

Unofficial CORPS (2nd Edition) FAQ and Addenda -- 30 June, 2000

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01.General

GN-01: What is *CORPS*?

CORPS (which stands for **C**omplete **O**mniversal **R**ole-**P**laying **S**ystem) is a role-playing system published by Blacksburg Tactical Research Center (BTRC), and was written by Greg Porter.

CORPS has gone through two editions. The first edition was released in 1990 as a conspiracy-oriented game (CORPS originally stood for Conspiracy Oriented Role-Playing System). The (current) second edition was slightly rewritten, and released in 1995 as a generic system. It is a point-based system notable both for eliminating many dice rolls and for its realism, given its level of mechanics and its granularity of resolution.

CORPS is available in the traditional (softcover) printed format (144 pages, ISBN 0-943891-28-0, stock#7101, US\$19.95), and as an electronic (PDF) version. The electronic version is only available at Hyperbooks Online (<http://www.hyperbooks.com>).

GN-02: Does BTRC have a website?

Yes. You can find them at (<http://www.btrc.net>), and contact them via email at (btrc@btrc.net).

GN-03: What supplements are available for CORPS 2ed?

Currently there are four official supplements for the 2nd edition of CORPS:

CORPS Dreamtime (48 pages, ISBN 0-943891-30-2, stock#7102, US\$9.95)

Heroic adventuring in a mythic past. Based somewhat on Australian Aboriginal legends.

CORPS VDS (158 pages, ISBN 0-943891-35-3, stock#7103, US\$20)

A vehicle design system that can be used for any role-playing system (not

just CORPS). Covers everything from rowboats to starships, past, present and future.

CORPS Apocalypse (128 pages, ISBN 0-943891-36-1, stock#7104, US\$17)

A game universe set in an alternate present. The short form of the background is "Nazi elves come back from whatever dimension they've been hiding in and enslave humanity". The long version is quite a bit more detailed and internally consistent, but no less depressing. You can download a [preview of Apocalypse](#) (in PDF format) from the BTRC website.

CORPS Down in Flames (72 pages, ISBN 0-943891-37-X, stock#7105, US\$12)

A set of end-of-the-world scenarios for CORPS (or any other rpg). Written for when you finally get tired of a campaign, or decide things need an abrupt and severe change of focus. You can download a [preview of Down in Flames](#) (in PDF format) from the BTRC website.

These books are published in the traditional (softcover) printed format, but they are also available in electronic (PDF) versions. The electronic versions are only available at Hyperbooks Online (<http://www.hyperbooks.com>), and are around half the price of the printed version.

BTRC publish two other products that can be used with CORPS:

Guns! Guns! Guns! 3rd edition (also called 3G3) (136 pages, ISBN 0-943891-19-1, stock#4001, US\$15.95)
Weapon design system, includes conversion notes for CORPS.

More Guns! (232 pages, ISBN 0-943891-26-4, stock#4002, US\$19.95)
Weapon write-ups for 3G3, with stats for all weapons in CORPS terms.

CORPS Addenda

Like the CORPS supplements, 3G3 is available in printed and electronic versions (you can also purchase an Excel spreadsheet, which will handle all the calculations for you). More Guns! is only available in the printed version.

GN-04: What was published for CORPS 1ed?

In addition to the main rule book, there were five supplements released for CORPS 1ed. They were, in order:

Book 0: CORPS, The Global Conspiracy Role-Playing Game
52 pages. The main rule book. Details the rules and the modern day conspiracy which the 1st edition uses as its setting. Includes a short adventure (Chinese Puzzle - as with all the titles Greg used for the adventures he wrote, this one has nothing to do with what the adventure involved).

Book 1: CORPS Technology 1991
28 pages. Weapons, armor, transport, personal gear and "other". Also includes a chapter on security and ID (what it costs and who you need to know).

Book 2: CORPS Deathwind
64 pages. A 5 part campaign involving the Illuminati and Hierarchy, but adding other organizations into the mix as well. Includes a lot more info on the CORPS conspiracy setting (in particular, expanded info on the Hierarchy), maps, NPC sheets, etc.

