two casters, some sand blown into the square.

EFFECT: The sand will turn different colors, indicating different species of demons in the area. The spell can locate all demons in an area as large as a small town or several city blocks. Unfortunately, the spell has a very



short duration, so the caster knows where the demons are at the moment the spell is cast, not where they will be later on.

SPELL OF BLINDNESS

Giles: Witchcraft. Blinding your enemy to disorient and disable them is . . . it's classic!

—1.3 Witch

QUICK CAST: No

POWER LEVEL: 5

REQUIREMENTS: A doll with some personal effect of the victim attached to it, and a lengthy ritual (about an hour long).

EFFECT: The victim is blinded until the spell is reversed or dispelled. Neat way to get back at people you don't like, or want to put out of commission for some reason (it can be a really, really weak reason, depending on who you are).

BLOODSTONE VENGEANCE SPELL

Willow: We've gotta get her to a hospital!

Giles: They can't help her. This is a bloodstone vengeance spell.

—1.3 Witch

QUICK CAST: No

POWER LEVEL: 6

REQUIREMENTS: A personal effect of the victim, a lengthy ritual (about an hour's worth).

EFFECT: This spell eventually kills the victim, draining her of one Constitution level every hour. When Constitution is reduced below zero, the victim dies. At first, the victim appears to have had a bit too much joy juice to drink (as in a gallon or two too much). Then her immune system shuts down, and she becomes weak and feverish. If the spell is reversed before death, the victim returns to normal in a matter of seconds.

LIGHTNING BOLT

Willow: I . . . owe . . . you . . . pain!

—5.19 Tough Love

QUICK CAST: Yes

POWER LEVEL: 6

REQUIREMENTS: Access to the book of *Darkest Magick*. Half an hour's worth of casting; for Witches or Warlocks, a mere gesture.



EFFECT: Lightning strikes the victim (who can be anywhere in line of sight of the caster), inflicting five times Willpower points of damage per Success Level. This powerful spell is one of the flashier magicks available. Unfortunately for the forces of goodness and light, it is not easy to cast, and requires access to the book of *Darkest Magick*, which can't exactly be found at your local Barnes & Noble, or even your typical witch's library.

AMY'S "RAT-IFICATION" SPELL

Willow: The only real witch here is fuzzy little Amy.

Buffy: I think you're being too hard on yourself.

Willow: She's got access to powers I can't even invoke. I mean first she's a perfectly normal girl . . . (Amy turns back to human) . . . and then "poof" she's a rat. (Amy turns back to a rat) I could never do something like that.

—4.9 Something Blue

QUICK CAST: Yes

POWER LEVEL: 7

REQUIREMENTS: A short phrase invoking the power of Hecate.

EFFECT: The victim is transformed into a rat, with normal rat intelligence and instincts. The victim's Life Point pool is reduced to 1/3 normal and her behavior has to be rat-like (i.e., care only about finding food, mating with other rats, and hiding from cats and exterminators). The spell remains in effect until reversed or dispelled. This effect only works on humans (including Slayers, as Buffy found to her chagrin), not on vampires, demons and assorted non-humans.





5 Sunnydale After Dark

Xander: We know underground. That's a start.

Buffy: Sure, in a town with 14 million square miles of sewer.

Xander: Plus a lot of natural cave formations, and a gateway to Hell. Yeah, this does resemble square one.

—3.10 Amends

Ah, Sunnydale.

This quaint California town enjoys beautiful weather (except for the occasional holiday snowfall—well, just that one time), friendly people (during the day, at least), and a very, very active nightlife. Conveniently located, accessible by ship, bus or air, and a mere two-hour drive from Los Angeles, Sunnydale boasts some of the lowest property prices in the state and a constantly fluctuating population. Drop by and visit, won't you? You might end up staying for the rest of your life . . . and maybe a bit longer than that.

Much like on our favorite show, Sunnydale is the "default" setting of a *BtVS* RPG Series (although several other options are explored in *Chapter Seven: Episodes, Seasons and Drama* and in *BtVS* RPG supplements). There are plenty of good reasons to pick Sunnydale as the backdrop for your game: lots of cool locations, colorful locals, a strategically-located Hellmouth and a population of vamps and demons too numerous to shake a stick at (although why you would want to do that we can't say). It's also familiar to fans of the show: when you Director folk say "you're at the Bronze," the players know you are talking about the club, not the metal.

So with no further ado (we always wanted to say that), we present an overview of Sunnydale and its (mostly) ordinary citizenry.



OVERVIEW

Cordelia: It's in the bad part of town.

Buffy: Where's that?

Cordelia: About a half a block from the good part of town. We don't have a whole lot of town here.

—1.1 'Welcome to the Hellmouth'

Sunnydale's recorded history began a few centuries ago, when a small Spanish settlement was founded there. Perhaps taking a cue from the natives, the colonists named the town Boca del Infierno—the Hellmouth. At some point, the more tourism-friendly (but less accurate) moniker "Sunnydale" was adopted. Despite a nasty earthquake in 1937 (not quite as bad as the one in 1812 though), and a mortality rate several times higher than the national average (of Colombia), the little community has grown and prospered over the years.

Sunnydale is chock full of interesting sites: two colleges, a zoo, a state-of-the-art medical facility, and no fewer than forty-three (some say forty-four) churches of assorted denominations—not bad for a "one Starbucks town." And that's just the stuff on the surface, the kind of info you'll see in tourism brochures. Beneath lies the world of the Hellmouth, a focal point of demonic activity whose mystical energies affect everything and everyone in the area. Living near a Hellmouth can be a real experience—Sunnydale is a place where a boy in a coma can make people's nightmares come true, or a nerd can build a robot girlfriend or bring his brother back to life. Demons, vampires and stranger critters flock to the town like frat boys to a kegger. It makes life exciting—shorter, most likely, but exciting.

CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

Chief: I need to say something to the media people.

Snyder: So?

Chief: So? You want the usual story? Gang related? PCP?

Snyder: What'd you have in mind? The truth?

Chief: Right. Gang related. PCP.

—2.3 'School Hard'

The people of Sunnydale have been exposed, both collectively and individually, to enough weirdness to fill several seasons of *The Twilight Zone*. Given the frequency of magical curses, vampire and demon rampages, mysterious disappearances and strange lights in the sky, you'd

think people would get a clue that there's something going on. And yet the townsfolk seem to blissfully ignore the existence of the supernatural. Most residents simply try to get along and pursue happiness in the best middle-class American tradition. When the family next door disappears without any notice or explanation, people don't talk about it much. Students get used to having classmates drop out (or drop dead) on an almost weekly basis. Things happen, but unless they happen to someone directly, they're usually ignored.

A lot of it can be blamed on the "rational" mindset—vampires, ghosts, and ghouls don't exist, so if you are the first to start babbling about them, you'll get carted off by the smiling guys in white to a nice padded room. It's really hard to start the water-cooler talk with "Say, did you see Dan running around last night, three days after his funeral?" Instead, people try to come up with reasonable explanations—drug-related crimes, teenage vandalism, or plain bad luck—instead of murdering demons or predatory vamps. It sounds better, it doesn't depress real estate values as much, and it's much easier to accept when gossiping in the kitchen.

But there's more than that. A lot of people—cops, firemen, ER doctors—just see too much weirdness to write it off. And most of them just lie their butts off to the public. For the better part of a century, the town was governed by Mayor Richard Wilkins (I, II and III), who helped cover up most of the supernatural occurrences as part of his dealings with the dark powers. Taking his lead, most public officials learned to look the other way when it came to the strange and unusual, or come up with plausible (if increasingly lame) explanations for them.

The Mayor is no longer with us—a small matter involving a big bomb and Sunnydale High School—but his legacy lives on. The local government knows a lot more about what goes on in Sunnydale, but it hushes things up. The Feds go right along with the official ignorance; yet they are particularly knowledgeable given the Initiative's former presence. Even so, it wouldn't do to admit that when it comes to Sunnydale, even Uncle Sam can't guarantee the safety of its citizens.

And so it goes. To be sure, plenty of people pack up and move as soon as they realize there's more to Sunnydale than meets the eye, but there's always someone else ready to take their place. The cost of living in the town is so low that newcomers are continually tempted to move there, usually to a house being sold by the estate of the previous owner, whose demise was both untimely and mysterious.





PLACES TO GO

Dracula: You're known throughout the world.

Buffy: Nah. Really?

Dracula: Why else would I come here—for the sun?

—5.1 *Buffy vs. Dracula*

So what is there to do in Sunnydale? While not exactly a bustling metropolis (despite having its own superhero), Sunnydale has a lot of places of interest for the bored, adventurous or suicidal. And of course, even going to the corner store can become a life-or-death struggle in this little California town, so excitement can be found anywhere.

SUNNYDALE HIGH

Jonathan: We don't talk about it much, but it's no secret that Sunnydale High isn't really like other high schools. A lot of weird stuff happens here.

Crowd: Zombies! Hyena people! Snyder!

—3.20 *The Prom*

High school can be an ordeal in any city or town. In Sunnydale, just surviving was a major accomplishment. Students seemed to die a lot at good old Sunnydale High, home of the Razorbacks. Some of it was the usual teenage stupidity stuff—alcohol, drugs, driving while on alcohol and drugs, and so on. But most of it was a bit more unnatural.

Many supernatural critters saw the school as a buffet table, full of tasty treats to nibble on. Due to an unfortunate coincidence (or an unfortunate planned event), Sunnydale High was built right on top of the Hellmouth. That made life more than a little hard for the students—not only did they have to contend with classes and monsters, but they were exposed to the supernatural energies of the Hellmouth on a daily basis. As a result, the school had an unusual number of people with strange abilities, magical curses, or other paranormal problems. Being a teenager brought a whole slew of problems. Being a teenager in Sunnydale plain sucked.

The school had a real problem retaining principals—they went through three in five years. Faculty members also seemed to have trouble sticking around (or, more accurately, staying alive). SHS had a lot of lovely facilities, though—football fields, basketball courts, a nice auditorium (used annually for the Talent Show), Olympic-sized pool, and a well-stocked lab (although a lot of ingredients seemed to run out unusually fast). When Giles was the librarian, Sunnydale High had probably the most comprehensive occult collection this side of the Atlantic. The cafeteria food wasn't the best, but it was only laced with rat poison the one time, and nobody actually died.

At the end of Season Three, the school was blown to bits in a freak explosion (well . . . "freak" to the authorities and town folks anyway). A new school has been built though and all of the old problems remain.

GOING TO COLLEGE

After high school, many lucky survivors get to escape Sunnydale and head off to college somewhere safer... like Somalia. Higher education is possible without ever leaving town, however. Sadder still, most of the students at the local colleges are from other parts of the nation and the world, and they have no idea what they are getting into. Freshman year is just murder on the students. Seriously.

CRESTWOOD COLLEGE

This small but exclusive institution isn't a party school, not really; more like a "secret society that practices human sacrifice" school. To be fair, only one fraternity, the now-disbanded Delta Zeta Kappa chapter, was involved in the human sacrifice bit... as far as we know, that is. Crestwood hasn't been featured much in the last few seasons of the show, which can provide you devious Directors with a fresh sub-setting within Sunnydale.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA—SUNNYDALE

Buffy (somewhat appalled): Please tell me you're going somewhere with this.

Willow: Nope. (Shows Buffy a letter.) I'm not going anywhere.

Buffy: U.C. Sunnydale?

Willow: I will be matriculating with the class of 2003.

Buffy: Are you serious?

Willow: Say, isn't that where you're going?

—3.19 Choices

UCSD is an accredited university with a full selection of courses, a large student body, and its own secret government organization hidden beneath a frat house. It's a great place to learn, to party and to have a chance encounter with some Hellmouth-spawned evil or another.

The university hosts a number of sororities and fraternities (but no Delta Zeta Kappas, apparently). UCSD isn't much of a party school, although the residents of Porter Dorm certainly treat it as one. There're plenty of places to do some serious studying and research, including the Science Center and the Sunnydale Cultural Partnership Center. The main library is gigantic, although its occult section lacks the breadth and depth of Giles' collection.

For fun, students can visit Brookside Park (although there are strange things lurking between the trees sometimes), drop by several local bars, or have their caffeine fix at the Grotto coffee house. There is a college pub

where the over-21 crowd can indulge in a little beer, although it's a good idea to stay away from Black Frost—that stuff will turn you into a Neanderthal.

All in all, it's not a terrible place to get a degree and discover your true self—as long as your roommate isn't a demon, or you don't turn out to be "catch of the day" for some critter or another.

PARTY TIME

Xander: I'm not worried. If there's something bad out there we'll find, you'll slay, we'll party!

—1.10 Nightmares

You can't be out slaying every night (well, you could, but then you'd be a dull person with no life). When the younger residents of Sunnydale need to take a break from reality, there are a few places to go and have some nice clean fun (or even some sorta dirty fun).

THE BRONZE

Willow: I can't believe you've never been here. The Bronze is the coolest place in Sunnydale. Of course, there's not a lot of competition. I think the vending machine at Burgin's came in second.

—4.16 Who Are You?

The place to be if you're cool, the Bronze features live music from such bands as *Dingoes Ate My Baby* and *Shy* (both disbanded recently after losing important members). This is where you go to dance, listen to some cutting-edge music, and be held hostage by marauding vampires planning a massacre. The Bronze is not in the nicest part of Sunnydale, and prostitutes, vagrants and vampires are common encounters late at night (although the vampires eat the vagrants and the prostitutes, keeping their numbers down). Folks on their way home from the Bronze should walk briskly, pay attention to their surroundings, and get ready to take off running.



THE FISH TANK

Willow: Sheila's a no-show? She goes to this really rank bar. The Fish Tank? Sometimes they have raids and other stuff that can make you tardy.

—2.3 School Hard

This supposedly adults-only dive is the kind of place rough-and-ready bikers and their hangers-on—and the occasional slumming vampire—gather. Definitely not a nice crowd here, with a lot of shady deals, nasty fights, and assorted mayhem (mostly non-supernatural) happening on a regular basis. Still, not everyone in Sunnydale is a student, professional or vampire (despite appearances to the contrary) and those folks get thirsty now and again as well.

SUNSET CLUB

This very exclusive club catered to vampire groupies—kids who had read way too much Anne Rice and thought vamps were just the kewlest thing this side of black lipstick. Most of the Sunset Club learned the error of their ways, and barely avoided being vampire crudités (thanks to the efforts of our fave girl-with-stake). Still, it's likely some are still putting on the pale makeup and dark clothing, and acting all tragically hip and stuff. Most vamps find the whole thing mildly amusing, and refuse to turn the groupies into vampires, no matter how much they beg.

WILLY'S PLACE

Spike: Double shot of O neg, 'keep. An' make it the good stuff, I don't want no freakin' orangutan.

Willy: Got ya.

—4.14 Goodbye Iowa

This seedy establishment (okay, Willy got a deep fryer and cleaned the place up a bit, but it's still seedy) caters to vampires and demons (and a few humans who don't mind the company). For the most part, violence is kept to a minimum, but when it gets violent, it gets really violent. Not a nice place to visit, even if Willy can be very informative when properly motivated (that doesn't have to mean a sound thrashing; Willy responds to other means of encouragement).

MEDICAL FACILITIES

Xander: Yeah. It's at the hospital, it's a wing. We do morgue time in the Scooby gang.

—5.16 The Body



Sunnydale General Hospital has one of the best trauma units in America—their ER specialists have the sort of experience one normally finds in war zones or the most crime-ridden areas of the country. Bad news for the community. Good news for any injured do-gooders—as long as they're more or less in one piece when they're brought in, there's a very good chance they'll make it. The biggest problem the hospital has is all those morgue break-ins and corpse disappearances. Well, in most cases they are actually breakouts, but try telling the hospital staff, or the cops, that.

THE MAGIC BOX

Giles: Think about it. Sunnydale. Monsters. Supply and demand. They'll be lining up around the block in no time.

Buffy: Yeah, you'll be making money hand over fist. (Holds hand over fist.) Which I guess is a good thing...

—5.5 No Place Like Home

Sunnydale's premier shop of all things mystical, new agey and downright weird is conveniently located on Main Street near the Espresso Pump. Life expectancy for owners of magic shops in Sunnydale was not something to bet the farm on (more mysterious cases of neck rupture) until Giles took over the Magic Box from the late Mr. Bogarty. He brought on Anya as an employee after she joined the Slayerettes. Given the Watcher's and ex-demon's experience and sources, *Magic Box* patrons certainly enjoy a knowledgeable sales staff, even if their customer service is a bit... unusual? This knowledge should be sufficient to keep the really dangerous stuff out of the wrong hands—as long as the person who rings up the sale is paying attention.



THE CEMETERIES

There are a dozen or more cemeteries within the Sunnydale town limits, and every single one of them has to be patrolled on a regular basis. Those are the places to go to stake new vamps while they are still getting used to the whole undead schtick. For some reason, demons also like congregating there (maybe the thought of all those dead humans comforts them). Your typical obligatory vamp fight takes place in a graveyard; be careful about tripping on headstones.

GOING UNDERGROUND

Buffy: Vampires really jam on sewer systems. You can get anywhere in the entire town without catching any rays.

—1.2 *The Harvest*

Between the sewers, the electrical tunnels, and the natural cave systems there is almost as much real estate beneath Sunnydale as above it, and a lot of people (well, mostly critters) take advantage of it. Vampire gangs, monstrous demon things and wannabe CHUDS regularly lair there. For vamps, underground passages are ideal—no sun to worry about. Hunters venturing into the underground have to worry about darkness (better bring a lot of flashlights), the stench (none too pleasant), and ambushes, especially if the vamps know the terrain better than the heroes.



THE INITIATIVE

Mr. Ward: It was an experiment. The Initiative represented the government's interest in not only ... controlling the otherworldly menace but in harnessing its power for our own military purposes. (a beat) The considered opinion of this counsel is that the experiment... has failed.

—4.21 *Primeval*

The US government is far from clueless on the mystical front. It has known for some time (how long nobody knows, although maybe, just maybe, the truth is out there) that paranormal creatures (or "sub-terrestrials") exist, and something needs to be done about them. A few years back, the Initiative was founded to do just that. This top-secret group was assembled to confront supernatural beings, capture or kill them, and study them to find new and better ways to deal with them. Its headquarters, not surprisingly, was in Sunnydale, under Lowell House, a frat house at UCSD where the Initiative commando squads lived.

A huge underground complex housed the rest of the Initiative—mostly scientists and researchers, as well as a small garrison of soldiers. It also had cells that could hold dozens of demons, vamps and other Hostile Sub-Terrestrials (HSTs for short). It was pretty cool, in a "James Bond/Tom Clancy meets *The Addams Family*" sort of way.

Naturally, someone had to upset the applecart. In this case, it was Dr. Maggie Walsh, psych professor by the day, mad scientist at night. While attempting to create a super-soldier (and when has that ever worked out for the best?), Dr. Walsh built a hybrid of human, demon and machine—Adam. Adam killed his "mommy" and set up a chain of events that ended with the deaths of a bunch of Initiative people. The government shut down the Sunnydale facility, covered things up, and moved on.

The Initiative is not gone, however. A new Initiative (although it may not necessarily be called that) has risen in its place. It doesn't care about studying monsters, though; it just kills them. When last seen, the organization was hunting down demons in assorted parts of Central and South America in a covert and particularly nasty war.



ALL THIS, AND A HELLMOUTH TOO

Jenny: We've got vampires? I thought the Hellmouth was closed.

Giles: Well, it's-it's closed, but not gone. The mystical energy that emanates from it is still concentrated in this area.

Xander: Which means we're still the undead's favorite party town.

—2.1 *When She Was Bad*

The bane of Sunnydale, a constant danger to the world as we know it and everyone's favorite plot device, the Hellmouth is what makes Sunnydale a festering sore on the face of reality. This link to the demon dimensions acts as a magnet for evil and weirdness. And that's when it's dormant and mostly inactive. If the Hellmouth opens for real, all the demons that were banished from our world will pour back in. The end result would be much like the apocalypse, except a little heavier on the pain and suffering bit. Every attempt to open the Hellmouth has been foiled by the Scooby Gang, but the bad guys only need to win once, and then it's all over but the screaming.

That cheery thought aside, the Hellmouth is as good an explanation as any for the huge concentration of vampires and demons in Sunnydale, the outbreaks of magic and psychic activity, the ability of certain folks to routinely build humanoid robots and super-weapons, and the surprising lack of ugly people in Sunnydale (they probably become invisible when nobody pays attention to them).



LAIRS

Boone: This is my place.

Adam: Your place. Yes. The sewers. You hide from them, crawl about in their filth, scavenging like rats. What do you fear?

—4.16 *Who Are You?*

For those really in need of adventure, or perhaps those looking to take on the mantle of Big Bad, the darker side of Sunnydale sports several nice lairs. Many of these spots—the Master's sunken church underneath Sunnydale High, the The Anointed One's abandoned factory, Sunday's Psi Theta house, Adam's secret area behind 314 and Doc's cozy little downtown apartment—are no longer being used by their former inhabitants. We're sure the realtor would be happy to consider any rental application, particularly one with several months payment up front.

Name: Joe School
Motivation: Survive, sex, drugs and rock and roll, be popular
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 8, Brains 10
Life Points: 26
Drama Points: 0-1
Special Abilities: —

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	8	—	Defense action
Punch	8	4	Bash



Name: Jonathan Levinson
Motivation: Get some respect, be happy
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 1, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 3, Per 3, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 8, Combat 8, Brains 11
Life Points: 22
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: +1 to Brains for Knowledge rolls;
 Sorcery 1 (untrained)

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	8	—	Defense action
Punch	8	2	Bash



PEOPLE TO SEE

Sunnydale is home to several thousand hard-working Americans, and a smaller number of hard-working monsters. Here's a little Who's Who of Sunnydale, from your average man or woman in the street to Guest Star characters from the show. Their game stats (in case our heroes need to outwit or simply beat the living crap out of them) are also listed.

THE STUDENT BODY

Sunnydale High has a diverse and colorful group of students, bound by a common desire to survive until graduation. Everyone, from the most nerdy to the most likely to succeed, knows that she could be next in the ever-increasing SHS Body Count. Somehow, they all manage to carry on and do the normal things high-schoolers do—skip class, play Frisbee, get in trouble, have some fun.

TYPICAL SUNNYDALE HIGH OR UC SUNNYDALE STUDENT

Snyder: There are no dead students here. This week.

—1.11 *Out of Mind, Out of Sight*

This is your basic extra on school grounds or UCSD's campus. While for the most part these students end up as demon fodder, they can come into play in other ways, like interacting with the characters (your basic dates, friendly acquaintances, and the like).

JONATHAN LEVINSON

Xander: So we're saying he did a spell just to make us think he was cool?

Giles: Yes.

Xander: That is so cool!

—4.17 *Superstar*

Life hasn't been good to Jonathan—he's short, unpopular, and a nerd. On the other hand, he has managed to survive a number of encounters with the supernatural, has had Buffy save him from committing suicide, and even has enjoyed a brief stint as the star of the show (courtesy of some bad mojo). During the school prom, he bestowed upon Buffy the title of Class Protector (and a cute gold umbrella), and he fought beside the Slayer and crew when the Mayor went Godzilla in the middle of his speech.

AMY MADISON

Cordelia: Hey, I'm really sorry you guys got bumped back to alternate. Hold it, wait... No I'm not!

Amy: Well, I know that I'll miss the intellectual thrill of spelling out words with my arms.

—1.3 *Witch*

Amy's had a screwy home life. Her mother Catherine, a legendary cheerleading champion in her youth, was—in technical terms—a crazy witch from hell. After harrying Amy's father out of the house, Catherine used the dark arts to switch bodies with her daughter so she could relive her glory days as head cheerleader. The Scoobies' intervention saved the day. Catherine ended up trapped in her old cheerleading trophy (and remains there to this day beneath the rubble of SHS), and Amy was back to normal... well, back to normal as a witch.



Buffy

the vampire slayer™

Name: Amy Madison
Motivation: Nibble on some cheese, (as a human)
 develop her Witch powers
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 8, Brains 12
Life Points: 39
Drama Points: 2
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 3; Sorcery 3

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Punch	10	5	Bash
Spell	15	Rat-ification	Turns target into a rat



Name: Harmony Kendall
Motivation: Be a great-looking corpse
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 5, Con 4, Int 1, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 13, Brains 9
Life Points: 48
Drama Points: 5
Special Abilities: Vampire

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	15	16	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Grapple	15	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	12	12	Bash
Punch	13	11	Bash



Name: Principal Bob Flutie
Motivation: I'm okay, you're okay
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 3, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 8, Brains 13
Life Points: 26
Drama Points: 0
Special Abilities: —

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	8	—	Defense action
Punch	8	4	Bash



Amy's mystical powers have gotten her in trouble—an attempt to help Xander ended up with every woman in Sunnydale stalking him, and, while trying to escape a lynch mob, Amy turned herself into a rat. As of the end of Season Five, she still remained in rodent state (except for a very brief return to normal, courtesy of an unaware Willow).

HARMONY KENDALL

Harmony: 'What a total disaster. My first plan! I so wanted it to go well. Plus, I didn't even get to kill stupid Xander Harris! God, that was so embarrassing.

—5.2 *The Real Me*

Harmony was one of Cordelia's groupies, and was a particularly empty-headed example of the species. Shallow and ditsy, her moment of glory came when she joined several other seniors at SHS and made her stand against the Mayor and his minions. Unfortunately, she ended up being munched on by a vampire.

Reborn as an undead, Harmony's had several misadventures, but has managed to avoid dusting. She had a tempestuous fling with Spike upon his return to Sunnydale. At present, she remains at large.

THE FACULTY

Snyder: My predecessor, Mr. Flutie, may have gone in for all that touchy-feely relating nonsense, but he was eaten. You're in My world now. And Sunnydale has touched and felt for the last time.

—1.9 *The Puppet Show*

Teachers and school administrators in Sunnydale have a few things in common. Besides being dedicated educators, they tend to have tragically short life spans. Teachers and principals often hinder the Cast Members,

keeping them after school, being suspicious about them nosing around where they do not belong, and otherwise being a nuisance that the heroes cannot beat up. A few have been helpful . . . just before they were eaten.

PRINCIPAL FLUTIE

Flutie: I'm always here if you need a hug—but not a real hug, because there's no touching in this school. We're sensitive to wrong touching.

—1.4 *Teacher's Pet*

Bob Flutie was a fairly nice guy—he cared, not too little and not too much, but just enough. When troubled student Buffy Summers arrived in Sunnydale, he tried to help her out. After a while, he decided she was just too weird to help. Shortly thereafter, he was killed and eaten by a pack of hyena-spirit-possessed students (maybe there's a lesson there). Flutie's passing was lamented by the entire school, especially after his replacement, Principal Snyder, made his appearance.

PRINCIPAL SNYDER

Snyder: There are things I will not tolerate: students loitering on campus after school, horrible murders with hearts being removed. And also smoking.

—1.9 *The Puppet Show*

The antithesis of Flutie, Snyder was an angry, bitter and hateful little man. Not only did he hate the students in his charge and try to ruin Buffy's life by expelling her, he was also a willing participant in the Mayor's cover-up of the horrible truth about Sunnydale. Although he did not fully know what the Mayor's plans were, Snyder supported him wholeheartedly, figuring he would help bring order to the world. At graduation though, the Mayor repaid Snyder's loyalty by making him his first snack of the day.

Name: Principal Snyder

Motivation: Control teenage behavior, suppress fun and joy everywhere

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 1, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4

Ability Scores: Muscle 8, Combat 8, Brains 13

Life Points: 22

Drama Points: 0

Special Abilities: —

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	8	—	Defense action
Punch	8	4	Bash



Name: Jenny Calendar a.k.a. Janna Kalderash
Motivation: Uphold family tradition, have fun
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 3, Con 2, Int 4, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 10, Brains 14
Life Points: 26
Drama Points: 4
Special Abilities: +2 to Brains for Occultism rolls

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	10	—	Defense action
Punch	10	5	Bash
Magic	16	-	Effects by spell



JENNY CALENDAR

Jenny: I'm sorry. I thought...

Enyos: What? That you are Jenny Calendar now? You are still Janna, of the Kalderash people. A gypsy.

—2.13 *Surprise*

Jenny Calendar was the young and attractive computer science teacher at Sunnydale High. She was full of dark secrets, however. First, she revealed herself as a technopagan, and helped Buffy and the Slayerettes on a number of occasions. She and Giles soon developed a budding romantic relationship. Unfortunately, there was more to Jenny than that; she was eventually revealed to be a Gypsy (née: Janna Kalderash)—from the same clan that put the curse on Angel—sent to Sunnydale to keep an eye on him. When Angel became Angelus, Jenny tried to research a ritual that would restore his soul. She succeeded, but Angelus murdered her before she could share her discovery with the gang.

GREATER SUNNYDALE

Sunnydale is far more than just schools and their attendees, of course. Described below are several other denizens of Sunnydale.

JOYCE SUMMERS

Joyce: Have we met?

Spike: Um... you hit me with an ax one time. Remember? Uh, "get the hell away from my daughter."

Joyce: Oh.

—2.22 *Becoming, Part Two*

Buffy's mother was a constant fixture in the Slayer's life, a source of strength and love until her tragic (and utterly non-supernatural) death during Season Five. Mrs. Summers worked at a gallery and did the best job she could as the single mother of a Slayer. For the first two seasons, Joyce did not know her daughter's secret iden-

Name: Joyce Summers
Motivation: Be a good person and mother
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 1, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 10, Brains 13
Life Points: 22
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: —

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Axe	20	20	Slash/stab; uses Heroic Feat (1 Drama Point); two-handed
Dodge	10	—	Defense action
Punch	10	5	Bash



Name: Sunnydale Police Officer
Motivation: Serve and protect, "Just the facts, ma'am."
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 12, Brains 10
Life Points: 34
Drama Points: 0-2
Special Abilities: —

Name	Score	Maneuvers		Notes
		Damage		
Baton	12	11		Bash
Dodge	12	—		Defense action
Pistol	12	14		
Punch	12	8		Bash
Shotgun	12	22		Bullet



tity, thinking she was just a normal troubled teenager. Eventually, the truth came out, and she did her best to accept that side of Buffy's life.

COPS! IN SUNNYDALE

Snyder: In case you haven't noticed, the police of Sunnydale are deeply stupid.

—2.22 *Becoming, Part Two*

Sunnydale's finest are faced with an impossible job. The old saying "Old cops, bold cops, no old, bold cops" goes double for this town. Cops who rush to answer calls for help and insert themselves forcibly into ongoing combat don't live too long, so your typical Sunnydale officer takes her own sweet time responding to a 911 call. They do try their best to serve and protect, but they end up arresting the wrong people more often than not. Heroes should be wary of hurting cops, though; not only

are they innocent bystanders, messing with cops can lead to a lot of trouble with law enforcement down the line.

INITIATIVE COMMANDO

Riley: Yeah, I know I can't, but it bugs me this time.

Forrest: This is the burden we bear, brother. We have a gig that would inevitably cause any girl living to think we are cool upon cool. Yet we must Clark Kent our way through the dating scene never to use our unfair advantage.

—4.10 *Hush*

Before the Initiative was shut down, these masked figures in camo uniforms prowled the campus at UCSD, hunting down assorted "sub-terrestrials." The troopers are more dangerous as a group, because they are trained to work as a unit.

Name: Agent Toughguy
Motivation: Fight the HST threat
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 4, Con 3, Int 2, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 15, Brains 10
Life Points: 44
Drama Points: 1-3
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 2

Name	Score	Maneuvers		Notes
		Damage		
Dodge	15	—		Defense action
Kick	14	13		Bash
Punch	15	12		Bash
Taser Rifle	15	9		Bash; Knockout (see p.111)





6 Creatures of the Night

The First Evil: I am something that you can't even conceive. The First Evil. Beyond sin, beyond death. I am the thing the darkness fears. You'll never see me, but I am everywhere. Every being, every thought, every drop of hate.

Buffy: Alright, I get it. You're evil. Do we have to chat about it all day?

—3.10 Amends

Vampires.

Demons.

Zombies.

Invisible teenage girls
and talking puppets.

Oh my.



The Buffyverse is teeming with a medley of creepy crawlers and fearsome fiends. They stalk an unsuspecting humanity and kill with impunity—or would, if the Slayer and the Scooby Gang weren't around to stop them. From the vampire hordes that haunt Sunnydale's nightlife to bizarre creations of science run amok, just about any entity from mythology, novels or the movies can find a place in Buffy's world.

This chapter describes some of the major supernatural beings of the Buffyverse and presents a rogues' gallery of Big Bads from the first five seasons of the show. We are addressing you Director folks in this chapter; players should not be peeking here. Each section provides an overview of a monster type, its game stats, and some plot and subplot ideas for use in your Series.

CREATING NEW MONSTERS AND RECYCLING OLD ONES

Anya: Sobekites were reptile worshippers.

Xander: Just once I would like to run into a cult of bunny worshippers.

Anya: Great. Thank you very much for those nightmares!

—5.8 Shadow

Most of the critters below have already appeared in the original show. While bringing back the “classics” can be fun, it’s best to add new monsters and dangers in your Episodes too. Let’s face it, if *BtVS* was “all vampires all the time,” it would have gotten stale a long time ago. One of the great things about the TV show is that you never quite know who (or what) is going to pop up next. Here we provide a few ideas and advice on creating new threats to delight and horrify your Cast.

MONSTER CONCEPTS

Olivia: All the time you used to talk to me about witchcraft and darkness and the like—I just thought you were being pretentious.

Giles: Oh I was. I was also right.

Olivia: So everything you told me was true.

Giles: Well no, um, I wasn't actually one of the original members of Pink Floyd. But the monster stuff, yes.

—4.10 Hush

In the show, monsters are often more than simple killing machines that need to be put down like mad dogs (although there’re plenty of those, too). Before jotting down stats and numbers, it’s a good idea to think about the concept behind the monster. What role will the critter play in the Episode? Does the monster have any symbolic or hidden meaning? A lot of *Buffy* monsters are metaphors for the trials and tribulations of growing up, cloaked in the supernatural and given a fangs-and-latex coating for good measure. Here are some possible concepts.

CANNON FODDER

Easy enough—these monsters get no lines; they just show up to act as punching bags for the Cast. They are the simplest (and usually the most boring) monsters available. Your typical vamp fills that role, but demons, human cultists and other miscreants can be tossed in for extra variety.

THE ARCHETYPE

Some monsters are embodiments of classic characters from mythology and fiction. Examples include the Trickster (who deceives and misdirects the characters), the Tempter (who offers a deal that is actually too good to be true), the Great Beast (think *Jaws* or *Moby Dick*; the hunt for the Great Beast is the story itself), the Guardian (the creature bars the way to the characters’ goals), and the Dark Reflection (the villain is the moral opposite of a character, but has enough in common with her to create a great deal of self-doubt).

Picking an Archetype is a good way to start. Let’s take the Trickster, for example. Unlike your typical monster, the Trickster rarely attacks the characters directly. Instead, it uses lies, illusions or word-games to get the victims to do what it wants. A Trickster should not be very powerful (otherwise why resort to trickery?), but its machinations should be nice and convoluted. Demons make good Tricksters, although a wily vampire or a cunning human (like Ethan Rayne) would do as well.

THE HIDDEN

These are the creatures for Whodunit Episodes—the monster is striking from the shadows, disguised in a human shape or otherwise protected from discovery. Discovering its identity is half the battle (the other half is an appropriately violent ass-kicking session, of course). When designing a Hidden monster, you need to figure out its *modus operandi*, the nature of its disguise/hidden place, and what clues will eventually (or hopefully) lead the Cast to it. A number of red herrings can be tossed in along the way to send the characters off in the wrong direction.

THE METAPHOR

Then there’s the symbolic monster, a creature that represents some facet of being a teenager or young adult, of dealing with life or facing moral dilemmas. You can take any problem from school and turn it into a monstrous encounter with a bit of exaggeration and dramatic license. Confronting a bully, for example, can be used for inspiration to create a monster whose power terrifies a Cast Member, but must be dealt with by that character alone. Or take the “Just say no” situation and turn it into a demon who offers “happiness” in return for the victim’s soul or moral principles (making her perform crimes as “payment” for example).

