

CHAMPIONS

THE SUPER ROLEPLAYING GAME



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USING THE *HERO SYSTEM*

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DEDICATION

To all the *Champions* and *HERO System* fans out there who have kept this game alive and vibrant for thirty amazing years.

AARON'S SPECIAL THANKS

Thanks must go to the players who have made the Strike Force Universe campaigns so much fun, and so instructive to a gamemaster and writer, over the years: Mark Bennett, Eric Bunker, Earl Cooley III, Kerry Gaber, Jeff Jacobson, Jan Lewellen, Beth Loubet, Denis Loubet, Billy Moore, Matt Pinsonneault, Susan Pinsonneault, Bob Quinlan, Roxanne Quinlan, Luray Richmond, Mark Richmond, Allen Sikes, Beth Ann Sikes, and Sean Summers.

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INTRODUCTION



"UP in the sky — look!" Those words opened each of the seventeen *Superman* short films produced by the animation studio of Max and Dave Fleischer in the 1940s. Spoken as if by an everyday man glimpsing something astonishing in the air above, they made it clear to the audience that it would soon witness uncommon wonders.

And it was true. In each entry in that groundbreaking cartoon series, audiences witnessed Superman, the first and arguably most popular of all the costumed superhumans, using the powers that were his alien birthright to battle giant robots, natural and unnatural disasters, enemy spies, and supernatural monsters.

These cartoons were, of course, passive entertainment. The members of the audience could imagine they were the superhero, accomplishing remarkable feats of strength and daring, but those were solitary imaginings, seldom shared, inevitably forgotten. With the *HERO System*, the audience becomes a set of participants, and the superhero up on the big screen is transformed into a more personal alter ego — one designed to give the player the experience he could only imagine previously, and to share that experience with others in a collaborative story.

Champions is a *HERO System* genre book — a book of guidelines, advice, and rules to help you use the *HERO System* to create Superhero characters and run Superhero campaigns in the style of your favorite comic books — or, if your tastes lean toward other sources of Superhero adventure, of cartoons, movies, television shows, radio shows, or movie serials.

As a genre book, *Champions* does not include the *HERO System* rules. You can find those in *The HERO System 6th Edition* two-rulebook set (or, if you want to start with a streamlined version of the rules, try *The HERO System Basic Rulebook*).

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Champions is designed both for players experienced with Superhero roleplaying and those who are new to this style and genre of play. Nothing in these pages is secret or for the GM's eyes only, so you can read it all and then decide which portions you want to utilize.

Chapter One, *Truth, Justice, And The American Way: The Superhero Genre*, describes what Superhero comic books, and the campaigns based on them, are like. Players who are familiar with comics can skip this chapter initially if they want to, since they already know many of the genre conventions it describes. But they should return to it eventually — even experienced comics readers can learn something here, and it has good advice on how to implement genre conventions using the *HERO System*. Players who aren't familiar with Superhero comic books should definitely read Chapter One.

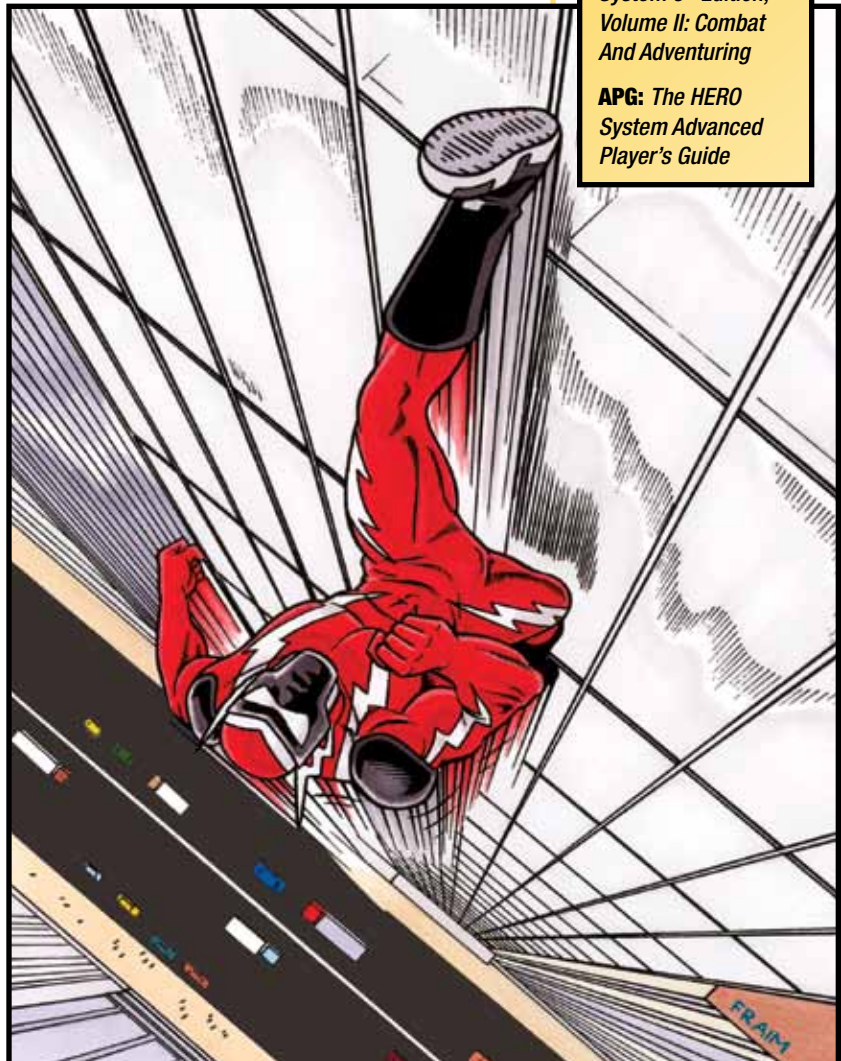
ABBREVIATIONS

This book uses the following abbreviations to refer to other *HERO System* books:

6E1: *The HERO System 6th Edition, Volume I: Character Creation*

6E2: *The HERO System 6th Edition, Volume II: Combat And Adventuring*

APG: *The HERO System Advanced Player's Guide*



Chapter Two, *With Great Power...: Superhero Character Creation*, talks about using the *HERO System* rules to build Superhero characters. It discusses what it means to be superhuman, the various types of origin stories that explain how heroes and villains get their powers, and the main superhuman archetypes (including a few sample powers to get you started). Then it goes over the *HERO System* game elements — Skills, Powers, Complications, and more — and discusses their special applications in the Superheroes genre. It concludes with a review of superteams and how to use them in your game.

Chapter Three, *...Comes Great Responsibility: Gamemastering Champions*, as is evident from its title, includes advice for GMs of Superhero campaigns. But even players with no interest in running a campaign should give this chapter a look, if only to have an idea of what the GM may expect of them and what they should expect of their GM.

Chapter Four, *The Champions*, provides a few examples from the *Champions Universe*, the official *Champions* campaign setting of Hero Games, to get you started. It includes writeups for a complete superhero team, the Champions, as well as their base, vehicle, and several of their enemies. Its members can serve as examples of character designs for players who are still new to the rules. In addition, its members might end up as NPCs in your own campaign, if the GM so wishes.

Chapter Five, *The Champions Sourcebook*, continues Chapter Four's approach by providing a wide variety of resources for Superhero players and GMs. It includes a section of gadgets organized by type, and example Bases and Vehicles for superheroes. Next comes the *Superhero Gallery*

— 20 different common types of superhumans, such as a Fire-based character or a Telekinetic. Each character has a two-page spread with a basic character sheet and pre-built abilities that you can “plug in” to that sheet. This allows a player to easily create a PC if he needs one, and the GM to quickly generate dozens of supervillains for the PCs to fight. Lastly, Chapter Five concludes with character sheets for generic minions and adversaries the PCs might encounter.

Taken all together, *Champions* provides a handy jumping-off point for your own adventures. This book, like many Hero Games products, is a toolkit — one addressing a particular genre. Rather than telling you the One True Way of doing something, it typically discusses the options and alternatives (to make you aware of them), and then lets *you* decide how to implement something in your game or build a particular power. Ultimately the most important ingredient in the mix isn't anything in this book, it's *your* imagination and creativity.

As with every other set of rules and recommendations related to the *HERO System*, you should remember two important things: first, if you're putting together your own campaign, you should adopt any rules that help you have fun and abandon those that don't; second, if you know enough about the game to question something in this book, you also probably know enough to change it to your satisfaction.

So fetch your impossibly bright, ridiculously bulletproof underwear from the dryer and prepare to have some fun!



TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND THE AMERICAN WAY:

**CHAPTER
ONE**

**THE SUPERHERO
GENRE**



WHAT SUPERHERO STORIES ARE ALL ABOUT

1

Superhero stories can take place practically anywhere, feature virtually any sort of character, and describe almost any sort of event or crisis you can imagine. But at their most fundamental level they all have...

THE HEROIC CODE

As far back as human storytelling can record, there have been stories about superheroes. Naturally, the bards and commentators didn't always use that word to describe them, but these characters possessed most of the traits of the modern superhero, including:

- Greater-than-human abilities
- Distinctive modes of dress
- Distinctive combat skills
- Champion-to-champion interaction

As an example, take a look at Heracles (Hercules), the preeminent hero of Greek mythology. As the son of a god, he had superhuman strength. He had a distinctive mode of dress (he wore the skin of the Nemean Lion as his cloak). In a time when the spear and the sword were the preferred weapons of the noble warrior, he carried a big club as his weapon of choice. And his adventures often brought him into alliance with or conflict with the other big-name heroes of his day: Theseus, Telamon, Jason, Polydeuces, Castor.

But these characters stopped short of being modern superheroes in their lack of one characteristic: *adherence to a higher code*. Heroes of the ages of myth were warriors and representatives of their individual tribes or nations. They killed without mercy, often without reflection. They helped their friends on raids and adventures even when their friends were performing tasks that, by modern analysis, are cruel, even evil. They respected no laws, and the notion of “rights” was still thousands of years in the future. If brought to the modern era, most of them would be far more comfortable as vigilantes or supervillains — charismatic and popular ones perhaps, but vigilantes or villains nonetheless.

Comic book superheroes tend to follow a code of conduct. They act “heroically” — they’re morally upright, courageous, self-sacrificing, don’t use lethal force, keep their word even to their enemies, and so on. There are exceptions to some of these guidelines, of course. For example, particularly in the later, “Iron Age,” comics (see page 41) heroes who kill, or who frequently display less than admirable personal traits, are sometimes commonplace. But even they share the courageous and self-sacrificing nature of their more upstanding brethren, and throughout the history of the genre most “four-color heroes” (as they’re called) have followed a code that sets them apart and truly makes them worthy of the “hero” part of the word “superhero.” (See *Code Of The Hero*, page 108.)

A SENSE OF DUTY

An unspoken part of the heroic code — one so important that it’s upheld even by heroes who aren’t always so morally upstanding or are willing to use lethal force — is the notion of personal sacrifice. Whatever his methods or personality, what truly defines a hero is his willingness to put himself in danger to help other people. His goal isn’t to use his powers to earn money (though he might actually be employed by the government or some other entity). He uses his powers to fight crime and oppose evil — and he’d do those things even if there wasn’t a dime in it for him. (In fact, many superheroes spend a considerable part of their own wealth to finance their costumed crime-fighting careers.) No matter how cynical a face a hero may show to the world, ultimately he feels a sense of duty to others, a dedication to a higher purpose than just serving himself.

SUPERPOWERS

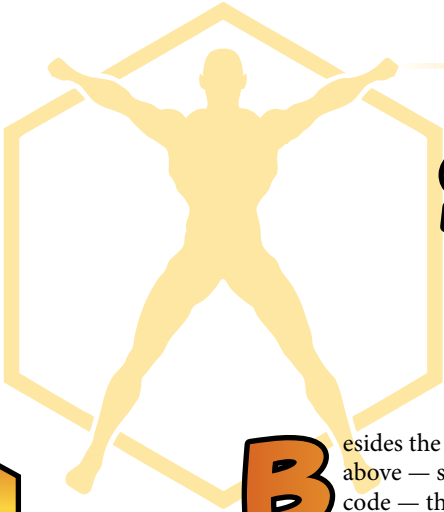
But the other part of that word is, of course, *super*. The other thing that virtually all Superhero stories have in common is the existence of what are broadly termed *superpowers* — fantastic abilities that set their possessors apart from the common ruck of humanity.

By classic definition “superpowers” refers to a wide variety of colorful, flashy, fantastical powers of the sort commonly associated with superheroes. Examples include the ability to fly under one’s own power, the ability to fire energy beams or control energy, enormous strength and durability (even to the extent of being able to move planets out of orbit or toss buildings around like baseballs), the ability to run vast distances in a split-second, the power to walk through walls, mental abilities like telepathy and psychokinesis, and literally thousands more.

But the definition doesn’t end there. Plenty of comic book characters possess learned or trained abilities that may not be “powers” *per se*, but which are sufficiently developed to allow those characters to function in superhero stories. For

example, martial artists and mystics in the comics often have hand-to-hand combat or spellcasting abilities that put them on a par with “pure” superhumans. (Superheroic spellcasting, in particular, is often distinguishable from true superpowers only by the appearance of the abilities.) Similarly, characters who equip themselves with powered armor, gadgets, and special weapons use technology to overcome their “ordinary human-ness” and transcend into the world of the superhuman. For purposes of discussing and considering Superhero characters, all of these abilities count as “superpowers” despite the fact their possessors learned them in school rather than getting them from being zapped by a bolt of lightning while standing next to a rack of chemicals or being bitten by a radioactive insect.





SUPERHERO ELEMENTS

1

Besides the two major elements discussed above — superpowers and the heroic code — there are many other elements, themes, tropes, and “bits” that characterize the Superhero genre no matter what subgenre or time period’s involved. Superhero campaigns wouldn’t be much like the comic books if they didn’t implement these genre conventions — things that don’t normally happen in real life, and that often don’t make much sense, but that are all part of making comic books what they are. This section discusses many of them and how you can simulate them in a *HERO System* campaign.

The “rules” described here detail the way things work in the comic books, and players who are readers of the comics will probably expect these genre conventions to hold true for a Champions campaign. If the GM disallows any of these comic book conventions — for example, maybe he thinks the rule about any mask, no matter how small, being sufficient to conceal a character’s identity is stupid — he should tell his players before the campaign starts so they’ll know to take a different approach to that particular issue.

SECRET IDENTITY NAMES

When you’re creating a Champions character, give some thought to his real name. A good *nom du crime-fighting* is important, but a good secret identity name helps make the character feel more “dramatically real” and exciting. Some suggestions:

- use alliteration, which makes the name easier to remember and say (examples: Peter Parker, Clark Kent, Matt Murdock, Wally West, Scott Summers, Reed Richards, Lex Luthor, Dan Dreiberg, Guy Gardner)
- use short names — one or two syllables each — which have a dramatic sound and are, again, easier to remember (examples: Bruce Wayne, Steve Rogers, Tony Stark, Hal Jordan)
- avoid long or difficult to pronounce names unless they fit a character’s cultural background (for example, unless your character’s a Cajun and you want to emphasize that in roleplaying, you probably shouldn’t consider names like Thibodeaux and Delacroix)

SECRET IDENTITIES, MASKS, AND COSTUMES

Most superheroes and supervillains maintain *Secret Identities* — when they use their superpowers, they do so while wearing a costume that conceals their true features, and call themselves by a distinctive codename that’s different from their given names. In many superhero worlds, this habit came about in the era of the Pulp heroes (see page 23), when heroes sometimes operated outside the law. Those heroes generally concealed their true features behind dark overcoats, floppy hats, and concealing masks or scarves, and used frightening-sounding code-names. These habits made it harder for organized crime or law enforcement to punish the heroes (or their loved ones) for their crimefighting activities. When crimefighting moved into the realm of the superpowered, such practices carried over.

In *HERO System* terms, Secret Identity is a form of Social Complication (see 6E1 428). Typically it’s worth 15 Matching Complications Points for a Frequently, Major Complication. However, if the character has a lot of enemies who want to harm or kill him, it might rise to Severe and be worth 20 points. (However, since almost *every* superhero has plenty of enemies, the baseline for what counts as “a lot” of them rises significantly — qualifying for a Severe Secret Identity in a Champions campaign may be far more trouble than it’s worth!) On the other hand, if the GM doesn’t want to introduce Secret Identity-related elements into the campaign very often, it may become an Infrequently-occurring Complication worth only 10 points (or less).

WHAT THE SECRET IDENTITY IS FOR

Superheroes don’t conceal their identities on a whim — they have reasons for doing so that make dramatic sense within a Superhero story. Any character who takes a Social Complication: Secret Identity should tell the GM what its primary purpose is. The GM can then use the Secret Identity to generate plots and subplots for the campaign.

Some purposes include:

TO AVOID NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

The most common purpose for maintaining separate civilian and hero identities is to prevent villains and criminals from taking revenge on the character (and his loved ones) for his actions. Alternately or in addition, the character may not want to expose his civilian identity to arrest and prosecution by the authorities. For this to be a concern, the character should have one or more other Complications and background circumstances that interact with his Secret Identity — Hunteds, DNPCs, or the like.

TO KEEP THE AFFECTION OF LOVED ONES

Sometimes a character has a loved one who would react very badly — abandon him, have a heart attack, or the like — if he learned the character was a super. For example, a hero might have a girlfriend who loves him deeply but loathes his costumed identity due to some misunderstanding, or a sickly relative whose health might fail completely if he learned about the character's superheroic pursuits. Typically the loved one in this situation is a DNPC, but that's not required.

TO GET MORE POINTS

Even if a player describes in a convincing way why his character has a Secret Identity, it may be that the *real* reason he took the Complication is to get 15 more Matching Complication Points for his character — a poor justification at best. Here are some danger signs that this is the case:

- The character's Secret Identity is known to all his loved ones and teammates
- The character has no loved ones who might suffer if his identity were revealed to the world.
- The character has a job that causes him no inconvenience (he's a freelancer who can adjust his work schedule and location without consequence; he's Filthy Rich, or the like)

If enough of these circumstances are in effect that the character has a Secret Identity that doesn't really hinder him, the GM should either reduce the Complication's frequency or disallow the Complication altogether (or, if it's already in play, require the character to buy it off with Experience Points right away). Alternately, the GM can find a way to make the character's Secret Identity a concern after all! For example, he could:

- have a long-lost relative suddenly appear
- get the PC romantically interested in an NPC only to discover the NPC's afraid of or antagonistic toward supers (either in general, or the character's superheroic identity in particular), or
- arrange campaign events so the character temporarily loses his dream job/personal fortune and has to work more at the behest of others

COSTUMES

For superheroes, the concealing garments of the Pulp hero have become distinctive costumes — instantly recognizable (and trademarkable!) combinations of clothes, accessories, and colors, often tight-fitting (and perhaps a bit revealing). In fact, costumes are so closely associated with heroes that terms like “costumes,” “capas,” and “masks” are often used as slang terms for “superheroes” in Superhero settings (“OK, our guns are useless against this monster — better call in the capes!”).

Each super designs his costume to leave a distinctive impression. He may want others to recognize his loyalties (such as costumes bearing patterns from a national flag), to fear him (costumes bearing symbols that cause dread, such as skulls, frightening animals, or weapons), or just to recognize him in any circumstance (bright color combinations). In some cases all the heroes on a team have the same costume, or use certain common elements, to identify themselves as a group.

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?

One of the most enduring costume-related “bits” involves the sacred nature of minor facial alterations. In the comics, the smallest mask or most ephemeral of changes to a character's appearance constitutes a change so dramatic that people who've known the character in both identities for years cannot penetrate the deception. Such minor facial alterations can include:

- A change in hair style (long rather than short, one lock of hair falling across the forehead in one identity but brushed back in another)
- A change in hair color (blonde for black)
- Addition or subtraction of facial hair (pencil-thin mustache versus no mustache)
- Use of a minor facial accessory (eyeglasses, false tattoo on one cheek)
- Wearing a mask, no matter how small or non-concealing
- Wearing a tinted faceplate over the entire face, allowing witnesses to see one's features only in monochrome

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT DIET

The most common sort of costume worn by superheroes is skintight. It's as stretchable as swimwear but much less prone to wrinkle. For this reason, any superhuman character can choose to have a perfect body — one an ordinary active lifestyle maintains, that doesn't gain pounds over the holiday feasting season, and that doesn't suffer severe metabolism changes as the hero ages — regardless of whether his powers and activities in the game seem to justify it.



Having a Perfect Superhero Body doesn't require the character to buy Striking Appearance or take a *Distinctive Features* Complication. A player can choose for his character not to have a perfect body, but this doesn't warrant any sort of Complication, either.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT STRAPS OR GLUE

For reasons no one has ever adequately explained, superhero costumes don't slip, bunch, or fall off, regardless of how they're stretched or abused. Therefore it's safe for a male hero to flit about in a costume that's little more than a pair of brightly-colored briefs — no dive into a body of water, no matter how clumsy, will ever strip them from him. Heroines can feel confident that their strapless tops will stay up. This is just a characteristic of the physics of a superhero world.

If a GM wants to be a little more realistic, he can say that among the many materials available to superheroes is a sheer skintight material that breathes, stretches without wrinkling, and can be dyed to match just about any skin tone. Consequently, when a costume appears to be mostly bare flesh, it's actually covered in part by this useful material, which serves as a base for the apparently-daring portions of the costume to be attached to. (Naturally, ice skaters and ballroom dancers will make extensive use of the same material.)

NEAR-MAGICAL COSTUME MATERIAL

Near-Magical Costume Material that's Indestructible or Self-Healing could be bought as an *Instant Change* Cosmetic Transform (see the sidebar on 6E1 307), or it could simply be a "special effect" that's a part of the setting and costs no Character Points. If it's the former, with the GM's permission, the character can apply the Limitations *OIF* and *Only To Keep Costume Undamaged* (-1).

Near-Magical Costume Material that provides protection to the wearer is bought as Resistant Protection, and is often referred to as "bulletproof spandex":

Bulletproof Spandex: Resistant Protection (6 PD/6 ED) (18 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 12 points.

Characters may buy more (or less) armor if they wish (up to any ceiling established by the GM — 12 PD/12 ED is usually a good restriction), and add Limitations like *Activation Roll* (to represent only partial coverage of the body) or *Ablative* (if the armor gets worn away by repeated attacks).

See *Defensive Gadgets* on page 224 for other defensive options for stylish superhumans.

IT'S NOT FOR SALE AT THE CLOTH STORE

Related to the notion of the flesh-covered bodystocking above, another "bit" you can introduce in your campaign is the *Near-Magical Costume Material*. This is a type of cloth, plastic, force-field projection, or other material normally found only in superhero costumes. Possible characteristics for the Near-Magical Costume Material include indestructibility (the costume doesn't prevent damage from reaching the wearer, but it doesn't sustain damage itself, and so remains clean and untornd despite how badly its wearer is pounded), self-healing (the material can sustain damage, but then fixes itself so that, within minutes, it appears as though it's never been scuffed), or lightweight armor (it provides the character with armor that's much lighter, less cumbersome, and more breathable than any material known to law enforcement) (see accompanying sidebar).

The general public cannot buy Near-Magical Costume Material, but it tends to be readily available to superheroes. Superhero inventors help other heroes out by supplying quantities of the material, for instance, or the campaign may feature one or more NPCs who provide the material to a limited clientele (such as the character Edna Mode in the movie *The Incredibles*).

TEMPORARY CONCEALMENT

In a typical "four-color" Superhero setting, a superhero character, assuming he's normal human size and doesn't have extraordinary *Distinctive Features* (smells like a stockyard, trails tentacles out to a distance of ten yards behind him, or the like) can, under normal circumstances, throw a trench coat and a hat on over his costume and walk around on city streets without attracting too much attention. This is an especially appropriate technique for characters so mutated or scarred by their origins that they can't even be mistaken for human, yet who, driven by loneliness, must occasionally put on some heavy-weather garb and walk among humanity.

JUST ORDINARY CLOTHES

In some modern-day comics (and movies and television shows inspired by them), superpowered characters are often shown wearing more or less ordinary clothes instead of the stereotypical colorful hero costume. Partly this is driven by image and budget concerns — superhero costumes don't necessarily look as good on-screen as they do on the printed page, and are expensive to create and maintain — but partly, too, by more "Iron Age" perspectives on the genre. These stories often take a more "realistic" look at what superheroes and their powers would be like, and they reject the flashy, form-fitting costume in favor of affordable, easily-obtained ordinary clothes, stylistic (and perhaps protective) leathers, and the like.



DISCOVERY OF THE SECRET IDENTITY

One of the most dramatic and momentous events in a superhero's life is when someone — an enemy, a loved one, the entire world — somehow learns his Secret Identity. It's a situation filled with roleplaying and storytelling potential.

If a character's Secret Identity is "blown," what usually happens is that it converts to a Public Identity (which has the same Matching Complication value). Other Complications may change, or the GM may require him to pay Experience Points to buy them off. For example, a DNPC may decide he no longer wants to associate with the PC due to the dangers involved. Depending on the GM and the nature of the campaign, that could mean buying off the DNPC, changing it into an associated Psychological Complication, or the like.

However, if an NPC discovers a hero's Secret Identity, but the player of that PC's unwilling to give up his Social Complication: Secret Identity, the GM must find some way for the identity to remain secret — even if the NPC wants to publicize his discovery.

What this normally means is that an NPC who has discovered a hero's Secret Identity must be rendered harmless as a threat to that identity except for those occasions when he's an active part of a storyline involving that PC. Here are some classic ways to accomplish this:

"Who am I? What's going on?" Bad guys are just as susceptible to bump-on-the-head and traumatic-event amnesia as PCs, and the GM can solve any number of problems by having one go through some sort of memory-erasing injury... though of course, the NPC's amnesia fades whenever the GM wants to bring him back into the story, forcing the PC to find some way to re-induce the memory loss.

"I enjoy our little 'game' too much to end it so abruptly, MegaMan." There are many reasons why a villain might choose not to expose a PC's Secret Identity. This. For instance, if he exposes the PC's identity, someone else might choose to destroy the PC — a privilege the villain reserves for himself alone. A more complex situation might be that the NPC is in love with or has some other relationship with a friend or relative of the PC, and that individual might be hurt if the PC's identity is exposed. The NPC might even develop a grudging respect or other positive emotion toward the PC and decide to keep the secret of the identity out of a sense of friendship or fair play — there are honorable villains out there, after all.

"No one could have survived that!" The ultimate way to keep a villain from revealing a hero's Secret Identity is for that villain to die before he can tell anyone. This, of course, is what most players of heroes threatened with exposure hope for, and it happens on occasion. Though if published comics prove anything, it's that no truly memorable villain stays dead forever....

CAPTURED!

The situation becomes a bit more complicated if a hero in a superhero-unfriendly environment is captured and tried by the authorities — in that case, “realistically” speaking he’s certain to have his true identity revealed to the press as a matter of public record. This is a more difficult problem to resolve. Some ways to do it include:

“But he can’t be MegaMan, I’ve seen them

together!” The hero might find a way to convince the authorities and the public that they got it wrong — that they identified the wrong “innocent civilian” as his Secret Identity. (It certainly helps if the hero is able to set this up before and during his trial, such as by having a ringer [or a robot] take his place in his civilian life.)

“Now I must leave my old life behind forever.”

The character can keep his Secret Identity even after that identity is revealed if he takes on a different identity. Typically, he’ll have to change his appearance and forge details of his new identity, and there is that pesky problem with fingerprints and perhaps DNA being on file, but in some cases it’s a viable option... and a dramatic one.

“Maybe it’s time to see if the public can accept both MegaMan and Clyde Carruthers.”

The PC could decide to accept the consequences of the revelation of his identity. He might buy off the Social Complication: Secret Identity, making his identity unconcealed — thereafter, people occasionally recognize him in his civilian face and dress. Or he might convert it to the *Public Identity* form of Social Complication, suggesting that the notoriety of the revelation of his true name was so great he’s now instantly recognized wherever he goes.

UNREALISTIC VILLAINY

Though the career of superhero may seem inexplicably strange, that of the supervillain or criminal mastermind is even stranger. Some of those expressions of strangeness — as impractical, counterproductive, or foolish as they often seem to tactically-minded gamers — are as intrinsic to a Champions campaign setting as strapless costumes that never slip.

IMPROBABLE SCHEMES

Some supervillains are pretty practical-minded, but many are not — after all, a practical criminal probably wouldn’t put on a gaudy costume and duke it out with superheroes on a regular basis in the first place! They’re prone to bizarre crimes involving plots so complicated that Rube Goldberg himself couldn’t diagram them... but in a Superhero setting, they work! In one adventure the villain’s trying to steal a full-sized sphinx statue

from the museum because he’s stumbled across an ancient papyrus that lets him activate its magical powers; the next time he’s trying to steal every piece of jade jewelry in the city; after that he plans to kidnap five famous people born under the sign Gemini for use in some elaborate ritual. Every one of these crimes makes perfect sense in a typical Superhero setting... and in fact they may all be part of an even bigger, more convoluted scheme!

Some guidelines to keep in mind when planning supervillain crimes include:

A Clue, A Clue, My City For A Clue. More than a few supervillains are prone to deliberately leaving clues at the scene of their crimes. Sometimes these are indirect — puzzles, riddles, or conundrums the hero must figure out to learn the true meaning of the clue. Other times they’re simple and straightforward. A clue may be legitimate... or it may be a trick designed to lure the hero into a trap or put him on the trail of the wrong person.

And Now For Stage Two Of My Master Plan!

Many supervillain crimes take part in stages. Rather than stealing one thing, the villain needs to steal *several* things; rather than kidnapping one person he has a whole list of victims. Usually he needs all the objects for something (like a whole bunch of diamonds to build the emitter for his super-laser); sometimes they’re all parts of a mega-weapon or arcane artifact.

From a storytelling perspective, the multiple-part crime presents both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, they allow the GM to draw out the story with multiple encounters and clues, which gives the players the chance to figure out the plot themselves instead of simply relying on dice rolling and combat. On the other hand, what happens if one part of the overall scheme fails? The GM has to be prepared to deal with the consequences if the PCs stop the villain from obtaining Part 3 of his five-part super-weapon... or, even worse, the capture of the villain halfway through the adventure.

Variations On A Theme. “Theme crimes” — crimes based around a particular subject or event — are popular in some supervillain circles. Examples include thefts of objects depicting the subject (such as cat statues and paintings, Egyptian memorabilia, or rock music collectibles), crimes inspired by specific events or things (such as holidays or songs), and the like. Often the villains who commit them have the same motif for their costume or powers. For example, the supervillainess Penny Dreadful commits crimes inspired by or involving literature, and often dresses up like literary characters. At other times a non-themed villain gets into the act because he’s looking for one specific object among a group of them (as in the Sherlock Holmes story, “The Adventure of the Six Napoleons”), or has found a way to derive special profit from the theme.



DESTROYING THE WORLD

Some supervillains, not content with just causing damage or property loss in a localized area, decide to destroy the world. Horribly deformed mad scientists may wish to avenge their losses by taking out the entire world population; alien invaders might choose to kill everyone so they can terraform the Earth into something more to their liking; mad robots may decide to exterminate all organic life to satisfy their warped programming.

Of course, “destroying the world” doesn’t necessarily have to literally mean destroying it. It can instead involve *conquering* the world, or otherwise transforming it into a place people don’t want to, or can’t, live in. One supervillain might wish to put the entire world population under mind control, another to melt the polar ice and make the world a better place for a secret race of aquatic humanoids, and so on.

If a Champions campaign is of a certain scale — that is, the characters aren’t just champions of local justice, but have power enough to defend the world itself when it’s threatened — then the GM will inevitably throw at least one world-threatening plot at the PCs. Over the years, the PCs might oppose several of them. (In other campaigns, “the world” simply becomes “the city” or “the nation,” exposed to similar threats of somewhat lesser scale; in Galatic Champions it expands to “the solar system,” “the galaxy,” or the like.)

Guidelines to remember when executing world-destroying plotlines include:

Match The Villain To The Threat. Villains who can threaten the world should be larger than life, even by the standards of a superhero campaign. Don’t just put a planet-buster bomb in the hands of Dexter Maxwell, crime boss of Boise. Instead, transform Dexter into Megalopolis, the City Who Walks Like A Man, and give him grand schemes and plans forevermore.

Make It A Multi-part Story. Significant threats to an entire world shouldn’t be solved and overcome in a single game session — they should be more grandiose and story-generating than that! Put the destruction of the world on a timer and let the heroes sweat as the clock ticks down across several episodes. After all, any good plot to destroy the world probably has several sub-parts and consequences for the PCs to deal with... you just have to make sure their adversary achieves enough of his aims at each stage of the adventure that he can continue with his plans.

Demonstrate The Threat. The PCs won’t necessarily feel the danger if it’s simply an on-off switch (*i.e.*, the world is fine, the world is destroyed). Have the threat to the world be something the villain can demonstrate (for example, he uses his Earthquake Ray on the New Madrid Fault as an exhibition of his power) or a process that gets worse and worse over time (the atmospheric temperature of the Earth increases day by day,

HOW TO DESTROY THE WORLD

The methods by which supervillains can destroy or conquer the world are myriad — the only limitations are the GM’s imagination and what’s plausible within the confines of the campaign world. Some examples:

- Literally destroy the world — blow it up with Mega-Bombs, incinerate it with a MegaRay based on the Moon, have a Giant Space Amoeba eat it, and so on. Alternately, the villain can blackmail the world’s leaders with such a threat, demanding money or power as the price for not unleashing his scheme.
- Use psionic powers, magic, or orbital mind control satellites to take control of every human being (or at least the ones in power) (see page 232).
- Create enough robotic/undead/demonic/whatever minions to wipe out every living thing on the planet.
- Open a gateway to a nether dimension, unleashing demonic beings that kill every living being on the planet.
- Cause the Moon or asteroids to crash into Earth.
- Unleash a super-plague that ends all life on Earth (or, even better, forces everyone to kowtow to the villain to obtain the serum that keeps the plague from becoming lethal).
- Transform the air or plants into something that won’t support higher forms of life.
- Melt the polar ice caps to drown the world.
- Crack open the planet’s crust with an Earthquake Machine, causing devastating seismic activity and vulcanism (see page 232).
- Take control of all Earth governments through secretive behind-the-scenes manipulation (or perhaps contrive the start of a true world war involving nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons).
- Provoke a much more powerful alien or extradimensional species into attacking Earth.
- Increase the sun’s energy output to fry the world.
- Buy a small game company, then parley it into a world-dominating economic entity.
- Shift the Earth into an alternate, hostile dimension.



causing the ice caps to begin melting, animal species to begin to die, national infrastructures to fail as they can no longer keep up with power demands and medical needs...).

Don’t Forget The Rewards. In addition to keeping the world as a place where they can actually live, the PCs who defend the world might profit from an improvement to their reputations. Assuming the campaign isn’t set up to keep them in the roles of hated fugitives, the act of saving the world can turn a group of supers from costumed kooks to world-renowned heroes.

Don’t Do It Too Often. If every storyline involves a threat to the entire world, the PCs rapidly lose interest in lesser dangers. Street crime may become something that’s beneath them, and the notion of rescuing a kitten from a tree won’t even occur to them. The threat to the world is a plot device the GM should only invoke occasionally, and which will be better-appreciated for that.

There's no requirement that a Champions campaign feature threats to the entire world. A campaign might center around a single community and not operate at the scale where a world-destroying threat is appropriate. There's nothing wrong with this, and in such a campaign a threat to the entire community has the same basic emotional importance as a threat to the world would have in a larger-scale campaign.

COCKROACH DURABILITY

Despite their insane crimes and failed attempts to destroy the world, there's nothing as durable as a supervillain: beat him, lock him up, take away his powers, kill him, he'll probably come back for more. (If he's popular with both the GM and the players, he'll *definitely* come back for more.) Even if he truly, unquestionably is defeated/killed/cured, someone else will probably show up with his costume and *modus operandi* at a later time.

Among the ways a supervillain can return:

From Jail: Escapes; is paroled or pardoned (possibly through malfeasance, such as a bribe to the right person, or even through noble deeds, such as aiding the nation in a time of crisis); conviction overturned on a technicality.

From The Loss Of His Powers: Re-creates original accident/event that caused them; duplicates original powers through use of super-technology or magic; "heals" from whatever caused the loss; has a cosmically-powerful entity give them back to him for its own inscrutable purposes.

From Death: Wasn't really killed (substituted a double; wasn't really him in that adventure, but a doppelganger; convincingly faked his death); raised from the dead by supernatural forces; a new villain, possibly an admirer or relative, assumes his costume, powers and identity; had a power/ability previously unknown to the heroes that saved him/resurrected him.

It's perfectly all right to keep bringing a villain back after every defeat, so long as you follow three simple guidelines:

First, don't make the villain the star of the campaign. No single villain (or NPC) should dominate a campaign; it's not his name on the cover of the comic book, after all.

Second, note the difference between "hate" and "love-to-hate." The PCs may hate a villain while the players enjoy storylines involving that villain; that's what's referred to as a "villain we love to hate." But if the players actually dislike the villain, and become unhappy each time he returns, it's time to retire him — let his latest defeat be his last. (This has the additional advantage of showing the heroes that sometimes their victories are lasting ones.)

Third, make a villain's returns plausible. Don't just let him show back up, again and again, for no good reason. Have a coherent, reasonable explanation for each re-appearance — preferably one you've laid the groundwork for with some foreshadowing earlier in the campaign.

DAY JOBS

Most superheroes, even those without Secret Identities, have occupations that take up more of their time than their costumed antics. But most superheroes' jobs tend to be glamorous, interesting ones. (Roleplaying games tend to be about wish fulfillment, superhero games especially so — why not create a character with an interesting occupation?) The accompanying sidebar has a list of some of the most common ones seen in the comics.

JOB INTERFERENCE

Regardless of how glamorous a character's job is (and how much free time or control over his own schedule it gives him) or whether he maintains a Secret Identity, a character's job should sometimes interfere with his adventuring. This is true even if the character has the *Money Perk* — when a character's wealthy, people tend to try to take his wealth away by legal, extralegal, and downright illegal means. (Specious lawsuits are one favorite tactic.) A character's job should be a source of plots, subplots, and campaign color, not just a line on his character sheet.

This doesn't mean the GM should punish PCs for having jobs, just that he should introduce storylines involving each character's civilian jobs and lives, and those storylines should incorporate some reasonable demands made by the jobs on the character's time. No matter how flexible a character's work schedule, a job demands results. For example, a freelance songwriter may commit to writing the score for a movie, only to discover that a sudden crime wave keeps him hopping and unable to meet his obligations; a lawyer who specializes in research rather than court appearances may have an old friend or fellow superhero beg him to act as the primary lawyer in a trial, which temporarily turns his carefree work schedule into a difficult, regulated responsibility.

THE ACHILLES' HEEL

Though it's not one that Champions players always enjoy contemplating, it's something of an axiom for superheroes that no set of superpowers is perfect. Many heroes tend to have at least one power-related weakness or flaw that their enemies can exploit — and the more powerful the hero, the more potentially crippling the flaw. For example, Superman loses his powers in the presence of kryptonite, Green Lantern's power ring won't affect anything yellow (or in earlier versions, anything made of wood), and the enhanced senses that compensate for Daredevil's blindness also cause him to suffer disorientation and intense pain when he's subjected to sensory overload.

In dramatic terms, an Achilles' heel serves two purposes. First, it gives the writer a way to hinder or restrict a hero so complex stories can be told. That's one reason why the most powerful heroes

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TYPICAL SUPERHERO OCCUPATIONS

Actor
Architect
Artist/Craftsman
Astronaut
Athlete
Attorney
Businessman/
Financier
Doctor
Fashion model
Law enforcement
officer
Martial arts
instructor
Millionaire playboy/
Dilettante
Musician
Occultist
Private investigator
Reporter/Journalist
Scientist/Inventor
Secret agent/
Assassin
Test pilot
Writer

tend to have such weaknesses; without them it would be all too simple for the hero to mop up the opposition in just a few panels. Second, it helps to establish that the hero *is* a hero. Anyone with superpowers can do amazing things. But only a *hero* is willing to struggle against all the odds, despite the pain and difficulties he suffers because of his Achilles' heel, to see that Good wins and Justice triumphs. In short — a hero is a hero *because* of his Achilles' heel, not because he has superhuman powers.

In *HERO System* terms, a hero's "Achilles' heel" is typically represented by his Complications; Dependence, Susceptibility, and Vulnerability are especially useful in this regard. However, the Limitations on a character's powers may also represent his Achilles' heel.

FAR AWAY PLACES

Many superhero settings feature strange and exotic locales for the heroes to visit, often inhabited by mysterious and powerful entities.

SPACE

Many Superhero settings feature sentient alien species and inhabited planets other than Earth — after all, the first true superhero in the comics, Superman, is an alien himself. Sometimes the heroes go into outer space to visit other worlds, perhaps to pursue an alien supercriminal or act as ambassadors from Earth. At other times, aliens come to our planet, maybe in a spacecraft crash or as part of an invading armada.

If sentient aliens exist in the campaign, the GM needs to consider several issues:

How Technologically Advanced Are They? Typically, sentient alien species are depicted as having higher technology than Earth (that's how they get here before we get the chance to go to their world, after all). However, that doesn't necessarily have to be the case. Nor does there have to be only one standard — some aliens may be more advanced (perhaps *much* more advanced) than humanity, while others are beneath mankind on the ladder of technological evolution. Some may even have "evolved" completely differently, with an emphasis on, say, biological or crystalline technology instead of electrical devices.

How Much Contact With Earth? How much contact has taken place between Earth and alien species generally (and important species in particular)? Do aliens occasionally visit Earth in secret to kidnap and impregnate women, or appear only to people on isolated rural roads to sow seeds of doubt and fear? Or have they established diplomatic relations and built embassies? Is there regular trade with alien species (and if so, how has it affected Earth's technology and economies)? Does the average human know of and acknowledge the existence of aliens, or do they remain supermarket tabloid fodder?

Similarly, the GM should determine each alien species's attitude toward Earth/humans. Are the aliens friendly or hostile — bent on peaceful interaction or invasion? Are they primarily interested in cultural and scientific exchanges, or do they want humans to buy their goods, or would they prefer to wipe out humanity and colonize Earth themselves?

Are They Superpowered? For a Champions game, it's important to consider whether aliens can have superpowers the way humans can. Are alien species subject to radiation accidents and mutation, can they use magic, do they build supergadgets? In some superhero settings, humanity is unique in its capacity for superpowers, giving it an "edge" in a universe inhabited by species who mostly have much better technology than Earth does. In others, any sentient race could develop superpowers (though sometimes humans seem to have a stronger predilection for acquiring them than other species do). Sometimes humans keep certain types of powers (*e.g.*, magic) to themselves, while other types of powers are freely available to all.

ALTERNATE DIMENSIONS

Similar in many respects to outer space, alternate dimensions present a wealth of storytelling and plot development opportunities for the GM. They range from "alternate Earths" where most of the details are the same but a few crucial ones differ (the PCs are all villains, and their enemies are heroes; the Nazis won World War II, or the South won the Civil War; dinosaurs evolved to sentience), to dimensions so different from Earth's that it's surprising they can exist in the same continuum. Since the number of alternate dimensions is, at least in theory, infinite, so are the number of characters and plots GMs can create from them — assuming the players don't get tired of an endless diet of cross-dimensional capers.

The considerations for alternate dimensions are the same as those for outer space: how much contact is there; how do the heroes get there; what are the inhabitants of the other dimensions' intentions toward Earth? The main difference is that in the comics, dimensional travel tends to be more the province of mystics and manipulators of magic, rather than science. Dimension-breaching devices are certainly possible, but typically adventures that involve travel to alternate planes of existence allow the super-mage, rather than the gadgeteer, to shine.

The GM should also consider whether, and to what extent, the laws of physics that apply on Earth apply in an alternate dimension. They do in space, but you could easily create an alternate dimension where gravity works differently, where there are no planets but just large floating chunks of land, where the laws of magic replace the laws of physics, or anything else your imagination can conceive. Some dimensions may be so inimical to human life that the PCs can only survive there thanks to their superpowers or super-tech life support suits.



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HIDDEN LANDS

Traditional comic book settings tend to be replete with *hidden lands* — corners of the globe where humans cannot go (or have extreme difficulty getting to) and alternate civilizations have developed somehow. Some common examples include:

Antarctica: In the comics, the Antarctic usually has at least one hidden valley that's warmed to temperate (or even tropical) levels by volcanic activity, technology left behind by ancient alien visitors, or the like. Alternately, civilizations of cold-resistant sentient beings may have evolved separately from humanity to live in caverns, gigantic ice-caves, or the like.

Atlantis: A staple of every major comic book setting, Atlantis is an undersea civilization, typically located somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean. In some settings its residents are magically powerful; in others they possess super-technology far more advanced than humanity's. In many cases Atlanteans remain sufficiently human to cross-breed with "air-breathers," perhaps producing superpowered children due to positive genetic interaction.

Gorilla Kingdom: Any Superhero setting is better with talking gorillas! The Gorilla Kingdom is a hidden city or valley in Africa where the intelligent apes dwell in seclusion from humanity, often developing super-science that puts their hairless cousins to shame.

Lemuria: A Pacific or Indian Ocean counterpart to Atlantis in most cases, Lemuria is often depicted as an enemy of both Atlantis and the surface world. Even if that's not the case, it's usually very different from Atlantis in some way — it uses magic where Atlanteans use technology, for

example, or its people come from a markedly different racial stock.

Lost Worlds: The Pulp from which the comics evolved were rich with long-lost civilizations located in isolated areas of the world — Romans or Amazons in the African jungle, surviving tribes of Neanderthals in Siberia, the list is almost endless. These "lost worlds" have frequently appeared in the comics as well, where they've survived because they have powerful technology or magic.

Super-Civilizations: In some Superhero settings there are tiny, hidden civilizations where *every* member has superpowers. The GM has to explain why they isolate themselves (perhaps because they fear being exploited, or they dislike humanity [but not to the extent they want to exterminate them]), and how they got their powers. Often every member of the society has a common origin, such as all being descended from a tribe of Cro-Magnons who were genetically manipulated by strange alien scientists.

Other possibilities include Sheba, the Lost Tribes of Israel, the Kingdom of Prester John, New World Vikings, dinosaur-men, ancient Egyptians, the Hittites, the Maya, the Aztecs, Shangri-La, Hy-Brasil, the Scythians — just about any intriguing mythical, legendary, or historical civilization!

Regardless of what type of hidden worlds you feature, the story considerations for them are much the same as for aliens. How much contact do "regular" humans have with the hidden land. Is it peaceful, hostile, or does it vary from year to year? How do humans and the residents of the hidden land feel about one another?

SUPER-MAGIC AND MYSTICISM

Most published comic book settings include as part of their background the existence of magic. In these worlds, magic is real, and characters can manipulate it. Some are powerful wizards, able to cast many types of spells based on natural talent and/or long years of study; other characters may have mystic superpowers bestowed on them by the gods, or obtained via a magical “radiation” accident, bonding with a spirit, or making a pact with a Higher (or Lower) Power.

The existence of magic implies certain things about a comic book superheroes setting, generally speaking. First, it usually means there are alternate dimensions, possibly an infinite number of them, many inhabited or controlled by beings who can manipulate magic. Some of those beings (such as demons) may threaten Earth or its inhabitants from time to time; others are high-omnipotent dimensional conquerors able to take on entire squads of superhumans.

Second, it suggests that many old legends and myths — and the gods and heroes who inhabit them — are real (and the gods may be the earliest superhumans). While mundane scientists may scoff at such tales, the PCs know the truth. This opens the door for ancient cults with insidious agendas, PCs who are the modern-day avatars of ancient pagan deities, and long-lost talismans to be a part of the campaign.

When deciding whether magic exists in his campaign, and if so how it functions, the GM should consider the following issues:

Does Magic Really Exist? If the answer is “No,” you’re shutting off a lot of possible character origins, plotlines, and story hooks, but this option may lead to other interesting avenues for the campaign to explore. For example, if there’s no magic, what’s the source of superpowers for characters who *think* they have magic powers?

If the answer is “Yes,” the GM needs to consider the remaining questions in this section.

Where Does Magic Come From? Is there just one source of magic — does it involve gifts of power from higher beings, or the tapping of some weird extradimensional energy, or drawing on reserves of personal magical energy innate to every sentient being, or always require talismans (*i.e.*, Foci)? Or are there multiple possible sources of magic? If there’s just one source, that does a lot to help the GM define what magic-using characters in the game are like, but it cuts off many possibilities. Multiple sources make for a more diverse Mystic World, but may not make mystic abilities seem distinctive from plain old vanilla superpowers.

Who Can Learn Magic, And How? Does all magic involve chanted spells, learned only by certain naturally talented persons (perhaps from the same family or bloodline) after years of study and practice? Or does every sentient being have the ability

to learn and use at least some magics fairly easily? The easier magic is to learn and use, the more of an effect it has on the campaign — it’s possible to create a Champions game set in a world where high technology never developed because magic took its place, for example.

In most comic book settings, magic is a rare thing, learnable only by a relatively few people with special gifts, a particularly high amount of personal discipline, or the like. As such, it’s a very secretive thing; its existence isn’t bandied about casually, for people are superstitious and fearful. Mystic heroes often have to go to extreme lengths to keep the mind-warping secrets of magic from the populace, who couldn’t stand the eldritch strain.

Who Are The “Big Players” In The Magical World?

A comic book setting with magic almost always features some major-league villains with mystic powers. Some are human sorcerers with decades (perhaps centuries) of learning and experience under their belts. Others are extradimensional entities, often inimical to Earth or humanity for some specific reason (perhaps they want to tap the vast magical energies that make Earth a special place, or they’re infuriated by humanity’s continued success at resisting their attempts at conquest), ancient fallen gods of evil, families with a knack for the Secret Sciences, or the like.

SUPER-MAGIC

Magic spells in the Superhero genre usually are very different from spells in Fantasy or other genres. They have flashy names (often alliterative). They have even flashier effects; some of them make the gaudiest superhero costume look plain. Lastly, they’re fairly easy for super-mages to learn (in game terms, learning a new spell usually just means adding a slot to, or defining a new power for, a Power Framework).

Although comic book spellcasters often wave their hands and spout mystic phrases when casting spells, this is as much for effect as anything; when push comes to shove, they don’t *have* to Gesture or use Incantations. Thus, they don’t usually take those Limitations on their powers, but they can if they wish.

Here are a few example spells; you can find some others in the discussion of the *Mystic* archetype on pages 87 and 272.

Iskari’s Invoked Iridescence: Sight and Hearing Group Flash 7d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½). Total cost: 60 points.

The Lucent Lightnings Of The Loyal Larethian: RKA 2½d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼). Total cost: 60 points.

Mantle Of Mastery: Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED/10 Mental Defense/10 Power Defense). Total cost: 60 points.

Vigor Of The Valdar: Aid Magic 5d6, Variable Effect (any Magic Characteristic or Power one at a time; +½), Ranged (+½). Total cost: 60 points.

Wings Of The Zephirim: Flight 40m, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½). Total cost: 60 points.

SECRET SOCIETIES

A superhero world is full of secret societies — some heroic, some villainous, many straddling that fence as they pursue specific agendas. In adding detail to a campaign world, the GM can add any number of secret societies. Since they are, in theory, secret, the GM need reveal their existence to the players only as the PCs discover them; at any given time, any number of such societies can await discovery.

Some examples of secret societies include:

Modern-era continuations of ancient orders: The Templars, the Scholomance school of sorcery, the Teutonic Knights, priesthoods of various mythological gods, the Inquisition — any of them can have survivors or descendants in the modern-day Superhero world. (In some cases, such as the Knights of Malta or the Jesuits, there *are* modern-day continuations of such orders, but the GM can create splinter groups with more extreme histories or agendas.)

Seekers of mystical knowledge: Occultist groups that wish to learn the universe's magical secrets are as common as Boy Scout troops in many comic book worlds. Some are benign, some malevolent, and some neutral but with an unfortunate tendency to accidentally release ancient horrors on the world.

Super-science enclaves: Nothing gets in the way of advanced research than all those niggling details of daily life, like unexpected visitors, government inspectors, and safety regulations. So groups dedicated to the unfettered advancement of Science and Technology may form secret groups with headquarters in isolated locations where they can pursue their work without interference... or, perhaps, any concern for scientific ethics.

SUPER-AGENCIES

Supervillains and criminal masterminds who need some additional muscle often dedicate millions of dollars to building up small private armies of super-agents. Almost invariably, they equip these super-agents with garish costumes (distinct from superhero costumes in that they're all alike) and weapons that can inconvenience (and, in circumstances involving massed attacks) even overcome superheroes. In the Champions Universe, VIPER is the best example of this sort of criminal organization, but there are many others from all sorts of Superhero settings.

Similarly, governments in Superhero settings often create super-agencies of their own — Marvel Comics's SHIELD is perhaps the best-known example of this, but it's far from the only one. Law-enforcing super-agencies usually spend a lot of their time fighting their criminal counterparts, but they may also take on mundane crime, world-threatening supervillains, and similar threats.

For the most part, it's not really important to delve into the psychology or individual identities of criminal super-agents. You can assume they're recruited from the nation's prisons and criminal underworlds and paid enough to overcome any possible reluctance to work for someone who pits them against superheroes and might even kill one or more of them just to make a point. As with so much else in the Superhero genre, looking at it too closely spoils the fun.

See page 164 for more discussion of villainous agencies, and page 289 for a “generic” agent character sheet you can use in your Champions campaign.

CHAMPIONS SUBGENRES



Like any other major genre of adventure fiction, the Superhero genre has subgenres. But compared to most genres there's a lot of similarities between them — a Golden Age, late Bronze Age, and Galactic Champions game may tell very different stories, but the themes, tropes, and elements tend to remain almost identical and to be easily recognized from one genre to the next. (In contrast, two Fantasy or Science Fiction stories can be so different that they have virtually nothing in common beyond the barest foundations of the genre.)

Broadly speaking, Superhero subgenres tend to fall into one of two categories. The first is subgenres built around a particular type of character or adventure, such as Teen Champions, Galactic Champions, or Mystic Champions.

The second, and more common in gaming, are subgenres defined by the *periods* or eras of comic books. Traditionally, superhero comic books have been set in recognizable periods of Earth history, and those periods have usually had consistent, recognizable characteristics you can adapt to a *HERO System* campaign. Most superhero comic books, and consequently most campaigns designed to simulate them, are set on Earth sometime between the start of World War II in 1939 and the present day. These campaigns usually draw a considerable amount of inspiration from the real-world events that took place in the appropriate periods. Campaigns set in the Forties are heavily influenced by World War II; campaigns set in the Sixties are influenced by the social upheavals of that era; and so on. Each "Age," as they're known, has its own features, advantages, and disadvantages for gaming purposes.

This section discusses the various Superhero subgenres, beginning with the Ages in chronological order, followed by the more theme-oriented ones.

DEFINING COMIC BOOK PERIODS

The periods used in *Champions* to define different eras of comic book history for gaming — the Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Iron Ages — aren't necessarily the same as those adopted by comics historians, because (a) the needs of gaming and of comic books aren't necessarily identical, and (b) not all comics historians share the same opinions on various stages of comics history. For example, some historians disagree as to exactly when the Silver Age ended, or whether there's been a Bronze Age *and* an Iron Age, or if the Silver just segues into the Bronze and we haven't reached an Iron Age yet. (There's also some question about whether, as of the date of writing of this book, the Iron Age has changed to something else — but since historical trends can't be properly analyzed while you're in the middle of them, *Champions* sticks to just four "Age" subgenres.) Each serious student and fan of the genre probably has own ideas on the subject. So, if you want to run a campaign set in the late 1970s and call it an *Iron Age Champions* campaign, based on your own opinions about the subject or the nature of the campaign, feel free. After all, even today, in the twenty-first century, some companies publish comics that have more of the tone of the Silver Age than the Iron Age.

The use of the terms Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Iron shouldn't be construed as a comment on the relative quality of comics in the different periods. They're just convenient designations, used by long custom. Each period has its gems, and each its trash.

THE GOLDEN AGE

The so-called Golden Age of Comics takes place in the period of roughly 1938 to the mid-1950s. This was the birth and infancy of the comics, and of the concept of the superhero, so by modern standards the characters and stories often seem simplistic, absurd, or atypical. Nevertheless, they also possess a certain charm and wonder unaffected by all that the genre later added or evolved into. A Golden Age Champions campaign can have a sort of purity to it that campaigns set in later Ages lack... or it can take a more modern gloss and embroil the PCs in World War II espionage and scheming.

GOLDEN AGE ELEMENTS

Golden Age Champions stories often concern themselves with these events, elements, and trends:

WORLD WAR II

In the 1920s and 1930s, Fascist organizations — groups devoted to the idea that the nation or race was the only thing that was important — gained power in nations such as Japan, Germany, Italy, and Spain. Eventually the expansionist natures of some of these nations brought them into conflict with surrounding countries, with war breaking out in Asia in the early 1930s and in Europe in September 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. In December 1941, Japan's attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii brought the United States into the war.

Naturally, the existence and nature of the war affected all forms of entertainment, and that included the comics. In Superhero comics (and thus gaming campaigns), adventures prior to the advent of the war often bring heroes into conflict with the superpowered representatives and spies of the Fascist nations and their allies. When war begins, but prior to the US involvement, some supers go overseas to fight the aggressor nations; when the US does enter the war, the majority of American supers find a way to contribute to the war effort, either by banding together to fight the supers and other threats of the Fascist states or by joining the armed forces and becoming part of military-sponsored special superhero units.

INCORPORATING WORLD WAR II INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the World War II element:

Learn Your History: Read up on the historical events and social changes that took place in the real world in the 1930s and 1940s. You don't have to become an armchair expert, but it's important to have some grasp of the period. By studying it you'll be able to present a more compelling,

realistic game atmosphere, and to steep your characters and adventures in the cultural, clothing, music, architectural, and engineering differences between then and now. You might even put music of the period on your CD or MP3 player during games, have period movies playing (with the sound turned off) on the TV, and so on. A grasp of the history of the time also allows you to set adventures around important or interesting events.

But Don't Make Your Players Suffer For Your Research:

The downside of doing a fair amount of research into a specific time period is that you may unintentionally inflict too much of it on your players. For instance, it's enough to tell them, when cars are speeding by on the road outside, about their size and blockiness, their running boards and hood ornaments, and the characteristics that differentiate them from modern cars. It's especially fun to have the PCs encounter a car made by a manufacturer no longer in business in the modern era... but it's going too far to sideline the game with any amount of detail that doesn't pertain to the adventure at hand.

The Home Front Versus The Front Lines: Golden Age Champions campaigns often focus on one of two "theaters of operation:" the home front back in the US; or the front lines of the war in Europe (or the Pacific). Adventures in the former pit the heroes against spies, Fifth Columnists, Nazi saboteurs, and attacks by Axis supervillains against American targets. In some cases the government, or some other force, may deliberately prevent superheroes from participating in pitched battles for some reason. Front line adventures, on the other hand, often take on the feel of military action or "special forces" adventures where the heroes not only use their powers against Axis soldiers and tanks, but often perform special missions behind enemy lines to destroy Axis factories, bridges, and other resources that ordinary soldiers can't get to.

BLACK AND WHITE MORALITY

One of the most significant differences between comic books of the Forties and those of today is that there were comparatively few moral dilemmas to confound the heroes. The Axis Powers (Germany, Japan, and their allies) and various villains were the Bad Guys; the Allies (the US, the United Kingdom, and their allies) and the heroes were the Good Guys; every right-minded person knew Right from Wrong, and moral quandaries were few. (Real-world historical events where the governments' choices were highly questionable, such as the interment of innocent Japanese-Americans in camps, generally weren't part of the comic book environment.) It was a time of war, so Codes Versus Killing were comparatively rare, even among superheroes (though heroes still only killed in battle; they were never cold-blooded killers).

PULP HEROES AND MYSTERY MEN

Prior to the advent of the superhero in the comic books, his role was largely occupied by the “Pulp hero.” Pulp heroes were essentially superheroes, though most lacked one or more of the traits of superheroes — some wore no costumes, some had no truly superhuman powers. Many were vigilantes operating outside the law, and instead of teaming up with other Pulp heroes at their own level of accomplishment, they worked alone or with support teams of somewhat less powerful heroes. The Shadow, the Spider, Doc Savage, the Black Bat, and the Phantom Detective are just a few of the hundreds of colorful crimefighters who graced the Pulp pages... and in time gave birth to the superhero.

The adventures of the Pulp heroes were published in text form from the early part of the twentieth century up to the mid-Fifties. (Paper shortages and competition from the comic books, which offered the same sort of entertainment but used less paper, eventually killed the hero pulps as a publishing industry.)

In the real world, despite the similarities of the characters and their adventures, crossover interaction between the heroes of the Pulp magazines and the superheroes of the comic books was rare. In later decades, writers and artists who were fond of both sorts of entertainment found ways to bring those two types of characters together. Comic books featuring the old Pulp heroes were produced, and those heroes began interacting, usually in a Thirties or Forties setting, with the superheroes of their time period.

In a Golden Age Champions campaign, some of the PCs could be Pulp heroes who’ve been adventuring for many years before the true advent of the age of superheroes. The *Pulp Hero* genre book has all the information you need to design a thrilling and authentic Pulp character.

INCORPORATING PULP HEROES INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here’s some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the Pulp heroes and mystery men element:

Research Hero Pulps: The adventures of pulp heroes such as Doc Savage, the Shadow, and the Spider were extensively reprinted in paperback form starting in the Sixties and can easily be found. Reading a few of these will give a GM a sense of the lurid, action-filled world in which Pulp heroes did their crimefighting. Hero Games’s genre book *Pulp Hero* provides extensive coverage of the genre and its characters, and can serve as a good starting point for your researches.

Consider Different Design Rules for Pulp Heroes:

Characters who are supposed to be Pulp heroes, especially those who have been adventuring for years before the dawn of the superhero, should have some Complications and some character benefits superheroes don’t have to worry about. For example, Pulp heroes should be able to buy a greater number of career-related Perks (such

PULP HERO POWERS

Pulp heroes tend to emphasize Skills, Perks, and Talents instead of Powers. They may have a few weird abilities bought as Powers (not to mention weapons!), but what sets them apart from true superheroes is their training and learning. Here are some sample abilities for Pulp heroes in your Golden Age Champions campaign; see pages 264-96 of *Pulp Hero* for dozens more.

Animal Empathy: The character has a natural gift for relating to animals; even the fiercest of them seem to like him and treat him deferentially.

The *Animal Friendship* Talent (6E1 110). Total cost: 20 points.

Door-Smashing Fists: The character’s enormous fists are strong and tough enough to smash down the strongest doors... and men!

HA +4d6 (20 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½). Total cost: 11 points.

Facial Manipulation: The character has such fine control over his facial muscles that he can use them to alter the shape of his face, making him look just like someone else.

Shape Shift (Sight, Touch, and Hearing Groups, any human face), Imitation (33 Active Points); Facial Features And Voice Only (-1), Extra Time (1 Minute to activate; -¾). Total cost: 12 points.

Fade Into Shadow: The character is so stealthy that he becomes practically invisible whenever he’s in a patch of darkness or shadow large enough to cover his body.

Invisibility to Sight Group (20 Active Points); Limited Effect (Normal Sight only; -¼), Chameleon (-½), Requires A Stealth Roll (-½), Only In Shadows/Darkness (-½). Total cost: 7 points.

Genius Insight: The character has a certain gift of insight he can apply to the problems that confront him. It’s not universally reliable, but it usually seems to come in handy at crucial points during an adventure.

+5 with All Noncombat Skills (50 Active Points); Activation Roll 14- (-¼), 1 Charge (-2), Only Applies To Knowledge/Wisdom-Related Rolls, Not To Physical Actions (-1). Total cost: 12 points.

Heroic Intimidation: So steely is the character’s gaze, so intense his demeanor, that his stare can unnervingly even the most hardened criminal.

+4 with Interaction Skills (16 Active Points); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Only To Intimidate (-1). Total cost: 6 points.

Hypnotic Powers: The character has the power to hypnotize others. You can buy this as either Basic Hypnosis or Master Hypnosis (see the sidebar on 6E1 257).

as Contacts) and Combat Skill Levels than the new generation of superheroes to begin with — a reflection of their years of experience. You may decide Pulp heroes can buy Bases and take the *Money* Perk while superheroes cannot. All these choices will, in the campaign, demonstrate the differences between these two types of characters, but will give each special advantages the other does not possess.





LIMITED CHARACTER TYPES

Since the Superhero genre was young and still evolving during the Golden Age, not all of the classic superhero archetypes (see Chapter Two) are common, or even exist. The *Powered Armor* archetype hasn't developed yet; Gadgeteers tend to be rare. Mentalists who aren't primarily Mystics are also rare, and most of them are villains rather than heroes. Martial Artists are mostly Pulp-style heroes who've studied the mysterious fighting arts of the Orient — in effect, having non-Western Martial Arts is a “superpower” in and of itself.

NORMAL VILLAINS

In the careers of many Golden Age (and early Silver Age) heroes, superpowered criminals — supervillains — were rare, or even nonexistent, opponents. The average foe tended to be a relatively “ordinary” human criminal or soldier. A few of the enemies were as colorful as the heroes — “super”villains with distinctive garb and *modus operandi*, in other words — but they didn't usually have superpowers. They might be mad scientists, or have themed weapons and gadgets based around some motif, but that was as far as it went. Some of the superheroes so outmatched their usual enemies that the trick was not in defeating them — it was in figuring out who to defeat. Rooting out the names and headquarters of a band of masked bank robbers was the hard part; once that was done, a single blow to each one not smart enough to surrender usually sufficed to end the crime spree.

Of course, gaming sometimes differs from its source material, and this is a good example of

that phenomenon. Most Golden Age Champions campaigns feature plenty of superpowered villains, and there's no reason yours can't, too, if you want them.

THE SUPERHERO GAP

In the late Forties and early Fifties, superhero comics went into decline, with most of the old favorite heroes fading away as their books were cancelled due to poor sales. It wasn't until the mid-Fifties that superhero comics underwent a resurgence that's lasted, essentially, to this day. Comics writers of later decades have sometimes tried to explain this dearth of superheroes in continuity terms — for example, by suggesting that most superheroes were killed in the war (or chose to retire after it, wanting to spend time with family and friends).

Another popular explanation is that anti-Communist agitation drove them underground. Starting in 1950, Senator Joseph McCarthy initiated a crusade against alleged Communist infiltrators of the US government. On the other side of the Capitol, the House Committee on Un-American Activities (usually known as “HUAC”), was involved in a lengthy investigation of alleged Communist influence on Hollywood. His and HUAC's investigations led to the black-listing of many prominent citizens, including many notable Hollywood celebrities. In 1954, the broadcast of one of McCarthy's hearings demonstrated the irrational nature of the investigations and turned public sentiment against him (and to a lesser extent against HUAC); late in the year, he was censured by the Senate, his power effectively

broken. But during the first half of the Fifties, his actions had a chilling effect on American freedom, one which definitely could have affected superheroes and their activities by causing them to either (a) maintain a super-patriotic, anti-Communist persona, (b) make their activities as secret as possible, (c) oppose McCarthy directly, or (d) some or all of the above.

However you explain it, you might want to consider working “the superhero gap” into your campaign as an element, or accounting for it in the timeline of a campaign set in a later era.

SUPERHUMANS AND AUTHORITY

Aside from the war effort, the government doesn't get intimately involved in most Golden Age adventures. The authorities welcome the assistance of superheroes, and don't question their motivations, heroism, or patriotism; they recognize that the heroes are working toward the same goals they are. In some cases costumed heroes become, or are regarded as, deputized law enforcement officers.

Typically, Golden Age stories portray public officials as idealized figures — the “real heroes” who fight evil without superpowers. Whether they're real men (like President Roosevelt or J. Edgar Hoover) or their fictional counterparts, governmental leaders are trustworthy, supportive of superheroes, and admirable men.

HIGHER-POWERED GOLDEN AGE ADVENTURES

While it's true that the typical Golden Age superhero was less powerful (and in game terms, more simply built) than his modern-day brethren, not *all* superheroes of the time fit that mold entirely. The Golden Age is the time when heroes like Superman, the Spectre, Green Lantern, and Captain Marvel were created, and even if their Forties incarnations weren't quite as powerful as they later became, they still put most superheroes of that Age (and even later Ages) to shame.

Thus, you're not totally violating the subgenre if you have a Golden Age Champions campaign with higher-powered heroes — for example, High-Powered Superheroic characters built on 500 Total Points (including 75 Matching Points from Complications). However, the GM needs to tread carefully and make sure the players are in accord with the nature of the subgenre. Given PCs of such power, the first thing many players start to think about is, “Why don't we just go win the War for the Allies right now?”. Higher-powered heroes can quickly leave historical events in the dust, depriving the GM of a potent source of adventure ideas and forcing him into creating an alternate history setting for his campaign.

GOLDEN AGE CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGNS

Golden Age Champions campaigns are usually Low-Powered Superheroic games. Player Characters are built on 300 Total Points (with 60 points of Matching Complications). Sometimes characters are built on even fewer Total Points; in particular, the GM may want Pulp hero or “mystery man” type characters to be built as Powerful or Very Powerful Heroic characters. Characters typically have around 40-60 Active Points in most powers, CVs of 6-10, and SPDs of 3-6.

Golden Age Champions characters typically do not have to comply with a Characteristic Maximum, and they have to pay Character Points for any equipment or other items they want (like usual for Superheroic campaigns). However, in some cases the GM prefers to institute a Maximum and give characters standard equipment “for free” instead. This is particularly appropriate for lower-powered Golden Age campaigns that aren't much different from Pulp campaigns.

PLAYING IN A GOLDEN AGE CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

If you're playing in a Golden Age Champions campaign, it's important to create and play your character so that you help the GM emulate the Golden Age “feel” and themes.

KEEP THE POWERS SIMPLE

The Golden Age was a time when characters didn't have tremendously complicated and elaborate arrays of powers, nor did most of them have the level of power enjoyed by some superheroes starting in the Sixties. In fact, some of them didn't even have superpowers at all. The Golden Age Atom's “superpowers” were that he was short, tough, and could box. The Golden Age Wildcat's “superpower” were that he was of normal height, tough, and could box. Many of their colleagues likewise got by on good ol' American moxie (and perhaps a weapon or gadget or two) rather than true superpowers.

Even when a character has actual superpowers, he may not have very many of them. At this early stage of the genre, just being super-strong and bulletproof, or just able to fly, or just able to turn invisible, or just able to fire an energy beam, was enough to make someone a powerful, effective hero. Many Golden Age Champions character sheets list only one or two superpowers. Multipowers are much rarer than in other Champions subgenres (and even when allowed shouldn't have more than half a dozen slots *at most*); Variable Power Pools are practically nonexistent (and require the GM's permission). Most powers, particularly most Attack Powers, have only one Advantage, if any.



RETRO VERSUS PERIOD STORYTELLING

The text describing the Golden and Silver Ages, and to a lesser extent the other Ages before the present day, talks about properly emulating the history and “feel” for gaming purposes. However, GMs and players should keep in mind the difference between “Period” and “Retro” campaigns.

A *Period* Golden or Silver Age campaign is the sort most emphasized in the main text. It means trying to run and play the campaign as if it were a comic book story from that time period, without regard to modern perspectives. Efforts are made to ensure accuracy in both historical events and genre tropes/themes.

A *Period* campaign has the benefit of being a purist approach, but also some difficulties. First, unless everyone in the group’s equally interested in maintaining the campaign’s feel, the effort to be accurate in both history and genre may sap some of the fun out of the game. Maintaining that level of attention to detail can become wearing after awhile. Second, not all “pure” aspects of the period subgenres are acceptable or admirable by modern standards. For example, in a *Period* Golden Age Champions campaign, there shouldn’t be any minority superheroes, and superheroines should be marginalized compared to their male counterparts.

A *Retro* Golden or Silver Age campaign is one in which the GM and players attempt to emulate the style of an earlier Age of comic books, but without totally ignoring their modern perspective. To put it another way, they try to get the best, most fun aspects of the Golden/Silver Age while ignoring anything they find objectionable. For example, there can be minority heroes and important heroines, characters can become more complex in both personality and powers, and the goofiness gets toned down. Think of it as mixing in some Bronze (or even Iron) Age touches to make an earlier-Age game more enjoyable and familiar to the modern gamer.

Most modern comics that depict the Golden or Silver Ages are far more “Retro” than “Period.” Marvel’s *Invaders* and DC’s *All-Star Squadron* are two good examples. More recently, Kurt Busiek’s *Astro City* provides an excellent example of this sort of thing. The events and periods the series looks at, and some of the characters it features, have a very Silver/Bronze Age tone. But its perspective — looking at things from the point of view of the “average man” rather than the heroes, examining characters’ psychologies and motivations, “realistic” stories, and the like — is very much an Iron Age one. On the other hand, Image’s *1963* mini-series is a loving homage to the early Silver Age comics that might inspire a more “Period” gaming campaign (albeit one heavy on the goofiness and camp).

KEEP THE ATTITUDES SIMPLE, TOO

In most cases, Golden Age characters’ attitudes are just as simple and straightforward as their powers. That’s not to say they can’t be fascinatingly complex individuals, but this is the Golden Age. Right is Right and Wrong is Wrong; a hero can easily tell one from the other and knows he has to fight to uphold the Right. There’s no moral ambiguity, mental anguish over whether he’s doing the “right thing,” or any other such modern nonsense.

Even if you choose to play a Pulp hero-style character, this guideline still applies. Although Pulp heroes are often more complex, darker, and “grittier” than Golden Age superheroes, they’re still simple and easily understood compared to more modern characters. Right is still Right, and Wrong is still Wrong, and it’s easy to tell which side of the line Pulp heroes fall on — even if, unlike their superpowered colleagues, they tend to do their crimefighting with thundering automatics and martial arts powers learned in the mysterious Orient.

CONSIDER PLAYING PATRIOTS AND SIDEKICKS

Two types of characters who were tremendously popular in the wartime comic books, but who gradually decreased in numbers in later decades, were the flag-wearing super-patriot and the sidekick. By playing one of them, you can not only emphasize the subgenre, but try a type of character you might not otherwise have the opportunity to play.

The flag-wearing character, or Patriot (see page 94), had a costume incorporating many elements of the flag of his nation. There was no standard for the types of abilities possessed by this sort of character, though most were at best only slightly superhuman (possessing the strength and reflexes of championship athletes rather than the ability to lift yachts or bounce bullets off their skin).