Book 3: CORPS Organizations Book 1
32 pages. Detailed information on the Immortals, Time Travelers and Hierarchy. Includes three adventures involving these organizations.

Book 4: CORPS Worldbook 1992
72 pages. Facts about the world. Includes information on gun laws in various countries around the world.

Book 5: CORPS GameMaster Screen
3 panel screen. Includes a 16 page booklet inside with an adventure (Conflagration). The back of the booklet contains several forms which can be used to record PC and NPC information.

Most of these are still available directly from BTRC.

GN-05: Why aren't there more supplements?

Greg's only one guy. The following supplements are in the pipeline, as of this writing:

CORPS Bestiary

Animals, etc. The text is done - Greg is currently waiting on art.

CORPS Tanurae (formerly Alien Games)

A SF campaign background.

CORPS TimeLords

The BTRC TimeLords background for CORPS. The text is done - Greg is currently waiting on art.

GN-06: Where can I get CORPS Errata, BTRC catalogs, and other CORPS information?

The [BTRC site](#) contains a complete catalog of all products currently in print (and a few that are out of print), as well as some errata (including some important errata for CORPS VDS).

GN-07: Is there a place (on the internet) where I can discuss CORPS with other people?

Yes, there are currently several places for CORPS discussions.

The first (and currently most active) is the CORPS electronic mailing list. Subscription info can be found at (<http://www.igs.net/~mtr/role-playing-games/mailling-lists.html#CORPS>). Subscription to the mailing list is handled by the web (although it is a traditional email mailing list). Pretty much anything about CORPS is on topic for the mailing list, and there are a lot of knowledgeable people there (including just about everyone who has contributed to this FAQ). Feel free to drop on by!

There are also two web based chat forums. The first (and official) chat forum is hosted by Gaming Outpost, located at (<http://www.gamingoutpost.com/forums/default.cfm?Action=ShowForum¤forum=42&site=GO>). In time this forum will have an email component, so that you can read (and post?) messages to the forum via email as well as the web. When this functionality is added, the CORPS mailing list may be closed down.

The second (and oldest) web forum is hosted by WebRPG (<http://www.webrpg.com>), and is called the CORPS Town Hall (<http://townhall.webrpg.com/index.phtml?>

[groupid=176](#)). Unfortunately this forum sees little traffic.

Greg Porter reads the mailing list and Gaming Outpost forum, so don't be surprised if you ask a question and he is the one who answers it for you!

GN-08: What is *CORPS in a nutshell*?

CORPS in a nutshell is a 4 page version of CORPS that provides you with the basics of the system (which isn't a bad effort since the bottom half of page 2 is a skill list, and page 4 is a character sheet). Obviously such a short document couldn't hope to include all the rules, but it does include the core rules which everything else is based on. It can be used as a handout by GMs who want to save their players the cost of buying the main rule book, or as a cheap way for someone to check out CORPS without having to buy it first.

GN-09: Where can I get *CORPS in a nutshell*?

You can download the PDF version of CORPS in a nutshell directly from the BTRC site, at (http://www.digdat.com/~btrc/pub/nutshell_v13.pdf).

A PostScript copy of CORPS in a nutshell is available from the mail server at monosys.com. For information, send an e-mail to games-request@monosys.com with a Subject line containing just the word "info" (no quotes).

GN-10: Where can I get CORPS?

The best way is to support your local games store, and to ask them to order it in for you. If they are unable to help, you can order it directly from [BTRC](#) (although they are unable take credit cards). Finally, there are several places where you can order it on-line. Hyperbooks Online (<http://www.hyperbooks.com>) sell CORPS (and all other BTRC products, including the electronic versions).

02. Combat and its aftermath

CM-01: How do you die in CORPS?

Unlike many games, CORPS doesn't really have a concept of "hit points". That is, you can't wound yourself by being punched in the head until weak (1 hit point left) and then die by having a rock dropped on your foot. It's **hard** to die in combat, though it's easy to die **after** combat's over.

There are two ways to die in CORPS: HLT loss and autokills.