When creating a metaphor, it’s important not to lay it on too thick, and keep the preaching to a minimum.





RECYCLING: RETURN APPEARANCES

Spike: 'What a fantastic day. Birds singin', squirrels makin' lots of rotten little squirrels, the sun beaming down in a nice non-fatal way. It's very exciting. I can't wait to see if I freckle.'

—4.3 Harsh Light of Day

Not every monster has to be brand-new either. There's something almost comforting about seeing an old fanged, demonic or gross-out face make a return engagement, especially when the villain in question was challenging and memorable. Coming up with a rationale for the monster's return can be tricky though, especially when the monster came down with a bad case of the deaths in the prior meeting.

THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL

Sometimes a villain gets away, and promises to return to get some payback. Assuming the critter in question didn't get killed (in which case turn to Sometimes They Come Back just below this section), having it return to punish the Cast for their deeds is a natural. The old villain may be working alone, or might have brought some new friends along. Since it was defeated before, it should have some sort of enhancement—a mystical weapon, some new Kewl Powerz, or a master plan to destroy the Cast and take over the world—to ensure (at least in its mind) that there is no repeat defeat.

SOMETIMES THEY COME BACK

Buffy: You died.

Ted: That's right, little lady, you killed me. Do we have something to say about that? Are we sorry?

—2.11 Ted

Bringing back dead villains is a tried and true plot device. Maybe somebody can figure out how to gather the dust of the Master's bones, for example. Any dead Big Bad could somehow be brought back from the after-life to further torment the Cast. Just as in This Time It's Personal, the returned Big Bad should have some new edge or trick up its sleeve, since the Cast has already kicked its buttocks once. On the other hand, if the Cast Members were lucky or were able to use some one-of-a-kind plot device to destroy the villain, then its return makes things fairly desperate for our heroes, as they scramble to find a way to defeat the now seemingly unstoppable monster.

"YOU KILLED MY (INSERT RELATIVE); PREPARE TO DIE"

Rather than bring back the Big Bad itself, have a relative, clone, close friend or associate show up in its stead. This is like This Time It's Personal, but with a new villain who may have some similarities to the late monster and probably has its own special abilities as well. An interesting twist is to have the Cast discover that the former Big Bad was just a "baby." Now Mom's here, and boy is she pissed.

FANGS IN THE MOONLIGHT: VAMPIRES

Xander: I don't like vampires. I'm gonna take a stand and say they're not good.

—1.2 *The Harvest*

Vampires. Nosferatu. The Undead. Critters with big nasty toofers. Everybody knows about them—the biting, the sucking, the waking up dead, the whole bat motif. In the Buffyverse they exist, and they're all over the place. They positively infest Sunnydale (comes with the Hellmouth options package), but can be found anywhere that humans live—predators follow their prey, after all. Bloodsuckers are the most common monster in the Buffyverse, hence the “Vampire” bit in “Vampire Slayer.” The typical vampire ranks very low on the supernatural totem pole—the predatory equivalent of hyenas—but even a fresh-from-the-grave vamp can tear apart a normal man, and is a dangerous foe for all but Slayers and other heroes.

In the cosmology of the series, vampires are a sub-variety of demon—basically a demon inhabiting the corpse of a human being. When a vampire's victim is “infected” with the undead curse (which requires an exchange of fluids, and not the pleasant kind), her soul is removed and a demon soul moves in. The vampire retains the looks, the memories and even some of the personality of the victim, but it has none of the redeeming qualities. Vampires are not angst, tormented creatures; they have no remorse or compassion, and only find pleasure in murder and the suffering of others. Anne Rice fans are bound to be disappointed (and sucked dry, if they aren't careful).

VAMPIRISM 101

Willow: It's horrible! That's me as a vampire? I'm so evil and . . . skanky. And I think I'm kinda gay.

—3.16 *Doppelgängland*

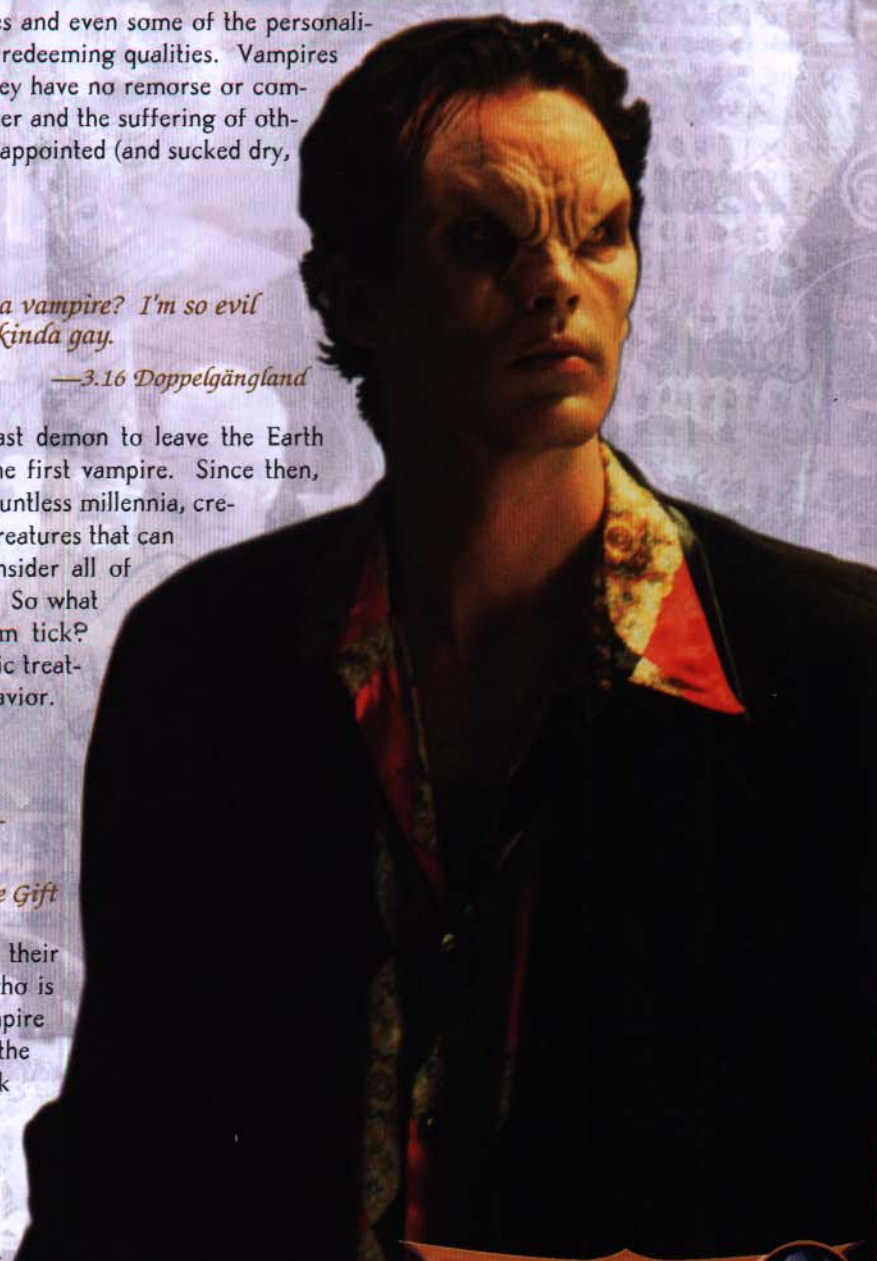
According to ancient legends, the last demon to leave the Earth infected a human being and created the first vampire. Since then, the curse has been passed down over countless millennia, creating a monstrous breed of predators, creatures that can pass themselves off as human and consider all of humanity their own personal food bar. So what are vampires like? What makes them tick? Here we present the National Geographic treatment of vampires, their habits and behavior.

THE UNDEATH CYCLE

Doc: I don't smell a soul on you anywhere.

—5.22 *The Gift*

Vampires reproduce by passing on their curse to their victims. Not everyone who is killed by a vampire rises as a vampire though. To create a new undead, the vampire must force the victim to drink some of its blood first. The infected then rises from the grave as an undead monster, hungry for blood.





VAMPIRE ABILITIES

Willow: Angel? I saw him too.

Giles: That's not terribly stealthy of him.

Willow: I think he's lost his edge.

—4.8 Pangs

Being a demon-possessed corpse with a taste for blood has both inherent advantages and disadvantages. For one, living expenses are almost non-existent and there're no worries about the dangers of smoking, junk food or unprotected sex. On the other hand, your next suntan will be your last, grooming is a bear with no reflection, and people you've never seen before may try to stick a piece of wood through your heart. And there's the bit about being a remorseless demon that makes a psychopathic serial killer look like a kindly old grandmother. But let's focus on the positives, shall we?

SUPERNATURAL ATTRIBUTES

Vampires are stronger and faster than human beings. The toughest vampires can punch somebody across a basketball court, and the fastest ones can catch a cross-bow bolt in mid-flight. Going mano a mano with a vamp is not a smart idea unless the character is a Slayer, a heavyweight pro boxer, or some sort of superhero type.

UNDEATH

Being little more than possessed corpses, vampires no longer have many of the frailties of normal human beings. They never grow any older (which sucks if they were sired when they were kids, but them's the breaks), they cannot be killed by normal weapons (except in a few very specific ways), and they no longer have to worry about air quality, because they don't need to breathe. Vampires are still part human. They can suffer pain, and when beaten up they bleed, suffer bruises, broken bones and other medical problems. Unlike normal humans though, they recover very quickly from anything that doesn't kill them outright.

LEGENDS THAT LIE

Some of the legends are dead wrong. Among other things, vampires cannot turn into bats or rats (with one notable exception). If they want to fly, they've got to get a plane ticket, same as everyone else. Ditto for turning into mist, although some vamps apparently can pull off that trick—it's just not a "natural" vampire ability. Very few vampires sleep in coffins either, or need dirt from their birthplace. They'd much rather lie down on a nice

Most young vampires have little care for anything beyond feeding. They are selfish, often irrational monsters, with overwhelming egos. An older and more powerful vampire can often intimidate them into following her orders though. Vampires are at your throat or at your feet; they respect force and brutality but consider kindness to be a sign of weakness. All in all, not the kind of people you want to invite over to hang out. The good news is, young vampires aren't usually all that bright, and can be taken out fairly easily. In fact, the best time to get a vampire is shortly after it emerges from the ground; it will be dazed, confused, irrational, and easy prey—well, easier prey—for a group of smart hunters. Of course, there is a thin line between being the last thing a vampire sees and being the first meal a vampire has.

Vampires that survive more than a few days or weeks behave more intelligently. Instead of just biting the first people they run into, they find a lair and start working on ways to hunt without alerting their prey about their existence. These older, wiser vampires are more likely to work in groups (although they are rarely very large or organized; vamps just aren't very big on teamwork), which make them even more dangerous.

After that, there's a brutal selection progress as the vampires struggle to survive. Being a vampire is no picnic—there are plenty of dangers out there, from bands of human vigilantes to forgetting about Daylight Saving Time and getting caught in the open to turf wars with other vampires, demons and similar competitors. The typical vampire doesn't live very long. The ones that survive are tougher, smarter or at least luckier than the rest. After a while, they become critters with Big Bad potential—the Spikes and Angeluses of the Buffyverse. Beyond that level you get the truly ancient vampires, centuries or millennia old—beings like the Master, who are nothing but trouble.

bed (not that vampires need much in the way of sleep anyway). Vamps also cast shadows (but no reflections) and don't seem to have any problems crossing running water.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Xander (scoffs): Please. He was no big whoop.

Willow: No big whoop? What about that thing where he turned himself into a bat? That was awesome!

—5.1 Buffy vs. Dracula

Some vampires have a few extra tricks that set them apart from the common run of the undead. In some cases, they appear to be psychic or supernatural abilities their human selves had before their transformation. In others, they may be the result of dark magicks, or caused by the vampire's age and increase in power over the centuries. Since vampires are unique demon-human hybrids, all kind of powers can be justified by a creative Director. Here are some possibilities from the show.

HYPNOSIS

At least three vampires so far (the Master, Drusilla and Dracula) have displayed some power to control the minds of others and do the old "look into my eyes" bit. Hypnosis comes in three levels of power, each level rarer than the last.

LEVEL 1: At this level, a vamp can cause someone to hesitate for a few moments—plenty of time for the critter to attack with impunity. The victim compares a Willpower (doubled) roll (or Brains Score) with the vamp's Brains Score. Unless the victim beats or ties the vamp, she is helpless for a Turn, and has a zero defense roll against any attack.

LEVEL 2: The vamp can create illusions and muddle the victim's senses (like Drusilla making Giles think she was Jenny Calendar). This works like Level 1, but if the vampire wins, the victim finds the illusion compelling. The vamp can render itself invisible to that character, or appear to be someone else. A vamp with Level 2 Hypnosis also gets a +1 bonus to its Brains Score to use the Level 1 power.

LEVEL 3: This is the most powerful version. At this level, the vamp can dominate the victim, forcing her to obey almost any command. Every time the vampire tries to command the victim, its Brains Score is compared to the victim's Willpower (doubled) roll. If the victim loses, she must comply. Furthermore, a vamp with Level 3 Hypnosis gets a +2 bonus to attempts to use the Level 1 power, and a +1 bonus to use the Level 2 power.

SHAPE SHIFTING

At least one vamp (Dracula) can do this, so it is possible that some other vampires out there have mastered the "showy gypsy stuff," as Spike put it. Dracula has shown himself able to turn into a bat, a wolf, and an insubstantial mist. The bat form is useful to move around and give girls the wiggins; the wolf shape can pass itself off as a dog in bad light; the mist form is really good to avoid getting staked. The animal shapes can be treated mostly as FX—the bat shape can fly, and hitting it is difficult (apply a -5 penalty to attacks, and the heart cannot be targeted). The wolf shape is just a cool effect, which restricts the vamp to a biting attack (same damage as the vampire bite, but without blood drain). The mist trick is really useful, though. With it, the vamp can "dodge" using her Brains Score with a +6 bonus, turning insubstantial before an attack lands. Still, an attentive character can see the mist beginning to coalesce and strike just as the vamp turns corporeal again. This requires a successful Perception and Notice roll with at least three Success Levels; if so, the undead beastie gets a zero defense roll against the attack.

VISIONS

Some vamps are able to see visions of the future. This works just like the Psychic Visions Quality (look at us reusing game rules—are we efficient or what?). Such vampires appear to have had the ability when they were human and retained it after their transformation.

HOW TO SLAY VAMPIRES

Xander: Sssh! Sssh! Quick draw's about more than speed. It's also about pointing a stake the right way. (Quick draws again.) Sssh! Sssh! And there can be splinter issues. It is a true test of dexterity.

—4.17 Superstar

Vampire Slaying is the official job description of the title heroine. To deal with the undead hordes, the characters should know the ins and outs. The old legends and the not-so-old movies have it mostly right—vamps are vulnerable to sunlight, stakes through the heart, and holy items. Oh . . . and beating the crap out of them at least slows them down some (and can be very satisfying).

Still, normal humans are at a severe disadvantage against vamps. Kids, don't try this at home. Vampire slaying should be done only by professionals under controlled conditions, just like stunt motorcycling, neurosurgery or certain types of Cajun cooking.



VAMP FU: VAMPIRES IN COMBAT

Spike (after Buffy stakes him): Oh, do it again. It tickles. You know, in a good way.

Buffy: The Gem.

Spike: Oh yeah, the Gem of Amarra. Official sponsor of my killing you.

—4.3 *The Harsh Light of Day*

Vampires are born (well, unborn) predators. They come out of the grave with some minimal fighting skills as well as the strength of a horse and a high resistance to injury. In addition to their physical powers, vampires have a few other cards to play.

FAST HEALING: Vampires recover from damage at the rate of one point per Constitution Level per hour. If not killed outright, most vampires recover after a good day's rest, and come sunset will be back on the streets, out for blood. Fire damage takes longer to heal though.

FIGHTING SKILLS: Nobody needs to teach cats how to use their claws, and the same goes for vampires attacking prey. Vamps emerge from the grave with a minimum Kung Fu Skill of 2. Even a freshly sired vampire isn't a pushover, except for Slayers and other super-powered heroes.

GAME FACE: Vampires can pass themselves off as human most of the time. When they get angry, upset or beset by some strong emotion, they reveal their "game face"—the inhuman features that show their true nature. The game face has ridges over the nose and eyebrows, long fangs, brutish features, yellow eyes and a really bad complexion. When the face is on, most characters (experienced vampire hunters become used to it after a while) have to pass a Fear Test (see p. 106) with a -1 or worse penalty. The first couple of times, or unexpected transformations, are at much higher penalties (-3 at least, and as much as -5 for really unexpected appearances—the first time Buffy saw Angel "vamp out," for example).

optional game face rule

There are some indications that vampires fight better when they let their demonic nature come to the fore. Directors who want to penalize vampires who fight without the gross makeup on can give them a -1 penalty to Strength and Dexterity while they are in "human" form. Most of the time this isn't going to be a factor. Most vampires have their game face on all the time, and switching back and forth takes only a moment.

VAMPS SUCK, VAMPS BITE: When a vamp has grappled or secured (i.e., tied up or otherwise subdued) a victim, it's feeding time. A strong vampire can totally drain your average human in less than a minute. The vampire Bite uses a Dexterity + Kung Fu + 2 roll, or the Combat Score + 2. It inflicts 3 x Strength base damage (Success Levels and armor modify, but damage type does not) every Turn that the vampire sucks blood from the victim. When the victim fails a Survival roll, she has been drained of all her blood and is dead. A normal victim will die in a Turn or so; Slayers and tougher humans may take a little longer. Breaking free from a grappling vampire works like resisting a Grapple (see p. 110), but the victim is at a -2 penalty.

SIRING VAMPIRES: By draining victims and feeding them some of its own blood, a vampire can create brand-new minions. Most vampires owe some sort of loyalty to their sire (their term for their creator), but such gratitude or control is short-lived at best, unless the vampire maker is strong enough to instill fear in the flock.

DUST TO DUST: KILLING THE DEAD

Buffy (staking a vampire): And they say one person can't make a difference.

—4.8 *Pangs*

Now that you know how vampires can harm the characters, it's time to list the ways they can put the hurt on a vampire. Below are some dos and don'ts. Remember, the undead are fast and strong, but they have plenty of weaknesses, and a well-prepared hunter can rack up an impressive dust count. On the other hand, unless the hunter is a Slayer or some other hero type, one mistake and she's out of luck (and blood).

THINGS THAT DON'T WORK

We'll start with the "Don'ts" before we get to the "Dos" of vampire slaying for fun and profit. Not all attacks are created equal when it comes to sending the undead back to the Hell they crawled out of, you see. Crossbows work better than guns. Stakes work much better than knives. Fire is much more effective than friendly dialog. And so on.

ASPHYXIATION: Being dead means never having to draw breath. Vampires usually do some breathing, but that's just out of habit or because it's much easier to speak with some air in your lungs (the human voice is a wind instrument after all). But you can put a vamp in a sealed room and he won't use up any oxygen. As a result, choking or strangling are pretty useless attacks, and vamps can wear tight corsets and other binding garments, smoke ciga-

rettes all day and hold their heads underwater for hours without any ill effect. On the other hand, they suck at giving mouth-to-mouth. A chokehold may knock a vampire out, but by crushing its neck rather than through suffocation.

GUNS: Guns don't kill vampires, Slayers do. The undead are highly tolerant of flying pieces of lead, probably because they don't have much in the way of functioning internal organs. Bullets hurt vampires, though, and if the Cast Members shoot them enough times they will incapacitate them, but it takes a lot of bullets to put them down. Divide any Bullet damage by five (rounded down). So if a character gets four Success Levels while firing a shotgun against a vamp (total damage 24), the vamp only suffers four points of damage. If surprised, the pain of being shot slows a vampire down though. A vamp who takes more than 10 points of damage from a gunshot (before the damage is divided by five) is stunned for a few seconds—a game Turn. If the critter steels itself against the pain, even this won't work. It can wade through several gunshots without slowing down. Bullet damage cannot "dust" a vamp; even if it brings the nasty below zero Life Points, it is merely knocked out from shock.

POISONS AND DRUGS: Like bullets, most chemicals have limited effects on vampires. There's still enough human in them to suffer some effects, just nothing permanent. For example, a tranquilizer dart knocks a vamp out, but the effects wear off in a few minutes instead of a few hours. Poison effects are divided by four, rounded

down, and vampires flush the poison out of their systems in a few hours. Some supernatural poisons are geared towards affecting a vampire's metabolism though, and they work like a charm.

DISEASE: Breathing on a vamp while you have the flu will not help one bit. No natural disease has any effect on a vampire (germs don't seem to like undead flesh—they're picky that way). It might be possible for a vamp to be a disease carrier if it fed off someone sick, but since any exchange of fluids is likely going to end up with either a corpse or another vampire, STDs are the least of the victim's problems.

THINGS THAT WORK

Willow: A lot of it we already knew. Turn-offs: wood, fire, crosses, garlic. Turn-ons: nice duds, minions, long slow bites that last for days.

—5.1 Buffy vs. Dracula

Okay, now you know that plastic bags over the head and guns aren't the answer. So what is? The basics include crosses and stakes, of course, but there are a few other things that work just fine.

THROUGH THE HEART: Any sharp wooden object firmly inserted in the vampire's heart with enough force to pierce it through results in a near-instant and fairly impressive "dust-up"—the vamp explodes in a cloud of dust, briefly exposing its skeleton before even that crumbles away. Thus, a stake (or pool cue, or wooden cross-



Buffy

the Vampire Slayer™

bow bolt, or arrow) that hits the vampire's heart inflicts five times normal damage (after modification for Success Levels and armor only; the x5 replaces the damage type modifier), and if the total damage is enough to reduce the vampire to zero Life Points, the vamp is dusted.

Dusting a vampire is not very easy, though. The critters have a terrible aversion to letting people stab them with sharp wooden implements, and the heart is well-shielded by the rib cage, requiring both precision and strength. If the stake damage (after all modifications) doesn't reduce the vamp below zero points, apply the pre-x5 damage instead (this means the stake didn't quite get to the heart, so the damage is not boosted over normal).

POINTED EXAMPLE: Season Two Xander (Strength 3) gets a solid stab in with a stake, and the roll is good for three Success Levels. The base damage is (2 x Strength), or six in this case; with the three Success Levels, this goes up to nine. Since this is a heart attack (as it were) damage is multiplied by five, for 45 points. The vamp only had 43 Life Points, and poofs away like a dandelion. If the vamp was tougher—say 50 Life Points, the damage would not be enough to reduce it to zero Life Points. In that case, the attack is considered a near miss (didn't actually pierce the heart) and the damage inflicted is not multiplied by five. So, facing a 50 Life Point vamp, Xander would have only inflicted nine points of damage. That sucks beyond the telling of it.

Slayers and other very strong characters can take out fairly tough vamps with a single stake thrust. Still, it pays to soften up a vampire with 10-30 points of damage before trying to use Mr. Pointy. This reflects the "reality" of the series, where much fisticuffs occur before the staking. Remember, a vamp can use a Drama Point to halve the damage (which would negate the dusting absent some pummeling beforehand). So, for characters, for-sake not the pounding.

Buffy: Especially the biggie, numero one-o. "Do not invite blood-sucking dead people into our home."

—5.2 *The Real Me*

PRIVATE PROPERTY: This isn't really a way to kill vampires, but it gives heroic hunters a good fleeing-to place. Just as the legends say, vamps cannot enter a private dwelling without an invite. An unwelcomed vamp hits an invisible mystical wall at the threshold, and is physically unable to push through; this also applies to windows, pet doors or any other means of ingress. This

restriction doesn't apply to public places, so stores and restaurants are not safe (everybody is effectively invited to those places, even where they reserve the right to refuse admittance).

CROSSES AND HOLY WATER: These holy objects cause pain and even injury to vampires. If someone shows a cross to a vampire, it instinctively recoils—the vamp loses initiative on that Turn. As long as a character holds a cross on a vampire, the critter cannot attack her. The vamp can try to knock the item away though (treat it as a Disarm Maneuver, see p. 110). Actually touching a cross burns a vampire, inflicting two points of damage per Turn of contact. Briefly touching a cross (as when slapping it away) is painful but not damaging. Some old and powerful vampires seem able to ignore the pain from crosses, either through sheer force of will or raw supernatural power.

Holy water is also good against the undead. Applied externally, it inflicts two points for a splash; five points for a glassful, and ten points for a bucketful. If the vampire ingests the holy water (not that any vamp would be so stupid . . . oh wait), damage is multiplied by 20, which gives a whole new meaning to "don't drink the water."

A vampire reduced to zero points or less through contact with a cross or holy water dusts away. Other holy objects and symbols have not been used in the show, so it is up to the you to decide whether or not they have similar effects.

BEHEADING: If the Decapitation Combat Maneuver (see pp. 109-110) is used, a blow that reduces the vampire to -10 Life Points dusts the critter.

FIRE: For a human, "fire bad." For a vampire, fire worse. While fire is not as fast or decisive as a neat staking, it produces lasting injuries and can kill a vam-



pire if left unchecked. A vampire heals from fire injuries more slowly than from other forms of damage (one Life Point per Constitution level per day). If fire damage reduces a vampire to -10 Life Points or below, it has to make a Survival Test (see p. 121) as normal. If the vampire dies, it's dust. Given a vampire's innately high Constitution and Hard to Kill levels, it takes a long time to burn it to death.

Spike: Your house happens to be directly between . . . parts . . . and other parts of this town. And I would pass by in the day, but I feel I'm outgrowing my whole "burst into flame" phase.

—5.5 No Place Like Home

SUNLIGHT: As a creature of darkness, a vampire cannot abide the touch of sunlight. Direct sunlight destroys even the most powerful vampire in under a minute. But it has to be direct sunlight—being indoors, in shade, or even covered up by heavy clothing minimizes or even eliminates the damage, and short exposures have very little effect. That means that a careful vampire can operate during the day to some extent.

If a vampire is exposed to the sun for more than a Turn, the burning begins. The undead takes 20 points of damage at the end of every Turn in full sunlight. If the exposure is for less than a Turn, the damage is only about two points. If a vampire is within reach of a shadowy spot, it can "dodge" the sunlight by leaping into the covered area, taking only the minimum amount. As soon as the vamp goes below -10 points, it is dusted. Sunlight damage is healed normally; the sunburn doesn't last long.

VAMPIRE VARIETY PACK

Submitted for your approval: an assortment of vampires, including both nameless extras and some familiar faces from the show. They can be altered, folded, spindled or mutilated to suit the needs of your Series.

BRAND-NEW VAMPIRE

Buffy: Have you ever heard the expression: "Biting off more than you can chew?" Okay, um, how about the expression: "Vampire Slayer"?

Vamp: What the hell are you talking about?

Buffy: Wow! Never heard that one? Okay . . . how about: "Oh, God! My leg! My leg!"

(Vamp growls. Buffy breaks his knee.)

Vamp: Oh God! My leg!

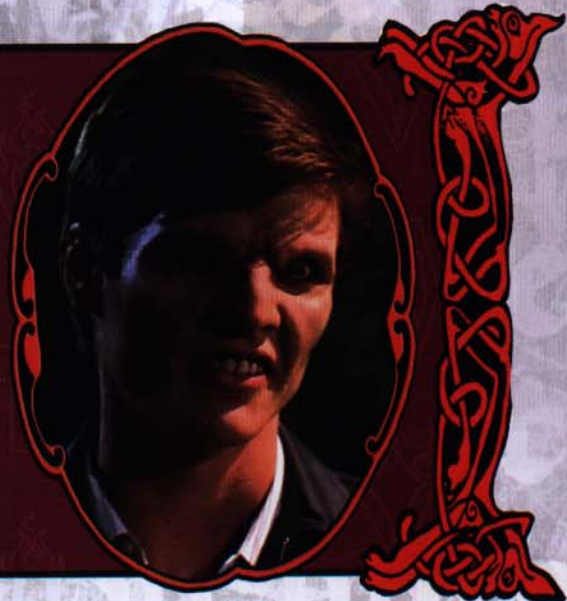
Buffy: See? Now we're communicating.

—5.22 The Gift

This is your basic just-undead vamp, with some grave dirt still on its clothes. The inner demon is still getting used to its new home, so the undead is not particularly well-spoken or charming. A newbie is easy meat for a Slayer or a group of Slayerettes, unless it shows up with a bunch of living-challenged buddies. Keep in mind that some brand-new vampires may have higher Attributes and Ability Scores, either because they were above-average humans or had some special training before they were turned.

Name: Brand-New Vamp
Motivation: Blood!
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 4, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 12, Brains 9
Life Points: 52
Drama Points: 0-3
Special Abilities: Vampire

Name	Score	Maneuvers Damage	Notes
Bite	12	17	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Grapple	14	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	11	14	Bash
Punch	12	12	Bash



Name: Vampire Minion
Motivation: Blood!, follow orders
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 4, Con 5, Int 2, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 14, Brains 11
Life Points: 59
Drama Points: 1-3
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 3, Vampire

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	16	20	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	14	—	Defense action
Grapple	16	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	13	15	Bash
Punch	14	13	Bash



VAMPIRE MINION

Rookie: I think it's funny when you scream. It's like, whoa...

Sunday: I gotta get me some better lackeys. I swear, you guys are useless.

—4.1 *The Freshman*

A vamp who's been up and around for a while. Some may be lone hunters, but they are more commonly found working for a tougher vampire (a Veteran, a Lieutenant or even a Big Bad). One on one, they are not a problem for a Slayer or a Hero type, but White Hats have to be careful.

VAMPIRE VETERAN

Master: Zachary was strong, and he was careful. And still the Slayer takes him... as she has taken so many of my family.

—1.7 *Angel*

These are the cream of the crop—tough vamps, some of them decades old. They make perfect henchmen, or may even lead their own gang of brand-new or minion vamps. Two or three of them can give even a Slayer some trouble.

Name: Vampire Veteran
Motivation: Follow orders, lead others
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 16, Brains 12
Life Points: 69
Drama Points: 2-4
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 5, Vampire

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	18	23	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	16	—	Defense action
Grapple	18	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	15	18	Bash
Punch	16	16	Bash



Name: Vampire Lieutenant
Motivation: Predator, follow orders, rule
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 6, Con 6, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 19, Brains 13
Life Points: 79
Drama Points: 2-4
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 7, Vampire

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	21	24	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	19	—	Defense action
Grapple	21	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	18	19	Bash
Punch	19	17	Bash



VAMPIRE LIEUTENANT

Xander: So, um, in your reality, I'm like this bad-ass vampire, huh? People are afraid of me? Oh, yeah. I'm bad...

—3.16 Doppelgängerland

These vamps have been around for a long time, and they are the ass-kickers of the undead world. A Lieutenant can lead a large or powerful gang of vampires, or serve a Big Bad or some other heavy-hitter. This critter makes for a tough encounter against a beginning Slayer and can wipe the floor with a group of White Hats.

LUKE

Luke (to Buffy): You are strong. (Slams her to the ground.) I'm stronger.

—1.1 Welcome to the Hellmouth

This powerful henchman of the Master had a short but glorious career. Luke was wholly dedicated to serving the Master, and was one of the stars of the Order of Aurelius, the Master's vampire cult. Big, strong and skilled, Luke was a formidable foe.

Name: Luke
Motivation: Restore the Master
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 8, Dex 6, Con 8, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 22, Combat 19, Brains 13
Life Points: 101
Drama Points: 5
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 9, Vampire

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	21	30	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	19	—	Defense action
Grapple	21	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	18	23	Bash
Punch	19	21	Bash
Takedown	22	14	Resisted by Dodge/Parry; target prone



Name: Darla
Motivation: Satisfy whims
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 7, Con 6, Int 4, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 19, Brains 14
Life Points: 78
Drama Points: 6
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 8, Vampire

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	21	21	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	19	—	Defense action
Grapple	21	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	18	17	Bash
Pistol	19	17	Bullet
Punch	19	15	Bash



DARLA

Darla: Let me do it, Master. Let me kill her for you.

Master: You have a personal interest in this.

Darla: I don't get to have any fun.

1.7 Angel

Darla was a sweet and innocent thing—not! She starred in the first scene of the entire series, was killed later in the first season . . . but got better. What she lacks in raw strength, she more than makes up for in speed and cunning.

DRACULA

Xander: I will serve you, your excellent spookiness. Or Master, I'll just stick with Master.

Dracula: You are strange and off-putting. Go now.

—5.1 Buffy vs. Dracula

Arguably the most powerful vampire Buffy has ever faced, Dracula was chock full of special powers that set him head and shoulders above your typical bloodsucker. After dominating Buffy and even getting a taste of her blood, Dracula was staked multiple times and apparently destroyed. Still, there's no telling if the charming fiend is truly gone, or just biding his time to return.

Name: Count Dracula
Motivation: Predator, be exotic, captivating and mysterious
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 7, Dex 7, Con 7, Int 5, Per 5, Will 7
Ability Scores: Muscle 20, Combat 18, Brains 21
Life Points: 96
Drama Points: 6
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 10, Hypnosis 3, Shape Shifting, Vampire

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	20	26	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	18	—	Defense action
Hypnosis	23	—	Target hesitates
Hypnosis	22	—	Creates illusion
Hypnosis	21	—	Controls target
Mist	27	—	Defense action
Punch	18	18	Bash



Dracula likes to recruit local help to assist him (he briefly turned Xander into an insect-eating toady). He also likes to live it up—he was staying in a castle (it's not clear what the castle was doing in Sunnydale, but there you are) during his visit to Buffyland. He is accompanied by three sister vampires (use the stats for Vampire Veterans) with seductive powers (characters of the proper gender or persuasion have to roll Willpower (doubled) against the gals' Brains Score or be temporarily enthralled by their beauty).

DEMONS

Angel: Lagos?

Buffy: Yeah, he's some kind of demon looking for an all-powerful thingimibob and I've got to stop him before holy havoc's unleashed and it's another Tuesday night in Sunnydale.

—3.7 Revelations

They once ruled the world, and they want it back. Demons (vampires included) are easily the biggest and most common threat to the Buffyverse. This section deals with the non-vampire demons, as we have already covered vampires. Note that to most demons, vampires are at the bottom of the social ladder because of their human connection.

Demons are a varied (and superstitious and cowardly) lot: they range from monstrosities that can consume the planet in a couple of bites to tiny demons who can scare you to death unless you accidentally step on them. In the Buffyverse, the term "demon" applies to a huge number of different beings. To confuse matters even further, humans can be transformed into demons, and then transformed back into humans. Demons are typically evil, although there seem to be plenty of exceptions. Good or evil, they are almost always on the ugly side, leaning towards hideous.

FUN DEMON FACTS

Spike: Let me guess. Someone pulls out the sword—

Angelus: Someone worthy. . .

Spike: —the demon wakes up and wackiness ensues.

—2.21 Becoming, Part One

Since demons are legion, it's hard to generalize them, but we'll do our best. Here we cover some of the basics on demons, their habits, behavior and how best to kill them. What does it mean to be a demon? Read on and find out.



ON THE NATURE OF DEMONS

Demons ran the earth once, but they've been living elsewhere for uncounted millennia ruling the Hellworlds, demonic dimensions that seem to be as numberless as the demon species themselves. Demons who manifest in this world are usually hybrids—demons with some human elements, or humans who have been possessed by or transformed into demons. The average demon is clearly evil, but it's usually an understandable sort of evil—your basic sadistic streak, unhampered by pity or empathy. Most demons delight in the suffering of humans (and animals and plants and other living things; they're not too kind to inanimate objects, either). It's not known whether they hate humans because we live in "their" world now or whether it's simply in their nature to despise and destroy.

Interestingly enough, not all demons are bad, although good demons are a definite minority. Some demons are just trying to get along, doing their thing and not hurting anyone. A few (like Whistler) appear to be on the side of good, or at least neutrality. This could be a result of the "taint" of humanity, or maybe not all demons are born evil. For the most part, assuming a demon is up to no good is the way to go; they're worse than used car salesmen or lawyers that way.