Sidekicks were the junior partners of more established characters. They were often younger than their partners (most were teenagers) and most wore costumes that were variations on their partners’ outfits. Some even had powers that were less formidable versions of their partners’. At first glance, there seems to be no up-side to playing a sidekick character, since they appear to be in all ways inferior versions of their partners, but this isn’t necessarily the case. Sidekicks were often underestimated by the bad guys (a consideration for the GM), giving them more opportunities to escape or act without interference, and there’s always the advantage associated with playing a lower-powered character: they do not have to take, or suffer from, as many Complications.

THE SILVER AGE

Beginning in the mid-1950s, superhero comics underwent a resurgence after several years of flagging interest, and this began the second period of comics: the *Silver Age*. Most superhero historians and fans date the beginning of the Silver Age to the publication of *Showcase #4* by DC Comics in October, 1956; this issue introduced the new version of the Flash (thus kicking off the “second generation” trend discussed below). Of particular note during this period was the rise to prominence of Marvel Comics under the editorship of Stan Lee, whose tenure saw the creation of such now-iconic characters as the Fantastic Four, Spider-Man, Iron Man, the X-Men, and the Avengers.

Running until the early 1970s, the Silver Age is an intriguing blend of the two periods that bracket it. On the one hand, it retained, especially early on, the relative lightheartedness and simplicity that characterizes the Golden Age; on the other, as time went by, the social issues that help to define the Bronze Age perspective began to influence Silver Age stories. It's during this period that some of the best known, and most archetypical, superheroes were first introduced, and when sophisticated writing and plotting began to appear in the “funnybooks.”

SILVER AGE ELEMENTS

Silver Age Champions stories often concern themselves with these events, elements, and trends:

LIGHTEARTEDNESS

In this more comfortable time, the creators of comic books steered their stories away from the grimness of war (and the grimness of hard social issues had not yet arisen). Many superhero series became far more whimsical. Genuinely goofy opponents became more frequent. Superpowered pranksters and meddlers were regular opponents. In at least one major superhero's life, gorillas became a recurrent theme — he had to fight intelligent gorillas, bands of escaped gorillas, superpowered gorillas, and so on. Another hero frequently encountered criminals using giant-sized objects as props/deathtraps (enormous typewriters, pinball machines, and so on). Another type of story that was common to the era included the eternal efforts of allied NPCs to discover a superhero's secret identity.

INCORPORATING LIGHTEARTEDNESS INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the lightheartedness element:

Capture The Social Tone: It's appropriate for you to immerse yourself, if only briefly, in the sort of popular culture entertainments that were dominant at this time. In particular, you should

look at the popular TV shows of the era, for this is the period in which television began its ascendancy. Watching such series as *I Love Lucy*, *Leave It to Beaver*, *The Milton Berle Show*, and *Your Show of Shows* will steep you in the cultural and comic sensibilities of the era.

Keep The Cast Small And The Focus Local: Most Silver Age superhero stories were actually single-hero or hero-and-sidekick adventures rather than stories involving superteams (though DC introduced the Justice League of America in 1960, and Marvel soon followed suit with the Fantastic Four, the Avengers, and the X-Men). Typically these characters were pretty much confined to their home towns; only the most mobile and powerful superheroes traveled the globe (or beyond) on a regular basis.

There's no practical way to simulate the single-hero story in a Champions campaign featuring several PCs, of course, but you can achieve some of the same feel by keeping superhero NPCs out of the campaign altogether. There may be NPC superheroes in other towns and cities, but the PCs should remain very insulated from them, with supers not usually needing the help of outsiders to solve their problems. This has the advantage of demonstrating to the PCs just how exceptional they are; they no longer have to compete, deliberately or accidentally, with equally flashy, competent characters fighting the same cause.

Avoid Wrenching The Emotions: Golden Age campaigns tend to avoid moral dilemmas; lighthearted Silver Age campaigns go that one step better by avoiding any truly painful situation. The threat of imminent death, of the ruination of one's country or loss of one's family, that are a routine part of the Golden Age campaign are entirely absent here (aside from the personal element discussed below). Concentrate on providing adventures that exercise the PCs' abilities and powers, often in humorous ways.

PLAYING THE LIGHTEARTEDNESS ELEMENT

Here's some advice for players to help them emulate the lightheartedness of the Silver Age:

Simplicity, Redux: While characters in the Silver Age can be somewhat more complex (and thus have more detailed character sheets) than their Golden Age counterparts, they don't have to be. It's often enough just to have a superpower (or two); and you don't have to dress powers up with a lot of Power Modifiers. As time goes on, some characters do become a little more complex, as their histories and backgrounds develop — Batman, for example, steadily increased his arsenal of gadgets — but they're still pretty straightforward compared to later characters.

Play It For Laughs: Since the period is a lighthearted one, play that way. Create characters with some humorous elements to them, and don't hesitate to get your character involved in situations intended primarily for comedic effect.



THE COMICS CODE

One of the reasons for the lightheartedness of the Silver Age was the imposition of the *Comics Code*. In 1954, Dr. Frederick Wertham published *Seduction Of The Innocent*, which claimed comic books contributed to the delinquency of minors and similar societal ills. In response to the furor (including US Senate hearings) this accusation created, the leading comic book companies banded together and established a code of self-regulation, the Comics Code. Comics that met the standards of the Code had a special logo on the cover, thus “certifying” them as safe for young readers.

The Comics Code was extensive and detailed. Its major points included:

- Crime shall never be depicted as glamorous or rewarding; it must always be shown as sordid and unpleasant. Criminals could never be sympathetic, or seen to gain from their actions; they had to always be captured by the heroes or come to a bad end due to their own wickedness. Good must always triumph over evil.
- No depictions of the details and methods of committing crimes.
- No excessive violence, gore, blood, gruesomeness, luridness, or the like.
- No profanity; and the use of slang is discouraged.
- No suggestive, salacious, or lewd illustrations allowed.
- Parents, established authorities, respected institutions, and moral/honorable behavior should never be depicted in disrespectful ways.

The result of this self-regulation was, in part, the death or diminishment of such then-popular comics genres as horror, romance, and Western. Superhero comics, at the time a small segment of the market, were largely unaffected and thus soon came to dominate the industry to the virtual exclusion of other types of comics.

For many years, the Comics Code Authority covered nearly all comics. But by the Bronze and Iron Ages, creators and publishers interested in exploring themes and story types forbidden by the Code began ignoring it — and discovered that they could still survive and thrive in the marketplace without the Comics Code Authority logo on their books. Today, the Code is generally ignored altogether.

Gamemasters who want their games to have a Golden or Silver Age “feel” should strive to impose a “Comics Code” style of play in their games, in large part by designing scenarios that never call the tenets of the Code into doubt. That’s hard to do, given the more jaded modern-day perspective, but well worth the effort to obtain the right atmosphere in the game.

ATOMIC MONSTERS

In the comics and especially the movies of this era, fear of the atom bomb (acquired by the USSR in 1948 and other nations not allied with the US in subsequent years) led to a succession of stories about gigantic monsters created through the misuse of, or accidents involving, radiation (as well as the occasional meteor from space or mad scientist). Starting at this time and through the decades since, ants, spiders, blobs, praying mantises, lizards, locusts, birds of prey, eyeballs, men, women, Gila monsters, leeches, shrews, crocodiles, invertebrates, rabbits, apes, columns of stone, Tyrannosaurus Rexes, pteranodons, turtles, moths, crustaceans, patches of industrial pollution, robots, and other things have become gigantic and stomped their way across the map, leaving death and ruin in their wake.

The “atomic monsters” element gives superheroes a chance to show off their prowess without either the dopiness of the pure lighthearted stories or paranoia of Red Scare plots. The GM could even base a campaign around this element, allowing him to pit superheroes against a succession of destructive byproducts of the Atomic Age, setting them up as a sanctioned or private superforce dedicated to protecting the world from gigantic creatures of all sorts (“Gargantosaurus has escaped from Monster Island again — call the Monster-Smashers!”).

INCORPORATING ATOMIC MONSTERS INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

When you use atomic monsters in your campaign, the design of each monster species should follow this pattern: the monster is too powerful for the PCs to defeat or even constrain, but it possesses weaknesses that, when discovered, allow the heroes to beat it. This means that when the heroes first encounter the monster, they may attack it, may even confuse and baffle it enough to send it somewhere else, but they cannot end the menace it poses — they simply don’t have enough power in and of themselves. But during each subsequent encounter with the monster, they learn more about it, until they, perhaps with the cooperation of government scientists and the Army Corps of Engineers, can come up with the means to defeat it.

For instance, perhaps this week’s menace is a horde of giant bees. Each superhero is individually strong enough to defeat one or more of the insects, but there are thousands of the things — their great strength is in their numbers, and the heroes cannot defeat those numbers. But by confronting the bees in fight after fight, protecting the communities in their path, analyzing samples, watching the bee behavior, the heroes discover how to duplicate the chemical pheromones the queen bee uses to control her drones, and that allows them to wrest control of the drones away from her and end the menace.



On a related note, design each monster so it can leave the heroes behind. For example, maybe a monster can escape by going into deep water, tunneling, teleporting, diving into lava pools, flying into space, or the like — it has to be able to go to some place the characters cannot survive or leave by some means they cannot duplicate. Otherwise, no matter how tedious it makes the adventure or how irrelevant the action is, one or more heroes will stay with the monster at all times, not permitting you to advance the adventure in a timely fashion to its next stage.

INNER AND OUTER SPACE

The 1960s were an era of exploration in which the Space Race (a competition between the US and the USSR to determine which would be preeminent in near space) reached its peak. Television and the movies reflected this fascination with exploration by sending heroes off into unknown environments in stories which ran from the sublime to the (more often) ridiculous. *Star Trek* and *Lost In Space* let their protagonists visit distant worlds; *Voyage To The Bottom Of The Sea* explored the depths of the world's oceans; *The Time Tunnel* sent its heroes cartwheeling into the past and the future; *Fantastic Voyage* injected miniaturized explorers into the circulatory system of a dying man.

Exploration, too, was a theme for comic book heroes, as teams of supers not only investigated those dangerous environments but also the depths of the Earth and alternate dimensions. At least

one entire team, the Challengers of the Unknown, though more costumed human-level heroes than actual superheroes, devoted themselves almost entirely to exploration.

INCORPORATING EXPLORATION INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Exploration stories require a detailed environment to explore. First you have to decide exactly what the PCs will explore — outer space? the subterranean depths? the deep ocean? alternate dimensions? different eras of time? — and then begin to populate it with interesting cultures, compelling NPCs, and tasks only the PCs can accomplish (whether they're the primary motivators or merely catalysts tends to vary from adventure to adventure). This sort of campaign is definitely design-intensive; once the heroes have found a new area, discovered its secrets, and addressed its dangers, they head off to the next unknown region rather than returning to a more comfortable known location.

Campaigns where the characters can't return to their homes tend to be frustrating in the long run for many players. Unless you're planning to run a limited-length series, you might prefer to stick to campaigns where the characters generally don't want to go home — maybe their home has been destroyed and they *can't* return to it, or perhaps an unfortunate chain of events back home has led to their being suspected of murder and they have to avoid the authorities.

PLAYING THE EXPLORATION ELEMENT

Here's some advice for players to help their characters fit into exploration-themed adventures:

Design Characters Who Need To Travel: Since the campaign revolves around constant travel, it's imperative that you design into your character an appropriate motivation to keep him on the road and away from home. A strong curiosity about the environment being explored is one good prod, but not the only one. Others can include a desire to test one's self with new challenges on a constant basis, a desire to flee the complexities of the world, or a need for some sort of knowledge or medical treatment that lies at some unknown point on the horizon.

Design Characters Who Don't Want To Go Home:

Similarly, incorporate into your character's design a reason why he can't return home (or at least is reluctant to) — typically a Complication of some sort, like a Hunted. Maybe he's been framed for a crime, had his heart broken, or been mystically barred from returning. Whatever the reason, it should ideally not only motivate him to travel, but provide other story hooks for the GM to use.

PERSONAL PROBLEMS INTRUDE

As a foreshadowing of elements that would take center stage during the Bronze and Iron Ages, some Silver Age comic books began to place some emphasis on superheroes' personal lives out of costume and the problems that being a hero might entail. Leading this trend was Marvel's Spider-Man, who had to cope with an elderly aunt who might suffer a heart attack if she learned of his crimefighting, being picked on at school, a public (led by a crusading newspaper editor) that hated him despite his heroic sacrifices, and eventually a girlfriend who loved him in civilian identity but hated his costumed persona. In contrast to Golden and most Silver Age heroes, for whom being a superhero was a great thing, for Spider-Man it was often a burden... but one that made him all the more a hero for bearing.

For Silver Age Champions, you have to introduce this element into a game carefully. Given Bronze and Iron Age influences, it's all too easy for it to dominate a character or campaign in ways that aren't appropriate for the Silver Age... especially if more than one character wants to go that route. Try to limit each character to no more than one "personal problem" Complication, and perhaps make each one distinct. (For example, only one character gets a personal problem DNPC, only one can have a personal problem Hunted, and so forth.) That way you can explore all aspects of this element without having it dominate the game.

RADIATION

Thanks to public anxiety over nuclear war and science gone amok, radiation became a potent factor in the creation of superheroes and their adversaries during the Silver Age. Many of Marvel's new characters owed their origins to it: the Fantastic Four flew through mysterious

cosmic rays; Spider-Man was bitten by a radioactive spider; Bruce Banner was transformed into the Hulk when exposed to gamma rays during the explosion of a gamma bomb; Daredevil lost his sight and gained his sensory powers when hit in the face by radioactive waste. This became such a cliché that the term "radiation accident" has passed into comics and gaming parlance to describe the strange events through which superhumans gain (or augment or change) their superpowers.

Incorporating this element into Silver Age Champions campaign couldn't be easier. First, make sure that at least one or two PCs have origins that involve radiation in some significant way. Second, the GM should create some villains that way too (perhaps through the same accident that created a hero, as a "mirror image" or archnemesis of that PC), and can also build plots around things involving radiation. For example, a villain might take over a nuclear power plant or try to steal a nuclear bomb, or he could put radioactive sludge into a city's water supply to create radiation-powered "zombies" the PCs have to fight without harming.

THE RED SCARE

One Silver Age element at odds with the general lightheartedness described above is the presence of the Communist menace. During World War II, the large Communist states — the USSR and the Red Chinese — were also enemies of the Fascist states. But as soon as the war ended, considerable paranoia sprang up between the Communist and capitalist states. Within a few years, the US was engaged in a ferocious behind-the-scenes struggle, the Cold War, with the Communist states, a struggle that played out mostly in the arena of international politics and espionage until the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

There isn't much precedent in the real world's comic books of the early Silver Age for Red Scare stories. Comics of the era did sometimes feature Communist enemies (such as the Hulk's adversary the Abomination, or Iron Man's foes the Titanium Man and the Crimson Dynamo), but by and large comic book buyers didn't want to be confronted with the realities of unpleasant international politics. Comics produced later in the period were more likely to feature Communist enemies or anti-Communist superheroing, though, so it is an appropriate element for Silver Age Champions campaigns to include. Similarly, many "retro" comics harking back to the Silver Age have Communist adversaries for the heroes. For example, the highly entertaining Image Comics mini-series *1963* (a loving homage to the classic Silver Age comics) features such villains as Comrade Cockroach and the Red Brain.

If you want your campaign to focus, in whole or in part, on the Red Scare element, you should do a couple things. First, you should study the history of the period. The Cold War actually continued up until the reunification of Germany and division of the USSR in the early Nineties



(though you may not need to research all of it for the purposes of a game set in the Sixties or Seventies). There's a considerable amount of information on its historical events and social implications available for research purposes, not to mention plenty of movies and spy novels to inspire plot ideas.

Second, you should scale the PCs' power level to the tasks you have in mind for them. If you plan to run adventures that are chiefly superhero spy missions, it's best to put restrictions on the power levels of the PCs — for instance, 40 Active Points per power and a campaign Characteristic Maxima. On the other hand, if you plan to have the international Communist menaces be powerful supers, you'll want to have PCs built at the same scale.

As a player you can have the most fun in an anti-Communist story if you embrace the theme. Regardless of your own personal perspective on the period or its politics, don't try to impose your views on the setting. The Communists are *Evil*, and they threaten the world with their God-forsaking philosophy — no true American hero could possibly think otherwise, or fail to take action to stop them! (This standard applies, to a greater or lesser degree, to just about *any* historical Champions campaign — Golden Age Champions superheroes shouldn't be German apologists, for example.)

THE SECOND GENERATION

In the comics of the late Fifties and into the Sixties, many of the heroes of the wartime years were quietly abandoned, typically due to low sales. In the Silver Age they were revived and replaced by heroes who had the same names as their predecessors, and often similar powers and costumes, but who had different backgrounds, secret identities, and personal histories. Indeed, as mentioned above, it was the “revamping” of the Flash that's generally considered the turning point from the Golden to the Silver Age.

One of the major comic book publishers of the era, DC Comics, explained this change through the creation of an alternate Earth. The heroes of the earlier generation had gone through their adventures on one world; the heroes of the newer generation were on a parallel Earth where those earlier heroes had never appeared. Eventually, by use of dimensional travel, the two groups of heroes met, and so began a tradition of a “cross-over” stories in which a menace too great for one set of heroes obligated two worlds' worth of supers to pool their abilities once every year or so. Over the years, other alternate dimensions were discovered, each with its own set of superheroes — most of whom had been the heroes of a different publisher's brand of comics.

The other major comic book publisher of the time — Timely, later known as Marvel Comics — made the changeover a bit more logically. The new heroes appeared on the same world as the old, and the previous heroes' exploits were definitely part of the world's history. But those heroes were aging, retiring, or sometimes inadvertently falling into suspended animation, and new heroes were needed.

INCORPORATING THE SECOND GENERATION INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the second generation element:

Fabricate A World History: Perhaps the most important task of the GM who wants to incorporate a Second Generation element into his campaign is setting up a detailed history of the previous generation of superheroes and their adventures. This history should include names and career information for a number of supers, the villains they fought, and the major historical events they influenced. The GM also has to make it clear that the older generation of heroes, for whatever reason, is no longer up to the challenge of defending the world. (Such a campaign doesn't have to be set in the Silver Age, of course; this idea lends itself to practically any type of Champions game.)

A good Second Generation-inspired history should include plenty of mysteries and unanswered questions (What happened to all that Nazi gold? Who killed Captain X? Why did the Crystal Duke retire at the height of his career and the peak of his powers? Who got ahold of the Janus Key after Dr. Macabre was killed?). And you should come up with answers to some of those questions — answers that will serve as the bases for adventures for the new generation of heroes.

Obviously, to reduce the amount of work the GM has to do, and perhaps to increase the involvement and enthusiasm of the players, the GM might want to base portions of this history on heroes from published comic books. Players who are familiar with the comics often enjoy comparing their characters to the campaign version of characters from the comics — though it's important to remember that the PCs, not published supers, are the heroes of the campaign.

PLAYING THE SECOND GENERATION ELEMENT

Here's some advice for players who want to use the Second Generation concept when creating and playing characters:

Create A Detailed History For Your Character's Predecessor:

The GM can't do all the work himself, after all! Since it's important for you to create a PC you enjoy playing, you need to have some idea of what his predecessor was like, why the changeover occurred, and so forth. By working with the GM to weave your ideas into the overall history he's establishing, you can ensure that your character has the maximum appeal for both you and your GM.

Respect Your Elders: Unless the “first generation” heroes are all dead (and sometimes even then), take advantage of their experience, wisdom, and advice. They learned a lot during their careers, and there's no sense letting that information go to waste. Just as the GM should bring the first generation into the story occasionally, you shouldn't hesitate to have your character maintain a relationship with his predecessor and call on him for help from time to time.



SUPER-SOCIETY POWERS

Here are a few examples of powers residents of a strange super society might possess:

Energy Cage: The character has energy powers that allow him to place tendrils of energy around a target (usually in the form of a cage, circle, sphere, or the like). If the target moves too much, he hits the energy and takes damage.

RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (1m Radius; $+\frac{1}{4}$), Constant ($+\frac{1}{2}$), Reduced Endurance (0 END; $+\frac{1}{2}$) (67 Active Points); Targets Only Take Damage If They Touch Cage Or Move Into/ Out Of The Affected Area ($-\frac{1}{2}$). Total cost: 45 points.

Living Hair: The character's hair is extremely strong, and can move and lengthen at his command.

Extra Limbs (up to 10) (5 Active Points); Costs Endurance ($-\frac{1}{2}$) (total cost: 3 points) and Stretching 6m (6 Active Points); Limited Body Parts (Extra Limbs/hair only; $-\frac{1}{4}$) (total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 8 points.

Sense Weakness: The character possesses an innate sense of the flaws and weaknesses in any physical object, allowing him to target them with ease and smash the target into pieces with his colossal strength.

Armor Piercing (reduces defenses to $\frac{1}{4}$ normal; $+\frac{3}{4}$) for up to 60 STR. Total cost: 45 points.

Silhouette Form: The character is a living shadow, though he retains some ability to affect physical objects.

Desolidification (affected by light-based attacks), Reduced Endurance (0 END; $+\frac{1}{2}$), Persistent ($+\frac{1}{4}$) (70 Active Points); Always On ($-\frac{1}{2}$) (total cost: 47 points) *and* Affects Physical World (+2) for 30 STR (total cost: 60 points). Total cost: 107 points.

Thunderbolt Voice: The character's voice contains tremendous energy, such that even the merest whisper causes terrible damage to the character's surroundings (and anyone in them). The character should either take an appropriate Physical Complication to represent his inability to speak safely, or the GM should allow him to apply a modified form of the Always On Limitation to the power.

Blast 20d6, Area Of Effect (84m Radius Explosion; +1), Personal Immunity ($+\frac{1}{4}$), Reduced Endurance (0 END; $+\frac{1}{2}$) (275 Active Points); No Range ($-\frac{1}{2}$). Total cost: 183 points.

STRANGE SUPER-SOCIETIES

In the Sixties it became more common to publish entire series about the homeworlds of some of the more exotic characters who had hitherto simply been powerful strangers from distant realms. Instead of leaving it at that, these new series followed these heroes back home, where many individuals like them also adventured. Three common environments for this were:

- the **Lands of the Gods**, where godly and demigodly characters got their start before discovering the pleasures of fast food and television
- the **Hidden Lands** — strange, forgotten valleys in the Himalayas, sunken realms, lost islands, and other “undiscovered” places where societies of superhumans live (see page 18)
- **Alternate Dimensions** better known just for spawning ultra-powerful world conquerors and the occasional conqueror's relative with a more heroic attitude

This element has a lot in common with the Inner and Outer Space theme described above, but with a crucial difference. Though a campaign focused on Strange Super-Societies inevitably presents an environment as detailed and strange as a setting intended chiefly for exploration, mapping the place and assembling data on its creatures and cultures isn't the primary goal of the story/campaign. Here, the heroes live and adventure according to the dominant local culture. If it's a society of showoff demigods, then the heroes should get into the action, competing with the natives in their endless games, monster hunts, and other struggles. If it's a dimension where giant stellar fleets led by superhumans in costumes wage war on one another, the heroes should become involved in the war, either to end it or to win it for their preferred side.

INCORPORATING SUPER-SOCIETIES INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the Strange Super-Societies element:

Decide How Many Heroes Are Natives: There are two basic ways to run a Strange Super-Societies story (or campaign): either every PC is a native of this unusual civilization; or only a few are, with the remainder being “normal” heroes from mainstream Earth. The latter sort of story works best as a sequel of sorts to an existing superhero campaign. If one or more characters from that campaign came from an exotic otherworldly setting, once the players in the campaign need a break from more ordinary superhero versus supervillain action, the GM can contrive to send them to the homeworld of those aliens. This might be a limited series, just a multi-part break from the norm, with the heroes intent on accomplishing one mission and then returning home — or it may be the new, regular home for the campaign (perhaps mutant heroes have found a place where their mutations do not make them feared, so they have decided to stay; perhaps the heroes' last attempt to save the Earth went badly, and the Earth was destroyed, leaving the heroes nowhere to go but here).

Design A Detailed Environment: This advice is similar to that for the exploration theme described earlier, though you won't have to provide details at the rate you would have for an exploration story. The PCs either just visit the "new world" for a little while (in which case you don't need quite as much detail as for an exploration game) or settle there (in which case they'll learn things at a more relaxed rate, so you can do your creating at a more sedate pace). But it's important that the environment be detailed, majestic, and strange, with overblown architecture, curious environmental effects, ancient unsolved mysteries, unfathomable technology or magic, distinctive terminology — any conceivable attribute that makes it a unique experience for the characters who adventure there.

PLAYING THE SUPER SOCIETIES ELEMENT

The best way to participate in a Strange Super-Societies story (or campaign) is to "choose your place and play your part." Are you a native of the super-society returning home — and if so, in triumph, in disgrace, or something else? Or are you an outsider (perhaps an "ordinary" human from normal Earth society) — and if so, did you come to the "new world" voluntarily, or were you forced to by some circumstance back home? Answering questions like these helps you determine your character's role in the story/campaign, his approach to his new situation, and his reaction to the events of the game. A character who desperately wants to return home (but can't) is significantly different from one who doesn't care about going back to Earth.

TV SUPERHEROES

Superheroes first began appearing on television during the Silver Age. Often, but not always, they were existing comic book characters adapted to a new medium. And even during later Ages, TV superheroes often had more of a Silver Age "feel" than the heroes portrayed in comics at the same time. (Only in the Iron Age do you start to see superhero cartoons that feature truly sophisticated writing and relatively complex stories, and even they are a far cry from the often depressingly grim comics then being published.)

Superheroes as they've appeared on television, both in series and TV movies, are somewhat different than they are in the comic books. Gamers interested in a lower-powered sort of campaign may embrace those differences, which include:

Superheroes Are Rare; The "Title Heroes" May Be The Only Ones: Most TV superhero movies and series assume the characters they feature are the only supers there are. (Later team-oriented superhero cartoons sometimes reverse this trend.) Some admit to the existence of other superheroes, but other supers are so rare that they seldom if ever meet one another. Supervillains, on the other hand, may appear in every episode, particularly if the heroes have a rotating "rogues' gallery" of frequently-recurring villains.

Superhero Power Levels Are Low Compared To The Comics: A superhero who, in the comics, can lift a mountain or an aircraft carrier over his head, when translated to a TV movie or series, will at best be able to lift a tractor-trailer rig. Instead of thinking of STR values of 60 to 90, think 40 to 50, with Pushing necessary to accomplish the really difficult tasks.

The Campaign Superteam May Consist Of One Super And Several Friends: If the players in your campaign are sufficiently experienced not to feel unfulfilled by such an arrangement, you might choose to have only one of them be an actual superhero, built on normal Silver Age Champions standards. The rest are built on, say, Standard Heroic guidelines, and have nothing that can really be considered a superpower. The compensating factor here is that almost all the campaign's real woes descend on the superhero character, while the other PCs (the super's friends, allies, and support personnel) seldom find themselves hunted by bad guys, placed into excruciating moral dilemmas, or responsible for the lives of hundreds or thousands of innocents.

The Impossible Dream: A TV Superheroes story or campaign may be driven by an unfulfilled quest. It's very common for a series to have as its basis some desire on the part of one character... and for that desire to be essentially impossible to fulfill (since fulfilling it would end the series). For instance, the supers might be werewolves or other monsters, all of whom seek a common cure for their condition. Once they're cured, of course, the series concludes. A superhero might have only one goal (to find the killer of his sister and avenge her death); when that task is accomplished, he either has to find some other crimefighting motivation or the campaign has to retitile itself to something like "Luke Austin, Formerly Superpowered Bookseller."

INCORPORATING TV SUPERHERO THEMES INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the TV Superheroes theme/element:

Set Low Campaign Standards: Allow players to build characters on fewer points than normal, with lower point/effectiveness ceilings (if you choose to impose such ceilings; see 6E2 282) — for example, maybe only 200 Total Points (including 40 Matching Complications points) and a 40 Active Point cap.

Limit The Numbers Of Supers: As mentioned above, you'll want to keep the numbers of superheroes worldwide very low. The minimum number is one in all the world (one of the PCs). A more likely arrangement is for the PCs, two or three other superheroes, and a similar number of supervillains to constitute all the costumed supers known worldwide. Over time, you can gradually introduce more costumed supers, as other supers debut or as their existence is discovered by the



world at large, but you'll want to compensate for this by doing it as the campaign gets rid of other supers on a permanent basis (as they die, lose their powers, retire for good, and so on).

Keep The PCs Mostly In Civvies: The standard TV Superhero approach is to have the PCs do most of their investigating and adventuring in civilian clothes. (After all, superheroing requires the studio to spend more money on costumes and special effects!) Only in rare circumstances — such as a prearranged confrontation with an enemy, or an assault on an enemy headquarters at what's obviously the climax of a story — do the heroes actually put on their costumes.

Set Up Adventures For Supers And Normals: If you choose to follow the pattern of a campaign with one true superhero and a collection of aides and support personnel, plan adventures around human-scale tasks and problems (except for the occasional encounter that really does call for superpowers and costumes). Most encounters involve investigative, conversational, scientific, professional, and deductive skills, which heroic normals can possess at the same levels as superheroes. This way there are situations for characters of every power level to resolve.

PLAYING THE TV SUPERHEROES ELEMENT

Here's some advice for players to help them emulate the TV Superheroes "feel" and themes:

Consider Only In Alternate Identity/Focus-Based Powers: Another way to give the campaign the sort of low-powered, mostly-in-blue-jeans approach called for by TV inspirations is for all superheroes to have the *Only In Alternate Identity* or *Focus* Limitations on most of their powers. This keeps them a little more vulnerable and better distinguishes between their adventures in civilian dress and those in costume.

Emphasize The Corny: Television superheroes often seem to emphasize the corny or "cheesy" aspects of superheroes in a form of gentle self-mockery. For example, consider coming up with a distinctive (but somewhat silly) catch-phrase or battle-cry for your character. When you talk with other characters, adopt a "heroically serious" tone.

SILVER AGE CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGNS

Silver Age Champions campaigns vary slightly based on what part of the era you're most interested in simulating. Those inspired by the earlier Silver Age (say, 1956-65) are usually Low-Powered Superheroic games. Player Characters are built on 300 Total Points (with 60 points of Matching Complications). Characters typically have around 40-60 Active Points in most powers, CVs of 6-11, and SPDs of 3-7.

If the later Silver Age (say, 1966-73) interests you more, that might mean a Low-Powered Superheroic campaign about the same as the one described above. But the GM and players might prefer to "upgrade" slightly to a Standard Superheroic game with PCs built on 350 or 400 Total Points (with 60 or 75 points of Matching Complications). In this case, characters typically have around 50-60 Active Points in most powers, CVs of 7-11, and SPDs of 4-7. (Of course, as with the Golden Age, a higher-powered Silver Age campaign is certainly possible. It may even enhance the goofy fun of the subgenre when characters can do things like move planets out of their orbit or mind control entire populations.)

In either case, Silver Age Champions characters typically do not have to comply with a Characteristic Maximum, and they have to pay Character Points for any equipment or other items they want (like usual for Superheroic campaigns).

PLAYING IN A SILVER AGE CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

As with Golden Age Champions campaigns, the players can, and should, create and play their characters in ways that help to emulate the Silver Age "feel" and themes. In addition to the suggestions above, some other things players can do include:

Keep Keeping Things Simple: Particularly for early Silver Age-style stories and campaigns, simplicity remains something of a watchword in terms of characters' powers. Silver Age characters aren't *quite* as straightforward as many Golden Age characters, but they're often close. Power Frameworks are comparatively uncommon; many superheroes can get by with no more than three or four powers on their character sheets. Characters do start to become more complex toward the end of the Silver Age, as the increasing sophistication of the writing and the growth of their histories and backgrounds combine to give them more depth and more ways to use their basic superpowers.

Embrace The Goofiness: By modern standards many Silver Age stories are extremely silly. The plots are paper-thin, the characters' actions and motivations aren't always entirely logical, and the threat of the menaces they face seems small, even pathetic. But all that's *in retrospect*. If you want to capture the Silver Age feel, leave your modern perspective behind and embrace the goofiness. Have fun with the absurd, high-powered hijinks and don't concern yourself with whether it's truly possible to travel back in time by flying around the Earth.

THE BRONZE AGE

Comics historians and fans don't always agree on exactly when the Silver Age ended. Some point to various events in the late Sixties and very early Seventies — the rise of comic book prices, the earliest stories of social relevance, significant changes in the creative teams on certain major DC and Marvel books (or retirements or job changes among major creative talent). Others look at specific events in the comics themselves to provide a firmer benchmark. Chief among these are two: *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* #85 (October 1971), in which the heroes discover that the Green Arrow's sidekick, Speedy, has become a heroin junkie; and *Amazing Spider-Man* #121 (June 1973), when the Green Goblin kills Spider-Man's popular girlfriend, Gwen Stacy.

In any event, by most estimates the Silver Age ended no later than the early Seventies. Toward the end of that period, the social and cultural issues so prominent in American society at the time — including the sexual revolution, the maturing of the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, the rise of numerous countercultures, and the widening of the generation gap — began to make themselves felt in the stories being told in the comics. Comics writers began thinking about issues they'd never considered before, and carrying trends and themes that started in the Silver Age — a focus on character's private (non-costumed) lives and romantic relationships, for example — to their logical creative conclusions.

By the early Seventies, this new perspective led to the ushering in of the *Bronze Age*, which ran until roughly the mid-Eighties. In contrast to the comics of the Fifties and early Sixties, this period was increasingly marked by use of the comics as a means to reflect the changing times. Superheroes went on cross-country journeys of self-discovery, confronted racism, suffered either directly or indirectly the effects of drug abuse, and even dealt with issues of mortality.

Superhero comics also adopted some of the characteristics of television soap operas and other episodic forms of entertainment. The characters' private lives became as important to the stories as their costumed action. Romantic relationships, instead of being tepid things that endured unaltered for years, progressed as they do in real life, sometimes solidifying, sometimes shattering. Characters acquired long-term enemies who were themselves heroes instead of villains. Supers wrestled with questions of family obligations, faith, ethics, and morality.

Many of these characteristics have become so much a part of comic books that they're now the default approach to superhero storytelling (and gaming), so *Champions* discusses them elsewhere in more detail. It is in combination with the societal turmoil of the Seventies (as derived from that of the Sixties) that they form the basis of campaigns set in the Bronze Age of comics. Because many of these concepts and themes were first articulated, if simply or crudely, in the later



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Silver Age, some of the elements and advice in this section apply to Silver Age *Champions* campaigns as well (though perhaps not with full force).

It's also important to note the influence of comics' maturity as a creative art during this period. Starting in the Seventies and continuing to the present day, comic book creators were in the enviable position that new times did not require them to come up with new methods of storytelling or communication. The basic tools of comic book expression were in place. Should a comic book provide a lighthearted escape from the grimness of the real world, or an analytical look at that grimness? Either way was acceptable. Should the art be traditional and clean, or more stylistic and individualistic? Take your pick, so long as the result was good. Should the stories conform to the Comics Code, or would it be better to venture into more adult themes and events? Again, there was no right answer, except that what was produced should be interesting.

Starting in the Bronze Age, the comics increasingly began to mix genres, cross characters over between settings that would have been considered incompatible, and showcase characters who would not have been considered able to sustain entire comic books in previous years. Marvel and DC allowed some of their characters to meet (in a curious netherworld where the two universes' histories were assumed to be one) in adventures that were carefully managed to showcase both sets of heroes equally. Characters from fantasy settings with no connections to the superhero universe nevertheless showed up for guest shots. The protagonists of horror series increasingly interacted with superheroes.

BRONZE AGE ELEMENTS

Bronze Age Champions campaigns often concern themselves with these events, elements, and trends:

FAD SHOWCASE

Since the advent of comics, pop culture fads have always made their presence felt in comic books. But in the Seventies, fads sometimes defined the occasional title. For instance, as the West developed an awareness of and interest in Asian martial arts, entire series debuted that featured martial arts superheroes. When disco dominated the music airwaves, the Marvel character Dazzler — a disco-singing mutant — made appearances in various series that were out of proportion to her super-abilities or genuine story value.

If you want your campaign to focus, in whole or in part, on the “fad” element, try to keep it light. When fads appear in comic books, the fact that they’re destined to last only a short time isn’t known. But when they’re implemented in roleplaying campaigns, the participants know about their ephemeral natures. For this reason, if you want to run a story, character, or entire campaign centered around what’s obviously a fad, there’s very little reason to make it a grim, serious one; everyone’s going to participate with tongue in cheek. So, regardless of the era in which it takes place — whether the fad is poodle skirts, Hula-Hoops, high camp, bell bottoms, disco, break-dancing, ninjas, in-line skates, or even roleplaying games — it’s best to play such campaigns for humor value, even if the characters are completely straight-faced and unaware of the comic potential of what they’re doing.

If you’re playing in a game that could feature a fad element, consider picking up that particular ball and running with it. Choose a fad that’s always interested you — perhaps it’s become your own hobby, or maybe it simply appeals to you because of its silliness — and develop a character around that theme. It will certainly set your character apart! Thousands of gamers have played Champions characters based around concepts like “super-strength” or “incredibly skilled gadgeteer,” but how many can claim to have played characters with skateboarding powers or abilities derived from Rubik’s Cube?

MINORITY REPORT

The Bronze Age is when minority superheroes first really begin to make an impact in the comics world. Luke Cage, the first minority superhero to get his own comic book, appears in the Seventies; other Bronze Age minority heroes from Marvel and DC include Black Lightning, Blade, Cyborg, the Falcon, Shang-Chi, Green Lantern John Stewart, and Storm. While some of these characters could be seen as perpetuating stereotypes, or as growing out of the “blaxploitation” film genre, their appearance still represents a definite change in the comics universes.

ENDURING FADS

A disclaimer: Many fads do endure, though usually with a reduced audience or fan base. Some of the fads mentioned

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in the text are still with us and will continue to be; they constitute “fads” when they are at the peak of their popularity and attract the attention of the general population, then becomes “hobbies” or “subcultures.” So to describe, say, an interest in Asian martial arts as a fad is not to insult it, because there was a period of time when it was a fad. (The same could be said for roleplaying games.) Now that most members of the general public have either lost interest or become so familiar with it that it no longer has any curiosity value, it’s ceased to be a fad and become a specialized interest.

’Nuff said.

Gamemasters who wish to incorporate this element into their campaigns can do so easily by creating a few NPC heroes who are blacks, Asians, or members of other minorities. Players interested in exploring it can try creating and roleplaying minority PCs, perhaps after studying examples from the comics or other entertainment media.

MUTANT HYSTERIA

One of the most successful titles of the Bronze Age (and beyond) was Marvel’s *The X-Men*, whose original run had ended in 1969 due to poor sales. Revived in 1975, the X-Men became one of the most popular and trendsetting comics of the period. The story of a band of mutant superheroes, often hated and despised by the world at large but still willing to fight to protect it, really resonated with readers (and gave writers a way to tackle racial issues in their stories in an indirect way).

Using one of the key elements of the X-Men saga — the “Mutant Hysteria,” or fear/hatred of mutants by normal humans — in a Champions campaign/story is simple. Some or all of the PCs (or perhaps some of their close friends) have powers because they’re mutants: humans with genetic characteristics not possessed by any of their ancestors. These powers make them superhuman or other-than-human, and ordinary people fear and hate the mutants (partly because of the dangers they pose, partly due to fear of “genetic corruption” and other such reasons). Despite being so poorly treated, the mutant heroes acknowledge a responsibility to protect ordinary people from the dangers of the world (particularly evil mutants). But they must do this from a position of secrecy, hiding their strangeness from the world whenever possible, and working against the forces of fear and prejudice that threaten to alienate or destroy them.

One advantage to the Mutant Hysteria element, especially if used as the basis for a campaign, is that the PCs, hunted and feared by society at large, have to cooperate and bond with one another. In other words, the GM doesn’t have to do much work to make the PCs form a superteam; mutant teams in such an environment tend to become tightly-knit groups.

A corresponding disadvantage is that it’s easy for PCs to become overwhelmed by the paranoia that’s a part of such stories. Knowing the world is out to get them, and that no matter how much good they do most people will still see them as monsters, eats away at the enjoyment experienced by some players. It takes care and forethought to sustain a positive outlook under such circumstances.

Note that the label “mutant” serves as a convenient stand-in for any sort of racial or cultural prejudice. You can substitute any sort of distinction that might lead to characters having both powers and subtle (or not-so-subtle) distinctions from the rest of humanity. They could be genetically engineered, or near-human aliens who’ve tried to settle peaceably in human communities, or the last survivors of Atlantis, for instance.

INCORPORATING MUTANT HYSTERIA INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the Mutant Hysteria element:

Set Appropriate Campaign Guidelines: If the players are to design characters who are mutants — heroes with natural powers, rather than powers derived from Foci or training — they need enough Character Points to build a character whose powers have relatively few Limitations. (Of course, the Character Point total also depends on how powerful you want the heroes to be; characters in some Mutant Hysteria campaigns may have just one or two powers each.) You should also consider establishing rules that reflect the characters' mutant nature — for example, maybe all PCs have to take a *Distinctive Features* Complication because government agents can detect them with special scanners, or must all have a Vulnerability to drugs and chemicals due to their unusual metabolisms.

Let Character Actions Create A Subculture:

From the start of the campaign, it's helpful to let the players see that their actions help to create a sort of mutant subculture. They may help another mutant successfully hide in normal human society, and then run into him again and discover he's adapting well; he may even be able to help them from his position of comparative security. Normal people the mutants help may not be able to directly oppose the social or governmental forces oppressing mutants, but they can covertly take action on the mutants' behalf. In short, though the culture in general may be as dangerous to mutants as occupied France was to Allied spies, the characters' own actions should help create the mutant-era equivalent of a French Resistance, which in turn helps the campaign world seem a less dark and forbidding place.

Consider A Campaign With A Conclusion: If there's some force other than simple human prejudice at work in making mutants a hated segment of society, a story arc or campaign could be designed as a mini-series or maxi-series with a specific conclusion — the defeat and elimination either of the mutants or of the conspiracies that have driven them into hiding. It could be, for instance, that another group of mutants has taken over the government and wants to purge all potential rivals, or that when the PCs defeat a sufficiently awful menace (and do so before the eyes of the world press, with appropriate heroism and self-sacrifice), they turn public opinion away from the anti-mutant forces.

PLAYING THE MUTANT HYSTERIA ELEMENT

Obviously, for this element to come into play at least one player has to create a character who's a mutant (and possibly they may all have to). Don't show up to the game with a character whose powers derive from a suit of powered armor, or who's a super-mage. The name of the game is Mutant Hysteria, so make sure your character

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG HEROES

One way to help get across the “feel” of any of the Ages is to consider how heroes tended to relate to one another during them.

In the Golden Age, heroes on the same team always got along wonderfully. They were the best of friends and respected one another. Chance meetings between heroes usually went very well and resulted in a successful team-up.

In the Silver Age, good relations and friendships between heroes generally prevailed, but things got a little more “realistic.” Two heroes on the same team might squabble from time to time, and heroes sometimes played pranks on one another. Two heroes meeting for the first time might mistake each other for a villain and have a brief fight before realizing what's going on.

In the Bronze Age, most heroes who work together remain friends, often good ones, but differences in personality and crime-fighting methods are more likely to arise and cause friction. Heroes might develop serious personal problems (such as drug addiction or having an extramarital affair), but they regret them and work to overcome these flaws.

In the Iron Age, heroes are usually good people in *some* way, but often display all sorts of negative personality traits, some of which can affect their heroing. Personality and team policy differences are more common, and may result in violence. Personal problems like alcoholism or addiction are far more common, and heroes may not have the willpower to make any effort to overcome them. That in turn seriously impacts both their relationships with other heroes and their ability to fight crime effectively.

By way of illustration, consider two Marvel Comics characters, Hank Pym (Giant-Man, Yellowjacket, *etc.*) and Janet Van Dyne (the Wasp), who during most of Marvel's history are married to one another. During the Silver Age they get along well, mostly playfully bantering and squabbling with one another much like many TV married couples. During the Bronze Age things start to take a turn for the worse, and strains develop in the marriage. Eventually Pym suffers a mental breakdown, and during this episode actually strikes Van Dyne. Although he regrets it and apologizes, the two end up getting divorced (though they continue to work together over the years). In the Iron Age comic *The Ultimates*, it gets even worse: Pym is depicted as a violent, vicious wife abuser, and Van Dyne as suffering from some aspects of battered wife syndrome.

fits the bill. Many characters should have a single overarching power — “I can fly,” “I can become invisible,” “I can shoot energy beams from my eyes” — perhaps with a Multipower or Unified Power to reflect various applications of that single power.

Once your mutant is in play, you need to maintain the proper attitude. It's easy to give in and return hatred for hatred — but that's not how heroes act. A hero needs to rise above that sort of thing and lead by example. Giving in to destructive emotions only provides the anti-mutant forces with fuel for the fire of their own hatred, so PCs need to have appropriate Psychological Complications (such as *Code Of The Hero*, page 108) that allow them to maintain the right frame of mind.

REVISIONIST PLAYHOUSE PRESENTS

As comic book fans from the Forties and Fifties became comic book creators of the Sixties and Seventies, there was an increased interest in establishing a more credible continuity in the comic book universes. For instance, if a character had two mutually incompatible origin stories, these continuity-minded creators released a story explaining the incongruity. If a superhero's first comic book title was cancelled in 1949, and then had a new one begin in 1961, the creators concocted stories explaining where he was and what he was doing in the dozen years in between.

As time went on, these revisions became more and more elaborate. Were several characters who had their own individual titles active during World War II? The revisionist creators might put them together as a wartime superhero team and describe their exploits during those years. Did a character experience a personality or procedural change in 1969? The revisionist creators might explain that the original hero with that name had disappeared and been replaced by a lookalike — and now, decades later, the original has returned from suspended animation to reclaim his name.

INCORPORATING REVISIONISM INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

These cleanups and elaborations on long-standing superhero settings aren't precisely the sort of hook a GM should hang a campaign upon, but they might make a good basis for a subplot or story arc — and you can orient any Champions campaign around the sort of tone and attention to detail that sort of continuity requires. Here's some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on this sort of revisionism:

Create A World With A Superhero History: Decide when the campaign will be set, then establish that the world has a history of superheroics going back twenty, forty, sixty or more years, whatever you prefer. This should be the sort of history one would derive from the superheroes' own press

releases and press conferences — upbeat, confident, with historical figures' heroic motivations. However, it shouldn't be extremely detailed (the characters might know, for instance, that the Crystal Duke helped people escape the famous Boston nightclub, the Cocoanut Grove, when it burned in 1942, but not what he was doing there, whether he was injured, or the like).

Create Layers Of Truth, Half-Truth, And Falsehood:

Having established the publicly-known history as a skeleton for the campaign background, you can now go in and provide the truth behind all those details, and the truth should often be nothing like the events recorded in all the history books. Then, as the new generation of heroes — the PCs — begin their own adventures, they'll gradually come across evidence that the shiny, happy world they know is not the truth, and that their lives and happiness rest atop a scabby layer of lies, mysteries, and sorrows.

Switches and mysteries you can throw at your players include: finding out that a character's parents aren't actually his biological parents (or that the mother is, but that the child is the result of an affair or a tragedy); learning a super-parent had a double life (hero by day, villain by night); discovering that an ancestor's death, presumably an accident, was actually murder; learning that all the new heroes' parents, a superteam of a generation ago, were involved in an adventure whose details are so painful or frightening that the few survivors won't discuss it, and now the consequences of that adventure are coming back to haunt them; discovering that powers defined as magical abilities are actually mutations, or vice versa; discovering evidence this reality is nothing but a virtual reality experience from another “real world,” discovering that one's own memories are false, created in a lab and planted in a robot or synthetically-created human; and so forth.

Note that this sort of campaign or story is best-suited to players who like to have their emotional chains yanked. If that's not the most common type of player in your campaign, the Revisionist Playhouse Presents approach is probably not best for your campaign.

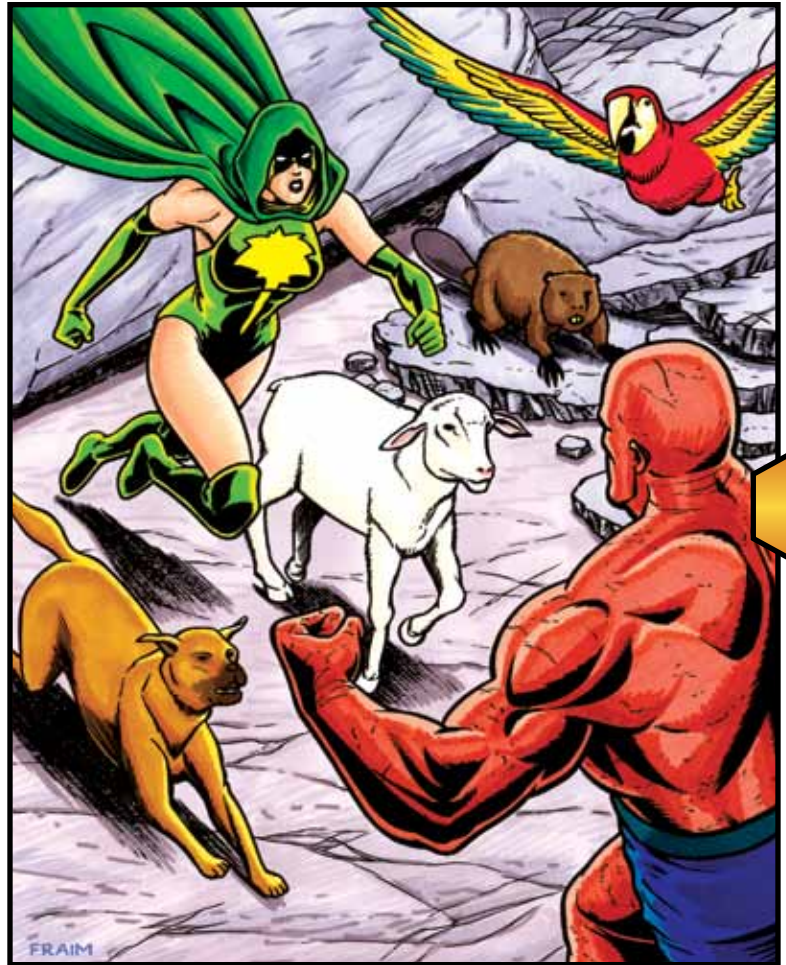
PLAYING THE REVISIONISM ELEMENT

If you're playing in a campaign with a revisionism element, consider creating a second-generation superhero as your PC (assuming the GM doesn't require that in the first place). Whatever your character's special effects and powers, he should be a second- or third-generation super, inheriting powers or heroic motivations from an earlier hero (or even villain). Don't build too much angst or anguish into the character's emotional makeup; events of the campaign itself will provide those.

THE TIMES, THEY ARE A-CHANGIN': SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ISSUES

Perhaps the most central theme or element of the Bronze Age is the rise of stories that deal with real-world social, cultural, and political issues. A Bronze Age Champions game can confront those things more directly than through the metaphor of Mutant Hysteria simply by concentrating on stories involving the troubles and changes experienced by society during this time. A campaign that emphasizes this element would naturally put its characters through a succession of moral quandaries and other dilemmas. Some examples:

- The PCs are asked to help with a covert military mission overseas, a mission that might involve killing (regardless of characters' Codes Versus Killing), lying (altering details of the mission's events and outcome to preserve morale and plausible deniability), and futility (attacking the symptom of an important problem rather than its underlying causes).
- A sidekick, younger sibling, or friend of one of the PCs becomes addicted to drugs. Whether the addict NPC gets cleaned up, persists in his habit, or dies, the amount of drugs on the streets doesn't change. No matter how many sellers the heroes bust, there are always more. Even if they damage sites of drug production, there are always more. The heroes discover that only fundamental social changes can reduce this problem — despite all their powers, they're helpless.
- Superhumans, unless they are of a particular age or born to the streets themselves, find themselves increasingly out of touch when fighting crime, and have to discover some way to get back in tune with things if they want to avoid becoming baffled dinosaurs spouting clichés while wearing out-of-fashion costumes.
- The heroes find themselves drawn into some sort of social protest — for example, perhaps they covertly help a group of striking workers to emerge victorious from their confrontation with management, or help keep a civil rights rally safe from those who would cause the activists harm.
- In the post-Watergate era, the PCs find themselves confronting issues of political corruption during their adventures.
- A Player Character discovers that his powers are somehow polluting the environment, or making an existing pollution problem worse in some way. Or perhaps his powers have the potential to cause cancer or some other serious disease.



- Social advocacy groups — rightly or wrongly — decide the heroes' team is insufficiently racially integrated, discriminates against women, or exerts more force when capturing non-white suspects than white ones. The heroes may find themselves the object of public scorn, picket lines, or opposition from the government and socially aware organizations, causing them endless trouble as they perform their crimefighting activities. The real tragedy is, whether the protesters are right or wrong, their hindering of the PCs only makes the crime problem worse and puts innocent lives in danger.
 - In their private lives, the heroes find themselves confronting the consequences of their personal decisions. For example, a hero and heroine living together (but not married) may feel pressure from their families, clergy, and NPC friends to stop "living in sin."
- Of course, society has corrected few (if any) of these problems in the decades since comic books first began looking at them. They've just become such an ingrained part of our awareness that there's less motivation to make them the primary focus of superhero adventures.

INCORPORATING SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ISSUES INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on social and cultural issues:

Assemble A List Of Issues: You'll find it helpful to have a list of the social issues you'd like to address in the course of the campaign. Then, you can prioritize it into categories of issues; some will be themes that pop up throughout the course of the campaign, some will be the focus of plotlines that dominate the campaign for several episodes in a row, some will be subplots that affect, at most, one or two game sessions.

Cut Up The Meat: Remember, no one likes to be lectured to. The purpose of offering up social issues in this sort of campaign is to illuminate rather than irritate. Use the social issues as the genesis of stories... but keep in mind that the PCs, not the social issues, are the most important element in your campaign.

Let The PCs Make A Difference: Most of the problems campaigns like this focus on are not ones superheroes can simply solve through the flexing of alien muscles or firing of plasma blasts. But if the PCs are not to feel completely useless (and that's never an appropriate state of affairs for a Champions campaign), they must be able to achieve some successes — such as helping individuals, even when they cannot cure social ills in a comprehensive fashion.

PLAYING THE SOCIAL/CULTURAL ELEMENT

Here's some advice for players participating in campaigns emphasizing social and cultural themes:

Showcase Differences Of Opinion And Moral Quandries: Society as a whole is going through turmoil because there are many wildly different perspectives on societal problems, the media provides more opportunities than ever before for showcasing those perspectives, and most of those perspectives have at least *some* merit. The PC team should reflect this in part by having characters whose opinions, and approaches to problem-solving, also differ. As the PCs learn to work together, the changes within the group will mirror the changes they want to create in society.

Maintain Some Perspective: Champions is just a game, and should never be something that gets people overly upset about in-game events. Role-play your character well, but don't start insulting other PCs, or take offense when the presentation or resolution of an issue doesn't agree with your personal opinions. A little perspective helps keep the game as entertaining as it's supposed to be.

TEAM-UPS AND CROSSOVERS

The Bronze Age is when team-ups between two characters who were normally restricted to their own books, or even large crossovers featuring characters from multiple independent titles (such as *Marvel Super Heroes Secret Wars*), rose to prominence. Team-ups certainly occurred in the Golden and Silver Ages, but by the Bronze Age they were common enough — and profitable enough — that publishers launched comic books featuring nothing but team-ups (such as *Marvel Team-Up*), and realized that the best way to launch a new hero was to have a popular existing hero make an appearance in the new guy's comic.

Incorporating team-ups and crossovers into a Champions campaign is difficult, since the PCs are always the most prominent superheroes in the game and everyone else is played by the GM. But GMs who are willing to get creative may be able to pull off a team-up or crossover story arc. Perhaps the most fun way, if you have the resources to do it, is to collaborate with another local gaming group and have the two GMs plan one large “crossover” game. If that's not feasible, another possibility is to let each player take the part of one NPC hero (preferably one that's not much like his PC) so all of the work doesn't fall on the GM's shoulders. After all, he'll be handling twice as many villains!

BRONZE AGE CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGNS

Bronze Age Champions campaigns are in many ways the “default” sort of Champions game, with a mix of “classic,” even lighthearted genre tropes with a more serious, “realistic,” look at some issues and aspects. Player Characters are typically built as Standard Superheroic characters on 400 Total Points (with 75 points of Matching Complications). Characters typically have around 50-75 Active Points in most powers, CVs of 7-13, and SPDs of 4-10. Occasionally GMs prefer a lower-powered campaign so social issues can more easily be brought to the fore, and as always a higher power level is certainly possible.

Bronze Age Champions characters typically do not have to comply with a Characteristic Maximum, and they have to pay Character Points for any equipment or other items they want (like usual for Superheroic campaigns).

PLAYING IN A BRONZE AGE CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

Since the Bronze Age is in many ways the “default” style of Champions campaigns, there's not much need for specific advice on how to play. The best way to approach the game is to keep the more serious or “realistic” aspects of the subgenre in mind, but not to let them totally overwhelm the fantastic, even absurd, nature of comic book action and drama.

THE IRON AGE

By the mid-Eighties, the increasingly sophisticated nature of comic book writing and the continued fascination with how superheroes would function “realistically,” both physically and socially, led to the rise of the *Iron Age* of comics (sometimes known as the “Modern Age” or “Dark Age”). In the minds of many scholars and fans, the turning point was the publication in 1986 of two ground-breaking comic books by DC, Frank Miller’s *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* and Alan Moore’s and Dave Gibbons’s *Watchmen*.

Perhaps not coincidentally, the late Bronze/early Iron Age is when *Champions* (and many other superhero roleplaying games) first hit the market or came of age, and became truly popular during the Iron Age. Thus the Iron Age emphasis on continuity, detailed stories, and complex characters tends to influence the way gamers approach the Superheroes genre.

The Iron Age, like the Bronze Age before it, continued the themes and trends shown in its immediate predecessor, pushing them further and exploring them in more detail. “Graphic novels” — lengthy, often serious, self-contained comics — first made their appearance, usually featuring elaborately-crafted stories light-years ahead of standard superhero comics in terms of sophistication and creativity. Whereas Bronze Age comics sometimes addressed somber social issues, Iron Age comics became *really* grim, emphasizing societal decay, excessive violence, amoral “heroes,” and other trends and themes dismaying to fans of more traditional “four-color” superhero stories.

Another aspect of “realism” that appears in some Iron Age comics is to challenge the entire concept of the Superhero. If a *Champions* campaign tries to change heroes to make them more “realistic,” to show that they’re not really all that heroic, to demonstrate that they have lots of all-too-human flaws, or the like, it’s definitely getting into Iron Age territory. In short, Iron Age *Champions* often takes a *cynical worldview* of superheroes. Compared to Golden and Silver Age audiences, Iron Age audiences don’t really have many heroes anymore — the modern mass media has made modern people all too willing to think the worst of heroes and leaders, and this leads to the idea of “re-examining” superheroes and making them seem as dirty, corrupt, or flawed as “everyone else.”

IRON AGE ELEMENTS

Iron Age *Champions* campaigns often concern themselves with these events, elements, and trends:

DARK HEROES

The modern era of comics featured the rise of truly “dark” heroes — many so dark that even referring to them as “heroes” sometimes becomes problematic. Some are vigilante crimefighters who pit intellect, gadgetry, skills, and an all-too-human body against the forces of crime... and, often, the law. Others are true superhumans, with the usual array of awesome powers, but whose attitudes and crimefighting methods have more in common with costumed vigilantes than purely four-color superheroes.

Some of the characteristics of these darker comic book stories include:

Ongoing Conflict Between The Supers And The Law:

Dark superheroes become judges, juries, and sometimes executioners in their struggle with crime. Even if the campaign is set in an era when superheroes are well-established and generally have good relations with the authorities, the vigilante hero tends to be an exception, someone sought by the law as much as the criminals he hunts.

Exploration Of The Concept Of “Hero”:

Iron Age comics often delve into the subject of what constitutes a “hero,” and what it takes to be one and act like one. They often do this by showing that just wearing a costume isn’t enough — Iron Age heroes may be rather pathetic, ineffectual, or mentally disturbed in either of their identities. It’s often by rising above those difficulties, and even by ceasing to hide behind a mask, that they truly become heroic.

Small, Private, Hidden: Many Iron Age comic books concentrate on a single superhero. This isn’t necessarily practical in a roleplaying campaign, but even so, it’s helpful to keep the size of an Iron Age *Champions* dark hero team low — it’s counterproductive to have NPC heroes in the team. All heroes in the team should be good at stealthy skills, and have a number of escape powers or gadgets ready so the law won’t catch them.

Concentration On Crime And Society’s Ills: Dark hero stories and campaigns often take place not in shiny supervillain bases or master villains’ orbiting satellite headquarters, but in the city streets. There may be supervillains, but they’re more likely to be predators or muscle for organized crime, utterly amoral corporate leaders, government conspiracies and abuses, or villainous agencies more like true organized crime groups than they are to be costumed masterminds or world-smashers. Many of these dark stories should involve crime and its effects on the community rather than more exotic evils; the whole campaign may have a dark, moody film noir quality to it if the GM and players prefer.

“FOUR-COLOR” VERSUS “DARK”

Iron Age *Champions* games often tend to feature characters who are grimmer, grittier, and more “realistic” than the heroes of the earlier periods (particularly Golden and Silver). They are generally referred to as “dark,” even though their costumes can be just as gaudy as earlier heroes’, because of their harsher, more practical attitudes. This term also stands in contrast to “four-color,” a designation often applied to Golden and Silver Age heroes and deriving from the four colors used to print the comics of those periods. A four-color hero typically stands for the “Truth, Justice, and the American Way” sorts of ideals, and has the sort of approach to superheroing that people so often associate with the genre (see *Code Of The Hero*, page 108). Conversely, the dark heroes of the Iron Age may scorn such ideals as foolish, and/or adopt more “realistic” methods of crimefighting.

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DARK CHAMPIONS

The term “dark heroes” used in this section differs from *Dark Champions*, the name used by Hero Games for its modern-day action/adventure genre line. “Dark Champions” comes from the supplement that originally described this type of gaming, and the name was chosen because the supplement was conceived of as a sourcebook for *Champions*, rather than a separate genre book. The *Dark Champions* line does, in fact, cover costumed crimefighters such as Marvel’s Punisher or DC’s Vigilante, and so the name remains an apt one; therefore characters like that don’t receive too much coverage in this book. The *Dark Champions* line also delves into related subjects like espionage games, law enforcement games, technothriller games, and so on. Superhumans are rare, carefully defined, or nonexistent in such games. “Dark heroes,” in contrast, refers more to true superhumans who share some of the outlook and methods of *Dark Champions* vigilantes.

Potential For Greater Violence And Lethality:

Though some dark heroes have a Code Versus Killing (page 108), at least as many have a more practical outlook on the elimination of crime: a crimefighter with a .44 Magnum is somewhat more effective than one without, and a criminal with a .44 Magnum slug in his chest is less likely to harm an innocent bystander. Similarly, superheroes with powers like the ability to turn their hands and fingers into razor-sharp blades crop up frequently in the Iron Age, whereas they were virtually unheard of in earlier periods. If the GM and players like it that way, the campaign can feature hero-villain battles that are far more bloody and permanent than normal *Champions* campaigns; Iron Age stories often explore the theme of violence and its consequences (both for the heroes, and for the NPCs and settings around them).

Style Over Substance: In Iron Age *Champions* campaigns, particularly those with a darker orientation, a character’s style and attitude matter as much as his powers or actions. Costumes become more revealing and overtly sexy than ever before, with leather, metal, and chrome appearing more and more frequently. Tattoos, piercings, mohawk haircuts, blades, spikes, and other such “fashion accessories” also become a part of the superhero wardrobe. Even those characters who have truly heroic attitudes tend to hide them behind embittered or callous facades.

INCORPORATING DARK HEROES INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here’s some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the “dark heroes” element:

Consider Human-Level Origin Sources: You might wish to impose a Characteristic Maxima (or other Maxima) as a campaign ground rule. Encourage characters to confine their abilities to martial arts, gadgetry, and the like rather than four-color fantastic powers.

Prepare For Lethality: Given the greater lethality of Iron Age *Champions* campaigns, you should plan to replace villains and enemies on a fairly frequent basis. In some cases, a villain identity may progress from one NPC to another (as one adopter of the identity dies, another person takes his place), but usually you have to create new villains and introduce them into the campaign. The *Superhero Gallery* section of Chapter Five can help you with that task.

PLAYING THE DARK HEROES ELEMENT

Here’s some advice for players to help them emulate the dark heroes “feel” and themes:

Ask About Codes Versus Killing: Before play begins, find out whether the campaign will be a bloody one or not. If so, it’s best not to design your character with a Code Versus Killing, and to consider taking more Killing Attacks than Normal Damage-based powers.

Consider Skills As Much As Powers: Even if your character has superpowers, many Iron Age *Champions* supers focus as much on Skills as on Powers. You may want to design your character accordingly.

Consider Weapons As Much As Powers: Many Iron Age *Champions* characters follow the Dark *Champions* mold (see accompanying sidebar) — they’re relatively ordinary humans armed to the teeth. Whether they’re wielding mundane firearms, comic book-style blasters, or something else, they do their fighting with weapons rather than innate superpowers.

Pay Attention To Your Character’s Appearance: Come up with a costume that fits the aesthetic of the era. De-emphasize gaudy colors and capes in favor of darker hues, leather, and bits of metal.

Think Practical: Consider discarding the usual Silver Age-derived thought patterns about how superheroes act — abandon the four-color perspective for a darker, grimmer, more practical outlook. Approach crimefighting more like a soldier or renegade cop than like a funnybook character.

REALISTIC SUPERPOWERS

In past eras, comics creators often didn’t worry too much about the “realistic” implications of, or explanations for, superpowers. By the Iron Age, more and more creators had begun to think about, and explore in their stories, what superpowers “would really be like.” Superhero combats became bloody, with lots of collateral damage — a major attack could accidentally injure or kill dozens of innocent bystanders with its collateral effects, and superhumans without defensive powers could easily get ripped apart or blown to pieces by super-strong muscles or energy beams. If a superhero picked up a building, sewer pipes and gas lines get ripped up, causing floods and fires. When a supervillain is killed, the coroner needs laser scalpels and buzzsaws to cut through his super-dense skin to perform the autopsy. The “realism” angle often appeals to gamers, since it allows them to make use of their own knowledge of sciences (both hard and social) when discussing or exploring issues related to superhumans.

INCORPORATING REALISTIC SUPERPOWERS INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here’s some advice for GMs who want their campaigns to focus, in whole or in part, on the realism element:

Consider The Implications: When you design a supervillain, or use him in the game, consider the implications of his actions on the world around him. If he wants to build his secret headquarters on an artificial island in the Pacific, how does he obtain the materials, get them to the construction site, and hide the island from spy satellites? Instead of having super-battles in the city be fairly antiseptic, emphasize the damage done to the scenery and innocent bystanders — perhaps by requiring the heroes to use their powers for fire-fighting or ambulance detail after the battle’s won.

Consider The Civilian Point Of View: Some of the best comics of the Iron Age look at superheroing not from the heroes' perspective, but from the perspective of the "ordinary joe" who sees or encounters the superheroes as they fight crime and save the world. In some cases, the ordinary joe even gets caught up in their adventures, perhaps to chronicle them or become "sidekick for a day." Find ways to impress upon the PCs how they (and their actions) appear to average citizens. You might even try running a game session or two where the players take on the parts of ordinary people observing their own PCs in action.

PLAYING THE REALISM ELEMENT

Here's some advice for players to help them maintain the feel of "realism" in *Iron Age Champions* stories.

Consider The Implications: Even more than the GM, you should consider the implications of each PC's powers and actions — they are, after all, on center stage throughout the campaign. A little time spent during character creation to determine the nature and ramifications of a character's powers is a good start. Then just keep that information in mind when the characters enter play and fight crime.

Consider Lower Defenses: For games that want to emphasize the violence and bloodiness of many Iron Age comics, having lower than normal amounts of defense (particularly Resistant Defenses) may be appropriate.

MOVIE AND CARTOON SUPERHEROES

The Iron Age has seen a veritable explosion of superheroes in cinema. Some of the most successful movies of recent years, such as *Spider-Man*, *Iron Man*, and *The Dark Knight*, have focused on superheroes. Similarly, animated television shows focusing on superheroes or superhero teams (such as Batman or the Justice League) have attained great popularity on cable television.

Despite the fact that comics in the Iron Age often focus on "grit" and "realism," superhero movies and cartoons tend to have more of a Bronze Age feel (or even Silver). The stories tend to be much better written, and more "realistic," than Silver Age stories, but they rarely descend into serious grimness. (The Batman movies and TV cartoons could be considered an exception in some respects, but then Batman's always been fairly grim compared to most of his superheroic compatriots.) Therefore, if you want to run a campaign inspired by movies or animated shows, you should pay less attention to Iron Age tropes and more to those of the Bronze Age, perhaps with a touch of Silver for enjoyable goofiness.

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SERIAL STORIES AND UNIVERSE CREATION

The Iron Age isn't precisely a period of "anything goes." Instead, comic book creators continued two trends begun in earlier Ages.

The first is a greater emphasis on serial stories — stories that span multiple issues of a comic book (or even several different titles) rather than wrapping every thing up between two covers. Partly this trend is driven by a desire on the writers' parts to tell more complex, detailed stories, and partly by marketing concerns (since a five- or six-issue "story arc" can easily be collected into a "trade paperback" and resold to the consumer, or sold to one who might not buy the individual issues).

The second, related trend is one of creating settings ("universes") that observe continuity between characters and between titles more carefully than ever before. This follows simple setting logic: if something bad happens to the Golden Gate Bridge in one character's comic book, then ramifications of that event should affect any other title taking place at the same place at approximately the same time. If one series shows that the US is experiencing a wave of Mutant Hysteria, then other titles — even those that don't deal specifically with mutants — should make note of this important change in American society. By the same logic, if one comic book explores the adventures of vampires or vampire hunters in the publisher's main universe, then there are vampires and vampire hunters in that universe; they could show up elsewhere. The result was universes that seem bigger, more complete, and more "realistic" — despite the presence of essentially unrealistic elements like superheroes.

Incorporating this element into an Iron Age Champions campaign is mostly a job for the GM, who has to plan the campaign and the adventures to make them as serial as possible. However, the players can help by designing characters with enough complexity and plot hooks (Complications) to support the GM's plans. It's much easier to create a serial story with three-dimensional characters who have personal problems and concerns than it is with featureless combat machines who exist only for fights against supervillains.

UNIVERSE REBOOTS

By the late Bronze and early Iron Age, many publishers realized — often due to flagging sales — that one or more titles were showing their years. There were so many storylines, and so much setting development, that following what was going on could be difficult for a new reader (and even for many long-time comics fans). The solution? Start things all over again. By relaunching a title with a new Issue #1, or redoing a character altogether, readers new and old could be in on things from the beginning and wouldn't have to worry about decades' worth of continuity and canon.

For example, in *Crisis On Infinite Earths* (1985), DC Comics "collapsed" all of its many confusing alternate Earths into one single universe, killed off some major characters, and "rebooted" the DC setting. Marvel Comics went one step further with its *Ultimate Marvel* imprint (which began in 2000). These comics totally re-envisioned the Marvel Universe and characters from a new, modern perspective (e.g., Peter Parker as the Daily Bugle's website designer, not a freelance photographer) while keeping their powers and essential natures the same and often re-telling classic stories.

Generally speaking, this sort of element isn't one you can introduce into a Champions campaign — after all, few gaming campaigns last for decades, and even when they do the participants tend to treasure the "canon" they've built up rather than wanting to discard it. However, for some longstanding campaigns a "reboot," even if it's only a short-term "alternate history" story arc, might make for a refreshing change of pace and offer new, exciting perspectives on familiar heroes and villains.

IRON AGE CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGNS

Since the Iron Age has predominated for most of the time since *Champions* was first published, its outlook and influences can be felt in many superhero campaigns. Player Characters are typically built as Standard Superheroic characters on 400 Total Points (with 75 points of Matching Complications). Characters typically have around 60-80 Active Points in most powers, CVs of 7-13, and SPDs of 4-10. Occasionally GMs prefer a lower-powered campaign more focused on fighting street-level crime, while others want even higher-powered heroes whose actions impact global geopolitics.

Iron Age Champions characters typically do not have to comply with a Characteristic Maximum, and they have to pay Character Points for any equipment or other items they want (like usual for Superheroic campaigns).

PLAYING IN AN IRON AGE CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

Since the Iron Age is familiar to many Champions gamers through the comics they buy and read each month, the themes and elements of the genre may consciously or unconsciously already affect how they design and play their characters. Some things players may want to do to help contribute to the Iron Age "feel" of the campaign include:

Choose A Biological Origin: Many classic Silver Age characters had origins that revolved around radiation, a manifestation of concerns about nuclear war and nuclear power in the Sixties and Seventies. By the 2000s, those fears had decreased significantly, but had often been replaced by



concerns about other potential abuses of science — such as genetic engineering. Thus, many “rebooted” characters had their origins changed from radiation to biology (for example, Ultimate Peter Parker doesn’t get his powers from the bite of a radioactive spider, but the bite of a genetically-altered spider). Players designing Iron Age Champions characters should likewise look more toward biology and high technology for their origins than radiation or bizarre accidents.

Consider The Implications Of Your Powers: In earlier Ages, relatively little thought was given to the implication of characters’ powers, but in the Iron Age considerations of how superpowers might function “realistically” come to the fore. If a character has radiation powers, he may irradiate the world around him and pose a cancer risk to anyone nearby; if he has insect powers he may have to spin a cocoon to sleep in each night; and so on. When creating an Iron Age character, consider the “realistic” implications of the character’s powers and choose Limitations and Complications to reflect those implications.

Consider The Implications Of Your Actions: Similarly, Iron Age Champions characters can’t expect to show up, fight the villains, and then move on in a world that’s reset to the status quo after each adventure. Their actions in and out of combat affect the world around them — and usually not for the better — and they need to be aware of that. If they cause property damage or injury to innocent bystanders, they may find themselves sued. If they depose some tinpot dictator, they may just make the regional situation worse when a civil war results.

Work For The Government... Or Beware It: In the Golden, Silver, and Bronze Ages, superheroes often worked closely with the government (even to the extent of being officially deputized law enforcement officers), but they didn’t work for the government. Even when the government attempted to assert oversight or control, those attempts always failed sooner or later.

Things aren’t quite so simple in the Iron Age. Given the more “realistic” outlook of the subgenre, it’s not uncommon for superheroes to work directly for the government, with all that implies (both positive and negative). Heroes who don’t work for “the feds” are usually watched closely by them (which may qualify as a *Hunted* Complication), and the authorities probably have elaborate plans in place to deal with any heroes who “go rogue.”