HLT can be lost through bleeding, exertion, exposure, environment (drowning or a vacuum), or through a paranormal power like "Subtract." When the character

actually dies depends on how they lost their HLT. For bleeding, you die when you have lost HLT points due to the bleeding (**not** the same as when your HLT reaches zero - see bottom of page 49). For everything else, you pass out when your HLT reaches 0, and die when your HLT falls below its negative value (page 82-83). For example, if your HLT is 5, you die when your HLT goes below -5.

Autokills are determined when a character takes damage (page 49). This is an optional rule, and may not be used by the GM (or it may be used only for NPCs, and not PCs). Autokills are based on the amount of damage the character took, and modified by the location of the damage. Arm and leg hits are never autokills.

CM-02: What's the difference between "damage" and "impairment"?

Damage is how much you're hurt, which affects how fast you'll bleed and how long you'll take to recover. Impairment is how badly that interferes with subsequent actions.

Let's say your character takes two points of lethal damage to the chest. Two points of lethal damage is a two-point impairment. All rolls that involve the chest are now made at +2 difficulty. Rolls that involve nearby body parts are at +1 difficulty. At this point, damage and impairment are identical.

Once you get a second wound in the same location, they become different. Suppose you now get a three-point hit in the chest. The damage is still three points, and determines how long you'll take to heal or bleed or die from that wound. The impairment to your chest, however is:

- The largest damage, + 1 for each additional wound

In this case, the impairment to your chest is 3 (the largest damage) +1 (for the 2-point wound), or 4 points of impairment (ie: +4 difficulty).

CM-03: How much does a non-lethal attack impair you?

On the round it's delivered, a non-lethal attack (a punch, say), causes its full damage as impairment (plus or minus any location modifiers). On **subsequent rounds**, it causes 1/10 its original damage as impairment (round up) (page 47).

For example, if you're hit with a stick in the abdomen for 9 points of non-lethal damage, that's +9 difficulty in that round, but only a +1 difficulty in subsequent rounds. If you were hit in the head instead of the abdomen, the **initial** modifier would be +8 difficulty

(still +1 in subsequent rounds), and if you were hit in the arm or leg the initial modifier would be +10 difficulty (still +1 in subsequent rounds).

As another (less detailed) example, if you're hit for 11 points of non-lethal damage, that's +11 difficulty in that round, but +2 in subsequent rounds.

Or if you do DV 2 with your fist and hit someone 5 times, they will have +5 non-lethal impairment after the fight is over.

CM-04: Limb amputation seems a little too easy to me...

...On page 48, it says that cutting attacks which inflict DV 5 on limbs may be considered as amputation (GM option). This would mean that every successful attack with a broadsword by someone with strength 6 (i.e. one point above average for men) against someone without armor would always be able to amputate a limb, which seems too easy for me.

[Answer by Greg Porter, in a post to rec.games.frp.misc]

You are right, but there are a few caveats:

- It's an optional rule.
- That's 5 points of damage **after** armor.
- If you use the graze or half damage rules (page 40), it means that only a solid hit (make your hit roll by 2 or more) does 5 damage. And I don't have any conceptual problem with a strong guy lopping off an unarmored arm with a solid broadsword hit.

CM-05: The description of the Grab maneuver (p. 56) isn't clear...

...It says, "may not directly use that body party" which contradicts the example that follows, where the "assassin is now at +2 to stab Grond" after having been grabbed at the arm.

[Answer by Greg Porter, in a post to rec.games.frp.misc]

Correct. The assassin can't do a stab with that arm until he exceeds Grond's STR on his movement initiative (he breaks free). However, the grab is a +2 penalty to all other skill use by the assassin, including attacks with the free arm. That could have been written clearer. Sorry.

CM-06: Explain the eventually-fatal roll again?

(Page 49). There are two questions answered by the eventually-fatal roll - is the damage the character just

took serious enough that it will eventually cause them to die, and if so, how long will it take for them to die? A wound can only be eventually fatal for *lethal* damage. To determine if a wound received is eventually fatal:

1. Determine the amount of lethal damage the character received to the hit location (**after** armor, etc).
2. Add 1 to this value if the hit location was the head, and subtract 1 if the hit location was the arms or legs (torso hits are unmodified).
3. Roll 1d10. If the value rolled is less than the value calculated in step 2, the wound is eventually fatal (the character is bleeding to death).