Not all demons are born, either. Some started out as human beings and were turned into demons. Vengeance Demons (such as the lovely Anyanka) seem to be human women whose thirst for revenge leads them first to magic and then demonhood. The Mayor was a human who eventually became a Pure Demon for all of five minutes before being blown to kingdom come. And Giles was briefly turned into a Fyarl demon thanks to the foul magicks of his old drinking buddy Ethan Rayne. Most demons are intruders and raiders from beyond, though.

Human-born or pureblood demon, these critters are usually trouble, and the best way to deal with them is to use something sharp and heavy on them.





PURE DEMONS AND REGULAR DEMONS

Anya: You've never seen a demon.

Buffy: Uh, excuse me, killing them professionally, four years running . . .

Anya: All the demons that walk the earth are tainted, are human hybrids, like vampires. The Ascension means that a human becomes PURE demon. They're different.

Giles: Different?

Buffy: How?

Anya: Well, for one thing, they're bigger.

—3.21 Graduation Day, Part One

Most demons you see on the show are not real, capital "D" Demons. They are human-demon hybrids, "tainted" with human frailties and emotions (although rarely with any positive traits). Pure Demons are big, totally inhuman, and often have incomprehensible goals and purposes (although usually they go for the simple stuff, like "Eat everyone and everything," "Burn the world," and "Mmmm, donuts"). Their power seems to be godlike, although they can be killed (as the Mayor found out in 3.22 Graduation Day, Part Two).

Pure Demons should not make regular appearances in most Series. Their arrival is generally a sign that the end of the world is at hand, and the Apocalypse is the kind of thing should be saved for a Series finale (unless you are planning on some "day after" action—maybe a *Mad Max* meets *Hellraiser* kind of deal). For your typical game, regular demons work best; they are nasty and powerful enough, and they can be killed in an Episode or two.

DEMON ABILITIES

Cordelia: What does this do?

Giles: Uh, it, uh, extracts vital organs to replenish its own mutating cells.

Cordelia: Wow! What does this one do?

Giles: Um, i-it elongates its mouth to, uh, engulf its victim's head with its incisors.

Cordelia: Ouch. Wait, what does this one do?

Giles: It asks endless questions of those with whom it's supposed to be working so that nothing is getting done.

Cordelia: Boy, there's a demon for everything.

—2.18 Killed by Death

Unlike vampires, other demons come in all sizes, colors and flavors. There are thousands of known species of demons, and probably many more unknown types. Each species has its own unique powers and weaknesses; discovering the demon's true nature is often half the battle. They have a few common traits, which are discussed below.

SUPERNATURAL ATTRIBUTES

Many demons are stronger, faster and tougher than your average Olympic athlete. Pure Demons are the size of a Greyhound bus or larger, so they can really tear up the landscape. Fortunately they don't show up much in the Series (unless the you want to do a Buffy-Godzilla crossover). Other demons can be pretty tough enemies, far beyond even ancient vampires. Demon hunters—better eat your Wheaties before going on the prowl.

Demon Life Points can be figured out normally (see p. 33) or assigned as you see fit. Some demons are just tougher, with more Life Points than the combined total of a biker gang. Cannon-fodder demons should have normal Life Points. Powerful monsters could have 100+ Life Points, and Big Bad-level monsters could have several hundred or more. Better bring a rocket launcher or lots of explosives to that party.

NATURAL WEAPONS AND ARMOR

In addition to their not-so-good looks and serious need of breath mints, demons are often endowed with a variety of natural weapons: claws, horns, poisonous secretions, a bite like a pit bull on steroids, and other fun, painful stuff (fun for them, painful for everyone else). Generally speaking, any natural weapon you've ever seen on the Discovery Channel could be part of a demon's bag of tricks. A demonic natural attack has a base damage of (1 x Strength) to (5 x Strength) (Slash/stab), depending on how big the claws, teeth or horns are.

Demons with natural poisons (on top of their natural pointy weapons—hey, no fair!) should be given a Strength and the Attribute they affect (see p. 122).

Additionally, the amazingly latex-like complexion of some demons is often tough enough to turn away knives or crossbow bolts. These demons have an Armor Value of 1 to 20 (or even higher).

demon contagion

Some cultures believe that consuming a creature's blood or some other part of it may grant the eater some of its powers. In the Buffyverse, exposure to demonic blood or other fluids may temporarily "infect" the character with the demonic taint. This sounds bad enough, and usually is, but in some cases the infected person may gain some demonic powers.

A character who comes in contact with demon blood or another fluid may temporarily acquire one or more of the demon's aspects. This is not really a game rules thing as much as it is a fairly rare plot device thing. If you Director folks think it makes for a nice plot or subplot, it happens, and that's that. Usually, the power should have plenty of side effects, so the lucky recipient will soon be in a hurry to find a way to lose the "gift."

SPECIAL DEMON POWERS

Adam (as a human): She's uncomfortable with certain concepts. It's understandable. Aggression is a natural human tendency. (Looks at Buffy.) Though you and me come by it another way.

Buffy: We're not demons.

Adam (as a human): Is that a fact?

—4.22 *Restless*

There are dozens of special demon powers. Listing them all would take the better part of a whole book (insert gratuitous plug for *Monster Smackdown*, our upcoming sourcebook for demons, vampires and assorted ickies of the Buffyverse). Here we present a quick sampler of said powers. As Director and all around creative master of your universe (awesome responsibility, no?), you are encouraged to come up with new and interesting abilities. Just about any supernatural effect could be the domain of one demon species or another. In addition to the powers listed below, the Demons of Note section has a couple extra powers in the individual demon descriptions. Feel free to use them too, or even create variations on those themes.

HYPNOSIS

Some demons are very adept at manipulating and controlling human minds. This power works just like the vampire power of the same name (see p. 165).

ILLUSIONS

This ability goes beyond the Hypnosis powers described elsewhere, and can be used to create very convincing illusions and even whole landscapes. Demons with this power usually reach into their victims' psyches and dredge out memories and bits of their subconscious, and even make them seem to come alive. This power comes in two levels.

Level 1: The illusions have no substance. They can be seen or heard, but they cannot affect the physical world beyond that level. They are plenty good enough to drive people insane, or push victims into despair, despondency or other bad des-things.

Level 2: At this level, the illusions truly come alive. People from the victim's past could actually kill her instead of merely haunt her. The illusions are as solid and dangerous as the real thing. Only the most powerful demons have this level of power.



POSSESSION

Willow: So you think Buffy's not herself? Like she's been possessed or something?

Tara: I'm not sure.

Willow: You didn't sense a hyena energy at all, did you? Because hyena possession is just . . . unpleasant.

—4.16 *Who Are You?*

Demons don't always arrive with body and soul intact. Instead, some invade the body of a hapless human and do the Linda Blair routine. Possessed victims often have increased physical attributes as the demonic energies course through their bodies. The down side is that killing the demon has serious side effects on the possessed person—death being the main one. The best way to deal with a possessing demon is to exorcise or otherwise expel it from the victim, at which point the demon has to go home—or try to possess someone else.

TELEPATHY

Buffy: Guess I won't be writing that book, "Winning friends through telepathy."

—3.18 *Earshot*

At least one species of demon has the ability to communicate telepathically. Several demons can also read people's minds and find out their fears and desires. This power allows demons to coordinate their plans without having to speak, which can come in handy when sneaking around.

THE WISH

Cordelia: I never would've looked twice at Xander if Buffy hadn't made him marginally cooler by hanging with him.

Anya: Really . . .

Cordelia: Yeah, I swear . . . I wish Buffy Summers had never come to Sunnydale.

Anyanka: Done.

—3.9 *The Wish*

Some demons, most notably Vengeance Demons (like Anya's old self) have the power of the Wish, the ability to reshape reality to suit the desires of a person. Anyanka used this power to grant Cordelia's desire that Buffy never arrive in Sunnydale, rewriting history and creating an alternate universe where the Master and his

minions ruled the town. Note that the Wish rarely makes the recipient happy. It is almost always twisted so everybody affected is miserable (or, in Cordelia's case, killed horribly—poor girl).

DEMON SLAYING

Buffy: Professor Walsh? That simple little recon you sent me on—wasn't a raccoon. Turns out it was me, trapped in the sewers with a faulty weapon and two of your pet demons. If you think that's enough to kill me, you really don't know what a Slayer is. Trust me when I say you're gonna find out.

—4.13 *The I in Team*

Most demons are vulnerable to the same things humans are—they can be shot, run over, cut to pieces and so on, and they don't just get better afterwards. Unlike vampires, there is usually no need for special attacks or holy items. Although it is likely that demons don't like crosses or holy water any more than vampires do, the show has not shown them in action, so their effectiveness or lack thereof is up to you as Director. Demons can often be killed in many more ways than vampires, but they usually have the inconsiderate habit of leaving a messy corpse behind, which adds a whole new logistical problem for the heroic hunters.

Some demons are invulnerable to conventional weapons, and can only be destroyed by special magicks, unique items (e.g., silver bladed weapons) or other plot devices (e.g., stabbed through the eye). Dispatching those critters requires a great deal of research and maybe even a mini-quest to retrieve the necessary items. For the most part though, the judicious use of Getting Medieval and Kung Fu will take care of most uglies from beyond reality.



Name: Demon Henchmen
Motivation: Kill, maim, destroy
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 5, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 14, Brains 10
Life Points: 42
Drama Points: 0-3
Special Abilities: Armor Value 5, Claws

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Claw	14	11	Slash/stab
Dodge	14	—	Defense action



DEMONS OF POPE

A "generic" demon and three monsters from the show are described below (many more are presented in the follow-up *Monster Smackdown BtVS* supplement—sorry couldn't help ourselves, again). As with the Vampire Variety Pack, the demons can be used as is, or may help inspire you to create your own new ickies.

DEMON HENCHMAN

Spike: Funny hearing a Fyarl demon say "serviceable." Had a couple of 'em working for me once. They're more like "Like to crush. Crush now?" Strong, though. You won't meet a jar you can't open for the rest of your life.

—4.12 *A New Man*

Although there is no such thing as a "typical" demon, there are some demons whose only purpose in life is to look menacing and provide the Cast with someone to beat up at designated times in an Episode. Here's a sample demon, ugly with clawed hands and a bad attitude. Such a creature would be in the service of a more powerful demon or might be a lone predator, the kind of critter that gets killed in the teaser section of an Episode.

THE JUDGE

Giles: The more I study the Judge, the less I like him. His touch can literally burn the humanity out of you. A true creature of evil can survive the process. No human ever has.

Xander: What's the problem? We send Cordy to fight this guy, and we go for pizza.

—2.13 *Surprise*

Name: The Judge
Motivation: Burn humans
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 7, Dex 3, Con 7, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 20, Combat 14, Brains 12
Life Points: 140
Drama Points: 0-3
Special Abilities: Armor Value 15, Burns humanity, Cannot be killed by forged weapons, Increased Life Points

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Burning Arc	14	60 per Turn	Affects only beings with humanity
Dodge	14	—	Defense action



Name: Sister of Jhe
Motivation: Bring on the Apocalypse
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 7, Con 6, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 20, Brains 14
Life Points: 80
Drama Points: 4
Special Abilities: Armor Value 5, Increased Life Points,
 Known ritual to open Hellmouth

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge/Parry	20	—	Defense action
Kick	19	19	Bash
Punch	20	17	Bash
Spin Kick	18	21	Bash



He was big, blue, built like a brick wall, and he could burn the humanity right out of you (that's gotta hurt, unless you've disposed of that troublesome humanity thing). The Judge spent several centuries stored in a number of boxes until Spike and Drusilla put him back together. Weak after his dismemberment, the Judge initially had to touch his victims to burn them. Eventually he grew in strength until he could burn people as far as he could see them. According to prophecy, this nasty could not be killed by any weapon forged by man. The Judge had serious Big Bad potential, but his career was cut short by Buffy and some modern military hardware.

A cult of she-demons, the Sisters are known for celebrating victory by feasting on the corpses of their enemies. They want to bring demons back to our world, typically by re-opening the (or a) Hellmouth. This makes them good recurring villains. Their last attempt was a dismal failure, thanks to the efforts of Buffy and company. The Sisters are tough and dangerous fighters, though. Even a Slayer can't face more than two or three at the same time, and even a single one can make for a tough fight.

† THE SISTERHOOD OF JHE

Faith: These babes were wicked rowdy. What's their deal?

Giles: I wish I knew.

—3.13 *The Zeppo*

SCABBY TELEPATH DEMON

Buffy: Scabby demon #2 got away. ... scabby demon #1, big check in the "slay" column.

—3.18 *Earshot*

Lacking mouths, these demons communicate telepathically. Fighting them has the added risk that, if the character gets some of the critter's blood on her, she may be

Name: Telepath Demon (or Scabby to those on a first name basis)
Motivation: Mayhem
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 2, Per 4, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 17, Brains 12
Life Points: 60
Drama Points: 2
Special Abilities: Claws, Increased Life Points, Telepathy

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Claw	17	15	Slash/stab
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Punch	17	15	Bash



infected with telepathic powers. This sounds cool at first, but the telepathy soon becomes uncontrollable, and the character can't shut out the constant blaring of all the minds around her. Besides their telepathic abilities, these demons have claws and nothing better to do than wander around the streets looking for trouble. A clever Director might be able to come up with some additional purpose or plan, or maybe have the Scabbies work for some Big Bad.

PRIMALS AND SHAPE-SHIFTERS

Willow: Quite the party animal.

Giles: Quite. It acts on pure instinct, without conscience, predatory and aggressive—

Buffy: In other words, your typical male.

Xander: On behalf of my gender: hey!

—2.15 Phases

Lycanthropes. Skin-changers. Fabulous furry freaks. The Buffyverse has its share of were-creatures, beings who have a human and animalistic shape. Sometimes they are humans who have been cursed and are occasionally possessed by the spirit of some beast. And sometimes they are monsters who can pass themselves off as human, the better to feed on them. Whatever their nature, these creatures are like some nightmarish refugee from *When Animals Attack*, and their first reaction when running into somebody will likely be to take a bite or two.

The show has depicted several different types of shape-shifters so far. You have your traditional werewolves, people possessed by the spirit totem of an animal, giant insects that can pass themselves off as human, and even a guy who could turn himself into a horde of maggots (which makes for a great conversation piece but sucks as a pickup line).

THE SKIPPY ON SKIP-CHANGERS

Like demons, Primals come in many varieties, but they have a few things in common. They are always predators—there are no were-sheep or were-marmots out there. They are pretty dangerous, to themselves and to others. When assuming their bestial aspect, they lose any self-control. Most of them are living metaphors for the raging hormones inside your average teenager.

NATURE AND HABITS

Oz: I won't lie about the fact that I worry. I know what it's like to have power you can't control. I mean, every time I start to wolf out, I touch something, deep, dark. It's not fun. But just know that whatever you decide, I back your play.

—4.4 Fear Itself

Lycanthropes are predatory beings, and they tend to feed on humans. Maybe this is Nature's way of striking back at humankind—we cut down the rain forest and serve a few billion burgers, and Mother Nature sends us a plague



of werewolves and other creatures that see us as walking burgers. Or humans might be their preferred prey because there're so dang many of us. In any case, your average Primal is wanting to munch on somebody before too long, which will lead to trouble for all concerned.

Like all predators, Primals try to be careful about how they hunt. Rampaging in broad daylight (even if the Primal can assume its bestial shape during the day) is rarely the smart way to operate. Shape-shifters hunt covertly, hiding in the night or setting up elaborate traps and luring their victims into an ambush. Once it's bloodlust takes over, though, all bets are off and the creature is unable to stop until it kills or is killed or knocked unconscious.

PRIMAL ABILITIES

There're lots of different were-creatures out there, and they have different powers and abilities. Here are some of the basic traits they share.

DUAL SHAPE

Primals usually have two forms: a regular, human shape and a bestial, fill-in-the-blanks-man form. The human form is good to get around without attracting cops, animal control officials and game wardens, but generally it lacks most or all of the Kewl Powerz of the animal shape. In some cases, the human form is simply an illusion or shell, something the critter puts on when trying to blend in. In others, it is the real person, with the bestial form being the result of a curse, possession or some other Really, Really Bad Thing.

In some cases, the Primal does not have a secondary shape. Instead, the changes are in her behavior and attitude. These Primals become animal-like and predatory, and the beast spirit inside them gives them some enhanced physical attributes, but they look fairly normal—except for the occasional unnatural gleam in their eyes. These non-shape-shifting types can be even more dangerous, because they can't be spotted on sight. Usually their behavior gives them away.

SUPERNATURAL ATTRIBUTES

Were-critters are usually better than humans when it comes to lifting weights and moving fast. An enraged werewolf can give even a Slayer a run for her money. Shape-shifters have two sets of Physical Attributes, Life Points, Muscle and Combat Scores, separated by a slash. The first set is for their human form; the other is for their were-form.

NATURAL ATTACKS

Your basic teeth and claws (pincers, stingers, or other "natural" weapons). This is pretty much like the demon ability (see p. 165)—a claw is a claw, whether wielded by Fregathor from the Ninth Circle of Hell or Juan, your friendly neighborhood Guatemalan were-jaguar.

WEREWOLVES

Willow: Oz is a werewolf.

Buffy: It's a long story.

Oz: I got bit.

Buffy: Apparently not that long.

—3.3 Faith, Hope and Trick

Always a classic, one shape-shifter deserves special mention. The Buffyverse werewolf is very similar to the "wolf-man" of the movies. During the three nights of and around the full moon, our friendless furry turns into a hairy carnivore with a taste for living flesh. Well-wishers and relatives may keep the unfortunate under lock and key during her "time of the month," allowing her to lead a happy, productive life despite her condition.

Some werewolves learn to control their changes though. Oz managed it through a combination of strange herbs and meditation techniques. The downside seems to be that if the "controlled" werewolf is exposed to some intense stress (like finding out your girlfriend has turned gay and found her own girlfriend—not that there's anything wrong with that), the control may slip and the change might take over, even when it's not the full moon. A few very fortunate furries learn how to control the change, and can even change at will, retaining control in their animal form. For the most part though, being a werewolf is your basic bummer.

WEREWOLF POWERS

During the three nights of the full moon, the afflicted turns into a werewolf. Physical Attributes go up (+4 to Strength, +2 to Dexterity and Constitution), nasty teeth and claws appear (inflicting 2 x Strength base points of Slash/stab damage), and acute senses arise (+3 to any Perception or Brains task that involves using senses).

A COUPLE SHAPE-SHIFTERS

Two were-critters are described below, to be used as the you see fit. We have the typical werewolf (for a look at yet another werewolf, see Oz on p. 67) and the something more unusual.

Name: Veruca
Motivation: Have fun, live for today
Critter Type: Werewolf
Attributes: Str 2/6, Dex 3/5, Con 2/4, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10/16, Combat 11/16, Brains 12
Life Points: 26/50
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: Attractiveness +3, Werewolf

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	16	16	Slash/stab
Claw	16	16	Slash/stab
Dodge	16	—	Defense action
Grapple	18	—	Resisted by Dodge



VERUCA, SLUTTY WEREWOLF

Oz: 'Free to kill people? I won't do that. You shouldn't.'

Veruca: 'You don't understand. But you will. You'll see that we belong together.'

—4.6 *Wild at Heart*

The sexy lead singer of Shy, Veruca happen to visit Sunnydale and took a moment out to do a serious seduction number on Oz. A werewolf herself, Veruca liked to let the beast inside run unfettered, although it seems she had some control over her transformation. Veruca tried to kill Willow, and would have if Oz hadn't killed her instead. The whole thing wound up destroying Oz and Willow's relationship, and Oz left Sunnydale to get himself straightened out. By the time he returned, Willow had switched teams, so to speak.

MS. FRENCH, THE SHE-MANTIS

Giles: 'Whatever you do it's got to be sudden and swift—this beast is dangerous.'

Buffy: 'Well, your buddy Carlyle faced it, he's still around.'

Giles: 'Yes . . . in a straightjacket howling his innards out day and night.'

—1.4 *Teacher's Pet*

The She-Mantis was able to pass herself off as human (either through some sort of illusion or shape-shifting ability), but vampires and other supernatural predators could sense her alien nature very quickly. To fertilize her eggs, she would lure male virgins to her lair, mate with them and then devour them head-first. She chose Xander as a prospective mate, much to his chagrin. Buffy dealt with the monster through a combination of bug spray, bat-sonar recordings (praying mantises are stunned by the sound) and some extreme violence with a machete.

Name: Ms. Natalie French (fake identity)
Motivation: Breed, mate, eat mate
Critter Type: She-Mantis
Attributes: Str 3/7 Dex 3/6, Con 3/6, Int 3, Per 5, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 12/20, Combat 12/17, Brains 14
Life Points: 50/75
Drama Points: 4
Special Abilities: Attractiveness +4 (as human), Shape-shifter

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	17	19	Slash/stab
Pincer	18	26	Slash/stab
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Grapple	17	—	Resisted by Dodge



Her eggs survived though, so her children might show up looking for some vengeance one of these days.

Giant mantises can rotate their head 180 degrees even in human form, and are very big, strong and fast in their natural shape. Their pincers deal (3 x Strength) points and their bite inflicts (2 x Strength) points of base damage (both Slash/stab). Bug spray inflicts 10 points of damage per can and bat sonar knocks them off balance (reduce Dexterity and the Combat Score by four when exposed to the sound). To kill them, a character needs to chop them up into little bits (they have to be reduced to -50 Life Points using an edged weapon).

RESTLESS DEAD: GHOSTS, ZOMBIES AND OTHER THINGS FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

Xander: A ghost? (Willow nods.) What's the deal? Is every frat on this campus haunted? And if so, why do people keep coming to these parties, cause it's not the snacks?

—4.18 Where the Wild Things Are

Vampirism is not the only way people can come back after death. The Buffyverse has a full contingent of other restless dead—ghosts and poltergeists as well as zombies and reanimated corpses. The dead can be a royal pain in the butt. Ghosts make all kinds of mischief, with the advantage of having no corporeal . . . anything, and zombies and other embodied undead are pretty hard to put down, having already been killed once. Although these entities don't have much Big Bad potential, they can still make for interesting featured villains in an Episode or three.

BASIC GHOSTBUSTING

The biggest difference between vampires and all the other restless dead is the demon thingy. Vampires are dead bodies with a demon inside; zombies and ghosts have no demons. Zombies (and other re-animated critters) are human corpses brought to a semblance of life through magic or weird science. Ghosts are human souls that are unwilling or unable to move on to the next stage for some reason or another. So let's explore the returned dead.

GHOST ABILITIES

Giles: And now the poltergeists are drawing more and more energy out of them. Feeding on them in fact. Buffy and Riley are, are powering this whole thing.

Xander: Okay, they're the battery in the boo factory, so what happens when the battery's drained?

Giles: They die.

—4.18 Where the Wild Things Are

Ghosts are the restless spirits of dead humans. Usually when somebody dies her soul moves on to the next stage of existence, whatever that may be. For an unfortunate few, things don't work out that way, and they are stuck in our dimension. Most ghosts are tormented by some event in their lives, or feel they have unfinished business in this world. Until they can solve their "childhood trauma," as Cordy puts it, they remain on the physical plane. Most ghosts are unable to affect the world directly, although they can briefly manifest as translucent shades, strange sounds or "cold spots." Some ghosts (especially those on a Hellmouth) can do a lot more than moan and rattle some chains, though.

In some cases, instead of an actual ghost you get a "psychic fragment," a sort of spiritual resonance that works much like a ghost, but without having an actual dead soul there. These fragments are only created in places where a lot of people suffered horror and torment for a long time. Torture chambers, dungeons, or places where children were abused are prime candidates for this type of poltergeist event. The abilities of these collective emanations are very similar to those of regular ghosts.

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

A ghost isn't corporeal, so Strength, Dexterity and Constitution don't really apply. By the same token, neither do Combat or Muscle Scores, or Life Points. The shade relies on its Mental Attributes and its Brains Score for most things. Assume that any magicks that can injure a ghost will destroy or banish it if they inflict more than twice its Brains Score in damage.

HYPNOSIS

Powerful ghosts can manipulate people's thoughts and senses. This works like the vampire power of the same name (see p. 165).

POLTERGEIST

Giles: I don't believe there are any ghosts.

Anya: One ran right through me.

Giles: Not a ghost. An apparition. I believe we're dealing with a kind of poltergeist. A whole cluster of them, in fact, born out of intense adolescent emotion and sexual energy.

—4.18 *Where the Wild Things Are*

Some ghosts can move objects, slam doors, break things and otherwise make a nuisance of themselves. Treat this as the Sorcery power telekinesis (see p. 143) but use the ghost's Brains Score - 2 to determine how much weight it can move. Ghosts with low Brains Scores can barely move a few pounds at a time, but very strong-willed spirits can toss around furniture and break every window in a room if moved to do so. Also, the repetition penalty for telekinesis doesn't apply to ghosts.

Very powerful ghosts can combine the poltergeist power with some level of materialization—they can manifest parts of themselves physically, or create objects out of thin air. These manifestations are solid enough to injure or kill people. Destroying them physically is possible—any attack that does more damage than the ghost's Brains Score destroys the manifestation, without harming the ghost itself.

POSSESSION

Some spirits can take over the bodies of human victims, and use them for their own nefarious purposes. This works like the demon power of the same name (see p. 176).

ZOMBIE AND REANIMATE ABILITIES

Xander: Alright, but if you come across the army of zombies, can you page us before they eat your flesh?

—2.2 *Some Assembly Required*

Corporeal living dead can come back in several different ways: they can be put together à la Frankenstein's Monster (lots of stitches and scars), or reanimated by foul magicks and unspeakable rituals, or raised by the careless use of exotic antiques. In most cases, zombies have no consciousness or memories of their former lives. They just wander around attacking people. Movie myths to the contrary, they do not hunger for brains.

Some reanimated dead retain their memories and personalities (which is kind of sad, as they realize they are standing around in a slowly-rotting corpse). Unlike vampires, who look normal enough unless they show their game faces, zombies look . . . well . . . dead. Their skin is usually grayish or purple, their complexion is absolutely awful, and the smell—well, let's not dwell on the smell, but it's noticeable, and deodorant and after-shave just ain't gonna cut it. Besides their appearance, most walking dead have a few other things in common.

SUPERNATURAL STRENGTH AND RESILIENCE

Zombies tend to be a bit stronger than humans (+1 to +2 to Strength), but are usually less agile (-1 to Dexterity). Punching or kicking a zombie isn't going to do much to it. If the damage is greater than its Muscle Score, the zombie is knocked down, but it soon gets up. Dismemberment (using an edged weapon to chop the zombie down to -30 Life Points or so) at least keeps the critter from walking around and grabbing people, but the pieces continue to squirm—a major gross-out, not to mention a cleanup nightmare. Burning usually takes care of the corpse, as long as it's burned to ashes. The best way to deal with a magically reanimated corpse though is to undo the spell or ritual that brought it back in the first place.

A FEW DEAD THINGS

Two ghosts and a zombie (walk into a bar . . . nah) from the show are described below.



Name: James/Grace
Motivation: Tragic Love
Critter Type: Ghost
Attributes: Str —, Dex —, Con —, Int 3, Per 3, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle —, Combat —, Brains 18
Life Points: —
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: Poltergeist, Possession

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Pistol	18	17	Bullet



JAMES STANLEY AND GRACE PEWMAN

Willow: A ghost? Cool!

Xander: Oh, no, not cool. This was no wimpy chain rattler. This was more like—"I'm dead as hell and I'm not gonna take it anymore."

—2.19 I Only Have Eyes for You

What happens when love goes horribly wrong in the vicinity of the Hellmouth? Well, you get two ghosts condemned to relive their tragic deaths over and over again—and taking over the bodies of helpless people to re-enact the murder-suicide that ended their lives (which is really hard on the possessed bodies). Their torment ended when they played the possession bit on Buffy and Angelus. Since vampires can't be killed by guns, the murder was disrupted and the ghosts had a chance to talk and resolve their issues, which allowed them to move on. It was a very Oprah moment, except for the gunfire part.

DARYL EPPS, REANIMATED JOCK

Eric: We're ready.

Cordelia: Ready? Ready for what?!

Eric: You're going to feel a little pinch, maybe a little discomfort around the neck area. But when you wake up, you'll have the body of a seventeen year old. In fact... you'll have the body of several.

—2.2 Some Assembly Required

Daryl Epps had a bright future ahead of him until he died in a rock-climbing accident. His future got a little dimmer when his brother Chris put him back together (winning no prizes for neatness) and brought him back to life through a combination of weird science and (likely) the influence of the Hellmouth. Daryl was back, but he was a little too Frankenstein-y for prime time, so he kept to himself a lot. Dead or not, Daryl really wanted a

Name: Daryl Epps
Motivation: Get a girlfriend
Critter Type: Zombie
Attributes: Str 7, Dex 4, Con 5, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 20, Combat 15, Brains 10
Life Points: 58
Drama Points: 4
Special Abilities: Jock, Zombie powers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Punch	15	18	Bash
Slam-Tackle	20	19	Bash; no Parry; target possibly prone
Takedown	20	12	Resisted by Dodge/Parry; target prone



girlfriend, and Chris and his friend Eric set out to build him one using dead girls as raw material. They needed a fresh head to complete the process though, and the evil nerds chose Cordelia for the job. Buffy saved the day, as is her wont to do, and Daryl apparently perished in a fire that consumed the makeshift laboratory where the operation was going to take place.

ROBOTS

Xander: So, I'm Ted, the sickly loser. I'm dying and my wife dumps me. I build a better Ted. He brings her back, holds her hostage in his bunker o' love until she dies. And then he keeps bringing her back, over and over. Now that's creepy on a level I hardly knew existed.

—2.11 Ted

Robots are surprisingly common in the Buffyverse. On at least three occasions, some inventor or nerd has been able to manufacture a robotic humanoid, the latest such creation being the adorable Buffybot that Spike "dated" briefly in Season Five.

It is possible that the ability to create robots (and other super-science creations) is somehow linked to the Hellmouth. Perhaps the mystical influences allow mad geniuses to bend the laws of physics and create things that couldn't be replicated in any other laboratory in the world. Or maybe robots and weird science are just a part of the Buffyverse. Let's not think too hard about it.

ROBOT BASICS

What hidden evil lurks inside a robot's mechanical heart? In theory, robots are mere machines incapable of feeling anything, good or bad. They are bound by their programming, which they follow to the letter whether it makes sense or not. In the show, robots are used as living power fantasies—you don't like who you are, you

remake yourself. You have the technology to make a better, faster, stronger self. Or, even better, you can create the perfect mate, someone who is hardwired to love you and do anything you want.

Reality never quite lives up to the fantasy though. The robots end up twisting their instructions in new and unexpected ways, people start getting hurt or killed, and someone needs to pull the plug on the wacky machine before the body count starts to rack up.

ROBOT ATTRIBUTES

Joyce: I mean, don't get me wrong. I-I'm still a little gun shy. It certainly didn't help that my last boyfriend turned out to be a homicidal robot.

—4.4 Fear, Itself

Every robot in the show so far has been extremely strong and resilient. The typical robot has +4 to Strength, +1 to Dexterity and +2 to Constitution, with no limit to its Physical Attributes. Life Points measure how



Name: Ted
Motivation: Find a wife, keep a wife, repeat
Critter Type: Robot
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 5, Con 6, Int 3, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 16, Brains 12
Life Points: 73
Drama Points: 6
Special Abilities: Good cook, Hard to Kill 5,
 Power Down, Robot

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Kick	15	18	Bash
Punch	16	16	Bash



much damage the robot can sustain before it no longer works. A robot can be temporarily knocked "unconscious" until it resets itself, but generally it keeps on ticking until it takes one too many lickings. Once it is broken, the robot needs a skilled technician (that's someone with the Mr. Fix-It Skill, right?) for repairs.

KILLING ROBOTS

Good ol' violence seems to do the job just fine, although robots can take a lot of punishment before they go down. Then there's the "trick the robot into punching an electrical fixture," sending thousands of volts of electricity into them and frying their circuits. That seems to work pretty well. Indeed, that plan probably works great against most living beings too.

TED

Buffy: What are you?

Ted: I'm a salesman! That's what you should've remembered. No matter how you put him down . . . a good salesman always bounces back!

—2.11 Ted

Ted seemed like the perfect boyfriend—cheerful, clean-cut, and friendly. No wonder Joyce liked him. Soon, he started displaying a few weird quirks that made Buffy suspicious. One violent argument later, Ted was dead—until he came back. Turned out Ted was actually a robot serial killer. Buffy put an end to his depredations through the liberal use of a cast-iron skillet upside his head.

Ted's Power Down ability allows him to temporarily shut down operations. He regains six Life Points per hour while powered down.

THE BIG BADS

They are the worst of the worst, the masters of mayhem, the mega-villains who torment Buffy and her friends for entire Seasons before finally getting their richly deserved ass-whuping. They are the Big Bads. Here they are, recorded for posterity, to recycle into your games or perhaps to inspire you to create new and improved Big Bads of your own.

THE MASTER

Colin: So you would spare them?

Master: I am weary and their deaths would bring me little joy.

(Vampires are executed.)

Master: Of course, sometimes a little is enough.

—1.7 Angel

He was the first Big Bad, and he was a classic—smart and powerful, a monstrous creature trapped between worlds looking for a way out in order to bring Hell to Earth. The Master was a centuries-old vampire who led one of the few large vampire societies, the Order of Aurelius. Some sixty-odd years ago, the Master arrived at the Hellmouth, ready to open it and welcome the Old Ones back into our reality. Fortunately for humankind, an earthquake buried him in the old church where he was preparing the ritual. The earthquake disrupted the spell and kept the Master there for decades, stuck "like a cork in a bottle," to quote Giles.

The Master's evil was not stopped, merely contained. Even from his prison, he continued to direct his vampire minions, and he tried to break free on a number of occasions. After many failures, the key to his release was

Name: Heinrich Joseph Nest a.k.a. The Master
Motivation: Escape the Hellmouth, summon the Old Ones
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 8, Dex 8, Con 8, Int 6, Per 5, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 22, Combat 22, Brains 18
Life Points: 90
Drama Points: 10
Special Abilities: Claws, Hypnosis 1, Increased Life Points, Vampire



Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Claw	22	22	Slash/stab
Bite	24	31	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	22	—	Defense action
Grapple	24	—	Resisted by Dodge
Hypnosis 1	18	—	Target hesitates

found in the *Pergamum Codex*—an ancient prophecy predicted the Master would rise and the Slayer would die. The prophecy came true, sort of—Buffy confronted the Master, lost the fight and drowned in a pool of water after being partially drained of blood. The Master was free, but the prophecy never said anything about Buffy staying dead. Thanks to Xander and some timely CPR, Buffy came back just in time to stop the Master as he opened the Hellmouth and let the first Old One through. In the apocalyptic battle that ensued, the Master met his end, impaled on a piece of broken furniture. His bones remained behind though and his followers tried to restore him to unlife, but the attempt failed and Buffy

pulverized the bones, apparently putting an end to his evil once and for all.

In another dimension, a timeline where Buffy didn't move to Sunnydale, the Master rules there. In that world, he killed Buffy when she finally arrived.

DRUSILLA

Drusilla: Do you like daisies? I plant them but they always die. Everything I put in the ground withers and dies. Spike, I'm cold.

—2.3 School Hard

Name: Drusilla
Motivation: Whimsical nutjob
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 5, Con 4, Int 4, Per 6, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 18, Brains 20
Life Points: 48
Drama Points: 10
Special Abilities: Hypnosis 3, Vampire, Visions



Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	20	17	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	18	—	Defense action
Grapple	20	—	Resisted by Dodge
Hypnosis 1	22	—	Target hesitates
Hypnosis 2	21	—	Create illusion
Hypnosis 3	20	—	Control target
Nail Slash	18	13	Slash/stab



She's a little bit crazy, but don't let the swooning princess act fool you: Drusilla is one of the most dangerous vampires out there. Gifted with prophetic powers, young Drusilla was hounded and driven mad by Angelus, who turned the pious young woman into an insane monster. Drusilla in turn sired Spike, and the two became a couple—the Sid and Nancy of the vampire world, leaving chaos and grief in their wake.