GALACTIC CHAMPIONS

“Galactic Champions” is the name commonly given to the subgenre of Champions games that focuses on extremely powerful superheroes (and villains!). As the name implies, their adventures often take place in outer space or on other worlds, mixing Science Fiction elements with those of more mainstream comic book settings. For ordinary superheroes, Earth is a big enough playground — but for heroes of truly cosmic power, even the entire Galaxy may not provide enough opportunities for adventure! However, despite the connotations, Galactic Champions games don’t have to take place in space or involve Science Fiction tropes; at its most fundamental, “Galactic Champions” means “Champions with really high-powered superheroes,” wherever they happen to do their adventuring.

The inspirational source material for Galactic Champions campaigns is both plentiful and diverse. The most direct source of subgenre tropes and themes tends to be DC Comics’s *Legion Of Superheroes* and *Green Lantern* titles, with their groups of superheroes (often young, idealistic ones) fighting crime on a multitude of planets and staving off threats to the very Universe itself. Marvel Comics’s *Guardians of the Galaxy* are similar in many ways, but Marvel’s best-known contributions to the subgenre tend to involve powerful solo heroes like the Silver Surfer, Adam Warlock, and Captain Marvel. Looking beyond costumed superheroes, Science Fiction (ranging from E. E. “Doc” Smith’s high-powered “Lensmen” stories, to *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*, to the classic Space Opera tales of Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers) can have just as much influence on Galactic Champions settings and stories as any comic book.

Galactic Champions campaigns have some of the same strengths as the “Inner and Outer Space” Silver Age element/theme described above, in that it allows the GM to impart a sense of wonder by introducing the PCs to all sorts of new worlds and new species. But its primary purpose is not exploration — as with most Champions campaigns, a Galactic Champions game is about crimefighting, albeit on a much greater scale than normal.



GALACTIC CHAMPIONS ELEMENTS

Galactic Champions campaigns often concern themselves with these events, elements, and themes:

ALIENS (AND THEIR POWERS)

In almost all Galactic Champions settings, aliens proliferate. The galactic societies depicted tend to resemble Space Opera Science Fiction, with dozens (if not hundreds or thousands) of sentient species occupying the Galaxy (or even galaxies) and interacting with one another through trade, diplomacy, cultural exchanges, and crime.

While many PCs in a Galactic Champions campaign will be Human (or aliens visually indistinguishable from Humans), it's not uncommon for some of them to come from truly alien species. In fact, in some settings just *being alien* is enough to qualify a character as a super“human.” For example, in the early days of DC Comics's Legion of Superheroes, many of the characters' superpowers were just unusual abilities common to their species. A character might have telepathy and/or other mental powers — not because he's a mutant, or was accidentally exposed to gene-altering radiation or chemicals, but because every member of his species possesses them. What makes him “super” is that he's living among people (mainly Humans, in many cases) who don't have such powers; his home planet is thousands of light-years away or otherwise difficult to reach. Therefore he seems “superpowered,” even though he's not, technically speaking. What really makes him a hero is his attitude and willingness to expose himself to danger to save others, not his powers.

INCORPORATING ALIENS INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This is one element that couldn't be simpler to work into your Galactic Champions campaign. About half the time when the PCs have to interact with an NPC and there's no story-specific reason why the alien should be a particular species, make it a species the PCs haven't encountered before (or only encounter rarely). A few memorable details — skin color and texture, the presence of bumps/ridges/antennae on the head, an odd voice, an odd smell, a habit or mannerism distinctive to the species — are all it takes to separate one species from all the others in the minds of your players.

PLAYING THE ALIENS ELEMENT

To play the aliens element, play an alien! While many Galactic Champions characters will be humans (or aliens close enough to human to make no difference), consider choosing a non-human (and perhaps even non-humanoid) species for your PC. Playing an alien gives you a chance to roleplay from a different perspective, and perhaps to build a few supplementary abilities into your character that humans lack (for example, a “radar-sense” if your character is from a bat-people species, or a tail).

COSMIC MENACES

Since the scope of a Galactic Champions campaign typically shifts from the planetary to the galactic (or universal), so does the scope of the villainy and other threats the characters face. In a standard Champions campaign, an adventure might threaten a city or a continent, with occasional forays against master villains who want to take over (or destroy) Earth. In a Galactic Champions game, the least threat that a group of heroes faces tends to endanger an entire planet (or solar system). The standard enemy might threaten several worlds or solar systems at once, and sometimes the heroes have to fight villains with designs on the entire Galaxy.

COSMIC POWER

Given the level of power displayed by many Galactic Champions characters, it often becomes pointless trying to define it as belonging to a specific “special effect” category. When a character can do virtually anything with his powers — as many Galactic Champions characters can — labelling those powers serves little purpose. Even the distinction between “mundane powers” and “magic” may blur almost into nothingness.

To cope with this situation, many Galactic Champions settings feature a type of “energy” known simply as *cosmic power*. Cosmic power can manifest in virtually any form or way, and allows a character who wields it to do nearly anything — fire powerful beams of any type of energy, travel at speeds many times faster than light, shield entire planets from dangerous effects, and on and on. The only limit tends to be the character's imagination.

In game terms, you can represent cosmic power in several ways. First, the GM can allow a character to define “cosmic power” as the special effect of all of his abilities. In this case, cosmic power can appear as, or create, almost anything or phenomena — fire, metal, delta radiation, a swarm of stinging insects — but regardless of what it looks like, it's defined as “cosmic power” for special effects purposes. Thus, fire created by cosmic power won't trigger a Vulnerability or Susceptibility to Fire, nor would it be affected by a Drain Fire Powers ability. On the other hand, a Drain Cosmic Power could affect it, and so on.

Second, the GM can require a character who has “cosmic power” abilities to define his powers so they can do nearly anything. His Attack Powers all have to have the *Variable Advantage* and *Variable Special Effects* Advantages, or he has to have a large Variable Power Pool, or the like. This way the character can create fire that would trigger a Vulnerability or Susceptibility to Fire, but he's paying for the privilege of being so flexible. (On the other hand, this leaves the character vulnerable to Adjustment Powers that affect either the special effect he's creating [Fire, in this example] or “cosmic power”; in essence, many of his powers would have two special effects.)



THE HERO OUT OF TIME

Since many Galactic Champions settings directly connect to some other ongoing setting or storyline (such as a standard-power Superhero setting in the modern day), it's not uncommon for GMs and gamers to want to establish specific character ties between the two. This usually means that one or more characters from the modern-day setting can travel to, or become permanently transplanted to, the futuristic Galactic Champions setting. Not only does this give gamers familiar touchstones and GMs story hooks to work with, but the Hero Out Of Time “stands in” for the players by providing the GM with a plausible reason for “infodumps” — in other words, for telling the players all about the new and remarkable features of the setting without lots of clunky out-of-game explanation.

See the *Time Transplants* sidebar on page 95 for more information about heroes out of time.

SPACE GODS

Powerful though Galactic Champions characters may be, they often encounter beings even more powerful than they — even so powerful that they are to the Galactic Champions PCs as the PCs themselves are to insects! These beings, generically referred to as “space gods” (though they may or may not actually be gods), typically serve as plot devices for the GM to exploit, and challenges for the heroes to overcome. When the galactically-powerful heroes can't fight a foe with sheer might alone, they have to *think*, finding ways to exploit the space god's personality, goals, or *raison d'être*

to defeat him (or at least stop him from doing something that, unbeknownst to him, will wreak great havoc on the ordinary mortals of a solar system or galaxy).

TECHNOLOGY

Given that most Galactic Champions settings derive as much from Space Opera-style Science Fiction as they do from comic books, high technology — from starships, to laser pistols, to teleporters — tends to be ubiquitous. Even ordinary people often have access to technology possessed only by superhumans in the modern day, which tends to make some hero archetypes less common (see below). On the other hand, the prevalence of technology makes it possible for the GM to easily provide all PCs with certain types of equipment (such as force-fields that let them survive in outer space) if he wants to.

TIME TRAVEL

Galactic Champions characters often have access to technology that allows them to travel through time. Sometimes this simply enables the presence of the Hero Out Of Time (see above), but often it has broader applications. For example, a team of Galactic Champions superheroes might find itself responsible for protecting not only the Milky Way Galaxy in the year 3000 AD, but for the entire period of recorded history (and beyond)! After all, given the vast powers possessed by Galactic Champions villains, the possibility of them escaping into the past or future, or manipulating events in other timeframes to ensure the success of their plots in the campaign's time,

is a real one. Therefore the heroes need the ability to travel through time themselves. However, even in settings where time travel factors into adventures, it rarely does so frequently. The heroes (and their foes) are well aware of the perils posed by time travel (such as the fact that a trivial change of past events may radically reshape the “future” [their present]), so they don’t go jaunting around in the timestream unless they have to.

TRAVEL

Ordinary heroes can often get around on Earth, or even Earth’s solar system, without much trouble. Galactic Champions heroes have a lot more territory to cover, so they tend to do a lot more traveling. For most of them, crossing multiple solar systems in the space of an hour or two is a commonplace thing, and some can traverse the entire Galaxy (or universe!) in the blink of an eye. See below for further discussion.

GALACTIC CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGNS

Galactic Champions games typically fall into the “Very High-Powered” or “Cosmically Powerful” categories of Superheroic campaigns described on 6E1 34. This means they’re typically built on 650-750 Total Points (with 100 or more points of Matching Complications). Characters typically have around 75-100 Active Points in most powers, CVs of 10-16, and SPDs of 6-12.

Even those guidelines may be too restrictive for certain types of Galactic Champions campaigns. In some settings, GMs may want players to build characters on 1,000 Total Points or more, have 120+ Active Point powers, and the like. After all, protecting the Galaxy can be dangerous work!

Galactic Champions characters typically do not have to comply with a Characteristic Maximum. They have to pay Character Points for any equipment or other items they want (like usual for Superheroic campaigns).

RUNNING A GALACTIC CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

Here’s some advice for GMs who want to run Galactic Champions campaigns:

Build The Skeleton For Your Galaxy: The task of creating an entire galaxy as a campaign setting may seem daunting, but it’s not if you break it down into smaller tasks and accomplish them one at a time. The first thing to do is to design a general framework for galactic civilization; then, as players build their characters and you put them through adventures, you can begin layering in details. You may want to consult *Star Hero*, the *HERO System* genre book for Science Fiction gaming, for additional information and advice.

This framework should include these details:

- **The nature and size of the galactic “empires.”** In this context, “empire” doesn’t necessarily mean something ruled by a despotic emperor, it indicates any large collection of planetary systems belonging to the same governmental structure. (Do note, however, that when they actually are empires, however wise or cruel their rulers may be, those rulers constitute really interesting NPCs for the Player Characters to encounter.) It’s helpful to start with a rough political map of the galaxy, drawing in approximate borders for the frontiers of those empires. Then decide on such matters as what type of government each one has (tyranny? regulated monarchy? democracy? plutocracy?), how they interact with other empires, and whether they’re dominated by a single species or bestow equal benefits to citizens of all species.
- **The key species.** To make each empire more visually distinct, you need to create anywhere from one to three species who are most strongly associated with it. These would be either the most numerous or the most privileged species belonging to that empire, and each should have a distinctive appearance, a distinctive manner of speech, and a distinctive set of special effects for its preferred types of technology (*i.e.*, antimatter propulsion versus gravitic propulsion versus ion drives, laser beams versus missiles versus electromagnetic pulse weapons).
- **Standard levels of technology.** How fast can spacecraft go? How much damage can their weapons do and take? How big can they be? You’ll have to settle on the answers to these questions, and many more like them.
- **Mysteries of the Galaxy.** It’s good to establish, early in the process of constructing the galaxy, some mysteries for the characters to know about (and to establish that they’re of sufficiently low priority that the PCs don’t immediately head off to explore them, leaving your planned adventures far behind). For instance, is there life in the areas where radiation is so high that little exploration has been conducted? Who built all those buildings, which seem to be something like temples but apparently were never occupied, about 300,000 years ago at points scattered throughout the galaxy? Why are so many species obviously related to humans — did someone seed the galaxy billions of years ago, and if so, which planet is the origin of the humanoid races? And so on.

It’s “Superheroes,” Not “Super-Ships”: One important thing to remember is that a campaign like this is still supposed to center around its Player Characters, so it’s a bad idea to put together tasks that are most readily solved through application of a starship’s weaponry. Design adventures that can only be resolved by individual superpowered heroes.



Think “Cosmic”: Since the PCs are supposed to be powerful enough to stop galactic threats, take on the biggest starships, and deal with planetary problems, they need power — lots of it. The campaign standards should be closer to Very High-Powered or Cosmically Powerful superheroes than to standard point totals and guidelines.

Consider Travel Times: One of the most important issues to think about if you’re creating a campaign that spans a galaxy is travel time. With so much space in the setting, the question of how quickly PCs can journey from Point A to Point B — whether under their own power, or with the help of starships or teleportation systems — is a crucial one. The answer tells you how large galactic governments can be, how quickly the heroes can respond to crises (and how easily villains can escape from the scene of the crime), where (and how) people live, and so forth.

If travel is easy — usually because of the existence of ultra-fast FTL starships or interstellar teleportation technology — then the entire galaxy may be no different, dramatically speaking, than the campaign city in a normal Champions campaign. The heroes can get from one place to another very quickly, and the villains’ ability to outrun them or hide from them is significantly diminished. You can have PCs from widely separated planets come together to form a team, increasing the diversity of character creation options available to the players.

If travel is difficult — possibly because the campaign ground rules prevent characters from buying high levels of Movement Powers, forcing the PCs to rely on standard travel methods — then you may effectively restrict the scope of the campaign. Even if you’ve detailed the entire Galaxy, if it takes the heroes months to get from one side of it to the other, half of your work is largely going to go to waste. On the other hand, it’s easier to run stories involving distant, unknown worlds or unexplored galactic backwaters, since the heroes can’t get to them in the blink of an eye — uncovering such mysteries requires effort, and that makes the outcome of the adventure more meaningful. A PC could be an alien from a species so far away that they’re rarely seen, and thus his (to him ordinary) racial abilities become the equivalent of superpowers.

As a basis for your decisions, remember that the Milky Way Galaxy is about a hundred thousand light-years from edge to edge. Assuming you’ve set your campaign in the Milky Way or a comparably-sized galaxy, how long would you like it to take for a standard ship to go from one edge to the other? If you think that should be a lifetime’s trip — say, 100 years — then ships should be equipped with 30 points’ worth of Faster-Than-Light Travel (1,000 Light Years/year). If you’d prefer for characters to move around more briskly, with an edge-to-edge trip taking a year, then allow ships 44 points’ worth (128,000 Light Years/year).

PLAYING IN A GALACTIC CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

Here’s some advice for players to help them get the most from a Galactic Champions campaign.

Think “Cosmic,” Too: The GM is giving you a lot of Character Points to work with, so use them appropriately! Galactic Champions characters are usually not only powerful, but “self-contained” — they rarely rely on Foci or the like, but instead have innate powers. Many, if not all, can fly and survive unaided in the vacuum of space; Enhanced Senses are common as well.

Restricted Archetypes And Origins: Some types of superheroes are common and popular in Galactic Champions campaigns, others less so. Bricks, Energy Projectors, and Mentalists, for example, are frequently encountered. On the other hand, the Gadeteer, Martial Artist, Mystic, Powered Armor, and Weaponmaster are all uncommon.



COSMIC POWERS

Here are a few examples of some cosmic-level powers Galactic Champions superhumans might possess:

Godlike Awe: The character is as majestic and awe-inspiring as a god.

100 PRE. Total cost: 90 points.

Nova Effect: The character has the ability to make stars go nova, destroying not only them but everything in their solar systems. The effects of the blast are so extensive they “wrap around” planets and asteroids, making it impossible to take shelter from them in the lee of some world.

RKA 20d6, Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +¼), MegaArea (1m = 10 billion km wide, broad, and deep; +3½), Personal Immunity (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) (1,575 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Minute; -1½), No Range (-½). Total cost: 525 points.

Standing On The Sun: The character is virtually immune to damage from energy.

Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75% (total cost: 60 points) and Resistant Protection (0 PD/90 ED), Hardened (+¼), Impenetrable (+¼) (total cost: 202 points). Total cost: 262 points.

Translight Travel: The character can travel at many times the speed of light.

FTL Travel (32,000 LY/year, or about 1 LY/15 minutes). Total cost: 40 points.

Universal Transmutation: The character has Transform powers that can affect virtually anything.

Severe Transform 10d6 (anything into anything), Improved Results Group (anything; +1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½). Total cost: 375 points.

There are several reasons for this. First, the ready availability of high technology makes it difficult for a tech-based character to truly “stand out” (though many characters have technical skills, since technology is an important part of the campaign setting). Second, given the large numbers of Character Points the characters have to spend, and the prevalence of incredible superpowers, trained or learned abilities and Skill-based characters simply don’t fare as well in most cases (and the *Focus* Limitation is much less common in general). Third, magic and mysticism tend to be rare, if not nonexistent, in the Galactic context. However, “hybrid” characters mixing a more common archetype with a rarer one aren’t unknown.

Similarly, certain types of character origins (see page 73) aren’t as common in Galactic Champions as they are in standard Champions campaigns. Laboratory accidents, being bitten by radioactive critters, and the like don’t occur as origins that often (though they’re not entirely absent). It’s more likely that a character was born with his powers (either because his species is, or because he’s a mutant), had them deliberately infused via genetic engineering or psionics, can access an extra-dimensional power source, or the like.

Stray Far From Home: Many of the PCs in a campaign such as this are aliens (*i.e.*, not Humans), and it’s normally permissible to create the sort of character you want and then assume that his unusual traits are characteristic of one particular alien species. (The GM, charged with filling in the details of an entire galaxy, usually doesn’t mind the players helping out by creating new species, so long as they fit within the tone of the setting.) Remember that your character is probably supposed to be a superhero even within the context of his own species. In other words, if you’ve put together a super-shapechanger with the notion that he comes from a planet of shapechangers, he should probably be a lot better at shapechanging than others of his kind.

MYSTIC CHAMPIONS

Mystic Champions is a sort of “meta-subgenre” of superhero stories that focuses on characters and adventures featuring magic and related phenomena. Any sort of Superhero campaign could become a Mystic Champions campaign, though they’re by far the most common in Silver Age and Bronze Age settings. What ties them together is that all the heroes have magic-related powers in some way (often they’re “supermagics,” but they might be something different, like lycanthropes or warriors wielding enchanted weapons) and usually confront mystic menaces rather than “standard” super-crime.

RUNNING A MYSTIC CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

Here’s some advice for GMs who want to run Mystic Champions campaigns:

Design Your Multiverse: The GM for a regular Champions campaign has to think about what Earth is like, and maybe give some thought to the rest of the Galaxy. But in Mystic Champions, characters usually have the power to travel between dimensions, so you need to design a *multiverse*. You need to decide what other planes of existence are out there, how “close” they are to Earth’s home dimension (both in terms of distance, and in terms of how well they follow the same laws of physics and magic), how easy it is to reach them, and who lives there. Obviously you don’t need to waste time creating every dimension in full — what you need is a solid framework, so that when you have to come up with a dimension for an adventure, you know where it fits into the framework and how it interacts with your setting’s rules for planar travel.

Design Your Major Adversaries: Mystic heroes need special mystic enemies; they don’t just fight the usual run of superpowered bank robbers and world conquerors that “mundane” superheroes do. Some of them include:

- **Dimensional overlords**, beings of vast mystic power who rule entire dimensions, or even multiple dimensions, and are usually eager to conquer more (especially Earth’s dimension, which is often considered especially rich in mystic power);
- **Embodiments**, powerful beings who embody some negative concept (like Fear, Hatred, Entropy, or Death) and want to use that power to accomplish goals inimical to humanity;
- **Mystic monsters**, such as vampires, werewolves, and ghosts; and
- **Evil supermagics**, the heroes’ polar opposites (some of whom may have once trained with the heroes, but turned to the dark, left-hand path to power).



Design A Spell System... Partially: One of the ways to give your Mystic Champions setting its own unique “feel” is to create some of the spells and magical abilities common to mystics in the setting. By creating a shared body of lore that all the PCs and their enemies can draw on, you add verisimilitude to the setting. But part of the fun of Mystic Champions, and Champions in general, is the freedom the *HERO System* gives to create just the sort of character you want, so don’t *require* the PCs to use your “stock” magic system if they don’t want to. After all, magic is infinitely malleable and a manifestation of the mage’s will, so who’s to say that each character can’t practice magic in his own way?

PLAYING IN A MYSTIC CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

Here’s some advice for players to help them get the most from a Mystic Champions campaign.

Go Beyond The Supermage: A typical “supermage” character, such as Dr. Strange or Dr. Fate, is the stereotypical Mystic Champions character. They’re a lot of fun to play because they usually have a wide variety of powers and a cool shtick. But that’s not the *only* possibility in a Mystic Champions campaign, and a group of nothing but supermages isn’t likely to be much fun anyway. The existence of magic opens up all sorts of potential for Player Characters: monsters like vampires or zombies who are fighting against their own dark natures to retain some shred of humanity and act heroically; mystic “gadgeteers” who use potion and enchanted items instead of high technology; characters who’ve been augmented by magical spells rather than radiation, biology, or one-in-a-million accidents.

Go Beyond Comic Book Spells: The typical supermage spell system involves spells that aren’t very different from regular superpowers. They may look different, but in game terms they’re pretty much the same — a Blast 12d6 is a Blast 12d6, whether it’s defined as a Pulson Beam or the Beneficent Bolts of Berethar. But there’s more to magic than just that. Consider playing a character who uses a more restricted form of spellcasting (Voodoo or Sorcery, for example). That adds another aspect to the campaign *and* makes your character stand out from the pack.

TEEN CHAMPIONS

Another sort of “meta-subgenre” common to comic book superheroes are stories focusing on teenage superheroes. Teen Champions heroes (who often, but not always, face off against teen villains) have to deal not only with the usual travails of superheroing (risking their lives, maintaining a Secret Identity, and so on), but all the baggage that comes with being a teenager. In addition to saving the world on a regular basis, they have to get their homework done on time (and earn good grades!), cope with teen romance problems, deal with family-related issues, get permission to use the family car and stay out late, and find a date for the prom.

Inspirational comic books and characters for this subgenre abound. For example, early Spider-Man stories, when Peter Parker was still in high school, fit the Teen Champions mold well (as does *Ultimate Spider-Man*, which to date has focused almost entirely on that period of the character’s life). Some other possibilities include *Invincible*, *Runaways*, *Robin*, and *The New Mutants*.

TEEN CHAMPIONS ELEMENTS

Teen Champions campaigns often concern themselves with these events, elements, and themes:

LACK OF FREEDOM

One of the central themes of a Superhero story focusing on teen heroes is lack of freedom — a contrast between the enormous powers a teen super has, and the burden to use them responsibly to protect others, and his general powerlessness to make decisions about how to spend his time, where to live, and the like. You can represent some of these problems with Complications (such as Social Complication: Minor), but others come into the game through roleplaying and adventure design. Relatively simple problems that an adult hero could easily avoid become serious issues for a teen who can’t switch (or quit) schools anytime he wants, live on his own, or obtain a job that can support him, and it’s up to the GM to make sure those issues crop up in the game.

TEEN TURMOIL

The other central theme that pervades Teen Champions are the turmoils that adolescents go through as they edge toward adulthood but still remain kids in many ways. And for teen heroes, those turmoils are even worse! An ordinary teen has to deal with problems like difficulties with schoolwork, poor family life, bullies, finding and keeping a part-time job, and teen romance. Teen heroes potentially have all of that, *plus* having to fit superheroing and its problems into the mix. It’s tough enough to deal with a girlfriend/boyfriend in mundane life; a teen hero also has to cope with hiding his Secret Identity from his love interest, explaining his frequent absences to her/him, and even looking like a coward because he “runs away”





when trouble rears its ugly head (so he can change into costume and save everyone). Being grounded is bad enough for an ordinary teen; it's even worse for teen heroes who need to go out and stop Sunburst's latest evil scheme, or who've gotten used to being able to fly around the world whenever they want.

Of course, it's entirely possible to tell stories about teenage superheroes without addressing these issues. *Teen Titans* and *The New Warriors*, for example, both feature superheroes who are technically teenagers... but they're so often written and act like adults, and suffer from so few (or no) teen-related problems, that they don't fit the Teen Champions subgenre.

TEEN CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGNS

Teen Champions games are typically built on few Character Points compared to regular superheroes — no more than 300 Total Points, and perhaps as little as 200-250. But given the problems that teens face, they usually have no problem meeting a Matching Complications total, even if it's 60-75 points. Social Limitation: Minor (Infrequently or Frequently, and Minor, so worth 5-10 points) and Social Limitation: Secret Identity (15 points) cover a lot of the required amount right off the bat. Teen Champions characters typically have around 40-60 Active Points in most powers, CVs of 4-8, and SPDs of 3-5.

Teen Champions characters typically do not have to comply with a Characteristic Maximum. They have to pay Character Points for any equipment or other items they want (like usual for Superheroic campaigns).

RUNNING A TEEN CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for GMs who want to run Teen Champions campaigns:

School Daze: To run a Teen Champions game, first and foremost you need a proper setting. For some Teen Champions campaigns, that setting is a special school or academy for superpowered children. This has some benefits (all the heroes are in the same place most of the time, and they automatically form a team), but also some drawbacks (it eliminates a lot of the story-driving dilemmas that confront teen superheroes). Other games take place in a typical modern-day city, with the heroes attending one or more regular high schools.

Keep Power Levels Low: It's fine for these teen supers to be able to be more powerful than their friends in high school, certainly, but they shouldn't be able to carry City Hall around or blast Mount Shasta into a steaming crater. If they possess a high level of power, the PCs feel powerful and dominant — which runs contrary to what this sort of campaign is all about. It's appropriate for the GM to impose significant point and effectiveness ceilings, such as 40 Active Points in powers, or no SPDs above 4 without special permission.

Make Secret Identities A Must: A teen campaign can never have an appropriate level of angst if there aren't compelling reasons for the teen supers to keep their heroic identities secret from their parents and classmates. The reasons can be as simple or elaborate as the GM and players wish. For instance, assuming a somewhat paranoid atmosphere, you might establish that people who demonstrate superpowers are always inducted into secret branches of the armed forces, with their families sequestered for study by government scientists. If the teen hero doesn't want that to happen, he'll have to keep his real name a secret, and will have to dodge the occasional efforts by government representatives to unmask him.

Orient Stories Around Teen Interests: Most of the campaign's stories should have at their core some sort of teenaged-oriented theme. Examples might include: the struggles of holding down a job (when one's time is divided not only between it and school but also superhero responsibilities); young love (even more complicated for teen supers than ordinary teens, since their boyfriends/girlfriends might end up being possessed by demons, unknowingly be the offspring of the town's villainous mad scientist, or hating or fearing superheroes); struggles for independence (if an ordinary teen that his parents are too restrictive, imagine the feelings of a teen who could fly to the Moon... if he weren't grounded for the next week); personal attractiveness (acne and braces afflict supers as well as normals); disapproval (from

parents, relatives, and people in general who deride the heroes' music tastes, friends, clothes, and hobbies); and so on. Every menace can be a metaphor for one of the heroes' inner struggles — for instance, the eighty foot-tall motorcyclist who crushes the neighborhood under his wheels is both a dangerous enemy and a reflection of what one of the heroes would really like to be....

PLAYING IN A TEEN CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

Here's some advice for players to help them get the most from a Teen Champions campaign.

Design The Person First: A campaign like this revolves around the personalities of the characters more than their powers. If at all possible, come up with the personality and history for a Player Character before worrying about his powers.

Design The Home, Friends, And Family: After his personality and background, the next most important things in a teen hero's life are his home, family, and friends. Where does he live? What are his parents like — strict or indulgent, kind or cruel, loving or uncaring, together or divorced? Is his family wealthy, middle class, or poor? Does he have any siblings? Do any other relatives live close by? Is his home life fulfilling and loving, or is spending time at home a dreaded burden?

Beyond the home, you should also consider who else your character interacts with. Does he have a circle of close friends, just one or two, or none at all? Is he bullied or picked on? Does he belong to any clubs or extracurricular activity groups? Does he have a part-time job? Focusing on these little details really helps you flesh out a teen hero and his attitude before you spend a single Character Point.

Create Unusual Powers As A Basis For Others:

Teen superhumans usually start out with a small suite of narrowly-defined powers. For example, instead of being able to teleport at will, a teen hero might have the ability only to teleport between patches of shadow. Instead of being super-strong all the time, he might need to absorb solar energy to exercise his full STR (so he's much less effective at night or indoors). This reflects the relative newness of a teen hero's powers, and his relative inexperience in using them. As the campaign goes on, the character can spend earned Experience Points to improve his powers by buying off Limitations, adding more effect, and so forth. Eventually he has unrestricted Teleportation or can use his full super-strength at all times. (The GM might even consider holding back some of the heroes' starting Total Points so he can hand them out in small lump sums throughout the game to represent character growth.) Players who design characters along these guidelines, and who roleplay the effects appropriately, should be rewarded with more "screen time," more opportunities for roleplaying, and hopefully more Experience Points.

Have Weaknesses And Vulnerabilities: For many players, the whole point of character design is to eliminate as many weak points as possible — after all, superheroes are supposed to be strong, powerful, and confident. But that approach runs contrary to many of the themes of Teen Champions. A teen super (whether hero, villain, or neutral) should have one or more points of vulnerability — ways he can be hurt or manipulated by ordinary friends, relatives, and authorities. It's especially appropriate for teen supers to have the *Only In Alternate Identity* Limitation on most of their powers, making them ordinary kids (vulnerable to school bullies and sports injuries as anyone else) when in their Secret Identities, or to have some obvious, unconcealable trait they're very sensitive about — so much so they'll be pained by or even flee taunting.

Make Inappropriate Choices: No experienced adult superhero is likely to fall in with a "bad crowd" because of peer pressure, or use his superpowers in irresponsible ways — but a teen superhuman certainly might. The temptation to show off their powers undoubtedly preys on the minds of many teen heroes, especially ones who are snubbed or bullied by their classmates. A player who roleplays these situations appropriately should be rewarded for doing so.



MIXING AND MATCHING

Now that you know about all these different periods and types of campaigns, you can also consider ways to mix and match their elements to please yourself. It's actually a pretty simple process. All you have to do is decide on a set of traits from one subgenre and decide how they would be implemented in another period. For example, it's entirely possible to mix some of the elements of a Silver Age campaign into a Bronze Age Champions game, or vice-versa.

Let's say you wanted to run a campaign set in the early years of the twenty-first century, but have that campaign be much more like the comics of the Golden Age. To do this, you'd probably want to establish that the very first superheroes began appearing in the 1990s.

Since the Golden Age comics were less cynical and more gung-ho than modern comics, you might want to establish that the appearance of these superheroes began to change things in modern world culture. The superheroes drew admirers by the thousands, causing the formation of endless numbers of fan clubs, and even a demand for more wholesome forms of entertainment. Since they possess enough power and inhuman versatility to ignore demands by the government to serve it in covert ways, the superheroes remain free of morally ambiguous obligations.

The defining characteristic of Golden Age comics was the interaction of superheroes and World War II, and to simulate that atmosphere, the GM will probably want to plunge the Earth into another war. But the problem is that "realistically," no nation or group of nations today can really take the part of the Axis powers. The solution? Have the war be a global defense against invaders from space — invaders with their own super-powered warrior elite.

And so with a few simple steps — and a little work to implement them — you can successfully mix modern culture and history with the Golden Age comic book atmosphere.



MIXING GENRES

Beyond “pure” expressions of the Superheroes genre there are many types of stories (and game campaigns) involving the use of meta-genres, or which combine Champions and some other genre.

META-GENRES

A *meta-genre* is a style or theme of storytelling/game play/campaign conception that could apply to any genre. Comedy, horror, romance, and tragedy are all meta-genres, whereas Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Western are genres. Thus, you could have a horror Western, or horror Science Fiction, or horror Fantasy — horror isn’t a genre, it’s a *meta-genre*. A meta-genre can apply to an entire campaign, or just to specific adventures or story arcs within an otherwise normal Champions game.

In most cases, a campaign’s or scenario’s meta-genre evokes (or is intended to evoke) a particular mood in the characters: dread, compassion, suspense, humor. The GM should do his best to enhance the mood by encouraging players to have their characters engage in *dramatically appropriate actions* — such as deliberately putting them in situations where they’ll look ridiculous in a Comedic Action campaign (see below).

This section discusses several common meta-genres and how to implement them in a Champions campaign (or just in a single adventure). Since this advice is in many ways as important for the players as for the GM — all the gamers in a group have to work together to maintain the mood — it’s included here, rather than in Chapter Three. But before you read about specific meta-genres, it’s important to understand one rule of thumb applicable to all of them:

The GM Should Reward Appropriate Actions!

In every campaign, characters try to pull off unlikely actions, but how unlikely they are depends on part on the genre and mood of the campaign. For instance, in real life, most people don’t swing across gaps on ropes very gracefully. Many fall off. Many land badly. So if a campaign were to simulate real life, “swinging across a gap on a line” would require a successful Skill Roll, probably with a penalty.

But in a swashbuckling campaign, characters swing around on lines all the time. Ropes, shroudlines, cables, and unusually tough cords are everywhere. In such an environment, an attempt to swing from point A to point B on a line would be simple — requiring, at most, an ordinary DEX Roll (perhaps with a bonus in the character’s favor), and landing in a position to be able to do something useful would be an automatic part of the successful roll.

In short, the GM should reward, with an improved chance of success, just about any action that’s in character for the campaign mood, particularly if it’s performed as much to entertain the players as it is to gain an advantage for the character. Obviously, the types of actions that deserve such rewards vary from mood to mood, from campaign to campaign; the text below discusses appropriate ones.

Although the discussion in this section talks about “campaigns,” it applies equally to subplots and story arcs within campaigns. A game with an Adventure mood could easily have a Comedy or Drama subplot going, or feature a story focusing mainly on Romance. Many campaigns mix and match these moods and meta-genres freely.

ADVENTURE

The most common mood for a Superhero campaign is Adventure (in fact, it’s more or less the default — if some other meta-genre doesn’t predominate, Adventure is the name of the game). Adventure means the characters decide to accomplish a dangerous task. In undertaking this mission, they risk injury and death; they experience pain, competition, and adrenaline rushes. Then the story concludes, probably with them victorious, possibly with them having failed in their objective.

GUIDELINES

The most important word in an Adventure-oriented campaign is “Danger.” In every episode, one or more characters should find themselves in physical danger of some sort, whether it’s an imminent attack from an enemy, a drop into a bottomless crevasse or a pool of molten lead, a deathtrap with a pendulum blade, or possible incineration during a spaceship’s re-entry into Earth’s atmosphere. Getting into and out of danger again and again are what characterizes Adventure in the first place.

APPROPRIATE UNLIKELY ACTIONS

One of the most common activities in genre fiction is for characters not just to accomplish something, but to accomplish it with style, so GMs should be on the lookout for PCs attempting to achieve a little extra something when performing Combat Maneuvers, using Acrobatics, and the like.

Extra Combat Functionality: The GM may allow a character to perform a Combat Maneuver that exceeds the description of that Maneuver’s effectiveness in a minor way.

Example: *The martial artist hero Graycat is in combat with Blood Groove, a sword-wielding villain. Graycat’s pal, Black Swordsman, is nearby, being hard-pressed by another villain because Black Swordsman has lost his blade.*

Graycat announces, “I’m going to perform a Disarm on Blood Groove, but I don’t just want to disarm him. When I’m in the middle of the maneuver, I want to announce, “Black Swordsman, look sharp!” and then spin Blood Groove’s blade into his hands.”

This being a very appropriate thing to do and a very cinematic maneuver, the GM decides to reward Graycat by not imposing any additional penalties on the maneuver, and by stretching the definition of the Disarm maneuver a bit to allow him to send the weapon in the direction he wants... if he succeeds with the maneuver in the first place, that is.

Some players, seeing that such a thing is possible, will have their PCs try to perform it each and every time they use a pertinent maneuver. If this begins to happen, the GM should continue to grant extra combat functionality, but impose a penalty on the characters’ chances to succeed. He can remove the penalty if the frequency of such attempts drops back to a more reasonable level.

Not Accounting For Minor Actions: On occasion, a character’s action would count as his attack for a Phase, even though it doesn’t really constitute an attack. The GM can choose to consider such an action as only a Half Phase Action instead.

Example: *Freedom Fighter, flag-wearing American male hero, has had an ongoing subplot in which he’s become romantically interested in Snow Leopard, a supervillainess working for the Z-Force criminal agency. She’s likewise attracted to him, but not to the point he can persuade her to give up her life of crime.*

In battle with members of Z-Force, Freedom Fighter ended his last Phase beside the abandoned stand of a street vendor. He decides to wait there for the villains’ next charge. At the start of his next Phase, he asks the GM, “Is there anything in the vendor’s stand I can use as a weapon, or for a tactical advantage?”

The GM says, “No, not really. It’s a flower stand.”

Freedom Fighter announces, “Then I’ll toss one red rose over the heads of the oncoming bad guys to Snow Leopard.”

Technically, tossing the rose constitutes an Attack Action, but since it demonstrates panache, is a charming moment related to an ongoing subplot, and doesn’t gain him any sort of combat advantage, the GM decides this constitutes just a Half Phase Action, not an attack.

Adding A Skill Roll Benefit: When a PC has just announced he’s performing an Action or a Combat Maneuver in a particularly colorful or cinematic way, the GM might allow him an additional, not-asked-for Skill Roll if the maneuver succeeds. The Skill Roll would be one the character had been attempting in earlier parts of the adventure, and the GM would have to feel the character’s recent performance somehow accentuated it or gave it an additional chance to succeed.

Example: *In the same battle between Freedom Fighter and Z-Force, the badly outnumbered Freedom Fighter has, by bouncing all over the landscape, accomplished three things: kept himself from being Knocked Out; delayed Z-Force long enough for his own allies to accomplish their task (thwarting the villains’ scheme); and made most members of Z-Force look like idiots. Now, as the tired hero drops from a building’s ledge to one of its vertical flagpoles, he gives them all a mocking bow, offers one last smile to Snow Leopard, and then uses the flagpole as a diving board to bounce himself up onto an elevated train, with which he makes his getaway.*

The GM decides this is a very affecting moment for Snow Leopard, another opportunity for her to weigh the worth of her professional associates against that of Freedom Fighter, so he tells Freedom Fighter, “Make a Persuasion roll.” This roll becomes part of the sequence of efforts Freedom Fighter has made to persuade Snow Leopard to join him, even though Freedom Fighter has actually left this scene and is unaware that he may, at last, have succeeded where Snow Leopard is concerned.





Then, There's Presence: In the spirit of adventure, a GM might also allow a successful Skill Roll to be accompanied by a Presence Attack, even when the PC doesn't ask for it.

Example: Moments ago, Graycat disarmed Blood Groove and flicked his sword to the Black Swordsman. Black Swordsman, all his Combat Skill Levels restored now that there's a sword in his hand, can hold his own foe, Death-Weaver, at bay.

Black Swordsman says, "I'm going to back toward Graycat and Blood Groove and look uncertain. When Death-Weaver comes at me, I'm going to put all my Combat Skill Levels into DCV and do a blind reverse thrust at Blood Groove behind me. I'm hoping that if Death-Weaver lunges at me and misses, he'll end up where Graycat can punch him out."

They play out that Phase and it turns out just as Black Swordsman predicted, with a hole in Blood Groove's leg and Graycat's fist undoing years of Death-Weaver's orthodontics work.

Blood Groove's and Death-Weaver's teammate, Dementia, just awakening after having been Knocked Out earlier in the fight, witnesses this skillful teamwork. The GM has the Black Swordsman, the higher-Presence character of the two heroes, make a Presence Attack against her, and he rolls high enough to dissuade her from making a new attack against them.

COMEDY

The obvious purpose of a Comedy campaign is to get laughs. The characters might experience danger, but their first response (before drawing laser pistols, putting up their dukes, or pulling the pins out of grenades) is a wisecrack or act of physical comedy.

Comedy campaigns don't offer their characters as many opportunities to grandstand — well, not successfully, anyway — but can be just as entertaining as any other type so long as the GM and players are reasonably adept at wordplay.

GUIDELINES

Keep It Light: The first thing to remember about running a Comedy campaign (or story) is that comedy tends to vanish when more serious emotions are invoked. If, for instance, a character is going to die, make sure that it's not a tragedy. (The world is full of annoying characters, a comedy world even more so, and seldom do players mind their passing.) It's possible to have romances in a Comedy world, but they should be attractions between comparatively shallow characters, often expressed in inconvenient places, at inconvenient times, and possibly complicated by the actions of romantic rivals.

Use Extreme Characters: In a Comedy campaign, it's all right to have characters whose costumes, special effects, and Complications (especially Psychological Complications) tend to be more extreme than in a normal campaign. A character who (in a normal campaign) believes in a specific conspiracy theory would, in a Comedy campaign, become a muttering paranoid who believes in all such notions and has a grand unified conspiracy theory that relates every one of them to all the others.

Superhero = Loony: It's also worthwhile to remember that the very notion of dressing up in colorful skintight costumes and bounding around on rooftops is pretty strange, so it should be even more so in a Comedy setting; the normal population will regard the superhero/supervillain subculture as an extreme and insane one.

APPROPRIATE UNLIKELY ACTIONS

Appropriate unlikely actions for Comedy include:

Opportunities For Wisecracks: Remember to pace combat sequences and any other portions of the adventure so players who are adept at wisecracks have time and opportunity to issue them, and don't forget that NPCs can, and should, be just as amusing.

The Consequences Of Missed Rolls: There's a tremendous opportunity for humor in Skill and Attack Rolls that don't succeed. Any time an Attack Roll misses, or a Skill Roll misses by 3 or more, the GM should choose some likely (and amusing) consequence for the miss.

The possible consequences for missed Skill Rolls are too many to enumerate; there are dozens per Skill. As a rule of thumb, though, the attempted outcome should backfire. For instance, a character missing an Acrobatics roll could end up with his rear end stuck in a trash can or hanging upside down, his foot caught in a fire escape. Someone failing an Inventor roll could believe he has succeeded in creating the gadget he wanted, only to have it do something entirely unexpected when used in combat. A character failing a Combat Piloting roll would naturally crash into an unlikely obstacle, such as a billboard, paint factory, volleyball net at a nudist beach, the headquarters of an organization that hates him and all he stands for, and so on.

Missed Attack Rolls should have the same sorts of results. Gamemasters who would like a ready reference can use the accompanying Missed Attack Rolls Table.

The Consequences Of Successful Rolls: Another potential source of amusement is for Skill use to succeed *too* well. Any time a character makes his Skill Roll by 5 or more, he uses the Skill successfully, but the success takes an unexpected turn that inconveniences him.

Example: A hero uses Persuasion to talk himself out of a jam with a powerful enemy. The enemy decides our hero is his new spokesperson/negotiator/best friend and insists that our hero stay with him always. Attempts to use this new position to infiltrate the enemy's organization will naturally end up as disastrously as the original Persuasion attempt.

Example: A hero succeeds with Charm on an attractive NPC. All's well until the next day, when the NPC's family (an organized crime group, a band of aliens, the US president, a clan diametrically opposed to the hero's politics or lifestyle, or the like) shows up in town to meet the person they're certain is their new prospective in-law.

MISSSED ATTACK ROLLS TABLE

3d6 Roll Consequences

3-5	Attacker becomes off-balance and falls down.
6-7	Attacker becomes off-balance and steps into/sits down on/falls into an undesirable substance — the residue of an enemy's Entangle, a mud puddle, fresh paint, a vat of batter....
8	Attacker spins around, slinging one or more of his Foci away, possibly into the hands of enemies.
9	Crucial buckle breaks, causing some of attacker's garments to fall down around his knees (-2 to all DEX Rolls involving the legs).
10	Attacker falls into the arms of unappealing person who considers him/her absolutely gorgeous.
11	Attacker hits himself (possibly on ricochet or rebound).
12	Attack hits target with no effect other than to irritate him.
13	Attack hits target and somehow helps/invigorates him.
14-15	Attack hits ally with amusing and inconvenient results.
16-18	Attack hits bystander with amusing and inconvenient results.



DRAMA

A Drama is any type of storyline in which invoking and experiencing serious emotions is most important. A Drama campaign is usually run for players who enjoy having their characters put through emotional wringers. Drama-oriented campaigns can include moments from other types of moods; there can be lighthearted moments, romantic moments, adventuresome moments, scary moments. But the majority of each play session should revolve around the emotional lives of the PCs, and often verge into a closely-related subgenre, Tragedy.

Running a Drama-oriented superhero campaign can be tricky, because it means the GM has to move storylines along when the PCs are in their civilian identities, has to give each PC individual subplots as well as bringing them together for collective ones, and has to manage what may be a large number of NPCs. He usually can't draw on that staple of comic books stories, combat, as much, because combat is typically adventuresome, not emotionally wrenching.

On the other hand, one of the major conventions of the Superhero genre — Secret Identities — provides the GM with an excellent tool for introducing drama into the game. The conflicts between the demands of superheroing and the demands placed on the character by his civilian life can lead to all sorts of pathos, angst, and wonderful roleplaying.

One good way to manage a Drama-oriented Champions campaign is for the GM to insist that all PCs in their Secret Identities belong to a specific organization or company. The GM can then center storylines around that organization, bringing in PCs as the organization's activities require their involvement. For example, if all the PCs are members of one extended family or somehow associated with a corporation, the GM has a valuable tool for getting them wherever they need to be in their civilian identities.

GUIDELINES

Keep It Heavy: Most events in a Drama campaign should be serious business — ever-growing disagreements that threaten to spill over into violence, a character's friends and family making bad choices in work and love, business turmoil, betrayal, stress, tragedies of all sorts. But too much of this makes the campaign unbearable for all but the most masochistic of players, so the GM should include regular situations where the characters can get away from their troubles. In a Superhero campaign, this is probably when they're in costume — the heroes can flee into another identity to escape the emotional hardships of their mundane lives — or the occasional knock-down drag-out battle.

Tie Everything To PC Complications: Every plotline, every challenge in the campaign should relate to at least one Complication (usually a Psychological Complication) of at least one of the PCs. (For this reason, the GM may want to require a larger amount of Matching Complication points for PCs than in other campaigns with similar Total Points.) The more Complications and the more PCs a plotline can relate to, the more likely it is to be a main plot rather than one character's subplot. It's a good idea for the GM to keep a big list of every PC's Complications so that, when considering new plots to introduce, he can decide who they best relate to and how.

Example: *The superhero named Inflictor has a DNPC — his high-school-age daughter. The GM wants to introduce a supervillain NPC who is, in his Secret Identity, a new vice president of marketing at the corporation where Inflictor works. The GM decides to have Inflictor's daughter take a romantic interest in the new supervillain, potentially setting up a large number of ways to agonize Inflictor.*

Find The Correct Torture Threshold: Even with a campaign full of players who like to have their characters put through an emotional stump-grinder, it's possible for a GM to allow his campaign to become too heavy, too depressing. The only solution to this problem is for the GM to keep a very close eye on the emotional reactions of his players. When the players begin reacting to each new painful plot twist with something less than enthusiasm, the GM should take it as a sign that it's time to introduce a few uplifting plot elements — the defeat of a long-running villain, success in a character's personal goals, or a humorous scenario, for instance.

APPROPRIATE UNLIKELY ACTIONS

Appropriate unlikely actions for Drama include:

Revelatory Presence Attacks: Before the campaign begins, tell the players that each each of them may, once (perhaps more) during the campaign, make a special kind of Presence Attack, one in which the attack is the revelation of a fact that is news to the recipient — and not particularly good news, at that. The player chooses when to make his Revelatory Presence Attack, and the GM has to run with it (though he can veto it if it's absolutely ruinous to the campaign).

Examples: *"You remember the hit-and-run accident where your boss was nearly killed? Your wife was at the wheel!"*

"Your son has gotten my daughter pregnant."

"No, Luke. I am your father."

The Revelatory Presence Attack follows the same general rules as the standard Presence Attack. A character uses his standard Presence, receiving 1d6 per 5 points in that Characteristic... and unless a character has different PRE scores in his civilian and super identities, he should be just as effective with this tactic when he is out of costume. In addition to the Presence Attack modifiers listed on 6E2 136, some modifiers that are particularly appropriate to Revelatory Presence Attacks are listed in the accompanying table.

But sauce for the goose, sauce for the gander — important NPCs can make Revelatory Presence Attacks against PCs, as well. And regardless of who makes them, they're a great way to kick off new storylines.

REVELATORY PRESENCE ATTACK MODIFIERS TABLE

Modifier Situation or Character's Action

-2d6	Speaker is unknown to target
+1d6	Speaker has KS of his target and succeeds with a Skill Roll
+1d6	Speaker has SS: Psychology or Psychiatry and succeeds with a Skill Roll
+2d6	Target trusts speaker or knows he always tells truth

HORROR

Horror is a particularly difficult meta-genre to introduce into a mainstream Champions game — the great power and extensive capabilities individual heroes, not to mention entire superteams, possess makes it difficult to frighten them. But it's helplessness and dread that make a Horror story. Without them, you have some other kind of story (normally Adventure or Drama) in which the bad guys merely have unusual special effects.

For example, gamers refer to several types of stories as Horror stories, but most of them really don't belong to the Horror genre. Most common among these is the monster-hunting story. This is an adventures in which the good guys take it upon themselves to hunt down and exterminate evil monsters. It has some of the furniture of Horror (creepy settings, supernatural monsters, and the like), but, especially in Superhero campaigns, it normally isn't actually Horror. Because the heroes are in the driver's seat, taking an active role against the monsters with the expressed goal of destroying them, the characters don't normally feel much helplessness, fear, or dread.

Most Horror stories use one or more of several mechanisms to create suspense, fear, and dread in the characters (and thus, in the readers/players as well). The first is *isolation*. If characters can radio for help, or escape, that lessens their feelings of terror. A proper Horror story traps them somewhere — a deserted island, an isolated mansion during a driving thunderstorm, a prison — and keeps them there until they resolve the situation. In a Superhero context, this may mean somehow depriving the PCs of their movement-related powers. The second is *ignorance*. People tend to fear the unknown, so Horror stories often place characters in situations where they're unaware of the true facts. As the story unfolds, the characters slowly learn what's going on... often to their own detriment. The third is *powerlessness*. Characters who have the ability to cope with adversity often also have the confidence to confront that which scares them. It creates a better Horror effect if they have to struggle against the lurking terrors instead of just attacking them as if they were any other adversary (see below).

GUIDELINES

It's difficult to achieve Horror effects in a gaming context, with the lights on and plenty of snacks at hand, but it is possible. For a Champions campaign to be a Horror campaign, three factors must exist:

The Characters Must Not Be As Powerful As The Campaign's Horrors:

This doesn't mean they're incapable of destroying one or more of the campaign's horrors at a time, but individually and collectively, the PCs must feel as though they're not a match for the things that go bump in the night. Being as powerful gives them confidence; confidence is destructive to a sense of dread. It's also helpful to have monsters who are intelligent enough to learn and exploit the heroes' weaknesses (which should often include Dependences, Susceptibilities, and Vulnerabilities).

Alternately, you can confront them with horrors their powers are useless against (at least at first). All the Strength or Blast dice in the world don't do a superteam much good when their foe is a helpless teenage girl possessed by a demon. They dare not harm the girl, but they have to stop the demon. For once, they can't rely on their powers — they're going to have to be clever and inventive if they're going to save the world *this* time.

The Characters Must Not Understand The Campaign's Horrors: Having a real understanding of how the monsters work, what motivates them, and how they think is just the sort of familiarity that breeds contempt and undermines a campaign's sense of horror. The GM should work hard to make his monsters somewhat inexplicable. The best approach is to give them a recognizable *modus operandi* while keeping their true thoughts, mental processes, and abilities as secret as possible. Don't throw a normal vampire at them — every hero knows how to cope with one. Substitute a weird superpowered vampire with unpredictable abilities, or some bizarre extradi-dimensional *thing* the heroes have never seen before and know nothing about.

The Characters Must Be Afraid Of The Campaign's Horrors: This is among the hardest things to enforce in a gaming campaign, particularly a Superhero game, since most players are simply unwilling for their characters to be vulnerable — and without vulnerability, there can be no fear. The best approach to implementing this guideline is, of course, to run games for players who want to have their characters scared; the second-best is to have players who are good roleplayers and will abide by their characters' Psychological Complications (and who'll make sure their characters have appropriate ones). And don't forget — even the toughest of superheroes becomes less cocksure when stripped of his powers and put in a deadly situation he cannot control.

Given these guidelines, you may even want to consider requiring players to tailor their characters appropriately if you intend to emphasize Horror in your campaign. Rather than allow the full range of superhero types, you might mandate that all PCs have to be mystics, psychics, occult investigators, or highly-trained normals without any true superpowers. Additionally, by setting low point and effectiveness ceilings (see 6E2 282), you can cut down on the sheer power the PCs can bring to bear on the obstacles confronting them, which helps to emphasize feelings of dread. You might also increase the required Matching Complications, or dictate that a certain percentage of a character's Matching Complications points have to come from Dependence, Susceptibility, Vulnerability, or appropriate Psychological Complications.

APPROPRIATE UNLIKELY ACTIONS

Demonstrating Fear: Superheroes seldom suggest they're afraid or otherwise not in charge of a situation. The GM should reward appropriate demonstrations of fear or dread through awards of more Experience Points for good roleplaying.

Fleeing: In most Superhero campaigns, the heroes would never consider fleeing from an enemy. In a Horror-oriented Champions game, running away is a viable tactic and, until the heroes learn how to confront the enemy, a valid response. To persuade PCs to flee an enemy, it may be helpful to have them see a character of similar abilities cut down and devoured by the monsters. That's a definite demonstration of the fact the PCs don't yet stand a chance in a physical confrontation.



ROMANCE

A Romance campaign is all about romantic relationships. Naturally, other sorts of moods may be present as well (Adventure and Drama are especially appropriate), but the establishment, development, and (sometimes) termination of character-to-character romances is the primary subject of such campaigns.

The mood of Romance may be best-suited to mini-series rather than a years-long campaign. This is because every romance goes through a “life-cycle” that its participants hope will result in a happy ending. When they do, the characters involved in that romance can no longer occupy center stage in the campaign. On the other hand, if they result in a relationship breaking up, the characters involved can be center stage of the next storyline (though with other romantic partners), but eventually the characters find long-term partners and have to stop being the campaign’s focus. In short, a Romance campaign requires a constant rotation of primary characters, which puts a strain on a GM or players who’d like to play the same characters for an extended amount of time.

GUIDELINES

A Romance campaign should include two or three prospective couples occupying center stage at any given time. A couple can be two PCs or one PC and one NPC. The campaign can feature other PCs who are not involved directly in the romances at this time, but who have plenty to do with plotlines that are only indirectly related to the romances.

Every Romance in such a campaign goes through a series of stages of development. When a Romance gets to the last stage, its storyline is done, even if the characters’ relationship remains intact, which means these characters need to move off center stage to permit others to take their place.

If a campaign features more than one Romance at a time, each one should be at a different stage of development (the GM can make an exception in the first episode or two of play, when two or more relationships may be in the first stage of development).

The stages of development, including necessary pre-storyline setup by the GM, are:

CHARACTER DESIGN OR MODIFICATION

When building new characters, or revising experienced ones, to be part of a Romance plot, the GM and players should make sure each one possesses two traits: a reason to be attractive to the other; and a trait the other will find difficult or off-putting. With PCs, the first step in dealing with this is to have the player describe the character’s ideal mate. Then, the GM can create NPCs or help modify existing PCs to make them somewhat more like the ideal mate. The key word here, however, is “somewhat.” Romances should be

rocky roads, but they’re much less likely to be if each character is a perfect template of the other character’s ideal mate.

Example: *Black Swordsman*, a PC, is about to become part of a Romance-oriented campaign. At the GM’s request, he answers the question of what his ideal mate would be. He decides that she would be intelligent and well-educated (if not downright scholarly), somewhat serious (to contrast with his own flippant nature), a student of fencing and/or the martial arts (to share a hobby with him), and a movie buff.

The GM looks over the female PCs and decides that no one is near enough to this sort of character to serve, so he’ll create an NPC to act as *Black Swordsman*’s love interest. He creates Lillian Hughes, professor of history and author, whose field of interest is the effect of infantry weapons on history.

But the GM slips a joker into the deck by deviating in a substantial way from *Black Swordsman*’s “ideal mate” checklist. Not only is Lillian not a student of fencing or martial arts, she is a pacifist who abhors the effects of violence on society — one reason why violence throughout the ages, as expressed through an interest in history’s small weapons, is her chief academic interest. Thus, in addition to having reasons to be attracted to Lillian, *Black Swordsman* also has reasons to come in conflict with her.

Likewise, at the moment, Lillian has only reasons to be in conflict with *Black Swordsman*, so the GM decides the hero’s great appeal to her lies in his secret identity, that of Richard Gray, stock analyst and newspaper columnist. The GM establishes that Lillian is attracted to other writers and admires someone with mathematical acuity and a flamboyant nature, both of which *Black Swordsman* possesses in spades.

MEETING AND INITIAL ATTRACTION

It’s no trick to set up a situation where the two parties of a Romance meet one another. The GM can choose to do so in a violent situation (one party saves the other from impending doom), another type of conflict (they meet on opposite sides of a business deal and each likes the way the other conducts himself), a social situation (a party), or some really unlikely event (both break into the same art gallery at the same time). The only thing the GM has to remember is to find a way for each PC to demonstrate one or more attributes the other person finds attractive.

In books, movies, and TV series, characters can meet, initially dislike one another, and eventually find romance. In game campaigns, this is not usually the case; whatever characters initially feel about one another tends to endure (if not worsen). So it’s best not to set up a situation where the heroes initially find themselves in a disagreeable sort of conflict — you’re likely to torpedo the entire romance that way.



ESTABLISHMENT OF ROMANCE

The GM now needs to find ways to continue to have the two parties of the romance encounter one another. Sometimes this is easy (such as when they work at the same place), sometimes more difficult (in which case the GM may have to rely on coincidence, or manipulations orchestrated by some NPC). It is during these events that the more ordinary plot details of the campaign reveal themselves — what supervillain is plotting a new takeover, what jewelry display is bound to attract thieves, what criminal investigation is yielding details about one of the PCs' Hunteds.

This stage of the Romance is complete when both parties acknowledge their attraction to and continued interest in one another. At this point, the GM can start complicating things.

TROUBLE PART I

Once the parties in a Romance are certain they're interested in one another, trouble erupts. Some examples of trouble include:

- A previously-thought-dead husband/wife/former boyfriend/former girlfriend turns up, hale and healthy and very, very attractive.
- The characters discover they're opposed in their super identities (*i.e.*, one hero, one villain).
- The characters discover mutual personality incompatibilities (mostly related to Psychological Complications).
- The characters discover one did something potentially unforgivable to the other at some time in the past.
- The characters discover they belong to opposed families or organizations.
- The characters discover they belong to the same family and are too closely related for comfort. (This is usually eventually followed by the revelation that one or the other is adopted, which makes everything all right again.)
- The characters must oppose one another in business, and business turns ugly.
- One character achieves some result that leaves the other hurt and jealous (the GM must normally utilize Psychological Complications here).
- One character discovers the other has a previously-undisclosed child.
- One character discovers he has a previously-unknown child.
- An NPC or another PC begins to court one member of the Romance.
- An NPC manipulates things so that evidence of any of the earlier Troubles appears, even if the actual Trouble has been falsified.

Note that these discoveries can come via a Revelatory Presence Attack, as described under *Drama*, above.

TROUBLE PART II, PART III...

Once the first wave of trouble has been beaten into submission, the GM can introduce a new one — assuming he hasn't done so even before the first wave was quelled. The GM can keep this up so long as all parties are entertained; once the Troubles begin to wear thin as entertainment (or, even better, before they do), the GM can progress the characters' relationship to the next stage.

HAPPILY/UNHAPPILY EVER AFTER

Ultimately, after having weathered numerous Troubles, the couple decides whether to stay together or go their separate ways; either choice ends their Romance plotline. If they remain together, they can take on some other role in the campaign. If they go their separate ways, they can be retooled for a later Romance, perhaps with one another, perhaps with someone else.

CHARACTER REDESIGN OR MODIFICATION

Lastly, characters who've survived a Romance can go through a minor redesign to adjust appropriate Romance-related Psychological Complications, Hunteds, and so on.

APPROPRIATE UNLIKELY ACTIONS

Vulnerability To Romance: Some players prefer to keep their characters unencumbered by romantic attachments — either because the players themselves are uncomfortable roleplaying romantic scenes, or because they'd rather have their characters do the “fun stuff” (*i.e.*, fighting) instead of boring roleplaying scenes, or because they don't want a DNPC held over their heads. Players who are willing to open their characters up to romantic possibilities — who take lots of DNPCs (even if they get no points for them), who act like someone in love might act, who, in short, get in the campaign mood — should be rewarded for their participation.

OTHER GENRES

The tropes, themes, and character types of Champions stories easily mingle with those of other genres. Combining them can create fascinating campaigns and stories.

CYBER HERO

The colorful, flashy heroes of the earlier Ages don't have much place in gritty, "realistic" Cyberpunk stories. However, there are still possibilities for mixing the two genres.

First, Iron Age superheroes are close enough to the Cyberpunk mentality that it just might work. However, the GM will probably need to arrange the campaign setting to suit the premise. He should probably restrict the types of PCs so that they tend more toward origins and backgrounds involving cyberware, genetic manipulation, mental powers, and the like. Obviously the superheroes have to be more powerful and notable than ordinary people with ordinary cyberware, but there's a lot of dramatic room to work with.

Second, even gritty Cyber Hero characters need a way to relax and blow off steam. That may involve playing virtual reality games on the Cybernet... and perhaps in those games, their "avatars" are superheroes! In effect this sort of campaign is a two-in-one arrangement: ordinary Cyberpunk adventures in "real life," mingled with virtual Superhero adventures. For best dramatic effect, the GM can arrange it so that events in the VR Superheroes game mirror, or comment on, events in the characters' real lives.

DARK CHAMPIONS

As mentioned on page 42, the Dark Champions genre of modern-day action-adventure includes non-superpowered costumed crimefighters such as the Punisher or even Batman, so mixing the two genres isn't difficult at all. It usually leads to one of three results.

The first is a style of game known as *Dark Champions: The Animated Series*. It's a sort of cross between a standard "Vigilante Crimefighting" Dark Champions campaign and traditional four-color Champions. The characters are costumed vigilantes, but ones whose attitudes tend to resemble traditional superheroes, and who may have minor superpowers. The name of the subgenre comes from the way Dark Champions-style costumed vigilantes are often depicted in modern animated television shows.

The second is the opposite of DC:TAS: *Iron Age Champions*, which could in many ways be described as the addition of Dark Champions attitudes (and sometimes methods) to true superpowered characters. See page 41 for more information.

Third, mingling Champions and Dark Champions can lead to "street-level superheroes" games where the PCs are low-powered superheroes who use their powers more to fight street crime and low-powered supervillains than to take on the world-threatening menaces fought by more powerful superheroes. Characters such as Marvel Comics's Spider-Man (in various times/incarnations) and Daredevil provide excellent examples of this sort of campaign.

In most cases, the PCs in Street-Level Champions campaigns don't show the full range of superpowers "typical" superheroes do. They're less likely to have flashy powers like Blast and Teleportation, and more likely to have "personal" powers such as Enhanced Senses, augmented DEX, Clinging, low-level Regeneration, minor super-Strength, and the like. They're unquestionably superhuman, but their powers aren't so overwhelming or impressive that they can ignore the attacks of ordinary human opponents. In particular, Street-Level Champions PCs shouldn't have so much Resistant Defense that they can ignore gunfire; otherwise they won't regard street thugs as a threat. In most Street-Level Champions campaigns, the PCs are built as Low-Powered Superheroic characters. The Normal Characteristic Maxima rules do not apply, but most characters will have few, if any, main Characteristics above 25 (STR is sometimes an exception). Characters don't receive equipment for free; they have to pay Character Points for any equipment they want to have and use regularly.

MIXING DARK CHAMPIONS AND CHAMPIONS CHARACTERS

Some GMs may prefer to use street-level elements in their regular Champions campaign rather than running a full-blown Dark Champions campaign, or they may want to have characters from a costumed vigilante campaign "cross paths" with traditional superheroes. This isn't difficult, but the GM should consider several things.

Several potential problems can arise when you include Dark Champions and "four-color" Champions characters in the same campaign. The first is personality. Unless your Dark Champions characters are all of the "Animated Series" variety, their viewpoints and methods of crimefighting probably differ from those of the four-color superheroes. This can easily create conflicts between the characters, which may even go as far as outright fighting if the superheroes attempt to capture the Dark Champions vigilantes. This sort of inter-character conflict upsets some gamers, and often results in bruised egos on one side or the other. Some gaming groups can roleplay this sort of conflict without having it affect real-world relationships between the players, and they enjoy it; but others can't and hate it. Unless the GM and players can deal with this sort of conflict maturely and responsibly, it's best avoided. However, it does have its rewards — opportunities for roleplaying and exciting scenes — so don't be too quick to dismiss its possibilities.



One way to deal with this sort of clash of personalities, if the GM is up to it, is to “separate” the group. This means the GM shifts back and forth from the Champions superheroes to the Dark Champions action heroes, as each group (or character) attempts to deal with whatever happens in the scenario in its (or his) own way. However, this requires the GM to do a lot of extra work when running the scenario. Another possible solution is to give each group something the other needs or wants (such as crucial clues), thus forcing them to work together even if they despise each other.

A second problem with integrating Dark Champions and Champions campaigns is power levels. Even if all the characters are built on the same amount of Character Points (which is unlikely), four-color superheroes will probably be more effective at some things (such as combat) because of the way they spend their points. The GM can deal with this in two ways. First, he can direct his efforts at the lowest common denominator. That means he must devise ways to limit the superheroes so they can be challenged by NPCs who are already a challenge to Dark Champions characters. The second, and perhaps better, way to balance power levels is the “smorgasbord” approach — something for everybody. This means the GM has to tailor the scenario so each type of character has something meaningful to do (especially in combat, because many players will be upset if their character fails to “keep pace” with the other PCs in a battle). For example, maybe the Champions PCs take on the superpowered guardians of a secret military installation, while the Dark Champions vigilantes sneak inside, disable the guards, and find the information needed to defeat the master villain and save the day.

On the other hand, there are two major benefits to mixing Dark Champions and four-color Champions characters. The first is character development. By seeing the way “the other half” lives, both types of characters can learn how their characters react to different situations, and perhaps alter their characters’ personalities to take these new experiences into account. Superheroes might learn something from being brought “back down to earth” for a while; Dark Champions characters could learn new ways to fight crime, or might “soften” harsh and sometimes irrational attitudes. Similarly, each group of characters will probably have the opportunity to learn new Skills and abilities from the other.

A second benefit is the roleplaying opportunities presented. The clash between Dark Champions and four-color points of view provides some of the best opportunities that exist for complex, in-depth roleplaying. Elements of both debate and diplomacy combine as both types of characters try to “convert” the other without provoking a major fracas. Sure, your character knows what to say to Dr. Destroyer when he begins yet another world-conquering scheme, but could he talk the Harbinger of Justice out of killing some anony-

mous gangbanger? Would he be willing to risk his life, and the punk’s, to try to capture Harbinger at the same time? How would he defend his views on crimefighting against Harbinger’s? Does he even have a defined philosophy of crimefighting? Why not? These are the sorts of things you can learn about your character when the two genres are properly mixed.

FANTASY HERO

Since magic already exists in most superhero settings — courtesy of supermages, dimensional conquerors, embodied deities, and the like — bringing some Fantasy tropes into the mix poses little problem for most GMs. The only problems that might arise result less from conflicting abilities or conceptions than clashing “flavor.” In Champions, “magic” is just another special effect justifying superpowers. Spells have flashy, often alliterative, names, and though supermages appear to gesture and incant, in most cases they can work magic without any such restrictions. Fantasy magic, on the other hand, usually follows “laws” specific to the setting it comes from, and requires chanting, hand gestures, material components like bats’ wings, and the like. In comparison to super-magery, Fantasy Hero magic usually seems limited and low-powered. Therefore, the GM needs to decide whether Fantasy magic brought into a Champions campaign works more like super-magic (giving Fantasy characters a lot more freedom and power), or if the restrictions remain in effect.

Instead of bringing Fantasy elements into superheroing (Champions Fantasy), you can instead run a Fantasy game with superhero elements (Fantasy Champions). Fantasy Champions campaigns are High Fantasy campaigns — *really* high. The PCs are immensely powerful wizards and heroes whose powers derive from magic in some way. They may be demigods who gain numerous powers from divine ancestry or patronage *a lá* Heracles or Gilgamesh, sorcerers whose spellcraft makes them like unto gods, mighty dragons who choose to mingle with and help humans, warriors armed with immensely powerful magic weapons, mighty giants, or the like. However, they tend to participate in more traditional Fantasy adventures and battles rather than fight crime, much in the way Heracles had his labors or Gilgamesh searched for the secret of immortality.

But you could create a more Champions-like campaign structure if you wanted. For a true Fantasy Champions campaign, set the game in a large Fantasy city, give the characters vast magical powers like unto superpowers, and then create enemies for them with similar abilities. Instead of combating VIPER or the Ultimates, the superheroes have to take on the Black Claw (a group of superpowered assassins), the Thieves’ Guild’s magically-augmented fighters, demons summoned by evil wizards, and perhaps even fallen gods.

URBAN FANTASY

Urban Fantasy and superheroes generally don't mix — once you introduce costumed crime-fighters and superpowers into the mix, you've gone beyond what qualifies as "Urban Fantasy." However, it's not difficult to imagine a melding of the two genres where you have mystic characters who protect the city (and even the world) from mystic threats. They might even have superhero-level magic powers, though not superheroic garb.

HISTORICAL CHAMPIONS

Though many comic book creators and the designers of superhero RPG universes assume campaigns follow the standard model (superheroes first appearing shortly before World War II and more appearing in the years since so that there are few or no periods where no active supers exist), there's no regulation saying you have to define your own Champions campaigns that way. If the GM and players are fond of a specific historical period, they can create a campaign in which supers first appear during that time. For example:

GREAT WAR CHAMPIONS

World War I is another intriguing period for superhero emergence. It had many of the characteristics of World War II, including military clashes between mighty nations (and without the insane racial overtones that led to the Holocaust) and related espionage. It was an era of inventors and inventions, with the emergence of tanks, submarines, and airplanes as effective weapons of war. The guidelines and advice for Victorian Hero, below, apply to Great War Champions campaigns as well.

ALTERNATE HISTORIES

For the most part, this chapter discusses the characteristics of superhero campaigns as they would be if they followed the models shown in major comic books published over the last seventy years. But you can separate historical events from tone and style, and separate the type of campaign from historic period, any way you want. Such a campaign is entertaining for a GM who likes to put his characters through adventures in a fantastic environment that is culturally very unlike our own, and for players who enjoy exploring "what ifs."

For instance, instead of having a campaign set in the Sixties work as described above, you could have it be the dawn, rather than the second or third generation, of the age of superheroes. Instead of it being a time of social turbulence, the same events or forces that caused superheroes to appear in the first place could have a major effect on society, making it very different from what we experienced in the real world. The presence of superheroes could have led to the Vietnam War being avoided completely and could have allowed the cheerful *Father Knows Best* complacency of the Fifties to continue for decades, leading to a very different sort of Silver Age campaign.





Or a campaign set in the modern world could derive from the assumption that the first superheroes were the heroes of Greek mythology, and that there has been an uninterrupted history of superhero activity since then. By tradition, all superheroes are protectors or champions of specific cities, tribes, or races, warriors for their cultural identities rather than defenders of larger concepts of good or evil, and clashes between supers would be as common as conflicts between the cities they represent. Owing to whatever forces cause parallel universes to appear similar to one another more than they logically should, nations with the names of the United States of America, Iraq, and Zimbabwe could have developed, but they would be very different in government and temperament than the nations we know in the real world.

You should run an alternate history campaign in the same way you'd run the nearest equivalent mainstream Champions campaign. However, you should decide how your variations on historical events affect later events to come. For instance, you might decide to run a campaign based on the notion that England won America's war for independence. So, in the twentieth/twenty-first centuries, there is no United States. The former Colonies would have a different name and be another nation in the still-thriving British Empire. World history would be tremendously different than the history we know, and you'll have to spend a considerable amount of time and do a considerable amount of work as you decide where history has led up until the point the campaign begins.

NINJA HERO

Martial arts and superheroes go hand-in-hand, and many Champions settings already feature martial artists with unusual powers and abilities (see page 81). A number of martial arts elements also make fine Champions elements, as superhero settings are usually rife with ninjas, aged masters, secret societies, supernatural beings, and unusual weapons.

Gamemasters and players alike can use fantastical martial arts comic books, movies, and stories as a source of ideas for new powers and techniques for existing martial arts superheroes, or as a basis for creating completely new characters. One could even go so far as to create an entire campaign around super-powered martial artists and their adventures, in a style similar to many video game-inspired campaigns. Other character types could also borrow ideas from martial arts tales, such as mentalists adapting *chi* powers to psionics or weaponmasters adopting Asian fighting styles with their weapons.

Of course, the prevalence of martial arts in a Champions campaign may depend on the subgenre depicted. In Golden Age Champions campaigns, martial arts (other than Boxing) are rare, since they weren't well-known in the West at that time; just possessing Martial Arts could qualify as a character's "superpower." Martial arts are also rare in Galactic Champions, since characters in those campaigns are too powerful to need them. On the other hand, Silver, Bronze, and Iron Age Champions games often feature a wide variety of martial arts supers.

POST-APOCALYPTIC HERO

At first blush, Superheroes and the Post-Apocalyptic wouldn't seem to have much in common. Superheroes are there to prevent the end of the world, and very rarely fail. Not only that, but most Superhero stories are fairly upbeat — even tremendous hardship is followed by success and a feeling of accomplishment, while after the fall of civilization the only accomplishment is survival. Still, the heroes only have to fail once, and the world, or even the universe, becomes a place just as terrible as any other Post-Apocalyptic setting.

However, there are some links that a GM running a Champions campaign or planning a Post-Apocalyptic Hero campaign can work with. First, it's not unheard of for superheroes to travel (or be sent to) alternate Earths or "dark futures" where their activities have caused the apocalypse. (The alternate setting allows the GM to show them the consequences of certain actions without demolishing the regular storyline and killing or irrevocably changing major characters.) There they have to try to set the world to rights (as best they can), in the process learning important lessons about abuse of power and taking their "job" for granted, so they can make sure not to create the same problems in their own world. But what if they *don't* come to save the alternate Earth? That would make for an intriguing Post-Apocalyptic setting, one where superpowers take the place of mutant powers and the heroes' goal isn't crimefighting but establishing a "safe haven" where innocent people can survive and thrive.