How long it will be before the character dies is determined from what was rolled on the 1d10 in step 3 (call this value X). At X minutes after the wound is received, the character will lose 1 point of HLT. At (2*X) minutes after the wound is received, the character will lose a second point of HLT. At (4*X) minutes after the wound is received, the character will lose a third point of HLT. And so on, until the character's HLT has reached 0 (when they die), or someone performs a successful First Aid task of Difficulty X on the wounded character.

A detailed example: A character with a HLT of 5 takes 3 points of lethal damage to the head. For the wound to be eventually fatal, the character needs to roll a 4 or less on 1d10 (3 for the damage, +1 for the hit to the head). The character is unlucky, and rolls a 2. They are dying.

- 2 minutes after they took the damage they will lose a point of HLT, dropping their HLT to 4.
- 4 minutes after the wound, they lose a second point of HLT (HLT is now 3).
- At 8 minutes after the wound they lose a third point (HLT 2).
- At 16 minutes after the wound they lose a fourth point (HLT 1).
- At 32 minutes after the character received the wound, they have bled to death (HLT 0).

At any time during these 32 minutes, the bleeding can be stopped by another character with a successful First Aid or Paramedic roll (in this example, it is a Difficulty 4 task).

CM-07: Why do small wounds bleed faster on average?...

...On page 49 it reads that an eventually fatal wound bleeds at the rate of 1 point per 1d10 minutes (doubling the time to the next loss each time a point is taken), using the roll which determined the wound to be eventually fatal. So the average time increment

would be smaller for smaller wounds, i.e. smaller wounds bleed faster on average!? Isn't the formula 11 - (die roll) as the time increment for bleeding a better solution?

[Answer paraphrased from Thomas N. Bagwell]

Consider, for a moment, what the eventually fatal roll means. It means that the damage the character has taken was such that they are bleeding to death. As written, if a person takes 1 point of lethal damage, there is only a small (10%) chance of it being eventually fatal. Normally the player will make their roll, and the wound will only be a minor inconvenience. There may be some bleeding, but nothing serious.

However, occasionally (1 times out of 10) the wound will be eventually fatal - in other words, the character is dying. The most likely explanation for this is that something fairly major must have been hit (like an artery). If such a wound were to have a slow bleeding rate (like in the formula suggested above), in reality the wound most likely wouldn't be eventually fatal.

There is a second (game mechanics) advantage to the rule as written. It minimizes dice rolls and generates an effect so that small weapons can generate fast bleeding injuries (like a wrist slash). The end result is that small wounds that are eventually fatal are always fairly quick, while larger ones have a range from fast to slow.

CM-08: A question on knockout rolls...

When hit in a previously wounded place, does the injured character have to make TWO knockout checks (one for the new and one for the old injury), or just the bigger one?

No, just a single check for the new damage.

CM-09: Can you clarify how Pain Tolerance works?

...

*Does Pain Tolerance **reduce** impairment from non-lethal hits by WIL aptitude (turning a +3 impairment into +1, for example), or does it 'ignore hits up to WIL aptitude, with higher hits having normal effect'?*

[Answer paraphrased from Greg Porter on the CORPS mailing list]

It reduces the game effect on the character of a non-lethal hit. A hit for 3 would be felt like a hit for 1.

CM-10: Who makes the roll when a pre-emptive action is attempted?...

The description says the person being pre-empted, but the example says the person who is pre-empting.

The person who is being pre-empted makes the (AWR) roll to notice that you are "setting them up" for your action.

03.Weapons

WP-01: What do I do about underwater gunfire and explosions?

[Asked in discussion of running Blue Planet (<http://www.biohazardgames.com/>) using CORPS]

[Answer by Bertil Jonell, in a post to rec.games.frp.misc]

Do like in TimeLords: For concussion effects, treat the explosion as if it were closer, at half the range, but for fragmentation effects, treat the explosion as if it were farther away, at four times the range. The latter would do for guns too, together with whatever changes in refraction you get from the eye/water or air/glass/water interface (-2 **at least**). To be perfectly accurate you'd only multiply the range for damage purposes, not for aiming/number of fragments.