Drusilla was weak and in bad shape when Spike brought her to the Hellmouth, but the mysterious du Lac ritual restored her to full health with a little help from Angel's (unwillingly donated) blood. When Angel returned to his evil ways, Drusilla's love for Spike cooled down, leading to a falling out that culminated with Spike betraying Angelus, knocking Drusilla out and leaving Sunnydale. Drusilla has moved on to tormenting Angel in Los Angeles and remains at large, making brief forays into Sunnydale. She continues to be a threat to the lives and sanity of the Cast.



looking for some cheap thrills. He got them at the hands (and teeth) of Darla (see p. 172), who turned him into a vampire and took him on a nomadic tour of death and destruction across the globe. Angelus soon proved to be her equal in viciousness and murder.

Decades later, Angelus tortured and murdered a Romany (Gypsy) girl and her family. Her clan worked a powerful curse on him, restoring his human soul so he would know lasting suffering for his deeds. Unknown to Angel, the curse would remain until the day he felt a moment of true happiness—at which point he would turn back into a demon inhabiting a human corpse.

On Buffy's seventeenth birthday, she and Angel consummated their love, and the vampire knew that moment

ANGELUS

Spike: You've really got a yen to hurt this girl, haven't you?

Angelus: She made me feel like a human being. That's not the kind of thing you just forgive.

—2.14 Innocence

Angelus ("he of the angelic face") was born in the 18th century. He grew up to be a good-for-nothing rich kid,

Name: Angelus (from Season Two)
Motivation: Torture, maim and destroy; particularly Buffy and those close to her
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 8, Dex 7, Con 6, Int 3, Per 4, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 22, Combat 21, Brains 15
Life Points: 90
Drama Points: 10
Special Abilities: Armor Value 5, Fast Reaction Time, Hard to Kill 8, Situational Awareness, Vampire

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	23	30	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	21	—	Defense action
Grapple	23	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	20	23	Bash
Punch	21	22	Bash
Sword	21	38	Slash/stab



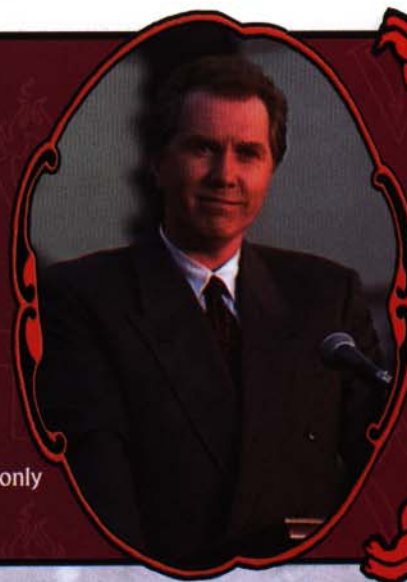
Buffy

the vampire slayer™

Name: Richard Wilkins III
Motivation: Become Pure Demon, eat people
Critter Type: Human (Demon at the end)
Attributes: Str 2/20, Dex 2/6, Con 4/10, Int 5, Per 3, Will 5
Ability Scores: Muscle 10/46, Combat 10/16, Brains 16
Life Points: 34/100
Drama Points: 5
Special Abilities: +8 to occultism rolls, Armor Value 10 (demon), Controls gang of vampires, Increased Life Points (demon)

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	16	64	Slash/stab; demon only
Dodge	16	—	Defense action
Tail	16	84	Bash; demon only



of bliss. Big mistake. Angelus came back, all demon, no soul and leather pants. He broke Buffy's heart, tormented her friends and family, murdered Jenny Calendar, and then tried to destroy the world. So Buffy killed him—just after she realized he had regained his soul.

THE MAYOR

Mayor Wilkins: This officially commences the Hundred Days. Nothing can harm me until the Ascension. Gosh, I'm feeling chipper! 'Who's for a root beer?

—3.14 *Bad Girls*

For a century, the Mayor of Sunnydale kept a lid on the existence of the Hellmouth even as he prepared for his "Ascension" to pure demon-hood. Hard to believe, coming from a nice, polite, obsessively clean, somewhat

dorkish man and all. The Mayor was the antithesis of the typical villain. He looked perfectly normal, and acted like an upstanding member of the community. He was respected by the people of Sunnydale, and positively adored by Principal Snyder, who considered the Mayor a force for good and order (as a reward for his loyalty, Snyder was chewed up and swallowed like so many Mentos). Behind the pleasant facade hid a dark and merciless soul, all the worse for being a human being with no inner demon to serve as an excuse for his behavior.

Using magic, the Mayor kept himself youthful for decades. His wife did not share in his eternal life and died cursing his name. He appears to have genuinely cared for her though. The Mayor definitely had a soft spot for the renegade Slayer Faith, and treated her as a daughter. He wanted to become a Pure Demon, untainted by humanity, and usher in a new age of chaos.



Buffy

the vampire slayer™

Name: Adam
Motivation: Build himself a new species
Critter Type: Demon/Undead/Cyborg Hybrid
 (not available as a Cast Member option, okay?)
Attributes: Str 10, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 5, Per 7, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 26, Combat 24, Brains 17
Life Points: 250
Drama Points: 6
Special Abilities: Armor Value 12, Implanted weapons, Increased Life Points, Resistance (Magical Effects) 10

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bone Spear	24	26	Slash/stab
Dodge	16	—	Defense action
Minigun	24	12/shot	Bullet; successful burst hits with 7 shots
Punch	24	26	Bash
Rockets	24	80	Bash



The process of Ascension rendered the Mayor invulnerable to harm for 100 days (he cannot be killed, and any damage he sustains is regenerated at the rate of 100 Life Points per turn—this is just to determine how long a massive injury slows him down—i.e., not long). In addition to his magical skills, the Mayor commanded a small army of vampires led by the infamous Mr. Trick, and eventually by Faith. On graduation day, he turned into a demon in the middle of his commencement address. His demonic shape was huge and snake-like (the demon stats are listed on the right of his Attributes and scores). Demonhood didn't last long though. After the Ascension he could again be killed, and Buffy accomplished that by luring him into the high school, where the Scoobies had planted a large quantity of explosives. Thus did Buffy save the world and take out her high school all at the same time.



ADAM

Buffy: She pieced you together from parts of other demons.

Adam: And man. And machine. Which tells me what I am . . . but not who I am. Mother wrote things down. Hard data, but also her feelings. That's how I learned that I have a job here. And that she loved me.

—4.14 Goodbye Iowa

Designed by Dr. Maggie Walsh of the Initiative, Adam was the ultimate mix of human, demon and machine—a nightmarish combination of reanimated demon flesh with cybernetic enhancements. Unfortunately, Adam was not a nice monster. His first act upon gaining consciousness was to murder Dr. Walsh, his “Mommy.” Shortly afterwards, he casually dissected a child out of curiosity. It only got worse from there. After recruiting an army of vampires and demons, Adam plotted to overthrow the Initiative and build more beings like him.

His plan called for dozens of vamps and demons to infiltrate the Initiative by allowing themselves to be captured. Then the prisoners would stage a massive breakout, which should produce plenty of demon and human corpses for Adam to play with. In the end, Buffy was able to defeat him only after a ritual gave her the combined powers of all of her friends, as well as the abilities of the First Slayer.

Buffy

the Vampire Slayer™

The "kinetically redundant, bio-mechanical demonoid" was one of the toughest foes Buffy ever faced. He was stronger and tougher than her, equally fast, and had an array of implanted weapons, everything from machine guns to rocket launchers. Besides his physical prowess, he had a sharp analytical mind with perfect computer memory and heightened senses. Oh, and a wicked bone spear that used to belong to a Polgara demon.

GLORY

Glory: Guys! I'm not gonna kill you. Not in the mood. What do you think that's about?

Gronx: In mercy does your power lie?

Glory: No, brainless, in torture, death and chaos does my power lie.

—5.21 *The Weight Of The World*

During Season Five, Buffy faced her toughest opponent yet—a living, breathing Hellgoddess. Greater than a demon or vampire, Glorificus (Glory to her friends) looked like a gorgeous blonde (when she wasn't transformed into a handsome male doctor by the name of Ben). She could punch through walls, take a hit from a wrecking ball, and move so fast she was barely visible. And those were just her basic abilities; for food, she devoured the minds and sanity of people.

Glory ruled a demon dimension with an iron fist, but ended up exiled in our world. For over two decades, she led a dual existence—Glory, the beautiful insane mind eater, and Ben, the kindly doctor who hated what Glory did but was too weak-willed and afraid of death to stop

her. To return home, Glory needed the Key, a mystical item that allowed its wielder to sunder the barriers between worlds. A group of monks guarded the Key. To hide it from her, they used a powerful ritual that turned it into a young girl. The ritual also overwrote the memories and records of the Key's new "family"—the Summers in Sunnydale. And thus was Dawn born. After several misadventures, Glory finally discovered Dawn's secret, and prepared the ritual to open the gates of Hell. Buffy managed to beat Glory to a pulp, with a little help from Willow's magic, Xander (and a wrecking ball), and the mystical hammer of Olaf the Troll God. To save herself, Glory morphed into Ben, and Buffy spared his/her life. Giles then dispassionately killed Ben in order to spare Buffy from Glory's inevitable revenge. All their efforts did not stop the opening of the gateway though, and Buffy had to sacrifice her life to save her sister's.

In addition to her powers, Glory commanded a small army of freakish gnome-like creatures. These demonic servants were not very tough or useful, but they sure knew how to kiss ass. She was opposed by the Knights of Byzantium, a mystical order that preferred to fight with medieval weapons and armor, which did them precious little good every time they ran into her. Glory killed most of them shortly before her own demise.

Glory's mind-destroying attack involved sinking her fingers into a person's brain (without actually perforating the skull). At the end of the process, the person's rational mind was gone, leaving behind a terrified, tormented and quite insane husk. Willow figured out a way to take back the minds Glory had stolen, which greatly weakened the Hellgoddess (Glory used those minds as sustenance) and restored Tara (who Glory had de-brained before) to normal.

Name: Glorificus
Motivation: Go home
Critter Type: Hellgoddess
Attributes: Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 5, Per 5, Will 8
Ability Scores: Muscle 36, Combat 23, Brains 20
Life Points: 400
Drama Points: 5
Special Abilities: Armor Value 20, Brain Suck, Increased Life Points

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Brain Suck	20	—	Insanity
Dodge	23	—	Defense action
Punch	23	36	Bash
Kick	22	38	Bash





7 Episodes, Seasons and Drama

Whistler: No one asks for their life to change, not really. But it does . . . So, what, are we helpless? Puppets? No. The big moments are gonna come, can't help that. It's what you do afterwards that counts. That's when you find out who you are.

—2.21 *Becoming, Part One*

In the *BtVS RPG*, you Directors also get to be the producers of the show.

By now, you should have an idea of how the rules work, and the basics of slaying—all the mechanical stuff, the equivalent of FX, fight choreography and basic acting. None of that is enough for a full-fledged show. You also need the setting—the backdrop for the action—and the framework of the show. To help keep things “in character,” the default structure of a *Buffy* game is broken up into Episodes—self-contained scenarios that can be played out in one to three game sessions. A group of Episodes with a common thread—a major villain or subplot—becomes a Season, at the end of which the villain should be confronted (and hopefully defeated) and most of the subplots resolved (although their resolution might spawn other subplots to be dealt with next Season).

This chapter provides advice and suggestions for all you budding Directors. Use them, modify them or ignore them as you see fit.



TIME AND PLACE

Giles: But that's the thrill of living on the Hellmouth—one has a veritable cornucopia of fiends, devils and ghouls to engage... (off their looks)... Pardon me for finding the glass half full.

—1.3 *Witch*

Let's talk setting here—where will the Series take place? Where and when are as important as who will star in the Series—being the Slayer doesn't matter much if the setting is aboard the *Titanic*, for example (that would be a pretty short Series). The ideal setting should provide a number of "hooks" for the Cast. It should have interesting locales—cool hangouts, dangerous neighborhoods, and dark secrets buried in unexpected places. The setting should also have interesting people—friends, acquaintances and foes, people the Cast can fall in love with or fight to the death, or have to deal with in their everyday lives. Finally, if the Cast is going to save the world, the world should be worth saving; the setting should have some redeeming qualities.

SUNNYDALE

Willow: There's big evil brewin'. You'll never be bored here, Faith. 'Cause this is Sunnydale, home of the big brewin' evil.

—3.3 *Faith, Hope And Trick*

By day a beautiful California town, by night the hunting grounds of vampires and worse—Sunnydale is the default setting of the *BtVS RPG*. Our favorite gateway to Hell is chock full of things to do, places to visit, and critters to slay. More information about Sunnydale and its denizens can be found in **Chapter Five: Sunnydale after Dark**.

Using Sunnydale as a setting is easy and convenient: there's plenty of information and support available, both in this book, future supplements and in other *BtVS* source material, including the shows themselves. As long as the players are familiar with the TV show, they will know what you're talking about when you mention the Bronze, Sunnydale High or the cemetery (then again cemeteries all look alike, especially at night... especially when vampires are chasing you).

Most of the adventures for the *BtVS RPG* will be usable for members of the Original Cast as well as player-created Casts; while Sunnydale is the default setting for many of them, they can be transferred to other settings with a few changes.



Perhaps the biggest problem with Sunnydale is that it belongs to the Original Cast. If some of the players are assuming the roles of Buffy and company, that isn't a problem, but if nobody is playing those characters, you need to do some thinking beforehand. Several possibilities come to mind.

COEXISTENCE

Buffy and the Scoobies are in Sunnydale, but are treated as Guest Stars. This isn't a problem if the players are using the Original Cast, but it gets trickier if they are playing their own characters. It would be natural for Buffy, Spike and the Slayerettes to eclipse the Cast, and few people want to play second-string characters. You need to work hard to make sure the Original Cast doesn't upstage the players' Cast—having Buffy save the day is going to get old fast. On the other hand, the Hellmouth could be big enough to have two groups of heroes in town—maybe the Cast gets to save the Scooby Gang's collective butt once in a while.

APRÈS-BUFFY SUNNYDALE

Sunnydale remains, but Buffy and crew are no longer in town. What if Buffy died during one of her many close brushes with the Grim Reaper? Or what if Buffy remained a waitress named Anne after the whole Angelus tragedy? The others might have left town for their own reasons, or you can keep them around to help the Cast. Giles, Willow or Xander are much more appropriate Guest Stars than Buffy, Angel or Spike.

In this case, the new Cast's problem would be to fill Buffy's shoes (dainty size sixes, probably)—Buffy is a tough act to follow, and it would be nice to have somebody from the Original Cast around to remind the characters of that. There are plenty of dramatic possibilities awaiting a band of replacement heroes trying to live up to the legend of the greatest Slayer that ever lived.



Another twist would be to use the Sunnydale from "The Wish"—a really nasty place where Buffy never showed up (except briefly, to die at the Master's hands) and vampires rule the land. The Cast (maybe led by the new Slayer) can arrive ready to kick ass and take names, just in time to save Giles and his band of brave—but underpowered—"white hats."

ALTERNATE SUNNYDALE

Anyanka: You trusting fool! How do you know the other world is any better than this?

Giles: Because it has to be.

—3.8 *The Wish*

A more extreme "What if?" scenario has the players' Cast replace the Original Cast. There never was a Buffy here, and the new characters have to deal with the Master, the Mayor, Adam and all the other fun denizens of Sunnydale on their own. In this situation, Buffy either never existed, did not become the Chosen One, or died before ever setting foot in Sunnydale. The Cast's Slayer (if any) is the first Slayer in Sunnydale for quite some time.

This is an interesting variant, but the potential for spoilers is high as the players know how Buffy and the crew dealt with their enemies, and thus have an unfair advantage. You can easily deal with this problem by making a few subtle changes in the villains and subplots. Players who try to use their knowledge of the show to deal with Sunnydale threats may find themselves unpleasantly surprised.

BEYOND THE HELLMOUTH

Ellis: We have a Code One in Belize. A demon tribe is taking apart missionaries in the rain forest down there.

—5.10 *Into the Woods*

Sunnydale is far from the only option for you and your players. Supernatural danger can be found in many other places. From demon tribes in Belize to vampires, warlocks and law firms in Los Angeles, the monsters can be anywhere—and so can your heroes. Here are some possibilities to inspire and awe (okay, maybe interest?).

OTHER HELLMOUTHS

Is Sunnydale's the only Hellmouth on the planet? Word from the man who knows is "no." So you can set a brand-new Hellmouth—drawing the supernatural the way a week-old pizza draws flies—anywhere you please. It could be in a large city or a small town, a quaint vil-

players who aren't fans

If you own this book, it is a safe assumption you like *BVS* (or Uncle Teddy just gave you a lousy Christmas present). Still, not everybody who plays needs to be familiar with the epic tale of the Slayer and her loyal Scooby Gang. Maybe they are playing because their friends are running the game, or they are just curious about the Buffyverse. You Directors should try to make them feel "not left out."

In some ways, players who don't know much about the Buffyverse are actually a bonus. Unlike veteran *Buffy* fans, they'll discover the Slayers, the Hellmouth and other fun facts about the Buffyverse at the same time their characters do. Newbies will be less inclined to argue with you about details of the show (at least one *Buffy* veteran will say something like, "You know, in 4.19 *New Moon Rising*, Buffy's behavior completely undermines your take on the character"—a non-fan can be a refreshing change).

People who enjoy action-adventure games with a supernatural background and quirky humor should like playing this game. The Buffyverse is large enough to accommodate a bunch of different characters and playing styles—you could help introduce non-fans to the game by having them bring their favorite characters from other games, movies or TV shows to the Hellmouth. You might even get them to start watching and enjoying the show, and gain another convert to the Church of Whedon.

lage or a creepy mountain community. You could even place the Hellmouth in your hometown—depending on where that is, it might even be an improvement.

Wherever the little supernatural roach motel is, things shouldn't be nice and normal. People should die or disappear with alarming frequency. Companies with dubious track records should set up shop there. The local authorities should have a few skeletons in their closets, sometimes literally. Doing some research on the city or town's history might uncover local legends and scandals that you can use to stir up trouble for the Cast.

Much like in Sunnydale, the Cast Members can be locals trying to survive, heroes who have arrived to clean up the town, or innocent visitors who showed up for the sights and stayed for the zombies. This option has the advantage of being a setting that is full of surprises for even avid *BVS* viewers. Still, some players may be disappointed if they never get to slay vampires on stage at the Bronze, or visit other classic Sunnydale locales.



THE WANDERING HEROES

Another possibility is to have the gang move from place to place, solving mysteries as they go (multicolor van is optional). They could be chasing something or somebody, or something or somebody could be chasing them. Or maybe the Cast is made up of members of a touring band, or carnies in a traveling fair. They travel all over the country, moving from job to job, encountering trouble along the way. Every Episode, the Cast gets to see new places, meet new people, and slay new monsters.

This type of "setting" is interesting but requires more work. Since the gang is always on the move, you have to create a new "set" every time they reach a new town, with new Guest Stars, new places of interest and so on. The Cast will rarely get the chance to bond with anybody aside from each other, since they will be riding into the sunset with each Episode or so. This isn't necessarily bad, but you and your players should keep it in mind.

SAME SLAYERS, DIFFERENT DAY

What about different time periods for the game? There have been Slayers since the dawn of time. When you consider your typical Slayer doesn't live for many years after her awakening, in the last 500 years we are talking 100+ potential Slayers. You could have Slayers in the Middle Ages ("Who was that girl in plate armor?"), in the Old West ("Fastest stake thrower this side of the Mississippi, pardner"), or even in mythical Greece ("I'll show you a real Warrior Princess!"). Or forget the past: the future beckons. The Slayer could rub shoulders with bio-engineered super-soldiers, cyberpunks, and alien threats. Or if you really want to get weird, have the Slayer and her friends find themselves in a time machine (maybe disguised as an old-fashioned phone booth) and wander through the ages fighting demons and undead.

Doing a historical or futuristic *BtVS* Series requires more work but it can be fun. This option makes using the Original Cast more difficult, though, unless you allow a "Buffy travels in time" device or spell.

keeping the cast in town

So you have just discovered that your hometown is the monster capital of the world. What do you do?

- Decide not to worry about it.
- Pack up your belongings and take the next bus out of town.
- Toss a few of your things in your car and drive the hell out of there.
- Don't even bother packing—your shadow has to sweat to catch up with your fleeing butt.

Most reasonable people would go with options b through d. When casting for the Series, you and your players need to think of a reason why the heroes never decide that running away is the best part of valor. Some possible explanations include the following:

Duty Calls: Slayers and other heroic types cannot escape their destiny. Sunnydale or other Hellmouths are the places to be if you are into demon hunting. Also, if the demons get the upper hand, they might destroy the whole planet, so running away isn't going to fix anything. It's better to discover and stop those threats than be on the receiving end of a Surprise Apocalypse Party.

No Escape: Some people may not be able to leave even if they want to. If the characters are minors, they are stuck in town until they are 18, unless they can convince their parents that Nebraska is beautiful this time of year, and wouldn't it be nice if the whole family just moved there? Or, given that a Hellmouth is brimming with supernatural goodness, some mystical force might prevent the characters from leaving. Maybe whenever the fleeing Scoobies reach the town limit, something bad happens—their car gets a flat, the bus breaks down, or the ship sinks just after it clears the dock. Whether the force is good or evil, and what plans it has for the trapped characters—that's up to you.

Emotion Beats Reason: Your head tells you to get the hell out, but your heart tells you to stay. Cast Members can stay for a number of irrational reasons. Being in love with someone who is staying no matter what works nicely. Or maybe the forces of darkness hurt the character or her loved ones, and now it's time for some payback. Or maybe it's just a matter of being too stubborn to let some undead carpetbaggers run them out of the old homestead.





CAST OPTIONS

The name of the show is *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, not the *Sunnydale Monster-hunting Club*, and that's no accident. The focus of the show is the Chosen One. Does that mean that you have to do the same with your Series? Not necessarily. The focus of the game depends on what you and your players want. Here we have a few options, and their pros and cons.

THE CHOSEN ONE AND FRIENDS

Buffy: You guys don't have to get involved.

Xander: What d'ya mean? We're a team! Aren't we a team?

Willow: Yeah! You're the Slayer, and we're, like, the Slayerettes!

—1.3 Witch

This is the "default" mode of the game. You have a Slayer (maybe more than one, see The Slayer Options, pp. 26-27) and the rest of the group consists of a mixed group of Heroes and Slayerettes. Heroes do most of the butt-kicking; Slayerettes provide moral support, research and investigation and (fortified with Drama Points) occasional butt-kicking of their own. Many (or even most) of the plots and subplots of the Series involve the Slayer.

This type of game follows the show's setting fairly closely. It doesn't mean it's the best style for your game, though. If nobody wants to play Slayerettes, don't force them to. If more than one player wants to assume the role of a Slayer, there are ways to make it happen.

Most of the guidelines in this chapter are meant for this type of game. They can be used for other games, but they may need some modifications.

A GATHERING OF HEROES

Forrest: Well, the way I got it figured, the Slayer is like some kind of bogeyman to sub-terrestrials. Something they tell their little spawn to make them eat their vegetables and clean up their slime pits.

Riley: You're telling me she doesn't exist?

Forrest: Oh, wait a sec. Am I bursting somebody's bubble here? Maybe this a bad time to tell you about the Easter Bunny.

—4.11 Doomed

This is a variation of the above—the Slayer is but one of a group of heroic characters. Any Slayerettes around will be Guest Stars under your control. All the Cast Members are Heroes or Experienced Heroes. To some degree, the original Scooby Gang has advanced into a Gathering of Heroes stage by Season Five. Even Xander is getting fairly badass. With the exception of Dawn and to a lesser degree Anya, true Slayerettes are few and far between. Random vampires won't be much of a threat to these heroes, and finding worthy foes might be more difficult. In some cases, the Cast Members may turn out to be their own worst enemies—heroes often have heroic flaws.

This option eliminates the tension between Slayerettes and Heroes, but is less true to the spirit of the show. Some players may prefer it though, because there is less chance of any one character stealing the spotlight.

A GATHERING OF SCOOBIES

Spike (scoffs): Feel it in my bones. It's, uh... called the Yoko Factor. Don't tell me you've never heard of the Beatles?

Adam: I have. I like "Helter Skelter."

Spike: What a surprise. The point is, they were once a real powerful group. It's not a stretch to say they ruled the world. And when they broke up everyone blamed Yoko, but the fact is the group split itself apart, she just happened to be there. And you know how it is with kids. They go off to college, they grow apart. Way of the world.

—4.20 The Yoko Factor

Or you can go the opposite way—the entire Cast is made of Slayerettes. Heroes are either Guest Stars, or there are no Heroes to be found. Here, the characters have to rely on their wits and teamwork to survive. Staking a single vamp can be troublesome unless the Cast uses some tactics, and fighting an über-menace like the

Master requires some quick thinking (or an über-expensive of Drama Points). This type of game pits regular people against the forces of darkness.

You have to make sure that the final score of the game does not read Forces of Darkness 6, Regular People 0. For inspiration, look at 3.1 Anne, where the Scoobies valiantly tried to fill the Slayer's shoes (and had a six out of ten kill ratio).

Alternatively, instead of a Slayer, one of the characters could be a Slayer-In-Waiting (like Kendra, who actually prepared to be a Slayer, unlike our beloved California Girl).

If there are Heroes around, the biggest task is keeping them from always saving the day—the Cast should be the stars. A funny variant would involve a Hero who is actually a fraud—too cowardly or dumb to do the job. Then, it's up to the Slayerettes to save the day!

THE INITIATIVE

Tom: They starve you. When you're ready to bite your own arm, they shoot out one of those packets. You drink, and the next thing, you're gone. And that's when they do the experiments.

Spike: And, uh, "they" are? The government? Nazis? A major cosmetics company?

—4.7 The Initiative

Instead of Slayers and gang, the game could focus on our favorite Friendly Government Agency, the Initiative—equipped with the best in military tech and ready to go all Rambo on the sub-terrestrial threat. Most Cast Members should be Hero types, although Slayerettes can have a role as scientists or new recruits. The game can be set in the time before Dr. Walsh and her misbegotten creation destroyed the Initiative. Or this can be a "What if?" scenario where the Initiative did not have that "technical difficulty" (you know, the one where the captured monsters escaped and ate half of the unit).

An intact Initiative could fight sub-terrestrials in other places besides Sunnydale. Covert teams could hunt undead lords and other critters in the mountains of Yugoslavia, the African jungles, or other exotic places (like Queens).

Initiative games have a different structure. The Cast is subject to military discipline, and they get ordered around more often than your typical Slayer. Having a personal life is a bit more difficult, although most Initiative commandos had a cover identity as college students, which provided plenty of opportunities to interrelate (i.e., party) and forge relationships (i.e., score) with others (i.e., hotties).

A sourcebook providing more information and guidelines about the Initiative and Initiative-oriented games is in the works by the same people who brought you the popular *BtVS RPG* (you may have already heard of it).

WATCHERS IN ACTION

Giles: A, a Slayer slays, a Watcher...

Buffy: ... watches?

—1.1 Welcome to the Hellmouth

Despite Buffy's opinion, Watchers have other things to do besides keeping track of the Slayer and watching *Masterpiece Theater*. Watchers keep track of potential Slayers, often training them before they become the Chosen One. They also have operatives who deal with Slayers who break the rules (Faith, anyone?), and may engage in the occasional hunt on their own, if only to train members. Then there are renegade Watchers that might need to be brought to heel before they... just for example... open up a new Hellmouth or something fun like that.

Most Watchers can be built as Slayerettes, although skilled or experienced ones could be full-fledged Heroes. Watchers lead more structured lives than Slayers—you've seen what stuffed shirts they can be, now imagine what *their bosses* would be like. A Watchers-oriented game can take place anywhere in the world, although they are concentrated in Merry Olde England, where a man can have a pint and play a game of darts in peace and quiet.



SLAYER-LESS SERIES

Giles: She said something about everything being different, that the . . . the world wasn't supposed to be like this. It was, um, better. Before.

Larry: Okay. The entire world sucks because some dead ditz made a wish? I just, I just want it clear.

Giles: She said the, uh . . . the Slayer was supposed to be here, was, um, meant to have been here already.

—3.8 *The Wish*

Another possibility is to have a Series without a Slayer. The Buffyverse has room for other heroes besides the popular Little Girl/Big Stake combo. Perhaps the best case in point is the *Angel* TV show, where Buffy's former beloved and a stalwart band of heroes battle evil on the streets of Los Angeles. A Series could focus on a secret society of demon hunters, a coven of witches (good witches, say three in number, all sisters), a team of federal agents looking for the truth, a psychic who uses his powers to help people contact their deceased relatives in a talk show format, or a group of midgets that find a troublesome magic ring (okay, maybe the last two are a bit of a stretch).

The symbolic dimension

Buffy is in many ways a metaphor for the process of being a teenager. The terrors of growing up, of being an outcast in school, the hidden dangers of bullies, the consequences of one's first sexual experience—they are all echoed in the themes of the show. The *Angel*/*Angelus* drama was a supernatural rendition of the "sleep with a guy and he becomes a total jerk" story.

BtVS is more than just symbols and metaphors, but you should keep them in mind when setting up a Series. An Adversary should be more than just a horrible monster; if possible, give it a symbolic dimension—the abusive authority figure, the corrupter of innocence, the ultimate egotist who cares for nothing beyond personal gratification.

Ideally, Episodes should be more than just butt-kicking action. When you can, try to throw in something with more depth—all choices should not be clear-cut, and there should be consequences for one's actions, often unintended ones. Do keep in mind, though, that the goal of the game is fun, not a philosophical treatise (unless your gang is up for that sort of thing . . . in that case, go for it).

A Series can be set in the Buffyverse without dealing with the Slayers, the Watchers, the Initiative or any other pre-existing group. As long as you and your players are having fun (and one of you buys this book), we won't mind one bit.

CREATING A SERIES

Alright, you've made all the conceptual choices, and are ready to go. To help recreate the feel of the show, *BtVS* games should try to follow the same structure—you have self-contained Episodes, linked together to create a Season. Each Episode should contain healthy doses of ass-kicking, comedy, horror and personal subplots. To help you in this holy quest, we have thoughtfully provided some ideas and guidelines.

SEASONS

Xander: We're going up against a god. An actual, mightier-than-thou god.

Willow: Well, you know what they say: the bigger they are—

Any: The faster they stomp you into nothing.

—5.13 *Blood Ties*

When doing a game the *Buffy* Way, you should plan out the major story arcs of the Season in advance. This does not mean that you should know exactly what'll happen in each Episode. After all, your players' decisions and their characters' actions should be a major factor in the game. But you should have some idea of what major situations and events will be thrown at the Cast. How they deal with them will be the focus of the game.

First, you need to take care of all the prelim work—building the sets, casting the characters, that kind of stuff. That's been covered in the previous sections. Next comes conflict. Stories (not just violent stories) depend on conflict, and in the Buffyverse conflict usually comes from an Adversary. Besides villains, you need Plots and Subplots—stories that will flow from Episode to Episode, leading to a climax somewhere down the line. Finally, you need to populate the Season with a nice Supporting Cast—the characters that will relate with, make fun of, or terrorize the Cast along the way. You don't have to outline everything before the game starts; you might not even have a Big Bad in mind for the first couple Episodes. You should have some idea about what she will be like relatively early in the Season though, or you'll end up with a collection of disjointed Episodes.

Why do we start with the Season and not the Episodes? If you think about the Season first, you'll have a better idea of the direction of the game. You really shouldn't try to be too detailed though. Think of the Season as a point in the map, like "North." All you need to know is that the game is going to head north. You may not know how it gets there, let alone all the stops along the way, but at some point, the game is going to reach *el norte* and, one would hope, the arrival will be worth the trip.

YOU'LL RUE THE DAY

Ms. Calendar: Okay, so this Master guy tried to open the Hellmouth. But he got stuck in it, and now all the signs are reading that he's gonna get out, which opens the Hellmouth, which brings the demons, which ends the world.

Giles: Yes. That about sums it up, yes.

—1.12 *Prophecy Girl*

The Master, Spike, Drusilla, Angelus, the Mayor, Adam the cyber-Frankenstein Monster and Glory the Hellgoddess round out the list. The Big Bad, the ultimate foe, defines the Season. Over several Episodes, the conflict between the Big Bad and Our Fearless Heroes builds up, with skirmishes, battles, and casualties suffered on both sides—all leading to the cataclysmic Final Showdown.

What makes a good Big Bad? First, the nemesis should be smart or at least resourceful. A big dumb monster rampaging through downtown Sunnydale is good for an Episode, not a Season. Bosses rarely do the dirty work themselves; they use minions instead. They also have goals... important goals. While your Joe Schmoe vampire only cares about the occasional human morsel, a Big Bad is far more ambitious—world domination, the unleashing of unspeakable horrors on the entire planet, or even wiping out all bunnies in North America.

The Season's Big Bad is not the only major villain, even without counting the "monsters of the week" that appear in many Episodes. There may also be a secondary villain who works for the Big Boss or might have plans of her own. The Big Bad may not even make an appearance for several Episodes. In fact, it is probably best if the Cast does not even suspect the identity or purposes of the Big Bad until they are several Episodes into the Season.

No need to get all the Big Bad's vital statistics down at first (when you get to that, refer to Villains, Henchmen and Innocent Bystanders, on p. 201). More importantly, you want to have a feel for her motives and modus operandi.

The villain's plans can be as simple ("I want to unleash Hell on Earth") or complex ("I will gain the Slayer's confidence, then I will turn all of her friends against her and when she is isolated and full of despair, I will claim her soul and make her my Hellbride") as you want. The master plan no doubt plays a role over several Episodes.

The actual nature of the villain is also important. You can choose from your basic vampires (getting a little old hat by now, but always good for the nostalgia), demons (good because there is a lot of variety among the Hellbound Hordes), human warlocks or witches (maybe it's time to dust off good old Ethan Rayne, or maybe a distant cousin), or that paragon of plotting Something Completely Different (Adam and Glory qualify). Figure out any powers the villain has—she should be pretty dangerous. Limitations are also good—the Master was trapped in the Hellmouth, Adam couldn't really show his face in public and spent a good portion of his time learning about the world, Glory occasionally turned into a nice guy—that kind of thing makes the Big Bad more interesting. If the villain is too powerful to be taken out in a straight fight, there should be an Achilles' heel to make up for it (but it should be hard to discover).

What resources does the Big Bad have? Most of them have a small army of cannon fodder minions (vampires are a popular choice, for some odd reason), and a couple of heavyweight lieutenants, good enough to go mano a mano with our fearless heroes. Others may have money, access to powerful spells, connections at City Hall (heck, the Mayor *was* City Hall), and so on.

Finally, at some point or another, the Big Bad has to make things personal. Destroying the world is all well and good, but it doesn't have the same emotional power as torturing a loved one, shattering the innocence of a dear friend, or terrorizing the characters past the breaking point. If you can get the Cast Members to say (and mean), "This sucker is going DOWN!" you know you're getting the Big Bad just right. Besides being dangerous and threatening, the baddie needs to be infuriating. This could be achieved by making her really good at foiling the heroes (maybe as good as or better than the heroes are at foiling the Big Bad), by giving her a really twisted or even annoying personality, or by having something about the Evil One's looks, behavior or appearance that produces that nails on a chalkboard feeling. By the Final Showdown, the defeat of the Big Bad should feel good. Damn good.

Once you have the Big Bad all figured out, you have something to link several Episodes, and the basic skeleton of the Season is set.





THE TANGLED SKEIN: PLOTS AND SUBPLOTS

Buffy: You know very well, you eat this late . . . (Stakes the vamp.) . . . you're gonna get heartburn. Get it? Heartburn? (He turns to dust.) That's it? That's all I get? One lame-ass vamp with no appreciation for my painstakingly thought out puns. I don't think the forces of darkness are even trying.

—4.6 *Wild at Heart*

These are the complications and themes that move from one Episode to the next. Since this is a game, not a script, you do not have full control over Plots and Subplots. The Cast has a big role in making a storyline live over several Episodes, or lie forgotten after one or two. You can think of Plots and Subplots as fishing lures—dangle them out there and if the characters are interested, they will bite. Here are some suggestions to make sure the Cast bites (er . . . are enticed into following Plots).