Second, in a more traditional High Post-Apocalyptic setting, you could equate mutant powers with superpowers. While superpowers are usually more spectacular than mutant powers, and in some settings more reliable, ultimately there can be a lot of similarities. Suppose that a band of noble-minded mutants, inspired perhaps by a comic book found in a ruined building, decide to put on costumes and use their mutant powers to fight for Truth, Justice, and the Post-Apocalyptic Way?

PULP HERO

While comic books came along late in the Pulp era, and to some extent helped to contribute to the demise of the pulps, the two genres have a great deal in common. Many of the most important conventions of comic book superheroes — masked and costumed heroes, master villains with world-threatening plots, exotic locations, incredible coincidences, fantastic technology, secret identities — originated or flowered in the pulps, and the creation of more than one superhero was inspired or influenced by similar Pulp heroes. The main difference between the two is the level of “believability.” The events and characters of even the most outlandish masked mystery-man Pulp story pale before the deeds of costumed supermen who can hurl tanks, teleport, and project beams of energy.

The easiest way to mingle the two genres is to use the comics as inspiration for a *Pulp Hero* campaign — specifically, a team of masked mystery men. Such things didn’t exist in the pulps, but with comics as an inspiration gamers can easily make up for that lack. Alan Moore’s *The League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, though set in the Victorian era rather than Pulp times, shows how much fun that sort of campaign could be.

STAR HERO

Beyond the obvious connections that link Galactic Champions to Science Fiction (see above), superheroes are often ostensibly Science Fiction characters. Except where a hero’s powers explicitly derive from magic, superheroes generally have a “rubber science” or “technobabble” explanation for how they got their abilities. In comic books, Superman is an extraterrestrial, the X-Men are mutants, Iron Man has a high-tech battlesuit, and Plastic Man’s powers come from exposure to chemicals.

You can use the weapons and equipment from a Star Hero game to outfit a high-tech superhero operating in a contemporary Champions campaign (paying the appropriate point cost for the powers they confer, of course). An alien or time-traveler with off-the-shelf supertech equipment could be quite effective as a crimefighter.



Some aliens may have superpowers themselves, either as the result of the same sorts of origins Human superheroes experience, or because the alien's species naturally possesses some sort of ability that makes him "superhuman." The Malvan gladiators of the Champions Universe are an example of this.

EVERYONE'S A SUPERHERO

If an ordinary soldier or policeman in the twenty-fifth century has equipment that makes him the equal of a present-day superhero, what do the heroes in that setting have? Is there much point in being able to fly and project bolts of energy when anyone with a few credits to spare can buy an antigravity pack and a blaster gun? Superheroes in a high-tech setting face the problem that their powers may not give them much of an advantage over the off-the-shelf items available to ordinary citizens. If those normal folk have cybernetic implants and are genetically improved, or are aliens with innate powers of their own, the superhero is just a guy who likes to wear capes.

One way around this problem is to encourage players to design supers with powers that aren't easily duplicated by technology. Superpowers like Growth, Stretching, Desolidification, or Mental Powers are all possibilities.

Another solution is to embrace the problem and run with it. The comic series *Top Ten*, by Alan Moore, examines the problems of superheroes working as cops in a city where everyone from bum to mayor is also super-powered. Fighting crime is easy when you can shrug off the bad guys' bullets; when they have blasters it becomes a dangerous job. Isn't doing a dangerous job what being a hero is all about?

VICTORIAN HERO

The last quarter of the nineteenth century is a wonderful time to set a superheroes campaign. The British Empire was ruled by Queen Victoria, who lent her name to an entire era, and was in the last great period of its expansion. The United States was still recovering from the events of the Civil War, the period generally thought of as the Wild West was in full bloom, and American Indians were engaged in a losing fight with the forces of the US government. Japan's isolation had been broken only years before and that nation was still adjusting to greater interaction with the rest of the world. Fictitious characters such as Sherlock Holmes, Professor Challenger, Captain Nemo, Phileas Fogg, Dr. Jekyll, the Time Traveler, the Invisible Man, and Bram Stoker's interpretation of Vladislav Dracula were appearing in print. Alan Moore's marvelous *The League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen* comics show just how superhero-like you can make characters in this amazing era.

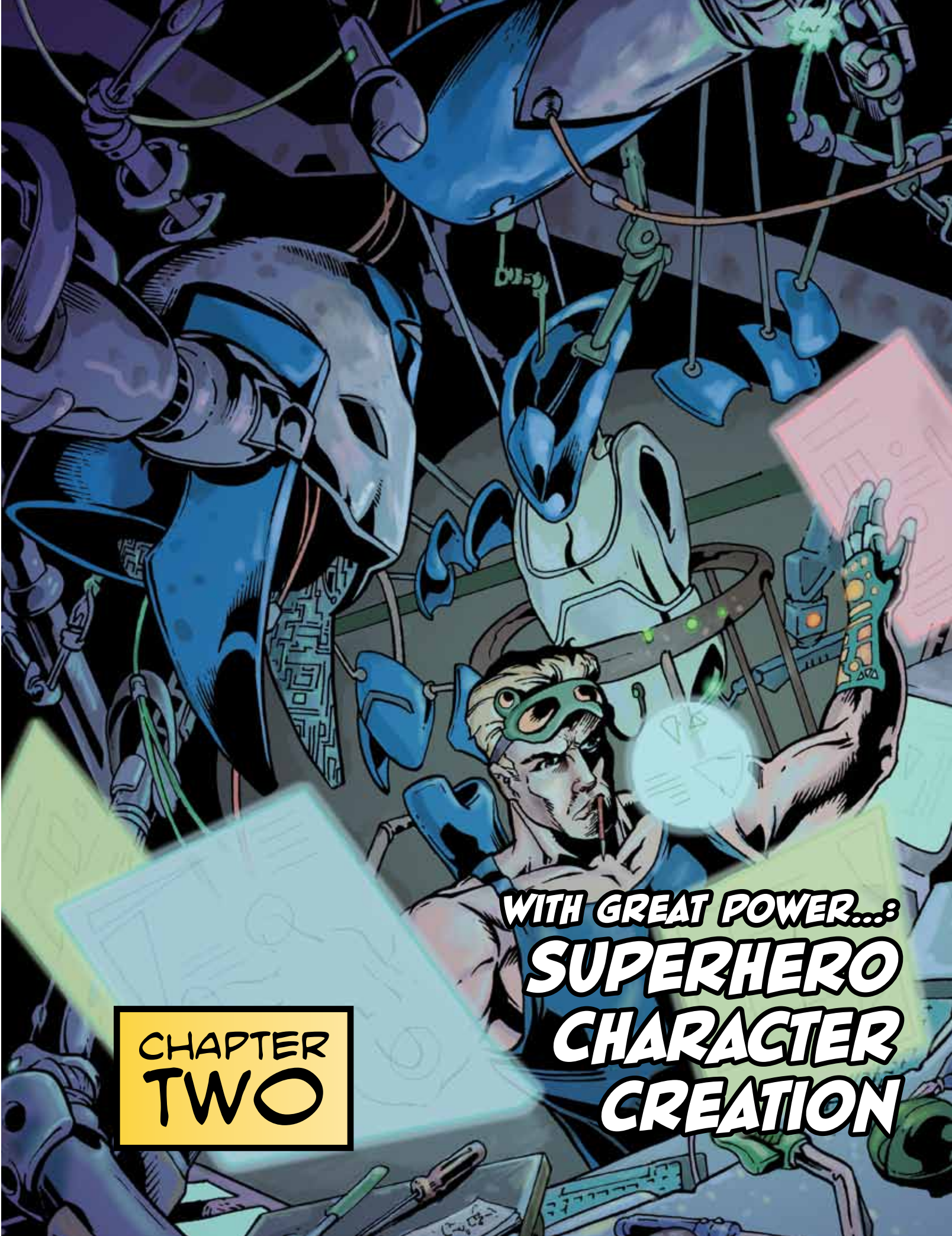
If you want to run Victorian Champions campaigns, it pays to learn about the era — history, culture, costume, entertainments. (The same can be said, of course, about any other campaign firmly grounded in a specific historical period.) Since you're trying to simulate a "dramatic reality," it also helps to read the works of Doyle, Wells, and Verne, among others.

Victorian Champions campaigns typically feature Low-Powered Superheroic characters — often built on as little as 200 Total Points (with 40-50 Matching Complications points). Characters typically have around 30-40 Active Points in most powers, CVs of 5-8, and SPDs of 3-5.

Some advice for playing in a Victorian Champions campaign:

Keep Anachronisms To A Minimum: Unless the GM is running a lighthearted campaign, anachronistic actions and speech detract from the period flavor of the campaign rather than add to the humor. Try to create characters who belong to the setting rather than anticipate eras to come. For example, creating a gadgeteer character with "steampunk" technology is probably appropriate; trying to invent the Internet a century early is not.

If Your Character Has A Superpower, He Should Have Only One: Many Victorian Champions adventurers are like Pulp heroes — more-or-less normal folks with the right attitude, skills, and equipment. But some are true superhumans, possessing powers beyond mortal ken; Dr. Jekyll and the Invisible Man both fit this description. You should keep in mind two things about such superhumans if you want to design a character like that. First, they tend to have just one superpower (or a group of very closely related powers), and often that power has severe Limitations or drawbacks. Hawley Griffin, the Invisible Man, didn't have a list of "Invisibility Powers" — he was invisible, and that was all. Furthermore, only his body was invisible; anything he wore or carried remained visible, thus significantly hampering him at times. Second, their powers tend to be low-powered — no more than 40 Active Points, as indicated above.



WITH GREAT POWER...:
**SUPERHERO
CHARACTER
CREATION**

CHAPTER
TWO



BEING SUPERHUMAN

2 **T**he *HERO System* rules do not specifically define what it means to be superhuman, especially in comparison with so-called “normal humanity.” Each GM has to decide for himself where to draw the lines separating humanity and superhumanity... though those lines often turn out to be rather blurry. If, for instance, the GM establishes a Characteristic Maximum for STR of 20, is someone with a 21 automatically superhuman? A 23? In each campaign, the GM decides where “normal human” ends and “superhuman” begins, but he should make that decision in conjunction with the players, since their characters are the ones most strongly affected by the rules.

You need to consider several factors when making this decision, including:

How realistic is the campaign?: Some games make an effort to simulate “real world” reality as closely as possible. In games like this, the range of Characteristics and abilities is limited: almost no characters exceed 20 in their main Characteristics, and those above 15 are fairly rare. On the other end of the extreme are campaigns that use the “dramatic reality” of the highest-powered comics and movies, where even the seemingly “normal” people one encounters may have a Characteristic or two above 20. The range of variations in between these extremes is infinite.

How specific are superpowers?: In some campaigns, a superhuman’s powers, and their effect on his Characteristics, are tightly defined; in others, superhuman Characteristics don’t necessarily have to relate to one’s powers. For example, a psychic character might have higher-than-normal INT and EGO, but just because he has some superhuman powers doesn’t mean you should also give him higher-than-normal STR or DEX. But in a typical four-color superheroes setting, having any sort of superpowers often gives a character license to also have superhuman STR or DEX, innate Resistant Defenses, and the like.

SUPERHEROIC POINT TOTALS

The “Standard” Superheroic character defined by the guidelines on 6E1 35 is the “default” approach for Champions campaigns, including the Champions Universe setting depicted in many Hero Games products. That category describes the values the *HERO System* rules regard as most common throughout starting superhero campaigns. In the remainder of this chapter, if examples indicate power levels and point values for powers and do not indicate some other power level such as Cosmically Powerful or Low-Powered, the text means Standard superheroes.

For more information on point total options, see pages 134-39.

What classification do PCs fall into?: Take a look at the Character Ability Guidelines Table on 6E1 35. It provides good guidelines for “average” ranges of Characteristics (and the like) for Low-Powered, Standard, High-Powered, Very High-Powered, and Cosmically Powerful superheroes.

What races does your campaign include?: In most campaigns, humans predominate, making it relatively easy for you to determine ranges for Characteristics based on your own experiences. But if your game has unusual alien or Fantasy races, that may skew things — what counts as “superhuman” for a human may not for a dwarf, a merman, or a Rigellian.

What Characteristics define superhuman?: Not all Characteristics are the same. It’s fairly easy to deduce or extrapolate the normal/superhuman divide for physical Characteristics like STR, DEX, and PD. But for INT, EGO, and PRE — which represent far more subjective qualities — it’s not that simple. Thus, what amounts to “superhuman” for one Characteristic may be too limiting for another. (See also page 99.)

RATING CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERISTICS

For purposes of analyzing characters and their Characteristics, the *HERO System* uses seven categories: Weak, Challenged, Average, Skilled, Competent, Legendary, and Superhuman.

Characteristics in the *Weak* range usually represent infants, the extremely aged, persons suffering from terrible diseases or poisons, and the like. *Challenged* is one step up from that; it represents some children and elderly people, persons suffering from illness or handicaps, and the like.

Average is just that — the range of Characteristics for the typical people encountered during the game, from children to senior citizens. One step up from Average is *Skilled*. Characteristics within the Skilled range can still represent more or less normal persons without any special training or benefits. For example, many ordinary people have Skilled-range STR from exercising, INT, EGO, or PRE due to genetics and personality, and so forth.

Once you get into the *Competent* range, though, things become a little different. Normal people can sometimes edge into Competent, but usually Competent-level Characteristics result from intensive training, truly rare genetic gifts, or the like. Many heroes, even in Heroic campaigns, have a majority of their Characteristics in this range or higher — that's one of the things that makes them heroes.

Beyond Competent is *Legendary*. Few humans reach this lofty plateau; generally speaking, ordinary people can *never* attain it. Only truly exceptional individuals — heroes and superheroes — have Legendary Characteristics. The upper limit of Legendary is the upper limit of normal human attainment.

At the pinnacle is *Superhuman*. A character cannot have even a single Characteristic in this range unless superpowers and/or a related explanation (such as magic, mutation, super-technology, or the like) exist.

Each GM determines for his own campaign what numbers fall within these ranges. In one game, an Average person might have main Characteristics in the 6-10 range, and Superhuman ones in the 31+ range. In another game, Average might be 10-15, and Superhuman 51+. It all depends on GM and player preference, the nature of the campaign, and many other such factors. Naturally, each GM should distribute copies of his own "Characteristics Standards Table" to his players when they begin creating characters for his campaign.

A character doesn't have to have Superhuman-range Characteristics to be considered a "superhuman." The Superhuman label is simply a convenient one for defining a specific threshold. Being a superhuman depends primarily on having superhuman abilities of some sort, or an appropriately superhuman origin for one's Characteristics, not on crossing that threshold. For example, look at Sapphire on page 196. None of her main Characteristics fall into the 31+ range for "Superhuman" in the Champions Universe. And yet, she's clearly superhuman — she can fly, fire energy bolts, and so forth.

EXCEEDING THE LIMITS

There is one way a Player Character can exceed the limits for a particular Characteristics category (especially Superhuman) without actually entering that category: Limited Characteristics (and related methods, such as the *Lightning Reflexes* Talent). With the GM's permission, a character can buy Characteristics (or meters of movement) with appropriate Limitations and define them as Skills, technology, or special abilities, rather than as true "powers" that make him Superhuman (or Legendary, or whatever).

For example, look at Defender on page 188. Defender's overall STR of 40 clearly boosts him into the "Superhuman" category for the Champions Universe (see below). But his STR has a Limitation — it's bought through a Focus (his suit of powered armor). Defender himself, James Harmon, is an exceptional individual, but by no means Superhuman in any respect. Thus, even though he has some Superhuman-level attributes, he doesn't count as Superhuman for campaign purposes. The same reasoning applies to using *Lightning Reflexes*, extra meters of Leaping that *Require An Acrobatics Roll*, or other such abilities to verge into the Superhuman.

Each GM should decide for his own campaign, and perhaps even on a character-by-character basis, just how far characters can take this principle. At some point, no matter how Limited, a Characteristic or ability may become "Superhuman." For example, enough *Lightning Reflexes* may represent "Superhuman reflexes," even if the character's normal DEX remains well within the Competent or Legendary range, and the character tries to define his *Lightning Reflexes* as "lots of training." Just be careful not to let characters strain the "feel" of the campaign and genre too much, and you should be fine.



CHAMPIONS UNIVERSE CHARACTERISTICS STANDARDS

Char	Weak	Challenged	Average	Skilled	Competent	Legendary	Superhuman
STR	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-13	14-20	21-30	31+
DEX	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-13	14-20	21-30	31+
CON	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-13	14-20	21-30	31+
INT	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-13	14-20	21-50	51+
EGO	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-13	14-20	21-50	51+
PRE	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-13	14-20	21-50	51+
OCV/DCV	1-2	1-2	2-3	3-4	5-7	8-10	11+
OMCV/DMCV	1-2	1-2	2-3	3-4	5-7	8-10	11+
SPD	1	1-2	1-2	2-3	4-5	6-7	8+
PD, ED	0-1	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-10	11-15	16+
REC	1	1-2	2-4	5-6	7-10	11-13	14+
END	2-4	6-10	11-20	21-26	27-40	41-60	61+
BODY	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-13	14-20	21-30	31+
STUN	3-4	7-11	12-20	21-27	28-40	41-60	61+
Running	1-2m	3-6m	7-12m	13-16m	17-20m	21-26m	27m+
Leaping	0m	1-2m	3-4m	5-6m	7-10m	11-22m	23m+
Swimming	0m	1-2m	30m	5-6m	7-10m	11-18m	19m+

EXAMPLE: THE CHAMPIONS UNIVERSE

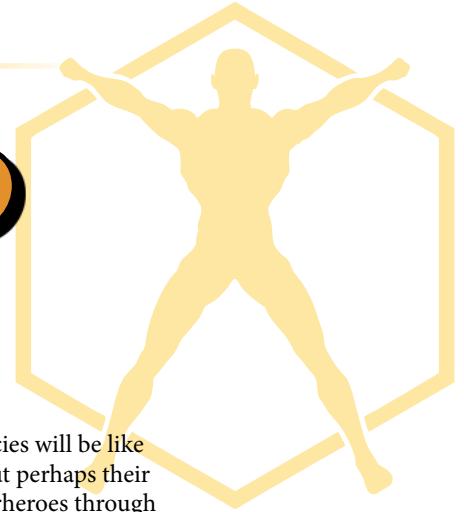
To give you an example of how to determine the difference between normal and superhuman, the accompanying table describes the Characteristic ranges for the *Champions Universe*, the setting detailed by several books in Hero Games's *Champions* product line. Since the *Champions Universe* is a typical four-color, high adventure sort of superhero setting, GMs can use these standards for similar types of campaigns if they want to. Gamemasters running other types of games can use these standards as guidelines, varying up or down depending upon the tone, degree of realism, and nature of the campaign.

ADJUSTING CHARACTERISTIC MAXIMA

The Characteristic ranges in the *Champions Universe* Characteristics Standards table mesh with the standard definition of Characteristic Maxima, which assumes a typical ceiling of 20 for main Characteristics, with costs doubling beyond that to reflect the rarity of higher attributes. If you're running a game with a higher (or lesser) degree of realism, or where Legendary or Superhuman characters are even rarer (or more common) than usual, you may want to reflect that by adjusting the Maxima breakpoint.

For example, to achieve greater "realism," you might make 15 the threshold at which Characteristic costs start to double. That allows PCs to become Competent, but not too Competent. On the other hand, if you'd like all the PCs to have at least one or two Legendary-level Characteristics, you might bump the NCM breakpoint up to 25.

SUPERHERO ORIGINS



The way a Champions PC obtains his powers is at least as important to a campaign as the powers themselves. For example, if they're magical, this means there's magic at work in the campaign — a non-trivial consideration for the GM. If they're technological (for example, built into a high-tech suit of armor), the GM must deal with (or at least take into consideration) the existence of super-technology in the hands of at least one scientist (the builder of the suit). In game terms, the origin of powers can dictate the use of specific Advantages and Limitations in the construction of the powers, give the GM ideas for story plots, and cause the GM to create a great many related NPCs (for example, super-level martial arts may suggest the existence of other martial artists at a similar level of ability, a history and tradition of superpowered martial arts competition, and so forth).

ORIGIN CATEGORIES

In *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare wrote that “Some are born great, // Some achieve greatness, // And some have greatness thrust upon them.” That statement does a good job of defining the three categories of superhero origin stories.

BORN GREAT

Here are some of the common origins involving being born with or inheriting powers:

ALIEN

This character is from another planet or dimension where everybody is physically superior to Earth humans. If a superhero has this as the basis for his powers, the GM has to consider an important question: what would happen if several people from this place, or several thousand, showed up on Earth? Typical approaches to dealing with this problem include destroying that place so our hero is the only survivor, or one of a very few survivors; setting up some environmental circumstance that makes it impossible for a typical person from that place to survive on Earth, though the one hero in question can; or arranging things so it's impossible for natives of that place to leave their home except when the GM thinks there's a good adventure in it.

Of course, many alien species will be like humans — mostly normal. But perhaps their members could become superheroes through radiation accidents, mutation, training, or any of the other means available to humans. The GM needs to decide whether only humans can become superhumans (or humans somehow become superhuman on an unusually frequent basis), or if the ability to gain superpowers is a universal phenomenon.

GODLY ANCESTRY/BESTOWAL

A character with this type of origin is the descendant of a god, and has powers appropriate to that god. In the typical arrangement, a super-strong hero would be the descendant of a super-strong god such as Thor or Heracles; a clever hero would be descended from someone like Athena or Coyote. A variant on Godly Ancestry is Godly Bestowal — one of the Powers That Be has decided the character is especially worthy and has bestowed tremendous powers upon him (or imbued him with those powers by “merging” with him somehow). Occasionally there's even a character who simply *is* a god, one of the rare ones who decides to walk the modern world instead of staying in the land of the gods where there are no taxes, cell phones, or bad sitcoms.

MUTANT

The character's genetic code is a little different from that of ordinary people. Though the change is subtle, it grants the character superpowers. In the campaign, perhaps some people feel that these mutations, as they result in the creation of more and more superpowered people, represent a fundamental step in human evolution, leading to the next stage in mankind's development. But sometimes, unfortunately for mutants, people and governments interpret this trend to mean mutants are forerunners of a new species whose inevitable goal must be the destruction, displacement, or enslavement of “true” or “pure” (*i.e.*, non-mutant) humanity, and they seek mutants in an effort to control or destroy them.

MYSTIC FAMILY/RACE

The character belongs to a family or race, normally a subset of humanity, that's imbued with magical or psychic power. This may result from ancient pacts with powerful gods, complex magical rituals performed by one of the character's ancestors, or a "mystic mutation" of some sort. Everyone who belongs to the group has some power, though a PC destined to be a superhero typically has an unusually high degree of it.

ACHIEVE GREATNESS

Here are some of the common origins involving characters who learn or build their superhuman capabilities:

BUILD GADGETRY

Some people, unable to acquire superpowers by other means, go to the laboratory to create machinery to do the same thing. One typical expression of the "build gadgetry" origin is "powered armor," an all-in-one gadget that provides its wearer with protection and an array of superpower systems (see pages 88, 274). Related to this origin is "know someone who builds gadgetry" — *i.e.*, the character is the friend, employee, or other beneficiary of someone who builds superpowered gadgets rather than being the builder himself. The fellow hired to test the gadgets often ends up as a superhero or supervillain.

MENTAL TRAINING

Some powers can be rationalized as being a very high level of scientific knowledge. Mind Control through hypnosis, Teleportation and Extra-Dimensional Movement through extraordinarily high-end mathematics, and the like are all expressions of this origin, but Mental Training acts as the rationale for a small enough set of powers that it usually isn't the source of all of a hero's abilities. Mental Training also covers many superhumans' learned (non-powered) skills.

MYSTICAL/MAGICAL TRAINING

The character has learned to cast magic spells. He possesses and/or can direct magical energy, allowing him to do many remarkable things. Magic, as a rationale, can conveniently include every power in the book, so it's a popular choice among players creating characters.

PHYSICAL TRAINING

This origin category includes all the martial arts- and athletics-related origins, and many Skills. For example, you can associate numerous powers with martial arts training; examples include breath control (Resistant Protection, the *Resistant Advantage*), healing (Healing or Regeneration), *ch'i-kung* (Telekinesis), Leaping, and more. Similarly, many weaponmaster characters have a whole host of physical abilities related to using their chosen weapon in various ways.

HAVE GREATNESS THRUST UPON THEM

Here are some of the common origins involving accidental, unintentional, or involuntary acquisition of superhuman abilities after birth:

RADIATION ACCIDENT

The traditional form of the comic book *radiation accident* is a mishap in which a subject is exposed to an unhealthy amount of hard radiation. This causes him to experience a sudden non-fatal mutation that gives him superpowers. The term comes from influential Silver Age comics, many of whom featured characters with origins involving radiation (*e.g.*, bitten by a radioactive animal, bombardment by "cosmic radiation" in space, or exposure to strange forms of radiation in a weapons test). Over the years, the term has mutated to include just about any of the weird sorts of accidents that create superpowers — a "radiation" accident could involve mutagenic chemicals, magical energy, transformative diseases, genetic engineering, lightning strikes, and any other situation that might cause an unexpected transformation in the character. (For example, "chemical accidents" were a much more common explanation for powers in the Golden Age, and "genetics accidents" are more common in the Iron Age, based on the current state of science in those periods.) Radiation accidents are much-beloved of GMs and players alike because their results can be very dramatic and unexpected, and because few people demand a consistent set of consequences from them.

SUBJECT OF EXPERIMENTATION

This origin signifies a character who has either volunteered to be the subject of some new scientific or mystical technique, or who's been subjected to the technique without his approval. It covers everything from the noble young test subject who agrees to undergo dangerous, painful experimentation so he can be transformed into a superhero during times of crisis to the hapless kidnap victim who's just the latest test subject of a villainous organization's research and development lab. Whatever the reason for the experiment, the result is a superpowered individual — though one who may be physically or psychologically scarred by his transformation.

COMBINATIONS OF THE THREE

In many cases, heroes and villains combine two or more origin rationales in their characters. A character might be the child of a god, but even that would not allow him to be competitive in the world of superheroes and supervillains if he had also not received exceptional mental and physical training. A character might be a mutant, but would still be an easy target for a thug with a handgun if he did not also wear body armor and use gadgetry.

SUPERHERO MOTIVATIONS

When you design a superhero character, it's important to decide why he does what he does. Fighting crime, especially in the form of super-powered villains, is not the best choice for most people — particularly not when they could obtain fame and money by exploiting their unusual abilities. So, why does a character become a *superhero* instead of remaining just a *superhuman*?

Some classic superhero motivations are described below. Each one lists one or two representative Psychological Complications. Of course, over years of adventuring, a character could lose or overcome whatever reason originally inspired him to be a hero, meaning he must then find a reason to continue... or retire.

For more Psychological Complications common to superhero characters, see page 108.

CONDITIONING

The character's been trained for an adventuring lifestyle since he was a child — for instance, because one of his parents was a superhero, because he belongs to a family with a strong sense of *noblesse oblige*, or even because he's a programmed robot. No other course of action occurs to him. Over time, the conditioning may fade, leaving the hero in a quandary about whether his “choice” of a superheroic lifestyle is the correct one.

Representative Psychological Complications: Must Live Up To Family Reputation For Achievement (Uncommon, Moderate; 10 points); Noblesse Oblige (Uncommon, Strong; 15 points).

DESIRE FOR MONEY

This character fights crime, but he does so chiefly to keep himself in front of the cameras, the better to sell his free time at exorbitant rates. When not confronting evil, he might endorse products, work construction sites in difficult environments, carry sensor packages to orbit the sun, and so on. Even less wholesome versions of this motivation lead to the creation of mercenary supers, individuals who only use their powers for pay.

Representative Psychological Complication: Greedy (Common, Strong; 15 points).

FEELING OF FELLOWSHIP

The character doesn't feel welcome, or as though he belongs, with anyone but a group of heroes. His friendship with them is real, but he truly only fights crime because he wants to stay with the group; the effect on the people he helps or saves is really of little (or much less) interest to him.

Representative Psychological Complication: Desperate For Acceptance (Uncommon, Strong; 10 points).

HUNGER FOR JUSTICE OR REVENGE

The character or someone he loves has been wronged (typically, this means “horribly wronged”), and he now seeks vengeance. He may choose for his revenge to be legal (*i.e.*, he turns villains over to the authorities) or illegal (he punishes them, perhaps even kills them, without consulting the legal authorities). He may want to punish only those responsible for the crime that first motivated him, or he may extend his anger to anyone with a similar motivation or *modus operandi*.

Representative Psychological Complications: Obsessed With Crimefighting (Very Common, Strong; 20 points); Vengeful (Uncommon, Strong; 10 points).

NEED FOR RECOGNITION

This character has a desperate need to be noticed or recognized as somehow exceptional. This need can be a pathetic one (the result of lack of sufficient attention and support as a child) or an obnoxious one (the character is “on stage” all the time — an actor, comedian, or prankster who becomes sulky when ignored).

Representative Psychological Complication: Showoff (Common, Strong; 15 points).

OBLIGATION

This character fights crime to pay a debt or to fulfill another's wish. Someone whose life was saved by a superhero may need to pay back the debt of his life by donning a costume. A sympathetic supervillain might turn to a life of crime-fighting as a condition of his parole. One of the hero's relatives may have asked for this with his dying breath. Whatever the reason, until the hero feels he's satisfied his obligation, he continues in the life of the superhero.

Representative Psychological Complication: Feels Obligated To Fight Crime (Uncommon, Moderate; 10 points).

SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

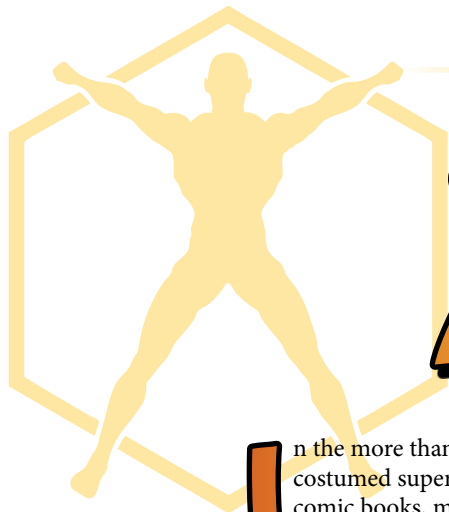
The character, typically because of his personal code of ethics, believes that “with great power comes great responsibility” — that he has an obligation to utilize his superpowers for the benefit of others. He doesn't necessarily have to have experienced tragedy in his life, nor does he have to have any emotional problems; he just feels that it's his duty. Someone with this mental orientation usually finds himself in disagreement (whether serious or humorous varies with the characters) with characters who have the “Thrillseeker” or “Need For Recognition” motivations, and is often not on good terms with those who have “Desire For Money” as a motivation.

Representative Psychological Complication: Code Of The Hero (Very Common, Strong; 20 points) (see page 108).

THRILLSEEKER

This character is only really alive when he's in danger, and can't find anything much more dangerous than facing a powerful supervillain.

Representative Psychological Complication: Thrillseeker (Common, Strong; 15 points).



SUPERHERO ARCHETYPES

2

In the more than sixty years since the first costumed superheroes began appearing in comic books, many standard superhero types have developed, and Champions players often plan to play characters similar to their favorite types. This section talks about many of those types and how to construct them with the *HERO System* rules.

In addition, in Chapter Five you'll find example character sheets for "stock" examples of these archetypes, with random power selections you can use to customize them. In just a few seconds you can create a new hero, or an entire team of villains to oppose your PCs with!

The information about each of the following archetypes discusses the following character traits:

Skills: Most superhero archetypes have Skills related to the type of super they are. A Weaponmaster, for instance, can probably build weapons, while a Mentalist is more likely than most characters to be acquainted with the field of parapsychology.

Perks and Talents: Not all superheroes possess these little personal advantages, but some do relate to certain superhero archetypes:

Powers: Naturally, no discussion of superhero archetypes can really cover the topic thoroughly until the subject of superpowers is included. The *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five has many more example powers.

Complications: Finally, some Complications lend themselves to specific superhero archetypes. For instance, if a hero is super-strong, there could be a material or methodology to make him temporarily weak... and you can be sure the bad guys will eventually discover and exploit it.

BRICK

A *Brick* is a superhuman whose main attributes are super-strength and resistance to injury. The first costumed superhero, Superman, is one classic image of the Brick, and his many imitators (such as Thor, the Thing, and Colossus) set the stage for the Brick becoming a superhero archetype: an individual who can pick up tremendous objects, leap great distances or fly, bounce projectiles (bullets, explosive shells, sometimes powerful missiles) off his skin, and so forth.

With the earliest comic book Bricks, all these powers were intrinsic to the character, but later Bricks introduced the notion of someone who was superpowered only when he needed to be and spent the rest of his time in a physically normal Secret Identity — the original Captain Marvel (he of the magic word "Shazam!" which transformed him back and forth between his super form and the body of unpowered teenager Billy Batson) was an early example of this type. The Hulk, who transforms back to his "puny Banner" normal human form when he calms down, is another classic embodiment of this concept.

The Brick is probably the most superhero popular archetype. Due to his versatility and durability, he's often the cornerstone of a superhero team, though not necessarily its leader. Because the Brick is thought of as a normal person who is just "more," in some sense, than normal people, Bricks are often looked on by normal people as one of their own. They're expected to be decent, comparatively well-adjusted heroes; if they turn out not to be, they are even more feared than many other archetypes (and with good reason, thanks to their almost unparalleled ability to wreak havoc and cause property damage). From a gaming perspective, they tend to be relatively easy to design, create, and play, making them a good choice for gamers new to Champions.

POSSIBLE BRICK SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Brick powers include:

- Exposure to radiation or a special serum/chemical super-energizes all of the character's cells, granting him prodigious physical powers.
- The character builds a suit of powered armor that enhances his STR and resilience.
- A god of strength or war (Hercules, Thor, Huitzilopochtli...) imbues the character with phenomenal might.
- The character is an alien (or has alien blood) and is super-strong on Earth (even though he's just an ordinary person back home).

SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

Bricks aren't often expected to have a specific set of Skills. This doesn't mean they're necessarily unskilled or stupid, just that there's no consistent set of Skills they as a group possess. (Some Bricks, particularly those who act as muscle for supervillains, do tend to be unskilled or uneducated, which contributes to the Brick-as-simpleton stereotype.)

Bricks are often good in combat (they buy Combat Skill Levels with HTH Combat). Few take Martial Arts to improve their fighting ability, though some low-level Bricks (those with STR scores of 40 or less) choose to do so, and a high-STR Brick who supplements his fighting skills with Martial Maneuvers that do no extra damage but grant greater fighting versatility can be frightening in a scrap. Some Bricks take a *Strength Tricks* Power Skill to simulate their ability to occasionally pull such stunts as squeezing diamonds out of coal with their super-strong hands (as usual, if a character wants to use a "trick" like this frequently, he should pay Character Points for it).

Bricks are among the flashiest and best-regarded of supers, so it's not unknown for them to have the *Local Police Powers* Fringe Benefit (representing their excellent relationship with local authorities) and the *Positive Reputation* Perk.

No Talents are specifically better-suited to Bricks than to other supers.

POWERS

Obviously, the most important power for a Brick is high STR. A character is most likely to be regarded as a Brick if he has a STR of 40 or more. Typically a Brick's STR is as high as the campaign standards allow (e.g., STR 60 in a game with a 12 DC ceiling on Attack Powers).

Many other powers are appropriate to the Brick. Resistant Protection or the *Resistant* Advantage for his PD/ED allows him to duke it out with villains armed with Killing Attacks (and it's not uncommon for him to buy the *Hardened* or *Impenetrable* Advantages for his defenses, either). Flight allows him to get to the scene of the action, though lots of Leaping may be easier to justify (with the special effect of "super-strong leg muscles"). Enhanced Senses allow him to detect danger at a distance. Anything else a player can reasonably justify as a reflection of a

super-strong body — Life Support (super-strong lungs), Telescopic for the Sight Group (super-strong eye muscles), and the like — could qualify as a proper power for a Brick.

Beyond these standard choices, it's also appropriate to have powers that simulate unusual uses of superhuman Strength. For instance, a Blast with the *Explosion* and *Personal Immunity* Advantages and the *No Range* Limitation simulates the ability of some supers to hit the ground and cause a minor earthquake (see page 78).

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Brick character sheet.



EXAMPLE BRICK POWERS

Shockwave: The Brick slams his fists into the ground with such force that he creates a small, but high-powered, seismic shockwave around him.

Area Of Effect (26m Radius Explosion; +½) for up to 60 STR, Hole In The Middle (the 1m radius area the Brick's standing in when he uses the power; +¼) (45 Active Points); Only Affects Targets On The Ground (-¼), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Only Does Knock-down, Not Knockback (-0). Total cost: 26 points.

The Big Wrap-Up: The Brick uses available materials — I-beams, a chain-link fence, even rolled-up asphalt — to bind and confine a foe. The effectiveness of this tactic depends largely on the strength of the materials used.

Entangle 6d6, up to 6 PD/6 ED (60 Active Points); OIF (appropriate materials of opportunity; -½), No Range (-½), Extra Time (at least a Full Phase, and often longer, depending on how long it takes to get the materials; -½), Defense Depends On Materials Used (-½), Side Effect (may cause considerable damage to the environment; -0). Total cost: 20 points. (Optionally, you can apply the *Entangle Has 1 BODY* (-½) Limitation, representing the fact that anyone who loosens the materials a little can wiggle out of the Entangle easily.)

Thunderclap: The Brick claps his hands together so forcefully that the resulting sound deafens anyone nearby.

Hearing Group Flash 8d6, Area Of Effect (48m Radius Explosion; +¾), Hole In The Middle (the 1m radius area the Brick's standing in when he uses the power; +¼), Does Knockback (+¼) (54 Active Points); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), No Range (-½), Restrained (-½). Total cost: 22 points.

The Flick Of Unconsciousness: The Brick flicks a foe in the head with his index finger, knocking him out without inflicting any serious harm. But if the Brick miscalculates, the target takes the Brick's full STR damage (not multiplied by Hit Location modifiers).

Blast 6d6, NND (defense is any innate rPD protecting the head; +1) (60 Active Points); No Range (-½), Requires A Strength Tricks Roll (-½), Side Effects (if roll is failed, opponent takes character's full STR damage; -¼). Total Cost: 27 points.

COMPLICATIONS

For Bricks that have alternate forms (such as the Hulk and Captain Marvel), Accidental Change makes for an interesting Complication. The character's efforts not to have his Secret Identity revealed by an impromptu change of identity, or his efforts to hold back the transformation until innocents can get to safety, make for some great (and often humorous) scenes.

Enraged/Berserk is a fairly common Complication among Bricks, particularly those with relatively low intelligence. *Berserk In Combat* is a favorite of many villainous Bricks — though not necessarily of their allies.

Other than that, few Complications are specifically suited to Bricks, but one such is:

Physical Complication: Doesn't Know Own Strength (Frequently, Slightly Impairing; 15 points). When the Brick interacts with delicate or fragile items — or people — the GM occasionally calls on him to make a DEX Roll. (The GM may choose to make the roll for the player without informing him of the fact, the better to surprise him with possible consequences.) If the roll fails, the character accidentally exerts his Casual STR on whatever he's holding, possibly damaging it.

ENERGY PROJECTOR

An *Energy Projector* is a superhuman whose primary expression of superpower is the use of high-powered energy at range. An Energy Projector (also called a "Blaster") might shoot lasers from his eyes, flamethrower-style fire from his fingertips, plasma from his mouth, beams of ice/cold from his hand, or any other type of power from any appropriate part of his body.

Energy Projectors are perhaps even more spectacular in their use of powers than Bricks, though they don't have quite the Everyman appeal Bricks do. On the other hand, Energy Projectors are vital to a superteam, since they provide "artillery support" and allow the team to make attacks at great ranges.

POSSIBLE ENERGY PROJECTOR SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Energy Projector powers include:

- The character is doused with a mysterious chemical and somehow gains related energy powers (for example, if soaked in a super-fuel, he develops fire powers).
- The character's body takes in and processes solar/stellar/cosmic/life energy, allowing him to manipulate it in various ways.
- The character taps the energy of the atoms in his body and can use it for various effects.
- A bizarre accident involving enormous amounts of electricity (or some other source of energy, such as a super-laser) grants the character energy powers instead of simply frying him.

SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

It helps Energy Projectors to have Combat Skill Levels with their attacks and Range Skill Levels to diminish the effects of the Range Modifier. Similarly, the Talent *Absolute Range Sense* is very apt for Energy Projectors. The *Power* Skill lets them use their energy powers in clever but trivial ways (such as lighting candles), or even to manipulate their existing abilities in a broader, more tactically viable fashion.

POWERS

Energy Projectors tend to have Blast and/or Killing Attack (Ranged) powers, usually bought as a Multipower so they can have different slots reflect the varying ways they apply their powers (one slot is a full-power Blast, several others are Blasts with various Advantages, and so on). But that's far from the limit of their abilities. They can project or manipulate energy in such a way to propel the character (Flight, Faster-Than-Light Travel), to open holes in reality (Teleportation, Extra-Dimensional Movement), to stand as a barrier between the hero and incoming damage (Barrier, Resistant Protection), to hold an atmosphere around the hero (Life Support), to move objects at range (Telekinesis), and even to affect the environment (Change Environment, weather-based Telekinesis and Darkness, and so on).

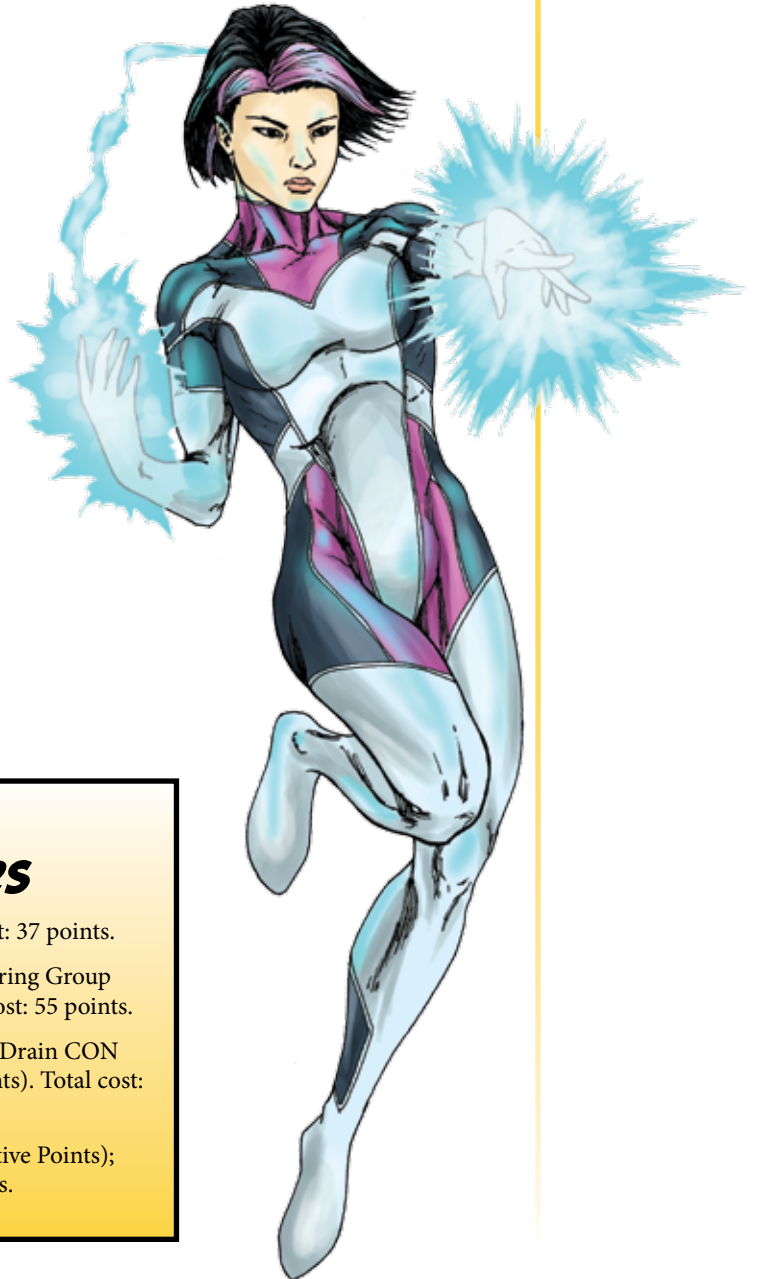
Some Energy Projectors, rather than just using or controlling energy, are actually *made* of energy — they have bodies of pure light, plasma, or the like. Such characters (and even some “normal” Energy Projectors) may have energy-based powers like Absorption (the character “feeds” on incoming energy), Energy Damage Reduction, or Desolidification. Energy Projectors in general often have Unified Power-based abilities, but that sort of power construct is particularly common among “made of energy” heroes, since all their powers derive from the single “source” of having an energy body.

Since so many of their powers are designed to operate at Range, it's often helpful for an Energy Projector to have Enhanced Senses — particularly since several Enhanced Senses can be defined as involving energy emissions (Radar and Active Sonar, for instance). They often define such Senses as belonging to the Radio Sense Group.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for sample Energy Projector character sheets for such special effects as Electricity, Fire, Ice, Magnetism, Sonic, and Weather Control.

COMPLICATIONS

Energy Projectors tend to interact with energy sources in odd ways, and this may give rise to Complications. Such a character might take extra damage (as a Vulnerability) from an energy type thematically opposed to the one he manifests, or may even take extra damage from the same type of energy he uses. An Energy Projector composed of or suffused with pure energy may suffer harm (Susceptibility or Vulnerability) when physical objects (especially metal ones, like bullets and knives) enter his body and significantly disrupt its energy matrix. A being made of pure energy may have difficulty interacting with the normal world and its inhabitants in various ways, giving rise to Physical and Psychological Complications.



EXAMPLE ENERGY PROJECTOR POWERS

Fire Blast: RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+¼). Total cost: 37 points.

Sonic Blast: Blast 9d6 (total cost: 45 points) *plus* Hearing Group Flash 5d6, Linked (-½) (total cost: 10 points). Total cost: 55 points.

Radiation Blast: Blast 9d6 (total cost: 45 points) *plus* Drain CON 1d6 (10 Active Points); Linked (-½) (total cost: 7 points). Total cost: 52 points.

Magnetic Manipulation: Telekinesis (30 STR) (45 Active Points); Only Versus Ferrous Metals (-½). Total cost: 30 points.

GADGETEER

This character builds high technology devices to act as superpowers. Instead of having natural laser-emission powers, he builds a laser gun; instead of having innate powers of flight, he constructs an antigravity device or a jetpack. Of course, a character who uses gadgets doesn't necessarily have to invent them himself — he might hire someone to make them for him, steal them from a criminal gadgeteer, or find them abandoned in an alley. The following advice applies to characters who both invent and use their own devices.



EXAMPLE GADGETEER POWERS

Gravity Globes: These tiny flying spheres (they come in groups of four) surround a target and generate a gravitic field that prevents him from moving.

Entangle 4d6, 4 PD/4 ED, Indirect (gadgeteer is always the Source Point of the power, but the globes' Path can change with every use; +½) (60 Active Points); OIF (difficult to grasp spheres; -½), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 24 points.

Pogo-Boots: These boots have electronically-augmented springs, allowing the wearer to leap prodigious distances.

Leaping +40m (20 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

Power Helmet: This device provides a Gadgeteer with a variety of minor but useful sensory and defensive powers. Other devices may also be installed.

Infrared Perception (Sight Group), Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group), +6 versus Range for Sight Group, Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points), Hearing Group Flash Defense (8 points) (total of 37 points); all OIF (-½). Total cost: 24 points.

Universal Defense Field Belt: This belt creates a broad-spectrum force-field that offers protection against most forms of attack.

Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED/10 Sight Group Flash Defense/10 Mental Defense/10 Power Defense) (75 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 50 points.

POSSIBLE GADGETEER SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Gadgeteer powers include:

- The character is an incredibly learned and gifted scientist/engineer/inventor.
- The character is a mutant with an instinctive grasp of how technology works, though he's never studied the subject.
- The character stumbled into an arsenal of gadgets built by someone else; he can't build new ones, but has so many mix-and-match possibilities with the components available to him that he's not very limited by that lack.
- The character can't build gadgets himself, but has the support of a patron who can.

SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

A Gadgeteer character should have a wide selection of Skills related to his chosen "profession," including Computer Programming, Demolitions, Electronics, Inventor, Mechanics, Systems Operation, and Weaponsmith. In particular, he should have one or more Science Skills for the specific fields his powers relate to. For instance, if he uses poison darts, he would have SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology, SS: Botany, and/or SS: Biology. If he creates energy-emission powers, he might have SS: Physics. If he climbs into a large robot that moves and attacks, he would have SS: Robotics, SS: Mechanical Engineering, and SS: Cybernetics.

POWERS

There's really no limit or focus to the type of powers a Gadgeteer can possess (except those deriving from any GM-imposed campaign restrictions on the extent and nature of super-science; see page 131). In fact, Gadgeteers often imitate other superhero archetypes, with the sole difference being that their abilities are based on gadgets rather than innate powers. Multipowers and Variable Power Pools are extremely appropriate power structures for a Gadgeteer.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Gadgeteer character sheet, and *The HERO System Equipment Guide* for a vast array of gadgets and devices.

COMPLICATIONS

Some Complications common to Gadgeteers include:

Physical Complication: Unable To Walk: Some gadgeteers (including powered armor heroes; see below) develop their technology skills in part because they're physically crippled in some way — the most common example being unable to walk. The character builds a hover-chair, exoskeleton, or suit of armor that helps him overcome this disability. (Ordinarily this would be an All The Time, Fully Impairing Physical Complication worth 35 points, but if the character can build gadgets that reduce how often it affects him, the GM should reduce the Complication's effect, typically to Infrequently, Greatly Impairing [15 points].)

Psychological Complication: Easily Distracted By Scientific Matters (Common, Strong; 15 points): Whenever the gadgeteer comes across any scientific object, detail, or technique within his field of interest but new to him, he automatically wants to explore or investigate it... meaning he sometimes forgets his primary goal.

MARTIAL ARTIST

This character is normally at a human or slightly-above-human level of physical performance, but augments his abilities with extensive training in formal or informal martial arts. He isn't necessarily best-known for his fighting skills — he may be thought of foremost as an investigator or an acrobat, for instance — but hand-to-hand combat prowess is an important part of his suite of abilities.

POSSIBLE MARTIAL ARTIST SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Martial Artist powers include:

- The character has spent years at an ancient monastery hidden deep in the Himalayas studying a powerful fighting style long thought forever lost.
- The character is a mutant with a natural gift for or grasp of hand-to-hand combat.
- The character is a “living cartoon” escaped from an *anime* movie.
- The spirit of a long-dead noble warrior has merged with the character and granted him powerful fighting abilities.
- The character can instantly and perfectly mimic any physical action he sees someone do, and he's spent a *lot* of time watching Saturday Afternoon Kung Fu Theater.

SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

In addition to Martial Arts and related Combat Skill Levels, a Martial Artist usually has Skills related to his martial training. These could include Knowledge Skills pertaining to strange arts, foreign lands, or martial-arts subcultures, Analyze Style (or similar forms of Analyze), Languages related to the cultures that developed his fighting styles, and the like.

Martial Artists often have physical Skills that are natural offshoots and consequences of their training. Acrobatics, Breakfall, Climbing, Contortionist, Fast Draw, Shadowing, Sleight Of Hand, Stealth, and Weapon Familiarity are all frequent choices. If the character also has an investigative bent, Bugging, Deduction, Lockpicking, and Security Systems are also good possibilities.

POWERS

Martial Artists often have weapons or gadgets — not as many as the Gadgeteer, of course, and Martial Artists are not always the designers or builders of the gadgets they use. Martial Artist gadgets tend to be oriented toward improving combat (melee or thrown weapons, armor, billy clubs, and so on) or mobility (swinglines, cling-grips).

Some Martial Artists emphasize the mystic or magical aspect of their powers. They buy many *ch'i*-based powers, develop secret mystic abilities as part of their training, or even study full-blown Oriental sorcery. For example a character might be able to surround his fists with “Dragon Energy” so that his punches are even more effective, be able to teleport by entering the spirit realm of his ancestors, or have the power to call upon his *ch'i* to enhance his physical attributes. Similarly, some players, inspired by *wuxia* martial arts films, like to give their Martial Artist characters the power to run up walls, balance on the slenderest branches, or sweep-kick a dozen foes at once with almost no chance of missing.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Martial Artist character sheet, and the *HERO System Martial Arts* supplement for a detailed look at martial arts and related abilities in the *HERO System*.



2



EXAMPLE MARTIAL ARTIST POWERS

The Delicate Kick Of Han Chen: HKA 2d6, NND (defense is Resistance; +1), Does BODY (+1) (90 Active Points); Concentration ($\frac{1}{2}$ DCV; $-\frac{1}{4}$), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; $-\frac{1}{2}$), Activation Roll 12- ($-\frac{1}{4}$). Total cost: 45 points.

Drunken Defense: +6 DCV (30 Active Points); Extra Time (Full Phase; $-\frac{1}{2}$), Requires An Acrobatics Roll ($-\frac{1}{2}$). Total cost: 15 points.

Fists Of The Dragon: HA +6d6 (30 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack ($-\frac{1}{4}$), Requires A *Ch'i* Manipulation Roll ($-\frac{1}{2}$). Total cost: 17 points.

Thunder-Leap: HA +8d6 (40 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack ($-\frac{1}{4}$), Only Works With Move Through ($-\frac{1}{2}$). Total cost: 23 points.

COMPLICATIONS

Martial Artists are often very focused characters — the dedication they need to train up to a superhero level of performance is clear evidence of this. So a couple of appropriate Complications for them include:

Psychological Complication: Obsessive (Common, Strong; 15 points): The character, once he decides on a goal, refuses to give up on it.

Psychological Complication: Vengeful (Uncommon, Strong; 10 points): The character is determined to punish those whom he believes deserve punishment... particularly those whom he believes have wronged him personally.

Martial Artists also undergo rigorous physical conditioning that makes them very strong in some ways but can weaken them in others, such as:

Susceptibility: Missing With (Specific Attack) (takes 3d6 instantly; Common; 20 points): The character's preferred attack requires very exacting biomechanics. When he misses with it, he sustains physical harm. A character should only have this Complication if the GM is sure the character will use the attack frequently (several times per combat).

Susceptibility: Poisons And Gases (takes 1d6 per Phase; Common; 10 points): The character's system is unusually delicate; whenever an invasive atmosphere or substance enters his lungs or a toxic substance enters his bloodstream, he begins to suffer damage. Alternately, this may result because the character's system functions so efficiently, due to his high level of physical conditioning, that poisons and gases spread throughout it quickly.

MENTALIST

This character has psionic powers — abilities deriving from the energy of the mind. This covers a wide range of abilities, including psionic senses (clairvoyance, remote viewing, the power to detect other minds, and so forth), psychokinesis (the ability to move and manipulate physical objects, or even intangible things like energy or computer data, with mental power), and telepathy (direct mind-to-mind contact to communicate, control, project illusions, or the like). Psionic powers have some of the same characteristics as magic (they're somewhat mysterious and spooky), but usually aren't quite as versatile and don't derive from a rationale that's explicitly magical or supernatural.

POSSIBLE MENTALIST SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Mentalist powers include:

- —The character is a mutant, born with awesome psychic powers.
- —Thanks to a radiation accident, mutation, or unusual ancestry, the character's brain functions on a much higher level than that of other humans, allowing him to access higher-order scientific principles that manifest in our reality as psychic powers.
- —The character's received mystical training focusing on the arts of glamour, illusion, domination, and telepathy.
- —The character's built gadgets that grant him Mental Powers.

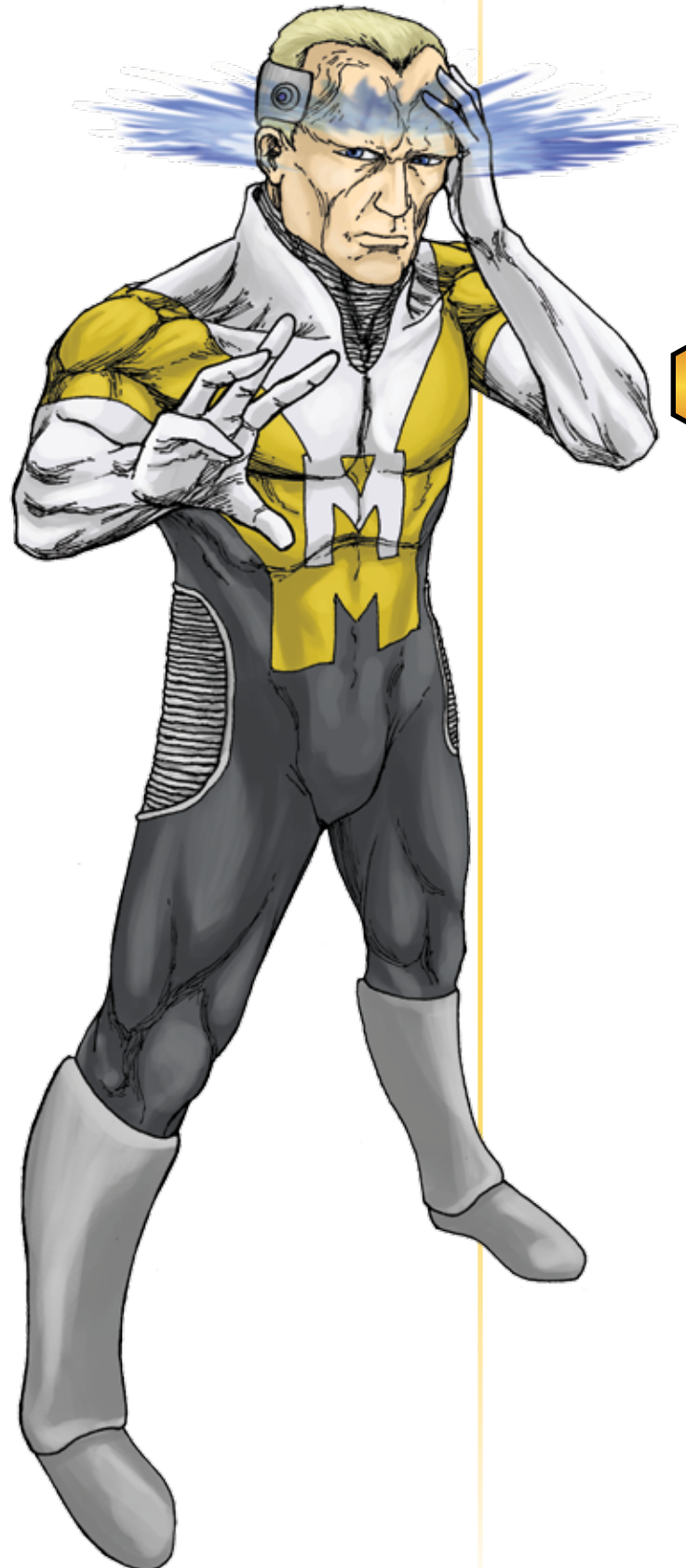
SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

Mentalist characters often receive training in parapsychology, the formal examination of psychic phenomena. Parapsychologists usually start as students of psychology. Thus SS: Psychology and SS: Parapsychology are common choices. The *Danger Sense* Talent is also very appropriate. Many Mentalists have *Mentalism* or *Psionics* as a form of the *Power Skill*, enabling them to expand and adjust the use of their powers in creative ways.

POWERS

Some of the powers normally thought of as related to the world of the psychic include Clairsentience (distant viewing, precognition, retrocognition), Enhanced Senses (Detect Psychic Energy, Detect Spirits), Flight (levitation), Healing, Mental Blast, Mental Defense, Mental Illusions, Mind Control, Mind Link, Mind Scan, Telekinesis (psychokinesis), and Telepathy. However, depending on how far one wishes to stretch the definition of “psionic,” particularly in regard to psychokinetic effects, many other abilities are possible. Characters in the comics have used “mental energy” not only to control minds and move objects, but to alter targets at the cellular level (Transform), deflect attacks, or create defensive barriers (Barrier, Deflection, Resistant Protection), reach inside an opponent's mind or body to wreak all sorts of havoc (various Drains, Flashes, and AVAD attacks), and so on.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Mentalist character sheet.



COMPLICATIONS

Mentalists often have a heightened sense of the feelings of people around them, so their players might choose one or more Complication that reflect this enhanced sensitivity.

Enraged/Berserk: Sympathetic Berserk (Berserk when anyone else in LOS goes Berserk [Uncommon], go 14-, recover 14-; 25 points): Whenever someone within line of sight goes Berserk, the character does, too — he's overcome by the other person's intense emotions. (Alternately, if the character only becomes Enraged when anyone in LOS becomes Enraged or Berserk, this is worth 15 points).

Physical Complication: The Pauli Effect (Frequently, Slightly Impairing; 15 points): The character's psychic powers somehow uncontrollably cause electronic devices near him to malfunction, or function improperly in a way that he doesn't want. At least once per adventure, and possibly more often, the GM should roll a Dispel 12d6 and apply it to an important device the PC's near (a phone or radio he's trying to use to make a crucial call, his teammate's laser pistol or jetpack, an alarm system he's trying to sneak past). If the Dispel succeeds, something bad happens.

Susceptibility: Mind Control (takes 1d6 per Phase, Uncommon; 15 points): A character with an unusual mental structure or very touchy mental powers might suffer damage when affected by another's Mind Control (you can easily substitute some other Mental Power if you like).

EXAMPLE MENTALIST POWERS

Remote Viewing: Clairsentience (Sight Group), 32x Range (6,400m) (45 Active Points); Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Requires An EGO Roll (-½). Total cost: 22 points.

Enhance Rage: Mind Control 10d6 (50 Active Points); Only To Control/Inflict Anger (-1). Total cost: 25 points.

Psychic Obliteration: RKA 1½d6, AVAD (Mental Defense; +1), Does BODY (+1) (90 Active Points); Only Works On Beings With Minds (-½), Limited Range (20m; -¼), Requires An EGO Roll (-½), No Knockback (-¼), Beam (-¼). Total cost: 33 points.

Psychokinetic Shield: Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED) (36 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-½). Total cost: 24 points.

Telepathic Bleed: This Complication, appropriate especially to telepaths, means the character constantly hears a drone of mental voices in his head (unless he's completely isolated from other humans). This can have either or both of two effects. First, you can buy it as a Physical Complication (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing; 10 points) which indicates he has to succeed with an EGO Roll whenever he makes a PER Roll or Skill Roll and there are four or more minds within 6m of him; if the roll fails he suffers a -1 (or greater) penalty on the PER/Skill Rolls (possibly just for that Phase, possibly for 1d6 Segments). Second, you can buy it as a Susceptibility (takes 1d6 damage per Minute when there are six or more people within 6m of him, Common; 10 points).

METAMORPH

This character is a shapechanger of some sort. His body can alter its shape, dimensions, coloration, density, and/or malleability. Characters with Growth and Shrinking fall in this category, but often fit into some other archetype as well — just larger or smaller (*i.e.*, tiny Martial Artist, gigantic Brick, tiny Mystic, and so on).

POSSIBLE METAMORPH SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Metamorph powers include:

- The character is a mutant, born with shape-shifting powers; he may not even *have* a “true shape.” (Or you can substitute just about any Metamorph ability for “shapeshifting powers”; since mutations involve the body, they're a good source for nearly any sort of Metamorph ability.)
- An animal-god grants the character the power to assume the forms of various creatures.
- While researching or working near new plastics, the character is accidentally exposed to them and ends up with a malleable body instead of dying.
- The character is an alien from an entire species of metamorphs.

SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

Metamorphs often use their powers in spy-like ways — sneaking into dangerous areas, assuming the identities of other people, and so on. So Skills related to spy activities are appropriate, including Acting, Charm, Concealment, Conversation, Cramming, Disguise, Mimicry, Oratory, Persuasion, Shadowing, and Stealth.

A Metamorph's ability to alter his physical nature also supplies a sufficient justification for buying several physical Skills and Talents, including Acrobatics, Breakfall, Contortionist, Defense Maneuver, Ambidexterity, and Double-Jointed.

POWERS

Multiform, Shape Shift, Stretching, Growth, and Shrinking are the most common and most obvious Powers for building Metamorph abilities. But any number of others are appropriate if you consider the many ways a metamorph might reshape his body:

Clinging: Squeezing fingertips and other portions of the skin into rough surfaces.

Deflection: Turning one's body rubbery to catch and repel missiles (requires the *Limitation Only Works Against Physical Projectiles* (-¼)).

Entangle: Wrapping an enemy up in loops of one's own body (usually requires the *Feedback* Limitation, and the *Lockout* Limitation or a Multipower to prevent the use of various related abilities).

Extra Limbs.

Flight/Gliding: Creating wings, flying in the shape of a bird, spreading one's malleable body into a parawing.

Killing Attack, HTH: Shaping body parts into melee weapons or sharp points, growing claws.

Leaping: Stretching the legs to allow extravagant leaps — Metamorphs often form their legs into spring-like coils to leap.

Resistant Protection: Hardening the skin.

Running/Swimming: Stretching the legs to allow for a longer, faster stride/kick.

Swinging: Using stretched arms to permit fast travel.

Tunneling: Shaping one's body into a bore-like apparatus to travel through the earth.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Metamorph character sheet.



EXAMPLE METAMORPH POWERS

Mace-Hands: The Metamorph transforms his hands into spiked maces, using them to smash his opponents.

HKA 1½d6 (plus STR), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼). Total cost: 31 points.

Parachute Form: The Metamorph shapes his malleable body into a parachute-like form, allowing him (and up to one person holding onto his arms and legs) to drift gently to the ground.

Flight 12m, Usable By Nearby (character can carry one other person; +¼) (15 Active Points); Gliding (-1), Limited Movement (character cannot gain altitude, and must move at least 12m downward for every 1m forward; -½). Total cost: 6 points.

Rubbery Body: Physical attacks just bounce off the character's malleable body, or have difficulty affecting so flexible a form.

Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% (30 Active Points); Requires A Malleable Body Powers Roll (-½). Total cost: 20 points.

Squeezing Through Cracks: The Metamorph can ooze his malleable body through even the tiniest openings. (This power is most appropriate for Metamorphs who've bought the ability to alter their bodily dimensions as part of their Stretching.)

Desolidification (affected by any attack) (40 Active Points); Does Not Protect Against Damage (-1), Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-½), Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Extra Time (Extra Phase; -¾). Total cost: 11 points.

COMPLICATIONS

Metamorphs are often unhappy with their physical condition — they and others consider them freakish and inhuman. So appropriate Complications include:

Physical Complication: Requires Specialized Medical Attention (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing; 15 points): This Complication means an ordinary doctor in an ordinary medical facility has a very hard time helping the character due to the Metamorph's bizarre physical form and/or biochemistry. Any time a character without a specific Knowledge Skill or Science Skill concerning the medical care of the specific person or his specific species tries to make a Paramedics or other medicine-related roll, he receives a penalty of at least -4 (for minor situations) or -8 (for crisis situations).

Psychological Complication: Desperate For Acceptance (Uncommon, Strong; 10 points): Metamorphs often feel cut off from the rest of humanity, so they make extra efforts to be accepted into a group (such as a superteam). This Complication means the character should make choices that follow the group dynamic and may be more easily manipulated by teammates, friends, and even villains in an ongoing effort to fit in.

Psychological Complication: Self-Loathing (Very Common, Moderate; 15 points): A character with this Psychological Complication tends to be unusually courageous in battle (a reflection of his unconscious death-wish or desire to be punished) and fails to pursue opportunities that permit him a measure of personal happiness (meaning the GM should remind this character's player of the Complication any time the character does something smart in his professional or personal relationship life).

MYSTIC

Mystics are characters trained in the use of magic, who have a natural affinity for magic, who have magic-derived powers, or who possess and use enchanted items. (In this respect the Mystic archetype may overlap other archetypes, such as Brick, Energy Projector, and Weaponmaster.) When not participating in more general team adventures, they often confine their activities to a subculture that's primarily magical, mystical, and supernatural in origin... meaning teammates who visit their houses and other haunts may end up with a case of the willies ("The lamp *spoke* to me — I swear!").

Having Mystic characters in a campaign implies that magic really exists in that campaign world, and that raises some issues for the GM to consider (see page 19).

POSSIBLE MYSTIC SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Mystic powers include:

- The character has studied magic for years (perhaps decades) and is an accomplished manipulator of arcane energies.
- A curse has "granted" the character mystical powers (but also some hefty Complications).
- A dying wizard, sensing the character's innate goodness and heroism, gifted the character with his mystical powers.
- The character is a descendant of a famous magician (Merlin, Cagliostro, or the like) and has an innate ability to use magic even though he's never studied it.
- The character comes from a region of the world with its own distinctive style of magic (such as Haitian voodoo) and has become a master practitioner of that style through exposure to it, study, or the like.

SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

Appropriate Mystic Skills include Knowledge Skills in a variety of occult subjects (arcane and occult lore generally, monsters, mysterious sites, secret histories, secret societies, necromancy, thaumaturgy, the gods, demons, alternate dimensions, and so on) and Languages (especially dead or mysterious ones). Cryptography only to translate is also often appropriate, as is Navigation (Dimensional) for plane-hopping Mystics. Many Mystics also have a *Power Skill* called Magic upon which many of their powers are based. Mystics whose studies emphasize keeping the body strong so the mind remains strong may learn Martial Arts.

Mystics are very Perk-oriented, sometimes having Access to occult sites, Contacts with a wide variety of occult experts, Favors from individuals they've helped, animal-companion Followers (familiar), *Head Of State* Fringe Benefits (usually from alternate dimensions), the priestly *Right To Marry* Fringe Benefit, Reputations as mystic protectors of Earth, and secret Bases ("sanctums").

Universal Translator is Talent frequently found among dimension-traveling Mystics.

POWERS

There's really no limit or even focus to the type of powers a Mystic might have. However, certain structures of powers are common. Mystic powers often Require A Skill Roll (based on Magic), and sometimes require Gestures, Incantations, Concentration, Extra Time, and/or Increased Endurance Cost. In short, Power Limitations are very common among Mystics. On the other hand, sometimes super-mages just *look* Limited; they may, for example, gesture and incant for show, but when push comes to shove they can cast spells even if bound and gagged, so they take no *Gestures* or *Incantations* Limitations on their powers.

Power Frameworks are common among spell-casting Mystics. A Multipower with a lot of slots, or better yet a large Variable Power Pool, goes a long way toward giving a super-wizard the sort of flexibility and adaptability his brethren in comics and movies so often display.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Mystic character sheet; additionally, many of the other characters in the Gallery could easily be converted into Mystics by changing the special effects of their powers to “magic.”

COMPLICATIONS

Mystics often suffer Hunteds based out of the strange and eerie environments that are their homes — demons, the undead, dimensional overlords, and rival wizards may all bear a Mystic enmity. Similarly, while they may have a Social Complication: Secret Identity as far as the general public's concerned, they may be very well known among the Mystic World (which could be a *Positive Reputation* Perk and/or a Social Complication depending on exactly how it affects the character). Other Complications common to this archetype include:

Dependence: Must Recharge (Very Common/ Easy To Obtain, Character's Powers Are Affected [Required Roll 11-], 1 Day; 0 points): A character with this Complication must regularly return to or summon forth a battery-like item or lose his powers. (This assumes a power recharger that normally comes when summoned. If the character must go to a specific place, which cannot occur when he is captured or far away from home, the Very Common becomes Common, and the Total becomes 5 points.)

Psychological Complication: Easily Distracted By Magical/Occult/Supernatural Matters (Common, Strong; 15 points): This is the Mystic's equivalent of the Gadgeteer's Complication. Whenever the character comes across any appropriate object, detail, or technique within his field of interest but new to him, he becomes distracted by it. This includes strange enchanted items, tomes of forbidden lore, unusual magical creatures, and so on.

Susceptibility: Contact With Iron (takes 1d6 per Phase, Very Common; 25 points): This is a Susceptibility appropriate to characters with the blood of elves or faerie-folk in their veins. If they touch ferrous metal with their bare flesh, they suffer burns and pain.

Susceptibility: Contact With Holy Objects And Places (takes 2d6 per Phase, Common; 25 points): Vampires, demons, and other innately evil mystical creatures often cannot stand to touch holy ground, holy symbols, holy water, and other such objects. Typically, a vigorous display of a holy item suffices to drive them off, or at least persuade them to come no closer.

Unluck: Cursed (2d6; 10 points): Some Mystics have enemies who've inflicted a curse on them, represented by Unluck (and/or other Complications). Trying to learn enough, or become powerful enough, to dispel the curse is often a big motivation for the character.

EXAMPLE MYSTIC POWERS

The Amulet Of The Aandiri: Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED/8 Power Defense), Usable By Other (+¼) (42 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 21 points.

The Blasting-Wand Of Berala The Bold: Blast 15d6 (75 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 25 points.

The Scintillant Shackles: Entangle 5d6, 5 PD/5 ED, Stops A Given Sense (Sight Group) (60 Active Points); Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 40 points.

A Simple Spell Of Comprehension: Universal Translator (INT Roll), Usable Simultaneously (usable by up to eight characters at once; +1) (40 Active Points); Concentration (0 DCV when casting; -½), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 20 points.



2



POWERED ARMOR

This character is a variant form of the Gadgeteer (above), with the main difference being that the Powered Armor hero has an all-in-one gadget — he integrates all his devices into a single suit of powered armor. Also, he's not as likely to be the actual inventor of the apparatus (he might just be an employee, tester, or friend of the inventor, or even someone who actually stole the suit from the inventor).

Typically, players build Powered Armor characters using the *Power Resistant Protection* together with a suite of Attack Powers (usually grouped into a Multipower or Variable Power Pool) and some Movement Powers (most often Flight). The character may also build Enhanced Senses or many other miscellaneous powers into his battlesuit. But other options are possible. For example, a character may prefer to use Damage Negation or Damage Reduction as his main Defense Power. Players with detailed knowledge of the *HERO System* might even experiment with building the powered armor as a Vehicle, though this is generally not recommended.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Powered Armor character sheet, and *The HERO System Equipment Guide* for more examples of powered armor or of gadgets that could be incorporated into a powered armor suit.

EXAMPLE POWERED ARMOR POWERS

Boot-Jets: Flight 40m, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 40 points.

Gauntlet Blasters: Blast 12d6 (60 Active Points); OIF (-½), 12 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 34 points.