All guns would get a sharp increase in malfunction chance, +3 or +4 to malfunction class, and just forget about using hollowpoints: they'll mushroom just after leaving the barrel.

[Leif Magnar Kj|nn|y adds:]

For a person not used to firing underwater, yes, but presumably not for someone who's lived most of his life (and learned to shoot) around, in and below the surface.

> All guns would get a sharp increase in malfunction chance, +3
> or +4 to malfunction class,

This would presumably not apply to guns specifically designed to be safely fired underwater (well, I can imagine some specific and possibly hard-to-workaround problems with backpressure and turbulence and whatever, but not necessarily insurmountable ones).

>and just forget about using hollowpoints: they'll
>mushroom just after leaving the barrel.

In fact, you can pretty much forget about using ordinary firearms underwater except in weird emergency situations and such, since their range will forever suck. The water will slow down the bullets in a hurry; CORPS already accounts for this by assigning an AV of 1 per ten centimeters of water, which will stop pretty much all pistol bullets within a meter or so and most rifle bullets within a couple of meters. (Presumably, this AV rating is intended as a ballpark

average figure for small/fast projectiles such as bullets from smallarms; hydrodynamic drag should be more or less proportional to the square of an object's velocity as well as to its surface area (given constant shape and orientation; there's some stuff about Reynolds numbers and so on in here somewhere, but it's been four years or so since I did any fluid mechanics whatsoever and this knowledge has gone rather stale); together with the obvious square-cube relation between mass and surface area, this would be the situation a lot better for a bigger and slower projectile).

Thus, the projectile weapon of choice designed for underwater use will, just like today, be a harpoon or spear gun. Using 3G3, such a weapon would fire a 10:1 (or longer) projectile of maybe 10mm to 15mm caliber at a modest speed (probably a good deal less than 100 m/s); a high-density material would be very preferable for the projectile. Muscle-powered, chemically-propelled, compressed-gas-propelled and possibly even electromagnetic versions might be feasible. As a simple fix, you might assume that a weapon with that kind of projectile loses one point of DV per meter (or two, or three) underwater; this may not be entirely correct but would at least be a playable ruling, limiting weapons to credible lethal ranges maybe around 20 or 30 meters (underwater visibility isn't all that much to write home about in most situations anyway, so there'd be little need for more range than that). Against high-end threats, look at explosive-tipped harpoons (similar to those used in whaling), or even tiny torpedoes (guided or not; some might be small enough to use as ammunition in pistol-like launchers, while larger versions would be equipped with homing sonars or bluegreen lasers or something and might be used much as man-portable antitank or air defense missiles).

WP-02: What does the E mean after some damage values on page 129?

Example: RPG-7; 427/7E

The number modified by the E (7 in the example) represents an explosion: whole body concussive damage, as per the explosion discussion on page 70.

WP-03: What is the damage of a thrown melee weapon?

[Answer paraphrased from Greg Porter in personal e-mail]

A thrown melee weapon does its normal damage. For example, a knife that does STR/4+1 still does STR/4+1 when thrown. The GM may wish to apply minuses for distance, etc.

WP-04: Are the damages for spears in Dreamtime correct? They seem a bit, well, ineffectual.

[Answer paraphrased from Greg Porter, in a message to rec.games.frp.misc.]

Remember that the tech level in Dreamtime is low. A Dreamtime spear is a stick with a sharp rock attached to it. A metal spear (TL 4 or 5) would probably do STR/4 +3 instead of +2.

04.Character creation and conversion

CC-01: If an advantage or disadvantage says AP or SP, can I split between them?

Yes. For example, if you take a psychological limitation level 3 (Ailurophile), you can split the 6 points as 3 AP and 3 SP, or 6 AP and 0 SP, or any other way you want.

CC-02: How do you convert from TimeLords to CORPS?

From 'Organizations Book 1' for CORPS 1ed, page 28:

CORPS TimeLords

STR Strength/2 (down)
AGL Dexterity/2 (down)
AWR (Intelligence+Perception)/4 (down)
WIL (Willpower+Bravado)/4 (down)
HLT (Constitution+Stamina)/4 (down)
POW Power/4 (down)

Skill Skill/2 (down)

DV DV/3 (nearest)
AV AV*2/3 (nearest) (1)

Appearance is converted to a reaction mod (ie 'fame') of (Appearance-10)/2 (down).