Plots

These are the big kahunas, the major story arcs of the Season. The Master's plan to bring the Old Ones back into the world was the major Plot of Season One. The tragic Angel-Buffy relationship was a major Plot in Season Two. It ran through several episodes, and was dramatically resolved in the Season Finale. In the same Season, you had Spike and Drusilla's arrival in Sunnydale and their nefarious plans. The two Plots became interwoven, and reached a climax in the same final episode.

Typically, a Plot emerges early in the Season, and leads to the Season Finale. You should devise at least one plot. Some possible Plot ideas are elaborated.

APPROACHING DOOM: Some dangerous event is prophesied to take place in the near future. This is usually your basic supernatural event, complete with lots of FX at the

end. At some point in the Season, the Cast learns of it and realizes they have to prevent it from happening. Over a number of Episodes, the Cast acquires more clues about the danger, until reaching the final countdown. Will our heroes stop it in time? This type of Plot is relatively easy to set up. Dire warnings from some unlikely prophet, signs of the upcoming apocalypse, and clues inadvertently left behind by the bad guys can be sprinkled over several Episodes—a little research will do the rest.

CURSES! FOILED AGAIN: Your basic "stop the bad guy" theme, this Plot revolves around the Big Bad's plans. The plan usually involves such charming things as human sacrifice, unspeakable rituals, and scavenger hunts for mystical artifacts. The Plot is a race between the Cast and the villains. While the nemesis may be foiled temporarily, the plan should plod along until the Final Showdown. Like the Approaching Doom, this type of Plot is not hard to organize. The tricky bits include arranging for the Big Bad to avoid the Final Showdown until the Season Finale, and doing it without railroading the Cast. Even with Drama Points to "pay off" the players, they are not going to be very happy if the bad dude always seems to escape from their clutches. It's better to avoid a direct confrontation with the head honcho, and rely on competent and dangerous henchmen. To keep the Cast busy, you could set up a minion as the apparent Big Boss, and reveal he's but a servant of a greater power just after the Cast defeats him (that's a great point to end the Episode and roll credits, by the way).

FRIEND OR FOE?: A common Plot in *BtVS* is betrayal and loss. Friends and lovers may become deadly enemies—Faith and Angelus are two cases in point. The setup for this plot can be tricky. You need to create and assume the role of a Guest Star, get the Cast to come to like and trust the character, and then betray them. For an even more devious turn, you might recruit one of the players to assume the role of the Judas—after all, another player-controlled character is the last one the other players would suspect. After the betrayal, there may be hope of redemption (Angelus being turned back into Angel, for example), either in that Season or as a Plot or Subplot in the following Season.

LOVE IS A BATTLEFIELD: Romance blossoms, but love don't come easy, as the song says. This can be a Plot or Subplot, depending on how important it is to the storyline. The Angel-Buffy relationship was a major Plot in the first three Seasons, and ended in the Season Three Finale with Angel leaving Sunnydale. The setup here is hard, and the players need to pitch in. The relationship can be between a Cast Member and a Guest Star, or between two Cast Members. In the first case, you have some control on how the relationship progresses (you

are in charge of half of it, after all). In the second one, the Plot is largely in the hands of the Cast Members involved, although you can influence it by throwing in obstacles, romantic rivals and other complications. If you watch a dozen episodes of any soap opera, you'll learn the tricks of the trade.

SUBPLOTS

Willow: I'd be totally blowing off classes if I were in Dawnie's shoes.

Tara: Sweetie, you wouldn't blow off a class if your head was on fire.

—5.19 *Tough Love*

These are lesser plotlines, major enough to last for several Episodes, but usually not covering an entire Season. Examples include the rise of the Judge during Season Two, Willow and Oz's relationship over Seasons Two to Four, and the heartbreak of Joyce's death during Season Five. Subplots can be powerful dramatic story arcs, but they don't quite shape an entire Season the way Plots do. You should try to get at least one or two Subplots going.

A Subplot need not appear in every Episode, but it should at least be in the background, providing more axes to grind, bones to pick, and clichés to throw. Subplots often develop on their own, and they may occur to you after the Season has started. Sometimes they wither and die without the players ever noticing. If a Subplot isn't attracting their attention, it's time to either spice it up a bit, or let it go and replace it with something else.

Subplots include "smaller" versions of all the Plots described above. For example, a doomsday event or nefarious plan can be foiled in a couple of Episodes, rather than over the course of an entire Season.



VILLAINS, HENCHMEN AND INNOCENT BYSTANDERS

Stabbing Vamp (holding up bloody stake): Killed with her own weapon! They ought to put this in a museum!

(The door bangs open and Riley walks in confidently.)

Riley: You know what they put in museums? Mostly dead things.

—5.7 *Fool For Love*

Monsters, cops, teachers, and postal workers—they are the people that the Cast encounters along the way. Some are unremarkable, nameless characters from Central Casting. Others are the Cast's friends and family, dangerous foes or terrible Big Bads. Usually, creating the Supporting Cast (Guest Stars and Adversaries) can be done from Episode to Episode. Over time, you'll get recurring characters, and they play a role in many a Plot or Subplot.

Most Supporting Cast characters do not need full Character Sheets, or even Quick Sheets, unless you have a crew of players who like to fight everybody they encounter. For minor roles, all you need is a name (if that) and the role the character is going to play in the Episode. Victim #3, for example, is unlikely to need much development, except to be thankful after being rescued. Your typical cannon-fodder vampire rarely needs much beyond the basic Attributes and Ability Scores.

Then you have the "named" roles—relatives, friends, colleagues or hated enemies of the Cast. A Quick Sheet suffices for the mechanics aspect, but you probably want to spend some time fleshing out their personalities and attitudes. If all the supporting cast sound and behave the same, the Series is going to feel like *The Clone Wars*, emphasis on the "clone." A teacher should sound and act differently from a police officer, or a Cast Member's father, or an aging hippy teacher still living in the 1960s (then again, a Cast Member's father could be an aging hippy).

After the Cast has been created, it's probably a good idea to jot down some ideas about the people in the characters' lives. If they are going to high school or college, you don't need the entire faculty, but a couple of teachers, school officials and guidance counselors are good to have around. Keep them as recurring characters, and if any of them becomes a victim, her demise will have more of an emotional impact than Dead Body #23. Additionally, you should have a roster of Supporting Cast characters ready to go at a moment's notice. That way, if the Cast decides to do the unexpected, you have something to throw at them.





DETERMINING ATTRIBUTES AND ABILITY SCORES

Many Supporting Cast characters exist only to have their butts kicked by the stars of the show. When it comes to that, having their "stats" handy keeps the action flowing. This doesn't mean that you have to go through the entire character creation process for each and every enemy the Cast encounters. Far from it—all you have to do is assign Attributes, put together the Ability Scores, figure out any attacks or special abilities the characters have, and you're good to go. Once you have the details, mark them all down on a blank Quick Sheet for handy reference (see p. 256).

ATTRIBUTES: Unlike players, you don't need to divide a set amount of points among the six Primary Attributes. Just pick and choose what fits. If you need to stat out a couple of frat boys with roving hands, you could make them average across the board (all twos), or maybe give them a couple of Attributes at three. If you need to cast a team of berserk football players, give them a high Strength (four or five), above average Dexterity and Constitution (three or four), a two for the mental attributes and again, you're all set. It doesn't matter if the total Attribute points come to 11, 13, or 35, if that's what the character needs. For vampires and supernatural beings, Attributes should be on the high end (four to six). After that, just look at the chart on p. 33 to figure out Life Points, add any bonuses for the Hard to Kill Quality (most normal humans will not have any), and the Attributes are done.

ABILITY SCORES: You don't have to figure out the skills of most Supporting Cast members. Instead, use the Ability Scores (Muscle, Combat and Brains, see p. 104) to get a rough idea of what the character can do. Use the character's Attributes and the tables on p. 203 to determine what the appropriate levels are. Most regular folks have Ability Scores in the 9-13 range. Vampires and extraordinary people will be in the 14-20 range. Nasty Big Bad-types have even higher numbers.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Most people have no unusual powers or abilities. Monsters may have several, from the typical vampire powers and vulnerabilities to tentacles and warts (ick!) to magical powers. List them on the Quick Sheet so you don't forget that, say, a demon has scales that are as good as Kevlar against physical attacks.

COMBAT MANEUVERS: Figure out what attack and defense moves the character is likely to use, and list the damage. Add the Success Levels inherent in the scores to the base damage amounts.

Most vampires have your basic Bite, Dodge, Grapple, Kick, and Punch Maneuvers. Bite, Dodge, and Punch use the unmodified Combat Score, Kick uses Combat Score - 1, and Grapple uses Combat Score + 2.

EXAMPLE TIME: A vampire with Strength 5 and a Combat Score 15 would have the following basic Maneuvers:

combat maneuvers

name	score	damage	notes
Bite	15	19 (base of 15, plus 4 Success Levels)	Must Grapple first
Dodge	15	—	Defense action
Grapple	17	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	14	15 (base of 12, plus 3 Success Levels)	Bash
Punch	15	14 (base of 10, plus 4 Success Levels)	Bash

DRAMA POINTS: The Cast Members aren't the only ones with Drama Points—Supporting Cast also have access to them. Most faceless characters have no Drama Points since they aren't meant for extraordinary things. Your average cannon fodder vampire should have 1-3 Drama Points—enough to land a good punch or two on a Slayer before being dusted. A friend or relative of a Cast Member could have the same amount, to allow for occasional heroics (Buffy's mom brain-ing Spike with an axe, for example). Major foes could have 5-8 Drama Points, and Big Bads could have 10+ Drama Points in store, enabling them to give our heroes quite a run for their money. Usually, Supporting Cast characters spend their Drama Points for combat purposes (the sample vampire above, could spend a Drama Point to use the Heroic Feat rule and raise its punch value to 25).



muscle score table

- 8 **WEAK AS A KITTEN:** Willow can arm-wrestle this gal.
- 9-10 **AVERAGE JANE:** Your average couch potato, capable of carrying a full bag of groceries to the car without busting a gut.
- 11-12 **NOT TOO SHABBY:** Someone who works out, maybe plays an intramural sport; stronger than your average couch potato.
- 13-14 **AVERAGE VAMPIRE/FOOTBALL PLAYER:** This is the typical Muscle Score for a vampire. Athletic humans will be in the same range.
- 15-16 **TOUGH VAMPIRE/WEIGHTLIFTER/WEAK SLAYER:** An above-average vamp, a workout freak, a pumped-up Initiative commando, or a below-average Slayer.
- 17-20 **HUMAN PEAK:** Humans don't come any stronger than this. An athletic vamp, a strong demon or your average Slayer are in this range.
- 21+ **SUPERHUMAN:** Strong Slayers, powerful demons and the like are in this range. Glory rates a Muscle Score of 36 (ouch!).

combat score table

- 8 **NEVER BEEN PUNCHED:** With this Combat Score, a character needs to go Full Offense or Defense, or she'd just be a punching bag. Those who can't throw a punch to save their lives would have Combat Scores at these levels.
- 9-10 **AVERAGE JANE:** This is someone who knows which end of a weapon to point towards an enemy, or has been in a few scrapes in her life.
- 11-12 **NEW VAMPIRE/NORMAL FIGHTER:** This is the Combat Score of your typical freshly dug vamp, or a normal human with some training (a beat cop, or a regular soldier).
- 13-14 **AVERAGE VAMPIRE/VETERAN FIGHTER:** This represents a vamp that has been out and around for a while, or a tough, well-trained human (rank-and-file Initiative commandos).
- 15-16 **TOUGH VAMPIRE/EXPERT FIGHTER:** Some of the best undead material out there—these vamps got game! Expert swordsmen and martial artists are at this level.
- 17-20 **MAJOR VAMPIRE/MASTER FIGHTER:** Now we're talking Slayer-level proficiency. These gals are hard to beat—time to break out those Drama Points.
- 21+ **BOSS:** These levels are reserved for the Masters, Glories and Adams of the setting.

brains score table

- 8 **DUH?** Life is like a box of chocolates to this gal, but she doesn't know how to open it.
- 9-10 **AVERAGE JANE:** The character's never going to win on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*, but is able to hold down a job and live a normal life.
- 11-12 **SMART:** Someone with a good education and the smarts to make the most of it.
- 13-14 **BRILLIANT:** Highly educated, very smart, or both.
- 15-16 **GENIUS:** An expert, or just really, really intelligent. Probably a nerd.
- 17-20 **GENIUS PLUS:** Don't play *Trivial Pursuit* against this character.
- 21+ **TOO DANG SMART:** Nothing gets past this character.





THE PLOT THICKENS: EPISODES

Cordelia: So Buffy's going for the big showdown, huh? Wish we could help. You know, without dying.

Xander: I don't see how.

—2.22 *Becoming, Part Two*

This is where the action is. Series and Seasons are made up of Episodes. Just like in the TV show, Episodes of the *BtVS RPG* should be entertaining, fun and moving. If at the end of the Episode the players can't wait for the next one, the game has succeeded in its purpose. And you don't even have to break for commercials!

The elements of an Episode include the Setup (where the Cast finds out what the Episode is about), the Turning Points (usually two of them, when important things happen), and the Climax (where the conflict is resolved). Interwoven with all this you'll have the Season's Plots and Subplots. Put it all together, roll opening credits and let the polyhedrons fall where they may.

plots and free will

Games aren't scripted, and the Cast Members are going to act in ways that you Director types won't expect. Notice that we didn't say "MAY act in ways that you won't expect." That's 'cause it's going to happen. The word we are looking for is . . . inevitable.

So what happens when you were planning a nasty ambush the moment your heroes arrive in the library, and they decide to go to the Bronze instead? Or the Cast follows the red herring and ignores the clues that lead to the real culprit? You can choose to let the chips fall where they may—the ambush never happens, and half of Sunnydale burns down while the Cast follows a false lead—or you can adjust things accordingly. For example, if the ambush is a vital part of the storyline, just relocate it to wherever the Cast ends up. Or have the false lead actually contain some clue that points them in the right direction. You cannot do that all the time though, or the players will come to realize that no matter what their characters do, it turns out to be the right thing. Sometimes, mistakes should have consequences. Maybe the world doesn't end, but something bad should happen if the Cast screws up—a friend or relative might be hurt or even die, for example. Try not to do this without giving the characters some hint that they are going about things the wrong way though, and certainly don't do it just to "punish" them for not following your script.

Try to be flexible with Plots and Subplots. If you "railroad" the Cast, forcing them into nearly every situation and giving them little or no choice about actions and storyline directions, the players aren't going to have fun. But don't let the characters get away with totally wrongheaded decisions, either. Sound hard to do? Yup, and sometimes what you think is a fair decision is not going to sit well with the players. Nobody said being a Director was easy. It does get better with practice. Oh . . . and the feeling you get when everybody is caught up in the story and desperate to find out what happens next is better than Ben and Jerry's with no weight-gain guilt.

Teaser

The *BtVS* TV show episodes all begin with a Teaser, a short, often humorous vignette that introduces some aspect of the story to come. We sometimes refer to these as Cut Scenes (see Director's Screen). While not strictly necessary, you may consider adding a Teaser scene to your Episodes to better mirror the TV show. If so, you may need to brief one or more of the players so the scene plays out correctly.

THE SETUP

Giles: Uh, let me make sure I have this right. This witch is casting horrible and disfiguring spells so that she can become a cheerleader?

—1.3 *Witch*

An Episode needs a Setup, where the situation is established. For example, the Setup of 1.3 *Witch* was (unsurprisingly) "An evil witch is operating in Sunnydale." The Episode dealt with the Scoobies discovering that a witch was hurting assorted cheerleaders, figuring out how to stop said witch, suffering from (big shock) a magical attack and finally, squashing her mojo in the final act.

The Setup can be something new and unexpected or a development of a Plot or Subplot. Typically, the Cast doesn't know what the Setup is until later in the Episode. It's up to them to figure it out, and do whatever needs doing. Some possible Setups are given.

A STRANGER ARRIVES: There's a new ghoul in town, and the Cast must stop it before it racks up a big body count. This is possibly the simplest Setup there is. The Cast finds a victim or two, investigates, discovers who or what the stranger is, and takes care of business. You as Director need to create the new threat and figure out what sort of trail leads to its eventual defeat. If the Cast isn't on the ball, the Stranger might escape and possibly become a recurring threat, or even a Big Bad.

WE MEET AGAIN: A recurring villain, or even the Season's Big Bad, is the main foe of the Episode. This Setup usually helps advance one of the major Plots of the Season. Typically, the villain unleashes some scourge upon the Cast or the world at large. The Cast has to deal with the danger and stop the villain. The old enemy may escape, or might finally get her just desserts.

WE MEET AT LAST: These are important Plot-related Episodes. Our heroes finally discover the identity of some important villain or Big Bad. These encounters

usually end with a nice fight scene, but the unmasked foe might not be defeated this time. The Setup can start with the discovery of the villain, or might provide the clues needed for the revelation near the end of the Episode.

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT: Sometimes, the trouble comes from a Cast Member (or a Guest Star) rather than from an outside threat. The complication or danger is caused by a screw-up on the part of a "good guy." Maybe somebody cast the wrong spell, or made some tragic error and must now make amends for it. In these Episodes, monsters or villains play a minor role (although they are likely to be around), and much of the time is spent dealing with the consequences of the Cast Member's actions or undoing the damage she caused.

AS THE BUFFYVERSE TURNS: Finally, you have Episodes that deal with dramatic situations—falling in love, trying to lead a normal life in the midst of demon-hunting, resolution of personal subplots. Combat takes a definite back seat to interpersonal relationships, but usually a vamp or two show their ugly mugs just in time to get stomped sometime between tearful moments.

TURNING POINTS

Xander: Spike's working for Adam?! After all we've done—Nah, I can't even act surprised.

—4.21 *Primeval*

After you have your Setup, you need to get the story moving. Actually, the Cast does most of the moving, but you can give them directions to get to the good parts. The Turning Points are dramatic moments that advance the story, or complications that make things more interesting (and dangerous) for the characters. You should try to space out the Turning Points. Think of them as the high points on a roller-coaster—you get a thrill as you go down, then there's a temporary break and build-up as you go up (heading for the next Turning Point) before you go through the thrill all over again. Here are some Turning Points you can use in your Episodes.

HE'S DEAD, JIM: Finding a corpse is always a good way to get a reaction, especially if the cause of death is unusual or gross. This situation can be highly dramatic (as in 5.16 *The Body*), or for shock value. The grisly discovery could be used to reveal some dark force at work, or to provide clues as to the nature of the threat.

WE'RE IN DEEP DOODOO NOW: You turn around, and you face a roomful of vampires. Or the kindly old man you were interviewing turns out to have the strength of ten men and an appetite for human hearts. Or your boyfriend walks up on you having an intimate moment with an old



friend (he had something caught in his teeth, honest!). This Turning Point reveals an unexpected danger (physical or emotional), the kind of situation that has the audience (and in a game, the players) wondering how the hell the heroes are going to get out with their hides intact. Ambushes and surprise attacks make great Turning Points. Sometimes, you Directors may have to pay off the players with a Drama Point. Otherwise the characters

with Situational Awareness and Fast Reaction Time are never going to get knocked out from behind while poking their noses where they don't belong, and where's the fun in that? Setting up these situations can be difficult if the Cast is careful or paranoid enough, but with some creativity anyone can be ambushed. If you can arrange it, an attack or intrusion when the characters think they are totally safe can really shake their confidence.

others ways to do it

The Episode/Season/Series structure is a set of guidelines you can use to make the game feel like the *BtVS* TV show (yup, we love to belabor the obvious). That may not be the best way to run a game, or to run *your* game. Maybe you don't want to set up Season-length plots, and prefer to let the interaction of the Cast dictate the way the Series runs. Or you want to follow a more traditional roleplaying style. Here are some ideas for you Directors who want something besides the default structure.

THE QUEST: The game centers around some elusive goal. There are no actual Seasons or Episodes. The game sessions lead the Cast from one encounter or situation to the next, each event leading them a step closer to the final climax. The game focuses on a single major plot, and ends when the quest is fulfilled (although a sequel might follow). This structure is closer to a series of novels or a movie than a TV series. Heck, make it take place over the course of 24 hours. There's a novel idea.

THE SOAP OPERA: These games have no set structure, and depend on the Cast's interactions with the environment. You populate the setting and let the Cast loose on it. There will be lots of Plots and Subplots, but actual resolution points are less frequent. This is more like a soap opera, where by the time a villain is defeated, two more are already prowling in the background.

THE ONE-SHOT: This can be a single-Episode game where what happened before and what happens after are not very important, or a series of Episodes that don't have interlinked Plots or Subplots. One-shots are very useful for conventions or pick-up games where you don't have to worry about players showing up for every game session. The structure of those games is more like a movie—it may or may not have sequels, but the story should be over by the time the closing credits start rolling.

OUT OF LEFT FIELD: This Turning Point reveals that the Cast Members had it all wrong—the apparent victim is actually the villain, their suspect is actually a good guy, and the butler didn't do it—his demonically possessed, half-android kleptomaniac clone did. To develop this Turning Point, you need to plant a few red herrings and get the Cast pointed in the wrong direction, until the truth comes crashing down (often leading to a We're in Deep Doodoo Now moment).

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH: A lovesick character confesses her feelings. A secret betrayal is finally uncovered. What was hidden is now . . . not. This dramatic Turning Point can go beyond the Episode and involve the Season's Plot or Subplot (like the discovery of the ritual to restore Angel's soul near the end of Season Two). This is a Turning Point that can be player-driven, especially when it comes to personal revelations.

EPISODE SUBPLOTS

Tara: I am, you know.

Willow: What?

Tara: Yours.

—4.16 *Who Are You?*

BtVS Episodes are rarely about only one thing. Besides the central Setup, you should try to string along at least one subplot (notice the small "s"). This can be something from the characters' personal lives—a big test at school, a first date—or part of one of the Season's Plots or Subplots. These secondary storylines can be pretty important, but they don't get as much "onscreen time" as the main plotline. Common personal subplots include important celebrations—birthdays, anniversaries and holidays (what happens when the Cast needs to prepare for that big Thanksgiving dinner even as they try to end a man-eating demonic bird's reign of terror? Now that's a special holiday Episode). Romantic developments are also important. Our heroes may find that a recent breakup from within the ranks is cramping their slayin' style.

Ideally, you should devise Episode subplots from the relationships and personal lives of the Cast. There is a

small risk that the subplot will take over the Episode, but if that's what's important to the players, let the subplot run wild. The rest of the Episode can always be dealt with later (assuming time is not an issue; otherwise, a call from a Watcher warning the heroes the world is about to end may break their mood and get their butts in gear).

THE CLIMAX

Xander: Demons versus soldiers. Massacre, massacre.

Willow: And Adam has a neat pile of body parts to start assembling his army. Diabolical yet . . . gross.

Xander: Does anybody else miss the Mayor-I-just-want-to-be-a-big-snake?

—4.21 Primeval

Sooner or later, you'll get to the final payoff of the Episode. The Setup is resolved (even if the solution is not completely satisfactory), and the roller-coaster ride ends. Usually, the Climax involves a confrontation with the Episode's main threat, followed by the consequences of the confrontation. The Cast may be triumphant and unscathed; this is nice but not really in keeping with the show. Alternatively, the heroes win, but it's not a painless victory. Maybe they learn some hard lesson, or have to pay some painful cost. The Climax might turn out to be a Turning Point instead. Maybe the villain is defeated—only to be revealed as the pawn of a much more powerful being.

Many Episodes should end in an upbeat note—the Cast Members have prevailed, after all. They might be a bit battered, bloody, maybe even frayed around the edges, but you should see the other guy. Most Episodes should give the Cast a sense of accomplishment—if every Episode ends in an ambiguous or bitter way, you'll mire the heroes in a sea of existential angst, and that's a lot less fun than it sounds.



SPECIAL EPISODES

Not all Episodes are created equal. Some are going to be almost "routine." Monster shows up, monster rampages, monster gets staked (or knifed, or burned, or banished or clobbered with a giant mallet), Cast scores a few funny lines out of it, the end (and there's nothing wrong with that, as long as the execution of the Episode is fun and entertaining). Others are going to play a pivotal role in the lives of the Cast Members and the tone and shape of the Season or even the entire Series.

SERIES PREMIERES

Giles: Into each generation a Slayer is born, one girl in all the world, a chosen one, one born with the strength and skill to hunt the vampires . . .

Buffy (interrupts and joins in): . . . with the strength and skill to hunt the vampires, to stop the spread of their evil blah, blah, blah . . . I've heard it, okay?

—1.1 Welcome to the Hellmouth

The first Episode is pretty danged important. This is where the Cast gets together for the first time—at least "onscreen" (the characters may have known each other before on paper, but this is where we see what sort of chemistry exists between them). Everybody gets a first glimpse at the setting, and a lot of the tone of the Season or the Series is defined by this first impression. Not everything should be set in stone. Just like on TV, a game Series may need some "retooling" after the first few Episodes (whatever you do, though, don't introduce cute little kids who get the bulk of the best jokes; they are the kiss of death).

The Series Premiere is usually an extended Episode—a pilot, to borrow a term we heard somewhere—and involves some important Setups and Turning Points, including the following.

INTRODUCTIONS: Big Setup here. The stars of the show share the "screen" for the first time. Most of what happens next is up to the players and how they "perform" their roles, but you can provide a few nudges here or there. Putting the entire Cast under a little pressure may help them stick together—after the characters have to fight for their lives against a vampire gang, they may feel more respect for each other. Friends don't let friends get drained by vampires; by the same token, people who save each other's lives will likely become friends.

SHOCKING DISCOVERIES: A few things that should be gotten out of the way during the first Episode include such



shockers as "vampires are real," "vampires are real strong," and "Yikes! There're a real lot of them vampires." Some of the "basic facts" of the setting should be described here, especially if the Cast is not aware of them. If the Series starts with a group of experienced monster hunters, of course, it goes without saying that the facts should go without saying . . . as Willow might put it.

A GLIMPSE OF THINGS TO COME: You don't have to lay down all the cards, or even most of them, but it'd be nice if the Series Premiere gave some clues as to what's going to be happening. They can include tidbits hinting of the dark powers involved, a chance encounter with a Guest Star that may play an important role in the Cast's lives, or a "job description" for some of our heroes.

SEASON FINALES

Oz: Guys take a moment to deal with this: we survived.

Buffy: It was a hell of a battle.

Oz: Not the battle. High school.

—3.22 Graduation Day, Part Two

All good things must come to an end. In the Season Finale, the Plots and any remaining Subplots come to a head, the Final Showdown takes place, and the Cast Members' lives will never be the same. Season Finales should always be your cataclysmic, heart-wrenching, mind-boggling . . . uh . . . doozies. The Setup should be pretty intense; the consequences if the heroes fail must be extreme. The world might not end, but the survivors might wish it had if the Big Bad's plans come to fruition. The Turning Points should be powerful—moments of truth galore, and if the characters are in deep doo-doo, it should be deep indeed. The Finales are times for the Cast Members to show how tough, courageous and determined they are. Ideally, they should end with the heroes standing together, brothers and sisters in arms, closer to each other than to anyone else in the world. You get all of these things, and your gaming group will have recreated the magic of *BtVS*.

Season Finales have some of the following Episode elements.

THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY: Romantic Plots and Subplots should reach a major point in the Season Finale. Characters may finally declare their love for one another, relationships may come to a heartbreaking end, or both (that's always a kick in the teeth, ain't it?).

THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL: By the Final Showdown, the Big Bad should have gotten the Cast really, really pissed



off. The end of the Big Bad should provide a nice catharsis. Few things feel better than seeing the creature that tormented and terrorized the Cast and their loved ones over the course of many, many play sessions get the proverbial can of whupass unleashed upon it. With a combination of Drama Points and creativity, the Big Bad should come to an emotionally satisfying squish.

THE PRICE OF VICTORY: Victories are not without costs. Maybe the Cast has to pay a terrible price to finally defeat the villain. They might have to compromise their values (Buffy letting Spike and Drusilla go at the end of Season Two—and that wasn't even the highest price she paid during that poignant season finale). They might suffer personal losses at the end (Buffy makes the ultimate sacrifice at the end of Season Five). Good as the defeat of the Big Bad should be, the victory should often be bittersweet, flavored with pain.

AND LIFE GOES ON: The Season Finale can also be used to mark milestones in the lives of the characters. At the end of each Season, the Cast is going to be older and hopefully a little wiser. High school eventually ends, to be replaced by college or work. Characters grow up, and hopefully become stronger, better people than they were at the beginning of the Season.

SEASON PREMIERES

Xander: Uh, our summer was kinda yawn worthy. Our biggest excitement was burying the Master.

Willow: That's right, you missed it. Right out by that tree. Giles buried the bones and we poured holy water and we got to wear robes.

Xander: Very intense. You shoulda been.

—2.1 When She Was Bad

A Season ends and, hopefully shortly afterwards, a new one follows (all hail Nielson). The Season Premiere should pick up any loose ends from the previous Season and turn them into new Plots and Subplots, in addition to hinting at new Big Bads and story arcs. If any enemies survived the last Season, they may make unexpected comebacks. The consequences of the heroes' actions may come back and bite them in the butt in the new Season. And the Season Premiere is a good place to get the ball rolling.

A new Season can herald a lot of changes. Some Cast Members may leave, to be replaced by newcomers. Minor characters may become important Guest Stars, or even new Cast Members. The entire Series may take a new turn, perhaps becoming a little darker (or more tongue-in-cheek). You get a chance to fix any problems the last Season had, and the players should get a better feel for their roles.

The Season can start shortly after the end of the previous one, but sometimes it is better to let a little "down time" pass. That gives the Cast a breather and some leeway to modify their background a bit, and maybe get a few "power ups"—a summer learning hidden lore can turn a dabbler into a skilled witch, for example, and a few months of intensive physical training might transform a Slayerette into a pumped-up demon-hunter. The down time allows for new challenges in the characters' personal lives and new nemesis-es(?) to surface (although they might not make their appearance for the first few Episodes).

IN CONCLUSION

Buffy: Xander!

Willow: Oh, wonderful Xander!

Buffy: You know we love you, right?

Willow: 'We totally do.

Xander: Oh God, we're gonna die, aren't we?

—4.21 Primeval

Producing a fun game Series requires some thought and work from both the players and you Director types. Your gaming group is basically acting as a team of screenwriters, actors and directors. Instead of big salaries, celebrity-studded cast parties, Emmy attendance and houses in Beverly Hills, you get to have fun making your own stories in the Buffyverse. Hey, you can have your own cast gatherings, complete with whipped topping and crudities. And your fame in the neighborhood gaming store could be . . . ah, okay, we pushed this analogy a bit too far, eh? The great part about role-playing is that you can get both the pleasure of reading an exciting tale (and not knowing how it will end) and the creative joy of writing a good story. When you combine that with the characters and setting of *BIVS*, a grand old time is all but assured.





8 Sweeps Week

Sean ran as fast as he could, his breath coming in sharp, desperate gasps. It was no use. She was gaining on him.

"Help! Somebody, please help!" he screamed. His cry echoed hollowly through Sunnydale High's hallways. A watchman was supposed to be there at night, but he was never around when you needed him. Sean was alone.

The screaming exhausted his energy and Sean collapsed. "Help," he said again, almost a whisper. He could hear the footsteps coming closer, hobnailed sandals on the institutional tile floor.

"There you are," said a voice he'd heard so many times before. Sean turned around, and saw the impossible. Even now, after running from her for nearly an hour, he still could not believe it. "You can't be here," he wheezed. "You're not real. Not real."

"You keep saying that." Her sword rose. "This sure seems real though."

The sword flashed down, abruptly cutting off Sean's final scream.

"Doesn't it?"



INTRODUCTION

WARNING: This section is for Directors only. Everyone else, don't read this or we'll send a Watcher hit squad after you. More importantly, the Episode will be much less interesting to play through.

Once all the Cast Members have been created or assigned, the basic background of the Series established and the players gathered, you Director types are ready for your first game session. The following Episode can be used as a Series or Season Premiere, or inserted in an on-going campaign. Players can choose to play characters from the Original Cast (Season One stats), the Archetypes or their own Cast Members. The Episode offers some serious butt-kicking opportunities so you should ensure that at least one, and probably more Cast Members are able to hold their own in a fight.

director tips

At various points throughout this Episode, Director Tips sidebars will provide helpful hints for those among you who are new to the whole Director biz. Every game will be different (that's what's cool about roleplaying) so you should feel free to modify, adjust, add or delete the material to make it fit your group.

The main plot of Sweeps Week assumes the characters are in high school—Sunnydale High, to be precise. This will, no doubt, instill much wailing and gnashing of teeth among those of you who don't have the game set up either in high school or Sunnydale. Have no fear—with a few script changes, you can alter the Episode with minimal pain and suffering. Below are some options (surely the more creative among you will come up with some of your own).

Same Scene, Different Place: The easiest thing to change is the general location—if your game is not in Sunnydale, just move the characters and events to the town of your choice (a Hellmouth is not necessary, but it helps). Everything else flows as normal.

Outside Investigation: The plot proceeds as planned, but none of the Cast Members are in high school. No biggie—the murders in the high school (see p. 212) will surely attract the attention of any would-be hero in the area. And the incident at the Bronze (see p. 214) can easily be witnessed by college students and adult investigators, as long as they go out once in a while. Discovering the identity of the murderous couch potato (see p. 213) will be trickier, but not impossible. This option works well with an Initiative-based or similar "adult" Cast game.

Friends in Need: Even if none of the Cast Members are in high school, they could have relatives, acquaintances or neighbor kids who are. Some of them could be witnesses to the strangeness going on, or they might be the targets or suspects. The Cast will have access to the school's gossip through those connections, all without having to relive the high school experience.

Take It to College: Just bump everybody up a few school years, and the victims and perpetrator can be college students at UC Sunnydale or another higher ed institution of your choice. The bullying could be less overt than in the Episode as written, or just as nasty, as you like it.

THE OVERVIEW

Riley: It's not just a job.

Buffy: It's an adventure, great.

—4.11 *Doomed*

The Episode opens up with a murder, and the promise of more to come. Soon, it is revealed that a gang of vampire chicks has moved into town looking for trouble. Then there is the added weirdness that the murders are being committed by popular TV characters. What's going on? Tuesday in Sunnydale, of course.

In truth, the vamps just happen to be in the wrong place at the right time (though they still deserve dusting). The TV weirdness is courtesy of a super-powerful Big Bad, the Djinn. A dangerous entity from beyond reality (okay, aren't they all?), the Djinn was trapped in the space between universes by a powerful curse, cast upon it by a unique alliance of human sorcerers and demon lords. That's how nasty the Djinn was—natural enemies worked together to get rid of it.

After a few centuries of being trapped like a fly in amber, the Djinn managed to open a little hole in its prison (figuratively speaking). It could not escape through the gap, but it could project a little bit of its essence into our world—just phantom images with little substance. It could start working on its escape though.

The Djinn needs the living energy of human souls to break out of its bondage. Fortunately for us, it can't just scoop up human souls at will. First, the demon needs to establish a connection with the human in question; this is done by granting the target a wish. This tie allows the Djinn to use its considerable powers on Earth, reshaping reality to make the human's wish come true. In all cases, the wish is corrupted or carries unintended consequences. While the wish can be repudiated before it's too late, usually the human loses her sanity when the power over reality turns on her, and damns her soul by hurting innocent people—and insane and damned souls are exactly what the Djinn needs. As soon as the human's mind reaches a certain threshold of insanity and her soul is blackened sufficiently, the Djinn can seize and consume the person and use her energies to widen the gap in its prison walls. Once enough humans have been seized, the Djinn can break free. No one is sure what will happen then, but it will certainly be a Very Bad Thing.

In this Episode, the Djinn is working through a venal teenager whose answer to high school and familial abuse is murder.

No stats are provided for the Djinn here because the Big Bad is out of reach. If over the course of the Season



the Cast does everything right, the demonic lord will never break free and manifest itself. Will our heroes manage to keep the fiend locked out? Will they have to forge an unholy alliance with demons to repeat the imprisoning spell? Stay tuned.

director tips

The Djinn is a worthy Big Bad, but it may not be right for every Series. If the Djinn doesn't fit your game, don't use it. Replace it with your own personal Big Bad, or eliminate the Big Bad entirely for this plot. The power behind this Episode could come from a magic spell, or mystic device, or even the confluence of the Hellmouth and one kid's overactive imagination.