Mini-Rocket Pod: RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (18m Explosion; +½), Autofire (5 shots; +1½) (90 Active Points); OIF (-½), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), 10 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 40 points.

Protective Capabilities: Resistant Protection (18 PD/18 ED), Hardened (+¼) (67 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 45 points.

Searchlight: Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rolls, Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +½) (33 Active Points); OIF (-½), No Range (-½), Only To Create Light (-1). Total cost: 11 points.

SPEEDSTER

A Speedster's powers are based around movement, usually (but not always) at high velocities. The typical Speedster, inspired by characters like the Flash, Quicksilver, or Northstar, either runs or flies very fast, and often has extremely high reflexes too. The end result is a high-mobility, hard to hit target with some unusual abilities deriving from the various ways you can use the special effect of "moving ultra-fast" to attack people or do other things. Other Speedsters focus on unusual Movement Powers (e.g., Teleportation) and their implications.

POSSIBLE SPEEDSTER SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Speedster powers include:

- The character is a mutant, born with the ability to fly, teleport, run at hundreds of miles per hour, or what have you.
- The character manipulates time and/or other dimensions to make himself seem to move faster, when in fact it's not that he's so fast, but that he can slow other people down.
- The character taps the energy of the atoms in his body and can use it to move at tremendous velocities.
- The character has been blessed with speed powers by a god such as Hermes or Rabbit.
- A "radiation accident" of some sort has super-energized the character's nervous system and musculature, making him incredibly fast.

SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

Speedsters tend to have extraordinary fighting skills based on the notion that they move so fast they can more easily dodge attacks, strike their enemies more often or more accurately, or otherwise use their swiftness as a weapon. Therefore, it's appropriate to buy a lot of Combat Skill Levels for them. Those CSLs are usually for All HTH Combat or for a group of movement-based attacks such as Move Through, Move By, and Grab By. A high DEX, OCV, DCV, and SPD are usually must-haves.

With the GM's permission, many speedsters also buy Limited Skill Levels to counteract the penalty for performing non-combat tasks more quickly than normal (6E1 59, 88). This allows them to clean an entire house in the blink of an eye, program a supercomputer in just one minute, search an entire building in a Turn, and perform other such "speed tricks."

Speedsters are often scientists who have genetically modified themselves, created apparati that speed them up, or developed unusual sciences that explain their hyperkinetic abilities. Thus, Science Skills may be appropriate, along with technical Skills like Computer Programming or Inventor.

POWERS

In addition to Movement Powers, Speedsters often have powers that are applied aspects of being able to move at hyper-speeds (or to move unusually), such as:

Change Environment: Just by waving arms around very fast, a Speedster could fill an area with static electricity. (This is of no consequence most of the time, but could justify a Blast and serve as the means to recharge a character who has an electricity-based Endurance Reserve.) He could also make an area very windy, clean it up in a single Phase, or the like.

Blast, RKA: The character could create static electricity (see Change Environment, above) or finger-snaps that cause mini-sonic booms, throw ordinary objects very fast, shove air in concussive waves, and so on.

Deflection, Reflection: The character simply grabs comparatively slow-moving bullets and projectiles out of the air and hurls them in another direction.

Desolidification, Extra-Dimensional Movement: The character moves or vibrates himself in such a way as to become out of phase with reality.

Hand-To-Hand Attack: Enough HA dice can simulate striking multiple blows in a very short amount of time. (The Speedster may want to apply the *Autofire* Advantage to his STR instead of just using large numbers of dice to create a rapid-fire punch.)

Images: The Speedster could move so fast he leaves afterimages behind as he runs or flies, creating "copies" of himself that enemies must sort through when trying to attack him.

Invisibility: The character might vibrate in such a way that he goes out of phase with conventional reality, allowing him to turn invisible.

Killing Attack, HTH: The character could rub his hand across an object so fast that he creates tremendous friction energy, setting the target on fire.

Resistant Protection: The character could vibrate in such a way to compact air in a defensive shield around him. Or whatever gave his body the ability to move very fast might also have hardened and toughened it to withstand the rigors of hyper-speed.

Teleportation: The character puts on a burst of speed and appears to travel instantaneously to his destination. The character might be limited to Teleporting along open pathways, or might transform into a form of energy and reappear at his destination.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Speedster character sheet.



2



COMPLICATIONS

Appropriate Speedster Complications include:

Dependence: Speedster Metabolism (Very Common/Easy To Obtain; Weakness, 1 Hour; 5 points): The character must sustain his hyper-accelerated metabolism by feeding a tremendous appetite. He's always stopping off in mid-patrol for a snack.

Physical Complication: Requires Specialized Medical Attention (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing; 15 points): As per the Metamorph, above.

Psychological Complication: Speedster Impatience (Very Common, Moderate; 15 points): When a character can perform tasks in the blink of an eye, having to wait on others tends to make him frustrated and irritable. This does little to ingratiate him to the people he's annoyed with, and he often has to make EGO Rolls to keep from lashing out at the aggravating "slowpokes."

Vulnerability: 2 x STUN From Unexpected Collisions (Common; 20 points): The character doesn't withstand collision damage well when he isn't prepared for it, such as when someone runs into him by surprise, instantly erects a Barrier right in front of him, makes him the victim of a Martial Throw, or the like.

EXAMPLE SPEEDSTER POWERS

Hyper-Running I: Running +52m (64m total) (total cost: 52 points) *plus* Clinging (normal STR) (10 Active Points); Linked (-½), Cannot Resist Knockback (-¼) (total cost: 6 points). Total cost: 58 points.

Hyper-Running II: Flight 64m (64 Active Points); Only In Contact With A Surface (-¼). Total cost: 51 points.

Hyper-Running III: Teleportation 30m, Mega-Scale (1m = 10 km; +1¼) (67 Active Points); Only In Contact With A Surface (-¼), Must Pass Through Intervening Space (-¼). Total cost: 45 points.

Vibro-Phasing: Desolidification (affected by energy attacks, or attacks by other hyper-velocity characters). Total cost: 40 points.

WEAPONMASTER

This character has a powerful weapon (or a set of powers that are weapon-like) and relies on it almost exclusively in combat.

POSSIBLE WEAPONMASTER SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some (but by no means all) of the special effects that can explain Weaponmaster powers include:

- The character acquires his martial skills through intense training and devoted effort.
- The character possesses a magic weapon that tells him what to do in a fight.
- A god of war, such as Odin or Ares, imbues the character with amazing warrior powers.
- As the last surviving member of his species, the character carries within him the combined martial knowledge of his people, programmed into him by his people's greatest scientists before they died.

SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

Like Martial Artists, Weaponmasters have a fairly heavy Skill/Talent focus. The Weaponmaster tends to have a lot of Combat Skill Levels, plus other weapon-related and combat-related skills — Autofire Skills, Defense Maneuver, Fast Draw, Martial Arts, Rapid Attack, Tactics, Teamwork, Weapon Familiarities, Weaponsmith, technical or scientific skills pertaining to the construction or maintenance of the weapon, and so on.

A Weaponmaster will certainly find it helpful to have a *Weapon Permit* Fringe Benefit, particularly if he's often singled out by the authorities for carrying a blatantly illegal weapon ("I don't care if you *are* a member of the Justice Crusaders, lady, you can't go carryin' that pigsticker around on the street!").

Appropriate Talents for Weaponmasters include Combat Luck, Combat Sense, Danger Sense, Deadly Blow, Lightning Reflexes, and (surprise, surprise) Weaponmaster.

POWERS

A Weaponmaster, naturally, uses one or more weapons built with Attack Powers (typically Blast, HA, or Killing Attack). Some focus on a single weapon, perhaps developing multiple maneuvers and abilities that represent different ways to use it. Another category of Weaponmaster is the character whose weapon fires a bewildering variety of ammunition types, some of which are weapons and some of which perform other functions (like establishing swing-lines and climb-lines, acting as signal flares, and so on). These Weaponmasters usually define their weapons with Multipowers (or occasionally other Power Frameworks).

A Weaponmaster's powers don't have to be in a Focus — they could be natural to the character (for example, perhaps he can "generate a spear of life-energy" innately). Focus-based Weaponmasters are, however, far more common.

EXAMPLE WEAPONMASTER POWERS

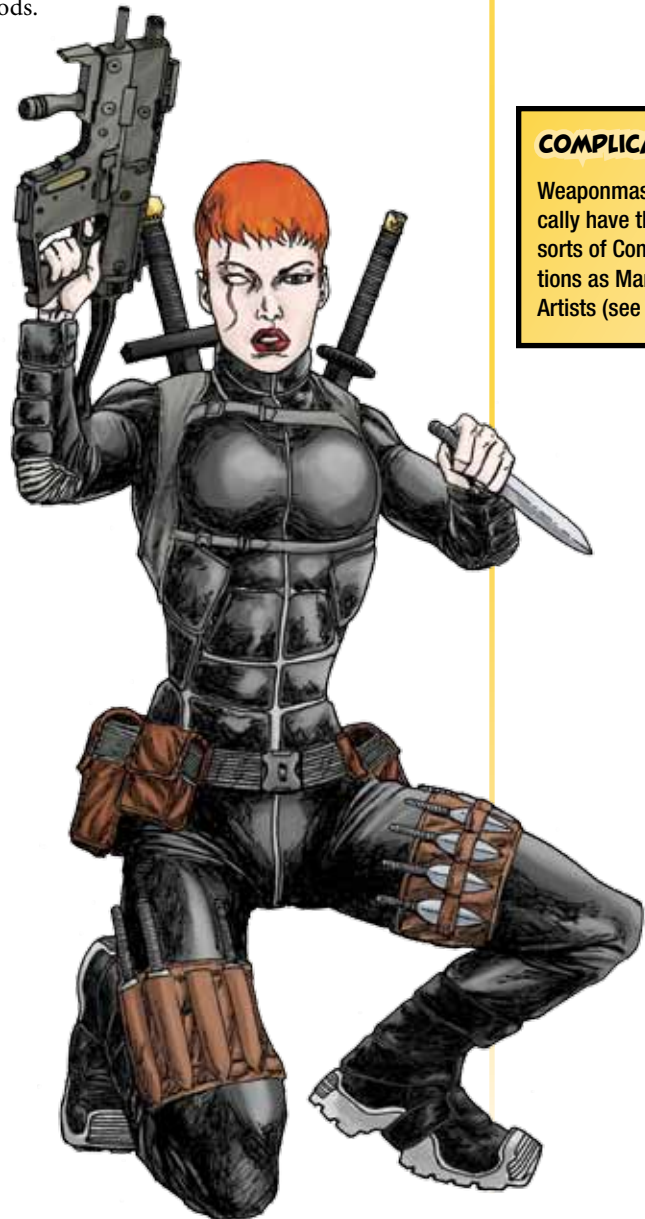
Boomerang: Blast 7d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (52 Active Points); OAF (character must use 1 Combat Skill Level to make boomerang return to his hand in the event of a miss; -1), No Knock-back (-¼), Range Based On STR (-¼). Total cost: 21 points.

Cleaving Through Weak Points: Armor Piercing (+¼) for up to HKA 3d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (16 Active Points); OIF (any sword of opportunity; -½). Total cost: 11 points.

The Enchanted Blade Of Rendrak: HKA 1½d6 (plus STR), Armor Piercing (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (44 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 22 points.

Explosive Arrow: RKA 1d6+1, Area Of Effect (20m Radius Explosion; +½) (30 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 15 points.

See the *Superhero Gallery* in Chapter Five for a sample Weaponmaster character sheet, and *The HERO System Equipment Guide* for a wide variety of weapons from all parts of the world and time periods.



COMPLICATIONS?

Weaponmasters typically have the same sorts of Complications as Martial Artists (see above).

2

META-ARCHETYPES

In addition to the standard archetypes described above, which are defined primarily by the type of powers they have, there's another class of archetypes defined by their nature or background concept. In a sense you could even think of them as broad "special effects" that can explain many types of superhuman powers, or tie together a character concept. They include:

ANTHROPOMORPHIC

An *Anthropomorphic* is an animal with superhuman powers (and a more humanoid than normal body) who puts on a costume and fights crime, or in some cases a human-animal hybrid of some sort. While not common in mainstream comics, they often appear in cartoons, manga, and the like. Examples include Mighty Mouse, Hong Kong Phooey, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, and Darkwing Duck ("Let's get dangerous!").

SKILLS, PERKS, TALENTS, AND POWERS

Aside from the fact that they're sentient, have humanoid bodies, and can speak and act like humans — all of which are pretty impressive, especially in a setting that's not entirely inhabited by anthropomorphic beings — an Anthropomorphic can fit into just about any of the standard archetypes described above. Brick, Martial Artist, and Weaponmaster are common choices, but by no means the only ones. In addition to whatever powers are appropriate to that archetype, an Anthropomorphic may also have abilities that derive from his animal heritage. A bird Anthropomorphic may be able to fly or convincingly imitate voices, a dog Anthropomorphic could perhaps track his foes by scent, and so on.

COMPLICATIONS

An Anthropomorphic's animal stock may provide ideas for potential Complications (or his animal nature may simply be fodder for humor during game play). For example, a dog Anthropomorphic might be easily distracted by meat or other delicious foods, while a cat Anthropomorphic might be afraid of getting wet (both Psychological Complications).

EXAMPLE ANTHROPOMORPHIC POWERS

Bloodhound's Nose: +2 to PER Rolls with the Smell/Taste Group and Tracking for Normal Smell. Total cost: 9 points.

Delphine/Vesperine Sonar: Active Sonar. Total cost: 15 points.

Leathery Hide/Shell/Tough Skin: Resistant (+½) for 6 PD/6 ED. Total cost: 6 points.

Monkey's Tail: Extra Limb (1), Inherent (+¼) (6 Active Points); Limited Manipulation (-¼). Total cost: 5 points.

COSMIC

An archetype primarily found in the Galactic Champions subgenre, the *Cosmic* character typically possesses great power of the "cosmic power" variety described on page 46, though it manifests in ways resembling a standard archetype (Cosmic characters are often Bricks or Energy Projectors). He usually spends a lot of time in space, or at least has the capability to exist there (*i.e.*, total Life Support, lots of Movement Powers). He may serve as a true Space God (page 47) in some capacity, be a Space God who's lost most of his powers for some reason, or be a former non-Cosmic character somehow elevated to Cosmic status. (Characters who are true Space Gods are best suited to be NPCs or villains, not Player Characters.)

TYPES OF COSMICS

Cosmics tend to fall into one of several categories. The first is the *concept- or theme-based* Cosmic, who embodies some idea, phenomenon, or subject. Examples might include Entropy, Time, Death, Life, Order, or anything else of "cosmic" importance that's not entirely quantifiable in scientific terms. In addition to the usual suite of Cosmic abilities (see below), the concept Cosmic has lots of powers specifically related to his theme. For instance, an Entropy Cosmic might have an unmatched ability to make things unravel, decay, come apart, or grind to a halt.

The second type of Cosmic is the *obsessed* Cosmic. His powers could come from many different sources; what sets him apart is how he uses them. He has an obsessive interest in some subject or practice — Art, Competition, Starships, galactic conquest, or the like — and uses his powers to study it, obtain it, perform it, or the like. For example, a Cosmic obsessed with planets might start his own collection of intriguing worlds, while one who's obsessed with learning would journey from civilization to civilization to study each one's ways and lore. This type of Cosmic is more commonly a villain (or at least antagonist), since PCs usually need to have broader interests and a more flexible outlook.

Third, some Cosmics may actually be *gods* of a species or sphere of authority. This makes the most sense in a campaign that features mysticism, but in more science-oriented campaigns the gods might simply be Cosmics whom lesser beings once worshipped. Like concept Cosmics, gods tend to have lots of powers based on whatever they represent — a god of birds can do anything associated with avians, while one of speed has better Movement Powers than anyone else.

Last but not least, some Cosmics are *survivors*. Immortal if not eternal, they've survived some cataclysm — the extinction of their species, the destruction of their universe in a Big Bang-type event, or the like — and as a result have emerged with cosmic powers. They often place great importance on their continued survival, and may perform what others consider villainous acts to ensure their lives go on as they have for uncounted eons.

SKILLS, PERKS, TALENTS, AND POWERS

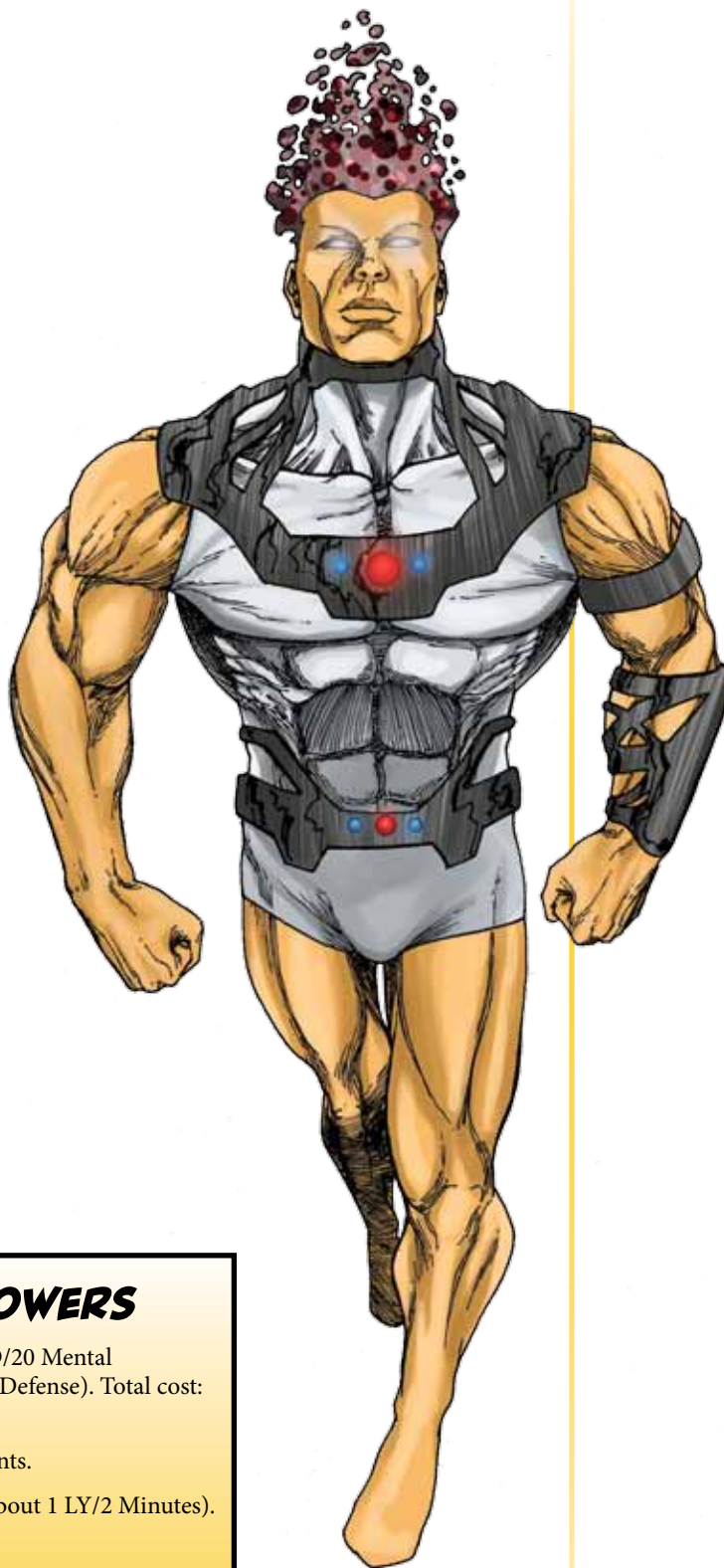
Cosmics are incredibly powerful, and their abilities can range all across the spectrum of superpowers, magic, and anything else you can think of. But they do tend to have certain powers in common. First and foremost among these is total Life Support (including Longevity: Immortality); they can withstand phenomena deadly to mortals, and can exist without discomfort in space. Similarly, they tend to be pretty tough, with lots of Defense Powers to keep them safe. Second, they usually have a vast array of Enhanced Senses; it's difficult to hide things from them. To represent the breadth and depth of their other powers, and to save players and GM the trouble of having to create dozens or hundreds of individual abilities for them, Cosmics often have Variable Power Pools (usually with the *Cosmic* (+2) Advantage so they can change them effortlessly; see 6E1 411).

COMPLICATIONS

Cosmically-powerful beings often have cosmically troublesome flaws. Some have few or no Complications as a way of representing just how mighty they truly are, while others lead as complicated an existence as any lovelorn, enemy-plagued mortal.

The most common Complication for Cosmics is Psychological Complication. Concept Cosmics often have a duty to protect whatever they embody, or to forward its cause somehow. Similarly, a god may have to protect his worshippers or oversee whatever it is that he's the god of. An obsessed Cosmic by definition has an unusually strong interest in something, with the Psychological Complications to match.

Beyond Psychological Complication, many possibilities exist. A Cosmic could have another Cosmic as an enemy (Hunted) or Rival. His need for some unusual form of sustenance might qualify as a Dependence (though the GM should monitor this carefully, since most characters have to eat and don't get a Disadvantage because of it).



EXAMPLE COSMIC POWERS

Cosmic Form: Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED/20 Mental Defense/20 Power Defense/20 Sight Group Flash Defense). Total cost: 150 points.

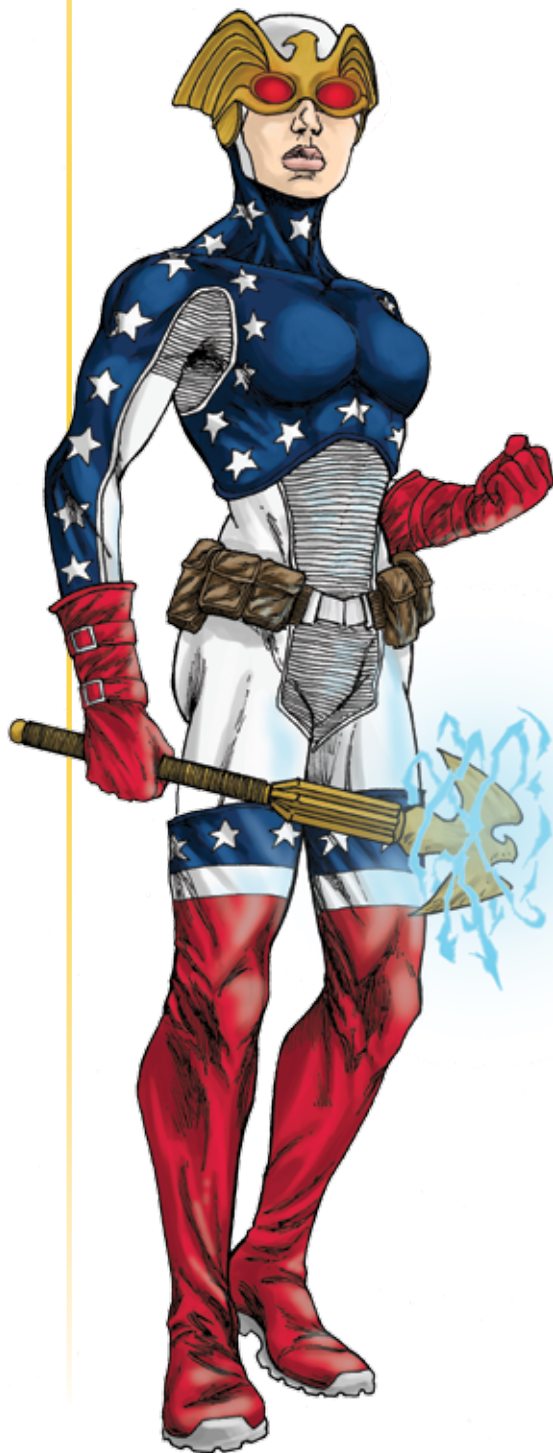
Cosmic Lightning: Blast 20d6. Total cost: 100 points.

Cosmic Travel: FTL Travel (250,000 LY/year, or about 1 LY/2 Minutes). Total cost: 46 points.

Solar Flare: Sight Group Flash 12d6, Area Of Effect (30m Radius; +1) (120 Active Points); No Range (-½). Total cost: 80 points.

DETECTIVE

The Detective is a character who specializes in using more or less traditional methods of investigation (criminalistics, criminology, interrogation, deduction, and forensic analysis) to fight crime. Typically (though not always) he possesses few or no superpowers, preferring to rely on his Skills, his intellect, and various devices or gadgets to keep up with his truly superhuman colleagues. Most Detectives are a combination of Martial Artist, Weaponmaster, and/or Gadgeteer — Batman being the classic example. But it's certainly possible for a Detective to have superpowers; the Elongated Man and Daredevil could both be considered to belong to this meta-archetype, for example.



SKILLS, PERKS, TALENTS, AND POWERS

Detectives rely heavily on Skills. The most prominent are Concealment, Criminology, Deduction, Forensic Medicine, Interrogation, Lockpicking, Security Systems, Stealth, and Streetwise; other common choices include Computer Programming, Electronics, various Interaction Skills, Climbing, and Contortionist. Similarly, they tend to favor Perks (particularly Contacts) and Talents. If they don't possess true superpowers they usually have an arsenal of gadgets to make up for the lack: guns; throwing blades; armored costumes; swinglines; billy clubs; utility belts; and many more.

COMPLICATIONS

Detectives are often brooding, vengeance-driven souls with a thirst for Justice and a willingness to go further than most other costumed heroes to see that it's done. They tend to have Psychological Complications representing these major facets of their personalities... and unlike their more four-color compatriots they may not have a Code Versus Killing (though in a mainstream Champions campaign they're rarely true killers — they just recognize that in some situations lethal force is the only reasonable response). Their attitudes and sometimes-brutal methods may cause them to acquire Hunteds or Negative Reputations.

PATRIOT

The Patriot is a character who deliberately embodies traits that his nation finds especially admirable, and chooses to represent that nation in a symbolic way. Alternately, he may embody some other concept, belief system, religion, philosophy, or principle, one not necessarily related to nationalistic fervor. Patriots often acquire their powers through service to that which they represent (they suffer a radiation accident while serving in the military, volunteer for a "superhuman soldier" project, or the like).

SKILLS, PERKS, TALENTS, AND POWERS

Patriots are archetypes only in a symbolic sense (though that's still important, especially in a genre where symbolism is often so prominent). There's no standard set of abilities most Patriot characters possess; their powers tend to emulate or reflect whatever the character embodies (making it possible for other characters to predict their abilities in many cases). Patriot characters most often belong to the standard archetypes Brick and Martial Artist, but others are certainly possible. For example, when you go beyond nationalism to Patriots who embody religions or philosophies, Mystic and Mentalist Patriots work well.

COMPLICATIONS

There are two types of Patriots — Heroic and Villainous. A Heroic Patriot displays the most virtuous traits of his nation; a Villainous one displays the nastiest. Heroic Patriots are likely to have Complication such as:

Psychological Complication: Code Of The Hero or Honorable: See page 108.

Psychological Complication: Overprotective Of (Class of People) (Uncommon, Strong; 10 points): A Patriot with this Psychological Complication feels a special kinship with or responsibility for one specific category of people — women, children, computer nerds, teachers and child-care personnel, and so on, particularly if they're a subset of the nation he represents. The presence of this Complication means the character will be extra-diligent about protecting this type of person and unusually outraged when this type of person is harmed, endangered, or even insulted.

Villainous Patriots are likely to have Complications such as:

Psychological Complication: Racist (Very Common, Strong; 20 points): The character chooses only to represent one race of a multiracial national population, and is happy to oppress or even kill members of other races. A character known to be a Racist may also have a Negative Reputation reflecting that fact.

Psychological Complication: Superpatriot (Common, Total; 20 points): The character believes in his nation, right or wrong, to such an extent he can acknowledge no faults. When his nation's interests or government conflicts in any way with any other, he considers his nation to be 100% correct and will enforce his nation's wishes without question.

Either type of Patriot may have *Social Complication: Subject To Orders* if he's a part of his nation's military.

TIME TRANSPLANTS

Although it's not exactly an archetype, one type of character who usually makes an appearance at least once or twice in highly-developed comic books universes is the *Time Transplant* — a character who's "out of place" in time for some reason and has to adjust to being a hero in the modern day. The classic example is Marvel's Captain America, who's frozen in an iceberg at the end of World War II and then revived in the Silver Age (or in *The Ultimates*, in the Iron Age) and has to cope with being part of a world that's not quite the same as the one he left. Other examples tend to involve characters who travel *back* in time from the future and either get trapped in the present day, decide they like it here and stay, or have some mission to perform in modern times to preserve the integrity of the timestream and their future world. (Captain Chronos in the Champions Universe falls into this category.)

A Time Transplant can belong to any standard archetype and/or meta-archetype; no one type of character has a monopoly on the concept (though characters who voluntarily travel through time do tend to be scientists and Gadgeteers). Future-to-past Time Transplants often have powers involving advanced future technology, which may in turn provide the GM with a plot device to exploit — what happens if the tech "gets loose" and becomes common in the modern day? Does that irrevocably change future history... or is it in fact necessary for future history to proceed as it's supposed to?

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EXAMPLE PATRIOT POWERS

Dada Fugue: The Avant Guard, living embodiment of dadaist, abstract, and surreal art, can inflict his unusual viewpoint upon others, temporarily confusing the hell out of them.

Drain INT 6d6 (60 Active Points); Requires An Oratory Roll (-½). Total cost: 40 points.

Justice-Sight: Justicar, a hero possessed by a Spirit of Justice who grants him crimefighting powers, has the ability to discern criminal culpability.

Detect Criminal Culpability Or Intent (PER Roll) (no Sense Group), Discriminatory, Analyze, Range. Total cost: 20 points.

Let Freedom Ring: Captain Liberty, the national hero of the United States, can affect his foe with the sound of the Liberty Bell ringing when he throws a punch.

Hearing Group Flash 10d6 (30 Active Points); No Range (-½), Linked (to Punch; -½). Total cost: 15 points.

Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite: Tricolor, the national hero of France, can split into three separate selves, each with powers reflecting one of the qualities of the French motto, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

Duplication (creates two 350-point Duplicates), Altered Duplicates (100%; +1) (150 Active Points); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½). Total cost: 100 points.

EXAMPLE ROBOT POWERS

Cyberkinetic Override: The advanced computers built into the Robot's head are so powerful they can take control of similar systems, but the Robot has to physically interface with (touch) the machine.

Mind Control 12d6 (Machine class of minds) (60 Active Points); No Range (-½). Total cost: 40 points.

Emotionless: The Robot cannot experience emotions, and thus is basically immune to powers that involve manipulating emotions.

Mental Defense (40 points) (40 Active Points); Only To Protect Against Emotion-Based Powers (-2). Total cost: 13 points.

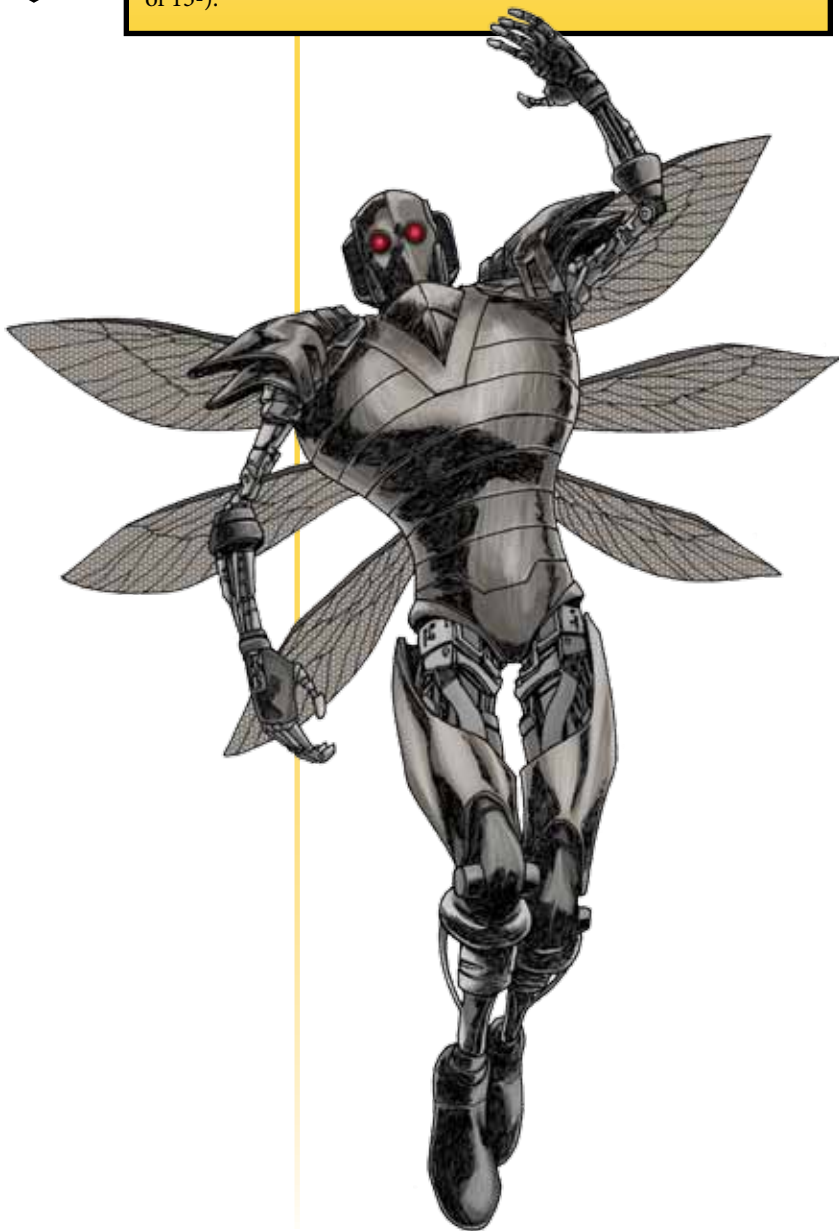
Robotic Form: The Robot's body is made from materials that are far more durable than mere flesh and bone.

+18 PD/+18 ED (total of 20 each) (total cost: 36 points) *plus* Resistant (+½) for 20 PD/20 ED (total cost: 20 points). Total cost: 56 points.

Voice Synthesizer: The Robot's vocal systems and programming allow him to imitate any voice or similar sound.

Mimicry 20-. Total cost: 17 points (assumes base INT roll of 13-).

2



ROBOT/ANDROID

A *Robot* is a superhuman who's not actually human — he's an artificial person. (An *Android* is just a robot that looks much more human-like, and may even be indistinguishable from an ordinary human to casual inspection.) His flesh is actually a plastic composite, his blood is hydraulic fluid, his nerves electronic wiring. But despite that, he's driven (through programming or compassion) to act heroically and protect humans.

From a broader perspective, you can expand the concept of "Robot" to "Artificial Beings" in general. A character who's a golem, for example, fits this meta-archetype (though some of the technology-related comments below might not apply; instead he'd probably have mystic abilities). An undead being who breaks free from the control of his evil, necromantic creator and becomes a hero could also be thought of as a sort of "Robot."

SKILLS, PERKS, TALENTS, AND POWERS

Since they usually have super-tech computer brains, Robots can have all sorts of Skills. Lots of Knowledge Skills and Science Skills are highly appropriate, as are technology-related Skills like Computer Programming, Electronics, Mechanics, and Systems Operation.

In terms of Talents, Robots often have a generous selection of them to represent the advanced functions of their computer brains: Absolute Time Sense; Eidetic Memory; Lightning Calculator; Speed Reading; Universal Translator; and more. A Robot that can put itself into a "dormant" mode might buy that as Simulate Death.

A Robot's non-organic form is a valid special effect for all sorts of powers (in fact, for purposes of "realism" and verisimilitude, the GM may *require* him to buy certain powers). Since he's not subject to the needs of the flesh, he should have plenty of Life Support (often Total LS), and because he's built of materials that are a lot more durable than flesh and bone he's probably got some Resistant Defense (potentially quite a lot of it). His body can have all sorts of gadgets or devices built into it. Examples include all sorts of Enhanced Senses, Flight (jets built into his feet), Blast and other Attack Powers (built-in weaponry), Mental Powers that affect the Machine class of minds, and robotic musculature (high STR). Going beyond that, since super-technology can do nearly anything, you could give a Robot such advanced systems as intangibility circuits (Desolidification), extendable servoes (Stretching, only on the arms), and shape transformation into various devices and vehicles (Multiform).

COMPLICATIONS

A Robot's Complications depend in part on exactly what sort of synthetic being he is, and how his internal systems work, but here are a few examples to consider:

Physical Complication: Affected As Human And Machine Classes Of Minds (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing; 10 points): The Robot's computer brain is so advanced that not only can it be affected by Mental Powers that apply to the Machine class of minds, it's also subject to the effects of Mental Powers that affect Human minds.

Psychological Complication: Cannot Feel Emotions (Uncommon, Moderate; 5 points): The Robot's programming doesn't encompass emotions. He doesn't feel them and generally can't quite understand them on anything but a purely intellectual or scientific level. This means he suffers penalties to most Interaction Skill rolls, and even to some PER Rolls or other rolls where emotion is strongly involved in some way.

Psychological Complication: Yearns To Be Human (Uncommon, Moderate; 5 points): Despite the advantages of his artificial body, the Robot wants to be human. He wants to understand what it is to feel pain, to experience emotions (he should also have *Cannot Feel Emotions* in most cases), to be a part of the human condition. He goes out of his way to try to comprehend and mingle with humanity... usually with results that are both humorous and poignant.

NOT USING ARCHETYPES

Naturally, players aren't required to base their characters around the classic comic book archetypes. Many Champions campaigns are better if they include some characters unique to them. Non-archetype characters might include: a hero with the ability to chemically affect a victim's body (combining some of the characteristics of the Energy Projector, the Mentalist, and the Mystic); a hero with enhanced animal traits (combining some of the characteristics of the Brick, the Martial Artist, and the Metamorph), a hero who simulates the powers of supers he's recently been in contact with (technically a Metamorph, but practically speaking he combines traits from all the archetypes); and a crusading vigilante with a wide variety of skills and abilities (combining some of the characteristics of the Gadgeteer, the Martial Artist, and/or the Weaponmaster).

Similarly, players shouldn't feel restricted by the explanations of archetypes — they should base new characters on those archetypes if they feel inspired by them, and ignore them otherwise. If a player has a different take on a particular archetype or power than what's described above, he should build to his own preferences. Archetypes aren't supposed to be straitjackets; they're intended as inspiration and guidance only.





MORE POWERFUL THAN A LOCOMOTIVE: CREATING SUPER- HERO CHARACTERS

With the advice from this book and the *HERO System 6th Edition* rulebook in mind, you should find it easy to construct the superhero you want to play. Here are a few ideas and examples to help you build just the right hero. You'll probably also want to refer to the *Superhero Archetypes* section (beginning on page 76) for additional ideas.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

Here's some general advice to help you conceive and design your character:

CAMPAIGN STANDARDS

Find out what the campaign standards are likely to be — and then double-check on them after all the PCs have been built. The GM should have an idea of what the campaign standards are for character power levels, CVs, SPD, and other factors will be when the campaign starts. The PCs will be built or modified based on that estimation. Once all the characters are built, the players should have an opportunity to revise their characters if they're too far out of line, particularly if their DEX and SPD scores are well below those of their fellow players. Having a comparatively low DEX or a SPD that's 2 or more lower than that of the other PCs leaves a player feeling frustrated and useless when combat occurs. On the other hand, if one character's "schtick" is having a high SPD, the GM should try to ensure that no other PC steps on his toes by coming too close to his SPD.

SCALING BACK

Prepare to have to scale your character back. When using the *HERO System* rules to create a character you've imagined, or to duplicate a character from the comic books, players often discover the character costs too much — they can't build him as envisioned with the Total Points available. This is normal, since comics writers don't have to justify things with points, and many published superheroes have years (or decades) of experience (and, in game terms, earned Experience Points). Be prepared to build your character at a lesser level of power or versatility to begin with, and then improve to that preferred level by spending Experience Points.

CONSIDER SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

The natural inclination of most Champions players is to focus on Powers, which is what most PCs spend the majority of their Character Points on. But don't overlook the Skills, Perks, and Talents. These low-cost game elements permit characters to do a lot of entertaining and interesting things, often functioning as low-level powers and giving characters many points of distinction.

CONSIDER "UTILITY POWERS"

It's easy to concentrate on Attack, Defense, and Movement Powers to the exclusion of all others, but it's often the others that give a character his distinctive identity. Don't forget about Enhanced Senses, Life Support, and other esoteric Powers. Sometimes just a few points in one of these Powers can really add flavor to a character... or save his bacon in an unusual situation.

COMPARE ATTACKS TO DEFENSES

Compare your characters' average attacks to the campaign's average defenses to determine if he's going to be effective (but not unbalancingly so) in combat — see 6E1 30 or 6E2 285-86 for more information. The GM should also evaluate characters this way. A player would definitely appreciate knowing, for instance, that "Your character can probably last a few Phases in HTH Combat with the average supervillain, but he's not likely to win; he should be able to Knock Out a talented normal martial artist in two or three Phases; and he's nothing more than a one-shot target to someone like Doctor Demolisher."

BEWARE COMPLICATED POWER FRAMEWORKS

There's definitely a temptation to use Multipowers (and Variable Power Pools) to construct a character who can do everything. But this is bad for two reasons. First, characters who can do everything irritate characters who can't do everything, and make life harder for the GM. Second, complicated Multipowers take too much time to manage during combat; the player's constantly comparing slots to available Active Points, comparing Fixed slots to Variable slots, constantly adjusting things... and slowing down the game.

The same applies, to an even greater extent, to many Variable Power Pools. So, if you use these Power Frameworks, construct them in a reasonable manner so they enhance game play rather than detract from it.

VISUAL AND PERSONAL STYLE

Before, during, or after you've settled on the character's point-based traits, you should also settle on the character's visual and personal attributes. Design the character's superhero name, his costume, his appearance; settle in your mind details such as how he moves, how he interacts with others, whether he's "on" all the time or he reverts to his true personality when the cameras go away; whether he speaks with a distinctive accent (and whether it's the same accent from identity to identity); whether his body language changes from identity to identity; and so on. Once established in your mind, all these details let you roleplay the character with greater authenticity, and let others interact with him in a more natural way.

SUGGESTED GAME ELEMENTS

Most *HERO System* genre books have a lengthy section that reviews Skills, Perks, Talents, Powers, Power Modifiers, and Complications, describing ones that are particularly appropriate, or discussing optional modifications and variants that apply to that genre. *Champions* is different, primarily because Superheroes is such a wide-ranging genre that virtually *anything* is possible — so the full *HERO System* character creation rules almost always apply, and apply in just about any way you care to use them. (Additionally, the *Sixth Edition* core rulebooks and this book contain dozens of example powers and abilities for superheroes.) So, this section is a fairly short one, containing just a few additional suggestions on various game elements that are particularly common to, or stereotypical of, the superhero genre.

CHARACTERISTICS

The Superheroes genre is one of few where truly high Characteristic scores are common, even expected. Bricks routinely have STRs in the 40-90 range, DEXs of 20 and above are often the norm (particularly with Speedsters and acrobatic heroes), and so on.

In some *Champions* campaigns, high Characteristics tend to be the norm. Simply "having superpowers" is more than enough justification for a character to buy, say, a 20 STR, 20 CON, or 23 DEX even though his main powers don't

necessarily have anything to do with physical fitness or agility. To many gamers this also makes a lot of sense from a dramatic standpoint. If you're playing a superhero, you want to play a *superhero*. If your character isn't generally faster, tougher, and better than a soldier or athlete, why not just play a Special Forces military campaign or some other type of game? Being a superhero is all about being better and more powerful than ordinary humans in nearly every way.

On the other hand, in some campaigns the GM may prefer to take a more "realistic" approach. In this case, characters can only buy Characteristics with high values if they can justify it based on the special effects of their powers. For example, in this sort of campaign, only Speedsters and their ilk are likely to have DEX scores above 18 or so. Characters whose powers don't bear some relationship to DEX are limited to what a well-trained human could have (usually no more than DEX 14-15). In short, just "being superhuman" isn't a sufficient justification for spending a lot of points on a Characteristic in these campaigns.

SKILLS

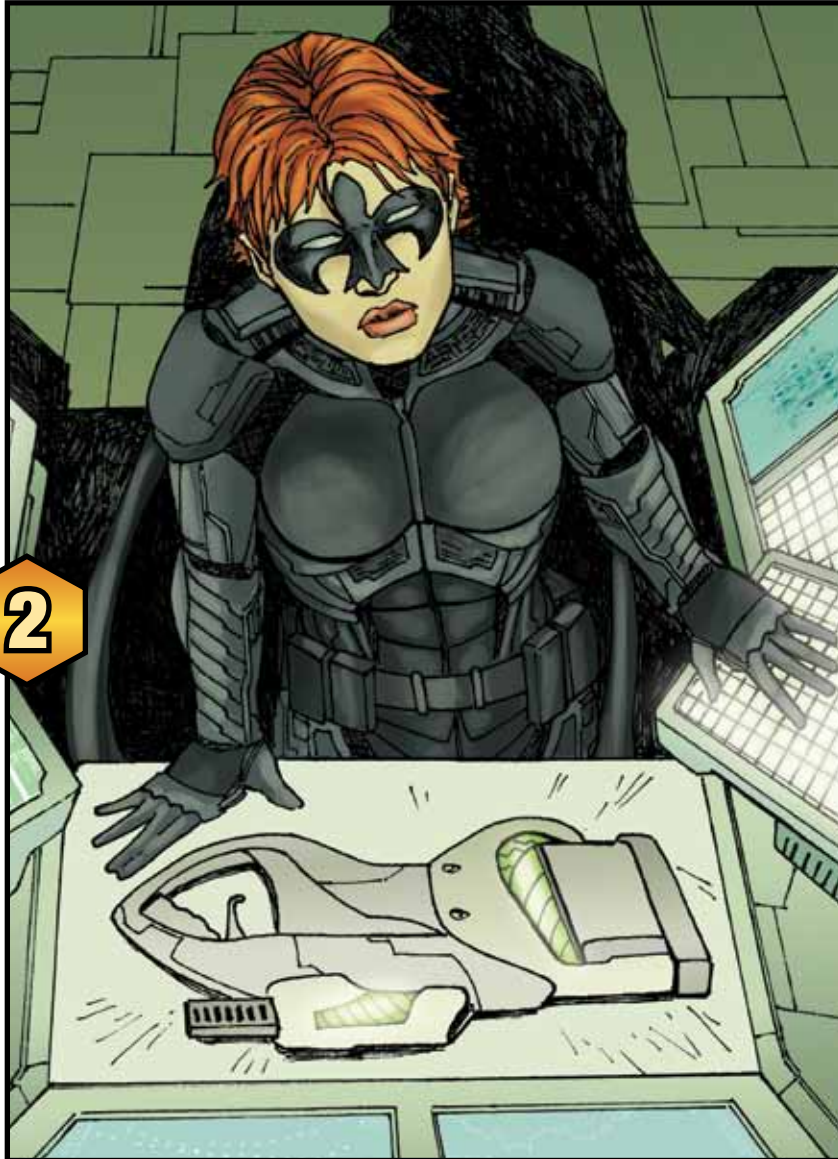
Here are some notes on Skills and Skill options that are particularly useful for Superheroes games. You may also want to check the APG and *The Ultimate Skill* for additional information and options about Skills.

Remember that a *HERO System* Skill doesn't necessarily have to indicate a learned ability. That's the most common "special effect" for them, but it's not the *only* possible one. A Skill is a game element like any other and can be defined as having whatever special effect the player and GM consider appropriate. For example, if a character wants to have the power to be really sneaky and hard to notice, but not impossible, rather than buying that as a Limited form of Invisibility, he might buy Stealth with a high Skill Roll (and perhaps the Limitation *Costs Endurance*). A Metamorph who can ooze his malleable fingers into locks to manipulate them easily could buy Lockpicking.

SKILL MODIFIERS

Accomplishing the impossible is a routine thing in *Champions*, a genre where characters can fly under their own power, become harder than diamond, or move objects with pure mental power. With that in mind, GMs should go easy on negative Skill Modifiers. Characters who rely on Skills as much as (or more than) Powers should have the same opportunity to shine, and that's hard to do if the GM gets "realistic" with the penalties just because a character's trying to defuse a bomb while hanging upside down from a moving helicopter during a thunderstorm.





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SKILL COMBINATIONS

In games where the GM doesn't want characters to have to spend too many points on Skills, or where Skills aren't especially important most of the time, the GM should consider implementing the Skill Combinations rules from APG 18-19. If he sets the cost of each Skill Combination at a low level (like 3-5 Character Points each), it's easy for any character to be pretty skilled at a wide variety of activities. This is particularly appropriate for Skill-heavy characters like Detectives (see page 94) so they can have a lot of Skills but still have enough Character Points left over to be competitive with their more Power-oriented brethren in combat.

ACROBATICS

The optional "Bouncing" rules on APG 34-35 are highly appropriate for city-based Champions adventures — in fact, they're practically tailor-made for superheroes. They add a lot of fun to the game, so GMs should make sure to include lots of bouncable surfaces on the battlefield.

CRIMINOLOGY, FORENSIC MEDICINE

Along with Deduction and Streetwise, these are the classic Skills of the Detective meta-archetype. Comics, television shows, and movies that revolve around forensic science and investigation are plentiful, giving GMs plenty of sources to draw inspiration from when they want to work criminalistics into an adventure.

While super-technology may make using these Skills easier (imagine, for example, a mystical or rubber science scanner that can instantly ascertain the time of death with pinpoint accuracy, or a Shrinking character who can examine trace evidence that's as large as his body), superpowers could also complicate a coroner's job tremendously. For example, what traces, if any, are left by a Drain BODY used to kill a victim? Are the burns left by one type of energy beam the same as those left by another?

DEDUCTION

APG 37 has an extended discussion of ways to use and manage Deduction in your game to keep it from becoming either overwhelmingly effective or virtually useless. Gamemasters with Detective characters in their games should consider using those rules.

CHAMPIONS KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

The following KSs are particularly appropriate for Champions:

KS: Superheroes or Supervillains: This KS represents knowledge of one class of superhumans (the good guys or the bad guys). It includes what their powers (and sometimes weaknesses) are and how they function, where they congregate, who belongs to what team, which supers are archenemies or staunch allies, and so forth. Unlike KS: Superhuman World, it doesn't include cultural information about superhumanity; KS: Superheroes(villains) is limited primarily to the sort of data law enforcement organizations and governments would track about superhumans.

KS: The Superhuman World: In many campaigns, superhumans form their own unique subculture. They tend to spend social time together (often in special places), have romances only with other superhumans, and so forth. Normal humans often find it difficult to penetrate this world, lacking as they do the "membership card" — superpowers.

KS: The Superhuman World represents knowledge of the superhuman culture. A person with it knows about different superhumans, what their powers (and sometimes weaknesses) are and how they function, where they congregate, who belongs to what team, who various superhumans are romantically involved with, which supers are archenemies or staunch allies, the history of superhumanity, and so forth. It's a common Skill not only among superhumans themselves, but their die-hard fans as well (though a fan may not have the really good "insider information," such as the name and location of the secret superhumans-only nightclub).

KS: Superpowers: A character with this Skill has a special knowledge of the various types of superpowers in the campaign. He may have gained this knowledge through experience, study, or experimentation. He knows what types of superpowers are common and which are rare, the nature or origin of various types of powers, potential ways to counteract some powers, and so on. It's a common Skill for scientists studying superhuman phenomena as well as for supers themselves.

NAVIGATION

The *Dimensional Navigation* subskill, mentioned on 6E1 83, is appropriate for Champions games featuring dimension-hopping mystics, invaders from Dimension Zeta, and the like.

PARAMEDICS

In a Superhero setting, with its bizarre super-science and weird mix of all possible types of characters, a PC with Paramedics may encounter all sorts of unusual problems. How do you give a shot to a character with super-dense skin that can bounce bullets? How do you provide IV drugs to a character who doesn't have a standard circulatory system? Typically characters get around these difficulties by using super-medical science to create medical tools specifically for use on superhumans (such as ultra-sharp questionite needles that can penetrate even Grond's skin), but the GM may impose penalties of -1 to -3 based on the circumstances, the victim's unusual physiology, and so forth.

POWER

The *Power* Skill gets used in more ways in Champions campaigns than in games set in just about any other genre, due to the wide variety of powers superhumans possess. Some of the more common forms it takes include: Gadgeteering; Magic; [Special Effect] Powers (the name changes based on the special effect of the character's powers — Fire Powers, Weather Powers, and so on); Speedster Tricks (also called "Speed Stunts"); Strength Tricks (also called "Brick Tricks"); and Stretching Stunts.

USING POWER

Power serves several related functions. First, it may act as a Required Skill Roll for abilities the GM rules must have a Skill Roll to function, or which take the *Requires A Roll* Limitation.

Second, Power can simulate a character's level of skill with a particular power, ability, or attack. Characters who make appropriate Power rolls can perform "tricks" or do unusual things with their powers. For example, a "brick" in a comic book superhero campaign might buy Power as *Strength Tricks* and use it to etch a message into hardened steel without breaking the steel or hurting himself. In some cases the GM may even allow characters who succeed with Power rolls to manifest entirely new powers, enhance the powers they've already got, or significantly alter the way one

of their powers works. This is the most common and fruitful way to use it in many Champions campaigns.

Third, Power provides a justification for a character using saved Experience Points to buy a new ability in mid-game. If a character senses a need for a new power that's reasonably closely related to his existing powers, the GM can allow him to make a *Power* roll. If the roll succeeds, he can spend the Experience Points on the power and start using it right away. If it fails he cannot, or can only spend half or less of what he wanted to spend, or can buy the power but not use it at full effect yet.

The Base Time for using Power is a Half Phase, but the GM can reduce it to a Zero Phase Action if appropriate.

CONTROLLING POWER

The *Power* Skill can be an amazingly versatile tool that adds a lot of fun to a Champions game, but the GM should control it carefully. Power isn't a cheap substitute for a Variable Power Pool, and shouldn't be used as one (unless that's what the GM wants). It's intended to give characters greater flexibility and the GM a way to keep the story moving forward in a dramatically appropriate fashion without worrying about whether a character has spent Character Points for every single possible application of his powers. How far a character can go with Power usually depends on the type of campaign the GM's running.

In Lower- Or Average-Powered Games: In low-powered or "typical" Champions campaigns, the GM keeps tighter control on what Power can do. Characters shouldn't use Power to provide Advantages for their Powers or to overcome Limitations (except in rare circumstances), nor should it provide bonuses in combat. Characters who want to perform a particular "trick" or "power stunt" frequently should pay Character Points for it (especially if it has an effect on combat). For example, the GM might let a character with *Strength Tricks* make a roll and use his awesome STR to squeeze coal so hard it turns into diamond (a type of Transform) — once. If he wants to do it repeatedly, he should buy it as a separate ability.

As a suggested guideline, the GM should examine the pregenerated abilities found in published *HERO System* books, such as this book or *Champions Powers* (in some campaigns the GM may have his own lists of pre-generated superpowers he can use for this purpose). A character with an appropriate form of the *Power* Skill who succeeds with a Skill Roll can create an effect with no more than *thirty percent* of the Active Points of any of the listed abilities. Any Advantages on an ability still apply to the Power-created ability, and must fit within the Active Point total; any Limitations on the ability also apply to the Power-created ability, but do not reduce the cost or somehow make it easier for the character to create.



If this isn't enough to get at least 1-2d6 of power or some similar quantifiable level of effect, the GM can allow the character to access more Active Points. However, he may impose a penalty on the roll (such as -1 per additional 1-10%) or any other restrictions he deems appropriate.

Example: Firelord wants to create “rings of fire” around a thug to keep the thug from running away. Unfortunately, he doesn't have a “Fiery Prison” power that would allow him to do that. He decides to try to achieve the effect (an RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (Radius Cage)) with his Fire Tricks 13-. Unfortunately, ten percent of the 60 Active Points in the Fiery Prison power the GM uses in the campaign is only 6 points — not much, given the Advantages on the power. He asks the GM to allow him to go to about 40%, or 26 points — enough for an RKA 1d6 with Constant and Area Of Effect (2m Radius). The GM agrees, but imposes a -4 penalty on his Skill Roll. Firelord rolls an 8, making it by one even with the penalty. Assuming Firelord can succeed with an Attack Roll to hit the thug, the thug will find himself trapped in rings of flame!

If the character doesn't necessarily need more than ten percent of the Active Points to achieve a worthwhile effect, but wants to access more of the points for some reason, he may do so, but at the GM's option must apply to the ability at least -½ worth of Limitations per +1-10% Active Points in addition to any Limitations listed in the ability's writeup. These extra Limitations cannot include Requires A Skill Roll, since the character has to make a Skill Roll with his Power Skill to do this in the first place. Limitations like Concentration, Extra Time, Increased Endurance Cost, and Side Effects are the most appropriate, but they're not necessarily the only applicable ones.

Example: Hydro needs to get the passengers on a burning yacht to safety quickly, but unfortunately he doesn't have the Water Walkway power (which lets people walk on water without sinking). Ten percent of the Active Points in Water Walkway is a measly 2.4 points, only enough to grant Flight 2m to one person. He decides to try to achieve a Flight 6m, Usable Simultaneously (up to four people at once; +¾) effect. That takes 10 Active Points, or about 40% of the full Active Points in Water Walkway. That means he needs to add -1½ worth of Limitations to the power — -½ worth for each 10% above 10%. He decides on Concentration (0 DCV, applies throughout as long as people are using the power; -1) and Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½). That really leaves him vulnerable to attack by whoever set the yacht on fire, but it's worth it to get these people to safety!

High-Powered Games: In some campaigns, the guidelines above are too restrictive — the GM wants characters to have even more flexibility, combats to be more free-wheeling, and powers to be even more spectacular. In that case the GM should consider some or all of the following, more open, guidelines:

- A character who succeeds with a Power roll can alter *all* of the Active Points in a power, but cannot increase them. For example, he could convert a Blast 12d6 (60 Active Points) into a Blast 8d6, Double Knockback (60 Active Points), but not into a Blast 10d6, Double Knockback (75 Active Points).
- A character who succeeds with a Power roll can create an entirely new power of the same special effect as one of his other powers, but with no more Active Points than the most similar power he has with the smallest number of Active Points. (Typically this is most appropriate for characters who have a lot of powers built around a common, easily-identifiable special effect, such as “Fire Powers” or “Weather Control.”)
- A character who succeeds with a Power roll can add up to a +½ worth of Advantages to an existing power, or remove up to -½ worth of Limitations. (Calculate the END cost based on the “Active Points” after any additional Advantages are applied; the GM may even want to “convert” any Limitation removed into an equivalent value “Advantage,” on the grounds that it's difficult and tiring to overcome one's weaknesses this way.)

Another possible change for Power for higher-powered campaigns is to make it an Everyman Skill (or perhaps give every character a free Proficiency with it). That way every character has *some* ability to alter his powers or develop new ones “on the fly,” and characters who want to be really good at it can purchase the full Skill.

POWER AND HEROIC ACTION POINTS

In campaigns that use the Heroic Action Point rules (6E2 287), the GM can employ them as a substitute for, or supplement to, the Power Skill.

One way to do this is to replace Power with HAPs (at least for purposes of altering existing powers or creating new ones; it would remain in the rules for use as a Required Roll and the like). Instead of requiring a character to succeed with a Power roll to manipulate one of his powers, the GM could require him to spend HAPs. The cost would depend on the nature of the campaign. For more high-powered, less restrictive games, a single HAP would be enough to accomplish anything the Power Skill can accomplish. For more controlled campaigns, a character might have to spend 1 HAP per 10 Active Points of power he wanted to use/change.



Another option is to allow characters to augment Power with HAPs. In this case, the GM allows Power to create small amounts of change or new powers, such as the 30% rule discussed above. To create more powerful abilities, characters have to pay HAPs (either a flat cost such as 2 HAPs, or one depending on the power, like 1 HAP for every +10% of power beyond 30%).

CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE

A failed Power roll usually just means the character fails to activate or manifest the power he wanted — he doesn't cast the spell, he can't use his control over fire to surround the target with a ring of flame. A bad failure (by 4 or more) may cause him to lose an entire Full Phase, have to spend twice the normal amount of END for the ability, or even injure himself — it's up to the GM based on the abilities involved, what the character's trying to do, and the circumstances.

STREETWISE

In a Superheroes campaign, Streetwise may provide at least some basic information about supervillains. Generally superhumans are a culture apart, dealt with through KS: The Superhuman World (or a similar Skill), but many villains have regular contact with the mundane underworld. A Streetwise roll might reveal to a character who Lazer's been hanging out with lately or that the "m.o." on a job matches Black Harlequin's usual pattern of behavior.

TRANSPORT FAMILIARITY

Vehicles in a Champions campaign may become truly bizarre. The high-tech "team jet" is a classic of the genre, but heroes and villains could create and operate vehicles in just about any shape and size: a flying platform in the shape of a bat; a teleportation cube; a rocket-powered skateboard; magic skis and surfboards; hovercraft and grav-cars in countless varieties; you name it. In some cases a character may take a TF with his vehicle (even though that's not normally required if he's paid Character Points for it) as a way of representing its uniqueness... and keeping other characters from using it. (Defining it as a Personal Focus may accomplish the same objective.)

PERKS

Any of the Perks are suitable for Champions, but some are particularly common or appropriate.

FOLLOWER

Particularly in the Golden and Silver Ages, one type of Follower is quite common: the *sidekick*. As discussed on page 26, sidekicks are the "junior" partners of more powerful (and usually better-established) characters. Most are younger than their partners — in fact, it's not uncommon for a sidekick to be a "kid sidekick," a teenager or other young person. (This is particularly true in Golden and Silver Age games, less so in Bronze and Iron Age ones.) The sidekick's costume usually mimics his partner's, though not so closely the two can't be told apart.

Another common type of Follower is the *animal companion*, which is more or less a sidekick in critter form. Typically animal companions are smarter, stronger, and braver than regular animals of their kind, and can often understand English well enough to respond to fairly elaborate commands from the PC. (Or the PC may just have a Mind Link with his animal companion.) Some may even have superpowers of their own, such as the ability to fly.

Typically a sidekick is built as a Follower with 50-100 Total Points less than his partner, and sometimes even fewer points. His powers and abilities usually mirror those of his partner in some way (though this isn't required). However, they usually have fewer Active Points or DCs in their powers — about one-fourth to one-third less. On the other hand, they may apply the powers in slightly different ways, which both distinguishes them and makes them effective in situations where their partner might not be.

FRINGE BENEFIT

The most common Fringe Benefit in many superhero campaigns is Police Powers (typically Local, Federal, or International, but ranging up to Interstellar in Galactic Champions campaigns). This represents a hero (or superteam) who's "sanctioned" with law enforcement powers by the appropriate authorities. A hero with sanction can function much like a police officer — he can make arrests, testify in court while maintaining his Secret Identity, easily arrange for villains he captures to be detained in jails and prisons, and so on.

Supervillains who rule their own nations should have the *Diplomatic Immunity* and *Head Of State* Fringe Benefits. Alien potentates visiting Earth, diplomats from Atlantis, and extradimensional visitors may all have Diplomatic Immunity as well... assuming humanity recognizes their ambassadorial status.

MONEY

Money is a common Perk in many Champions campaigns, despite the fact that characters have to pay Character Points for all their equipment and abilities. The "industrialist/millionaire playboy who's secretly a superhero" is one of the oldest bits in the genre, and PCs can represent it with this Perk.

In some campaigns the GM may want to give Money more of a concrete game effect to better justify the points characters spend on it. There are several possible approaches to this. The first is to use Money as a Skill modifier, as discussed on APG 26. You could even expand those rules in various ways. For example, using many Interaction Skills becomes much easier if a character can throw money around, without the need to spend the amount contemplated by the standard rule. The GM could grant a bonus of +1 per 5 Character Points spent on Money to any appropriate Interaction Skill roll (including nearly all Bribery rolls).

Second, the GM could give a character with Money access to a lot of more or less mundane Vehicles and Bases that he hasn't paid Character Points for. For example, maybe for every 1 Character Point worth of Money, the character gets 3 "Money Character Points" to buy Vehicles and Bases with. These have to be commercially-available models, and typically can't have weapons, armor, advanced surveillance equipment, security devices, or anything else that has a significant game effect... but they let the character maintain a flashy, high-profile lifestyle.

COMPLICATIONS

Any of the Complications are suitable for Champions. Some of the Complications that occur frequently in superhero campaigns include:

ACCIDENTAL CHANGE

Popular among werewolves, super-strong characters with no control over their heroic identities, and other such superhumans, Accidental Change isn't as common as Hunted or Psychological Complication, but does appear in Champions campaigns occasionally. Here are some additional options to expand its usefulness in the genre.

TIME BEFORE CHANGING

First, in Superhero campaigns, it's often important to know how long it takes for an Accidental Change to go from start to completion. (When you're sitting in a restaurant with your date and abruptly begin to transform into Kylax the Vampire Prince, the amount of time you have available to make an excuse and dash off to the bathroom is crucial.) APP 148 has rules for how to adjust the value of Accidental Change when the change doesn't occur immediately. Additionally, the GM may grant a character an EGO Roll to slow down his transformation. A character who's changing makes his EGO Roll, and for every full 2 points by which he succeeds, he gets an extra +1 Phase (or Turn, or Minute, as appropriate) before his transformation occurs. (The GM may choose to allow an EGO Roll only for characters who accept a -5 Character Point value for the Complication.)

NATURE OF THE CHANGE

When you take Accidental Change for a character, you must decide whether it constitutes the normal identity turning into the super identity, or the super identity turning into the normal identity. In most cases, it's the normal identity changing into the superhuman one. (Other variations are possible, such as a character with three or more states of existence — for instance, a person who has a normal human form, a human form with some wolfman powers, and a full wolfman form. See 6E1 271 for more information.)

Accidental Change is only a Complication when the transformation puts the character at a disadvantage, and you should weigh the chosen circumstances not only against their frequency of occurrence but also the frequency with which they inconvenience the character.

Example: Henry Tweed, mild-mannered CPA, is also Earth-Mover, gigantic strongman. He experiences a physical transformation when turning into his super identity, becoming two feet taller and adding 250 Character Points' worth of muscle and bone. He can normally change at will back and forth between forms, but, when enraged or injured to the point that he sustains BODY damage, Henry also changes involuntarily.

Henry's player thinks that being enraged and/or sustaining BODY damage are Common circumstances, so he builds the Accidental Change as Frequently (11-), Common, for a Complication value of 15 points. But in reviewing his character sheet, the GM notices that the Henry form doesn't have all of Earth-Mover's Psychological Complications; he's far less likely to get into physical danger, become injured, or be enraged. So he rules that it's an Uncommon condition, for a Complication value of 10 points.

Changing from a normal form into a super form typically endangers a character's Secret Identity, though it may pose some threat to nearby persons as well. The alternate use of this Complication, changing from a super form to a normal form, typically threatens both a character's Secret Identity and his life — it's very dangerous for a character to be flying along with an Abrams tank in his hands and suddenly begin to transform into a powerless scientist. Purchase of a super-to-normal Accidental Change is separate from a normal-to-super Accidental Change, and is worth the same amount of points as the more common form of the Complication. A character could theoretically have two *Accidental Change* Complications, one in each direction, if the GM permits.

ACCIDENTALLY REVEALING POWERS

Instead of using Accidental Change just to represent an alteration of a character's physical form or identity, at the GM's option, a super-human without an alternate form could take Accidental Change to represent the chance that something accidentally reveals his powers. (This assumes, of course, that it's not obvious from his appearance that he's superpowered.) This is most common with super-strength, since Bricks are notorious for not always judging how much strength to use in everyday matters, or for trying to "cheat" and use super-strength to accomplish a mundane task quickly and easily when they think no one's looking. (Speedsters may suffer from similar problems.)

The GM should roll the Complication at the beginning of each game session (or adventure). If the roll succeeds, something happens during the game session (adventure) that reveals the character's true nature. Maybe there's an accident that would injure a normal person but from which the character emerges unscathed, or someone catches a glimpse of the character making casual use of his tremendous STR to perform chores.

DEPENDENCE

The use and effects of Dependence as set out in the *HERO System* rules apply as written to most Superhero campaigns. Aquatic heroes who can only breathe and remain strong out of water for a few hours at most, "regional guardian" super-humans who can't leave particular areas of the world without suffering debilitating weakness, and powered armor heroes who need a constant supply of spare parts and maintenance work are all classic examples of how Dependence works in the genre.

DEPENDENT NON-PLAYER CHARACTER

The following types of DNPCs occur frequently in the comics, and thus in Champions campaigns as well:

The Boss: If the character has a job, his boss may somehow get involved in his adventures from time to time. Boss DNPCs are usually irascible, temperamental, and annoying, and often have an intense dislike for the character's costumed identity. The Boss is usually a Normal, possibly has a useful noncombat position or Skills, and normally is unaware of the character's costumed identity.

The Frail Relative: The character has a loved one who's old and/or sickly. He can't tell his relative about his costumed identity, because the shock could cause the relative to suffer a heart attack. So, the hero has to sneak around and go to great lengths to maintain his Secret Identity... and occasionally rescue his relative from maniacal supervillains, collapsing buildings, and what have you. The Frail Relative is typically Incompetent, has no useful abilities (other than home cooking skills, perhaps!), and is unaware of the character's superhero identity.

The Love Interest: The Love Interest differs from the Significant Other (see below) in that he or she has no existing romantic relationship with the hero. Instead, the hero simply has strong feelings for him or her, but hasn't expressed them yet (or perhaps has expressed them and been rejected). In either case, the character has the dilemma of trying to attract the Love Interest's attention even though his costumed identity (to which the Love Interest is often attracted to some degree) is more impressive, braver, and so on. It doesn't help matters that the character often "runs away" or "disappears" in dangerous situations so he can change into costume and protect the Love Interest.... A Love Interest is typically Normal (though possibly Slightly Less Powerful than the PC), may have a useful noncombat position or Skills, and is unaware of the character's superhero identity.



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The Nosy Coworker: A particularly common DNPC for characters who are reporters or news photographers in their Secret Identities, the Nosy Coworker is either actively trying to find out that the character is really MegaMan, or through his nosiness manages to stumble into trouble again and again (or both!). In either case, the hero constantly has to find ways to trick the Nosy Coworker into believing his guesses about the hero are wrong, rescue him from thugs and natural disasters, and so on. A Nosy Coworker is typically Normal (though possibly Slightly Less Powerful than the PC), may have a useful noncombat position or Skills, and is unaware of the character's superhero identity.

The Significant Other: The Significant Other — a boyfriend or girlfriend, typically — differs from the Love Interest in that he or she is involved in a romantic relationship with the PC's Secret Identity. In some cases, the Significant Other actively dislikes the character's superhero identity; in others the S.O. seems at least slightly attracted to the costumed persona, meaning the character has to compete with himself for the S.O.'s affections! A Significant Other is typically Normal (though possibly Slightly Less Powerful than the PC), may have a useful noncombat position or Skills, and is unaware of the character's superhero identity.

Occasionally the Significant Other mutates into the Spouse following a strange arcane ceremony that typically takes place in a church or cathedral. Unlike an S.O., a Spouse usually *is* aware of the character's superhero identity — after all, since the character and his Spouse live together, it becomes mighty difficult to hide the six MegaMan costumes in the closet, the secret crimefighting lab in the basement, or the supervillain trophy collection tucked away in the cupboard. The Spouse may support the character's superheroing, or dislike it, but in either case he or she worries incessantly about the danger the character puts himself in on a regular basis.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

In a genre where most characters wear costumes that help them stand out in a crowd, you have to go to some extra effort to justify taking Distinctive Features. (Note, for example, that very few published heroes or villains for Champions take this *Complication*.) Distinctive Features is a *Complication*, so it has to actually hinder or inconvenience a character in meaningful ways for him to get any Matching Complications points for it. Distinctive Features are most appropriate when:

- They cause NPCs to react badly to the character, and by extension to the character's allies and teammates (for example, when the character is a big, scary monster, hated by the public and small children even if he lives an exemplary superhero life)
- They inconvenience the character both in super identity and in Secret Identity (this, for instance, is where a bad body odor Distinctive Feature makes sense)

Although in some genres a uniform constitutes an “Easily Concealed” Distinctive Feature, in Champions, a superhero costume ordinarily shouldn't be the basis of a *Distinctive Features* Complication (except for the minions of master villains and villainous agencies, who are easily identified as targets for superhero attack by their colorful uniforms). Distinctive Features should be some intrinsic part of the character's being.

Campaigns featuring characters who are mutants often require such characters to take the Distinctive Feature *Mutant* (Not Concealable, Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses; 10 points). That way, villains and government agents with special scanners can identify the character as a mutant. In games focusing on the “mutant hysteria” element (see page 36), the value of the Complication might rise to 15 points if the reaction to the Feature is more intense.

See page 159 for more information about, and specific suggestions for, Distinctive Features.

ENRAGED/BERSERK

Enraged/Berserk is fairly common in the Superhero genre. Characters who are huge, nearly mindless brutes, afflicted with some sorts of supernatural curse, or so alien that normal terrestrial behavior can send them into attack frenzies all have precedent in the comics.

Other types of Enraged/Berserk are appropriate, based not on a character's ferocity or mindlessness, but his inability to control his actions in certain circumstances. For example, a robot character might Berserk when hit by electrical attacks. This doesn't represent ferocity on the character's part; the Berserk is actually nothing more than a malfunction of his electrical system. Similarly, an alien might be Enraged or Berserk when it accidentally consumes specific chemicals that are rare in its normal diet but common on Earth (in essence, the Complication represents a sort of “allergic reaction” in this case).

The *Enraged/Berserk* Complication makes a character more likely to be hated and feared by the public, and Hunted by the authorities. If a PC has it, it had best show up in Uncommon Circumstances and on a low (8-) roll, and it's also best if his teammates know about it and are trained in techniques to restrain him.

HUNTED

The following are some examples of classic Hunteds in the superhero genre:

Archenemies: Many superheroes have a single foe who best represents all they strive against, or for whom they have the deepest hatred and fear (and vice-versa). Typically an archenemy is an As Powerful Hunted, since that makes for the best match and most tightly-contested, drawn-out struggle between the two characters, but a few are More Powerful (especially if they're also master villains). Archenemies, being individuals, don't usually have Noncombat Influence (NCI) (though it is possible), and aren't normally confined to a Limited Geographical Area.