(1) Soft armors split the result 1:1, while hard armors split it 4:1 (nearest). For example a TimeLords bulletproof cuirass of ACW-vintage (TL8) AV 11/5 becomes $11 \times 2/3 = 7.333$, which rounds to 7, split 4:1 (because it is a hard armor) it becomes 5.6/1.4, which in turn rounds to a final CORPS AV of 6/1. The same for a soft armor: the classic mail vest: AV 10/2. $10 \times 2/3 = 6.67$ which rounds to 7, split 1:1 (it was soft) 3.5/3.5, I chose to put the odd point at the conversion side: CORPS AV 3/4. One point off from what CORPS 2ed says.

CC-03: Are there any other conversions?

Various people have written about doing different conversions. Conversions for characters that are available on the web (known of at this time) are:

- GURPS -> CORPS (by John McMullen) (<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Chamber/2838/convert.html#gurpscorpsconvert>)
- HERO -> CORPS (by John McMullen) (<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Chamber/2838/convert.html#herocorpsconvert>)
- Kult -> CORPS (by Erik Growen) (<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Zone/2259/corps.html>)

Jason Anderson has started a conversion of the Empathic powers from Dark Conspiracy to CORPS (http://www.anterc.utas.edu.au/~jason_ga/corps/powers.html)

There have also been suggested conversions for Blue Planet and Dark Conspiracy (URLs?).

CC-04: How would you best represent the disadvantage of being in a discriminated group?

As an extreme example, how would one design a dog character with a disad reflecting the social disadvantages to being a dog in a humanocentric world (no legal rights, the inability to get into the better restaurants, etc).

[Answer paraphrased from Steve Rennell on the CORPS mailing list]

Probably the best way to represent this is using negative Fame. The level will depend on how easily it is to be recognised as belonging to the discriminated group, and how much the discrimination is (given a hard time when trying to go all sorts of places, sometimes they're imprisoned for no reason, have to carry ID at all times, etc).

CC-05: What is the best way to represent banned/illegal skills?

After all, people can still practice such skills (even with the risk they could be sent to jail).

[Answer paraphrased from Greg Porter on the CORPS mailing list]

There are a couple of ways to do this:

1. Make it a cultural **psych lim** against such activities that has to be bought down first (eg: you're too nervous that you'll get caught to pick the lock well...).
2. Characters require a certain character background (Level 1 Police Enemy because of a prior arrest record), or people you know (Contacts with criminal elements whom you owe favors to).

3. Go the normal route, which is to set fixed limits like for weapon skills, and require an unusual background to exceed them.

05. The Environment

EN-01: What does the number in brackets after the AWR value of animals mean?

[Answer paraphrased from Greg Porter on the CORPS mailing list]

The value given for AWR is the animal ability to see/hear/smell you. The number given in brackets represents the animals cognitive or reasoning ability.

EN-02: How do I handle different gravities from a game mechanics point of view?

[Answer paraphrased from Greg Porter on the CORPS mailing list]

I just made this up while writing it, so take it with a grain of salt.

I think the simplest solution is the linear one for strength, with a reciprocal AGL penalty for any kind of fine work because of the inertia factor. You want to use that effective +2 STR because of lower gravity, you take a -2 AGL for the actual manipulation.

For leaping distance and running, I *think* a linear increase works. You can run faster and leap farther, gaining both STR and velocity bonuses for leaping distance.

The actual adjustments would best be done with a table. Take your normal lifting capacity, adjust it for gravity and see if the result gives you a better STR.

Example - STR 5 has a normal lift of 25kg. In .7g, they have a lift of $25\text{kg}/.7\text{g} = 35.7\text{kg}$.

Coincidentally enough, this is about the STR 6 lifting capacity (36kg). So, in .7g, a STR 5 person could lift and leap like a STR 6 person, though they take a -1 to AGL when using STR at this new limit. In .7g, a STR 5 person could run $1/.7 = 1.4$ times as fast and leap like they had STR 6, but take the -1 AGL penalty whenever using that STR or exceeding normal movement, and perhaps -2 to AGL if trying to do both at once (the full speed longjump).