FIRST PERIOD TERROR

Jonathan: Somebody help me!

Dodd: Come on, Johnny, you gotta hold your breath longer than that if you ever wanna make the team! Hey, somebody time him!

—2.20 *Go Fish*

It's another morning at Sunnydale High and the students crowd the hallways, heading to class, stopping to catch up with their buds, and, in at least one case, engaging in not-so-nice activities. Case in point—Brian White, Donny Ferrelli and Diego Valdez (see p. 221), Junior Varsity football players and all-around bullies. Their current victim is Julius Desmond (see p. 220), a short and pudgy kid with thick glasses, a Mt. Saint Helens-level case of acne, and the disposition of a well-kicked dog.

In addition to his other problems, Julius had the misfortune of running into Brian and dislodging some of his books. "Pick 'em up," Brian orders, and as Julius hastens to obey, Brian slaps the books out of his hands. "Again," he says. Donny and Diego surround Julius, who picks up the books a second time. And has them slapped away a second time. "Again."

This is going to go on for a while unless somebody intervenes. If any of the Cast stands up to the bullies, they back off—for now. They're bullies, but they aren't stupid. They won't start a fight in the middle of the hallway in the middle of the school day. Diego smirks at the rescuers and leave with a "We'll catch you later, losers." Julius is thankful and a little whiny. If nobody does anything, the trio torments him for a while, with Brian knocking off Julius' glasses as he bends over a fourth or fifth time. Satisfied with that, they go to their lockers.

director tips

As the Director, it's up to you to describe the scenes to the players. For this opening scene, have the Cast Members gathered together, or at least in the same hall at the same time, so they can witness the bullying of Julius. Make sure you make it clear that Julius is suffering and is unwilling to do anything about it. Then pause and allow the players to describe what they are doing.

Respond as necessary based on their descriptions. Use rolls if necessary, but remember that many things do not require rolls. Also, think about the characters and their backgrounds. A big dumb jock-type is not going to saunter forward and coolly carve up the bullies with rapier-like wit, and a scrawny geek-type is not going to use a flying jump kick martial arts move. Either might decide to go postal and jump on or punch the bullies, but warn them there will be repercussions (suspension, reprimand, payback, etc.).

Then the screaming begins.

Brian is the first one. He opens his locker, then recoils, screaming like a little girl. It's understandable, though—there's a headless body inside. A second or two later, Diego joins in the screaming. Also understandable—the missing head is in his locker. The grisly sights are worth a Fear roll with a -3 penalty for anyone who gets a good look at the contents of the lockers. The head (and the body) belong to Sean Lowell—Brian, Donny and Diego's football buddy and fellow bully.

The good news: school is cancelled for the day (making it the twelfth day off this year on account of a mysterious death—you gotta love Sunnydale). The bad news: Sean has been murdered, and someone is responsible (duh).





WHODUNIT

Wesley: 'We don't know that for certain. (brightly) I say it merits investigation.'

—3.15 Consequences

Our heroes can ignore the grizzly finds and try to forget what happened (not very heroic), or they can try to figure out what's going on. In the first case, move on to *Nightmare at the Bronze* (see p. 214—oh, and you probably need to scare up a better Cast). Assuming the Cast is curious as to who is divvying body parts among school lockers, there's a bunch of information to be had. Some of it would be known to anyone in the school (name, clique and general personality); others will require some actual investigation.

SEAN LOWELL: He's the deceased (for those not paying attention). The cause of death is pretty obvious; there are no other wounds on Sean's body aside from the severed head. This can be determined either by examining the body—which is going to be tricky with all the screaming and chaos going on (the Cast will have figure out a way to distract or misdirect the school authorities long enough for someone to take a look)—or by hacking into police records (which requires an Intelligence and Computers roll at -2). The murder weapon was a bladed or slashing weapon of some kind, no doubt a very sharp one. A successful Perception and Doctor roll when examining the body reveals that the time of death was sometime between 9 pm and midnight (hacking into police records reveals this fact without any roll beyond the Computers check).

Sean will be missed by Sunnydale High's football team, his girlfriend Donna Taylor, his other girlfriend Louise Baywillow, and his buddies (the aforementioned Brian, Donny and Diego). He will not be missed by any of SHS' misfits and outcasts, who were at the receiving end of his dark sense of humor. As a result, Sean had a number of enemies, or at least people who didn't like him much. They include Julius Desmond, who we met earlier, Keith Dicks, Peter Epstein, Danielle Pfeiffer and any of the Cast with the Misfit Drawback. All the boys have had their heads stuck inside a toilet bowl so far this semester—Sean and his gang call it Baptizing the Nerds (they think that's hilarious).

LOUISE BAYWILLOW (SEE P. 154, 220): Louise is one of the popular girls and counts Donna as one of her friends. Even so, she spent the last couple of weeks "moving in" on Sean. Louise wasn't in love with Sean; she just wanted to increase her status with the gang by "taking him" from Donna. Once she got into it, she also kind of liked the idea that Sean wanted her so much. She did confess at one point to Linda Robinson (her best friend) that she thought Sean would get "hurt" at some point.

KEITH DICKS (SEE P. 225): His unfortunate last name has earned him no end of grief, but Keith's ability to annoy people within fifteen seconds of opening his mouth makes things worse. Keith's not even a nerd—his grades are mediocre. He doesn't have many friends even among the local loser community. Julius is one of the few.

DANIELLE PFEIFFER (A.K.A. "PFEIFFER THE HEIFER"; SEE P. 154, 220): Danielle has a slight weight problem (about fifty



pounds), and has often been the butt of the joke for Brian and his gang. She is big into crystals and New Age-y stuff. In the last several months, she has taken to wearing more flowing dresses and skirts, and funky silver jewelry.

PETER EPSTEIN (SEE P. 154, 220): Peter is one of the smartest guys at Sunnydale High, at least when it comes to the sciences. He doesn't deal very well with people, though, and he's a favored target of the bully population. He hangs with Keith Dicks and Julius Desmond, but they get on his nerves too.

DONNA TAYLOR (SEE P. 154, 220): Donna is one of the popular girls but she's actually more clueless than mean. She doesn't pick on the unpopular kids and tries to distract the gang when it sets its vicious sights on someone. She was totally gonzo over Sean, and had no clue that Louise was working him over. Her fairy tale ended ugly with Sean's death. Once she gets over her near-catatonic grief, she's going to start looking at the world with a much more cynical eye.

MR. XAVIER WELCH (SEE P. 156, 221): Mr. Welch teaches biology at Sunnydale High. He's short, not very imposing, and has a hard time keeping Sean and his gang in line. Mr. Welch has often been heard muttering about doing something about them.

There isn't much else the Cast can find out today. If they talk to Sean's friends (most of whom aren't in a very chatty mood, what with the dead Sean and all), they won't find anybody who saw him later than 9 pm the day before.

PIGHTMARE AT THE BRONZE

Harmony: Are we going to the Bronze tonight?

Cordelia: No, we're going to the other cool place in Sunnydale. (Harmony looks confused.) Of course we're going to the Bronze.

—1.2 *The Harvest*

The next incident happens that night right outside the Bronze. It's a big night—*Dingo's Ate My Baby* (or some other happenin' band) is playing, and having some fun is just the thing to take one's mind off the murder.

The mood at the Bronze starts out subdued, as often happens when somebody gets killed at school. Things start picking up, though. The music is good, and you can get a complimentary nacho refill. The only down note comes from Brian, Donny and Diego. Brian and Diego are scared and angry; Donny, who didn't get any souvenirs in his locker, is trying to calm them down, without much success. Trying to talk to them is not a good idea. Brian and Diego are spoiling for a fight (and

director tips

It's your job to get the Cast to the Bronze that evening. For some groups, this is as easy as having an acquaintance run into one of the Cast Members and ask whether they are going to the Bronze that night. Or you could have the school or the parents organize the outing as a self-help/group-healing kind of affair (right up Principal Flutie's alley). You might set it up that some of the Cast Members work at the Bronze, or are part of the band.

If the Cast doesn't want to go the Bronze, that's okay too. Don't pressure them into doing something they don't think is right for their characters. We'll discuss that more in the next Director's Tip.

sure, a Cast with a Hero or two can kick their butts, but that's kind of not the point).

Donny finally comes up with a solution. He leaves for a while and comes back with some booze in a plain brown bag, courtesy of his brand-new fake ID. The troubled trio heads out to have a few drinks in the alley behind the Bronze.

They don't leave alone, though. Three pale girls who are dancing together look at each other, nod and follow them a few minutes later. Cast Members in the Bronze (if any) notice the interplay by making a Perception and Notice roll with a -2 penalty (it's crowded and not well-lit inside—also remember any Acute/Impaired Vision modifiers). The three girls are vampires; characters that get more than three Success Levels in the Perception and Notice roll realize that, as will any Slayer who concentrates and uses her mystical senses (yeah, right—she'd have to like read the handbook or something).

Out in the alley, the following events unfold (if the Cast intervenes at a different point, things may not happen exactly this way, of course):

- The three amigos pass around the bottle and start getting loaded. Donny is trying to be cheerful; the other two are surly and mean-spirited.
- Julius Desmond and Keith Dicks happen to walk by the alley, much to their misfortune. Julius had convinced Keith to get out of the house for a while. Now he has reason to regret it, as Brian and Diego decide that some fun with the losers is just the thing to dull their pain. Donny goes along, happy to see his friends acting like their normal selves again. The three jocks surround the two outcasts. Merriment (for the jocks) ensues.

- The vampire chicks join in the fun. "Mind if we cut in?" asks one. Both jocks and nerds are herded into the alley, and the vamps get ready to have a snack.

Ideally, the Cast Members arrive at this point (they could arrive a little earlier, when Brian and company were picking on their victims), which leads to the first tussle of the evening. The three Vampire Chicas (see p. 221) start out punching and kicking, but as soon as it's clear they are in a real fight, they pull out their switchblades and start slashing. If there are too many Cast Members for the three Chicas to handle, you should increase the number of vamps accordingly—for plot purposes, at least one of the vamps should be able to avoid fighting the Cast.

- While the fight is going on, the jocks and the nerds all take off, running and screaming to wake the dead (too late for that). One of the vamps runs after them.
- Just as the Cast finishes dusting off the last of the remaining vamps, Donny staggers back into the alley, clutching his chest. "Help me," he whispers, and collapses, dead.

CUT TO COMMERCIAL.

The Cast Members should each get a Drama Point as a consolation prize for trying to save the kids and failing through no fault of their own.

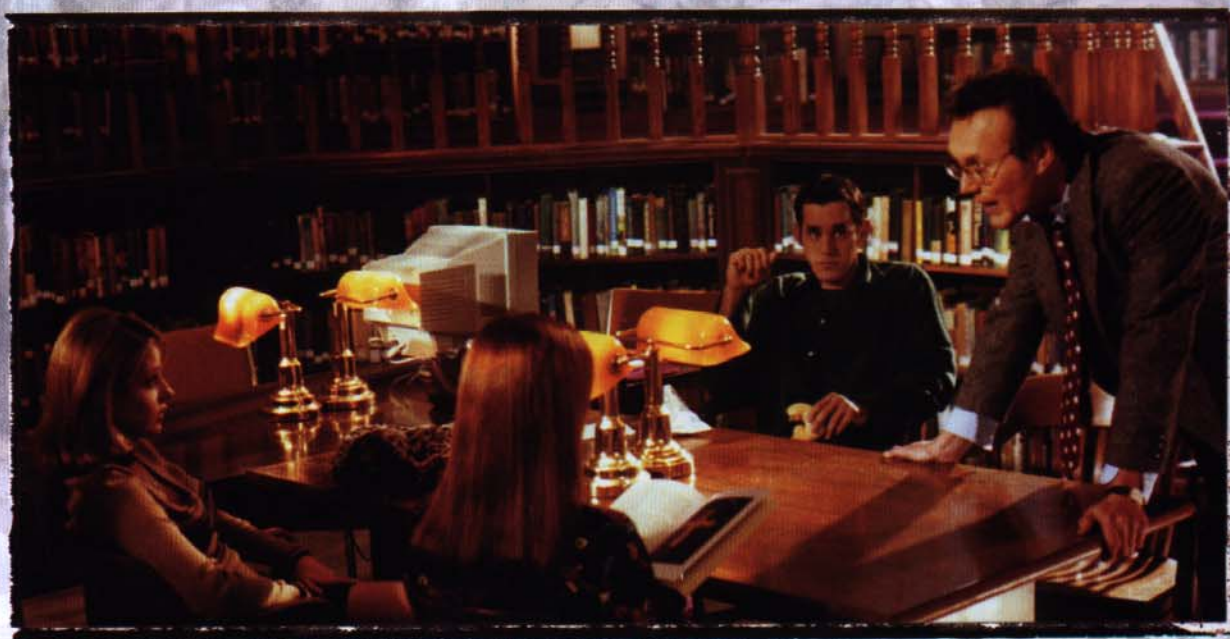
director tips

Okay, so what if nobody in the Cast wants to go to the Bronze that night? Here's an idea or three.

PATROLLING: If there are Hero types among the Cast, they should be out patrolling instead of watching TV or studying. Have the vamps chase the kids right into their path, and you can have the same fight and same gruesome murder at the end. Same result, and nobody has to risk hearing loss from all that loud music.

STAYING HOME: Some characters may decide that the thing to do after a murder has been committed is to stay home, lock the doors, and curl up in bed with a good Xbox game. If you really want to bring the action to the Cast, you can have the vamps chase their victims into the Cast Members' yards (talk about house calls). Or you can throw your hands up in despair and move onto:

MISSED THE WHOLE THING: They stayed home, and missed a great fight and murder combo (plus the good music). The next morning, Donny's body has been found near the Bronze with a death wound from a bladed weapon, and Brian and Diego say they were chased by some "weird chicks with switchblades and long pointy teeth" and lost track of Donny. Keith will tell a similar story—he and Julius were being picked on by the bullies, then the strange women arrived and chased everybody away.



AFTERMATH

Joyce: 'Who's wiggling?

Buffy (thinking quickly): 'Um... everyone. You know, 'cause of what happened.

—3.10 *Gingerbread*

A Perception and Doctor roll reveals that Donny's murder weapon appears to be a heavy blade—a sword or an axe—just like the one that killed Sean. The murder concludes the evening's festivities—there's no trace of the vamps, the surviving jocks, or Julius and Keith. Calling their homes reveals the others made it to safety. If the Cast doesn't check on them tonight, they are at school the next morning, where a moment of silence is taken in remembrance of Donny Ferrelli.

The mood at the school is pretty dark. Two dead students in a row is a lot to deal with, even in Sunnydale. People are looking at each other, wondering who's next. Brian and Diego get the most stares. Both jocks are shadows of their former selves—they have become two scared kids, jumping at any sudden noise. If asked, they say they didn't see Donny after they ran out of the alley; everyone got separated in the confusion. Diego is pretty sure the vamp that chased them had been running after Keith, not Donny.

Keith and Julius drop by to thank the Cast for saving them (assuming the Cast deserves thanks). Keith does most of the talking, and he stammers a lot. His story pretty much matches Brian and Diego's—the vamp chick was chasing them, but they managed to escape. Julius doesn't say much, he just stands there looking even more nervous than usual. Characters who get more than three Success Levels in a Perception and Notice roll realize that Keith is constantly looking toward Julius, as if making sure his friend approves of what he says (bit of misdirection there). Otherwise, they just notice his nervousness.

VAMPS

Xander (yells): 'Hey, Riley! What's the (hand gesture) all about?

Riley (exasperated): 'It means yell real loud so the vampires who don't know we're coming will have a sporting chance.

Xander (to Willow): 'See, now he's all mean and sarcastic.

—5.7 *Fool for Love*

Things start picking up that afternoon. Characters with criminal, police or occult Contacts (level 2 or higher) hear about the arrival of an all-female vamp biker gang in town, the Chicas.

An Intelligence and Crime or Influence roll can be used to shake some information loose from the local undesirables. An Intelligence and Computers roll taps into City Hall's building plans. An Intelligence and Mr. Fix-it or Drive roll gets in good with the local biker-types. You can apply modifiers to these rolls as you see fit (maybe the biker types aren't as good a source for vamp biker information as the local criminals). You can also devise other rolls, tailored to the Cast Members' particular strengths for gaining the information.

However accomplished, the Cast narrows down the likely hiding places for a gang of bikers who can't go out during the day. There are five possibilities: an abandoned train station, two warehouses near the docks, the burned-out factory on the outskirts of town (could be described as the CRD factory from *I.8 I Robot*, *You Jane* if you want to draw attention to this location), and an abandoned church. Each Success Level after the first narrows down the choices by one—the correct one is the factory. Otherwise, the gang just has to hoof it and physically check out each location. If that's the route they take, make the last place visited the real vamp HQ (or the second to last if you want to mix things up a bit).

An occult research roll (Occultism and Intelligence) reveals a few facts about the gang, depending on its success. Each additional rank of successes includes all the info at the lower ranks.

1 SUCCESS LEVEL: Nothing much—the Chicas are a chick vampire gang. They like motorcycles.

2-3 SUCCESS LEVELS: The leader of the Chicas is a Mexican vampire named Gabby Blades. The gang likes to play with, and then feed on, guys.

4+ SUCCESS LEVELS: Gabby Blades is known for using a sword in combat, and is a dangerous fighter. The gang likes to hole up in abandoned properties during the day, and ride around looking for trouble at night.

The Cast can hunt down the vamps. If they find them during the day, the Chicas are at a disadvantage (but they stay indoors, so it's not much of a disadvantage). There are four to six Chicas in the gang, as well as Gabby Blades (see p. 212). It's going to be a tough fight. Gabby might escape to fight another day, or she can get dusted along with her gang. In any case, the vamps are not the ones killing the jocks (although it's not like they were innocent bystanders).

After the Cast takes out the vampire gang, they may think the threat is over. Then they hear about the brutal murders of Brian and Diego the next day. Oops.

FALSE TRAILS

Anya: Don't you watch television? I thought all children despise effort and enjoy cartoons.

—5.17 Forever

Characters checking up on other would-be suspects find the following clues. Most of them are red herrings.

- Julius and Keith have a whispered argument on their way out of school. Julius looks pissed off, and he pushes Keith away before stalking off. Keith looks sad and upset, then shakes his head and walks away. Neither will talk about what happened.
- Peter Epstein has checked out a lot of books on witchcraft from the library. As it turns out, he does it for the same reason Xander did—the naked pics. Eww.
- Danielle Pfeiffer has been buying a lot of black candles and magic paraphernalia from local occult shops. She is indeed casting a spell at home—one to make her lose weight and look pretty. Anybody who makes a Perception and Occultism roll realizes that she doesn't know what she's doing; the spell is a complete dud. As a possible subplot though, Danielle's desire for beauty eventually leads her into the clutches of the Djinn, who will happily grant her wish. Naturally, the wish has some caveats (like maybe she needs to steal beauty from other girls, killing them in the process).
- Mr. Welch is very quiet and withdrawn. If he's followed, the truth will come out—he is contemplating suicide. Helping him out, if roleplayed well, might be worth a Drama Point or two. Someone in a state of despair, like Mr. Welch, could also end up serving the Djinn later on, of course.



Director Tips

You should play with the red herrings as much as you like, and as long as the group is enjoying them. Put some thought into where Danielle or Mr. Welch live, what their rooms look like, how they will react to the Cast's snooping. If you provide these details and play out the dialogue, you give the characters a chance to impact the world and provide no hint that the interaction is secondary to the plotline. Let the Cast find out as much as they can, and then decide what is important and what is not.

Whatever you do, make sure at least one of the Cast Members is aware that two obnoxious jock friends have been killed, and that two remain alive. That should lead them to keep tabs on Brian and Diego, no matter what else they do.

You may also want to think about dropping a hint about Keith by having one of the Cast notice something funny about his hand. They might catch a glimpse of a weird tattoo (see Mark of the Djinn, p. 225), which he will shrug off by saying that it's none of their business or perhaps that it was a stupid whim of his. Now, be warned that anything that sets one suspect apart from the others will serve to focus the Cast on that person. So be prepared to have the Cast notice something odd about the other folks at roughly the same time. Then the clues don't lead to one and only one suspect.

THE ATTACK

Willow (off Buffy's frilly costume): She couldn't've dressed up like Xena?

—2.6 Halloween

Brian and Diego aren't splitting up—safety in numbers and all that—so keeping them both under surveillance is a snap. And the gang need not be all sneaky-like. The big tough guys might actually be grateful to have the Cast Members hanging around, especially if they kicked vampire butt the previous night.

The jocks are staying at Diego's house. His parents are out of town, and the boys turn the whole place into a fortress, barricading all the doors and covering the windows. Diego has also gotten his hands on his father's gun, a revolver (see Pistol, p. 119). He has no experience with guns, so his Combat Score with it is a nine.

Feeling secure in the house, the jocks decide to watch some TV. Right in the middle of a commercial touting



the wonders of beef, the TV set flickers and dies—and there's somebody new in the room.

"I've been looking for you guys," the newcomer says. The jocks gape in disbelief, for the newcomer is none other than Dara of Neos Atlantis (see p. 222), the main character of the popular TV show of that name. Dara isn't signing autographs though—she pulls out her signature twin axes and starts hacking and slashing.

If the Cast Members are inside with the jocks, they can join in the fight. If they are nearby (keeping watch covertly), they have to break down the barricaded door (requires five Success Levels total in Strength (doubled) rolls, ignoring the first Success Level of any one roll; see p. 123). Two characters can try to smash the door down at once. Every Turn they spend doing that, Dara spends cutting the jocks and Diego's house to pieces, so hurrying up is a good thing.

If the Scooby Gang arrives in time (that'd be the ideal situation—the jocks can keep themselves alive for a while by hiding behind furniture and dodging wildly), they can fight the Barbarian Queen inside the living room. Mayhem and property damage ensue. Dara uses her Drama Points to recover from damage. She tries to disable her opponents as quickly as possible; her main goal is to kill Brian and Diego, not to kick the heroes' collective butts. If "killed," she disappears with a loud pop. Dara won't leave until her targets are dead, so it's a fight to the finish. If she succeeds, she disappears as if killed.

Either way, the Cast has discovered that the killer is a fictional television character. That ought to cause some wiggins.

If they manage to save Brian or Diego, each Cast Member earns a Drama Point. If they save both, that's worth two Drama Points.

AN EXPLANATION

Anya: I don't see why we have to patrol just 'cause Buffy's away. I'd rather stay home and watch television. It's often funnier than killing stuff.

—5.17 Intervention

Time to hit the books again. As soon as the Cast accumulates five Success Levels in their Intelligence and Occultism rolls, some possibilities suggest themselves.

Dara was a magical construct, a homunculus or tulpa—a projection of magical energy, given form by the desires of its creator. This is not your father's homunculus, though. The creature is a unique blending of magic

and technology, apparently using television sets to travel from place to place. The magicks being used are incredibly powerful—this is either the work of a very powerful sorcerer, or some demonic effect—something on the level of a vengeance demon's wish abilities.

Now that they know "the how," all the Cast needs to know is "the who." The leads for Peter Epstein and Danielle Pfeiffer are the most promising, but they are dead ends. Same for Mr. Welch. That leaves Julius and/or Keith.

director tips

We have kindly provided you with backgrounds and names for a variety of TV personalities for this Episode (see pp. 222-224). Feel free to substitute or supplement these folks with your or the players' favorite characters. That will personalize the storyline a bit, and allow the players' own background information about these characters to be used during the game.

MORE KILLINGS AND ABDUCTIONS

Giles: Yes, let's not jump to any conclusions.

Buffy: I didn't jump. I took a tiny step, and there conclusions were.

—2.15 Phases

Keith lives in a run-down house on the bad side of town. His father comes to the door in jockey shorts and shirtsleeves, smelling like a distillery. He's rude and hostile. "I don't know where that no-good brat is," he growls. "Now get off my property before I shoot myself some trespassers!" (An empty threat—the only gun in the house is a pistol-shaped cigarette lighter).

When (or if) the characters go to talk to Julius, they find him in deep trouble. A tall man is standing over him, holding a big sword and about to chop him up. It's another TV character, the Eternal Gael (see p. 223), immortal Irishman doomed to wander the Earth righting wrongs. Except right now the only wrong he seems to want to right is Julius' continued living. If nobody saves Julius, the kid is not long for this world. If the heroes arrive in the nick of time (what better time is there?), they have to fight the Gael (and Dara, unless she was "killed" at Diego's house). If the Cast is going to walk all over the poor Irish warrior, reinforcements arrive in the shape of Captain Steel of the Starship Intrepid (see p. 224) and his trusty stun blaster (surely prompting someone to say "Now it's getting ridiculous.").

If Brian and/or Diego are still among the living, the Cast should probably be sitting on them (literally, that's the best way to keep track of them). Unfortunately, this doesn't help them—Captain Steel snatches one or both of them with his teleport ring and takes them to Keith's lair, where they are imprisoned and set up for a grandiose execution.

One more killing is about to happen—Keith's father dies at the hands of Dara or the Gael (if either is still around), or blasted into atoms by Captain Steel's blaster (the Captain does not use the blaster's lethal setting on "innocents" but Keith's abusive father doesn't count). That might happen just as the Cast is returning to Keith's home to see if he's back (or maybe the first time they drop by).

So it looks like Keith is the mind behind the plot. Now where is he?

FINDING KEITH AND THE GRAND FINALE

Mayor: (We stops in pain) . . . we must all (screams). It has begun. My destiny (smiles). It's a little sooner than I expected. I had this whole section on civic pride . . . But I guess we'll just skip to the big finish!

—3.22 Graduation Day, Part Two

Keith's ability to "beam" his TV characters into other people's homes suggest he is using some sort of transmitter—this clue will occur to any Cast Member who makes an Intelligence and Science, or Intelligence and Mr. Fix-it roll. An Intelligence (doubled) roll then provides the most likely place—an abandoned TV station just outside town.

director tips

The main text provides game mechanics for leading the Cast Members to Keith's location. That is by no means the preferred method of moving the plot along though. If the players can piece the clues together themselves, that's the best thing. It shows that they are involved in the plot and their characters. Your job is to get the players to the right conclusions with the minimum input or dice rolling.

Now good roleplayers like good Directors are always learning. So don't sweat it if the gang can't piece it all together, and you have to fall back to asking for skill or Attribute rolls. That's what they are there for. Hey, if all fails, just have a Guest Star (the Slayer's Watcher, or a local police officer) put the facts together and tell the crew.

Keith is indeed there. If Brian or Diego survived and were successfully kidnapped by Captain Steel, they are chained up in the studio. Keith is playing with the remote, and deciding how he's going to kill his two tormentors. The two bullies are really making spectacles of themselves, crying and begging for mercy, but Keith isn't buying it. He turns on the TV and flips channels until he finds an appropriate character. He summons the Cyborg Defender (see p. 224) to perform the execution. "Make it last," he orders. "Oh, and make it gross. Major splatter factor."

That's about when the Cast should arrive. Keith sends the Cyborg Defender to exterminate the heroes. While the Defender is doing his thing, Keith starts flicking channels, and laughs. A commercial for a Japanese monster movie shows that it will begin shortly. "I'm going to unleash Gadjeera on your asses!" he cries triumphantly. The Cast has about six turns before the show starts and Keith summons a giant lizard that could make the Mayor look like a hookworm. It's up to the Cast to save the day.

Killing Keith would work. Even better though would be to destroy the remote. If anyone gets a close look (or with a Perception and Notice roll -3 from across the room), they see mystical runes painted all over it. It takes an attack with a -3 penalty to hit the remote; any amount of damage breaks it.

Whether Keith is killed or the remote is destroyed, he (or his body) disappears. He immediately reappears on a TV monitor. He can see the characters through it and the Cast can see him slamming on the inside of the screen, trying to get out.

He is on the set of the popular show *Who Wants to Spin the Wheel of Jeopardy?* Host Peter Soybel is behind him, smiling broadly. "I'm sorry, Keith," Soybel says with his typical fake-sympathy smile. "No grand prize for you today. However, we have a wonderful parting gift."

As Keith sobs in terror, a scantily clad female assistant opens a curtain and reveals a consolation prize: a fiery pit in some Hell, where a huge shadowy figure is moving. "No!" he screams, and turns back to the Cast. "Help me!" he shouts. A huge fiery hand reaches out and plucks him away. He disappears shrieking into the pool of flame.

"That's all, folks," Soybel says. "See you again *real* soon." His eyes flash an unnatural shade of red for a moment and the TV set explodes.

Donna Taylor stifled another snuffle and tried for the umpteenth time to focus on the copy of *Teenage Girl* resting on her frilly bedspread. She had been doing a great deal of crying ever since Sean was . . . didn't come home that one night. Donna had been sure she would run out of tears by now, but they still kept coming. She remembered his smile, and the cute way he cocked his head and looked at her when she really got him interested in something . . . something like that purple sundress she was wearing the night before he was . . . went to a better place.

And then there were those other deaths and attacks. It was hard to remember after all the tears, but she knew it was bad . . . and that she would never be the same.

And so much worse, she'd just heard from Mary Oesler that Louise was coming on to Sean just before he was . . . got hurt. That tramp should've known that Sean only had eyes for Donna. Then again, boys are so weak sometimes. Oh . . . it was all too much to bear. If only there were some way to . . .

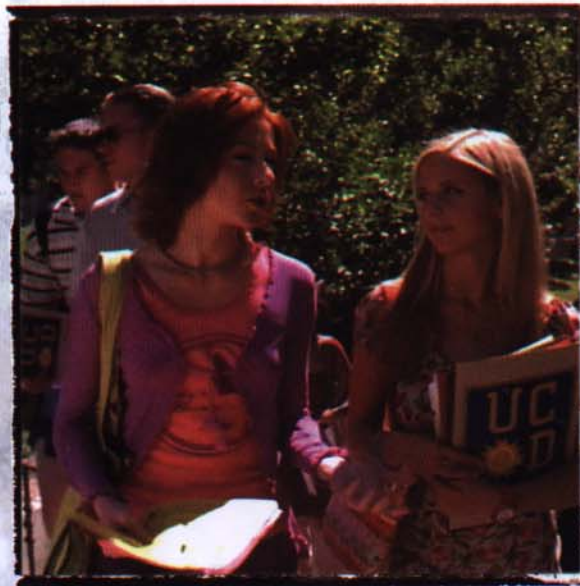
As Donna reached for another tissue, the pages of the magazine flipped of their own accord. When she turned back, a dashing young pop singer by the name of Ethan Grey gazed up at her from the page. As she watched, his smile got wider, his eyes turned red and he winked . . .

Cut to credits.

director tips

The Supporting Cast as presented here assumes a beginning group of Cast Members. That's not set in stone though. If you have a more powerful crew, notes to modify the stats of the punching bags—I mean, antagonists—from the Episode are provided in their write-ups. Typically, the Combat Score is what gets modified. The formula involves taking the Cast Member's highest Combat Skill and Dexterity values and adding a number (usually between two and eight) to it.

ONCE UPON AN EXAMPLE: Let's say the toughest character in the Cast is the New Slayer (see p. 60), with a Kung Fu and Dexterity total of 12. The write-up for the Vampire Chicas (see p. 221) calls for a Combat Score equal to the highest combat value in the Cast Member, plus two. That means their Combat Score is spot on at 14. If Season Five Buffy were in play, with a Kung Fu and Dexterity total of 18, the vamps' Combat would increase to 20.



EXPERIENCE AND DRAMA POINTS

Characters should get between two and five experience points at the end of the Episode, depending on what they did. Drama Points get awarded as described, plus any amount they earn as described in Chapter Three: Rules, Borders and an End Zone.

STATS AND GAME INFO

Here are all the hard numbers for our victims and villains.

BRIAN WHITE, DONNY FERRELLI AND DIEGO VALDEZ

The three bullies have pretty much interchangeable stats. They are not really evil, just mildly cruel to those weaker than them. They are at their worst when they are together. By themselves, they are almost decent, although they still look down on anybody who meets their definition of loser (i.e., those who can read without moving their lips, or don't play or watch any sports).

ALTERING POWER LEVELS: None. These guys aren't real "players" just more-or-less deserving victims.

LOUISE BAYWILLOW, JULIUS DESMOND, DANIELLE PFEIFFER, PETER EPSTEIN, DONNA TAYLOR

These students are innocent bystanders, victims or conniving vixens. They will most likely not get involved in combat or other rolling-type activities. If they do, the high school student stats (see p. 154) may be used.

Name: Brian, Diego and Donny
Motivation: Score (on and off the field), rule Sunnydale High.
Critter Type: Jock
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 11, Brains 10
Life Points: 34
Drama Points: 0
Special Abilities: Jock

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Grapple	13	—	Resisted by Dodge
Punch	11	8	Bash
Pistol (Diego)	9	13	Bullet; six shots
Takedown	12	3	Resisted by Dodge/Parry; target prone



MR. XAVIER WELCH

This clinically depressed teacher is not part of the really nasty goings-on. If necessary, Principal Bob Flutie's stats (see p. 156) are a good equivalent.

VAMPIRE CHICAS

The Chicas are an all-girl vampire gang, freshly arrived in Sunnydale to kick butt and take names. Their primary prey is "bad boys"—any male who doesn't show proper respect for the opposite sex. They are also on the lookout for any scorned women to turn and add to their roster. Their leader is a fairly tough vampire, Gabby Blades.

The Chicas wear leather pants and jackets, tank tops,

and biker boots, and have enough piercings to supply a steel mill. They like their clothing at least two sizes too small.

The Chicas are an added complication—they have nothing to do with the murders (but make good initial suspects). If the Cast includes any Slayers, they hatch a plan to grab her and turn her into one of their own (not bloody likely, of course).

Lines: "Hey, handsome. You like to play rough?"
(Violence) "Me too!"

ALTERING POWER LEVELS: To determine the Combat Score for the Chicas, take the highest Dexterity and combat-oriented skill total in the Cast and add two.

Name: The Chicas
Motivation: Blood!, payback sucks (literally)
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 4, Con 4, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 14, Brains 12
Life Points: 61
Drama Points: 2
Special Abilities: Attractiveness +1, Hard to Kill 5, Vampire

Name	Score	Maneuvers	
		Damage	Notes
Bite	16	19	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	14	—	Defense action
Grapple	16	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	13	15	Bash
Pigsticker	14	11	Slash/stab
Punch	14	13	Bash



Name: Gabby Blades
Motivation: Kill guys, blood!, take over Sunnydale.
Critter Type: Vampire
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 6, Con 5, Int 3, Per 4, Will 5
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 17, Brains 14
Life Points: 80 **Drama Points:** 4
Special Abilities: Attractiveness +2, Hard to Kill 10, Vampire

Name	Score	Damage	Maneuvers Notes
Bite	19	20	Must Grapple first; no defense action
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Grapple	19	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	16	16	Bash
Punch	17	15	Bash
Sweep Kick	16	10	Bash; knocks target down
Sword	17	27	Slash/stab



GABBY BLADES

The leader of the Chicas was born Gabriela del Espadon in Mexico during the 1830s, the daughter of a wealthy rancher. She met a dark, handsome stranger one night. He bit her, made her into a vamp, and the two had a brief, passionate and abusive relationship that ended when Gabby cut off his head after a bout of lovemaking. Gabriela has had little use for men since then, and built a

gang of man-hating vamps over the ensuing decades. Her signature weapon is a Spanish sword made of high-quality Toledo steel (adds +2 to the Base Damage).

Line: "I think I'll cut off your legs first. That way, you can't run while I have my fun."

ALTERING POWER LEVELS: Gabby's Combat Score should be equal to the highest Dexterity and combat-oriented skill total in the Cast plus five.