Evil foreign dictators: Many comic book settings feature one or more fictitious (or real) nations ruled by a ruthless dictator whom the PCs fight from time to time — and who returns the favor by sending minions after them to seek revenge. In some cases the evil foreign dictator may even be a superhuman himself. Most evil foreign dictators are More Powerful than the supers they hunt, since while they're not able to stand up to a PC in single combat, they have vast economic, military, and diplomatic resources to call upon in their quest to make the PC's life miserable. For the same reasons, they also have NCI. On the other hand, most are also restricted to a Limited Geographical Area, though they do sometimes send out squads of assassins or mercenary supervillains to take on the PC on his home turf.

Government conspiracies: Shadowy cabals of powerful government figures sometimes find a reason to go after a superhero (or heroes). They may believe that all superhumans represent a threat to national security, or they may want to co-opt the PCs to serve in the conspiracy's private army, or perhaps they think the PCs pose some danger to the conspiracy itself and so choose to eliminate them. A government conspiracy usually counts as an As Powerful Hunted (its power is balanced by its need to maintain secrecy); it has NCI, and usually doesn't suffer from a geographical restriction.

Law enforcement agencies: Superheroes who somehow find themselves on the wrong side of the law may end up Hunted by the police department, the FBI, the DEA, or even fictional law enforcement organizations like the Champions Universe's UNTIL and PRIMUS. Although most individual officers are markedly less powerful than your typical four-color Champions superhero, almost any law enforcement organization counts as a More Powerful Hunted because of the investigative, paramilitary, and public relations resources it can bring to bear against the PCs. A character who scoffs at the cops as a Hunted may quickly



find them digging into, uncovering, and revealing his Secret Identity, freezing his assets, and so forth. Law enforcement organizations are More Powerful than most heroes (due to numbers and resources) and have NCI; while they are nominally limited to the geographical area in which they have jurisdiction, they can call on other law enforcement organizations for aid, effectively giving them almost unlimited reach in many circumstances.

Master villains: Master villains — major super-criminals capable of threatening the world — make dangerous Hunters. They're More Powerful than any given hero (and sometimes even than his entire superteam!), and thanks to their far-flung webs of criminal influence and power usually have NCI. They make dangerous Hunters, for they aren't hobbled by the bureaucratic, diplomatic, and legal restrictions that often govern the police or the like — and they have power that should scare even the most jaded superhero.

Villainous agencies: Many Champions campaigns feature large criminal organizations whose members wear uniforms not that different from superhumans' costumes. These villainous agencies often Hunt superheroes, and can pose a major threat to them. While no one agent is as powerful as a PC, the organization as a whole is usually More Powerful, and typically has NCI because of its connections to corrupt politicians and businessmen, the illicit wealth it can throw around, and so on. It may also have police-like investigative resources, making it an even greater threat. (See page 164 for more about villainous agencies.)

PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLICATION

The following Psychological Complications all occur frequently in the comics, and so are perfectly appropriate for Champions superheroes:

Broadcasts Intentions In Combat (Common, Strong; 15 points): More a favorite of certain villains than of heroes, this Psychological Complication signifies a character who can't resist telling his victims what he's about to do: "Tremble in fear, MegaMan, as I blast you with my Nucleonic Bolt!" Unless the character can make an EGO Roll to resist doing this, his opponents always know when they should Abort to a Dodge, and at the GM's option may even get DCV bonuses against the character's attacks in some cases.

Code Of The Hero (Very Common, Strong; 20 points): The "code of the hero" refers to the collection of personality traits that signify a character who's molded in the traditional four-color superhero fashion. He always fights fairly. He treats everyone, particularly women and authority figures, with respect, and always keeps his promises. He does his best to fulfill any request for help made to him, even if it's just to rescue a kitten trapped in a tree. He doesn't hesitate to risk his life to stop crime, save disaster victims, thwart super-villains' schemes, rescue hostages, and perform other heroic actions.

This Psychological Complication sometimes goes by different names, but they all mean essentially the same thing. Other ways of referring to the Code Of The Hero include *True-Blue Hero*; *Fearlessly Heroic — Risks His Life In Even Obviously Lethal Situations*; *Four-Color Hero*; and simply *Heroic*.

Code Versus Killing (Common, Total; 20 points):

A character with this Psychological Complication refuses to kill others, even in the heat of battle, and takes affirmative steps to ensure that he's not using lethal levels of force against his foes. For example, when first fighting a strange foe, even often starts out using attacks with fewer DCs than his maximum so he won't accidentally hit his opponent with dangerous force before he knows how much injury that opponent can withstand.

Honorable (Common, Total; 20 points): Honorable is similar to Code Of The Hero in many ways, but it's more personal. A hero with Honorable isn't necessarily driven to fight crime in a certain way, or act a certain way towards others, but to live up to a personal code of honorable behavior. The player should specify exactly what his character's personal code of honor entails; typically Honorable characters are scrupulous about keeping their word after they give it, are reluctant to lie or act in a deceptive fashion, don't take advantage of situations, are loyal to one or more authority figures, and the like.

Hunting (Specific Character) (Frequency varies, Strong): This is the flipside of the *Hunted* Complication; in cases of a personal quest for vengeance or justice, it's the Complication of the character doing the Hunting. The character is driven to persecute or prosecute another, and may do so tirelessly and relentlessly, even at the cost of other personal goals and relationships.

Typically the Frequency of a *Hunting* Psychological Complication depends on the target's *Hunted* roll: Infrequently is an Uncommon Psychological Complication for the character; Frequently is Common; and Very Frequently is Very Common.

Note, however, that a character can choose a villain as his *Hunted* without the villain having a corresponding *Psychological Complication: Hunting* in his list of Complications. The villain may have the Complication without getting any points for it, delegate a lot of the hard work to minions, or the like.

Needs To Prove Self (Very Common, Strong; 20 points):

A character with this Psychological Complication feels he must make up for some earlier mistake or other perceived inadequacy by doing something dramatically successful or important. The player should work with the GM to decide exactly what the earlier failure or inadequacy was, and exactly how it influences the character's behavior at present in ways that hinder or restrict him.

Noblesse Oblige (Common, Strong; 15 points):

Due to his status in society — and, typically, his wealth — the character feels he has an obligation to help those less fortunate than himself. Though it's often tinged with touches of condescension, arrogance, or even racism, this is still at heart a worthy motivation for a hero (and one that often betokens a complex personality and many story hooks for the GM to use).

Novice Hero (Very Common, Strong; 20 points):

This Complication is appropriate for a character who's very new to superheroing. Since he hasn't had any formal training or mentoring, he's prone to making mistakes — he employs bad combat tactics, accidentally blurts out a teammate's real first name, and so forth. Any time the GM perceives the character doing something that suggests experience or superhero worldliness, he should ask the player, "With your *Novice Hero* Complication, would you really be doing that?" If the player thinks the answer is "Yes," the GM should have the character make an EGO Roll to overcome the Complication. Obviously, this is a Complication a character should buy off with Experience Points (or, with the GM's permission, replace with another Psychological Complication), since no hero remains a novice forever.

Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate; 15 points):

It's hard not to gain an overweening sense of confidence when one has the strength to juggle Mack trucks, the ability to fly at hundreds of miles an hour, or the power to read minds. A superhero with this Psychological Complication is likely to bite off more than he can chew in a lot of situations.

Protective Of Innocents (Very Common, Strong; 20 points):

A superhero with this Psychological Complication goes out of his way to protect innocent people from harm. If it's a choice between pursuing a fleeing supervillain and saving a troop of Girl Scouts from the truck that villain just threw at them, the hero will make sure the girls are safe every time. (Some GMs may consider this so similar to Code Of The Hero that a character can't take both Complications.)

Showoff (Very Common, Strong; 20 points):

A superhero with this Psychological Complication is a compulsive extrovert who takes every opportunity to demonstrate his skills or powers, especially the flashy ones. Doing so costs the hero time (he has to be dragged away from crowds), causes him to sustain extra damage (the GM can give him PER Roll penalties to reduce his chance to see incoming attacks or concealed enemies while he's showing off), annoys NPCs who might otherwise have been helpful, focuses supervillain attention on the character, and so on.

SOCIAL COMPLICATION

The *Secret Identity* Social Complication, as discussed on page 10, is extremely common in the superhero genre, whether it's a Golden Age story, a gritty modern-day crimefighting drama, or anything in between. A few heroes have Public Identity (6E1 428) instead, and some have neither (meaning an NPC who works at it can uncover the hero's identity, but it's not well-known to the public in general).

Other than Secret Identity, no Social Complication is particularly common in the typical Champions campaign. Heroes who work for the government, or who have official sanction, may be Subject To Orders. More than one hero (or villain) has a Harmful Secret besides his true identity.

SUSCEPTIBILITY

This is a classic Complication in the Superhero genre ever since Superman realized he didn't feel so well around those green rocks from Krypton. Even the mightiest hero needs a weakness or two, and a Susceptibility makes a great Achilles' heel. Some Susceptibilities common to the superhero genre include:

Counter-Power: A character with powers associated with a particular element, substance, or the like may experience pain when exposed to his powers' "opposite" — a Fire-based character may be Susceptible to Ice/Cold Powers, a Light-using character may be Susceptible to Darkness Powers, a character with green energy powers may take damage from yellow energy powers, and so on. The commonality of a counter-power varies; you can check the Vulnerabilities Frequencies Table on APG 152 for some guidelines, but ultimately the GM has the final say. Counter-power Susceptibilities usually take the "effect is instant" modifier, but in the case of Constant Powers, the effect may linger instead.

Sensory Overload: A character with extensive or sensitive Sensory Powers may suffer harm when he encounters intense sensory input (including Flashes) — loud noises or bright lights cause him searing pain (though perhaps only for a few seconds, until his senses adjust). In most campaigns, intense sensory input is a Very Common condition, and the effect is instant.

Strange Alien Mineral: A character whose powers result from his alien physiology, or who gets his powers from weird alien substances, may be Susceptible to bits of his home planet (or the planet from which his powers derived). Most strange alien minerals are Uncommon, but when they do show up, the effects are severe (2d6 or 3d6) and long-lasting (every Segment or every Phase).

Teleportation: A character who can Teleport, or who has an odd body structure, may take damage when *other* people Teleport him — it wreaks havoc with his physical form. In most campaigns, being Teleported is an Uncommon condition, and the effect is instant.



Of course, one question the GM must consider is: how do NPCs (villains or otherwise) find out about the Susceptibility? If the character keeps it such a well-guarded secret that no one ever uses it against him, it's not much of a Complication, so he should receive fewer points for it (perhaps none). The Susceptibility should either be something that at least a few NPCs can deduce or guess (maybe because of the nature of the character's powers), or something that's revealed (to a reasonably significant degree) early in the campaign.

It's appropriate for a Champions character to have other Complications associated with his Susceptibilities. If the substance is supposed to do more than simply damage him, he can take other Complications associated with it. For instance, Psychological Complications such as *Freezes*

When Seeing Substance and Physical Complications like *Blind In The Presence of Substance* add new and interesting dimensions to the character's weakness. (See also the optional effects described below.)

PROXIMITY

The "proximity" optional rule on 6E1 430 is definitely appropriate for the Superhero genre. The GM might even consider extending the table in the opposite direction, so that a hero is sometimes Susceptible to objects that are further away than 8m: +5 points if the Susceptibility can affect the character from 16m away; +10 points for 32m away; and so on.

OPTIONAL SUSCEPTIBILITY EFFECTS

The optional rules for the proximity of the substance/phenomenon that triggers a Susceptibility are appropriate for Champions (though not required). But the GM can go beyond that to expand the effects of the Complication, if desired. Specifically, instead of just doing damage to a character, a Susceptibility could have other effects instead, as indicated in the accompanying Expanded Susceptibility Effects table.

Most of the optional effects only make sense for Susceptibilities involving lengthy exposure; they're not really a hindrance if they only apply for an instant. However, the GM could allow a character to define a timeframe for which the non-damage Susceptibility effect lingers after an instant exposure (or even after exposure to a long-term phenomenon ends). If the effect lasts for 1 Turn after exposure ends, that's worth +5 points; 1 Minute, +10 points; and each step down the Time Chart from there is an additional +5 points (though the GM may wish to cap how much "lingering Susceptibility effect" a character can buy).

VULNERABILITY

Vulnerability works as described on 6E1 431; like Susceptibility, it's a classic of the genre. But Superhero characters are exposed to so many more powers than most other sorts of characters that you have to keep track of a bewildering number of attacks — specific powers, special effects, particular maneuvers, and so on — and gauge how frequently they appear in your campaign so players can figure out what their characters' Vulnerabilities are worth. You can use the rules and tables on APG 151-54 to help with this, or the GM can come up with his own tables based on which types of attacks are more (or less) common in his campaign setting.

EXPANDED SUSCEPTIBILITY EFFECTS

Instead Of 1d6 Damage, Character Suffers...

Ineffectiveness: a specific power (or group of powers) only functions on a 14- roll

Ineffectiveness: all of the character's powers only function on a 16- roll

Loss Of Power: a specific power (or group of powers) is reduced to 50% effectiveness

Loss Of Power: all of the character's powers are reduced to 75% effectiveness

Weakness: -2 to all main Characteristics and combat Characteristics, -1 to all CVs, and -1 SPD during exposure

Instead Of 2d6 Damage, Character Suffers...

Incompetence: -1 to Skill Rolls and related rolls during exposure

Ineffectiveness: a specific power (or group of powers) only functions on a 11- roll

Ineffectiveness: all of the character's powers only function on a 14- roll

Loss Of Power: a specific power (or group of powers) is reduced to 25% effectiveness

Loss Of Power: all of the character's powers are reduced to 50% effectiveness

Stunned: character is Stunned for the duration of the exposure

Weakness: -3 to all main Characteristics and combat Characteristics, -2 to all CVs, and -1 SPD during exposure

Instead Of 3d6 Damage, Character Suffers...

Incompetence: -2 to Skill Rolls and related rolls during exposure

Ineffectiveness: a specific power (or group of powers) only functions on a 8- roll

Ineffectiveness: all of the character's powers only function on an 11- roll

Loss Of Power: a specific power (or group of powers) is reduced to 10% effectiveness (or less)

Loss Of Power: all of the character's powers are reduced to 25% effectiveness (or less)

Unconscious: character is Knocked Out for the duration of the exposure

Weakness: -5 to all main Characteristics and combat Characteristics, -3 to all CVs, and -2 SPD during exposure

SUPERTEAMS



Though many comic books showcase the adventures of solo heroes, or of hero-side-kick teams, Champions is more commonly all about team adventures, such as those depicted in comic books like *The Avengers*, *Teen Titans*, *The X-Men*, *Justice League*, and the like. So, players designing characters need to consider team-related issues — how their characters will form a team, each character's role in the team, and so on — during the character creation process. The GM should also give some thought to these issues, since whether the PCs form a team can significantly effect the course of the campaign and the nature of the adventures he runs.

HOW TEAMS GET TOGETHER

In a Champions environment, superheroes band together to form superteams in one of a few different ways. The GM should evaluate these approaches, and also consider any others appropriate to his particular campaign setting, and choose the one that best fits his game as it's forming.

CATALYST

With characters who've been played in separate campaigns, or with characters who are presumed to have a considerable amount of pre-campaign experience (even though this wasn't gamed out), an event or pressing social need may unite them.

Of the techniques discussed here, this approach is perhaps the trickiest to pull off. The GM normally must put together an adventure that brings these separate heroes together and puts them into a situation they can only resolve as a group. Once the adventure's done, the characters may not "get the idea" that it's advantageous for them to work together. So the GM may have to concoct one or more additional scenarios with the same structure, or provide an additional incentive (like a Vehicle or Base). Alternatively, the GM might have to meta-game the notion — approaching one or more players to discuss how their characters could come up with the idea of creating a permanent team and begun organizing such a thing. Then he can rely on those players can get the ball rolling during a play session.

COMMON ORIGIN/SOURCE

Especially in campaigns which have a limited number of sources for superpowers, superheroes might all acquire their powers at the same place and time (or through some other common origin that inevitably draws them together). They might all be willing test subjects for a military service, which gives them common goals and circumstances. They might all be caught up in the same radiation accident, which tends to make them cling together out of common experiences. A common enemy might give them all powers somehow, and then they escape from him and have to stick together for protection against the minions he sends to recapture them.

Similarly, even if the PCs don't all get their powers in the same way, they might all have the same source. The all-mutant campaign is an example of this; so is the all-mystic campaign where the GM decrees that all the PCs must be super-mages or mystical creatures of some sort. In this case they might still need a catalyst or patron to bring them together at first, but their common background and interests will keep them a team.



This technique is fairly easy to pull off. The GM will want to keep the heroes together and endangered during the first several episodes so they're forced to depend on one another for survival. By the time the menace that caused them to gain powers or that appeared just as they were gaining their powers is ended, effectively they're a team — the only thing left is for one or more members to realize it and to formalize the arrangement.

MASTER ORGANIZER

In campaigns where characters are all supposed to be relatively new to the world of superheroing but have not met and have little in common, the GM should consider resorting to an organizer — someone who brings the supers together to propose that they work together as a team. Possible organizers include wealthy philanthropists, retired superheroes, mysterious supernatural beings, the government, or a teenaged fan who writes a brilliant letter.

This is perhaps the easiest approach to creating a superteam. One way to ensure its success is to have the organizer provide a few things the characters otherwise lack — for instance, a Vehicle or Base, training, communications devices, and/or a group identity. Characters who are aware of their inability to cope with Hunteds, the emotional consequences of their origins, and so on often leap at the opportunity to band together.

TEAM MEMBER TYPES

When putting a team together, the GM and players should consider both the personalities and the possible team roles of all the characters.

TEAM PERSONALITY TYPES

Superteams in the comics tend to be made up of members with a broad range of personalities. While there's no rules mechanism to ensure that the same thing happens in a campaign (nor should there be!), it may be valuable to the GM to look at the range of PC personalities and determine whether there are too many of any one type. If the players are creating characters at the same time, they, too, should find out what the range of personality types is to see if there is a pressing need for one or more types.

Among the personality types commonly seen in superteams are:

Captain Daffy: This character has only a casual relationship with organization and perhaps reality itself. He probably does as the team leader says, but in a madcap way — flirting with enemies, playing pranks, showing off, cracking jokes. He can bring some much-needed levity to a situation, or can inject inappropriate humor to an occasion that ought to remain serious. Daffy characters can be the emotional centerpieces of a team, since everyone tends to like them and “group drama” just rolls off their backs.

The Loner: This character is usually quiet and emotionally distant. Tactically, he may perform just as described for the Rebel (in which case he shares all the difficulties of that personality type), or he may perform perfectly well within the team structure and yet remain an enigma. In the latter situation, the GM should consider running the occasional story in which facts about the character become known and in which he must make a rare display of emotion or need to the other characters.

Mr. Dependable: This character does his job, doesn't talk back, doesn't run away, doesn't cause trouble. He may be morose or cheerful, but is likely to be quiet. When the Natural Leader is unavailable, Mr. Dependable is most likely to be his second-in-command.

Mr. Gung-Ho: This character is anxious for direct confrontation. He's often a front-line fighter when action starts, but he's also a bit too ready to make sure that action gets started — he prefers a bit of splatter to negotiations. Unfortunately, in a campaign without a Natural Leader, Mr. Gung-Ho tends to take control, and the team finds only military solutions to its problems.

The Natural Leader: This character tends to be quiet and charismatic. He may have skills such as Tactics, Teamwork, Persuasion, Oratory, and SS: Psychology. He leads less out of a desire to be in charge than out of a recognition that without his planning skills and directorial impulses, the team will perform in an inefficient, perhaps self-destructive fashion.

The Rebel: This character just wants to do his own thing. When trouble starts, he adopts his favorite tactics, often “not hearing” or deliberately disobeying leader instructions.

This is a particularly tricky personality to adopt in a roleplaying campaign. In the comics, the writers always find a reason for the Rebel to remain with the team. But in gaming campaigns, where the “writer” (the GM) cannot directly control the protagonists or the flow of story events, an excess of rebellion can spoil things. The final result may be enough hard feelings (among the characters, and perhaps even among the players) that the Rebel becomes unwelcome. The player of a Rebel and the GM should talk about ways to keep the Rebel character as a welcome team member. Examples include limiting instances of solo action so they're fewer than occasions when he acts according to team needs, and providing useful Skills and Powers no one else has (such as Healing). Most importantly, the GM and player should come up with at least one solid reason why the Rebel *wants* to remain with the team regardless of his general lone wolf nature.

The Survivor: This character has experienced tragedy and is still around, but is not yet fully recovered. He's likely to be a bundle of Psychological Complications (even temporary ones for which he receives no points). It's very common for such a character to have a tremendous need for others (hence his staying with the team) but be unable to express it. As with Captain Daffy, this character might be the emotional glue that holds the team together (because everyone wants to help him), or a bone of contention as the other members disagree on the best way to help.

The Thinker: This character is always thinking one step ahead — trying to outplot the enemy, manipulate the NPC, anticipate the surprise lurking around the corner. He lives to outwit. As with Mr. Dependable, this character can be a good stand-in when the Natural Leader isn't around, but he's not so good as the full-time leader of the team. His desire to outwit the enemy sometimes causes him to create schemes more complicated than necessary, to lose valuable time coming up with the “perfect plan,” and so on.

TEAM MEMBER ROLES

In addition to considering the best mix of personality types, the GM and players should consider the best mix of team member roles. If, for instance, every member of the team is a high-STR brick with no ranged attacks other than thrown Chevrolets, the team is going to be somewhat one-sided in its tactics, and thus limited in the solutions it can attempt for problems. It's best to think in quasi-military terms when deciding what roles a team needs, since the roles are most important in combat. Examples include:

Artillery/Air Support: Any team profits if one or more members can attack from a distance. These characters need good mobility (typically through Flight) and Ranged attacks.

Infantry: The team needs one or more members who can stand up front to inflict and sustain damage. These characters need to be good fighters with good defenses. Bricks, Powered Armor wearers, and Martial Artists often fulfill this role.

Intelligence: A team benefits if at least one character can coordinate complex communication efforts, dig information out of computers, and sneak around in secure emplacements. Martial Artists, Weaponmasters, and/or Gadgeteers with an investigative orientation usually take on this role.

Officer: At the minimum, a team needs one *officer* — someone to speak for the team when there's no time to consult (and perhaps to engage in “diplomatic relations” in general), and to bark orders in combat. Two or more team members can divide officer roles. One might be the peacetime leader but delegate direct control of the team to someone with more martial skills when combat breaks out.

Special Ops: It's helpful for one or more team members to have skills and powers that are difficult to anticipate or detect — psychic powers like Telepathy and Mind Scan, impersonation abilities like Shape Shift, strange powers like Desolidification, and so on.

Support: Generally, supply isn't a concern to a superhero team; each member tends to be responsible for his own ammunition, recharging, and so on. But teams do have support needs in two major categories: transportation and medical. If not all team members can travel at the kind of pace the team needs to sustain, then one or more members has to carry others, or the team needs a common Vehicle like the one on pages 240-42. Similarly, it's useful for a team member to be able to handle Teleportation and Extra-Dimensional Movement chores. Also, it's invaluable for at least one team member to have medical skills and/or Healing.

With a good mix of the above team roles, a superteam can be a very effective organization indeed.

TEAM ATTRIBUTES

The GM and players should also consider secondary team attributes. Though this is not necessarily a concern at the very beginning of a team's adventures, these questions will come up.

TEAM NAME

A team needs a name if it's going to deal with the public and press. But naming a team can be even trickier than naming a character — it has to somehow “represent” everybody and also be agreeable to all the founding members.

Here are some things to remember when working up a team name:

You Don't Have To Have One At The Beginning:

Though any team comic book features the team name on the cover of every issue starting with #1, a Champions campaign team doesn't have to have its name in place from the first episode. In fact, it's sometimes best to wait a half-dozen episodes or so before settling on a name. After all, a team that's just come together and had no adventures (or only one adventure) probably hasn't settled on a team motif yet, hasn't yet developed a signature tactic, and so on. Once the campaign is a little ways along, such factors are easier to spot.

Consider The Goal: All teams have one or more goals to accomplish, even if those goals are very broad or ill-defined. And those goals may offer suggestions for a team name. Does the team want to protect the public? It could be the Protectors. Does the team want to watch out for bad guys? It could be Vigil, the Guardians, the Watch, or the Sentries.

Have A Suggestion Box: When the characters decide it's time for their team to have a name, give the players an episode or two during which they can send the GM any number of suggestions. Then, prior to an adventure, list out all the suggestions and distribute the list among the players, allowing each to vote for three to five names. If the name with the most votes is agreeable to everyone (even those who didn't vote for it), you've picked a team name with a minimum of trouble.

Watch Out For Unintentional Humor: Carefully consider any superhero team in light of possible unwanted meaning. The Penetrators and the Lookouts would not last long in the wiseacre-filled environment of the superhero world.

RANDOM SUPERTEAM NAME GENERATOR

Having trouble thinking up a name for your superteam? Try this handy chart! Roll two dice once for the two words in the name. Read the first die as 1-3 ("1") and 4-6 ("2"), and the second die as 1-6 in the usual fashion. That generates 12 possible words in each category, with an equal chance of each one occurring.

2d6 Roll First Word In Name

1-1	Atomic
1-2	Color of your choice
1-3	Destiny
1-4	Freedom
1-5	Hero
1-6	Honor
2-1	Justice
2-2	Liberty
2-3	Power
2-4	Secret
2-5	Super-
2-6	Victory

2d6 Roll Second Word In Name

1-1	Brigade
1-2	Corps
1-3	Crew
1-4	Crusaders
1-5	Force
1-6	Guard/Guardians
2-1	Knights
2-2	League
2-3	Legion
2-4	Patrol
2-5	Squad(ron)
2-6	Vanguard

BASES

It's good for a team to have a base of operations, but sometimes difficult to convince them to build one (after all, it costs Character Points they may prefer to spend on personal powers or resources, and it may seem like a "villain magnet").

Of course, it's only difficult to convince them of such a thing if they feel all their needs are being met by their current circumstances. If they like using a local park as a mustering-point and not having a central lab where they can coordinate their wrist-radios, they have much less motivation to build a real base. But if necessary, there are a few things the GM can do to persuade them to build a base:

Give Them A Rotten Little Base: In a very early adventure, an NPC hero may volunteer his personal hideout, or a grateful rescuee may offer the heroes his hunting cabin, giving the heroes a place to meet. As the size and lack of facilities of the place begin to get on the PCs' nerves, they'll either begin exploring alternatives or start to rebuild their current site into something more fitting.

Give Them A Comparison: Have them go through an adventure in which they meet and cooperate with a team that has a really good base, and have the adventure demonstrate the base's usefulness. Little things like seeing how useful a thorough suite of laboratories and a rapid-deployment hangar housing the team jet are can act as a motivator. A millionaire playboy's mansion, with features such as hot tubs, a wine steward, and a masseur, can also be a real convincer.

This raises the question of who pays for the base. Typically, each PC chips in the points needed to buy a Base (and/or Vehicle; see 6E1 107), but there are several other options:

The PCs Get Their Base For Free: To encourage the PCs to form a team, work together as a team, and act like a team, the GM might simply give them their base for free. (This is also the best and fairest approach if the GM intends to use the base as a "plot seed" for adventures, so that it causes the PCs trouble as often as it helps them.) This means the GM builds it for them, which has the additional benefit of allowing him to insert various plot hooks and story development points.

The PCs Get Their Base Partly For Free: Often, it's best if the GM, in the guise of a philanthropist or NPC hero, pays for the basic headquarters functions (land, location, exterior defenses, and perhaps a team vehicle), then allow the PCs to pay for other features. The PCs are often glad to pay for personal facilities such as laboratories and computers, and that might set them on the path of occasionally purchasing base upgrades.

The PCs Pay For Their Base... Slowly: Rather than having to pony up the cost of a Base all at once, the PCs may want to do it slowly, by saving up Experience Points. For example, the GM should consider asking the players, “Would anyone object if I held back one Experience Point every other game from every character to put into a common point pool for the base?” If the players agree to this, the GM can establish this “account” for purchasing a Base, and perhaps for regular Base upgrades.

Several sample Bases appear on pages 233-39; see also *The Ultimate Base*.

EQUIPMENT

In a similar vein, many teams issue specific items of team equipment to all members. These range from minimalist radios using the same frequency to emergency life support devices, flight apparati, and even common Perks.

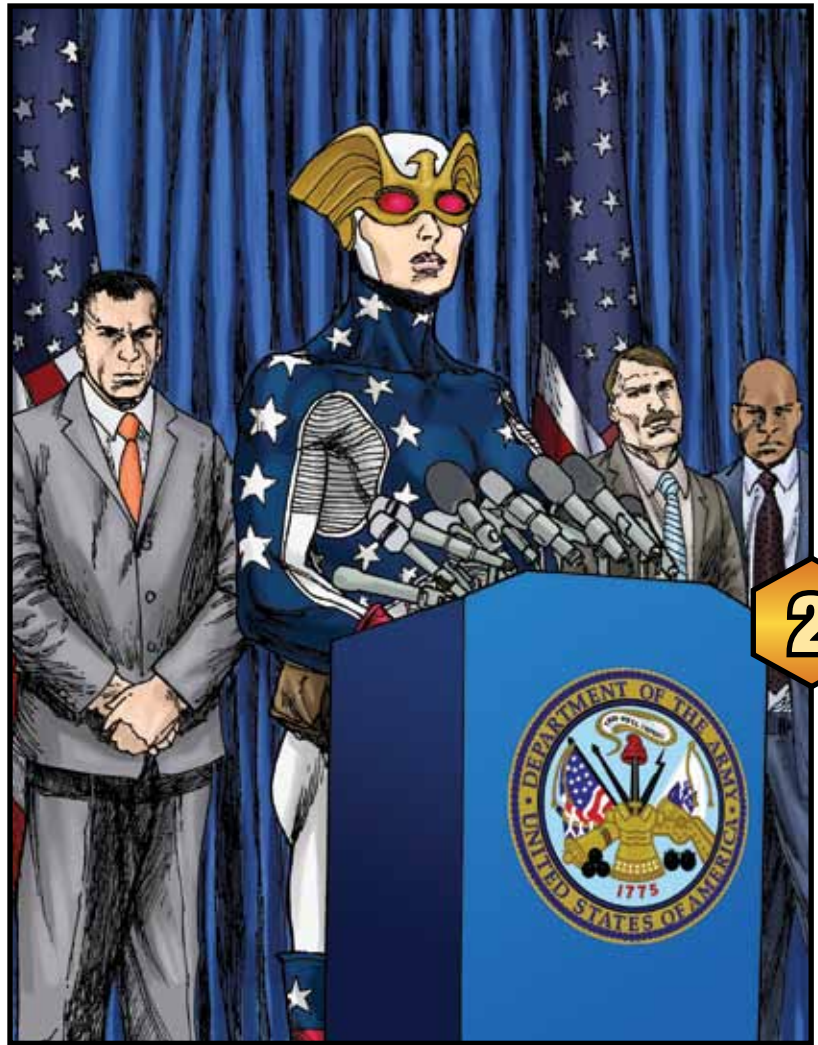
The GM can either grant such items for free to all team members as long as they remain with the team (an appropriate technique, especially if the point value of the items is low), require each player to set aside a number of his character’s points for team equipment, or include the team equipment in the same “Experience Point account” set up for team bases.

Sample team equipment appears in the *Gadgets* section of Chapter Five.

RELATIONSHIP WITH AUTHORITY

Though the question won’t necessarily come up in a team’s first few adventures, its members have to decide how they intend to interact with the area’s legitimate government authorities. Most such relationships fall into one of the following categories. Note that the players ought to be the ones to decide what relationship they want; if they don’t like the relationship they have with the authorities and that relationship continues for more than a few episodes, they begin to lose interest in and affection for the campaign. The GM can, of course, change the nature of the relationship temporarily (by having an enemy frame the team for murder, for example), but should be wary of changing it permanently unless that’s what the players want.

Government-Employed: The superteam’s actually part of some government agency. All team members should be given the *Federal/National Police Powers* Fringe Benefit. They pay for that, and some other team gear, by taking the Complication *Hunted* (Watched by their employer) — a result of their employers keeping a close eye on them.



Government-Sanctioned: The team’s not part of any government agency but has a formal right to engage in crimefighting activities, so long as those activities remain within the scope of some federal or local restrictions. (For instance, one restriction might be that the team communicate with the government about all investigations and combats.) Depending on the exact nature of the relationship, the GM might allow all members to have Fringe Benefits such as *Local Police Powers* and *Weapon Permit*. It’s very likely the team has a minor *Hunted* (Watched) owing to government scrutiny.

Friendly With The Law: The team cooperates with the law whenever possible; the law turns a blind eye to some of its activities (for example, not really investigating complaints that are nothing more than harassment attempts made against the heroes, not issuing citations for unauthorized use of a flying vehicle within city limits, and so on). This is a good “default” relationship for GMs and players who don’t want to worry too much about the “realistic” implications of their activities *vis-a-vis* the government.

Pursued By The Law: The team is Hunted by the local and perhaps federal authorities, who regard its members as outlaws for some reason (even if it's just because of "illegal use of superpowers" or "aggravated assault by superpower"). The PCs may have difficulty establishing a base, conducting their patrols, and even living their daily lives as a result of this "interference" with their heroic adventures.

GOVERNMENT LIAISONS

One staple of many team-oriented comic books is the "government liaison" — an NPC assigned by the authorities to work with the PC superteam in various capacities. In some cases this person is a law enforcement officer who actually goes out and takes part in the team's missions. More often, the government liaison is a bureaucrat or official of some sort who prefers to keep well out of harm's way.

The government liaison typically has one of two roles in the campaign: "good cop" and "bad cop." The good cop liaison is, basically, a friend and ally of the PCs. He genuinely admires them, supports what they're doing, and so on. He does his best to make their jobs easier, smooth things over with the government when they get in trouble, and obtain whatever resources they need that he can provide. Of course, he's still a government employee doing a government job, so his bosses may sometimes force him to act in ways he'd rather not, but at heart he's on the side of the angels. The bad cop liaison, on the other hand, either doesn't trust (or like) the PCs, or is more concerned about doing his job "by the book" than about really helping them. He spies on the PCs and reports their every move to his bosses; says unfavorable things about them to other government officials; keeps them on as tight a leash as he can; and snarls up their requests for help with bureaucratic red tape.

Friendly or not, a government liaison can be a big help to the PCs. He can get them equipment, access to experts, and funding they might not otherwise be able to obtain. On the other hand, he also keeps tabs on them (sometimes extremely detailed ones), and in some cases may even try to make them follow his orders. Sometimes having a government liaison can be a very mixed bag for the PCs — half really useful, half really aggravating. And that can make for some great roleplaying, and perhaps even provide the GM with an idea for a subplot or three.

Depending on the team's preferences and resources, the government liaison may work at (and even live at) their base, or he may have his own office in a government building downtown (city hall, the Federal Building, or what have you). Either choice offers the GM plenty of story potential, though the former provides more opportunities for the PCs to interact with the government liaison directly — and thus for the GM to develop him as a detailed, intriguing NPC, instead of leaving him as just another faceless functionary.

TEAM CHARTERS

A charter is a document laying out details of the team's goals, intended methodology, rules of governance and conduct, and the rights and restrictions it extends to its members. Charters typically cover things like:

- statement of team goals, philosophy, and/or purpose
- induction of new members (procedure, limits on team size)
- removal of team members (grounds and procedure for ejecting a member from the team)
- a description of team member privileges and benefits (salary, insurance, residuals from licensing deals, team credit cards, and so on)
- details on team leadership and officers (how the leader's chosen, the leader's responsibilities and powers, what officers the team has and how they're selected)
- a description of team member responsibilities, possibly including scheduling details (the team has a meeting on the first day of every month and each member must attend, each member must take monitor duty on a rotating schedule, required charity work or public appearances, all team members chip in to pay the butler's salary, and so on)
- rules of expected good conduct by all team members (or a "morals clause")
- a formal description of the team's (and thus each member's) relationship with the government (if applicable)

A new team typically has no charter (after all, it hasn't been together long enough to draft one), and many teams never create one, preferring a more *laissez-faire* approach to superheroing. Since minor points of team conduct and regulations rarely have any effect on the game, "no charter" is the default option for Champions campaigns (though the special effect of "no charter" might be "we have a charter, but neither the players nor the GM has bothered to write down any details").

Another approach, one used by many long-established teams/gaming groups, is to establish that the team has a charter, but not to worry about writing down all its details. The major points may be listed in one of the GM's files somewhere, and whenever a question about the contents of the charter comes up during the game, the players decide on it and the GM makes a note to add to the file.

Lastly, a group of players interested in doing so can actually draft an entire charter and make a copy for everyone in the game. This takes a lot of work, of course, but it definitely adds to the verisimilitude of the game. A fully fleshed-out charter may even generate some story ideas.

In some campaigns, a team may be *required* to have a charter. For example, government agencies might not be willing to extend sanction to a superteam that isn't serious enough to draft a charter and stick to it. Similarly, a wealthy patron might require all prospective members of the team he's assembling to sign a charter he's prepared (perhaps after some discussion regarding its terms). In Iron Age games stressing "realism" implications, a charter (in the form of bylaws) might be necessary for a superteam to incorporate so it qualifies as a legal entity and can get insurance, open up checking accounts in the team name, and so on.

TACTICS

Teams are more effective when their members act in concert, and one way to do so is to develop combat tactics — maneuvers that allow two or more members to combine their strengths in a way that overpowers or baffles the enemy.

For instance, let's say that one team member has Reflection, allowing him to Reflect all types of attacks, but he himself has no Ranged attack. Another team member has a laser attack. They might situate themselves on opposite sides of a villain, with the laser-blaster pretending to fire at the villain but actually firing at his teammate, and the teammate unexpectedly Reflecting the attack into the villain's back. The virtue of this approach is that it may be unexpected, giving the Reflecting character a much improved chance of hitting with the attack. (On the other hand, a missed Reflection roll means the character may get hit by his teammate's attack!)

The GM can help a team develop tactics by recognizing when an improvised move would actually be useful when practiced and repeated, and then recommending to the players that it be given a name and used on a regular basis. For instance, at the end of the episode with the laser-reflection attack, the GM might say to the players, "That was an interesting move; what do you call that?" This will prompt them to give the maneuver a distinctive code-name. In a later episode, if the players haven't already begun to utilize that maneuver, the GM might spot a situation where the circumstances mirror those of the original use of the maneuver, and point the fact out to the players, giving them the opportunity to use the move again. Over time, the characters, as they spend Experience Points to improve their powers or develop new ones, might even develop powers designed to be used in a complementary fashion.

Even if a team doesn't want to go to the effort of creating its own unique group of tactics, two or more team members can buy the *Teamwork Skill* to reflect, in general terms, their ability to work well together in combat. This allows them to Coordinate attacks, which can be extremely effective, especially against master villains, city-stomping giant monsters, and other such foes.

SOME TEAM TACTICS

In addition to the maneuvers described on pages 179-83, here are some possible tactics for a superteam to use. Clever players will undoubtedly come up with many more.

Can't Go There: A character with Barrier can sometimes construct and position his walls to deny the enemy access to certain areas, or channel foes' freedom of movement so his allies can make a devastating attack.

Drag-And-Drop: A fast-moving character (typically, a character with lots of meters in Flight) picks up a slower character, carries him toward the target, then lets him go so he performs a Move By or Move Through at the faster character's velocity. Depending on the GM's preference and the circumstances, you can either consider this a form of "fastball special" (see page 179); adapt the *Move Throw* rules on APG 168 for this purpose; or use the "dropped" character's base CV for the attack (on the grounds that he's going to try to twist and squirm and move so that he avoids the impact, thus negating much of the attacker's efforts to "aim" him).

Grab And Hold: A high-STR character Grabs a villain and holds him helpless while the "brick's" teammates attack. (On the other hand, this lowers the brick's DCV to the villain's allies' counterattacks....) One variation on this tactic uses Entangle, but that does grant the victim some extra PD/ED unless the Entangle has the *Takes No Damage From Attacks* Advantage or the attacks are ones that do no BODY (Mental Blast, some NNDs). Another involves using Martial Throw (or some other method) to render the target prone, halving his DCV.

Up, Up, And Away: A high-STR character can toss an enemy without Flight or Teleportation way up in the air, achieving three effects: it effectively removes the enemy from the combat for a while; it probably reduces the enemy's DCV, making it easy for the character's allies to attack him; and it may cause the enemy to take a considerable amount of damage when he falls back down to the ground.



SUPERHERO TEAM BENEFITS

Cost Benefit

2-8	<i>Official Legal Sanction:</i> Police Powers (extent varies based on scope of campaign)
5-10	Basic Radio Communicator (see page 226)
25-32	Advanced Radio Communicator (see page 226)
16-24	Armored Costume (see page 224)
27-40	Flight Ring (see page 228)
5	<i>Access To Team's Account:</i> Money: Well Off
var	<i>Member Of Renowned Team:</i> Positive Reputation
var	<i>Contribution To Team Base:</i> Base
var	<i>Contribution To Team Vehicle:</i> Vehicle
var	<i>Contribution To Team Computer:</i> Computer
var	<i>Good Friends With Team Liaison:</i> Contact

SUPERHERO TEAM COMPLICATIONS

Value Complication

15	Hunted: government sponsor (Frequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
var	Hunted: one or more of the team's arch-enemies
10	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Infrequently, Major)

TEAM BENEFITS

Besides the fact that a group of heroes can support each other in combat and take on villains none of them could handle individually, there are many other potential benefits to joining a superhero team. These include:

- access to a secure place to live and work (the team's base)
- access to team vehicles
- use of the team's super-technology (e.g., communicators, translators, flight gadgets)
- access to team funds (either generally, or for specific purposes)
- access to the team's database (which may include links to other computer systems private citizens ordinarily cannot use, such as the FBI's systems)
- use of team personnel for various purposes
- gaining police powers (local, national, international, or even interstellar)
- being covered by the team's super-insurance so the character's not personally liable for any property damage or injuries he causes while battling the forces of evil
- the opportunity to learn Skills and other abilities that he might otherwise lack, due to the team's resources (e.g., access to a training facility to practice new powers, being able to study Paramedics with the team's doctor)

On the other hand, joining a team may also create new problems in a character's life. He automatically becomes Hunted by any villain or organization who's Hunting (even just Watching) the team, for example. If the team has a patron, that patron may insist on knowing the character's Secret Identity and powers (this is particularly common for government sponsors). In some cases the PC may even become Subject To Orders due to the nature of the team.

The accompanying text box lists some of these benefits (and drawbacks) in game terms. The GM can use these to assemble a *Superteam Member* Template for his campaign, or roll them all up in a ball and define that as a *Superteam Membership Perk*.



... COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY:

**CHAPTER
THREE**

**GAMEMASTERING
CHAMPIONS**



CREATING YOUR SUPERHERO SETTING

Before you can run a Superhero campaign, you first have to create the setting in which your heroes will adventure. Typically this doesn't involve as much work as a Fantasy or Science Fiction game because you don't have to create the world from the ground up. Most Superhero games take place in the modern world, so you can take it for granted that the players are already familiar with the basics. They know where New York City and China are, how telephones and computers work, and what's been in the news recently. What you *do* have to inform them about is the changes in the setting that have occurred because of the existence of superhumans — not just which superhumans are currently active, but how history prior to the start of the campaign has been affected by superhumanity (if at all).

TIMELINE

"Timeline" refers not to the timeline of world history but to the events, particularly superhero and supervillain events, leading up to the start of the campaign. Having decided on the basic historical period in which to set your campaign, you should come up with timeline details pertaining just to superheroes and supervillains (since the real world doesn't provide very many examples of these). For instance:

- What sources do superpowers come from?
- When did supers first appear?
- How many supers are there?
- How have supers affected history and society?
- What super-related mysteries are still unsolved?

SOURCES OF SUPERPOWERS

In the standard four-color superhero campaign — one based on the genre characteristics of the massive, superhero-laden universes of the major comic book publishers — superhuman powers can result from, or be caused by, a tremendous number of events or sources. Some of these may affect the campaign's timeline (for example, mutations are rare before the development of atomic power, and a major event like the crash of a starship that creates lots of superhumans probably has other effects on the world as well).

The choice of which sources or events can "create" superpowers in your world is an important one. The fewer sources you allow, the tighter the range of powers PCs can manifest, and the smaller the number of special effects they can define for those powers. Possible sources include, but are not limited to:

Alien Species: The galaxy features other sapient races (perhaps countless numbers of them), and in some cases, representatives of those races are super-powered. It may be that all members of those races are super, at least on Earth; it may be that only a few are; it may be that intermingling of alien and Human DNA results in supers. Alien minerals, foods, or other substances may create superpowers in Humans.

Extradimensional Energies: Quantum physics, high-order mathematics, natural energy fields in the body, or completely inexplicable circumstances might cause a character to interact in a strange way with the very fabric of reality. Being able to slip partway or completely into another dimension is a plausible explanation for powers such as Desolidification, Teleportation, Damage Reduction, and super-speed.

Genetic Manipulation: Breakthroughs in gene replacement therapy, long theorized and now beginning to appear in greater and greater numbers, suggest a world in which superheroes not only appear, but are designed by geneticists in laboratories. Unlike many of the other power rationalizations here, the "designer genes" explanation doesn't come with a long list of genre conventions or assumptions — when you say "psionics," people think about a short list of powers, but in the comics there's no short list



associated with gene modification. So this power origin serves as a very broad one; players can use it for practically any power you permit.

Magic And Mysticism: In the campaign world, magic really exists. Ordinary people (or, if you prefer, a select subset of people who possess some sort of magical ancestry) can learn sorcery, and there may be families that possess inherent magical powers or traits. Such campaign worlds are also usually characterized by the presence of remnants of ancient magical civilizations, connections to dimensions inhabited by the gods of various mythological pantheons, and the like.

Mutation: The campaign allows the notion of genes gone amok to explain the presence of superpowers, but in this case the genes are modified by nature and chance rather than Genetic Manipulation. Many campaigns explain these genetic alterations as being the result of radiation released into the atmosphere during the August 1945 bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and atmospheric atom bomb tests by the Americans, Soviets, French, Chinese, and other nations since then.

Psionic Powers: Modern culture is steeped in an awareness of paranormal phenomena, and the many powers attributed to extrasensory perception — telepathy, telekinesis, remote viewing, pyrokinesis, astral projection, and so on — make psionics a good source for superpower origins.

Super-Science: The assumption that the technology of tomorrow (or of the campaign world today) will be smaller, faster, more powerful, and more energy-efficient than ours — not to mention capable of accomplishing tasks that ours simply can't — provides a rationale for many superhuman abilities. Build microminiaturized laser beams, ion thrusters, environment systems, communications, sight enhancement gear, and a force-field into a device a human can step into and seal around him, and you have a set of powered armor — an instant superhero.

The Super-Science explanation also includes most “radiation accidents” that have classically given rise to superhuman powers: being bitten by a radioactive animal; being struck by lightning while standing next to a rack of chemicals; being bombarded with strange energy when an experimental device explodes; a super-scientist

subjecting himself to his own experimental process rather than risking another person's life in the pursuit of knowledge; and so on. In this case the character doesn't get his powers from a device he builds, but nevertheless they still result from Science, scientific phenomena, or scientific processes somehow.

Supernatural Forces: The existence of the supernatural (ghosts, vampires, werewolves, curses, and so on) could explain many possible superhero powers. What if someone were descended from a vampire, and possesses some of the vampire's powers but only a few of his weaknesses? What if a scientific genius discovered that lycanthropy (the condition of being a werewolf) is a virus that causes specific physical modifications, and can be altered in the lab, resulting in a breed of wolfman who's not cursed to mindlessly hunt and slaughter innocents during the full moon? (Note that “the supernatural” in the context of superpower origins is often distinct from “magic,” in that the supernatural is normally considered something unnatural or to be feared, so any association with it by a super is cause for normal people to regard him with suspicion or dread. Similarly, Magic is often learned and studied, whereas the Supernatural can perhaps be studied, but not so easily mastered or controlled.)

Training: In the comic books, training and dedication can take a seemingly-normal person a long way, allowing that person to become competitive with true superhumans. Assume, for instance, that a genetically normal man or woman can train up to a STR of 20, providing 4d6 damage in combat. If that person learns a martial art with a maneuver that adds +4d6, the damage per attack becomes 8d6. If the person buys four Extra DCs, the damage becomes 12d6. This character can't act in every way like a character with STR 60, but can do as much damage in combat.

Of course, you're free to add sources not described above, or to “subdivide” these broad categories into more specific ones. Less common than the sources above, but equally valid in a superhero environment, are things like extraordinary luck, use of drugs (which would fall under Super-Science but is seldom seen in comics these days), manipulation of the body's natural electromagnetic field, and so on.

PLAYING THE ORIGIN STORY

Most characters are built with the assumption that their origin stories have already occurred, even if it was a very recent event. You should consider making the actual origin events part of a game session. They are, after all, often some of the most dramatic and important events in a character's life. (In the case of a “shared origin” campaign, as described on page 111, gaming out the origin story is almost mandatory.)

There are two ways to do this: you can take the player aside and discuss doing this; or you can allow the player to come into a game under the assumption that the origin has already occurred when it hasn't. In either case, someone has to create a character sheet for the pre-origin version of the character. And — this is important — unless the player's comfortable with running a normal character in a violent superhero environment, it's best for the origin events to occur very early in the adventure so the character has his powers through most of the play-session.

UNLIMITED SOURCE CAMPAIGNS

Most Champions campaigns are “unlimited source” games. In an unlimited source campaign, the GM permits just about every conceivable origin for superpowers. This offers the advantage of giving the players a very broad range of backgrounds for their characters. On the other hand, this approach often risks the players’ willing suspension of disbelief, especially when several of those players aren’t comic book fans and aren’t predisposed toward this most unlikely view of the universe.

An unlimited source campaign presupposes a setting that is (or once was) regularly visited by a number of alien races, has one or more traditions of magical training, was once dominated by the gods of legend (perhaps by several different pantheons, either concurrently or consecutively), experienced a wide variety of genetic mutations appearing primarily in the years after the use of the first atom bombs (and later duplicated and improved upon in the laboratory), features vampires and mummies and other thing that go bump in the night, all the while being the home of several martial arts traditions that allow the most devout students to achieve superhuman levels of ability... it’s a lot for some players to accept. It may seem more like a supermarket tabloid world than a comic book world. Nevertheless, because it mimics established comic book worlds, this approach suits more Champions campaigns than any other.

LIMITED SOURCE CAMPAIGNS

If all the players can’t accept every source for superpowers, or you have a specific type of setting or storyline in mind, you’ll probably want to use a subset of the available choices, relating them to one another whenever possible. In many cases, one of these sources defines the flavor of the campaign, and the others support it.

Example: Morgan plans to have a campaign oriented around mutant characters. Obviously, he permits the Mutation source.

He decides that, logically, various governments and medical cartels, as they discover the existence of mutants, will begin to try to duplicate and improve on their genetic patterns. Therefore characters are permitted to use Mutation and Genetic Engineering as the basis for their powers. Morgan decides to distinguish between true mutants and deliberately engineered mutants this way: engineered mutants do not show up on devices that scan for mutant powers (thus these characters cannot take Distinctive Features: Mutant, and are not as vulnerable to being Hunted), but only true mutants can take Multipowers, and only they can have powers with an Active Point value of 75 (engineered mutants are limited to 60 Active Points).

Morgan further decides that Super-Science permits a small number of superpowers (defined as super-miniaturized implants and gadgets); these are limited to Enhanced Senses and a short list of other Powers.

Finally, Morgan says that Training, specifically Martial Arts, allows a character to attain superhuman levels of damage, but doesn’t permit superpowers with martial arts rationale (for instance, using the manipulation of ch’i as an excuse to purchase Telekinesis or Damage Reduction).

Example: Dean wants to run a campaign in which most of the PCs are sorcerous supers, so he chooses Magic and Mysticism as the principal source for origins in the campaign. As with Mutants in the campaign example above, he decides to offer this Source an advantage in character-building: only mystics can base powers on Variable Power Pools or Multipowers, and only mystics’ powers can have up to 90 Active Points; all others are limited to 60. On the down side, mystics must have the Limitation Requires A Roll on all their powers.

Other origin Sources are available. Among them are Supernatural Forces (whose powers, though less potentially mighty than those of Magic and Mysticism, tend to be more reliable, since they don’t require Skill Rolls) and Training. In this campaign, Dean decides there’s an important link between the world of magic and that of martial arts, so martial artists can buy some superpowers that seem appropriate to the mysticism surrounding the world of martial arts.

3



UNIFIED THEME CHARACTERS

Another origin-derived way to define a campaign is to require all PCs to follow a common theme. This doesn't mean a common source (though sources sometimes act as themes) or a common set of special effects (e.g., all characters possessing powers of fire or based on extrasensory perception). Instead, it signifies that all the characters have a common sort of background that sets them apart both from ordinary humanity and other superteams where each hero has a different sort of superhero role and background. (Alternately, you may decide that *all* superheroes in the world share a theme.) Some examples of possible themes/campaigns include:

All-Alien: The PCs could belong to one specific alien race. Perhaps they're extraterrestrials stranded on Earth, using their nonhuman powers to protect the inhabitants of this world. (They could be favorites of the people, or passing for human, or feared by humanity.) An all-alien campaign could be played for laughs, with the aliens' oddball perceptions of Earth customs acting as the source for most of the humor (as in the TV show *Third Rock From The Sun*), or could be deadly serious, with Earth government forces determined to hunt down and dissect/extermine the alien heroes.

All-Aquatic: Every character in this campaign has the ability to breathe water (or has convenient technology that supplies him with a breathable atmosphere while underwater), and most of their adventures take place in the ocean depths. This sort of campaign tends to be similar to the Strange Super Societies element described on page 32, with an important distinction: all-aquatic heroes tend to interact with "surface people" on a regular basis (for instance, when surface activities like radioactive waste dumping or bomb testing endanger the undersea environment, or when surface criminal organizations enact some scheme that sends agents down into the watery deep).

All-Martial Arts: Every PC would have a distinct martial arts style (sibling teams and hero/sidekick pairings could possess the same martial art, naturally). The supers' powers have a "martial arts" special effects; some might be based on martial arts notions such as *chi*, breath control, secret techniques, and so on. (See *HERO System Martial Arts* for plenty of ideas for such characters.)

All-Mercenary: The heroes in this type of campaign all belong to an organization that performs missions for money. They might be morally and ethically upright missions (performing an outer space rescue of endangered astronauts), or morally ambiguous and questionable ones (infiltrating a foreign country and kidnapping its leader so he can be turned over to an intelligence agency). This can be especially fun for players who don't want to worry about

the ethical side of power use; all PCs would need to be similarly disinterested in weighing questions of rights and consequences. Or the campaign could be set up to explore these dilemmas, and the heroes must find some way to walk a moral tight-rope on any mission where their objective falls a little too far on the wrong side of a line they'd prefer not to cross.

All-Monster: In this campaign, every character is some type of monster. They might all be of the same approximate type of monster (all vampires, all werewolves, all golems), or each character might be the only example in this group of his type of monster. In any case, All-Monster campaigns usually involve the heroes keeping out of the way of monster-slayers (from villagers with pitchforks to dedicated and proficient enemies of the supernatural) while combating even more secret forces that actually are powerful and evil.

All-Monster Hunter: The diametrical opposite of the All-Monster campaign is the one in which every character is a dedicated adversary of monsters. The degree to which these characters can be considered "superheroes" is debatable — they spend most of their campaign time tracking down and destroying (or sometimes curing) monsters — but when they interact with more customary superheroes, they can perform more normal costumed crimefighting tasks.

All-Mystic: Every character in this campaign is a student of the supernatural. Usually it's not enough for them to have powers that derive from magic in some way (for instance, a character possessing an enchanted ring that allows him to transform into an indestructible flying strongman) — they must all be students of magic, with their studies and curiosity leading them into adventures that chiefly deal with realms of magic and the supernatural.

All-Patriot: Every PC belongs to the same nation and is an evident symbol of that nation. Most wear costumes based around the nation's flag or figures from its folklore, the better to keep the affection of the people. The adventures of All-Patriot campaigns tend to revolve around the heroes' conflicts with supers and menaces from opposed nations, and are best set during wartime.

All-Tech: In this campaign, every PC has powers based on technology. The group might include Gadgeteers, Powered Armor characters, cyberkinetics, and many other types of heroes, but all of them are united by their interest in and use of super-tech. Most of their adventures revolve around technology as well — they have to stop industrial sabotage (or villains who want to steal their own tech), help the space program solve its problems, and so forth.

All-Teen: See *Teen Champions* on page 51.



All-Vigilante: In the comics, most supers, and almost all superhero teams, find some way to cooperate with the authorities. Some operate with official government sanction, some work out informal arrangements that allow supers and law enforcement both to operate without stepping on one another's toes too often. But in this sort of campaign, all the heroes act as judge, jury, and (possibly) executioner, distinctly putting them on the wrong side of the law. All PCs in such a campaign should take the Complication of being Hunted by various law enforcement organizations (and possibly by superheroes as well).

The advantage of running a unified theme campaign is that the PCs tend to cooperate more readily — circumstances often force them to trust one another and become more dependent on one another. In addition, characters with common thematic backgrounds often have common elements in their background stories, meaning the GM doesn't have to create as many antagonists or villain organizations. For example, in a campaign based on normal four-color superhero team comic books, there needs to be one supernatural bad guy organization, one high-tech superspy organization, one villainous time-traveling organization, one intelligence agency led by a villain with a mysterious agenda, and so on, *ad infinitum*. In an All-Mystic campaign, you only need the supernatural bad guy organizations.

THE APPEARANCE OF SUPERS

Having determined what sources provide powers to supers in your world, you can decide when in your setting's history they first appeared.

The usual choices include:

- Now
- Recently (within the last few years)
- A generation ago, or more

A related question, if you choose the third option, is this: has the appearance of new supers been regular since the first ones appeared, or have there been long periods when no new ones debuted? If the latter, why?

FIRST SUPERS APPEAR NOW

This choice means the PCs are among the very first supers to appear in the world. The advantage to it is the PCs feel extra-special (and justifiably so). The characters know they're super, head and shoulders above common humanity. Their players know in addition that these characters are the first of their kind and will probably set the tone for generations to come.

But there's a downside, too. Since these supers are the first, there may be no logical reason for them to behave as supers in the comic books do. For every one of the following questions, the GM has to implement an answer if he wants these conventions to appear in the campaign. (For some of these questions, it may be enough to establish that the campaign world, like the real world, has had its own superhero comic books

(just not any true superhumans) for many years, so that when people with similar abilities actually begin appearing, their natural inclination is to behave like published superhero characters do.)

WHY DO SUPERS WEAR COSTUMES?

Dressing up in a colorful or revealing outfit to perform one's after-hours hobby is just a *bit* unusual, and you may need to give the players a good reason why their characters do it. Here's one possibility: a rich philanthropist (probably an NPC) notices early on that metahumans are appearing and helps organize some of them into a team. But he is, or is aided by, a savvy marketing and publicity expert who immediately comprehends the virtues of instant visual recognition by the public. (Alternately, he may recognize that a distinctive costume is something a hero can trademark and exploit through the sales of posters, action figures, and comic books.) In this context it's worth remembering that in the comics, members of brand-new super-teams often wore the same costume design at first, sometimes with slight variations, before eventually asserting their independence and choosing unique designs.

WHY DO SUPERS USE CODE-NAMES?

Code-names, in association with costumes, were originally intended chiefly to protect a superhero's identity by making it more difficult for villains, other criminals, and/or the agents of the law to track down the hero and punish him for what they consider misdeeds. For characters to do this in a campaign where there've been no crime-fighters with concealed identities before, it must occur to them very early that this is a concern. If none of the characters figures it out before taking to the streets as a crimefighter, you may want to set up an adventure that points out the need for identity concealment out to the PCs. For instance, an NPC hero, also a novice, might be tracked down and assassinated in a very public way by organized crime. News reports describing the incident should emphasize how easily reporters were able to figure out who the hero was... meaning it was just as easy for the crime syndicate.

WHY DO ANY SUPERHUMANS FIGHT CRIME?

Each character needs to have a very personal, very direct reason to pit himself against the forces of crime and chaos, and that reason needs to be reflected both in his personal history and his Complications. If you can't figure out the character's crimefighting motivation from his Complications, you should insist the player add an appropriate Psychological Complication or two.

WHY DOES ANYONE TAKE SUPERHEROES SERIOUSLY?

The answer to this question is not "Because they're superhumanly powerful." The public could recognize that individuals are superhumanly powerful but also believe them to be utterly insane. Why would the public begin to regard supers as a significant or worthwhile component of national or world culture?

The answer is that early in the campaign they begin to make a difference, a *positive* difference, in the lives of normal people. Though the GM doesn't have to make the sudden presence of superheroes turn the world into a nice place to live, free of injustice, crime, and bad thoughts, the PCs should have some durable victories that establish their worth. On a small scale, the heroes might turn a crime-ridden section of the campaign city into a neighborhood where people can actually walk at night, and/or inspire a fan club whose members, in emulating the heroes' training, stay free of criminal activities. On a more global scale, the heroes could save the world at least once in a spectacular and highly-visible way, so that everyone knows about their heroism and courage.

FIRST HEROES APPEARED RECENTLY

This option is somewhat easier on a GM than the "First Heroes Appear Now" choice. It allows you to establish that the presence of superheroes in your setting has begun to have an effect and begun to take on definite trends, which means the PCs don't have to establish every detail of the interaction between superheroes and the rest of the world. Nevertheless, you may still need to provide some justification for the habits described above.

For example, if supers have been around for a few years, they can have already established the pattern of wearing costumes/using code-names. They might have set up a pattern of the way they deal with supervillains — whether most villains tend to die in combat with the heroes or be captured and sent to prison, for instance. Laws trying to curb the activities of superheroes might have been enacted but would probably not yet be enforceable, and the public's interest in, and even adulation of, superheroes might not yet have been tarnished by the occasional bad apple.

FIRST HEROES APPEARED SOME TIME AGO

With this approach — the most common one in gaming campaigns — superheroes began appearing on the campaign world a generation or more ago, and society's had a reasonable amount of time to adapt to their presence. This offers you the advantage that it allows him to design a world that emulates the universes of the major comic book publishers, but it has the disadvantage of creating more work for you. You have to establish (in at least an outline fashion) the history of superheroing and supervillainy in your world and its effects on society, technology, famous world events, and so on.

WHERE SUPERHUMANS APPEAR

In addition to *when* superhumans appear, you should give some thought to the issue of *where* they appear. Are they evenly distributed throughout the setting's population, or do they tend to arise more in some places than in others? In settings designed to resemble those of the major comic book companies, superhumans

seem to be more common, and more active, in the more advanced nations and regions of Earth — the United States, Canada, and Europe — and less common elsewhere. If you want to mirror this situation, you should give some thought to *why* this state of affairs exists; the answers may have intriguing implications for the campaign.

Similarly, if superhumans are especially common in areas where they'd otherwise be rare, you should know why, and consider the implications. For example, perhaps superhumans are uncommon throughout Africa as a whole, but arise with unusual frequency in the nation of Malawi. This is because a bizarre alien starship crashed there decades ago, and the strange radiations it gives off have created superhumans of various sorts. This may in turn have affected the course of sociopolitical events in southern/eastern Africa.

NUMBER OF SUPERHUMANS

You should decide approximately how many supers there are (known and unknown), whether the proportion of supers to the general population is on the rise, stable, or declining, and so on. Most published comic book settings have a relatively small, stable number of superheroes compared to the general population, but there are examples from every part of the spectrum (such as Alan Moore's *Top Ten*, which chronicles the lives and adventures of police officers in a world where literally *everyone* has superhuman powers). You should decide how many costumed supers he thinks are active worldwide, and then try to figure out what this means on a "per capita" basis. Consider the following questions:

Out of every million people on the Earth:

- How many are superhuman in some sense?
- Of those, how many act as costumed supers?
- Of those, what's the proportion of heroes to villains?
- What other factors affect superhuman demographics?
- Do the numbers derived above include alien visitors?
- Does the number of costumed supers derived above include highly-trained normals, and normals using super-technology, who fight crime as superheroes but are not truly superhuman?
- Is the population of superhumans increasing, remaining stable, or declining?
- Why?
- Has this trend been the same in earlier time periods?
- If not, what has it been, and why?



Example: Darren wants to create a campaign with comparatively few costumed supers in the world — approximately 20 superheroes, approximately 30 supervillains, for a total of 50. This world uses only a few sources for superpowers (mostly Genetic Alteration) and this keeps the number of “unknown supers” relatively low, so Darren establishes that for every one costumed superhero, there are no more than nine potential supers, for a total world population of about 500 superhumans of any sort. There may be some additional “costumed heroes” who aren’t superhuman; those aren’t included in these numbers.

Example: Jason wants to create a campaign with a lot of costumed supers in the world — a total of about 6,000, split evenly between heroes and villains.

That’s about 1/1,000,000th of the total world population, but that’s only the most noticeable portion of the superhuman population. Jason decides that for every costumed super, there are probably 1,000 people who are superhuman in some way — though those superhuman traits often aren’t powerful enough to put let the super be competitive in the “big leagues,” the costumed-super world arena.

So Jason knows that approximately one person in 1,000 worldwide is superhuman in some sense, but the vast majority of such people do not become costumed supers — either out of disinterest (because they never realize they’re superpowered), because they choose to profit from their powers (legally or illegally) without acting as a costumed super, or for other reasons. Of those who are super in some sense, one in 1,000 becomes a costumed super.

Jason further decides that for every 10 true superhumans, there is another individual who, though not superpowered, uses advanced training or technology to “run with the supers.” That adds up to another 600 costumed “supers” in his campaign setting.

SUPERS AND SOCIETY

Having established when, in world history, superheroes and supervillains first began to appear, you should consider their effect on history, culture, and society from that point until now. (Of course, if heroes have only just begun to appear, you can skip most of this step.)

HISTORICAL EVENTS

Unless your world has a very, very small number of superhumans whose existence is kept secret from the general public somehow, the presence of supers would have to have some effect on historical events. Just how much of an effect varies according to their numbers, when they appear, whether they’re evenly matched against opposing supers, where they appeared in the greatest numbers, and other factors.

For example, if powerful supers began to appear in profusion just before the onset of World War II, it makes sense that they would have a dramatic effect on the outcome of the war. Looking at it logically, if most of the world’s superheroes appeared in one of the Allied nations, World War II might not have happened. Would Nazi Germany have invaded Poland in 1939, precipitating the war, if Hitler and his High Command had known that a handful of costumed individuals could kick his planes, tanks, and infantry right back across the border without raising a sweat? Probably not. But what if the distribution of supers was more even than that — what if there were as many supers in the Axis nations as in the Allied nations? The war might have taken place just as in our history, with there being an additional “superhero theater of war.” Things could get even uglier if you assume that Nazi Germany had the majority of the world’s superhumans on its side.

So, what you need to do is decide what effects you want the presence of supers to have had on world history. It’s easy, when setting up the details of supers’ influence on history, to make that influence too great or too little. In the World War II example above, having the presence of supers prevent the war, or make it too easy for either side to win, is “too great.” Eliminating World War II from history removes events that shape and define the world for generations to come, thus eliminating an important “touchstone” that helps the players understand and react to the campaign setting. It also forces you either to learn enough about pre-war world politics and sociology to construct a plausible detailed history in the absence of that war or to fabricate a history of the second half of the twentieth century that lacks detail and verisimilitude. But having Axis and Allied supers simply cancel one another out is “too little.” Their presence means nothing. They may have adventures, but their net effect on the world is nil.

The trick is to find specific places in history where the presence of supers makes a significant difference, while allowing the general flow of history to remain the same. Here are some examples:

In the real world, the Pacific theater portion of the Second World War ended after the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In a comic book world, plans for employment of those bombs could have been made, but President Harry Truman could have listened to an impassioned speech by the leader of America's wartime superheroes and allowed those supers to spearhead a conventional invasion of Japan. The net result might have been the conquest of Japan with the loss of very little human life — though possibly with the loss of many of those war-weary U.S. heroes — leading to a post-war Japan with different cultural traits (for instance, a lack of societal dread regarding atomic weapons). Another slight difference might be that there was no glut of radiation-spawned monsters in the campaign world during the Fifties.

In the real world, Communist forces led by Mao Tse-tung took control of China in 1949. Representatives of the former government, the Kuomintang, fled to the island of Taiwan and established themselves there. Since then, the existence of Taiwan has been a precarious one as the People's Republic of China has maneuvered to return that island to PRC control. In a comic book world, the forces of the Kuomintang might never have established a toehold there; instead, a collection of Chinese supervillains, taking advantage of the area's political chaos at that time, seized control of Taiwan. Today, Taiwan might be a rogue nation ruled by supervillains — a no-man's-land where personal power and wealth stand in for law, but which is too strong (thanks to having so many native supers) for any one nation to overcome. Its presence still destabilizes the area, but in a very different way than the real-world Taiwan does.

In the real world, man first walked on the Moon in 1969, and has yet to establish a viable moon-base or large-scale orbital colony as of 2010. In a comic book world, a rogue scientist could have built a device to take him to the Moon in 1957 (which is, of course, where he obtained his superpowers). He spent the subsequent years assisting the space program, so that now, decades later, there are viable colonies in space and on the lunar and Martian surfaces. The net change to the lives of the average citizen on Earth is very slight, but the change to history is significant.

Obviously, the earlier in history supers first appear, the more changes the GM can make to history. If the GM has no real interest in history, especially that of the twentieth century, he might want to establish that the first appearance of supers was relatively recent.

HISTORY AND THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

Don't forget to tie some of the campaign's PCs into the history you've established. With many players, that makes them feel that much more a part of the campaign setting; it becomes more important to them, and they become more important to it. Some easy ways to do this include:

- Have one or more PCs be descendants of supers from earlier generations (or even be a "time transplant" [page 95])
- Have a PC's superpowers relate to or derive from the experiments of earlier scientists and mystics
- Have a technologically-oriented PC's gadgets come, at least in part, from earlier events and inventors
- Have one or more PCs descend from investigators, military personnel, explorers, scholars, or other personalities who would have been in a position to experience unusual events

CULTURE

The presence of superhumans almost inevitably makes the campaign world different from the real world in both obvious and subtle ways. Here are some topics you should consider within your campaign:

SUPERHUMANS' CULTURAL STATUS

How does the general public regard superheroes and supervillains? Some options include:

Celebrity: Superhumans are the equivalent of Hollywood celebrities (supers' social activities, romantic affairs, petty feuds, hairstyle and costume changes, and more are as avidly followed as their crimefighting/criminal activities; fan clubs, web sites, and Internet newsgroups are devoted to them).

Lurid Fascination: The public views superhumans as it once did Thirties gangsters (people follow their activities with a mix of admiration for rebellion and horrified fascination).

Condescension/Intolerance: The public reacts to superhero activities with a mix of appreciation, condescension, and eye-rolling intolerance.

Hatred/Fear: Superhumans are regarded more or less the same as serial killers or terrorists (wanted posters appear everywhere, police forces pool their resources to capture these fiends, people flee from them in terror when they appear on the scene).

ENTERTAINMENT

Are there songs about superheroes? TV shows? Movies? If there are superheroes in real life, are there still superhero comic books? If so, do most deal with fictitious heroes, or are most of them licensed titles fictionalizing real heroes' exploits? If there aren't superhero comics, what are the most prevalent forms of comics?

INSPIRATION

Does the presence of superheroes inspire the common citizen to better himself and the world, or does the obvious superiority of the superhero dispirit the common man, increasing the prevalence of sloth, economic recession, and clinical depression? If the supers realize the latter situation is the case, what might they do to counter this dangerous state of affairs?

LAW

The presence of superpowered people, some of whom ignore any law that inconveniences them in any way, some of whom ignore only the laws that keep them from being effective as crimefighters, inevitably has an effect on the way laws are written and enforced. The world of the law typically reacts to the presence of supers in one of three ways: Rejection; Acceptance; or Incorporation. In a world with a long history of superhero activity, the first reaction tends to be Rejection; after a few years, this may change to Acceptance; ultimately, this may change to Incorporation.

(This section only discusses general approaches to how the law interacts with superhumanity. For a detailed review of the legal implications of superpowers and how the law adapts to supers, see the *Stronghold* sourcebook.)

REJECTION

A world where the legal reaction to supers is Rejection tends to regard its supers, regardless of their individual motivations or histories, as criminals. Crimefighters have to stop crime and then flee one short step ahead of the police. Law enforcement agencies have arrest warrants out on known supers, even ones who've never harmed another person. If the news media follows the lead of the local and national authorities, the only press supers receive will be negative. Campaigns where this sort of reaction is most appropriate include those where superhumans have only recently begun to appear in the world and campaigns where supers are, for some political or cultural reason, considered monstrous or evil (e.g., a world characterized by "mutant hysteria").

Some individual points of the relationship between supers and the law include:

Reaction Of Peace Officers: Arrest superheroes on sight; prosecute without exception; reveal true identities to the press upon arrest.

New Laws: Equate the use of most superhuman powers with discharging firearms in public and reckless endangerment, increase penalties for concealing one's identity in the commission of a crime and for use of lethal/excessive force (i.e., superpowers) during commission of a crime.

Federal Response: Governments of nations where superheroes appear tend to be panicky. They may create public or secret programs to duplicate the processes that create supers, or force captured supers to work for them (in a hostile "work for us or go to prison for life/be assassinated" environment). The government might permit the military to fight superhumans domestically even if the military's ordinarily forbidden by law from taking action within the nation's borders. Harsh

SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION LAWS

The law most powerfully and personally intrudes on the lives of superheroes when government officials in the campaign establish "superhuman registration laws." Used properly, these laws have lots of story potential for Champions campaigns.

As the name indicates, a superhuman registration law requires anyone with a superhuman power or ability to register with the government (typically the federal government, though states or provinces may have their own registration laws). Politicians in the campaign who support the registration law may make analogies to driver registration or gun licensing laws — like them, superhuman powers are potentially dangerous, so they need to be kept track of. Civil libertarians typically have other opinions, making pessimistic claims about invasion of privacy and governmental manipulation of superhumans.

In some campaigns, registration laws apply only to certain types of superhumans, such as

mutants or characters with supernatural powers. But most registration laws cover *all* superhumans, or at least those with innate powers. Characters with technology-based powers probably have to register their weapons and gadgets in other ways, and characters whose powers result from intense training and personal development may not have to register at all.

The big question for the PCs, of course, is: will they register? Many superhumans object to registration laws, fearing the government intends to use the information to further invade their privacy, blackmail them, control them, or draft them into the military. If they get angry enough about it, these supers may form a "resistance movement," one that might even unite some heroes and villains behind a common cause. Other superhumans, supportive of the law, won't hesitate to register. Where the PCs fall within this continuum may define the course of the campaign, or at least an important subplot/story arc.

“superpowers registration laws” (whether covering all superhumans or just some types) may be enacted and enforced (see accompanying sidebar).