EN-03: Can ASPs be used to save a character from a situation they don't know about?

It is up to the GM -- there is nothing in the rule book that says the character has to be aware of the situation

(a sniper, for example) to be able to use an ASP to save themselves.

Just remember that what applies to PCs should also apply to NPCs. So, if the players ambush a major NPC, they can expect the NPC to be able to use ASPs to get out of the situation.

06.Paranormal Powers

PP-01: How do I do magic?

All special effects in CORPS, be it magic, psionics or cyberware, are worked out using the Paranormal Power section (pp.95-115). At first glance this chapter can seem a bit daunting (I know I thought so, anyway). But with practice, like most things, it becomes easy.

The first thing to do when designing a power is to work out exactly what it does (heal someone by touching them, open a gate to another universe, etc). The clearer your idea at this point the easier it is (usually) when it comes to working out the mechanics of the power.

Once the description is done, look for a Power (pp.104-110) which could cover the desired affect.

[more to come]

PP-02: The "Others" power option isn't clear...

*On page 95, the description says: "A **self** power can only be used on the person the power belongs to, while an **others** power can in addition be used on or loaned to other willing or unwilling subjects." However the cyberware rules on page 112, and the powers in Dreamtime, imply that "Self" means the power is usable only **by** yourself, whereas "Others" would be a power you can enable someone else to use.*

[Answer paraphrased from Greg Porter on the CORPS mailing list]

The intention of the "Others" category is that the owner of the power can loan the use or beneficial ability of the power to another person. If I gave myself a no-range Blast with self-only and called it "claws", this just means I am the only recipient of the power and can't loan my claws to someone else. If I have a self-only healing ability, this doesn't mean I can't heal others, just that I can't loan the ability to someone else and go read a book. A person with a self-only healing ability that they could use only for healing themselves would buy it cheaper (no range, limited power "only to heal self", etc).

PP-03: I'm unsure about the cost of time multipliers for "cheap" powers...

If I create a power which has a calculated cost of -1 SP, and I wish to have a time multiplier for the power, is the total purchase cost worked out as:

- *-1 SP for the power, -1 SP for the multiplier (total of -2 SP), so the power costs the minimum of 5 SP.*
- *Powers can't have negative costs, so make them cost 0 SP (again for a total cost of 5 SP).*
- *A multiplier is a seperate power, so both will cost the minimum of 5 SP (for a total of 10 SP)*

[Answer by Thomas N. Bagwell on the CORPS mailing list]

The last option is the correct choice. If you decide that the time multiplier is cumulative (the longer you concentrate, the longer the spell lasts), then the total cost is 10 SP.

If you decide the time multiplier is not cumulative, then you have to pay for each one individually... that would get really expensive. Probably not the best choice in this instance.

PP-04: How does a "requires x seconds" limitation affect a time multiple and the power the multiple has been bought for?

*For example, assume a power has a requirement that the user must concentrate for 5 seconds before the power activates. A Time Multiplier is then added with the intention that the power will last for several minutes. If the description of the time multiple also says "requires 5 seconds", does that mean that it requires the same 5 seconds as the power, or an **additional** 5 seconds (for a total of 10 seconds to use the power). Additionally, does this initial concentration time count towards extending the length of time the power is active?*

[Answer paraphrased from Thomas N. Bagwell on the CORPS mailing list]

If you put 'requires 5 seconds' in the main power and the multiple, then you have a base of 10 seconds required. That's only for one multiple, though, which means the power will last a total of 2 seconds after the 10 seconds of contentration (not very useful).

For the power to last 20 minutes (for example), you would need 6 multiples (see table on p.107). You can either pay for 6 multiples for the power to last 20 minutes with 10 seconds of concentration (expensive), or you can concentrate for (6*5=30) additional seconds plus the 5 seconds for the power... taking a total of 35 seconds to activate the power (which will then last for 20 minutes). The second option is only available if the GM allows cumulative time multiples.

PP-05: If a power has a special effect, do any multiples on the power also need to have the special effect?