Name: Dara of Neos Atlantis
Motivation: Follow Keith's commands and look good doing it
Critter Type: Magical Construct
Attributes: Str 7, Dex 6, Con 6, Int 3, Per 3, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 20, Combat 19, Brains 15
Life Points: 92
Drama Points: 5
Special Abilities: Attractiveness +2, Fast Reaction Time, Hard to Kill 10, Natural Toughness

Name	Score	Damage	Maneuvers Notes
Axe	19	26	Slash/stab
(Thrown)	18	19	Slash/stab; axes return next Turn
Dodge	19	—	Defense action
Kick	18	21	Bash
Jump Kick	16	28	Bash; Acrobatics + Dex roll first
Punch	19	19	Bash
Spin Kick	17	23	Bash
Sword	19	33	Slash/stab



DARA, BARBARIAN QUEEN

The first homunculus created by Keith Dicks' magic remote, this construct has the attributes and personality of the starring role in *Dara, Barbarian Queen*, a highly popular TV show. Clad in a revealing chain-mail bikini, this athletic redhead, played by Scottish actress Sarah Manson, fights evil in the days after the fall of Atlantis. Her signature weapons are her sword and her pair of small double-headed throwing axes (damage is reduced from that of a regular axe), which magically return to her hands after they strike a target. Like all of the homunculi, Dara can only be summoned for one hour at a time, and if "killed," she vanishes and is gone forever.

Lines: "It ends now." "You didn't think you'd get away, did you?" "This is going to hurt. A lot."

ALTERING POWER LEVELS: Dara's Combat Score should be equal to the highest Dexterity and combat-oriented skill total in the Cast plus six or seven—she should be a tough opponent.

THE ETERNAL GAEL

The title character of a cult TV show, the Eternal Gael is Finn O'Cool, an Irish warrior gifted with immortality when he drank from the Holy Grail in 1643. Played by Nero Simon, Finn wanders the earth in a Winnebago, righting wrongs and fighting the supernatural. His weapon of choice is a Claymore sword (yes, that's a Scottish two-handed sword, and a nasty one at that). In addition to not aging for over three centuries, Finn regenerates damage with inhuman speed, making him an indestructible killing machine. He regains 50 Life Points per Turn; by spending a Drama Point, he can recoup all Life Point losses.

O'Cool can only be killed if his heart is destroyed. This works like an attack Through the Heart (see p. 112), except any stabbing weapon works, and the attack must inflict 57 points of damage in one shot. Any character familiar with the show knows about the vulnerable spot, but not the total points needed to kill. You could also ask for an Intelligence and Knowledge roll to reveal this information.

Lines: "Stay away, lass, and you won't get hurt." "Your time has come."

ALTERING POWER LEVELS: Add four or five to the highest Dexterity and combat-oriented skill total in the Cast. Finn's main threat is the fact that he won't stay down until his heart is destroyed.

CAPTAIN STEEL OF THE STARSHIP INTREPID

Portrayed by notorious over-actor Clint McLure, Captain Steel has a cult following among the sci-fi crowd. The heroic and square-jawed captain always manages to do the right thing, episode after episode. Now he is serving a murderous little psycho, and his job is to hunt down everyone who ever dissed Keith Dicks.

Steel doesn't kill unless his life is threatened. Not even the powers of the Djinn can make him act out of character. So all he does is use his blaster to stun and his teleport ring to bring targets to Keith, who can do the dirty deeds on his own. The ring takes one Turn to activate and bring him and up to two other people that he touches anywhere he wants to go. The blaster has the range of a pistol, and those struck by the stun setting must make a Constitution and Willpower roll with a -7 penalty, or be knocked out. Like all unconsciousness situations, duration is up to you (see p. 121).

Name: Finn O'Cool
Motivation: Serve Keith Dicks
Critter Type: Magical Construct
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 5, Con 4, Int 3, Per 4, Will 5
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 17, Brains 14
Life Points: 57
Drama Points: 5
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 5, Regeneration

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Big Ass Sword	17	30	Slash/stab
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Kick	16	14	Bash
Punch	17	13	Bash
Sweep Kick	16	8	Bash; knocks target down



Name: Captain John Pompeii Steel
Motivation: Serve Keith Dicks while staying true to the Star Consortium Charter
Critter Type: Magical Construct
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 4, Con4, Int 4, Per 4, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 16, Brains 16
Life Points: 53
Drama Points: 8
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 5, Teleport Ring

Name	Score	Damage	Maneuvers
			Notes
Blaster (Stun)	16	5	Target knocked out
Blaster (Lethal)	16	20	Bash
Dodge	16	—	Defense action
Punch	16	10	Bash



Lines: "You can't... do that. It... goes against everything the Consortium stands for." "Damn it! Do you think... I like this? I... have no choice in the matter!" "A man's... gotta do... what he's... gotta do!"

ALTERING POWER LEVELS: Add three or four to the highest Dexterity and combat-oriented skill total in the Cast.

CYBORG DEFENDER

"In the far future, man and machine will become as one, and the definition of humanity will reach a new

level." That was the opening of the short-lived sci-fi show *Cyborg Defender*, featuring the C-2000, half-man, half-machine, played with total lack of feeling by Belgian bodybuilder and martial arts expert Alain van Cleef. The show was terrible; maybe fifty people in the US and Canada liked it—Keith was one of them.

The C-2000 looks like a normal human on the outside, but beneath the skin lies a graphite-steel robotic body that encases a human brain. The Cyborg Defender is armed with a flechette shotgun, but usually ends up using his super-strength and kewl Kung Fu moves on the bad guys.

Lines: "Time to take out zee trash." "You are zee rats, and I am zee exterminator."

Name: C-2000
Motivation: Serve Keith Dicks
Critter Type: Cyborg
Attributes: Str 10, Dex 5, Con 10, Int 5, Per 2, Will 5
Ability Scores: Muscle 26, Combat 19, Brains 12
Life Points: 120
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: Armor Value 20, Fast Reaction Time, Increased Life Points

Name	Score	Damage	Maneuvers
			Notes
Dodge	19	—	Defense action
Flechette Gun	19	20	Bullet; unlimited ammo; halve Armor Value
Grapple	21	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	18	27	Bash
Punch	19	25	Bash
Takedown	26	17	Resisted by Dodge/Parry; target prone
Toss	22	16	Must Grapple first; throws victim six yards away



Name: Keith Dicks
Motivation: Revenge
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 2, Per 1, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 9, Brains 10
Life Points: 26
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: —

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	9	—	Defense action
Punch	9	5	Bash
Remote	—	—	Summons one character per Turn



ALTERING POWER LEVELS: Add seven or eight to the highest Dexterity and combat-oriented skill total in the Cast. The C-2000 is meant to be the enemy you can't defeat through normal ass-kicking techniques. Gotta take out that remote to finish this guy.

KEITH DICKS—MASTER OF THE REMOTE

An unpleasant rabbit pellet of a guy, Keith spends most of his waking hours in front of a TV set and prefers to live in a fantasy world. His father is an alky who lives on disability checks; his mother left them both a long time ago. Constantly bullied in school, Keith used to day-dream about getting some payback (usually during commercial breaks). One day, the host of *Who Wants to Spin the Wheel of Jeopardy* started talking to him through the TV, offering to make his wishes become reality. All Keith had to do was to touch the TV, and accept the gift, "freely and of his own free will." After thinking about it for 2.3 seconds, Keith said, "Okay." His hand acquired the Mark of the Djinn, and he gained the power to summon characters from television with his TV remote.

The power of the Djinn's magic resides in the remote control. With it, Keith can summon one TV character per Turn as long as the person appears on the screen at the time the remote is used. Then, Keith can send that character via the TV station transmitter to any room with a TV on in it. If the remote is destroyed, all the homunculi disappear, and Keith pays the ultimate price.

Lines: "Don't mess with me. You don't know what I'm capable of. Honest." "My name is Keith Dicks. I killed my father. Prepare to die."

The mark of the djinn

When the Djinn makes a connection with an (un)worthy human, it marks the victim. The mark looks like a stylized eye inside a circle, with arcane symbols around it—all done in red. The mark appears on the person's palm, and can be spotted on a Perception and Notice roll with a -3 penalty. If the recipient takes some care to conceal it, the penalty is -5. There is no chance to notice the mark if the person wears a glove; of course, if she only wears one glove, she's either in a Michael Jackson phase or something funny's going on, especially since California isn't exactly mittens country.

If the Cast Members get a chance to examine the mark, they can do the usual research stuff. Here are the likely results, listed by Success Levels.

No Success Levels: Kinda looks like an eye, doesn't it?

1 Success Level: The markings appear to be Sumerian in origin.

2-3 Success Levels: This is a symbol for some type of lesser deity or demon.

4-5 Success Levels: This sigil means "The All Knowing Wish-Giver."

6+ Success Levels: The symbols around the sigil have a further meaning, roughly translating to "Buyer, beware."





Appendix

A Guide to Buffyspeak

Master: Oh, good, the feeble banter portion of the fight. Why don't we just cut to the . . .

—1.12 *Prophesy Girl*

Words are
where the fun is.

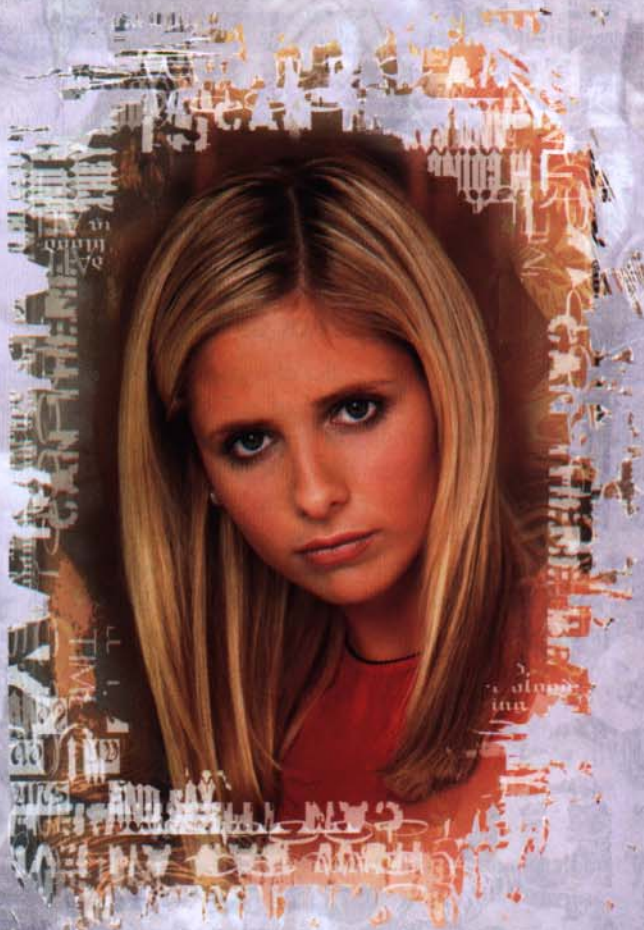
The cosmology of the show, Slayers, Watchers, vampires, and demons are all important, but what the characters say while they slay is what makes it "Buffy." Buffyspeak is more than just Valleyspeak. Sure, there is a lot of "like" and "stuff," but it has a wit all its own.

Any *BtVS* RPG game can be enhanced by spiffy riffs of dialogue that capture the essence of the show. Then again, Buffy and company have a cadre of experienced and well-paid writers to make their *bon mots* sparkle. You have . . . well . . . you, with maybe some help from your friends. Still, you can bring wit to the table. We have faith in you. Also, don't sweat the occasional clunker. Lameness is a perfectly acceptable portion of the Buffy experience—as long as you are willing to acknowledge it.

Xander: "We both go to school . . ." Very suave. Very not pathetic.

—1.1 *Welcome to the Hellmouth*

To help you on your way to capturing that Buffy feeling, we present this handy-dandy guide to Buffyspeak. Whether you are taking on the roles of our favorite characters, or making up your own creations, this tell-all will tell all. We have pored over 100 scripts and have identified a few patterns to help you out. Yep, we are the bomb.



POP CULTURE REFERENCES

Giles: Your . . . spider sense?

Buffy: Pop culture reference. Sorry.

—1.8 *I Robot, You Jane*

Movies, old, new, popular, and not so popular, describe actions and stereotypes. One of the first places to start when speaking the Buffy is the media and entertainment that surround you.

Buffy: No, I'm not saying she craned her neck. We are talking full-on Exorcist twist.

—1.4 *Teacher's Pet*

Xander: Well, I've seen Cocktail. I can do the hippy-hippy shake.

—4.5 *Beer Bad*

Buffy: Oh, you mean the camo and stuff? I thought about it but, I mean, it's gonna look all Private Benjamin.

—4.13 *The I In Team*

And, of course, television . . . even the commercials.

Xander: I'm sorry, calm may work for Locutus of Borg here, but I'm freaked out, and I intend to stay that way.

—1.12 *Prophecy Girl*

Anya: We should drop a piano on her . . . Well, it always works for that creepy cartoon rabbit when he's running from that nice man with the speech impediment.

—5.20 *Spiral*

Cordelia: Willow! Nice dress! Good to know you've seen the softer side of Sears.

—1.1 *Welcome to the Hellmouth*

You can even find stuff that is not exactly media—just the people, places, and things that sneak into our daily lives.

Buffy: Then if you wouldn't mind a little Gene and Roger, you might want to leave off the "idiot" part. Being called an idiot tends to take people out of the dating mood.

—2.2 *Some Assembly Required*



Xander: Well. Not much goes on in a one Starbucks town like Sunnydale.

—1.1 *Welcome to the Hellmouth*

Don't forget, the vampires have developed a popular culture of their own.

Buffy: And you're sure this isn't just some fan-boy thing? Cause . . . I've fought more than a couple of pimply overweight vamps that called themselves Lestat.

—5.1 *Buffy vs. Dracula*

Sometimes, actual real culture gets slipped in as well—literary and mythological references. Just don't overdo it. And don't use anything too obscure.

Xander: You ground his bones to make your bread.

—2.13 *Surprise*

Giles: Professor Walsh, I presume. You're hard to find. These—these halls are quite the labyrinth. I felt like Theseus and the Minotaur in the . . . labyrinth.

—4.12 *A New Man*

Pop culture references should be a little bit twisted, more of an example of something, and not overused. Giles may say, "I'll consult my books" every other episode, but Buffy does not say (begin deep voice) "I'll be back" in every episode. Stay away from the obvious, though mentioning Scooby once or twice is not a bad thing.



SUPERHEROES

Joyce: I mean, I would think they would be happy to have a . . . a superhero.

—3.2 Dead Man's Party

Ok, yes, this is pop culture too, but it is used so often on the show that it's noticeable, because, well, Buffy is a superhero.

Xander: But, gee, Mr. White, if Clark and Lois get all the good stories, I'll never be a good reporter.

—3.13 The Zeppo

Xander: Oh, okay, you and Willow go do the superpower thing, I'll stay behind and putt around the Batcave with crusty old Alfred here.

—4.20 The Yoko Factor

Ben: You know, not to be rampantlly sexist in the workplace, but you've got some serious muscles for a girl.

Buffy: I . . . um . . .

Ben: Radioactive spider bite?

Buffy: How'd you guess?

—5.5: No Place Like Home

Oh, and the whole Bizarro Sunnydale thing, that's a Superman reference.

Cordelia: Oh, are we feeling a little envious? You could belong to a fraternity of rich and powerful men. In the Bizarro world.

—2.5: Reptile Boy

There are a lot of superheroics going on. You can even turn an everyday person into a superperson by adding Captain to the front or girl/man to the end.

Buffy: Destructo Girl. That's me.

—1.4 Teacher's Pet

Xander: So, who's up for some more liquid refreshments? I'm buying, for I am Paydayman.

—5.14 Crush

MR., MRS., AND MISS

Kendra: In case de curse does not succeed, dis is my lucky stake. I have killed many vampires wit it. I call it Mr. Pointy.

—2.21 Becoming, Part One

Somewhat similar to being a superhero, being overdramatic in any fashion makes you Mrs. or Mr. Overdramatic Thing.

Cordelia: Hello? Miss Not-Over-Yourself-Yet?

—3.7 Revelations

Xander: Looks like Mr. Caution Man, but the sound he makes is funny.

—2.13 Surprise

Buffy: Well, there you go. Even when he's good he's all Mister Billowy Coat King of Pain.

—4.20 The Yoko Factor

This is also a good way to point out someone's flaws or failures.

Faith: It's not cynical. I mean, it's realistic. Every guy from . . . Manimal down to Mr. I-Love-The-English-Patient has a beast in him. And I don't care how sensitive they act. They're all still just in it for the chase.

—3.4 Beauty and the Beasts

Buffy: Diverted? That was me fighting for my life, Miss Attention Span.

—3.14 Bad Girls

Xander: My girlfriend. Mistress of the Learning Plateau.

—4.18 Where the Wild Things Are



BRITISHISMS

Xander: You coulda just said, "shit!" God, are all you Brits such drama queens?

—2.13 *Surprise*

One cannot fail to notice that a relevant number of the characters on the *BtVS* TV show are um . . . English. It would behoove one to be knowledgeable in at least a few English colloquialisms.

Giles: Some prophecies are a bit dodgy.

—1.12 *Prophecy Girl*

Spike: Leprosy! Alright, a spell that makes his parts fall off. That sounds proper.

—3.8 *Lovers' Walk*

Giles: You know what gets me? This is what gets me. Twenty years I've been fighting demons. Maggie Walsh and her Nancy-ninja boys come in and six months later, demons are pissing themselves with fear. They never even noticed me.

—4.12 *A New Man*

Just counting recurring characters, we have Giles, Spike, Wesley, Ethan and Drusilla. That's a lot of tea and scones.

Wesley: Well, I must say this is all rather odd to me.

—3.20 *The Prom*

Ethan: Well, we won't have to worry about that anymore now, mate. When you went to the loo I slipped a small pellet of poison in your drink. You'll be dead in an hour.

—4.12 *A New Man*

Spike: Dracula? Poncy bugger, owes me eleven pounds for one thing.

—5.1 *Buffy vs. Dracula*

Of course, the Englishisms are probably only going to be useful when talking from the perspective of one of these characters, or another character who hails from Britain. Buffy is not going to refer to someone as a silly git (well, maybe when making fun of Spike).



HYPERBOLE

Cordelia: Enough of the hyperbole!

—2.3 *School Hard*

Hyperbole is a big word meaning to exaggerate a wee bit. Buffy characters use this a lot. Gets mixed in with the whole sarcasm thing.

Xander: Well, you're certainly a font of nothing.

—1.1 *Welcome to the Hellmouth*

Xander: Ooo, gang, did ya hear that? A bonus day of class plus Cordelia! Mix in a little recital surgery, and it's my best day ever!

—2.8 *The Dark Age*

Buffy: Well, a man that worships chaos and tries to kill you is a man you can trust.

—4.13 *The I In Team*

Sarcasm is a subtle thing—it's not easy to pick up on when it's typed. Make sure you exaggerate enough so that people know you're making a funny. Every once in a while though, you can slip one in that's an inside joke.

Angel: I'm a funny guy.

—3.18 *Earshot*





COMPOUND WORDS

Xander: Anya, ever the wordsmith.

—5.16 *The Body*

What's more fun than one word? Taking two words and smashing them together!

Willow: I . . . I have frog-fear.

—2.9 *What's My Line? Part 1*

Xander: Oh, that's the sound she makes when she's speechless with geeker-joy.

—2.11 *Ted*

Xander: So with Buffy and Riley having . . . you know, acts of nakedness around the clock lately, maybe they set something free. Like a . . . big burstin' poltergasm.

—4.18 *Where the Wild Things Are*

Compound words are also used whenever something is worthy of a particular feeling or action.

Xander: Uh, our summer was kinda yawn-worthy. Our biggest excitement was burying the Master.

—2.1 *When She Was Bad*

Xander: Yeah, Will. I mean, this guy IS pretty barf-worthy. Can't we be elsewhere? Like, you know, is Oz cleared or what, huh?

—3.4 *Beauty and the Beasts*

STACCATO

Cordelia: Morbid much?

—1.1 *Welcome to the Hellmouth*

Staccato. A rhythm thing. Short words, no conjunctions, make point. Buffy and the gang get a lot of meaning across with fewer words than most.

Buffy: That's all. "Cryptic" guy said "Fork" guy.

—1.4 *Teacher's Pet*

Willow: Wolf you, not you you.

—3.4 *Beauty and the Beasts*

Buffy: What's this?

Willow: A doodle. I do doodle. You too. You do doodle too.

—3.11 *Gingerbread*

Riley: More than I wanted to know sometimes. She loved him. He turned evil. He, uh, killed people. She cured him. He left. Interesting little curse.

—4.20 *The Yoko Factor*

Staccato often comes in the big three. Saying three statements, in succession, leaves a memorable punch.

Buffy: But . . . Cute guy! Teenager! Post-pubescent fantasies!

—1.5 *Never Kill a Boy on the First Date*

Buffy: Giles, did you forget? The hospital, vampires, handy carryout packets of blood?

—2.8 *The Dark Age*

Buffy: Then I hunt them . . . find them . . . and kill them.

—5.5 *No Place Like Home*

LYING

Ms. Calendar: You're here again? Kids really dig the library, don'cha?

Buffy: We're literary!

Xander: To read makes our speaking English good.

—1.8 *I Robot, You Jane*



Buffy

the vampire slayer™

Stuttering and staccato are a lot alike, and the gang stutters a lot, usually when lying. Have you noticed that all of the main characters on the show are bad at lying?

Xander: So, Buffy, how'd the slaying go last night?

Buffy: Xander!

Xander: I mean, how'd the LAYING go? No, I don't mean that either.

—1.5 *Never Kill a Boy on the First Date*

Xander: You're in love with a vampire?! What, are you outta your mind?!

Cordelia: What?!

Xander: Not vampire . . . How could you love an umpire? Everyone hates 'em!

—1.7 *Angel*

Giles: Now, uh, bear in mind, uh, most likely, there, there is no deal, but um, if, if, if there was a deal, then it, um, would concern murder . . . last night. A male student was, was found i-i-in the woods.

—3.4 *Beauty and the Beasts*

Number one on the big list of lies: that thing . . . yeah, that thing.

Willow: A thing? The thing! That I have! Which is . . . a thing that I have to go to.

—1.12 *Prophecy Girl*

Riley: Yeah, but . . . I have that . . . thing . . .

—4.18 *Where the Wild Things Are*

Xander: Anya, you wanna help me with that thing?

Anya: Xander needs help with his thing!

—5.13 *Blood Ties*

THE Y

Buffy: I haven't been that scourgey lately.

—2.9 *What's My Line Part 1*

We can't have a guide to Buffyspeak without including this one—it's just too obvious.

Buffy: Uh, wait a minute. The dead guy's all puddly now.

—2.8 *The Dark Age*

Willow: Anyway, it'll help you stay awake. It's good and, and very wolffy. Seems to soothe the savage beast.

—3.4 *Beauty and the Beasts*

Dawn: Oh, she just said you look even cuter when you're all weak and kitteny . . .

—5.5 *No Place Like Home*

Yes, adding a "Y" to any verb or noun makes it descriptive. Justy don'ty overusey ity.

Buffy: He's boyfriendly?

—1.8 *I Robot, You Jane*

Buffy: I am not transfery. I swear to you. I'm your girl, and I'm gonna stay that way.

—5.1 *Buffy vs. Dracula*

ADDING -AGE

Riley: But you've killed a—You did the thing with that—Uh, you drowned. And the snake! Not to mention the . . . daily . . . slayage of . . . Wow.

—4.12 *A New Man*

Here's another "d'oh" for Buffyspeak. Adding "-age" to pretty much anything is just the thing to get you in the Buffy mood. For the most part, it replaces "-ing" in gerunds ("gerund" is fancy English professor-speak for using "-ing" words as nouns; a "noun" is . . . oh, never mind).

Buffy: I guess we got a little carried away with the whole post-slayage nap thing.

—3.20 *The Prom*

Buffy: How about that ceremonial knife, huh? Pretty juicy piece of clueage, don't you think?

—4.8 *Pangs*

Willow: So he's nice?

Buffy: Very, very.

Willow: And there's sparkage?

—4.9 *Something Blue*

We would warn you about overuse here, but we're not sure it's possible with this one.



SPEAKING OF ME . . .

Faith: You killed me.

—3.21 Graduation Day, Part 1

When I am talking about the language used on Buffy, sometimes I am talking about me. This way, I make me sound all cool and stuff. A great way for me to put myself down or build myself up.

Oz: I'm gonna ask you to go out with me tomorrow night. And I'm kinda nervous about it, actually. It's interesting.

—2.13 Surprise

Cordelia: Ooo, again, I strike the nerve. I am the surgeon of mean.

—3.13 The Zeppo

Willow: 740 Verbal?! I'm-I'm . . . pathetic! Illiterate! I'm Cletus, the slack-jawed yokel.

—3.8 Lover's Walk

How you use this one really depends on the character. Cordelia is all about making herself large in the eyes of others, but Xander is the king of the self-put-down. Your mileage may vary depending on your character's personality.

Xander: Uh, "you" nearly came to blows, Buffy. I nearly came to loss of limbs.

—3.15 Consequences

Xander: Tip-top, really. If anyone sees my spine lying around, just try not to step on it.

—3.13 The Zeppo

WORD PLAY AND SLANG

Willow: Hmm, it's a turvy-topsoy world.

—4.8 Pangs

In the end, the Buffiness of your language is how you mix it up. The characters on the show are masters of taking a common saying or phrase, and turning it around. It's kind of an inside joke, we know this is cliché, so we're going to point it out.

Giles: Just because the paranormal is more normal and less . . . para . . . of late is no excuse for tardiness or letting your guard down.

—2.5 Reptile Boy

Willow: I'm so overwhelmed! I-I got in! To actual colleges! And, a-and they're wooing me! They're pitching woo!

—3.14 Bad Girls

Some of it is just rambling. Feel free to ramble on every once in a while if you are in a mood to ramble.

Xander: Buffy! Lady of Buffdom, Duchess of Buffonia, I am in awe! I completely renounce spandex!

—2.6 Halloween

Buffy: Bronze things. Things of Bronze.

—3.6 Band Candy

Buffy: It is a sham, but it's a sham with yams. It's a yam sham.

—4.8 Pangs

And if you are looking for key slang terms to make your speech Buffyish, I hate to break it to you, there aren't any. The real coolness of Buffy slang is that you make up the slang to go along with the situation.

Buffy: Oh, I'm sorry, was that an offensive term? Should I say Undead American?

—2.1 When She Was Bad

Spike: Yeah, I've got an unlife, you know!

—3.8 Lover's Walk

Ok, maybe there is one slang term that gets tossed around a bit.

Buffy: I saw a dummy. It gave me the wig. There really wasn't a story there.

—1.9 The Puppet Show

Xander: Now I'm having a wiggins.

—2.14 Innocence

Buffy: No. The point is, she's completely wigging.

—3.11 Gingerbread





UNISYSTEM CONVERSION NOTES

The Unisystem is the heart of several different games with varying backgrounds and settings, but all focused on the horror genre. For those who are interested, check out CJ Carella's *WitchCraft*, a roleplaying game of magic and dark secrets or *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, a roleplaying game of zombie survival horror. Other Unisystem games and supplements are also available—lots of information can be found at <http://edenstudios.net/unisystem/>. All these games can be purchased at the store you picked up this sparkling tome.

If you already play one of our other Unisystem games, you may have noticed a few differences between those versions and this one. It's the same basic system though. So, for people who want to drag Buffy and company into the shadowy world of *WitchCraft* or the splatterpunk horror of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* (or vice versa), here're a few guidelines to do so.

THE EASY METHOD

This one requires little or no effort: just take character sheets and start rolling dice. For the most part, you can use a Buffy character in any other Unisystem game. The Attributes are the same. The skills are different, but their values are the same. You have to decide whether you'll use the flat damage system from the *BtVS RPG* or the dice-based system in other games, but that's it. That wasn't too painful, was it?

Some may want more detail though, so let's make things a bit harder.

CHARACTERS

We simplified character creation in the *BtVS RPG*, both to make things easier for new players and to better represent the "reality" of the Buffyverse. Here are the differences between the two versions.

ATTRIBUTES

The Primary Attributes are the same, but we removed three Secondary Attributes. In addition to Life Points, other games have Endurance Points (they represent the character's stamina, and how soon she will need to take a break or pass out), Essence Points (the character's inner energy, the strength of her soul, so to speak, used mainly for magic), and Speed (the formula is on p. 103, but it is not listed as an Attribute). All these values can be calculated using the *BtVS* Attributes for other Unisystem games, or dropped for the *BtVS RPG*.

QUALITIES

Other than a few minor changes, Qualities work about the same in both versions. Other games have many more Qualities, some of which are less useful in a *BtVS* game, but that's about it.

SKILLS

This one is a biggie. There are 18 skills in the *BtVS* game, and dozens and dozens of assorted skills and skill types in other Unisystem games. Instead of Gun Fu, there are skills for each type of gun (like Pistol and Rifle), for example. If you want to take a character from



the *BtVS RPG* and “convert” it to a more complex **Unisystem** version, review each of the 18 skills, and give the character two points per level up to level 5 (and five points per level after that), and use those points to “buy” regular **Unisystem** skills that fall within the *BtVS RPG* skill’s purview. The new skills should be no more than one level higher than the *BtVS RPG* skill.

EXAMPLERRIFIC: Riley has Gun Fu 9 in the game. To convert him to other **Unisystem** games, use 30 points and buy assorted Guns Skills. The maximum level in any one Guns Skill would be 10 (which would cost 20 points, leaving few points to spend on other Guns Skills). The more varied skill set is more realistic (people shouldn’t excel at everything), but the trade-off is time and more stuff to keep track of.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

The Maneuvers (*BtVS RPG*) or Moves (*Mystery Codex*) differ between the systems. The Director should pick the list she likes best for her game.

RULES

The basic mechanic works the same—roll a D10, add the appropriate Attributes and skills and so on. A few details are different, however.



FEAR TESTS

Fear Tests are a bit more complex in other **Unisystem** games. The sub-systems can be interchanged though, so Directors should choose which one to use.

DAMAGE

In the *BtVS RPG*, base damage is a flat value, with Success Levels added to that number. In other **Unisystem** games, damage is usually rolled randomly with assorted types of dice (four-sided, six-sided, and so on). Armor also has a random value. Again, the Director must decide which sub-system to use. The *BtVS RPG* version has the advantage of being faster and not needing as many dice. The dice-based version gives you more variation and less predictability—a hit may just scratch a character or kill her outright.

MAGIC

Magic in the *BtVS RPG* is meant to mirror the looseness and open-ended style of the Buffyverse. It is not the same magic system you’ll find in other **Unisystem** games, like *WitchCraft*. You can pick and choose which one to use, or try to have both systems together—call ‘em Magic and Sorcery, for example. In other **Unisystem** games, magic usually has an Essence cost (see the Attributes section above). An Essence Point cost may be assigned to *BtVS RPG* spells based on the spell’s Power Level, using the Essence Point Assignment Table.

essence point Assignment Table

power level essence cost

1	2
2	4
3	9
4	16
5	25
6	36

If you use this Essence Cost, eliminate the repeated casting penalty (see p. 140)—the cost replaces it as a limiting factor. Characters with Sorcery get an additional five Essence Points per level (the Extra Essence Quality found in other games can be acquired as well). Sorcery-wielding characters do not need the Essence Channeling Quality.



CHARACTER CREATION BASICS

The following tables and charts may be used to aid in the character creation process. Further information is provided on the pages cited.