Insurance Industry: Denies any claims made on the basis of superhero/supervillain interaction, classifying them in the same category as acts of war and acts of God.

ACCEPTANCE

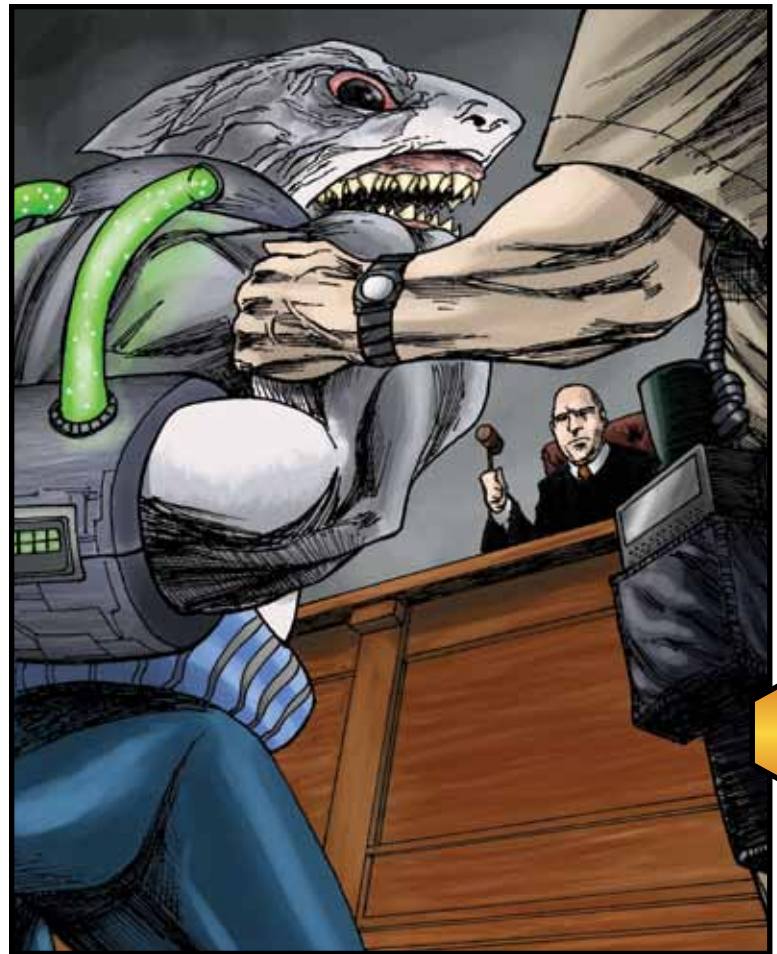
A world where the legal reaction to supers is Acceptance tends to regard its superheroes as champions of the people and its supervillains as menaces to be dealt with as just like any other criminal. Crimefighters are often able to work hand-in-gauntlet with local and federal law enforcement authorities. The news media tends to follow its own agenda in reporting on the activities of supers, generally giving good press to supers (whether heroic or criminal) who are charming and make for good stories.

Campaigns where this sort of reaction is most appropriate include those where supers have been around for a generation or more, so that the initial shock of their appearance has long subsided, or (more rarely) those where the national culture is traditionally one of acceptance and tolerance to a degree that would be considered extreme (or unusually enlightened) by modern standards.

Some individual points of the relationship between supers and the law include:

Reaction Of Peace Officers: The police arrest supers with warrants issued against them, and the government prosecutes them as appropriate; the authorities acquire as much information as possible about all supers in the region, and exchange such information with other local, federal, and even international agencies; law enforcement unofficially cultivates working relationships with the most professional and emotionally steady superheroes; prosecutors reveal a superhero's true identity to the press only at a trial's beginning (a known, frequently-captured supervillain's true identity tends to become a matter of public record early in his career, if the campaign's at all “realistic”). The “sanctioning” of superheroes by the government is possible, though relatively rare.

New Laws: The government officially follows the letter of the law in matters such as use of powers in public, reckless endangerment, and the like, but enforcement of those laws tends to vary based on each individual city, the circumstances of each case, and other factors. Some jurisdictions may have special laws that take superpowers into account (e.g., use of any superpower on another person constitutes aggravated assault, registered and licensed telepaths can testify as to evidence gained via telepathy). The authorities may implement laws that permit supers to testify under their code names, so long as their real names are known to the government and law enforcement can positively identify them as the supers in question. The government almost certainly implements laws regarding how superhumans can be



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humanely incarcerated or otherwise incapacitated, often building special prisons specifically to hold superpowered criminals (such as Stronghold in the Champions Universe).

Federal Response: Governments have by now given up on the possibility of controlling all supers everywhere and have lost the edge of their panic. Government programs to create superpowered federal agents are common (though not necessarily successful), and nations possessing many supers often have at least one official superhero team (either publicly known as such or secretly working for the government). Such governments also may have other federal responses to the dangers rogue supers represent, including super-capturing apparati or super-agent organizations (like PRIMUS and UNTIL in the Champions Universe). Superpower registration laws may still exist, but are often less draconian or restricted to certain types of superhumans (e.g., mutants or mystics).

Insurance Industry: The insurance industry allows/recommends the purchase of superhuman damage insurance, which pays off when a policy holder sustains financial or personal loss from the actions of identifiable supers. An insurance company can reap tremendous profits over the years on such policies, but any truly destructive supervillain rampage (such as one that collapses a skyscraper) can force a company into bankruptcy.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND SUPERHUMANS

In many comic book settings, the government gets involved in monitoring, controlling, creating, and/or employing superhumans. Sometimes the government creates a special bureaucracy specifically to deal with superhuman-related matters; sometimes existing institutions work with superhumans in their own spheres of authority. Here are some examples of possible relations between real-world government agencies and superhumans, using the United States government; for other nations, simply substitute a corresponding department, bureau, or ministry.

The Department Of Defense: The DoD would have responsibility for and/or control of all superhumans associated with the military, such as a squad of Marines with superpowers, or any super assigned to assist the nation's forces with the prosecution of a war (or similar action). The DoD would usually have primary authority over all superhuman incidents in a war, or which threaten national security.

The Department Of Justice: The DoJ would have responsibility for and/or control of all superhumans working for, or associated with, federal law enforcement (including those employed by the FBI, DEA, BATE, and like agencies). It would also have the authority (subject to executive review, if necessary) to extend federal law enforcement sanction to superhumans.

Department Of State: If the setting features nations ruled by supervillains, or non-Human societies recognized as nations by the rest of the world (e.g., Atlantis), the Department of State would be responsible for interacting with them, maintaining diplomatic relations, and so on. It would also have to consult with Justice regarding issues pertaining to extradition, diplomatic immunity, and the like.

NASA: Primary authority for investigating incidents involving (or possibly involving) aliens would belong to NASA, which would also (in conjunction with the State Department) coordinate any formal relations with non-Human species.

INCORPORATION

"Incorporation" means society makes a greater effort to incorporate its supers as citizens — to fully and fairly integrate them into public life. Campaigns where this sort of reaction is most appropriate include those where supers have been around for two or more generations and are now considered not just an inevitable part of society, but an essential part.

Some individual points of the relationship between supers and the law include:

Reaction Of Peace Officers: Many supers, either individual or organized, may be issued law enforcement credentials and authority as long as they meet a standard of behavior appropriate to peace officers. Peace officers tend to cooperate with other known superheroes as long as they don't have warrants out against them; often, law enforcement agencies have the same sort of bristly, competitive relationship with supers as they do with one another. Individual police departments and federal agencies may have one or more supers working for them and may have agents specializing in relationships with (or cases involving) supers; those agents will be very up-to-date on the names and abilities of superhumans in the region (and perhaps the world). Special Weapons and Tactics units may resemble super-agent corps and may be able to cause trouble for most superheroes or supervillains; given enough time and motivation to concentrate their attention on a specific superhuman, they'll have gear and tactics optimized to capture that individual.

New Laws: Laws tend to distinguish between government-sanctioned superheroes and unsanctioned supers (including vigilante heroes and supervillains). Criminal laws benefit sanctioned heroes, but impose harsher penalties on those who do not have sanction. Sanctioned supers may testify in court without difficulty, while unsanctioned supers may not.

Federal Response: Similar to the Federal Response listed above for "Acceptance," but more so. The government and private industry may consider superheroes as just the advance wave of what humanity is to be in a few generations or centuries, and bend their efforts to distribute the benefits of superior genetics, training, and science to the general population — starting with their own people, naturally.

Insurance Industry: Laws promoted by the insurance industry tend to obligate publicly-known heroes to carry liability insurance, which is as expensive and problematic as the malpractice insurance carried by doctors. This tends to make being a superhero more expensive than in previous generations, and some supers respond by behaving more like vigilantes of old, ignoring the efforts of society to dictate their behavior.

TECHNOLOGY

In any campaign where supers (either heroes or villains) possess technology more sophisticated and/or powerful than society as a whole does, you should address an important issue: can super-technology trickle down into the fields of ordinary science and the high-tech industries? In other words, to what extent does the existence of super-technology affect “everyday” technology?

For example, if Hardshell, the superhero identity of scientist/inventor Kyle Charteris, chooses to make the schematics of a much-earlier version of his armor available to the world at large, will there suddenly be a dramatic improvement in general scientific knowledge concerning his techniques? Will next year’s robotics become that much better than those of the real world? Can manufacturers sell comparatively inexpensive powered armor suits for use in industry and law enforcement?

The logical answer is Yes. A more practical answer, though, has to take into account your dramatic sense and incorporate your wishes concerning the level of technology in your campaign. If the world were to learn the technological secrets of all its high-tech superheroes, the result would change the world practically overnight — and that may not be what you or your players want. So you should ask yourself these questions:

What’s The State of Technology In The Campaign?:

In general, how advanced is the average technology in the campaign? Is it identical to that of the real world? Slightly ahead? Slightly behind? Far ahead? And are the differences uniform across the board, or do they differ in the fields of medicine, theoretical physics, applied physics, robotics, cybernetics, engineering, biology, genetics?

You should also ask: how advanced is super-technology? That’s a much more difficult question to answer, but you can probably establish some vague parameters to guide the creation of the campaign and PCs. Does technology allow for time travel? direct probability manipulation? teleportation? size or density alteration? telepathy and other mental powers?

Are There Any Factors Regulating The Advance Of Technological Knowledge?:

The cost of R&D and/or production might keep the world’s general state of knowledge behind that of superheroes. There might be other, more sinister, factors at work, though. These could include: secret government agencies that seize and classify potentially dangerous inventions as they appear; aliens who slow the advance of technology pending their own invasion; a godlike being restricting human knowledge either because he feels humans aren’t ready or because he doesn’t wish humans to become as powerful as he is; or the fact that using/creating advanced technology is a subtle super-power in itself, so ordinary people simply can’t understand or use “super-tech” no matter how much time they spend studying it or trying to reverse engineer it.



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One approach that works for most campaigns is to assume that super-technology is, generally, a mere step or two ahead of the real world in most respects. There are factors in place that keep it from immediately surging ahead to equal that of the cutting-edge technology-oriented superhumans — the most important being that the sort of gadgets used by superheroes are advanced prototypes that cannot feasibly be mass-produced. To build and maintain a suit of powered armor, a time machine, or what have you requires the total efforts of numerous scientists equal to the inventors of the superheroes’ equipment. Since superhumans (particularly PCs) are almost by definition exceptional and extraordinary, the number of “ordinary” scientists and engineers who can comprehend and duplicate what they do is quite small.

Once you decide on the general state of technology in your campaign, you can also decide on specific differences between the campaign world’s technology and real-world tech. That largely depends on how much you want the campaign world to diverge from the real world. For most GMs, the answer is “not too much,” since that makes it harder for the players to understand and appreciate the setting. Differences that are interesting but don’t change the world so significantly that they prove difficult to manage in a campaign include:

Extraterrestrial trade: This is as much a cultural concern as a technological one; the world could have regular contact with, and consequently trade with, alien worlds. (See page 17 for more discussion of this topic.)

Flying Cars: High-end vehicles might have a flight package as an option. This implies significant changes to the role of the FAA and like authorities, of course.

Giant Buildings: The mile-high skyscrapers predicted in the Thirties could be a practical reality. New York City and other skyscraper-heavy regions could have drastically different skylines.

Lifespans: Health improvements and genetic engineering could increase the lifespan of the average citizen to 100, 150, or more. This doesn't have an immediate effect on world culture — after all, a bullet or heart attack can still kill anyone at any age — but as people continue to be productive decades after they would once have left the work force, changes to the world economy will result. This can include a growing unemployed class made up largely of teenagers, twentysomethings, and thirtysomethings as the trend continues... leading to discontent and perhaps even rebellion among those generations.

Robots And Artificial Intelligences: Can robots and computers in the campaign become sentient? If so, do movements rise to grant them citizenship? To oppose their use in the workforce, where they will unfairly compete with humans?

Safe Atomic Power: Nuclear power plants might utilize fusion systems well in advance of ours, systems that do not endanger the environment and cannot be rigged to detonate.

Space Program: This campaign may have a far more advanced space program than the real world. The differences could be slight (large bases in orbit, on the Moon, on Mars, including vacation/recreational ones) or dramatic (Earth possesses faster-than-light travel technology, so humanity's scout ships are out learning about the galaxy, and its trade vessels establish economic alliances with other worlds). In the latter case, Earth could begin establishing colonies elsewhere, resulting in offworld migrations; will those migrations be dominated by scientists, engineers, and explorers, endangering the proportions of those professions on the Earth, or be more evenly spread across all human professions and social classes?

The GM may also want to consider technological differences within society. Does everyone on Earth have access to the same technology — or, as in the real world, do the “first world” nations have advanced technology, while “third world” countries generally lack it?

THE SUPERHUMAN COMMUNITY

While superhumans probably have some effect on the regular society they live in, you should also consider what the society of superhumans (*a.k.a.* the Superhuman World) is like. Just like movie stars, famous athletes, the fabulously rich, martial artists, and other cultural “subcommunities,” it stands to reason that superhumans would also socialize as much or more among themselves as among other people, would develop their own special relationships and rivalries, have their own favorite “hangouts,” and so on.

As the GM, you should give some thought to what the Superhero World in your campaign is like. Obviously if the PCs are the first superhumans ever, or some of the first, there isn't a “Superhuman World” yet, so they get to create it during the course of campaign play. But if superhumans have been around for a long time, some sort of Superhero World has almost certainly evolved. Some things to consider include:

TRUST

Do superheroes tend to trust other superheroes? The idea that two strange superheroes who meet for the first time tend to mistake one another for supervillains and have a fight until they realize their mistake is a classic comic book bit. But the mere fact they can stop fighting short of someone suffering serious harm is an indication that the general level of trust among the Superhero World is high. It doesn't necessarily have to be like that; in some settings, superheroes may not trust one another until there's been a long association between them.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCE EXCHANGE

Related to the issue of trust is how likely superheroes are to exchange information with one another, help with ongoing cases, and so forth. If there's a large, long-established Superhero World, the odds are there'll be at least some mutual assistance going on; the same may hold true among teams that are both sponsored by the same patron. Information — reports on past battles, profiles of known supervillains and alien species, and the like — is the most obvious resource to share, but relations among heroes can go beyond that. A hero group without a particular type of hero (such as a mystic or a gadgeteer) may turn to another team for help with a matter requiring that sort of expertise. A superteam without a team without a team vehicle may borrow another team's Super-Copter in an emergency.

Example: *The Rocky Mountain Rangers are a new superhero team based in Colorado. They don't have a mystic on their team, but during a recent adventure they acquired an artifact they believe has supernatural properties. They contact the Champions and ask for Witchcraft's help. How likely is she to give it? Given the tenor of the Superhuman World in the Champions Universe, the answer is “very likely” assuming she can verify the Rangers' bona fides to her satisfaction...*

which shouldn't be hard, given that their adventures have received a lot of coverage in the local press and her team's federal government contact can check FBI records on the Rangers for her.

That might just be the first step for the Rangers. If they continue to develop cordial relations with the Champions, they might eventually get access to news and reports from SOCRATES, the Champions' computer. Since SOCRATES is already linked to Digivax (the Justice Squadron's computer), the Silicon Sentinel (the Sentinels' computer), and PKC Prime (the Peacekeepers' computer), that would give the Rangers access to an enormous amount of information about supervillains, the Multiverse, and similar matters.

On the other hand, imagine a Champions Universe where the government's more oppressive, superheroes are outlawed, and several teams have been taken down by other "superheroes" pretending to be allies. In that case Witchcraft might suspect trickery and refuse to help unless she recognized the artifact as something that's both genuine and very, very dangerous.

If you want to use a straightforward rule to determine whether one team helps another in a given situation, you can rank all NPC heroes as Very Trusting (+2), Trusting (+1), Neutral (+0), Untrusting (-2), and Very Untrusting (-3). A PC who requests that hero's or team's assistance has to succeed with a Persuasion roll at the listed modifier to get it. You should apply additional modifiers based on the value of the resources the PC wants, how much time and effort it will take the NPC to get involved, whether the NPC would take special interest in the PC's case for some reason (e.g., his archnemesis is the villain the PCs are fighting), and the like.

NEUTRAL GROUND

An interesting feature of some Champions settings (but which doesn't work in every campaign) is the existence of a *neutral ground* — a place superheroes and supervillains can go where they aren't expected (or allowed) to fight one another. A small nation ruled by a superhuman, a multidimensional pocket where the laws of magic prevent characters from fighting, or a bar with an eclectic clientele run by someone powerful enough to enforce the peace are all good examples of neutral ground. Besides being a place where heroes and villains can meet in peaceful circumstances, a neutral ground allows superhumans to hear the news (and rumors!), gather information, look for work, and maybe even take classes on subjects of interest to them ("Legal Loopholes: How To Stay Out Of Jail Even When They Caught You Dead To Rights," "Basic Martial Arts For Beginners").

Example: John decides his campaign needs a neutral ground. Since none of the PCs have long-range Movement Powers or a vehicle, it needs to be right in the heart of Los Angeles, where he's chosen to set his game. He decides it'll be a bar, a tavern catering solely to people with superhuman powers, regardless of whether they're heroes or villains. To keep fights from breaking out, he creates a special NPC owner of the bar — a fallen god whose once-vast divine powers, though considerably curtailed, are still more than enough to keep all of the bar's patrons in line. The PCs, their NPC hero friends, and their supervillain enemies can all gather at the bar to exchange insults, have friendly conversations on topics of interest, play darts, look for work (there's even a "For Hire" bulletin board on one wall!), buy the house a round, and just plain relax.

SUPER-MYSTERIES

You should also consider creating possible answers to some of the big historical mysteries that remain unsolved in the real world, and establish others that pertain only to the world of superheroes and supervillains.

First, there are, of course, the questions that dominate supermarket tabloids: Are we being secretly visited by aliens from outer space? Who built Stonehenge and the pyramids at Giza? Was there an Atlantis, and if so, where, and what happened to it? Is there really something going on in the Bermuda Triangle? Naturally, in all of these cases, you can choose for the most likely answers to be true (no aliens, ancient inhabitants of the British Isles and Egypt built those structures, no Atlantis, and so on), but when you do choose an alternate answer, you set up a significant puzzle your PCs might someday solve.

In the realm of superhero-specific questions, you can add mysteries such as whether humanity was genetically tampered with early in its evolution, the truth behind the emergence of some sets of superpowers or the origins of specific, powerful supers (did he have a spontaneous magical accident — or did he become an agent for infernal powers?), the deaths and disappearances of supers in earlier generations, whether certain mythological gods and heroes were actually early manifestations of superpowers, and so on.

The answers to these questions can help add detail to the framework of behind-the-scenes information in your campaign world and can act as the springboards for many adventures to come.





POINTS AND POWER LEVELS

When you're setting up your Champions campaign, the most significant decisions you're likely to make as a GM are how many Total Points characters are built with, and how many points they can allocate to any one power. That in turn tends to dictate the characters' power level.

POINT TOTALS

The number of Character Points players receive with which to build characters (and how many points' worth of Matching Complications they have to take) affects the campaign and your job as GM. It does so more significantly in a Champions campaign than most other *HERO System* campaigns, since Superheroic characters have more points to work with, and a greater range of powers and abilities they can use.

The "Standard" beginning Superheroic character — the kind found in most Champions campaigns — has 400 Total Points (including 75 points' worth of Matching Complications). This results in a superhero who's balanced for game purposes, and more or less resembles, in power levels and degree of effectiveness, many (though by no means all) of the best-known comic book superheroes as they were at the beginnings of their careers. (That last part, "beginnings of their careers," is particularly significant; see *Point Total Problems*, below.)

There are three factors you should consider when setting the point totals for your campaign: Total Points; Matching Complication points; and your experience as a GM.

TOTAL POINTS

First, how many Total Points do you want players to build starting characters on? The "Standard Superheroic" model of 400 Total Points isn't the only way to build superheroes in a Champions campaign. The Character Types Guidelines and Ability Guidelines tables (see below) offer several different power levels for superheroes — and of course, you're always free to use any other point total or character creation guideline you want.

The more Character Points players have to work with, the more well-developed and powerful their characters will be — more Character Points not only allows them to buy more dice of effect and points of defense, it gives them the opportunity to buy all sorts of interesting abilities, Talents, Skills, and Perks they might not otherwise be able to afford. (This may depend, in part, on where you set your campaign's point and effectiveness ceilings, if you choose to impose any; see 6E2 282. The more Total Points characters have, the higher the ceilings tend to be, typically — but keeping the ceilings lower than expected may force players to think about spending points on things other than extra damage dice.)

MATCHING COMPLICATION POINTS

Second, how many points' worth of Matching Complications do characters have to take? A Champions campaign provides a broader scope for Complications than any other type of campaign — some Complications, such as Susceptibility and Vulnerability, are most common and make the most sense in a Superheroes setting — but there are still practical and dramatic limits. More than about 75-100 points' worth of Matching Complications may "cripple" characters too much, or cause players to take a Complication just for the points rather than as a way to define his character to make the character more enjoyable to play. Furthermore, the more Complications that can come into play, the more complicated your task as GM may become (see 6E2 275).

GAMEMASTERING EXPERIENCE

Third, you should consider your level of experience as a Champions GM when you set point totals for PCs. If you have little or no experience with Champions campaigns, or you have no particular preference between the campaign types, it's best to choose the Low-Powered or Standard levels. Those are the the easiest power levels for a GM to manage while allowing him to supply satisfying adventure situations. On the other hand, if you've run Champions games before and feel you have a good handle on the *HERO System* and the genre, you could pick any model you want and still have plenty of fun.

POINT TOTAL OPTIONS

The most common point totals used for Champions campaigns appear in the tables on 6E1 34-35; the Superheroic portions of those tables are repeated here for your convenience.

Of course, the point totals and guidelines for the various categories of Superheroic characters are just that — guidelines, recommendations that work well in many campaigns. You can alter the point totals, point ranges, or any other part of the guidelines to suit your own preferences and campaign if you want. Here are some other things to consider when choosing one of the standard options:

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

First, the higher the point total is, the comparatively more powerful Focus-based heroes (and other heroes with a broadly-applied Limitation) can become. If a 400 Total Point superhero has 200 of his points invested in an OIF powered armor suit, he functions at the level of a character with 500 points. He may not necessarily be so much more powerful than his confederates that he becomes unbalancingly effective in light of the occasional difficulties he faces when his Focus breaks down or is taken away from him temporarily. But the more of his points he applies Focus to (or any other Limitation, for that matter), the more likely it is that he becomes unbalancingly powerful, since you can only take the Focus away from him so often.

Second, higher point totals allow for more effectiveness with Power Frameworks — sometimes too much effectiveness. If the GM chooses a campaign power level higher than Standard, he should consider restricting Multipowers, Variable Power Pools, and powers bought with Unified Power by applying point and effectiveness ceilings... possibly even to the Active Point, DC, and defense totals of the next lowest type of campaign.

Third, higher Total Point campaigns allow for the creation of characters who are that much more powerful than the rest of the world. It becomes less likely for human-level agencies and individuals to affect the PCs; only supervillains and super-technology can do so. This creates the risk of setting up an environment where only costumed characters matter in the campaign. There's less reason for supers to care about or interact with normals, and certainly less reason for them to be concerned about petty human laws. This is sometimes a disadvantage for the GM (such as when it causes the superheroes to become unconsciously arrogant and unheroic) and sometimes an advantage (when good roleplayers are willing to explore the themes of increasing distance from humanity and its resulting consequences on the personalities, lifestyles, and ambitions of the heroes).

Fourth, different point totals allow for the simulation of different types of comics. If you want to play campaigns about the biggest and best superheroes getting together as a team after years of individual adventure, fighting world-shaking and galactic empire-threatening menaces, then you definitely want to choose a large Total Points for your PCs. Lower point totals won't do the job.



SUPERHERO TYPES GUIDELINES TABLE

Superhero Type	Total Points	Matching Complications	Maximum Points Per Complication
Low-Powered	300	60	35
Standard	400	75	40
High-Powered	500	75	40
Very High-Powered	650	100	50
Cosmically Powerful	750+	100+	50+

SUPERHERO ABILITY GUIDELINES TABLE

Superhero Type	Char	SPD	CV	DC	Active Points	Skill Points	Skill Roll	Def/rDef
Low-Powered	10-30	3-8	6-11	6-12	40-75	25-80	8-14-	12-15/6-10
Standard	10-40	3-10	7-13	6-14	40-80	25-80	11-15-	20-25/12-18
High-Powered	15-60	4-12	8-14	10-16	50-90	30-90	11-16-	25-35/15-30
Very High-Powered	20-80	5-12	10-16	12-20	60-120	40-110	12-17-	35-50/25-40
Cosmically Powerful	30-120	6-12	12+	14+	75+	50+	13+	40+/30+

Notes:

Char: The typical range of characters' main Characteristics. Some Characteristics tend to be on the higher end of (or even outside) the range (STR for "brick" characters, for example), and some (such as EGO) are typically on the low end of the range.

SPD: The typical range of characters' SPDs.

CV: The typical range of characters' base Combat Values.

DC: The typical range of the Damage Classes in characters' attacks.

Active Points: The typical range of Active Points in characters' Powers.

Skill Points: The typical range of Character Points characters spend on Skills.

Skill Roll: The typical range of Skill Rolls in characters' Skills.

Def/rDef: The typical level of the characters' Normal and Resistant Defenses.

POINTS AND CAMPAIGN SCOPE

Besides determining the point totals for your campaign based on the “Age” of the campaign (see Chapter One) or the type of Superheroic campaign it is, another possibility is to consider the scope of your campaign and set the Total Points accordingly. “Scope” refers to the area covered and the types of threats the PCs tend to fight against, as described in the accompanying table.

Scope	Total Points	Matching Complications
Neighborhood (part of a city)	250	50
City	300	60
State/Province	350	65
Nation/Continent	400	75
Planet	600	100
Solar System	750	100
Interstellar Empire	900	100
Galaxy	1,000+	100

SCALING CHARACTERS TO A CHANGING SCOPE

In published comics, it's not uncommon for a single character to function at different power levels depending on the scope of the story being told. For example, both Spider-Man and Batman tend to spend most of their time fighting street crime and low-powered supervillains in their own books... but then they turn right around and fight world-threatening or galactic menaces while they're part of a major superteam in that team's book.

This doesn't usually pose a problem in Champions campaigns because you know from the start what type of game you want to run and have the players design characters accordingly. But there may be campaigns where you want to regularly mix different types of characters. For example, perhaps your game takes place in a setting that features Low-Powered Superheroic and High-Powered Superheroic hero teams being run in the same campaign timeframe by yourself and another GM, and the two of you decide to run some “crossover” stories.

In this case, the easiest way to handle the situation is to create two versions of the lower-powered characters: the regular “standard adventures” version that fights street crime; and a “higher-powered” version that can stand side-by-side with the more powerful characters and participate in their adventures on equal footing. The higher-powered versions should just expand on the regular versions' standard powers, gadgets, and abilities; they shouldn't add all-new abilities or change the characters in significant ways.

When considering point totals for your campaign, you should also consider *point and effectiveness ceilings*, which are discussed on 6E2 282-83. Point and effectiveness ceilings are a common feature of many Champions campaigns because they channel the players' expenditure of points so that a character doesn't dump half his points into one massive attack and the rest into some defenses. They're not mandatory — and in a game with players who are both mature and creative they may be more of a hindrance than a help — but many GMs find them helpful.

LOW-POWERED SUPERHEROES

Low-Powered Superheroic characters (300 Total Points including 60 points' worth of Matching Complications) are good for many different types of campaigns (some GMs reduce the point allotment even further, into the higher Heroic amounts). This level is most often used to represent “new” superhumans who just got their powers and have almost no experience using them, or low-powered “street level heroes” who protect a neighborhood or a city instead of the world. In some games they're teen heroes, whose powers have just manifested; in others all the PCs gain their superpowers from the same event or root cause (often first teaming up to stop the villain who initiated the event).

Given the relatively low number of points characters in this type of campaign have to work with, and the fairly restrictive Active Point guidelines GMs often impose, characters in this campaign often tend to have one or two major powers. Sometimes they represent different aspects of these powers with a Power Framework, but it's not uncommon for them to start with a single Power (Blast, Desolidification, Flight, Mind Control, Teleportation...) and then build on that power with Experience Points. You might even want to consider not letting PCs spend some of their starting points right away, so that they can spend large chunks of the “saved” points at appropriate times to reflect the growth of their abilities and skills.

STANDARD SUPERHEROES

The “Standard” Superheroic character (400 Total Points including 75 points' worth of Matching Complications) is the “default” approach for Champions campaigns, including the Champions Universe setting depicted in many Hero Games products. That category describes the values that are the most common throughout starting superhero campaigns using the *HERO System* rules. It typically represents either (a) superheroes of average power just getting started, and/or (b) superheroes with at least a small amount of crimefighting and adventuring experience predating the first game session of the campaign. It provides enough points for players to create well-developed characters with both combat- and non-combat-oriented abilities, as well as a few quirky powers or Skills reflecting the character's background, interests, hobbies, or unusual life experiences.

HIGH-POWERED SUPERHEROES

Gamemasters and players who find the Standard Superheroic level a little too confining and restrictive may want to consider High-Powered superheroes instead (500 Total Points including 75 points' worth of Matching Complications). The 100 extra points such characters get go a long way toward broadening a character's suite of powers, and often allow him to buy a lot of "secondary" power effects based on his main powers. (For example, a fire-using character might be able to buy a Dispel Technology, defined as his ability to melt gadgets, as part of a Multipower otherwise filled with straightforward Blasts and RKAs.) The additional points may also give a character the opportunity to sidestep Power Frameworks and create some interesting constructs with straightforward Powers.

VERY HIGH-POWERED AND COSMICALLY POWERFUL SUPERHEROES

Beyond High-Powered superheroes, the sky's the limit — literally. With 650, 750, or more points to work with, players can create characters who spend most of their time in outer space, whose decisions and actions can affect the course of nations and worlds, and who fight foes that threaten the entire galaxy.

Besides allowing for higher power levels, and a broader range of power options within a given special effect, the point totals at the upper reaches of the Superheroic spectrum may lead to some unusual purchasing decisions. For example, fixed-cost powers like Enhanced Senses and Life Support are easier to purchase (see 6E2 284), and exotic defenses become more common in the campaign. This is even more likely to happen if you place a relatively low point ceiling on powers, since that just frees up more points for miscellaneous abilities.

Because higher-powered *Champions* characters have so many more options available to them, and roll so many more dice with their attacks, games using these point totals tend to play a little more slowly than other games. You might want to review the *Nine Ways To Speed Up Combat* listed on 6E2 52 and try them out to keep the campaign from slowing down too much.

MIXING CHARACTERS OF DIFFERENT POINT TOTALS

In the comics, it's not uncommon for characters of very different levels of power to be a part of the same team. For example, in Marvel Comics' team the Avengers, at some points in time Thor and Iron Man, two of the most powerful heroes in the setting, have fought side by side with Hawkeye (an archer with gimmick arrows) and the Wasp (who can shrink, fly, and fire an energy blast). Gamers can argue endlessly about exactly how to build a published superhero in *HERO System* terms, but creating a reasonable approximation

of Thor or Iron Man would probably take at least 650 Character Points (if not more), while you could create an acceptable version of Hawkeye or the Wasp on as little as 250-300 Character Points.

Characters of wildly varying power levels can fight crime and save the world together in the comics because one person — the writer — controls everything that happens to them. He can make the characters act the way he wants to, weaken or strengthen them if he wants to, and arrange the events of the story so that every character has his moment to shine. In a *Champions* session, the GM can't do that. He constructs the framework of the story, but he doesn't directly control the protagonists — the PCs — so he can't guarantee that they'll take particular actions, that a specific attack (by or against them) will work in the most dramatically appropriate way, and so on. The game is at the mercy of the players' desires, the randomness of the dice, and the inflexibility imposed by the need to quantify everything with rules and numbers.

Nevertheless, it *is* possible to have a fun campaign where the PCs are built on different Total Points (and perhaps with different point and effectiveness ceilings). This is easiest when at least some of the players are primarily interested in roleplaying and character exploration and don't really care if they're as effective in combat as the other PCs. Such players often enjoy playing a "weaker" character because there's more scope for plumbing the depths of the character and finding out what makes him tick (including what he thinks about being the low man on the superpowered totem pole).

If your group of players doesn't fit that mold, there are other approaches you can take. The one that requires the most effort from you as GM is to be sure to arrange every adventure so that the weaker heroes have a chance to pull their weight and prove their value to the team. If you want to do this, you should work with those characters' players to make sure they've got *something* on their character sheet you can work with — a Skill no other PC has, a form of attack that's more effective than anyone else's in some limited circumstance, or the like. Then you just have to work that something into the game occasionally.

Another possibility is to use the Heroic Action Point rules (6E2 287). Once all the PCs are built and approved, look at the difference between the Total Points on the powerful characters and the weaker ones. Then give the weaker ones that amount of points to buy Heroic Action Points (in addition to any that all characters get "for free"). The weaker heroes can then spend HAPs like they were going out of style to ensure that they succeed with rolls and do enough damage to keep up with their more powerful teammates.





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POINT TOTAL PROBLEMS

Problems sometimes arise because players try to get around the letter or spirit of your point total guidelines.

One such problem is that many players, fans of the comic books, try to build characters who are competitive with the stars of those comics — characters who’ve been around and adventuring for many years. Over those years, their writers have found more and more things for them to do with their powers, and have generally assumed that various circumstances allow the supers to become more powerful with age and experience. Trying to match one of these “established” heroes with a starting Champions PC often isn’t possible... though some players still try.

Similarly, some players design their characters solely for the sake of power or combat effectiveness, not as vibrant, three-dimensional characters in a *roleplaying* game. When a Champions player tries to design a character primarily to be powerful, he tends to do thing that may cause trouble later on.

Some of the problems you may encounter with point total “end runs” include:

STRETCH THE RULES UNTIL THEY SNAP

One approach is to use character design tactics that stretch and abuse the rules. Let’s say, for instance, that a player builds a character with a set of powered armor. That means most of his powers are bought with the Limitation *Obvious Inaccessible Focus*. Now, our character-builder reasons, he can’t use his powers without revealing his hero identity, therefore he also has a *Only In Alternate Identity* Limitation on his powers, too. He’s able to buy everything at a $-\frac{3}{4}$ Limitation rather than the $-\frac{1}{2}$ for OIF. He also decides that most of the suit’s systems are tricky to operate, so just about everything takes the *Requires A Skill Roll* Limitation (another $-\frac{1}{2}$), but they all default to the same skill (Power: Sam’s Power Suit), which he buys up to such a degree that he’ll still have an adjusted roll of 17- for even the most powerful system used at full strength.

That’s rules abuse, and is only one example of the thousands of ways creative character designers can do end runs around the way the rules are supposed to work. The *HERO System*’s flexibility and adaptability mean it’s open to abuse by players (and GMs) who don’t approach it with maturity, responsibility, common sense, and dramatic sense. Champions isn’t about squeezing as many points as you can out of something and building as powerful a character as you can — it’s about properly simulating the Superheroes genre in a roleplaying campaign, and creating awesome superhero stories with your friends based on your characters’ adventures and escapades.

As GM, it's your responsibility to make sure characters are properly designed not only in terms of rules, but in light of common sense and dramatic sense so they don't cause problems in the game. Review every potential PC carefully for problems, and reject (or require changes to) any character you think is likely to be trouble.

ESTABLISH ALL-OR-NOTHING CONDITIONS

A player may choose to shave some points by building most of his powers with a Limitation that causes him to become completely ineffective in certain rare circumstances. For instance, a character who is mystically tied to the life-force of the Earth might take a Limitation like *Only Works Within The Atmosphere Of Earth* on most of his powers. This is a valid Limitation; it means, for instance, that as the character flies up above the planet, his Flight power turns off once he's gotten past the outermost planetary limits.

The problem comes when the GM decides to have adventures that takes place off-world. Either the characters learn about this in advance and Earth-Link Boy bows out of the upcoming adventure, citing a need to remain on the Earth (with his player arranging to take another character into space), or the heroes are suddenly transported to the new area and Earth-Link Boy is completely stripped of his powers for the duration of the outer space mini-series.

If the character's player is of the sort to consider this an opportunity to explore new horizons for his character, there's no problem. Earth-Link Boy may borrow an armored space suit and his teammate's second-best laser pistol, and all is well. But if the player is likely to become frustrated and unhappy because his character is now high-useless, you have a problem. The player is at last paying for his character's Limitations, but he's causing everyone else to suffer, which makes it the GM's problem as well.

Ideally you should head this problem off at the pass by either not allowing these sorts of Limitations, or by making it very clear to the player before the campaign starts that the Limitation *is* going to affect him. If the Limitation is *really* important to the player as a way of defining who his character is and how he acts, then he'll want to keep it despite the fact that he'll be powerless during some scenarios. If he's just taking it to save some Character Points, once he understands that you *will* bring it into play he'll probably redesign the character to remove it. If not, he'll eventually have to live with the consequences of his choices, and his complaints about this should fall on deaf ears.

RESOLVING CHARACTER POINT DIFFICULTIES

The best way to deal with these character design problems is to prevent them from ever happening. The GM can ride herd on the character creation process, keeping a close eye on the construction of each character, and watching out for potential abuses of these types.

However, it requires experience to realize when a character design detail is likely to cause trouble in a campaign. An inexperienced GM will miss quite a few (and it's worth noting that troublesome character design details can be accidental rather than deliberate; a player often doesn't know that something he bought for his character will cause difficulties later on). Even experienced GMs overlook some potential problems — no one can think of everything in advance.

Therefore, you should make it clear from the campaign's onset that you retain the right to insist on a change to a character design, even well after the campaign has started, if you conclude that the character's design is causing problems for the campaign. The players may not like this, but if they're responsible gamers they'll understand that it's for the good of the campaign and not quibble about it too much.


PLAYER CHARACTERS VERSUS THE REST OF THE WORLD

When deciding on Total Points for the campaign (and perhaps on point and effectiveness ceilings), it's useful for you to decide how you want the PCs to compare, in terms of power and competence, to the rest of the world — not just to other supers, but to the general population. See 6E2 273 for a discussion of this issue.





CREATING AND RUNNING CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGNS



A campaign is a series of adventures featuring the same approximate cast of characters and setting, run over an extended amount of time — until its participants become tired of it, are unable to continue with it (which happens when some of them move away or have their time taken up by real-world concerns), or it reaches its intended end (which is the case with a mini-series or maxi-series). Running (and playing in!) Champions campaigns can be very complex — as complex as each GM and set of players allows it to be. This section discusses some of the factors that come into play, and how the GM and players can address them... or ignore them.

CAMPAIGN TONE

6E2 268-69 talks about several campaign attributes — morality, realism, outlook, and the importance of the PCs. (It also addresses the subject of campaign seriousness, but there's little for *Champions* to add to that topic.) This section examines those issues as they relate to Superhero campaigns.

MORALITY

Questions of morality are perhaps more significant in a Champions campaign than many other types of *HERO System* campaigns, simply because the characters have the opportunity to express their versions of morality through mightier abilities. When characters have the power to effect tremendous change in the world, how they exercise that power becomes an important moral issue.

Superhero campaign morality tends to fall into one of two camps: Black and White or Shades of Grey.

BLACK AND WHITE

Black and white morality means the difference between right and wrong in most situations is clearly defined and understood — both the players and the characters will recognize “the right thing to do” in almost all situations. In many ways, this tends to be the “default” morality for the Superhero genre, though Shades of Grey becomes increasingly prevalent during the Bronze and Iron Ages. Here are some ways to implement black and white morality in a campaign:

Villain Motivations Are Always Selfish Or

Delusional: A supervillain might decide to destroy the United States because he wants the wealth it represents, wants its population bending their knees to him, or hates its admirable characteristics (personal freedom, democratic process, and so on). Regardless of his specific goals, his motivations are clearly Wrong and/or Evil; no right-minded person (and particularly no true superhero!) will sympathize with them, or with the villain himself.

Authority Figures Tend To Be Good: Politicians, peace officers, and well-known newsmen and commentators tend to act in the interest of the public good. When there are exceptions, those individuals are operating on their own, and others in similar positions won't help them when their misdeeds are revealed.

Victories Tend To Be Complete: Even when a supervillain escapes the heroes at the end of a story, it's with the understanding that his plan is completely foiled, and his resources stripped away or destroyed. His situation has been reset to zero, and the heroes can leave with a sense of accomplishment.

Heroes Are Seldom Visited By Guilt: When heroes finish a successful adventure, they receive the congratulations of the authorities and the thanks of the people they've saved. The press writes about their adventures in a positive and supportive manner. When these circumstances are not in effect, the heroes know something's wrong: if a politician's not happy with their actions, he's probably crooked and is secretly benefitting from the villains' plan; if a newspaper publishes a scathing denunciation of the heroes' actions, it's probably unfairly decided to persecute the heroes for reasons of improving sales or benefitting a mysterious and evil patron.

SHADES OF GREY

Shades of grey morality means right and wrong aren't as clearly defined as in black and white situations. The heroes must make decisions about their actions in complicated ethical situations and may end up feeling less than satisfied and less than secure with the results. Some characteristics of this type of morality include:

Villain Motivations May Be Only One Step Away From Heroic:

A supervillain might decide to destroy the United States, or just do damage to it, for reasons that are all too close to the heroes' own viewpoints — for instance, to right wrongs done to the American Indians displaced by settler expansion, or to bring to an end some of the nation's less admirable characteristics (lack of empathy for nations in which it has no economic or strategic interest, presumption of national superiority, and the like). Once a hero truly understands a villain's motivations, he's likely to develop greater sympathy for that individual.

Authority Figures May Be Good, Bad, Or Somewhere In Between:

They possess the same range of motivations as the rest of humanity. When one turns out to be operating in a selfish or villainous manner, he may be simply one cog in a system that's compromised or corrupt, and others in similar positions may try to cover up the truth of his misdeeds, keep him in a position where he can help them, and so on.

Victories Tend To Be Compromised Or Incomplete:

When the heroes achieve victory in the campaign, it's often incomplete or spoiled. They may realize some of their actions have actually been the result of the villain's manipulations, and that he may have taken a step toward winning a strategic victory even at the cost of a tactical loss. (For instance, his supervillain team may have been captured... but the battle in which it happened was so destructive that the government implements laws to curtail superheroes, thus forcing them into the role of vigilantes.) A captured adversary may manipulate the system to go free, or be released by a corrupt government official who's recruiting him to help with some scheme. The death of a villain, far from being a cause for grim celebration, may be a time of mourning as the heroes recognize that they have had to slay a kindred spirit ("There but for the grace of God go I...").

Heroes Are Frequently Visited By Guilt:

Heroes get to witness firsthand the effects of any of their mistakes — a concrete mixer hurled at a supervillain lands on a school, a missed Blast destroys priceless art treasures in a museum. Authority figures praise them when it's in those individuals' best interests (as in a self-promoting photo opportunity) and criticize them at other times (as when a politician shifts blame for society's ills onto "vigilantes"). Media accounts of the heroes' actions might unfairly praise them or fairly criticize them, or vice-versa.



CHOOSING BETWEEN MORALITIES

The question of which of the two morality types to implement tends to be answered by what sort of players you have. Do they prefer simpler environments where they don't have to worry about real-world concerns? That means Black and White morality is the way to go. Do they enjoy wrestling with their consciences and prying victories out of complicated ethical situations? Then you should pick Shades of Grey.

In some cases the morality may depend on the type of campaign you have in mind. Black and White is almost required for Golden and Silver Age campaigns, and Shades of Grey is definitely the most common for Iron Age Champions; Bronze Age games can go either way. Of course, if you have a specific type of morality in mind for your game, you should always let the players know in advance what it will be.

In either case, remember that it's usually a bad idea to adhere strictly to one type of morality in a campaign. That gets boring. Each type of campaign can be refreshed and enlivened by an occasional storyline featuring the other type.

You should remain alert for signs that players are becoming frustrated with the campaign's current type of morality. Players in a Black and White campaign begin to adopt a casual, flip-pant attitude about their own place on the moral spectrum, always assuming they're right regardless of what they do; at that point, it's time to introduce a Shades of Grey storyline. Players in a Shades of Grey campaign tend to grow tired, frustrated, or even depressed at the prospect of having each of their victories cheapened or diminished by moral ambiguity; when that occurs, it's a good idea to run an adventure with a clearly-defined evil and an unquestioned victory on the heroes' part.

REALISM

Most superhero comics and campaigns tend to be inherently unrealistic (what the *HERO System 6th Edition* rulebook correctly refers to as “romantic” — but since this book co-opts that term to refer to romantic relationship-based campaigns and stories, it uses “unrealistic” in this context). This book and most Superhero materials presuppose that a Superhero campaign will be unrealistic, and the advice in Chapter One concerning Appropriate Unlikely Actions follows that supposition. If you and your players prefer a more realistic campaign — albeit one in which superheroes appear — then you should choose not to use those Appropriate Unlikely Actions, and should follow these guidelines as well:

Establish A “Rejection” Model For The Law:

Page 142 describes three types of legal atmospheres under which supers could operate; the “Rejection” model best matches a realistic campaign.

Implement Shades Of Grey Morality Guidelines:

It's difficult to establish a pattern of realism while playing a campaign where virtue is always rewarded and evil always scorned. Sadly, the “real world” doesn't work that way.

Ignore All The Advice Below About Superhero Physics On Page 184: That information assumes an unrealistic campaign.

OUTLOOK; IMPORTANCE OF THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

A Superhero campaign can have a positive or negative outlook, and these two questions define that outlook:

- Are the characters making a positive difference in the world?
- To what degree are they suffering for their superhero activities?

“Making a positive difference” means the characters have some longstanding beneficial effect on their environment. If the campaign is global in scale, they may be preventing wars, stabilizing international politics, preventing population-threatening disasters, and the like. If the campaign is local in scale, they may be cleaning up crime in specific neighborhoods, solving kidnapping and murder cases that upset the community, and defeating villains who prey on the citizens.

Suffering refers to the sacrifices made by the PCs, individually and collectively. Suffering includes sustaining injuries in combat, seeing their relationships with their loved ones deteriorate, not being able to perform at work up to the expectations of employers, watching their personal goals slip away, and not living a life that even approaches the dreams they had in youth.

POSITIVE VERSUS NEGATIVE

If the characters make a difference and aren't suffering much, the campaign is *very positive*. This sort of approach is best suited to players who want a light-hearted campaign. Adventure and Comedy campaigns thrive in an environment like this. Such campaigns are usually set up with Black and White morality; Shades of Grey has little place here.

If the characters make a difference but are suffering for their efforts, the campaign is *positive*. This sort of approach is well-suited to Adventure, Drama, and Romance campaigns. In some ways, this sort of campaign is even more positive than the “make a difference/aren't suffering much” campaign, because the players have a sense of fairness and appropriateness; they know that not all victories are going to be handed to them on a platter and that the happiness they bring to others is bought at the expense of their own sacrifice. It seems more fair somehow... or at least more dramatically appropriate.

If the characters don't make much of a difference but aren't suffering much for their efforts, the campaign is *negative*. This is an appropriate approach for campaigns involving vigilantes or other protagonists with non-four color ethics. It is appropriate to some Adventure, some Comedy (chiefly dark-humored), and some Drama campaigns.

If the PCs don't make much of a difference and are suffering, the campaign is *very negative*. This sort of campaign is only well-suited to players whose chief enjoyment comes from roleplaying and exploring the emotional depths of their characters, since they're not going to find much to reward them elsewhere. This sort of approach is well-suited to some Drama and some Romance (the tragic romance type) campaigns.

RUNNING THE CAMPAIGN

Here's some general advice on running Champions campaigns.

THE LIMITS OF SUPERHERO GENRE SIMULATION

The *HERO System* rules are versatile enough to allow GMs and players to simulate just about anything that happens in comic books. However, just because something *can* be simulated doesn't mean it *should* be.

TYPES OF SUPERHEROES

Certain character types that are common in comics don't work as well in Champions campaigns. They include:

The All Attack, No Defense Guy: Some people like to play walking artillery pieces, characters who deal out a tremendous amount of damage but can't take very much before falling over. In the comic books, such a character can be interesting; it's fun to see him devastate the enemy, comforting to know that it's only a matter of time before some thug with a baseball bat puts him out for the count. It's less entertaining to play such a character in a game. In general, try to make sure the players build PCs with an appropriate balance of attacks and defenses so they can stay in combat for a reasonable amount of time.

Invulnerable Man: This character just can't be hurt. Nothing short of low-yield atomic weapons or fuel-air bombs even staggers him. This type of character is fun to read about in a wish-fulfillment sense — who doesn't want to plow through every obstacle without breaking a sweat? — but is more problematic in a campaign. To make adventures a challenge for him, you have to scale up your villains' attacks, which is a hardship for the other PCs.

The Artful Dodger: This character has comparatively low defenses, and perhaps even doesn't make them Resistant. He also has a tremendous DCV and a formidable array of Combat Skill Levels. When he goes into battle, he just can't be hit — in the comic books, anyway. In Champions campaigns, unlike the comics, the writer (the GM) doesn't have direct control over the actions of the heroes (the PCs), or even over some events because of the use of dice as a randomizing element. So, a villain inevitably makes a very low Attack Roll, or uses an Area Of Effect attack, and tags our hero, splattering him all over the nearest brick wall. The easiest way to resolve this problem is to require the character to buy some directly defensive abilities — typically Combat Luck, Damage Negation, or Damage Reduction — with the special effect of "the attack just missed me" (instead of "it hit me but I soak up the damage"). Some Limitations on the power, like Requires A Roll, may be appropriate.

SEPARATING THE CHARACTERS

A common comic book event is for the members of a team to separate — to split up so they can accomplish several things at once. Even in a roleplaying campaign, this works fine if the characters are doing things like performing investigations and managing their personal relationships. But when combat arises and the characters are separated, there's trouble. Everybody wants to be in on combat, especially a protracted struggle. When half the team gets to go through a combat and the other half has to sit back and watch, the non-combatants feel frustrated and left out. Here are some things you can do to keep this from becoming a too-frequent event:

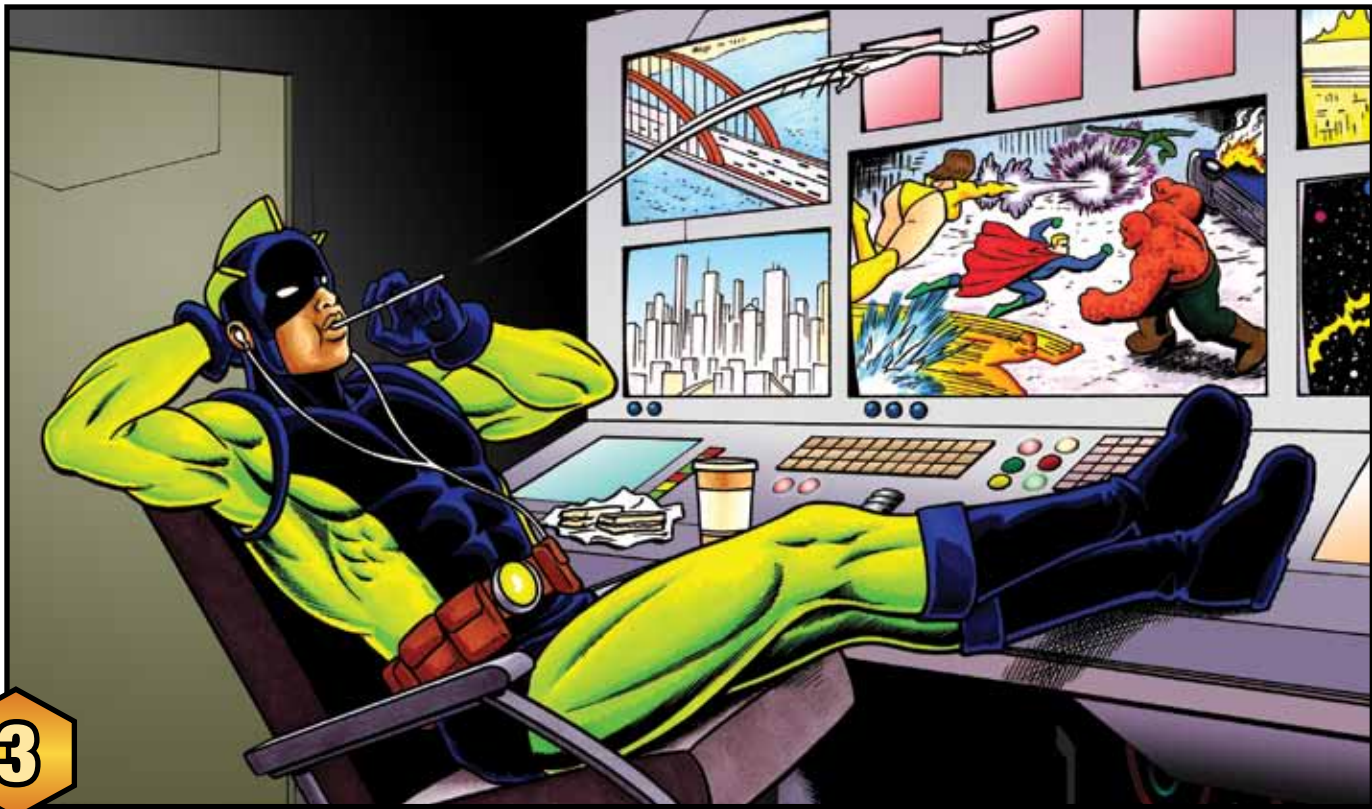
When Only One Group Has Combat, Make It Fast:

If it's inevitable that one solo hero or a small group of heroes are going to get into a combat without the others being present, make the combat as short as possible, turning it into little more than a prelude for the big event. For example, suppose you've set things up so that the team would run into the bad guy's main lieutenant, resulting in a skirmish that would eventually point the heroes to the bad guy's location. Unfortunately, only one or two heroes show up for this event. Instead of going forward precisely as planned, substitute a lesser bad guy minion for the lieutenant. Heroes occasionally have fun demonstrating their superiority by mopping up the floor with belligerent normal thugs and martial artists, and you can use the scene to accomplish the same result (getting the heroes to the big fight). This takes far less time, and the players who miss out aren't as annoyed — it was, after all, only a low-level minion, not someone tough.

Run Multiple, Plausibly-Concurrent Combats:

It's not difficult to have several fights at different places break out at once. (Logically, they probably aren't taking place at the exact same time, unless the heroes or bad guys have set up a coordinated simultaneous assault — but they can be close





enough in time that it's not strange for them all to be run at once.) You don't have to separate the character information among several pieces of paper, though it may prove useful to use a colored highlighter to mark the names of each participant, using a different color for each combat (e.g., yellow for everyone at the Hightower rooftop fight, orange for the poor sods thrashing around in the sewer fight, and so on).

Fudge Arrival Times: If combat involves only one character or group of several characters, but more distant characters could plausibly arrive before the combat is over, don't concern yourself too much with calculating how many Phases it takes each hero to get to the site at his maximum Noncombat Movement speed. Instead, gauge what order the heroes would get to the scene of the combat (without worrying about exact travel time), and then decide that the first one arrives, say, three Segments into the combat, the second six Segments in, the third nine Segments in, and so on. Sure, ignoring the characters' actual movement abilities is illogical... but it works much more like similar story events in the comic books, and everyone gets to participate in the combat.

Whenever Possible, Get Them Together First:

Finally, if you see a situation emerging that will soon lead the characters into combat, but hasn't done so yet, you can always try to find a way to get the PCs back together before trouble erupts. One character might stall the bad guys in conversation while another secretly sends out an alert call or a telepathic distress signal. An honorable or particularly arrogant villain might issue a challenge, with a meeting place and time, rather than attack at just this moment. (He might have set up a trap there, of course.)

UNNECESSARILY KEEPING CHARACTERS INCOMMUNICADO

Characters in comic books aren't often inconvenienced by not being able to get in touch with one another. All comics fans are familiar with the scene of the superhero realizing that imminent danger confronts someone far away, and then moving toward that scene at pushed-to-the-limit speeds. That creates fun dramatic tension — will Our Hero get there in time?

But practically speaking, in the parts of the game where characters perform investigations and research, keeping them from exchanging routine information and leads results in frustration more often than dramatic tension. Most Champions campaigns work best if, early in the campaign, the PCs develop a convenient means of communication — team radios (see page 226), cell phones, or even a team telepath with an appropriate Mind Link power. When drama calls for it, you can always find a way to sever the characters' communications — through radio jamming, mental jamming, sabotage, or the like.

PERMITTING CASUAL USE OF POWERFUL ENABLING DEVICES

An *enabling device* in fiction is basically anything that permits the exploration of a story that would under normal circumstances not be possible. Comic book and Science Fiction stories feature some of the more extreme versions of enabling devices, including extradimensional travel machines, time travel devices, faster-than-light spacecraft, amnesia-inducing machines, body-switching magical spells, and so on.

In a comic book or movie, there's nothing wrong with powerful enabling devices, because the writer controls exactly how the protagonists can use them, their attitudes toward them, and how long they have access to them. But remember, in a Champions game, the "writer" (the GM) doesn't control the protagonists (the PCs) or all the events of the story. That means enabling devices can cause problems, because the Player Characters either refuse to give them up after the immediate need for them has passed, or use them in dramatically inappropriate ways. Once characters get their hands on such devices, they're seldom willing to let them go. Note how fast a campaign's technologically-oriented PCs want to buy a Science Skill for the appropriate esoteric sciences once they have access to such devices. Note also that their expectation is that such Skills mean they can recreate the devices' effects even if they lose the original devices. Ultimately, this means characters will sometimes try to use these devices for purposes not even indirectly related to the plots of the adventures the GM wants to run.

For example, heroes who have come into possession of a bad guy's time travel machine may, in a later adventure, decide they could use it to accomplish some personal goal. A heroine might decide she has to go back in time to save the life of her murdered husband. A hero might realize that if he went back in time, he could change some event in a supervillain's past to reduce or even eliminate the villain's evil impulse. A hero being crushed by debt might want to make a brief trip into the future to learn about this week's sports results so he can place a few bets, make some money, and pay off his creditors. Whether their motivations are selfish or noble, these characters are obviously now thinking of the enabling device as a resource they can utilize whenever they feel like it, and this poses danger to a campaign.

There are several methods you can employ to reduce or eliminate this problem altogether.

TALK THINGS OVER WITH THE PLAYERS

The first tactic, of course, is to appeal to the players' sense of responsibility and maturity, and their desire for fun adventures. Talk, GM to player, with the players who want to use the troublesome device. Explaining, "Guys, if you fire up the time machine whenever an adventure doesn't go your way, you're pretty much abandoning your roles as superheroes. Now you're super-editors, and your job can be done by a technician, a spy, and a chimpanzee in a cute set of overalls. Are you sure you want to do this?"

Sensible players will realize you're right. Less sensible ones won't. When the group as a whole doesn't choose to abandon this tactic, you can turn to additional tactics of your own.

MAKE EVERY USE AN EVENT

If use of the enabling device is sufficiently complex, and/or has a sufficient lead-up time, you can take control of its use on each occasion, making that use pertain to a GM-directed adventure. In other words, you can inflict unintended side effects on the PCs as a consequence of their abuse of the enabling device. In the process you can create some great stories.

For instance, let's say the hero Graycat had once been just an extraordinarily successful professional kickboxer. When his kid sister died in a gang drive-by shooting, he decided to take vengeance on the gang, but couldn't bring himself to kill its members. Subsequently, he adopted the super-name Graycat and began his superhero career. This was six years ago, but his sense of guilt and loss have never faded.

Now his team, the Razor Knights, has gotten its hands on an interdimensional gate that gives them access to an endless number of alternate Earths, each similar to this one. Graycat decides to spend his spare time visiting these alternate Earths, trying to find one where his kid sister survived and he died. He could then bring his sister to this world, and they could be together again.

Obviously, it's a loony notion. If there's an infinity of alternate Earths, it might take an infinite amount of time to search through them for one that meets his criteria. Also, there's nothing to say that his kid sister would want to come to this world; she might want Graycat to come to hers. But it has story potential, so Morgan (the GM) decides to take control of this casual and improper use of the interdimensional gate and make Graycat's quest the subject of a story plot.

He'll introduce it first as a subplot. He lets Graycat conduct his search in secret, furtively going to the team's base at odd hours when no one else is there. All the other heroes know is that he's showing up tired to his civilian job and tired to team activities, passing off the problem as the result of trouble sleeping or work he has to do at home in what would have been his spare time. Morgan gives Graycat the results of his first several investigations in synopsis form: he finds a world where his kid sister is dead and he became a jobless alcoholic instead of a hero; he finds a world where the family apparently never existed; he finds a world where the Vikings colonized the Americas and world history is too different for the search even to be relevant.

At a certain point, the other PCs are going to find out what Graycat is up to. They might choose to stop him from this dangerous quest (leading to a conflict within the group, always a fun source of drama), or might choose to help him (since he's obviously determined to continue). In the latter case, their participation will speed up the process; in addition to having additional manpower to search, their scientific skills might help design some technique by which alternate dimensions might be "pre-screened," eliminating the need to personally visit most of them.



Then comes the day when the Graycat's Sister Search story becomes the primary plot for an adventure. Graycat finds a world where his sister survived and he did not. Now the plot-line can really get under way, and you can find many methods to complicate the situation into a full-fledged adventure and teach Graycat not to meddle with enabling devices. Some ideas:

Retrieving The Sister: Graycat may discover he has no idea how to approach his sister. When he does, it's worth remembering that she's six years older and not quite the person he remembers — she's 18 or so, may have a boyfriend, may want to finish her education at her current school. If, though thrilled to see him, she doesn't want to come with him, will Graycat kidnap her? And what if she isn't thrilled to see him — what if, after finally becoming accustomed to his absence, she regards this new brother as an imposter, an unnatural undead revenant, a cruel hoax, or a pathetic man who doesn't have enough emotional strength to cope with reality?

There's An Alternate Graycat Loose: On the alternate Earth, a supervillain Graycat also has access to a dimensional gate, and has been looking for an alternate world — one in which he's not being sought for his crimes. Just as the real Graycat brings his sister back to the “real world,” the alternate Graycat, attracted by the energies emitted by Graycat's frequent use of the enabling device, travels there — thereby setting up an adventure whose obvious theme is “using great power for selfish aims leads to tragedy.”

Sis Is A Villainess: On the living sister's world, she watched as her brother was cut down in the gang's drive-by shooting. She spent the next few years learning and perfecting her brother's martial art, then tracked down the gang members. Unlike her brother, she didn't hesitate to kill every one of them. Since then, she has embarked on a career as Deathcat, supervillainess for hire. She's more than happy to accompany Graycat back to his world, for, just as in the “There's An Alternate Graycat Loose” plotline, she's anxious to elude the forces of the law which are now closing in on her.

Deterioration From Separation: Graycat may bring his sister home or go to his sister's world, but either way, there's potential tragedy in the making. It may be that people separated from their dimension of origin must either be magically powerful or they'll begin to experience a physical, mental, or mystical deterioration from being separated from their homes. This leads to adventures where the heroes try to find a cure for the mystery disease, only to discover that nothing but a return to the home dimension can save the deteriorating character's life.

CONSEQUENCES OF DEVICE USE

In many comic book universes and campaigns, powerful mystic forces keep an eye on the kinds of processes utilized by enabling devices. Time Police scour the timeways, putting a stop, sometimes gently and sometimes with ruthless efficiency, to unauthorized use of time travel devices. A society of magicians may head off the establishment of regular interdimensional corridors. The subject of an amnesia-inducing device may turn out to be the only person on Earth who knows/knew how to save the world from an upcoming catastrophe.

One of the classic “consequences” storyline involves the effects of time travel. A hero team travels into the past to accomplish some noble end, only to discover when they return to their normal timeframe that their actions in the past have changed the world for the worse. The change could stem from some major alteration in time (preventing a supervillain from coming into existence also keeps one of his positive scientific developments from benefitting the world) or a minor one (telling someone back in time, “Don't worry, kid, you'll do fine” gives that individual the confidence to achieve more than he otherwise would have, depriving some other NPC of his own goals, resulting in elimination of the events that would have allowed superheroes to come into existence). The heroes must then accept the changes or go back in time once more to fine-tune their adjustments and set history back on its proper course. (It's entertaining to a GM to set things up so that, no matter how well they succeed, something, however minor, is different when they return — Freedom Fighter's red, white, and blue costume may be blue, red, and white, for instance.)

USE THE DEVICE AGAINST THE HEROES

It's not surprising that a group of PCs would enjoy using an enabling device to easily defeat their foes and accomplish their objectives. But it's also not surprising that they won't be too pleased if their foes do the same thing in return. If both sides end up with the same or similar enabling devices, perhaps you can negotiate a “truce” in which they each, having realized the dangers the situation poses, destroy their device.

ELIMINATE THE DEVICE

The most draconian but effective way to resolve this sort of situation is to remove the enabling device from the campaign. Any number of ways will suffice to do this — it's retrieved or destroyed by its builders, it blows up the first time the PCs use it, or the like.

Probably the best way to eliminate an enabling device is for the PCs to use it in an adventure, but to lose it at the adventure's end. That way it serves a purpose in the storyline and allows the PCs to achieve some goal, leaving them with a sense of gain even when it is removed.

CAMPAIGNS AS THEY AGE

Just like television series and movie series, Champions campaigns age and change. If left to their own devices, they're likely to become tired and familiar, causing their players to want to switch to another setting, another game system, or (possibly worst of all) another GM. But there are ways to make the natural changes occurring in a campaign mostly beneficial ones. It just requires a certain amount of anticipation and work.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE CAMPAIGN

In its first several episodes, a campaign seems very fresh. Player Characters explore the limits of the opportunities available to them. Characters who are destined to become series regulars make their first appearances; not yet set in their final personalities and methods, they probably do and say some things they wouldn't in later episodes of the campaign. But they also do and say things that cement their personalities and abilities in the players' minds, defining them for the rest of the game.

As the players settle into the campaign, their characters' working and personal relationships become familiar. You can introduce more and more NPCs who are part of the PCs' regular work, home, and adventure environments. Specific villains begin to make repeat appearances, some becoming favorites with the players.

The campaign soon enters a sort of middle age where characters begin to achieve life's goals (or realize they never will). As restless as a spouse with the seven-year itch, they experiment with new costumes, powers, tactics, partnerships, and relationships (professional and personal). You, seeking ways to make new adventures with some of the same old plots compelling, experiment with new playing formats, use of themes, and so on.

Gradually, problems begin to accumulate in the campaign like fatigue toxins in muscle tissue... but unlike fatigue toxins, mere rest doesn't serve to get rid of them. One character's uncompromising and high-handed methods for dealing with problems increasingly grate on other characters' nerves. Characters begin achieving long-time personal goals and a certain amount of their inner fire goes out; they continue to be valid heroes, but lack some of the old drive, determination, and energy that made them what they were in the early days. The campaign may lose crucial players as they move or can no longer find the time to play. Over time, the spirit and energy leave the campaign and its participants decide to bring it to a conclusion.

How long this birth-to-death process takes varies widely. Some campaigns can be introduced, age, wither, and perish within a handful of episodes. Others forge ahead in a near-perpetual state of vigorous middle age for many years and hundreds of play-sessions. The important thing is not to guess how many episodes a campaign is likely to last, but to notice when it's aging faster than it should and take steps to arrest the decline.

SLOWING THE AGING PROCESS

Some tips for keeping a campaign as fresh as possible, allowing it to continue for an impressively lengthy run, include:

PACING AND THEME

Alternate lengthy mini-series with a succession of shorter adventures. Alternate adventures heavily involving one theme or even special effect (e.g., mystical monsters) with a very different one (e.g., a visit to the gigantic spaceship/city of the Freeni). Rotations like this help keep players from getting tired of same-seeming adventures.

INTRODUCE NEW PLAYERS AND CHARACTERS

As long-standing players leave the campaign, bring in new ones instead of just running the now-orphaned characters as NPCs. New players bring new energy to a campaign. Also, you should suggest that these new characters have Hunteds, DNPCs, Contacts, and other background details that are new to the campaign rather than using the same old ones employed by the original generation of players — this, too, brings new life's blood into the stories. (But allow the new characters to have *some* association with the old backstory elements, so they have emotional ties to the campaign.)

Likewise, a long-standing player might not leave the campaign, but become restless with his usual character. Allow him to retire that character, either temporarily or permanently, and bring in a new one. If you realize a character is causing trouble in the campaign but that the trouble lies with the character and not his player, you can recommend that the player create a new character; this will wash some of the "fatigue toxins" out of the campaign.



ROTATE THE FOCUS CHARACTERS

Early in a campaign's development, a portion of the characters usually emerge as its focus. Their Hunteds are the more popular ones; their leadership skills keep them in the spotlight. This is initially good for establishing a flavor and tone to the campaign, but even when the other players don't mind it eventually serves to fossilize the campaign with those characteristics. Over time, you should find a way to shift the focus to other characters. Techniques include suggesting (perhaps with increasing emphasis) that it's time for the leadership of the team to pass to another character; resolving long-lasting subplots (especially involving Hunteds) that have long dominated the campaign, and bringing to the fore subplots that pertain more to the other characters; and creating a set of adventures showcasing the other characters. The process of introducing new PCs also helps rotate the focus, but you should be careful to ensure that the focus rotates to different players instead of just to new characters belonging to the same players.

INTRODUCE NEW GOALS

Over time, characters accomplish tasks that were an important part of their psychological and historical makeups. If a PC has wiped out his personal archnemesis, married and settled into an at-last-comfortable relationship with his sweetheart, and ironed all the kinks out of his problematic superpowers, he's not likely to act as a firebrand in the campaign, sparking new stories, themes, and events. When a character has been comfortable and complacent for a while, you should speak to the player, saying something like, "Now that Graycat's problems with Death-Weaver and his family life are settled, what's on his mind? What are some of his other original objectives that haven't yet been resolved?" This sets into motion the process by which new goals, and story complications resulting from them, are created.

REVAMP NPCs AND RELATIONSHIPS

Having PC-to-NPC relationships change, especially in a dramatic way, can bring a lot of new interest into a campaign. Sometimes this is nothing but a function of age: a PC's child may suddenly be a teenager (and possibly a nascent super); a teenager may suddenly be a college student or independent adult. Sometimes this is a function of lack of fulfillment: a PC's spouse may suddenly have had enough of the PC living out a life of power while the rest of the family waits at home for him to return, and may choose to separate, divorce, have an affair, attempt to become superpowered, start a new career, or the like. Fiancé(e)s can decide they've waited long enough, it's time to get married; family members and friends can suddenly turn out to be not what they were thought to be ("Mom! You were Lady Nuclear? Isn't there still a murder warrant out on you?"); or changes in DNPCs' jobs can affect the PC (such as when a husband or wife is suddenly

put in charge of Operation Super Roundup, or a significant other is appointed to head up a mission the PCs know is a front for an evil eugenics experiment).

REVAMP PLAYER CHARACTERS

With players who enjoy this sort of surprise, or with those who agree to the change, it's often refreshing to cause a total rebuilding of the character. The PC might go through a radiation accident causing all his powers to change in odd ways; may decide to toss his power suit and undergo a series of gene therapy treatments to give himself natural superpowers; or may at last overcome the hellish curse that gave him his powers and now concentrate on mastering his martial arts.

SEND THE CAMPAIGN OFF-COURSE

Changing the very nature of a campaign, temporarily or permanently, can pump some energy into it. Are the PCs members of a well-respected, above-board superteam with fan clubs and action figures? Have the team framed for crimes against humanity and force them to go underground, trying to clear their names and still fight crime with only a fraction of their usual resources. Are the heroes mutants chased by the governments of all nations? Give them a maxi-series that takes place on another planet or in another dimension where their heroic natures are recognized and unquestioned. Are things pretty settled on the Earth? Plunge the entire nation into a war... or trap the heroes in the post-apocalyptic future after the end of that war.

ROTATE THE ENTIRE CAMPAIGN

Rather than playing a campaign until it becomes a sad thing the players can never bear to return to, you should play it until you begin to grow weary of it, then set it aside for a few months. When you return to it later, your creative batteries may have been recharged, and your players' enthusiasm for the campaign may be renewed.

CREATING AND RUNNING EPISODES

With the characteristics of the campaign ironed out and its principal PCs and NPCs built, you can begin running "episodes" (*i.e.*, individual game scenarios and sessions).

Simple adventures need to include the following elements:

- Villain
- Plot

More complex adventures should include the following additional elements:

- Theme
- Subplots



VILLAIN

A later section of this chapter, *Villains* (page 162), goes into considerable detail about the types and use of villains in Superhero campaigns. For now, it's enough to remember two things.

First, the villain of an adventure isn't necessarily villainous, evil, or even selfish. Technically, he's the "antagonist" rather than the "villain." Whatever his role or usual outlook, his job is to set into motion a series of events that cause superheroes to oppose him for some reason.

Second, the adventure should bear the personality stamp of its antagonist. This doesn't mean it should be obvious from the first moments which antagonist is responsible for which series of events — only that what's going on should be characteristic of the villain's personality.

For instance, world-conquering alien invaders don't usually rob banks. This doesn't mean an adventure involving a world-conquering alien invader can't have him arranging for the robbing of a bank. But if he's responsible for such a crime, there should be clues and leads left behind to indicate that something is not normal.

Example: *In a bank robbery, a team of five well-motivated, well-disciplined robbers enter the bank building, keep an eye on the bank customers, fill their bags with money from the vault, pry open a wall of safe deposit boxes and take their contents, and leave a minute before the first police and superheroes arrive. So far, there's nothing unusual about this crime except the professionalism displayed.*

But two events stand out. First, of the five robbers, four did all the talking. The fifth, whose face was more completely concealed than the others', did not speak once. Second, one of the safe deposit boxes robbed had some unusual contents. Perhaps it belonged to one of the PC superheroes and held a mysterious device the hero took from an unknown robot in a previous adventure. Perhaps it belonged to an archaeologist and held a piece of tooled metal the scholar took from a dig site dated to 2800 BC in Turkey.