To a large extent it depends on what the special effect is, and how expensive the GM wants powers to be in the campaign. In general, no.

07.Credits

Most of the credit for this FAQ belongs to John McMullen, who took the time to compile information from previous messages to rec.games.frp.misc. Answers contributed by or swiped from (in alphabetical order):

- Jason Anderson
- Thomas N. Bagwell
- Bertil Jonell
- Leif Magnar Kj|nn|y
- John McMullen
- Greg Porter
- Steve Rennell

08.House Rules - New rules for initiative

The order of action in a given round is based on the value of the highest skill used **plus** 1d6 (or 1d10/2(u) for those who would rather CORPS stay a d10 only system). Non-skill actions like walking or running are based on the characters AGL + 1d6 (the value, **not** the aptitude), or AWR in the case of paranormal powers. Characters act from highest initiative to lowest. Equal initiatives are determined by the highest AGL of the characters involved, or a die roll if the AGL is equal. Those with higher initiatives may "hold action", and wait until later in their round before having their action.

The maximum number of actions a character can perform in a round is unchanged (it is still skill/2(u)). However, sequencing (the amount of time between each action) *is* changed. Instead of a minimum of 2 points of initiative between each action, there is now a minimum of 3. Penalties for multiple actions are unchanged.

Held actions now get a +3 instead of a +2 to initiative.

Characters can only make one "move" action each round (as per the existing rules).

Combination manoeuvres are unchanged.

Example - If a character had a skill of 4, and rolled a 4 for initiative on the d6, their first action would occur on Initiative 8 and their second (and last) action on Initiative 5 (with a skill of 4, a character only has 2 actions a round).

Example - A character has a Pistol skill of 3, and a AGL of 6. They roll a 5 for initiative on the 1d6. Their first action would be at Initiative 8 if they were going to shoot first, and Initiative 11 if they were going to move first in the round (their second actions would occur at 5 or 8 respectively).

09.New Advantage - Up to the Challenge

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Cost: 35 SP

Your talents are boundless, and your experiences are rich. You've been trained by the best, tested by the baddest, and came through smiling. And it seems that every new adventure shows off yet another impressive skill.

Whenever you want a skill that isn't already on your character sheet, you can just take it - at **APT+1** or **APT+2** (your choice). The skill is recorded permanently on your character sheet, and the price of the skill becomes an immediate debt against any SP you earn in the future. During future adventures, the skill can be improved normally: It's yours now. There are, however, a few restrictions:

Necessity Is A Mother: There needs to be a REASON for the skill to pop, retroactively, onto your list of abilities. There should be a plot-related challenge to overcome, or at least a potential romantic partner or employer to impress. It should also fit your character concept (of course, if your character can justify even HAVING this advantage, that won't be a problem very often).

Earn What You Learn: If you haven't paid off SP debts from previous sessions, this advantage is "frozen" until the skills are all paid for. Debts accrued earlier in the SAME session are no problem.

Thou Shalt Not Steal Thunder: If the PCs are together when the problem crops up, and somebody in the party *already* has the skill you want, or can already handle the problem in some *other* way, then he gets his chance first. This advantage can never be used to rob the spotlight from another PC. On the other hand, it CAN be used to Keep Up With the Joneses. If everybody in the group knows Scuba and goes for a dive, you won't get left high and dry on the quayside unless you decide, for character reasons, that you don't want to have known the skill (whether you can suddenly know Scuba in a future adventure is then a GM's call, since that kind of consistency is only a requirement in *some* cinematic genres).

CORPS Addenda

Maintain Thine Idiom: If there is another character in the group with this advantage that would be more appropriate for dealing with the problem than you, once again you are required to hang back and give him his shot. If you're the Combat grunt and he's the Tech geek and the skill that's needed involves rescuing a crashed hard drive, the geek gets to go first. (Special note for **Black Ops** campaigns: when there is no clear "appropriate" PC in the party, the Secop always gets first crack at it, since the Secops have access to the broadest curriculum in the Academy).

Tech Levels and other campaign-based restrictions still apply: This advantage won't let you "learn" any skill you couldn't learn otherwise. This advantage will never grant manoeuvres, psi skills, spells, or other supernatural abilities.