CREATION PROCESS

1. **Choose a concept:** What's your character going to be like? Noble Slayer, bookish Watcher, beginning witch, or something more daring—a football captain warlock with deep girl insecurities?
2. **Choose Character Types:** The Character Type determines the general power level and nature of your character. Heroes are tough and skilled. White Hats are normal people who depend on their wits and luck to survive. Type sets the number of Drama Points (10 for Heroes, 20 for White Hats). See p. 29.
3. **Attributes:** What are your character's natural abilities, both mental and physical? Attributes cost one point per level to level five, and three points per level after that. At least one point must be put into each Attribute. Human maximum is six. See p. 30.
4. **Qualities and Drawbacks:** What innate advantages or penalties affect your character? A handy list of Qualities and Drawbacks is on p. 236-237; the details start on p. 33.
5. **Skills:** What does your character know? The possible skills are listed on the character sheet (see p. 256); the details start on p. 52.
6. **Finishing Touches:** This is where you decide the character's name, appearance and other characteristics. Distinctive habits or mannerisms, hairstyle, scars, tattoos, piercings fashion, music/video tastes.

character type chart

type	attribute points	quality points	drawback points	skill points	drama points
Hero	20	20	up to 10	20	10
White hat	15	10	up to 10	15	20
Experienced Hero	25	25	up to 10	40	20

life point table constitution

strength	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	18	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54
2	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58
3	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62
4	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66
5	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70
6	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74
7	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78
8	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82
9	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86
10	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86	90





qualities and drawbacks table

Acute/Impaired Senses	2-point Quality or Drawback	p. 34
Addiction	Variable Drawback	p. 34
Adversary	Variable Drawback	p. 35
Age	2-points/level Quality	p. 36
Artist	2-point Quality	p. 36
Attractiveness	1-point/level Quality or Drawback	p. 36
Clown	1-point Drawback	p. 37
Contacts	Variable Quality	p. 37
Covetous	1- to 3-point Drawback	p. 37
Dependent	2- or 3-point Drawback	p. 38
Emotional Problems	Variable Drawback	p. 38
Fast Reaction Time	2-point Quality	p. 39
Good/Bad Luck	1-point/level Quality or Drawback	p. 39
Hard to Kill	1- to 5-point Quality	p. 39
Honorable	1- to 3-point Drawback	p. 40
Humorless	1-point Drawback	p. 40
Initiative Commando	4-point Quality	p. 40
Jock	3-point Quality	p. 41
Love	2- or 4-point Drawback	p. 41
Mental Problems	1- to 3-point Drawback	p. 41
Military Rank	1-point/level Quality or Drawback	p. 42
Minority	1-point Drawback	p. 42
Misfit	2-point Drawback	p. 42
Natural Toughness	2-point Quality	p. 43
Nerd	3-point Quality	p. 43
Nerves of Steel	3-point Quality	p. 43
Obligation	Variable Drawback	p. 43
Obsession	2-point Drawback	p. 44
Occult Library	Variable Quality	p. 44
Paranoid	2-point Drawback	p. 44
Photographic Memory	2-point Quality	p. 45
Physical Disability	Variable Drawback	p. 45
Psychic Visions	1-point Quality	p. 45
Reckless	2-point Drawback	p. 45
Recurring Nightmares	1-point Drawback	p. 46
Resistance	1-point per level Quality	p. 46
Resources	2-points/level Quality or Drawback	p. 46
Robot	5-point Quality	p. 47
Secret	Variable Drawback	p. 48
Showoff	2-point Drawback	p. 48



qualities and drawbacks table

Situational Awareness	2-point Quality	p. 48
Slayer	16-point Quality	p. 48
Sorcery	5-point/level Quality	p. 49
Talentless	2-point Drawback	p. 49
Teenager	2-point Drawback	p. 50
Vampire	12- or 15-point Quality	p. 50
Watcher	5-point Quality	p. 50
Werewolf	3-point Drawback or 6- or 12-point Quality	p. 51
Zealot	3-point Drawback	p. 51

strength table

strength lifting capacity

1-5	50 lbs x Strength (Strength 5: 250 lbs)
6-10	$200 \times (\text{Strength} - 5) + 250 \text{ lbs}$ (Strength 10: 1250 lbs)
11-15	$500 \times (\text{Strength} - 10) + 1500 \text{ lbs}$ (Strength 15: 4,000 lbs/2 tons)
16-20	$1,000 \times (\text{Strength} - 15) + 5,000 \text{ lbs}$ (Strength 20: 10,000 lbs/5 tons)
21-25	$1 \text{ ton} \times (\text{Strength} - 20) + 5 \text{ tons}$ (Strength 25: 10 tons)
26-30	$2 \text{ ton} \times (\text{Strength} - 25) + 10 \text{ tons}$ (Strength 30: 20 tons)





combat maneuvers reference table

name	roll basics	damage	notes
Aiming	Perception + Gun Fu, or Perception + Getting Medieval, or Brains Score	None	Adds Success Levels to shooting roll, see p. 109
Bow Shot	Dexterity + Getting Medieval - 2, or Combat Score - 2	(4 x Strength) Slash/stab (to maximum of 20)	Ranged attack modifiers apply (see p. 115), see p. 109
Break Neck	Strength + Kung Fu, or Muscle Score	(4 x Strength) Bash	If defender at -10 Life Points, Survival Test or neck broken (dead), see p. 109
Catch Weapon	Dexterity + Kung Fu - 5, or Combat Score - 5	None	Ranged defense action; see p. 109
Choke	Strength + Kung Fu, or Muscle Score	(Strength - 1) Bash	Asphyxiation; see p. 109
Crossbow Shot	Dexterity + Getting Medieval, or Combat Score	16 Slash/stab	Ranged attack modifiers apply (see p. 115), see p. 109
Decapitation	Dexterity + Getting Medieval - 5, or Combat Score - 5	Varies by weapon	Total damage multiplied by five, see p. 109
Disarm	Dexterity + Getting Medieval - 2, or Dexterity + Kung Fu - 3, or Combat Score - 2	None	Resisted by Parry; see p. 110
Dodge	Dexterity + Acrobatics, or Dexterity + Getting Medieval, or Dexterity + Kung Fu, or Combat Score	None	Avoid getting hit, duh!; see p. 110
Feint	Intelligence + Kung Fu, or Intelligence + Getting Medieval, or Brains Score	None	Adds Success Levels to next action; see p. 110
Grapple	Dexterity + Kung Fu + 2, or Combat Score + 2	None	Impairment varies; see p. 110
Groin Shot	Combat Maneuver - 3	Varies by attack	Tough on boys; see p. 111
Gunshot	Dexterity + Gun Fu, or Combat Score	Varies by weapon	Ranged attack modifiers apply (see p. 115), see p. 111
Head Butt	Dexterity + Kung Fu - 2, or Combat Score - 2	(2 x Strength) Bash;	If target grappled, she cannot defend; if attack misses, attacker takes damage, see p. 111
Jump Kick	Dexterity + Kung Fu - 3, or Combat Score - 3	3 x (Strength + 1) Bash;	Acrobatics + Dexterity roll first; add Success Levels to damage, see p. 111
Kick	Dexterity + Kung Fu - 1, or Combat Score - 1	2 x (Strength + 1) Bash	Done with style and grace, of course, see p. 111
Knockout	Dexterity + Kung Fu - 2, or Dexterity + Getting Medieval - 2, or Combat Score - 2	Half damage of attack	Lights out; see p. 111



combat maneuvers reference table (cont.)

name	roll basics	damage	notes
Melee Weapon	Dexterity + Getting Medieval, or Combat Score	Varies by weapon	Good ol' fashioned hack, slash, crush and maim, see p. 111
Parry	Dexterity + Kung Fu, or Dexterity + Getting Medieval, or Combat Score	None	Defense action, -2 against ranged attacks; see p. 112
Punch	Dexterity + Kung Fu, or Combat Score;	2 x Strength Bash	Basic knuckle sandwich; see p. 112
Slam-Tackle	Strength + Sports, or Muscle Score	2 x Strength Bash	Football or other roughhousing tackle; see p. 112
Spin Kick	Dexterity + Kung Fu - 2 or Combat Score - 2	2 x (Strength + 2) Bash;	Kick for the cool folks; see p. 112
Stake	Dexterity + Getting Medieval, or Combat Score	2 x Strength Slash/stab	see p. 112
Sweep Kick	Dexterity + Kung Fu - 1, or Combat Score - 1	Strength Bash	Knocks target down (see p. 113); see p. 112
Takedown	Strength + Kung Fu, or Muscle Score	Strength Bash	Knocks target down (see p. 113); see p. 112
Through the Heart	Combat Maneuver - 3	Varies by weapon	see p. 112
Throw Weapon	Dexterity + Getting Medieval - 1, or Combat Score - 1	Varies by weapon	Range 2 yards plus 2 yards/Strength; see p. 113
Toss	Strength doubled - 4, or Muscle Score - 4	Strength Bash	Must Grapple first, minimum Strength 4; see p. 113
Wrestling Hold	Strength + Kung Fu - 2, or Muscle Score - 2	None;	Must Grapple first, defender is at -1 per Success Level; see p. 113



Base Damage Table

Attack	Base Damage	Notes
Assault Rifle	16	Bullet; can fire bursts; see p. 118
Axe	5 x Strength	Slash/stab; can use two hands; see p. 118
Baseball Bat	4 x Strength	Bash; use this for any heavy club; can use two hands; see p. 118
Baton	3 x Strength	Bash; see p. 118
Big Ass Pistol	18	Bullet; see p. 118
Big Ass Sword	5 x (Strength + 1)	Slash/stab; uses two hands; see p. 118
Big Knife	3 x Strength	Slash/stab; see p. 118
Big Pistol	15	Bullet; see p. 119
Bow	4 x Strength	Slash/stab; maximum damage 20; see p. 119
Break Neck	4 x Strength	Bash; must Grapple; see p. 109
Choke/Strangle	1 x (Strength - 1)	Victim cannot breathe; see p. 109
Crossbow	16	Slash/stab; see p. 119
Head Butt	2 x Strength	Bash; see p. 111
Hunting Rifle	20	Bullet; see p. 119
Jump Kick	3 x (Strength + 1)	Bash; add Success Levels of Dexterity + Acrobatics roll to damage; see p. 111
Kick	2 x (Strength + 1)	Bash; see p. 111
Knife	2 x Strength	Slash/stab; see p. 119
Pigsticker	2 x (Strength - 1)	Slash/stab; see p. 119
Pistol	12	Bullet; see p. 119
Pistol Crossbow	1	Slash/stab; see p. 119
Popgun	9	Bullet; see p. 119
Punch	2 x Strength	Bash; see p. 112
Quarterstaff	3 x (Strength + 1)	Bash; uses two hands; see p. 119
Shotgun	20	Bullet; see p. 119
Slam-Tackle	2 x Strength	Bash; knocks target down; see p. 112
Spear	3 x (Strength + 1)	Slash/stab; uses two hands; see p. 119
Spin Kick	2 x (Strength + 2)	Bash; see p. 112
Stake	2 x Strength	Slash/stab; see p. 120
Submachine Gun	9	Bullet; can fire bursts, see p. 120
Sweep Kick	1 x Strength	Bash; knocks target down; see p. 112
Sword	4 x Strength	Slash/stab; see p. 120
Takedown	1 x Strength	Bash; knocks target down; see p. 112
Taser Rifle	5	Knockout effect; see p. 120
Thrown Axe	4 x Strength	Slash/stab; see p. 118
Thrown Knife/Stake	2 x (Strength - 1)	Slash/stab; see p. 119, 120
Thrown Pigsticker	1 x (Strength - 1)	Slash/stab; see p. 119
Thrown Spear	3 x Strength	Slash/stab; see p. 120
Toss	1 x Strength	Bash; knocks target down; see p. 112
Tranquilizer Gun	1	Puts target to sleep; see p. 120

Armor Table

armor type	armor value	notes
Leather or Tweed Jacket	2	Typical biker's jacket with lots of zippers or a Watcher's scholarly jacket*
Leather Armor	3	Breastplate, helmet and arm and leg protectors
Chain Mail	8(4)	Second value is used against Bullet attacks
Plate Armor	12(6)	Second value is used against Bullet attacks
Bulletproof Vest	10(5)	Second value is used against Slash/stab attacks
Combat Armor	12	Worn by combat soldiers and SWAT teams

* Giles, strangely enough, owns one of each.



base modifiers table

EASY: +5
 MODERATE: +3 to +4
 AVERAGE: +1 to +2
 CHALLENGING: No modifier
 DIFFICULT: -1 to -2
 VERY DIFFICULT: -3 to -5
 HEROIC: -6 to -9
 SHAAH, RIGHT: -10 or worse



combat roll modifiers

FULL DEFENSE: +3 to all defense actions;
 no attack actions
 FULL OFFENSE: +2 to all attack actions;
 no defense actions
 KNOCKED DOWN: -2 to all defense actions;
 no attack actions
 MULTIPLE ACTIONS: -2 per action, cumulative;
 extra actions limited by Dexterity
 MULTIPLE OPPONENTS: +1 per additional person;
 maximum +4
 SHORT RANGE: no modifier
 MEDIUM RANGE: -1
 LONG RANGE: -3





glossary

Wesley: "Her abuse of the English language is such that I understand only every other sentence." Oh, this is going to make fascinating reading.

—3.14 *Bad Girls*

314: Secret Initiative project to combine demon parts and make a super-warrior.

ADVERSARY (GAMESPEAK): The bad guys who make life miserable for our heroes (the Cast Members), or maybe just hang around waiting to be staked.

ANNE RICE ROUTINE: The I'm-not-evil-I'm-just-misunderstood shtick some vampires use to fool their prey. Can also apply to Angel's overt angst.

ANOINTED ONE (A.K.A. COLIN): Little boy vampire destined to bring Buffy to the Master. Tried to start his own little cult of vampires, until he was killed by Spike.

Master: And in this time shall come the Anointed, the Master's great warrior. And the Slayer will not know him, will not stop him, and he will lead her into hell. As it is written, so shall it be.

—1.5 *Never Kill a Boy on the First Date*

ARCHETYPE (GAMESPEAK): A ready-to-play character—just add imagination.

ATTRIBUTES (GAMESPEAK): The six things that define what a character can and cannot do, or how good they are at certain things: Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence, Perception, Constitution, and Willpower.

BIG BAD (ALSO GAMESPEAK): A Season's villain. Someone who challenges the Cast in extraordinary ways, and brings death and/or serious pain to our heroes.

BOOKS OF ASCENSION: A key ingredient if one wishes to become a big snake—a really big demon bent on opening the Hellmouth.

BRONZE, THE: The coolest club in Sunnydale, despite the fact that they have to rebuild it every few months after some demon/vampire/troll trashes it.

Cordelia: The Bronze. It's the only club worth going to around here. They let anybody in, but it's still the scene. It's in the bad part of town.

Buffy: Where's that?

Cordelia: About a half a block from the good side of town. We don't have a whole lot of town here.

—1.1 *Welcome to the Hellmouth*

BUGGER (ALSO BUGGERY, BUGGERED): An Britishism (used by people from Britain). Figuratively, it means to be in trouble. Literally, um, best not defined. Let's just say that Spike has a bad potty mouth.



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BUT-FACE: The expression on someone's face when they want to say "but".

CAST MEMBER (GAMESPEAK): A character made by a player. Your fictional persona in the Buffyverse.

CIVILIAN: Anyone who is not hip to the existence of vampires and demons. Also can refer to a non-Slayer, but the Scoobies find this kind of attitude annoying.

Buffy: Look, this is Slayer stuff, okay? Could we have just a little less from the civilians please?

—2.1 *When She Was Bad*

CLIMAX (GAMESPEAK): The final payoff of an Episode, where the Setup is resolved.

COVEN: A group of witches, Wicca or neo-pagans. If they meet online, it's a cybercoven.

D10 (GAMESPEAK): A ten-sided die.

DEMON: Nasty things from other dimensions—usually hell—that want to hurt people. Duh.

DIRECTOR (GAMESPEAK): A person who comes up with stories that the Cast Members take part in. Part scriptwriter, part referee. The Director runs all of the bad guys—not in an I'm-going-to-beat-all-of-the-Cast-Members sort of way, but in an I'm-going-to-make-sure-everyone-has-fun sort of way.

DRAMA POINTS (GAMESPEAK): Points that your character earns by doing something heroic, dramatic or just plain fun. Players can use them to have their characters perform cool stuff, make their own plot twists, or not die.

DRAWBACKS (GAMESPEAK): Flaws that your character has, or things that complicate her life, like being a spaz, having a little sister to take care of, or being only sixteen.

DUST (ALSO DUSTED, DUSTING): To kill a vampire. When a vampire dies it goes "poof!" and turns to dust.

EPISODE (GAMESPEAK): A single storyline or plot, usually played out over the course of one or two game sessions.

EXPERIENCE POINTS (GAMESPEAK): Awards granted after each session or Episode which may be used to improve a Cast Member's abilities.

EXPERIENCED HEROES (GAMESPEAK): An advanced form of the Hero Character Type who has seen a great deal of action and has become quite powerful.

FIVE-BY-FIVE: Radio slang for loud and clear. Signal strength and clarity are given on a scale of 0-5, so five-by-five is the loudest and clearest possible signal. The term is often used by Faith. We don't know why either.

GAME FACE (ALSO GETTING BUMPY): The wrinkly, ugly, forehead vampires do when they get angry or right before they bite someone. The term is also used among non-vamps to mean "get ready for action."

Buffy: Angel, better put on your game face.

—1.12 *Prophesy Girl*

GATHERING: A get-together, with mellow song stylings and brie (for further discussion see 3.2 Dead Man's Party).

GUEST STARS (GAMESPEAK): The friends, relatives, neighbors, strangers and other folks that the Cast Members interact with during the course of any Episode. Some could be Adversaries in disguise. Others could become Cast Members themselves.

HELLMOUTH: A convergence of mystical energy centered around an opening to the Demon Realm. Weird and icky things tend to happen nearby. Located below the library of Sunnydale High. Ironic isn't it?

HERO (GAMESPEAK): A Character Type that has special powers or abilities, like Slayers or Initiative Commandos.

HOOTENANNY: A whole lot of hoot, a little bit of nanny (for further discussion see 3.2 Dead Man's Party).

HOSTILE SUB-TERRESTRIAL (HST): Bureaucratspeak for demons and demonkind. Used by the Initiative so they can sound all scientific and soldier-like.

INITIATIVE: A secret paramilitary operation run by the U.S. government. They destroy or imprison demonkind, and have a secret project (see 314).





KEY, THE (A.K.A. DAWN): The thing that will free Glory from her prison.

Dawn (reading from Giles' journal): "The key is not directly described in any known literature, but all research indicates an energy matrix vibrating at a dimensional frequency beyond normal human perception. Only those outside reality can see the key's true nature."

—5.13 *Blood Ties*

KNIGHTS OF BYZANTIUM: An ancient order of Knights dedicated to combating Glory, the Beast, and destroying the Key that frees her.

LIFE POINTS (GAMESPEAK): How much damage your character can take before she becomes an ex-character. When your character gets stabbed or shot, she loses Life Points.

MASTER, THE: Possibly the oldest living vampire. He was trapped within the Hellmouth when he tried to open it the first time, and he's not happy about it.

MOJO: Magic, witchcraft or the Dark Arts.

MR. GORDO: Buffy's stuffed piggy.

NANCY-BOY (SEE ALSO POOFER): An Britishism (used by people from Britain). A not-so-manly man.

ORDER OF AURELIUS: A cult of vampires all sired by the Master. This group is prophesied to bring the Anointed One to the Master.

ORDER OF TARAKA: An ancient order of assassins made up of demons and assorted brutal killers. Fun at parties and career fairs.

Giles: I'm afraid he was not overreacting. This ring is worn only by members of the Order of Taraka. It's a society of deadly assassins dating back to King Solomon.

—2.9 *What's My Line?, Part One*

PATROL: Going out and wandering around, usually in cemeteries, looking to bring trouble to those who are trouble (vamps and demons).

PLOT (GAMESPEAK): These are the big Kahunas, the major story arcs of the Season.

POOFER (SEE ALSO NANCY-BOY): An Britishism (used by people from Britain). A not-so-manly man.

POWER LEVEL (GAMESPEAK): The overall strength of a spell. The higher the Power Level of a spell, the greater its effect on the world, the more difficult it is to cast properly, and the more damaging the consequences of failure.

QUALITIES (GAMESPEAK): Special things that your character knows how to do, is really good at or is born with, like having Army training, being quick on the draw, or even being the Slayer.

RESISTED ACTION (GAMESPEAK): When a character tries to do something that is directly opposed by another character or bad guy, like arm wrestling, or you punching and her dodging.

SCOOPY (SEE ALSO SLAYERETTE): One of the Slayer's gang of intrepid supporters.

Tara: Come on you have fun, admit it. Living the Scooby life.

—4.17 *Superstar*

SCORE (GAMESPEAK): A set value used in place of a die roll and modifiers. Comes in three flavors: Muscle, Combat and Brains.

SCULLY: To discount someone's belief in a supernatural event.

Buffy: I cannot believe that you, of all people, are trying to Scully me. There is something supernatural at work here. Get your books! Look stuff up!

—1.6: *The Pack*

SEASON (GAMESPEAK): A collection of Episodes that develop a theme or over-arching Plot, and usually culminate in an ultimate showdown against a Big Bad.

Buffy

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SERIES (GAMESPEAK): A campaign composed of one or more Seasons.

SETUP (GAMESPEAK): The establishment of the situation, challenge or story of an Episode.

SHINDIG: A gathering, but with less-mellow song stylings and malt beverage instead of brie (for further discussion see 3.2 Dead Man's Party).

SKILLS (GAMESPEAK): Stuff your character has learned how to do. The more points she has in a skill, the better she is at doing it.

SLAYER: Once in a generation, a girl is born with special powers, destined to fight the vampires, demons or any icky thing that gets in the way.

SLAYERETTE (SEE ALSO SCOOPY): The Slayer's close friends and allies. The guys and gals who hit the books, lend a hand and occasionally get the Slayer in a lot of trouble.

SMOOCHIES (A.K.A. MAKING WITH THE SMOOCHIES): Getting serious, beyond mere kissing.

SUBPLOTS (GAMESPEAK): These are lesser plotlines, major enough to last for several Episodes, but usually not covering an entire Season.

SPANK YOUR INNER MOPPET: Stop acting like a spoiled brat.

Cordelia: Whatever is causing the Joan Collins tude, deal with it. Embrace the pain, spank your inner moppet, whatever, but get over it.

—2.1 When She Was Bad

SPARKAGE: A mutual attraction between two people

SUCCESS LEVEL (GAMESPEAK): Sometimes, when your character does something, you need to know how well she did it. The better your character does something, the more Success Levels she achieves.

SUPPORTING CAST (GAMESPEAK): Adversaries and Guest Stars—any character who is not a member of the Cast.

TECHNOPAGAN: A person who uses the internet and other computer aids to study and practice the occult.

TURNING POINT (GAMESPEAK): Dramatic moments that advance the story, or complications that make things more interesting (and dangerous) for the characters.

VAMPIRE (ALSO UNDEAD AMERICAN): A demon, inhabiting a dead human body, using its memories and skills. They like to suck blood. If you don't know what a vampire is, you should probably be playing a different game.

WACKY: Acting crazy, usually applied to relationships. What love makes you do.

WATCHER: A member of the Watcher's Council, sent to guide and train the Slayer.

WATCHER'S COUNCIL: A group, based out of England, that trains Watchers. Sometimes they think they own the Slayer. Some think they are just busybodies.

WHITE HAT (GAMESPEAK): A Character Type with no kewl powers or special training—your regular schmo.

WICKED: A substitute for "very" or "extremely" among those who are, or want to be like, Faith.

WIG (ALSO WIGGINS, WIGGED, WIGGING): To freak, be strange, or be scared.

Buffy: I know. I should keep my Slayer cool, but . . . it's Angel, which automatically equals maxi-wig.

—2.13 Surprise

WITCH (ALSO WARLOCK): A person, sometimes Wicca, with an extraordinary gift for magic.

WITCH-FU: Using witchcraft, particularly in combat.

ZEPPPO: The least-needed member of a group. The Marx brother who is most often forgotten.

Cordelia: "Integral" part of the group? Xander, you're the, the "useless" part of the group. You're the Zeppo.

—3.13 The Zeppo



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The graveyard is cold and still. Bright moonlight deepens the shadows. The silence is disturbed by a throaty moan. Breaking through the soft, recently packed earth, a claw extends, sharp and grasping. A sickly sweet stench rises with the corpse. Desperate hunger is etched on its cadaverous face—a hunger for your blood!

Buffy: Alright, I get it. You're evil. Do we have to chat about it all day?
—3.10, Amends

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Written by CJ Carella

Foreword by Christopher Golden

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EDN6000 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer RPG Errata

page 3: Say it isn't so, not a typo in the Table of Contents. Yes, Virginia, it's true. How embarrassing! What's most surprising is that four pairs of eyes looked at "Archeytpes" and saw "Archetypes." Sigh.

page 34: The Acute/Impaired Senses Quality/Drawback should have specified that it has four (not five) versions: Eyesight, Hearing, Touch, and Smell/Taste. The Werewolf Quality on page 51 includes the last of these as a Quality -- Acute Senses (Smell/Taste).

page 56: The quote under the Mr. Fix-it skill should have been attributed to 5.15 I Was Made to Love You. Also, the text should include the word "plumber," not "plummer."

page 60: In the last paragraph of the New Slayer's background, "That makes me a feel a bit better" should be "That makes me feel a bit better."

page 67: The quote for the Martial Artist should refer to "your left cheek."

page 68: The Psychic should not have the Drawback "Charisma -1." That Drawback does not exist in the *BtVS* RPG. It should read "Bad Luck 1 (1)."

page 80: The Former Vampire Groupie's "Criminal Acts" skill should read simply "Crime." Her Bow Shot Bonus should read 9, and the Through the Heart Bow Shot 6. Unlike Getting Medieval, her Wild Card (Archery) skill does not suffer the -2 for Bow Shot.

page 82: The Amateur Hunter's Misfit Drawback should be worth 2 points, not 1. Add in another level of Good Luck or Hard to Kill if you like. Or use the extra point to take a new Quality or increase a skill.

page 84: Buffy should have the Psychic Visions Quality.

page 88: Spike should have Languages 3 at least. He knows English, Fyarl, and either Cantonese or Mandarin (he did spend a good portion of time in China). No doubt he learned a few others during his more evil years, but we'll leave that to you to decide.

page 96: At the end of Spike's seasonal adjustment paragraph, the last few words should read "and by three each for Season Two."

page 97: In Cordelia's adjustment, her name is spelled "Coredia". That's just a pet name used by her father . . . yah, that's it . . . and . . .

page 104: In Par Example, the Cast Member should have to tie or beat a value of 14, not 16.

page 109: Slight adjustment in the last four sentences of the Break Neck maneuver:

"If the total damage reduces the defender to -10 Life Points, she must pass a Survival Test (see p. 121) with an added penalty equal to the Success Levels of the Break Neck attack (in addition to any normal Survival Test modifiers; this is due to the very sensitive nature of the neck area for us normal human types). If she fails, you get that telltale crunching sound with fatal results. If the defender is a vampire and the successful attack reduces it to -10 Life Points, she has to pass a Survival Test (but no special modifiers are applied; undead aren't so sensitive—in any sense of the word). On a failure, her head is twisted off and he is dusted—gruesome but pretty impressive."

page 109: Decapitation is missing a Survival Test requirement. It should read:

"Decapitation: Your basic samurai killing slash—it needs a sword, axe, or similar large scale cutting implement. Decapitation uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 5 roll, or the Combat Score - 5, but damage is multiplied by five (after Success Level bonuses are added and armor effects subtracted; damage type is not applied; weapon damage is listed on p. 240). If the damage is enough to reduce the victim to -10 Life Points or less, a Survival Test is in order. If that fails, the head comes off, and the rating of the show goes up to TV-M. Flashy way to dust vampires (see p. 168)."

page 113: The Wrestling Hold description is missing a roll. After the attacker succeeds with a Grapple roll, she must make a Strenght and Kung Fu -2 (or Muscle Score -2) roll. That roll provides the Success Levels for the -1 per Success Level hinderance on the defender. The Combat Maneuvers table on page 239 has it right.

page 113: Under Knockdowns, the text states that a character cannot attack for the remainder of the Turn she is knocked down. After the first Turn, the prone penalty would apply until the character got up (which would take an action normally, no action on a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll). The prone penalty on attack and defense actions is incorrect. It should be -4, not -2.

page 115: Multiple shots with a gun degrade by -1 per shot, not one Success Level per shot.

page 116: Burst fire should have specified that it can be used more than once per Turn just like multiple shots with a semi-automatic gun. Each subsequent burst loses one Success Level.

page 120: The damage for the Submachine Gun should be 12, not 9.

page 123: The text under Breaking Things should clarify that damage types (Slash/stab, Bullet, etc.) modifiers are inapplicable to inanimate objects.

page 124-125: The sample combat contains a couple of errors. Rather than trying to explain where they are, we have included a complete [copy of the example with revisions](#).

page 156: Add Attractiveness +3 to Amy Madison's Special Abilities.

page 156: Add Attractiveness +2 to Harmony Kendall's Special Abilities.

page 158: Add Attractiveness +3 to Jenny Calendar's Special Abilities.

page 168: The vamp is entitled to a Survival Test just like anyone else before decapitation and dusting (see errata above concerning page 109).

Page 169: Brand-new vamp's Bite Score should be 14, and the damage 18.

Page 170: Vampire minion's Bite damage should be 19.

page 172: Add Attractiveness +3 to Darla's Special Abilities. Add Attractiveness +4 to Dracula's Special Abilities.

page 177: Add Attractiveness -5 to the Judge's Special Abilities.

page 178: Add Attractiveness -4 to the Sister of Jhe's Special Abilities. Add Attractiveness -6 to the Telepath Demon's Special Abilities.

page 180: The jump cite for the demon ability is wrong under the Natural Attacks heading. It should be p. 175, not p. 165.

page 181: Add Attractiveness -8 (as monster) to Ms. Natalie French's Special Abilities.

page 184: Add Attractiveness -6 (as monster) to James/Grace's Special Abilities. Add Attractiveness -4 to Daryl Epps' Special Abilities.

page 187: Add Attractiveness -3 to the Master's Special Abilities. Add Attractiveness +3 to Drusilla's Special Abilities.

page 189: Add Attractiveness +2 (as Mayor)/-8 (as monster) to the Mayor's Special Abilities. Also, his Life Points in True Demon form are understated. They should be 400.

page 190: Add Attractiveness -6 to Adam's Special Abilities. Also, his Dodge should be 24, same as his Combat Score. He often chose not to dodge, but that doesn't undermine his abilities.

page 191: Add Attractiveness +4 to Glory's Special Abilities.

page 228: The quote from 4.20 The Yoko Factor under the Mr., Mrs., and Miss heading should have been attributed to Riley, not Buffy.

page 240: The damage for the Pistol Crossbow should be 10, not 1. The damage for the Submachine Gun should be 12, not 9.

page 240: The ranges for pistols and rifles are provided on page 115. Information on which weapons use which ranges classes was omitted on the Base Damage Table notes section. It is as follows:

Pistol ranges: Big Ass Pistol, Big Pistol, Bow, Crossbow, Pistol, Pistol Crossbow, Popgun, Shotgun, Submachine Gun, Taser Rifle

Rifle ranges: Assault Rifle, Hunting Rifle

EDN6010 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer Revised RPG Errata

Page 110: "It could be witches / Some evil witches! / Which is ridiculous / 'Cause witches, they were persecuted / Wicca good and love the earth / And women power / And I'll be over here." Tara, the white Wicca, was the sweetest and goodest of the Scoobies. She should definitely not be following Angel's lead and have a Wild Card skill in Torture. That should read Horseback Riding.

Page 135: The end of the multiple actions Example Me, Baby is incorrect. The vamps have an attack total of 20 as each gains +2 to his attacks due to the multiple opponents rule immediately following the example.

Page 135: The multiple opponents rules applies fully only when the combatants are using melee attacks. In ranged combat, multiple opponents get a flat +1 bonus (no more) each if

more than two attackers engage the character. Ranged combatants don't aid each other in the same way melee attackers do.

EDN6002 Buffy The Vampire Slayer RPG - Slayer's Handbook Errata

page 2: Despite their fine work on the character speak section in the appendix, James and Marianne Wilber were omitted from the Additional Writers byline. Floggings will commence shortly.

page 48: The Slayer-In-Training Archetype is missing a point in Attributes. Increase her Perception from 2 to 3.

page 116: The Grim Slayer's Attributes are too high (she spent 27 Attribute Points). Her Willpower should be 4. That brings her within the Experienced Hero limit of 25.

page 118: The Road Warrior is trying to keep up with the Grim Slayer and also overspent on Attributes. His Willpower should be 3.

page 122: We discuss how Dale's Attributes get augmented by his "He-Slayer" abilities, but we don't specify what the He-Slayer bonuses do for another character, such as a Cast Member. The easiest solution is just to add the Slayer Quality to whoever is chosen to be the He-Slayer. Alternatively, a Director could follow our lead with Dale and enhance the He-Slayer's physical Attributes but not his mental ones.

page 135: The citation "3.22 The Graduation - Part Two" should read "3.22 Graduation Day - Part Two."

page 153: The table entry for the Fire Rod should cite page 100, not page 99.

EDN6003 Buffy The Vampire Slayer RPG - Monster Smackdown Errata

page 31: It seems we mess up our substitute names with our memorials when it comes to the undead. The Master was an "epithet" not an "epitaph."

page 62: Two jump cites are missing. The first is "the Hellmouth Spawn (see p. 104)". The second is "Chapter Six: Monster Spawning (see p. 139)." Must be something about the "spawn" word.

page 77: The first sentence of the last paragraph should read "Ethan is not a Sorcerer in the black-eyes-magic-sense, but he is a talented magician". That pesky "not" is missing.

page 90: Again, Dracula is an "epithet" not an "epitaph."

page 139: The Zombie Quality is missing some material. Zombies regenerate at a rate of Constitution points per minute, and can reattach severed parts (other than the head). Bullet and Slash/stab damage modifiers are not applicable (all damage is treated as Bash type). Zombies also don't age.

A Zombie's regeneration is not perfect. Life Points are replaced but the process is not completely aesthetic. Over time, the body parts start to wear out. Superglue, masking tap, and Zip-it are needed to keep the zombie from looking completely trashed. Even so, after a certain number of pitched battles, injury and dismemberment, there's no way the zombie can pass himself off as "normal."

EDN6005 Buffy The Vampire Slayer RPG - The Magic Box Errata

p. 17: In the second paragraph of Orders as Allies "is that is isn't obvious" should read "is that it isn't obvious".

p. 21: Dark Willow should have Magic (Power Boost I) 20, Magic (Power Boost II) 24, and Magic (Power Boost III) 37 added to her Combat Maneuvers.

p. 24: On Rack's Quick Sheet, the missing page reference should be 53. It's correctly stated in the accompanying text.

p. 44: Addicted Willow should have Magic (Power Boost) 20 added to her Combat Maneuvers.

p. 44: Willow should have the Telepathy Quality.

p. 45: Tara's Honorable (Serious) feature should be listed as a Drawback, not a Quality.

p. 46: Giles' Magic (Power Boost) Combat Manuever should be 26, not 18.

p. 47: Amy should have Magic (Power Boost) 19 added to her Combat Maneuvers.

p. 73: The Summon Draconian Katra spell should have "may be Quick Cast (+1)" in its Aspect Analysis. Its Power Level should be 5.

p. 76: The source for False Resurrection should be 5.17 Forever.

p. 77: In Season Seven, we see Willow use an energy barrier spell without Tara. Thus, another version of this spell exists that does not require dual casters. The Power Level of this version is 8.

p. 85: The source for the glove of Mynhegon should be 3.7 Revelations.

p. 120: The second paragraph under Tao-Chi should read "Ignore Essence costs listed; instead, use the multiple castings rule from the BtVS Corebook (see p. 140) but lower the resting period to two minutes. For Inner Strength and Speed of the Tiger, each Success Level gives the user +1 to the appropriate Attribute."

Buffy the Vampire Slayer Corebook

Revised Sample Combat

**Sometimes mistakes happen ... no matter how long we work on a book.
These mistakes will be fixed in future printings.**

The combat example on page 124-125 contains a number of errors. The text should read as follows:

Sample Combat

Buffy and Xander s Big Night

Buffy (see p. 84), currently being played by Maria, and Xander (see p. 86), played by Peter, are jumped by three tough vampires (Combat Score 17). The vamp attack is unexpected Xander and Buffy were having a Big Meaningful Chat. The example uses Drama Points (see p. 126), so you might want to skip ahead to that section to brush up.

Turn 1

Xander/Peter: And that s why I don t like those Potter books. Maybe if I was ten years younger, and less of a battle-scarred veteran of the supernatural wars . . .

Director: Three shapes emerge from the alley and charge you, moving inhumanly fast. Their fangs gleam in the moonlight. Intentions?

Buffy/Maria: Crap. I stake the first one I see.

Director: Did you have a stake in your hand?

Buffy/Maria: Well . . . er . . . no. Okay, I draw Mr. Pointy from my belt while I kick a vamp in the teeth.

Director: Xander?

Xander/Peter: This is going to hurt. I go full defensive, trying to keep at least one vamp occupied.

Director: Sounds good. The vamps go first. They attacked you by surprise. Two of them are going after Buffy. Roll and add your Parry or Dodge.

Buffy/Maria: I Dodge. (Rolls die.) Uh, a 2. Well, that s still a 20.

(The Director does some quick figuring. The vamps have a Combat Score of 17. It s two on one, so they each get +2, for a total of 19. Buffy s second defensive move suffers a -2 multi-action penalty. Thus, her defense against the second attack is an 18, not good enough.)

Director: You dodge one of them, but the second one gets a punch in. You take 15 points of damage it could have been a lot worse.

Buffy/Maria: I don t like worse. Ouch. (Writes down the damage.) My turn? (Director nods, and

Maria rolls again.) Kick plus eight on the roll 25 total.

Director: You got him good. Damage?

Buffy/Maria: 25 is seven Success Levels, so . . . 25 points.

Director: One of the vamps goes flying and lands on its undead butt. Meanwhile, over in Xander's corner . . .

Xander/Peter: Yep. Rolling my Dodge, +3 for full defense. (Rolls.) A total of 13. Ugh. Not very . . . ah . . . robust.

Director: Yup, that's not good enough. The vamp lands a good one, right in the kisser. You too take 15 points of damage.

Xander/Peter: No I don't. Spending a Drama Point for I Think I'm Okay.

Director: Ah, you just manage to roll with that punch. You only take eight points of damage, and you get to keep all your teeth. Oh, and you managed to draw one of the vamps off of Buffy. Good job! Next turn.

Turn 2

Director: Okay. Buffy and Xander have a vampire each. And the one Buffy kicked is getting up. He will get back to the fight near the end of the Turn. Intentions?

Buffy/Maria: It's Mr. Pointy time. Stake the one in front of me, then reverse the stake and stab vamp #2 as he comes charging in.

Director: Okay the second attack is going to be -2 for multi-action, and -3 for the awkward position. Spending a Drama Point?

Buffy/Maria: Yep. +10 to the attack roll, right?

Director: Correct. Xander?

Xander/Peter: I'm going to try and kick this sucker in the groin. Instead of Drama Points, I'm going to burn some of my Good Luck.

Director: Okay. Buffy goes first.

Buffy/Maria: (Rolls.) Total 20 on Stake Through the Heart, 30 with the Drama Point.

Director: And 25 after modifiers on the other vamp. Don't bother figuring out the damage; it's plenty. Perfect one-two combo. Straight thrust into the vamp's heart, and the other one walks right into the back swing. You get a bit of dust on your new blouse, though. Oh, and when you dusted the first vamp, Xander's sparring partner got distracted, so Xander goes first.

Xander/Peter: Cool. Kicking away. (Rolls.) Nine on the roll, total of 16, and I'll put in +5 for the Good Luck, for a total of 21. Reduced to 18 because of the groin penalty.

Director: The vampire hesitated when Buffy started her double dust-up, and now you landed a work boot right where it hurts. Damage?

Xander/Peter: That'll be 13 points. Five Success Levels.

Director: Vamp goes down, clutching at himself. Needless to say, he doesn't attack. Next turn.

Turn 3

Director: Two vamps done, the last one is still recovering from the shot to the groin. Intentions?

Xander/Peter: I take a step back, bow to Buffy, and say 'No, no, after you' . . .

Buffy/Maria: Stake in the back, going for his heart. The vampire's, not Xander's.

Director: Go for it. Don't bother rolling. The vamp's back is to you, and Xander's got him well tenderized. He's not having a good day. Poof. Dust to dust.

Buffy/Maria: Sounds good. I turn to Xander and say But you saw the Harry Potter movie three times.

Xander/Peter: I pat my bruised face, spend a Drama Point to reduce it to four points of damage, and reply: Blame Anya for that. She keeps calling me that M word and everything . . .

Director: Meanwhile, back at the library . . .



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