Perhaps its contents are unknown, but when the heroes uncover the renter's identity, it turns out to be a cover name for a supervillain who died a month ago, burned to death by a hitherto-unknown radiation-emitting device.

So suddenly the PCs have a bank robbery with some unusual characteristics, and it's those anomalous features that will gradually but inevitably point toward the one true villain of the piece.

PLOT

The standard plot, whether it belongs to a comic book story, a short story, a novel, or a movie, breaks down into three phases.

Phase One: Get someone in trouble.

Phase Two: Get that someone in more trouble.

Phase Three: Get that someone out of trouble.

This sounds simple, but it's infinitely versatile. This sequence is not so much a formula for events as it is a formula for pacing, and most people in Western society are attuned to that rhythm of story-telling whether or not they're aware of it.

To set up the basic framework for an adventure plot, you have to determine the following:

1. The Antagonist's Goal. This may be simple (a madman wants to win the affection of a supermodel, a criminal scientist needs a specific meteorite to power his new invention) or complicated (a world-conqueror decides to bleed the U.S. dry economically by plunging the Middle East into a war where America must intervene militarily).

2. How The Antagonist Is Going To Achieve The Goal. This, too, may be simple (the madman kidnaps the supermodel and locks her in a bunker, where he talks to her endlessly about his love and financial prospects; the scientist invents a mini-tank and drives it into the museum to fetch the meteorite) or complicated (the world-conqueror must get better munitions into the hands of every conceivable participant in a Middle East war, then trick a prominent politician of one side into taking an action that can only be interpreted as

a mortal insult by another faction, then initiate a scandal in the US House and Senate to distract them and the public while the Middle East situation worsens, then... and so on).

3. What First Goes Wrong With The Antagonist's Plot.

The antagonist plans his operation from beginning to end, but inevitably something goes wrong, bringing it to the attention of the PCs. This is usually simple — in fact, the more complex the antagonist's plan, the more simple the event that causes the first detail to go wrong. (The super-model kidnapped by the madman is the cousin of one of the PCs; the scientist disabled all the museum's security devices, but, being rooted in an earlier decade, forgot to account for the museum-goers' cell phones; the Washington, D.C. madame whom the world-conqueror enlisted to start off the scandal recognized the danger he posed and, unwilling to approach the police or State Department, came to visit a circumspect set of superheroes.)

With these elements in place, you can predict how the interaction of the antagonist's plot and the PCs' actions will go. Of course, your "prediction" about how the PCs react and the adventure unfolds is likely to be incorrect in some respects — the only universal constant in gaming is "the players never do what you expect them to do." You can usually make some pretty safe assumptions, or at least prepare an "event tree" listing the major options and how the story develops depending on the players' choices... but you should always be ready to react to the unexpected and take the story in a new direction.

Example: Dr. Hallyburton, inventor and sociopath, invents a miniaturized tank about the size of a station wagon; it's capable of taking on one or more superheroes, and its driver's compartment can teleport out of the main unit as an escape mechanism. He'll use it to crash into the Challenge City Museum of Natural History, break into the meteorite display, and steal the remnants of a meteorite that fell to Earth ten years ago; he's recognized it as a sample of polydescartium, a compound with some remarkable properties.

He uses remote-controlled micro-robots to disable all the museum's security. He drives the tank to the museum, crashes in through the front door, and heads straightaway to the meteorite display. Thirty-three museum-goers immediately hit 911 on their cell phones and the PCs are alerted.

This is the setup for the adventure; the GM can decide that all these events have taken place, and the PCs' actions don't enter into the equation until after that last event. Now they will. So the GM must first figure out how he thinks subsequent events will go.

Doctor Hallyburton has a considerable head start, so the GM predicts, based on what he knows about his PCs' movement rates, that Hallyburton can get to the meteorite display and retrieve the meteorite before they reach the museum. His estimation is that they'll arrive just as he's reaching the door out.

Doubtless they'll demand he surrender; doubtless he won't; doubtless they'll attack. Battle ensues. Hallyburton's micro-tank isn't capable of holding them off forever, so after the area around the front of the museum is trashed, he teleports away in his driver's compartment, leaving the rest of the tank behind.

With the battle over, the PCs are in possession of a tank and eyewitness reports that point them to the meteorite display. Scientific analysis of the display indicates that, though it is not radioactive, the meteorite must have had some sort of odd emissions, as the metals of the case itself have been weakened. Mechanical examination of the micro-tank points to Dr. Hallyburton, the supplier of fine vehicles to supervillains for over 30 years.

Hallyburton's motivation remains a mystery, and detective work to establish his whereabouts indicates they're unknown; he is wanted for parole violation, as his parole officer cannot reach him. The PCs have to find him.

The GM knows of two ways they can do this. Another museum has a smaller sample of polydescartium; if the heroes can get that and determine the nature of its emissions, they can build a device that detects them, allowing them to track Hallyburton to his hideout. The mini-tank included several rare parts normally used only by amphibious vehicles manufactured for the military; examination of the builders' records points to only one set of local deliveries, which is to Hallyburton's hideout. The GM assumes the players can come up with more ways to find Hallyburton. He's now satisfied they can track him back to his house.

He anticipates that by the time they reach his home, Hallyburton has completed assembly of his device, a time-travel machine that will send him forward in time to a point where he's presumed dead and his crimes are forgotten. Either the heroes stomp Hallyburton before he activates the device, ending the story, or Hallyburton leaps into the temporal effect and disappears into the future, which ends the story if the PCs let him go or continues it next time if they jump in after him.

This is how the GM sees the adventure as proceeding. But no adventure plan ever survives contact with the players! How the adventure actually plays out is revealed below, under "Gaming It Out."

THEME

A *theme* is a subject that a story tries to explore in a meaningful way. The story's theme can normally be expressed as a sentence or question, such as, "Does a combination of power and lack of consequence cause people to abuse that power?" or "Acts of vengeance also destroy the avenger."

The events of the story must relate to the theme. However, whether the events or the theme comes first tends to vary from adventure to adventure. Sometimes you discover the theme once the events begin to take shape, and sometimes it's the other way around.

Example: *One of the PCs has a teenaged nephew who knows about his super identity and is always begging to be allowed to try on the hero's power armor suit. The PC always laughs and says, "You're too young."*

The GM decides this is a good launching-point for a story. What if the teenager, frustrated beyond endurance, steals the suit to prove he can drive it? What if the teen accidentally activates some of its combat simulations and it goes on a rampage as it reenacts the hero's last battle? We have a plot, and the theme for it soon becomes obvious: "You can't keep a child in diapers forever," or, "Goad someone into a foolish move and you are as responsible as he is."

Example: *The GM decides on a theme he wants to explore: "To assume you're always right is to be oblivious to your every mistake." He has a supervillain concoct a plan whereby a superhero can be tricked into freeing an ancient evil — one the villain cannot reach because his spirit is not sufficiently pure to allow him proximity to it. Then he sets up a series of encounters and clues he's sure a specific hero will interpret in a particular way, without reflection, without acknowledgment of others' contrary opinions. He sets it into motion; the PC in question lets the ancient evil out; the PCs must track it down and end its rampage; the supervillain gets away; the hero, if he has any self-reflection left to him, is chastened.*

Furthermore, the theme should be something that has a significance to one or more of the PCs — else why explore it? So you should make sure that it relates in some way to one or more personality traits of the PCs.

Example: *In the story of the teenager and the stolen power suit, the GM might contrive things so some of the dialogue between the teen and the power-suit hero resonates with conversations other heroes have had with their sidekicks, children, or other junior relatives.*

Example: *An appropriate theme for the Dr. Hallyburton storyline might be, "It does no good to run away from the consequences of your actions; they are always with you." But that's not a theme the GM can explore unless Dr. Hallyburton escapes into the future. And to explore it, the GM has to find some way for*

Dr. Hallyburton's past crimes or the personality traits that led him to perform those crimes to trip him up. In addition, for the theme to have any significance to the PCs, they have to recognize it as relevant to themselves, so the GM should base it on a Hallyburton personality trait that one or more of the PCs share.

The use of themes is always optional, and usually even the most theme-friendly GM doesn't want to use them all the time, since players don't always like being "preached" to (even subtly). But themes give stories greater significance, and can sometimes make them more memorable experiences.

SUBPLOTS

A *subplot* is any sort of plot that doesn't have to carry the weight of an entire adventure or story on its back. In other words, it's one of any number of secondary sets of events that take place around (or parallel to), and sometimes interact with, the adventure's main plot.

A subplot doesn't necessarily define where a story begins or ends. With a self-contained storyline (such as most movies), subplots tend to begin at the same time as the main plot and end at the same time. But with a series — and most Champions campaigns are presented in serial form — the subplot can begin and end without regard to where main plots begin and end. Thus, subplots are one of the things that help define a campaign; they twine from episode to episode rather than being confined to specific storylines, so they provide the campaign with a sense of continuity. They also provide individual characters with senses of accomplishment as subplots related directly to them are resolved.

Subplots can involve entire superteams, or just one or two PCs at a time. They often relate to a character's personal goals (for instance, a romantic interest) or a character's Complications (such as a Hunted that doesn't involve the hero's allies).

Example: *In the current episode of the Razor Knights campaign, Black Swordsman's nemesis, Sabreur, appears to return from the dead, showing up as a distant figure whose minions execute a set of attacks on seemingly-unrelated university professors. This is the main plot of the episode.*

In earlier episodes in the campaign, Black Swordsman's teammate, Freedom Fighter, has been romancing the villainess Snow Leopard and trying to persuade her to abandon her criminal life. This is a subplot.

In this episode of the campaign, the hero Graycat discovers his health is deteriorating. In the midst of battle, he feels shooting pains in his chest. After the battle, if he chooses to, he can go to a doctor and discover there's a mysterious buildup of fluid around his heart. If he doesn't go to the doctor this time, there'll be another, worse, incident in the next adventure. Either way, this is the start of another subplot.

It's sometimes useful to keep track of a campaign's subplots on a sheet of paper. Before each play-session begins, review this sheet and update it to include subplot details that you intend to introduce in the upcoming episode. See the accompanying sidebar for an example featuring the Razor Knights' subplots.

RAZOR KNIGHTS SUBPLOTS

Black Swordsman — His Father's Return:

After Sabreur's first appearance, Black Swordsman, at home, will be visited by his father, the original Black Swordsman. The old man has had a prophetic vision that he (the old man) is soon to die, and wants to stay with his son while that's happening. Is this more than a superstitious notion? And does it relate to Sabreur's presence? Sabreur isn't supposed to know about the Secret Identities of the Black Swordsmen.

Freedom Fighter — Romancing Snow

Leopard: In our last thrilling episode, Freedom Fighter's courage and gallantry really had an effect on the beautiful villainness Snow Leopard and made her reevaluate her situation. She concluded she would miss him more than she'd miss the thrills of her profession. So she's ready to make a switch. But her team, Z-Force, is involved in a plan to steal Dr. Hallyburton's cloning apparatus, and team leader Death-Weaver, already suspicious of her, is watching her very closely now. Can she find some way to communicate with Freedom Fighter without alerting Death-Weaver?

Graycat — Poisoned by Dementia: In a recent adventure, while Graycat was in his Secret Identity, his wallet was stolen by a 13-year-old, who fled through a junkyard. Graycat followed, getting nicked and cut in the tight passages the boy took, before getting his wallet back. What he didn't know was that the theft and the boy's route were chosen by Dementia, who poisoned sharp metal flanges all along the route. Now Graycat is suffering a physical deterioration leading to congestive heart failure if he doesn't discover he's been poisoned and find the antidote in time.

GAMING IT OUT

Having done all this preparation work — deciding on the villain, the plot, and optionally theme and subplots — you and your players can game out the adventure. Note that all this preparation doesn't have to be a lot of work; it can be anything from a few minutes' worth of thinking to several hours' worth of meticulous planning, depending on your preference. Some GMs prefer the confidence and ease of game play that comes from preparing in advance — after all, as the Chinese say, “The strongest memory is weaker than the palest ink.” Other GMs, for various reasons, would rather do little (if any) prep work and instead “wing it” based on their confidence in their gamemastering skills.

NARRATION VERSUS CONVERSATION

Many Champions campaigns muddle along with a certain lack of dramatic flair and an unfortunate absence of character development. One common reason for this unfortunate state of affairs is that, while players interact, their characters really don't. The GM and players allow narration to substitute for interaction. An example:

Graycat's Player: “I'm going to call Black Swordsman on my radio and tell him that I've got an idea that might draw Z-Force out of hiding.”

GM: “All right.”

With this sort of approach, you get no character interaction. Instead, it should go something like this:

Graycat's Player: “I'm going to call Black Swordsman on my radio and tell him that I've got an idea that might draw Z-Force out of hiding.”

GM: “All right. Black Swordsman, your dagger-hilt beeps at you, incoming call.”

Black Swordsman's Player: “Black Swordsman here. Damsel-saving a speciality.”

Graycat's Player (to GM): “I just told you what I was going to say. That was pretty much it.”

GM: “Right. Now tell him.”

Graycat's Player (to GM): “Fine.” (To Black Swordsman): “Very funny. Listen, I've got an idea on how we can draw Z-Force out of hiding.”

Black Swordsman's Player: “Let's hear it.”

Graycat's Player: “Not on an open frequency, no. Let's meet back at base in fifteen minutes. But come in by the tunnel access, just in case the main doors are being watched.”

Black Swordsman's Player: “Gotcha. Have you already called Freedom Fighter?”

Graycat's Player: “No, and I don’t want you to, either. I mean, I trust him, but he’s got this thing with Snow Leopard going, and I don’t trust her. And, hell, he may talk in his sleep.”

Freedom Fighter's Player: “Hey!”

GM: “You’re not in this conversation.”

Freedom Fighter's Player: “Right, right.”

Black Swordsman's Player: “See you there. Black Swordsman out.”

This approach takes longer, but not much longer — it’s nothing compared to the amount of time combat takes, and it’s wonderful for establishing character and personality.

In the example above, Graycat’s player conveyed the same amount of information, but the conversation established his suspicion of Snow Leopard (a valuable point for the GM to note — it suggests a conflict he can exploit in the Freedom Fighter/Snow Leopard Romance subplot), got a laugh from the players (from Freedom Fighter’s player’s reaction), and allowed both players to act as their characters. Over time, all this roleplaying rounds out the characters’ personalities and better establishes their relationships with one another.

An inexperienced GM should start by playing out all conversations except those involving NPCs who are both completely irrelevant and utterly without personality. In the latter case, narration is appropriate. A player says, “We’re lost. I’m going to ask directions of the first likely-looking person I see.” The GM replies, “Well, the guy operating the newsstand says Michigan Street’s two blocks up — you’re almost there.” But the GM can, if he wishes, use such an opportunity to introduce an NPC he considers interesting or pertinent to the storyline, particularly if he has the character ready and is just waiting for an opportunity to bring him in. As the GM gains experience, he learns where to allow conversations to be narrated and where the players and he should continue to roleplay them.

On the other hand, there is one area where narration — or, to be more exact, synopsis — should stand in for conversation. That’s when characters are obliged to repeat information that their players have already heard. For instance, if Freedom Fighter gets the details about the clone-tank heist from Snow Leopard (in a gamed-out conversation enlivened by their frisky repartee) and then bumps into Graycat, he’ll want to provide the same information to Graycat. Neither the players nor the GM really want to hear the same exact details offered up again, so it’s appropriate for the player to say, “I’ll give all that information to Graycat” or “I’ll recap for Graycat.” (This is a tactic known in the author’s campaign as “pushing the recap button.”)

When recapping, it’s also appropriate for the character providing all the information to indicate how it might differ from the information he received. For instance, “I’ll recap for Graycat, but I’ll leave out the part about Snow Leopard’s kid sister, since that might allow him to figure out her identity.”

DR. HALLYBURTON'S PLOT

An example above detailed the plan of Dr. Hallyburton and the GM’s estimation of how the adventure of the museum attack will progress.

The GM is wrong. The GM is almost always wrong in some way where these estimations are concerned. If the GM isn’t usually wrong in at least some respects, he either has a frightening real-world prophetic ability or he’s forcing the PCs down a too-limited set of character options and not allowing them the freedom of action that’s one of the best features of roleplaying games.

As it turns out, shortly after the museum attendees pull out their cell phones and call 911, the GM has the police department’s superhero contact officer call the Razor Knights and tell them about the museum assault. Freedom Fighter, the superhero on duty, takes the call, and his player asks the GM something unexpected: “The Museum of Natural History? Doesn’t Black Swordsman work just a block from there?” The GM, taken aback, searches his memory and realizes a previous adventure did establish that Black Swordsman worked a block from the museum — he and his girlfriend, Lillian, often go to the museum on their lunch breaks. “Fine,” Freedom Fighter says. “I’ll call Black Swordsman and tell him to get over there now, and that backup is coming.”

This puts the GM in the position of having to deal with a sudden bobble in his plot. If Freedom Fighter can get through to Black Swordsman on his team radio, which he should be able to, then Black Swordsman can get to the museum a full minute ahead of the rest of the team. With that amount of extra time, Black Swordsman may be able to interrupt Dr. Hallyburton as he’s still trying to retrieve the meteorite. This fouls up the GM’s whole prediction about how the rest of the adventure will run. What to do?

The GM can either manipulate events to put his adventure back on track, or can incorporate the characters’ corrosive effects on his plot. In spite of the temptation to do the former and not have to abandon lots of preparatory work, it’s usually better to give the characters their logical influence on the plot. Roleplaying games are about *group* story creation, not the GM creating a story and telling it to the players. Sometimes the players get to affect the outcome of events, too.

The GM has Black Swordsman get to the meteorite display just as Dr. Hallyburton pops the hatch on his tank. The two see each other. Dr. Hallyburton curses, slams the hatch back shut, and jumps into combat with Black Swordsman. Black Swordsman stalls the mini-tank until his teammates arrive. Dr. Hallyburton has to teleport to safety... and doesn’t have his meteorite.

What now? In the plot as envisioned, the heroes would eventually track Dr. Hallyburton to his house just as he’s firing up his meteorite-fueled time machine. Now, things are different, and the GM must improvise.



Fortunately, the GM already established in his own mind that there's another, smaller, piece of polydescartium at another museum. Since Hallyburton can't get the one from this museum, he races home, packs up his time machine, and rushes off to steal the other piece. By the time the Razor Knights get to his house, he's gone. But they find some of his technical illustrations, allowing them to figure out where he's gone and why. So, in the all-new, improvisation-plotted last half of the adventure, the PCs confront him in a new city, at a different museum, stealing a different meteorite. Perhaps he'll have his time machine installed in his tank this time, allowing him to try the time-jump the instant he has the meteorite in hand; perhaps they'll just catch him and prevent all the time-travel ramifications from taking place.

Either way, the GM has planned and run his adventure, and has done so successfully despite the way his plot was derailed. He even incorporated plot details (the other meteorite) that would otherwise have been wasted when the original plot was circumvented.

And that, ultimately, is the way most Champions adventures play out — designed, plotted, partially or completely abandoned, and completed in a way that synthesizes both the GM's and the players' ideas, input, and goals.

CHAMPIONS INSTANT PLOT GENERATOR

If you're stuck for a plot, you can utilize this Champions Instant Plot Generator to put together the framework of a play-session. It will generate fairly simple plots, but you can then flesh them out and fine-tune them according to the details of your campaign.

To use the Champions Instant Plot Generator, consult the following series of charts, rolling dice where indicated to determine which elements will become part of the plot. Throw out any that simply don't feel right for your characters and re-roll those options. Choose additional events that make the story work better; add events that don't appear on the tables below when appropriate.

STEP 1: GENERAL NATURE OF STORY

Roll 1d6:

Roll Nature

- | | |
|-----|--------------------|
| 1-4 | Man versus Man |
| 5 | Man versus Nature |
| 6 | Man versus Himself |

MAN VERSUS MAN

This is the most common sort of superhero plot — one in which people come into conflict with the superheroes. To determine the nature of the antagonists of the story, roll 1d6.

Roll Antagonist

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Hunters. This episode's bad guy is the Hunted of one of the PCs. |
| 2-3 | Criminals. The PCs interfere in a criminal plot currently hatching — a robbery, corporate takeover attempt, blackmailing, murder attempt, or the like. |
| 4 | The Law. Legitimate law enforcement forces seek the heroes. The heroes may have been framed, or there may be a legitimate complaint against one or more of them, but this intrusion comes at a time when one or more PCs must be free to pursue some personal agenda. |
| 5 | Avengers. The antagonist has an agenda of revenge. It may be a hero trying to avenge a crime, a villain trying to avenge a hero's interference, or a normal trying to avenge any sort of offense. |
| 6 | Invaders. A force set on conquest or destruction is planning a mission. This may be a mission of infiltration, subversion, kidnapping, sabotage, or assault. They may be aliens, foreign nationals, terrorists, or representatives of a secret society. |

MAN VERSUS NATURE

In this sort of plot, there's no real "villain" — some sort of natural disaster or event provides the danger and must be countered. Roll 1d6:

Roll Threat

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1-2 | Encroachment. A natural disaster pops up in one place and moves toward innocents; it can be intercepted by heroes, but not necessarily stopped in an easy fashion. Examples: volcanic eruption, tsunami, meteor, forest fire. |
| 3-4 | Punishment. A force of nature assaults an area and stays there, continuing to do it harm. Examples: hurricane, plague, giant Japanese monster (which keeps returning to the city). |
| 5-6 | Aftermath. A disaster takes place in a short amount of time; the rest of the adventure consists of dealing with the consequences. Examples: earthquake, factory explosion, radiation leak, tornado. Appropriate problems to solve include coping with fires, dealing with breakdown of services and local infrastructure, stopping looters, finding missing persons, rescuing victims, and heading off starvation and dehydration. |



MAN VERSUS HIMSELF

The classic literary convention of a story in which the protagonist struggles with one of his own traits or weaknesses doesn't normally translate well to a simple superhero story, or into a roleplaying game session in general in most cases, but you can approximate it. Choose one PC and pick out one of that character's Psychological Complications. Then either roll on the Man Versus Man chart or the Man Versus Nature table and put together an antagonist who bears directly on that Psychological Complication in such a way that the character will have to overcome the Psychological Complication (at least temporarily) or be ineffective in the adventure.

STEP 2: REVELATION OF MENACE

Here, you find out how the adventure's antagonist or problem is revealed to the PCs. Roll 1d6:

Roll Manner Of Revelation

- 1 **Dying Clues.** A person who's been murdered, or who's just now in the process of dying from an attack, leaves behind clues pointing indirectly to the problem confronting the heroes.
- 2 **Ongoing Investigation Or Mundane Mystery.** If a PC is engaged in an ongoing investigation, his search unearths clues about the upcoming event, even if it's not directly related to his investigation. Alternatively, one or more PCs, enjoying their normal Secret Identity lifestyle, stumble across some things that are Just Not Right, pointing him toward the problem.
- 3 **Series Of Strange Events.** The GM calculates how the adventure's menace will play out and determines a set of side effects the heroes can experience, but which individually don't explain what's about to happen.



Roll Manner Of Revelation

- 4 **Big Boom.** The heroes become aware of the developing situation when the first overt signs of it appear — bombs are dropped, laser bolts fly, radiation breath melts City Hall.
- 5 **Powers/Equipment Point To What's Coming.** Characters with Danger Sense, prophetic powers, equipment that relates to the scientific field most closely related to the approaching menace, or the like begin to accumulate data that alerts them to what is going on.
- 6 **Warning From An NPC.** An NPC could have gone through any of the experiences shown above for rolls of 1 through 5 and decide to bring that information to the PC team. The NPC could be an ally, a psychic, even a supervillain.

STEP 3: EVENTS OF THE STORY

By following the two previous steps, you now have a sense of the general nature of the story's antagonist and how the PCs are led toward their enemy. You can take the reins from here and simply decide, based on logic, what happens next. If you wish, you can add detail to the story by rolling on or selecting from the accompanying table additional story elements.

Roll 1d6 twice to generate the two numbers you need.

When using this table, remember the Phase One, Phase Two, Phase Three plot structure described earlier in this chapter under "Plot." When rolling/selecting events of the story, divide them between the three phases of the plot, putting them in whatever order best raises dramatic tension.

EVENTS OF THE STORY TABLE

First Roll	Second Roll	Event
1-2	1	The characters must hurry to a specific location, perhaps in competition with a rival/opposed group after the same objective.
	2	A partial or complete solution to problem involves an object (magical item, invention, or the like) held by secondary antagonists; the PCs must take the object by trade, force, trickery, or coercion.
	3	A partial or complete solution to problem lies with an NPC who's hostile, unhelpful, or mysteriously missing; the PCs must convince him or find him.
	4	The characters temporarily lose critical resources — destroyed by disaster, stolen by villains, a breakdown due to character negligence, or the like.
	5	The characters' plot/tactic completely fails; characters are driven into retreat/captured (if captured, must escape or survive deathtrap)
	6	A DNPC tries to help, but just gets into the path of danger.
3	1-2	The characters must invent a partial solution to problem (spend time in the laboratory, develop a magical spell, field-test a new weapon, or the like).
	3-4	A mysterious NPC/group repeatedly interacts with situation, but doesn't seem to be on the side of the PCs or the antagonist.
	5-6	The characters must solve one or more mundane crimes using their investigative abilities.
	1	The characters must get a crucial item/person from point A to point B; the trip may be long, the route dangerous, or the item/person aggravating or problematic.
	2	The characters' plans keep being leaked to the enemy; the characters must find the mole in their organization, spy devices in their quarters, or whatever is causing the leak.
	3	A character's superpowers interact with antagonist's powers/effects in strange and unpredictable ways.
4	4	A character's family/loved ones are discovered to be tied into the plot.
	5	Characters' plot/tactic succeeds, but result in the deaths of a lesser number of innocents; they must either find a way to undo what they did, or accept and explore the moral consequences of their actions.
	6	The characters must fight a rear guard or delaying action to allow innocents to escape, or to allow an NPC or fellow PC to get to a specific place by a specific time.
	1	An NPC falls in love with/professes love for/develops a crush on a PC.
	2	A DNPC or loved one stands to profit from actions that are unhelpful to the PCs' mission or tactics.
	3	The characters discover that allies/resources they need will benefit if the antagonist wins and so aren't planning to help fight the antagonist.
5	4	The characters find evidence of inexplicable change that must relate to antagonist tactics — physical laws are different, material properties have changed, peoples' behavior is different, people are missing — but the relationship is unclear.
	5	Research into a menace reveals that its causes are older than previously suspected.
	6	The authorities refuse to cooperate with PCs (they may believe their tactics wrong, seek them on criminal charges, or the like).
	1	An injury to a PC causes temporary amnesia.
	2	A character's loved one demands more time/attention from him.
	3	A character is poisoned, cursed, or otherwise weakened.
6	4	A character undergoes a "radiation accident" after an encounter with antagonist; develops new powers, Complications.
	5	A character discovers that the PCs' preferred tactic actually benefits the antagonist.
	6	The characters are ejected from the vicinity of trouble and must race back to the scene of the action.

STEP 4: OPTIONAL TWISTS

With the plot structure and a number of events in hand, you can optionally decide to add one or more “twists” to your adventure. A twist is an unexpected event or revelation that causes the heroes to reevaluate previous happenings and actions, and perhaps adjust their tactics or their goals. Roll 1d6:

Roll Optional Twist

- 1 **Supposed Friend Is Really Enemy.** One of the heroes' allies actually turns out either to be an agent of the other side or to be a self-serving wretch who accomplishes a personal goal at the expense of the PCs' chances for success.
- 2 **Supposed Enemy Is Really Friend.** One of the forces the heroes have been fighting turns out to be working in their best interests.
- 3-4 **Source Of Menace Is Not As Expected.** The forces or enemies blamed for the events turn out not to be their cause; the heroes must find and confront the true cause.
- 5 **Menace Is Nothing But A Distraction.** All these events have merely been a way to keep the heroes out of the way while some other malfeasance goes on elsewhere, unnoticed. (The bigger the events have been, the bigger the other malfeasance must be. One doesn't set off a volcano to keep the heroes away from a bank robbery.)
- 6 **Menace Is Actually A Good Thing.** It turns out the bad consequences of the story's menace are actually working in the heroes' best interests (*e.g.*, the kind-hearted scientist the heroes are protecting from kidnappers turns out to be engineering a medicine-resistant strain of the Black Death in his basement; the kidnappers are time-travelers who want to stop him from killing 78% of the Earth's population).

EXAMPLE OF USE

Morgan, the GM of the Razor Knights campaign, is pressed for time, so he decides to make use of the Champions Instant Plot Generator.

For General Nature of Story, he rolls a 6 — Man Versus Himself. He's dubious about that, but, since it calls for him to re-roll to provide the underlying structure for a Man Versus Himself story, he decides he'll abandon Man Versus Himself if it turns out not to be what he wants. His second roll is a 5, Man Versus Nature.

For further details on Man Versus Nature, he rolls a 4: Punishment. Whatever this force of nature is, it keeps pounding whatever area it visits.

For Revelation of Menace, he rolls a 6: Warning From An NPC. That's a good way to do it, and certainly won't waste much time in getting the PCs into the story.



3

Now, it's time to determine Events of the Story. He decides to start with two events per phase of the plot, and his rolls net him these events:

- Characters Are Ejected From Scene Of Trouble
- Characters Must Hurry To Specific Location
- Characters Discover Allies/Resources Characters Need Will Benefit If Antagonist Wins
- Character's Loved One Demands More Time/Attention
- DNPC Tries To Help, But Gets Into Path of Danger
- Characters' Plot/Tactic Is Complete Failure

Finally, Morgan decides to roll on the Optional Twists table and see if he likes what he gets. He rolls a 3, Source Of Menace Is Not As Expected. He'll use it if he can find an interesting way to do it.

He considers what he's got here, and, actually, he thinks there's a way to implement the Man Versus Himself structure — it interacts nicely with the Source Of Menace Is Not As Expected twist. What if the menace is actually a projection from the hero's own mind?

That makes sense. A superhero might develop a temporary power that creates remote projections of his own inner turmoil. Morgan decides that, in this case, the projection is a big monster that manifests out of storms (nicely symbolic of that turmoil), rampages across the city, and then disappears into the storm again, and just can't be stopped.

What hero to use? Morgan looks through his list of PCs and decides on Graycat, the martial artist whose sister was gunned down before his eyes. Morgan decides Graycat's guilt and self-loathing will manifest themselves in a way that threatens to destroy both Graycat and his city.

The Revelation Of Menace result was a Warning From An NPC. Growing more cheerfully malicious, Morgan decides the NPC is Graycat's dead sister. She'll appear to him and warn him he's very close to joining her... there's no way he can defeat the doom coming to visit his city.

But Graycat is essentially a normal martial artist who stays at superhero levels through constant (fanatical) training. Morgan has to find some way to explain why he can suddenly manifest giant monsters. This suggests he should have some sort of radiation accident that provides a plausible reason for the temporary power. Morgan adds that to the set of events the characters experience.

Morgan rearranges the events of the story to make them progress in a way that logically builds toward the climax and resolution of the story. In his new order, and with details provided by the decisions he's been making, they look like this:

PHASE ONE

(New Event) The characters' superpowers interact with an antagonist's powers/effects in strange and unpredictable ways. In an apparently unrelated incident, the Razor Knights clash with agents of a mystical society that have set up an arcane ritual in the Challenger City Museum of History, in the display on ancient Viking culture. It appears the bad guys are enacting a spell to give one of them great power. The Razor Knights foul things up and capture them. Morgan contrives things so Graycat first touches one of the several artifacts being used in the ritual, but that part of the event is completely innocuous.

(Revelation Of Menace) Warning From An NPC. A few nights later, during a pounding thunderstorm, Graycat's hears a noise in his apartment, gets up to investigate, and finds his dead sister looking through his scrapbook. She issues her warning about him being close to death. During a blinding clap of lightning, she disappears. The scrapbooks have actually been moved, opened, looked through.

(Event) Character's Loved One Demands More Time/Attention. Graycat's girlfriend, Debra Uecker, made increasingly frustrated by his fanatical training and crimefighting, insists he retire, or at least cut back on his costumed activities.

(Event) DNPC Tries To Help, Gets Into Path Of Danger. Immediately after Debra's demand, the monster, a mountain-sized frost giant straight out of Norse myth, manifests for the first time. Graycat rushes off to join his team. Debra, not satisfied she's gotten through to him, follows. During the monster's first rampage, she is nearly killed by accident (the giant doesn't attack her directly). The monster disappears.

PHASE TWO

(New Event) Characters Must Invent Partial Solution To Problem. The PCs correctly conclude that the giant relates to their Viking cultists of the other night. They analyze its tactics and perhaps magical energy traces left behind, and develop methods they think will defeat the giant.

(Event) Characters Are Ejected From Scene Of Trouble. The next time the giant appears, the heroes rush to the scene... but despite their stealth, the giant knows they are coming. Unlike its tactic when dealing with city forces and the National Guard (smash with club, hit with ice storm), it waves its hand and they are magically teleported to a distant location, unhurt... all except Graycat, whom it smashes. As soon as Graycat is unconscious, it disappears back into the storm.

PHASE THREE

Morgan decides to get rid of the "Characters Discover Allies/Resources Characters need Will Benefit If Antagonist Wins" factor, since he can't find a way to make it fit within the texture of the story, which is already going very smoothly.

(Event) Characters' Plot/Tactic Is Complete Failure. In the next encounter or encounters with the giant, the PCs' special tactics, gadgets, or spells prove to be inexplicable failures. Evidence mounts that the giant hates Graycat and yet won't deliberately harm to things Graycat likes (Debra, his friends, his favorite landmarks, and so on). They may use Graycat as bait to lure the giant away from habitation, but won't be able to figure out how to defeat the thing until they realize, through research or use of SS: Psychology, that it's a projection of his guilt/self-loathing.

(Event) Characters Must Hurry To Specific Location. Once the heroes know what the problem is, they might come up with any of several possible solutions, many of which require fast trips to specific destinations. Possibilities: to the warehouse where the artifacts from the Viking ceremony are held, so they can re-interpret the items and their function in light of Graycat's problem; into the dream-world of Graycat's sleeping mind, where they can confront the giant (now revealed as a version of Graycat himself) and Graycat might be able to speak to a dream version of his sister and find closure related to her death.

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF COMPLICATIONS

Complications are one of the most useful tools you have when running a Champions campaign. They give you insight into a character's personality, hooks with which you can compel or entice him into performing certain actions, and weaknesses you can exploit.

COMPLICATIONS AREN'T AN EXCUSE FOR PUNISHMENT

Sometimes a GM, especially an inexperienced one, falls into a trap concerning Complications: when a PC takes one he considers foolish, he punishes him for it in subtle ways.

As an example, a GM who considers the Code Versus Killing to be ridiculously impractical might punish a character with that Psychological Complication by having his Complication result in harm and tragedy over and over again. The character catches a villain and turns him over to the police; the villain escapes and kills someone important to the character. The character catches him again; the villain escapes and kills again. This cycle continues until the hero is maddened enough to violate his Code Versus Killing and murder the villain, at which point the GM has triumphed over a Psychological Complication he considers stupid.

This, obviously, is bad GMing. If a GM feels a Complication won't work within his campaign, he should tell the player so as soon as he recognizes the problem, then allow the player to change the Complication to something more appropriate.

Complications are hooks that allow a GM to direct a character's actions and anticipate his responses. They shouldn't be hooks that dig into a character's flesh and puncture his organs.

SPECIFIC COMPLICATIONS

Here are some specific suggestions about each individual Complication and its appropriateness for, or use in, Champions campaigns. You should also review the player-oriented notes on Complications beginning on page 104.

DEPENDENT NON-PLAYER CHARACTER

The line between DNPC, normal NPC, and Follower is sometimes a bit blurry. Use the following basic set of questions to determine what role any specific NPC plays.

If the character:

- Is around a lot, mostly when there's trouble, can be counted on to get in trouble or position himself below falling debris in combat situations, usually makes the wrong decision in times of crisis (or at least the decision that gets him in the most difficulty), and has some sort of emotional tie to the PC that keeps the PC from throwing him to the fishes even in times of greatest aggravation, then the character is probably a DNPC.

- Is around a little or a lot, mostly when there's no trouble, possibly can be relied upon to get to safety when there's trouble and to help the PC in more peaceful circumstances, is evenly divided between making the right or wrong decisions in times of crisis, has earned the character's affection through deed or personality, then the character is probably a normal campaign NPC.
- Is around a lot, mostly when there's trouble, can be relied upon to help the PC, in times of crisis usually makes the decision most helpful to the PC whether it's in the NPC's best interest, has demonstrated loyalty to the PC and has earned the PC's own loyalty through deeds, then the character is probably a Follower.

One character's DNPC could be another character's normal NPC, but one character's DNPC should not be another character's Follower (or even the same character's Follower). You should be leery of letting two characters take the same NPC as a DNPC; that tends to diminish the problems the Complication causes for each one, and also reduces the number of story hooks you can work into the game.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

To repeat something that was said in the player section on Complications: Distinctive Features only qualifies as a Complication *if it hinders, restricts, or inconveniences a character significantly*. Just looking unusual isn't enough to qualify for Complications points; the character has to suffer because of his unusual appearance. In a Super-hero setting, where *lots* of characters have an unusual look (and where garish costumes are the norm), Distinctive Features rarely qualifies as a Complication. A character who takes Distinctive Features has to be *really* distinctive to justify the Complication.

Some possible ways you can make sure Distinctive Features truly affect a character negatively include:

- His appearance is so horrifying that people run from him in fear even when he's trying to help them, probably causing them to put themselves in even greater danger and making the hero's job harder.
- His appearance makes it hard for people to get along with him (he suffers a -2 or greater penalty on all Interaction Skill rolls [this assumes, of course, that he *has* at least two or three Interaction Skills and tries to use them occasionally] and a -10 or greater penalty on Presence Attacks based on friendly persuasion [rather than intimidation, impressiveness, or fear]).
- His appearance makes it more difficult (but not impossible) for him to maintain his Secret Identity.
- His appearance causes a lot of people to attack him on sight, or makes it easier for his Hunted to find him.





HUNTED

Hunted are one of the most prevalent Complications affecting comic book superheroes. They all seem to have recurrent enemies (“He’s my arch-nemesis!”), which is what a Hunted normally signifies.

The most important thing to remember about a Hunted is this: the Hunting character or group should be appreciated by the players even if he/it isn’t appreciated by the characters. The thought that the Hunter is near should whet the players’ appetites even if it dismays the characters. It’s not difficult to determine when this isn’t the case. If a Hunter appears for the second time and each subsequent time, and the majority of players offer tired sighs or groans out of character, you know the player in question has come up with a Hunter no one likes.

Most Hunteds are fairly ordinary and predictable: particular master villains, villainous organizations, secret government cabals, and the like. These can get boring quickly if you don’t find ways to liven them up. To make a Hunter more appreciated, you should always feature some reward, however intangible, associated with his appearances in a campaign. This usually means the Hunter has some personal connection with one or more of the heroes. The Hunter might be the source of answers to questions and enduring mysteries that plague a campaign — even as the Hunter is bedeviling the PC, he’s also providing

clues and even facts that advance the hero toward his goal of acquiring more information. The Hunter might be romantically pursuing one character even while inconveniencing or endangering the whole group. Or he might amuse the PCs — he could be a witty, charming character as well as a thief and liar. Other intangible rewards include the opportunity a Hunter usually provides for heroes to show off — one who is a particular hero’s opposite number, evenly matched with that PC, offers the hero a chance to have a battle royal.

Don’t underestimate the worth of Hunters who are honorable opponents simply driven by motivations or cultural assumptions that differ slightly from the PCs’. Not all Hunters have to be despicable, soulless pockets of pure evil. In fact, the most interesting ones seldom are.

POSSIBLE HUNTED ACTIONS

Depending on the nature of the character doing the Hunting, the nature of the target, and the background of/explanation for the Complication, a Hunted might do some or all of the following things as a way of attacking the character:

- Try to kill him
- Try to maim or significantly harm him
- Try to learn his Secret Identity
- Try to make his superheroing life more difficult (show up to help another villain fight him, frame him for crimes, tell other villains about his weaknesses, and so on)
- Assuming he knows the character’s Secret Identity, try to make his civilian life more difficult (get his boss to put more pressure on him at his job, trick his significant other into breaking up with him, slash his tires, and so on)
- Stalk/harass the character, or play (potentially harmful) pranks on him
- Do any of the above to the character’s DNPCs and beloved NPCs

As discussed on 6E1 416, a Hunter “appearing” in the campaign doesn’t mean he literally has to show up and attack the PCs — or even indirectly attack or harm them in the ways suggested above. It simply means he’s doing *something* you need to be aware of and take into account as you plan your adventures and campaigns. It could easily be some sort of behind the scenes planning or conduct that the PCs never learn about (or better yet, that they hear mysterious rumors about but can’t take time to investigate because more pressing matters demand their attention). Eventually the Hunter’s plot reaches fruition and becomes the main adventure for a game session.

NEGATIVE REPUTATION

Reputation works exactly as described on 6E1 424. Don't forget that it's supposed to be a Complication; if a Reputation is mostly helpful, you should require the character to buy it as the *Positive Reputation* Perk. Of course, it's entirely possible that a "positive" Reputation can have such negative effects that it merits a Complication. For example, a character who has the Reputation of being honorable might have problems because enemies could exploit that personality trait for their own ends (assuming he really *is* honorable — if he's not, being known for his honorable nature doesn't really Complicate him at all).

PHYSICAL COMPLICATION

Physical Complications work just as described in 6E1; chosen in moderation, they're very appropriate for superheroes. Once upon a time, superheroes tended to be perfect physical specimens (with the exception of heroes who were blind but compensated with special sensory powers). But since the Sixties, there's been an increasing number of supers with physical disabilities — bad hearts that had to be maintained by high-tech pacemakers, paraplegics who build power suits that enable them to walk, characters suffering from dwarfism who use their skills and wit to compensate for their short size, and so forth. So, it's perfectly all right for a player to come up with a character like that for Champions; you should work with him to integrate the PC into the fabric of the campaign, not assume that "he'll be useless" because of his Physical Complication.

The chief virtue of Physical Complications in a Champions campaign is that you can place a character with this Complication in situations where he has to cope with his disability — possibly for an increase in the drama of the episode, possibly to the detriment of his self-image. With the right player, it can make for some fascinating role-playing and great stories.

PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLICATION

Along with Hunteds, Psychological Complications are perhaps the most common sort of Complication among superheroes, and are likewise the best-suited to use as character hooks. Psychological Complications help define how the character thinks, what sorts of events or concerns really eat at him. Bait formed in the shape of a Psychological Complication trigger and dangled in front of a hero can lead him into danger, or at least into the next stage of a story. See page 108 for some discussion of Psychological Complications that are particularly prevalent in the Superhero genre.

RIVALRY

Rivalry works exactly as described on 6E1 426. But as the GM, you should remember that Rivalry isn't just a Complication — it's often a subplot as well. If you go too many adventures without characters' Rivalry actually affecting events in the campaign, it's time to introduce a new subplot to exploit the character's Complication. Since most Rivalries can't be dealt with as easily and satisfyingly as Hunteds (with whom the heroes can fight), they often create more dramatic tension and make for great roleplaying.

SOCIAL COMPLICATION

The best-known Social Complication in Champions campaigns is the *Secret Identity* (see the example 6E1 428 and the discussion of the subject on page 109 of this book). As long as a character has a Secret Identity, you should use it as the basis for subplots and main plots — it's a Complication, after all. Things you can do to make use of a Secret Identity include:

- Have NPCs and DNPCs accidentally or deliberately come close to discovering it.
- Have NPCs and DNPCs actually discover it.
- Have villains discover it, if only temporarily
- Have the PC's Secret Identity job interfere with his superheroing time.
- Have the PC's Secret Identity job give him insight into a potential villainous plot — but make it impossible for him to follow up without revealing that he's a superhero.
- Have the PC make promises in one identity that his other identity forces him to break, or nearly break.
- Have one type of relationship with an NPC in one identity and a very different type in the other identity.
- Have the character experience success in one identity and failure in the other, or admiration in one identity and contempt in the other.
- Have duties of and demands on each identity take up 80% of the character's available time.

UNLUCK

Unluck functions as described on 6E1 430. It's an excellent tool with which to manipulate characters into interesting situations, but be careful not to overuse it. A constant run of bad luck can become frustrating to the most upbeat player, even if he triumphs in spite of it.





VILLAINS

A Champions adventure's villain is the character (or process, or force of nature) that sets bad events into motion, causing superheroes to try to counter them. More accurately, the correct term should be "antagonist" rather than "villain," since people who cause trouble this way aren't necessarily villainous, evil, or even selfish in motivation or action. An antagonist can be the most noble of superheroes if he goes about his objectives in a manner the PCs feel they must oppose. Nevertheless, comics and gaming parlance both use the term "villain" as a shorthand.

Except in some Comedy campaigns, an adventure's villain should have a well-detailed personality and be as believable (and maybe even as sympathetic) as the PCs. Even more importantly, he should have one or more goals you understand. The players don't have to understand the character's goals, but you, in portraying the villain, should always have those goals uppermost in your mind; this allows you to create a consistent portrayal of the villain. (Later, when the PCs figure out the villain's goals, your portrayal may take on additional meaning for them.)

A good villain should have a self-image that doesn't include the word "villain." Every villain, no matter how he's perceived by the rest of the world, has anything from a complete degree of assurance that his actions are correct, to a set of excuses that convince him his actions have been inevitable. In his own mind, the villain is the hero of his story (perhaps a tragic hero, misunderstood because of the actions destiny has forced him to undertake) or, at the very worst, the victim of someone else's story.

LEVELS OF VILLAINS

Villains in a Champions campaign tend to occupy one of several ecological niches. Some are bottom-feeders (despite their flashy costumes); some exist to support someone with grander aspirations; some plan to change the universe.

GANGSTERS AND HOODLUMS

Supervillain gangsters and hoodlums are people who've obtained superpowers but still cling to traditional roles as low-level criminals. They use their powers to rob banks, mug pedestrians, steal, intimidate, and so on. Their ambitions never rise to equal their new levels of power. Some are happy with their low-level existences; some carry the air of tragedy about them, recognizing that their exceptional qualities have never quite made them exceptional people.

Of course, you can always use non-super-powered gangsters, hoodlums, and criminals. In lower-powered campaigns, they can be a credible obstacle for the PCs to face, especially if played intelligently. In higher-powered campaigns, they range from comic relief (a street encounter for a hero to wade through without difficulty) to dangers that confront NPCs, DNPCs, Followers, and the like.

Gangsters and hoodlums make good short-term encounters for heroes, but their lack of ambition and organization mean they'll never constitute a credible threat for a superteam.

HENCHMEN

Henchmen are villains who do the grunt work for more charismatic or more organized villains. They may be normals or supers. In most respects they're similar to gangsters and hoodlums, but they serve someone on a regular basis. It's good for any Henchman the PCs interact with to have a distinctive personality, but they don't have to be as fully-detailed as more prominent villains.

Henchmen tend to be built on fewer points than the PCs, so they're no match for the heroes individually, though they may be a match en masse.

INDEPENDENT/FREELANCE VILLAINS

Some villains choose to act alone, or to hire their skills out on a temporary basis to others. These characters sometimes pursue their own agendas, perhaps while aiding the plans of more ambitious organizers. The independent villain may live by a code unique to him (sometimes a code of honor understood, though not necessarily duplicated, by the heroes).



Independent and freelance villains are useful as regular encounters in a campaign. They sometimes succeed with their individual missions, escaping into the night ahead of pursuing heroes. Those who have a semi-cordial relationship with heroes might help the PCs on an occasional basis and even forge relationships of grudging respect (or strained romance) with them. Others, especially those with more antisocial and amoral attitudes, become long-term enemies of individual heroes. But because they seldom work in concert with one another (and when they do, they aren't necessarily very coordinated), they tend to hatch plans and adventures that don't threaten the fabric of society or the world.

Independent villains tend to be built on the same approximate number of points as PCs. One such villain is usually a pretty good match in a combat with a Player Character.

LIEUTENANTS

Lieutenants are villains who act as middle and upper management for more charismatic or organized villains. They don't have the ambition or the vision of master villains, but may be even more satisfied with their criminal lives and careers than the bigger fish.

Lieutenants should be fully-developed and distinctive characters. They don't all toe the party line within their criminal organization; some pursue private agendas and goals while also serving their masters; some develop individual relationships with PCs (love, hate, love/hate, professional respect, and so on) that their employers don't appreciate.

Lieutenants tend to be built on approximately the same amount of Character Points as PCs. One lieutenant is usually a pretty good match in a combat with one Player Character.

A lieutenant who develops enough personal contacts, wealth, power, and ambition might be promoted at some later time to the level of master villain; on the other hand, he might continue as a lieutenant villain, become a superhero, retire, go to prison forever, die (temporarily or permanently), or suffer a similar fate. If the master villain he serves is killed, captured, or retires, the lieutenant may try to assume the mantle and take his former master's place.

MASTER VILLAINS

The master villain is the one with the power and the plan. Typically, he wants to change the world in a significant way. He might want to rule a nation, or the entire world. ("Bolivia is nice, but it really should be renamed Destroyerland.") He may wish to wipe out Earth's human population, or turn it into amphibians. He might want to change the very nature of reality in minor or major ways — making the Earth the front porch of Hell, permitting an ancient pantheon of gods to return and take over, paving the way for an alien invasion, causing one Earth cult or religion to become dominant in all nations among all peoples, or the like.

He should have a distinctive, or at least effective, manner of speech and behavior; these characteristics help make him memorable. A bland, mild-mannered supervillain isn't memorable, unless you are capable of portraying his blandness and mildness in such a way as to be creepy or disturbing.

VILLAINS BY LEVEL

Chapter Four of this book includes write-ups of six sample villains from the Champions Universe, the official Hero Games setting for Champions. Here's how they break down according to the categories described here:

Armadillo: Independent villain.

Green Dragon: Hoodlum.

Ogre: Hoodlum.

Pulsar: Hoodlum.

Tachyon: Independent villain.

Talisman: Independent villain.

It helps if he has a memorable visual style, too — a costume that sets him apart not only from common man but also other supers with unusual garments. He might be larger than most humans, or smaller, or burning with an inner fire (literal or figurative), bearing symbols the heroes find difficult to ignore (Nazi swastikas, the emblems of fallen nations, the chest-symbols of superheroes he's slain over the years, icons of death or destruction). He might be horribly scarred or inhumanly beautiful.

Typically, master villains are built on far more points than PCs, allowing one master villain to stand toe-to-toe in combat with an entire PC team. However, this isn't always the case. Sometimes a master villain who rules by sheer charisma or brilliance is physically normal; once the heroes get to him, Kid Sidekick can annihilate him with a 4d6 Punch.

Master villains are always shepherding plots from conception to completion — though superheroes usually end them before they reach completion. A master villain's plot should bear the stamp of his personality, or at least be consistent with his nature (Dr. Devastation isn't likely to base a plot around laughing-gas released from the big red noses of circus clowns, for instance, and the Harlequin's not going to launch a scheme using lots of ordinary military weaponry).

VILLAINOUS AGENCIES

Many Champions campaigns feature another intriguing type of villain who fills roughly the same niche as the master villain — the *villainous agency*. This is a large organization of criminals devoted to typical comic book villain sorts of goals — conquer the world, rule America from behind the scenes, steal all the world's gold, and the like. Unlike more traditional organized crime groups or terrorist organizations, villainous agencies adopt the trappings of the comic book world: their “agents” (rank-and-file members) wear gaudy costume-like uniforms and use super-tech blasters; their leaders are powerful and mysterious costumed beings (often superpowered); and they employ supervillains (often of their own creation) in their schemes. VIPER and DEMON from the Champions Universe are both examples of villainous agencies (though ones that are very different from one another).

A good villainous organization can add a lot of flavor and depth to a Champions campaign (particularly since it's much harder for the heroes to remove an entire organization from the campaign world than to utterly defeat a single supervillain or villain team). On the other hand, a badly thought-out or dull villainous agency can hinder a campaign. Here are some things to consider when creating villainous agencies for your game:

HISTORY AND GOALS

When creating a villainous agency, think about its goals and reason for existing. It didn't spring to life one day simply to oppose Our Heroes during a game session. When did the agency get started, and who started it? What was that person's reason for starting it (*i.e.*, the purpose/goal of the agency), and has the agency's focus changed since then? Many villainous organizations' aims and goals are the same as those of master villains: rulership of Earth; domination of humanity; conquest of a particular nation; obtaining vast wealth; maintaining technological superiority over everyone else. But you (and your players) may find it fun to create villainous agencies with less stereotypical goals, such as radical environmentalism, destroying all high technology, committing genocide against some hated group of people, or being the first group of humans to make it to other planets (and, by implication, to rule those planets). As long as the goal allows the agency to be either (a) an intriguing one-time opponent, or (b) provides sufficient rationale for the agency to become a long-standing foe of the PCs, it works.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

Is the agency a monolithic hierarchical organization answering to a single all-powerful leader? A cartel of lesser allied groups? A network of loosely-connected cells? A vast family, linked by ties of blood and marriage? A shadowy cabal or mysterious cult? Answering these questions tells you what types of agents and leaders the organization should have, how it reacts and responds to changing situations, and so forth.

METHODOLOGY

How does the agency go about achieving its goals? The typical villainous agency, as mentioned above, uses super-technology like blasters, artificially intelligent computers, hovercraft, hidden bases, and grandiose schemes to accomplish its goals — it's like a supervillain team or master villain writ large. But some agencies may prefer other methods, particularly if they don't want to attract the sort of attention that a colorfully-uniformed private army tends to. For example, a secretive conspiracy-based agency might concentrate on manipulating politicians behind the scenes; a coven of villainous wizards might have ordinary people as its mind-controlled agents and work its will through spells instead of gadgetry.

RESOURCES

How much money, men, and materiel does the agency have to work with? Can it afford high-tech blasters, or must it restrict itself to ordinary rifles? Does it have multiple hidden bases, or a single headquarters? Most importantly, does it have supervillains (or superpowered servants) working for it? Most villainous agencies do, but they don't all have to. You should also consider whether the agency has the capacity to create its own super-humans, or must hire mercenary villains to do its dirty work.

AGENTS IN COMBAT

When a group of PCs fights against a Villainous Agency, they're going to spend most (if not all) of their encounters with the Agency fighting against *agents* — trained (possibly highly-trained) personnel wearing gaudy superhero-style uniforms and wielding super-tech weaponry instead of ordinary firearms. Champions battles against agents (and in general) need to work on two levels:

- They should be enjoyable tactical combat exercises. Fights should challenge the players' and PCs' tactical skills and provide exciting combat moments.
- They need to be part of an exciting story. They should advance the plot. Plot developments can (and should) occur in the middle of fights.

A Villainous Agency is a fighting force. It trains many of its agents for just one thing — combat. In all other aspects of their lives, they're pawns — and they know it — but once battle is joined, their conditioning kicks in and they come to life. When twenty to thirty well-armed agents hit the field, they should pose a threat to any similar force, or to superheroes, and they should know they're that dangerous.

But it's one thing to feel superior, another thing to transfer that attitude into interesting stories and tactical battles. No tactical situation in Champions is easier to mess up than an agent battle. Four things usually happen to make an agent battle go bad:

1. **Agents are too ineffectual.** (They're too slow, they can't hit the heroes, or their attacks don't have the penetrating power.)
2. **Agent battles last too long.**
3. **Agents get *too* lucky,** and the heroes lose unexpectedly.
4. **Agent battles get too repetitive and predictable;** they become boring.

AGENT EFFECTIVENESS

The first problem — ineffectual agents — may not actually be a problem at all. These are *agents*, after all, while the PCs are *superheroes*. In many campaigns, particularly higher-powered ones, the PCs *should* carve through agents like a hot knife through butter. After all, the idea of an agent armed with a Blast 8d6 energy pistol, or even a dozen such agents, hurting a hero who's powerful enough to hurl asteroids around or fly near the sun may rightly seem pretty ludicrous. Besides, the occasional easy opponent can do worlds of good for the PCs' self-esteem, especially if they've had long run of really tough fights and opposition. Sometimes it's fun to be high-unstoppable.

But some threats aren't meant to be trivial, and sometimes you want a Villainous Agency to be a serious threat. This is particularly appropriate in lower-powered campaigns where the PCs may not be all that much more powerful than the

agents (due to the fact that agents get issued a lot of weapons and gear by their organization). Even in the lowest-powered campaigns, a single PC should pretty much always be able to win a fight against a single agent easily... but it may be another story altogether when several agents can fight a PC together.

If you want agents to be a credible threat, but a Villainous Agency's the butt of your players' jokes and you don't want it to be, here's what you can do. When superheroes laugh at agents, it's usually due to one or more of three reasons:

THE AGENTS CAN'T HIT THE HEROES

If your PCs can avoid agents' attacks without much difficulty, you need to improve the agents' accuracy. The simplest, but crudest, way to do this is just to give them lots of laser sights and combat computers that provide big OCV bonuses (similarly, you can add Area Of Effect (1m Radius) to weapons to make it easier to hit any target). But there are subtler, cleverer ways that also enhance Villainous Agency's image as a competent fighting force:

Upgrade the agents' tactics: Have them try to obtain Surprised bonuses, or Multiple Attacker bonuses; give them Teamwork and have them Coordinate their attacks. Agents with disabling attacks (such as Flashes, Entangles, Drains, and the like) can concentrate their fire on a single hero until they hit, and then other agents take advantage of the hero's momentary weakness to hit and hurt him. Once the agents Stun a hero, have several of them turn their guns on him to take advantage of his reduced DCV.

Have agents work in tandem: Instead of all the SPD 3 agents taking their Phases in Segments 4, 8, and 12, stagger their actions. Some attack on those Segments, others Hold their Actions and attack in later Segments when the heroes are vulnerable. If you have a large enough group of agents, you can have a few of them firing at the PCs on every Segment, giving the heroes no time to rest, prepare for Haymakers, or the like.

Employ distractions and diversions: Perhaps the easiest way to make agents more effective in a fight is to provide a big, obvious target for the PCs to attack so they leave the agents alone to do their jobs. Mercenary supervillains, of course, are a major diversion; big weapon platforms set up on the edge of the battlefield make great targets and can absorb a few attacks that might otherwise take out an agent.

THE AGENTS CAN'T HURT THE HEROES

If your agents are hitting the target, but they're not making a dent, chances are you need to increase the DCs of their attacks (or add Advantages like *Armor Piercing* or *Penetrating*) or have them Coordinate more often. Agents aren't supposed to take heroes out with a single shot (or even a couple of shots, in most cases), but they should inflict *some* damage in most cases. Even a point or three adds up when the heroes take it again and again.



THE AGENTS ARE TOO SLOW

Inferior agent mobility is a subtler problem. To some extent it's not a problem you need to worry about: agents, as more-or-less normal humans, *should* act and move more slowly than superheroes. But it can cause difficulties in the campaign if the heroes use their superior movement capacity to bypass or minimize encounters with agents.

The first way to solve this problem is not to use agents as "speed bumps" on the way to the "really important" encounter. If that's what's happening, it makes sense for the heroes to try to avoid the agents — why weaken themselves for the real battle, or waste time fighting cannon fodder while the real bad guys escape? Furthermore, if you use agents this way, it's hard for the PCs to have any respect for the threat they pose as enemies. In most scenarios involving a Villainous Agency, try to give agents a crucial role; don't use them as trivial opposition the PCs can ignore without consequences.

Second, you can solve the problem directly by providing the agents with mobility technology: jetpacks; jumpboots; vehicles; and the like. Equipping agents with weapons that have the *Improved Maximum Range* and *No Range Modifier* Advantages also gives them the means to "keep up with" the PCs even if they don't move as quickly. Technology isn't as good as personal movement powers, but it definitely diminishes the mobility problem.

COMBAT LENGTH

Nothing destroys the fun of a Champions game like a battle dragging on too long. Champions battles prioritize tactical richness, but this can become a problem when the GM has to keep track of lots and lots of agents. Fortunately, there are some easy ways to handle this.

First and foremost, analyze why your battles take too long. If you're bogging down the game choosing agent tactics, push yourself to be more decisive, prepare tactics in advance, or let someone else help you during the fight. If you spend too much time figuring out which miniature represents which agent, perhaps you should stop using minis; conversely, if everyone has trouble visualizing the battle, maybe introducing miniatures into the game will speed things up.

Second, if the paperwork of tracking agents' Charges, STUN, and so on slows you down, you should minimize or abandon it. It's easy enough to streamline the process to keep track of multiple agents on a single piece of paper by noting their key abilities at the top (their defense, their weapons, and so on) and little sections for each agent's BODY and STUN on the rest of the page. An even more radical solution is to ignore the bookkeeping altogether. Instead, declare agents as one-, two-, or three-hit opponents. Any successful attack Knocks Out a one-hit agent; two hits, or one hit with an Attack Roll made by 1, Knocks Out a two-hit agent; three hits, or one hit with an Attack Roll made by 2, Knocks Out a three-hit agent. If a PC uses a Killing Attack, you can substitute "Dead" or "Maimed" for "Knocked Out" if it suits you. Of course, you should treat any supervillain or really important agent as a normal NPC, not someone the PCs can so easily take out of the battle.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF IMPROVEMENT

If you improve or enhance agents to give them more ability to oppose your PCs, you should consider the potential story implications. Is there an in-game reason for this development from which you can spin plot hooks? Did Villainous Agency develop new, more effective technology? Perhaps the agents are using weapon prototypes (and the PCs can stop the development cycle of the weapon). Has the Villainous Agency hired a tactics expert to train its agents with new tricks to use against superheroes?

3



Another way to save time is to treat a squad as a character. Pick the best CV in the squad, add +1 OCV for every additional member of the squad, and treat the squad's attack like an Autofire attack directed against one or more targets (if some or all agents have Autofire weapons, you can either roll those attacks separately, or just increase the overall number of "Autofire shots"). You select which targets the squad hits (usually by random roll). If this becomes too effective because you roll well, you can limit the number of successful shots: no more than two hits for a squad of General Combat Specialists; no more than four hits for a squad of Elite Agents.

Third, if necessary impose a strict time limit on the battle — say, two or three Turns. If, at the end of that time, the PCs have the upper hand, then the agents lose (you can assume any still fighting were actually Knocked Out during the battle). If the PCs are losing, either they must retreat, or they all get Knocked Out and taken prisoner, or overwhelming reinforcements arrive and help the agents capture them. Be wary of using this method; players *hate* to have this sort of *deus ex machina* defeat imposed on them, and you can't always count on the heroes being the winners.

LUCKY AGENTS

Bad things sometimes happen to good characters in combat. Combat is random and unpredictable, and that's often a good thing, but if the PCs frequently lose due to dumb luck, the players can get discouraged and the campaign suffers.

Fortunately, there are a few steps you can take to minimize the randomness factor. First, when things go wrong, don't just attribute it dumb luck and move on — look for reasons and patterns. You probably don't need to conduct a full statistical analysis of the battle (after all, games are supposed to be fun), but if you take a close look at what happened and try to learn from any mistakes that occurred, you can keep those mistakes from cropping up repeatedly.

Second, when you use weapons that take advantage of a character's Complications (such as Vulnerabilities), forewarn the PCs whenever possible. If the lycanthrope PC recognizes the glint of silver ammunition being loaded into a gun, or the magnetic PC notices an agent setting up a machine to generate a counteracting magnetic field, he not only has a chance to react, it gives him a moment of fear that helps sustain his interest.

Third, fudge dice rolls if necessary. If the Villainous Agency agents get lucky and roll high damage numbers, shave off enough points of damage to prevent the agents from ending the battle too quickly. Keep the PCs' CON and STUN totals in mind so you know how much it takes to Stun them or Knock them Out.

A COWARDLY, SUPERSTITIOUS LOT: VILLAIN ARCHETYPES

When you're creating a new villain, you may want to base him in part on one of the classic villain archetypes (or stereotypes) that have become familiar to us over the decades. These archetypes include:

ANIMAL

Whether an actual animal (in its natural state, or mutated) or an animalistic humanoid, this creature is motivated by the basic drives — the needs to eat, reproduce, survive. An animal villain is not likely to become the personal enemy of a PC, and may well evoke some sympathy from the heroes — after all, an animal is only a supervillain when things have gone very, very wrong for it (*i.e.*, it's been horribly mutated, transplanted from its native environment, or the like). Animal villains are also often wounded, one cause for their rampages. This character's powers tend to be concentrated on combat abilities and movement powers.

Some campaigns feature a variation on this type of NPC — a sentient animal villain, such as a hyperintelligent talking gorilla. Often frustrated by their inability to live in human society, and/or by their perceived superiority over "foolish humans," these villains lash out, seeking to destroy or conquer that which they cannot be a part of.

AVENGER

This villain has been wronged, or has been affected by someone else being wronged, and is now determined to take vengeance, regardless of what the law says or who might get hurt. An avenger villain could be anything from a garden-variety martial artist who lost a friend to street crime to a survivor of the Holocaust who now bends his superpowers to the destruction of neofascism, the nation of Germany, or the descendants (however innocent they may be) of anyone involved with running the concentration camps. This character usually has a good mix of abilities — some combat-oriented, some stalking and planning skills, and so forth.

CULTIST

This villain believes in a theology that's not in the best interest of most of the world. Fueled by religious fervor, cultist supervillains tend to be willing to do anything to promote the aims of their gods. Human sacrifice is a routine tool in the cultist's arsenal, as are rituals that temporarily transfer some of the god's power to one or more followers. Cultists can be anything from a minion-league member of a supernatural sect to a religious leader in a normal modern-day denomination who suddenly develops powers, assumes they come from his god, and decides they mean every one of his personal prejudices is his god's will. This character might have any sort of powers, but they are likely to manifest at the behest of his god rather than whenever he wishes.



CREATOR

This person creates things — usually things that move around and cause trouble, such as robots, synthetic life forms, artificially engineered diseases, undead creatures, golems, and the like. Sad to say, the creator usually isn't very good about keeping his creations contained, and sometimes doesn't care what they do once they've walked out of his lab.

Creators typically aren't very powerful — it's not uncommon for the average professor of Scandinavian history to be able to thrash one with a clipboard and an eraser — but their creations are sometimes far more powerful than superheroes. A creator has tremendous scientific skills (or the magical equivalents) and such powers as Summon.

HERO WITH A DIFFERENT AGENDA

This character is in most ways similar to the PCs, but has just one or two personality quirks that lead him into violent confrontations with the PCs. He may prefer to impose high justice on criminals he catches (under the assumption the law is not up to the task), may have a medieval warrior's outlook on villains (*i.e.*, that killing them is the best way to prevent recidivism), may have switched from villainy to heroism but still chooses not to accept the punishment of the law for his earlier misdeeds, or the like. The PCs often find something sympathetic about the Hero With A Different Agenda, and some may secretly agree with a few of his views — but ultimately they still have to stop him. Such characters are usually the equal, in personal power, of the PCs, and may have any sort of powers.

MERCENARY

This villain is available for hire. Lone mercenary supervillains typically charge high rates for their services and take considerable pride in their work. Most have no Codes Versus Killing and no compunction against any sort of crime (they'll gladly take jobs such as kidnapping young mutants and delivering them to villainous instructors, raid police stations or prisons, steal gold reserves, and so forth). Mercenaries who have ethical codes that approach those of superheroes are often able to get along quite well with PCs, sometimes even joining superhero teams, but the majority hire their ethics out with their powers and are considered bottom-feeders by heroes. This character may have any sort of powers.

PRANKSTER

This villain has personal gain in mind, but that gain comes in the form of amusement — he lives to perform tricks on other characters, particularly superheroes or anyone who's stiff and humorless. Depending on his personality his “pranks” could be mostly harmless, or they could pose a danger to the lives and safety of everyone in the city. His powers tend to be oriented toward movement, escape, illusion, and inconvenience. He may have a real affection for the PCs, but it's probably not reciprocated. Prankster characters are often alien creatures or magical beings (such as leprechauns).

PUPPET

This character is partly or completely controlled by another villain. He may do that villain's bidding out of love, out of debt and a sense of honor, out of naivete, or because he's being mind-controlled. Puppet characters tend to evoke a certain amount of PC sympathy... as long as they are not responsible for their situations. Those who follow another willingly, even though they know right from wrong, don't earn much sympathy from the campaign's chief heroes. This character may have any sort of powers.

RAVAGER

This villain wants to destroy the world, kill everyone on the planet, or accomplish some other equally apocalyptic goal. Usually quite powerful, with abilities oriented toward combat (*i.e.*, high-DC Attack Powers, high defenses), he may have what he considers a legitimate justification for his goals, or he may simply be insane. Sometimes he's a frustrated Ruler/Conqueror (“If I can't have the world, no one can!”).

RULER/CONQUEROR

This character has one overriding agenda: compel others to obey him. He may wish to be the ultimate authority in society; he may simply want others to obey the same laws he does with the same inflexible diligence. His powers tend to be oriented toward combat and compulsion (*i.e.*, Mind Control, high Presence), but he's often an extremely powerful villain in nearly every way — after all, world conquerors often have to fight entire superhero teams at once!



SADIST

The Sadist likes to inflict pain. He doesn't necessarily need a basement filled with handmade torture devices; he may simply be a hand-to-hand fighter who continues to beat on his foes long after they're incapable of moving, or a psychological sadist who enjoys playing mind games that cause his foes emotional pain. The sadist is usually subordinate to a more sophisticated villain, but some master villains indulge in sadism as a hobby during those times when their plans are on cruise control. A sadist character might have any sort of powers.

SCAMMER/GRIFTER

This villain makes his living by persuading others to give him money or other valuables; he's simply the superpowered version of a confidence man. He usually has Skills that make it easier for him to deal with others (especially Conversation and Persuasion), and might have complementary Powers (Mental Illusion, Telepathy, Mind Control, Shape Shift). Scammers normally don't pose much of a threat to combat-oriented superheroes, but when their abilities are used by a broader-thinking master villain, they can cause the PCs endless trouble with their manipulations. For example, they're particularly useful for breaking other villains out of prison....

THIEF

This character uses his superpowers to help him take valuable things away from their owners. Thief supervillains range from sophisticates whose powers allow them to go after ever-more-carefully-defended targets, or run-of-the-mill burglars whose powers have simply given them a certain reliability when it comes to burgling houses, knocking over convenience stores, and mugging joggers. A thief super usually has abilities pertaining to sneakiness — Stealth, Invisibility, Clinging, and so forth.

THUG

This villain uses his powers for exactly the same purposes he used his fists and weapons before he gained superhuman abilities. He enforces the rules laid down by the criminal who employs him. Thug characters tend to be combat-oriented; some are formidable fighters, while some are only slightly superhuman thumb-breakers.

TRANSFORMER

This sort of bad guy has powers that allow him to turn things into other things — most commonly, to turn people into creatures they don't want to be. One type of transformer might cause a city's population to become irresponsible and violent. Another might transform victims into gold, animals, or horrible cthonian monsters. Such characters tend to have formidable Transform powers; they're seldom combat-oriented, but may employ superpowered bodyguards (including people they've transformed).

RUNNING SUPERVILLAINS IN A CAMPAIGN

When designing, revising, and playing supervillains in a campaign, you should consider the following issues.

MATCH THEM AGAINST THE HEROES

Supervillains aren't much fun when the heroes have no trouble putting them down, nor are they very entertaining when they casually dispose of the heroes. Some balance is called for.

Take note of how much damage your heroes do with average attacks and with rare, maxed-out attacks. Compare that to the defenses of your villains to get a sense of how many attacks the villains can sustain before being defeated.

Likewise, compare the attacks of the villains against the defenses of your PCs. A villain's attacks often ought to be slightly better against PC defenses than the heroes' attacks are against their defenses, for two reasons:

- The heroes are, in the collective, played by several minds at once, while you have to divide your mind among several villains at the same time. This means the PCs have a higher likelihood of coming up with a clever plan to unbalance a situation in their favor. So, you should compensate, for balance's sake, by making your villains slightly tougher.
- Villains are, on the average, more focused on things like destruction and power than superheroes, who are better balanced (both mentally, and in terms of their overall suite of powers). From the standpoint of genre conception, it's appropriate for them to have slightly stronger attacks than the PCs.

TEAM-FIGHTING VILLAINS

Designing a villain to take on an entire team by himself is an interesting challenge. If you make him immune to the PCs' attacks, he'll win almost every time they meet. If he can wipe out a hero with each punch or blast he makes, combat becomes nothing more than a test to see whether the heroes can wear him down faster than attrition reduces their numbers to zero. On the other hand, if he folds in the face of the heroes' attacks too easily, he's not doing his job in the story. Neither situation is much fun.

What you need to do is find the proper balance for the character. It's best to design a team-fighting villain so a sustained attack by a hero team can eventually wear him down, and so that his attacks tend to knock a hero out after two or perhaps three successful blows (or perhaps one really lucky damage roll).



When designing a major villain, consider the virtues of Damage Negation and Damage Reduction. Both Powers (particularly Damage Reduction) allow some damage from most attacks to do STUN to the villain, but makes it much harder for any attack to Stun him or Knock him Out. Coupled with a high STUN total, a high END score, a high Recovery, decent (but not overwhelming) defenses, and perhaps Healing or Regeneration, these Powers allow a major supervillain to perform as expected. (You may be able to accomplish the same thing with a large amount of Regeneration, particularly if you use the optional rules for that Power in the APG, but that's a trickier character design to use effectively.)

Similarly, team-fighting villains have an improved chance to stand their own against hero-teams if they have attacks with the *Area Of Effect*, *Autofire*, and similar Advantages — the better to attack several heroes at once. Another option is to give the villain a relatively small attack, but one that due to AVAD or some other Advantage(s) is virtually guaranteed to inflict significant damage to the PCs because it can bypass their defenses.

VILLAIN TACTICS AND ESCAPE OPTIONS

Supervillain combat tactics also play an important role. If a lone supervillain hits one hero on one Phase, another on the next, another on the third, and so on, the heroes tend to Recover as fast as he can dish out damage. If you want this sort of fight, fine; if you want to give the villain a chance, the bad guy ought to concentrate attacks on one or two foes at a time, only turning to attack new ones when the first ones are down.

Villains are also proficient at having escape options set up in advance — their bases have rocket sleds leading to safety, they carry one-use Teleportation gadgets, and so on. Too-frequent use of these *deus ex machina*-style options tends to frustrate and annoy the players (who hate it when the bad guys always get away), but, judiciously used, they can lead to a superteam developing a grudging respect for a villain's versatility or intelligence. A master villain who can devise a plan that has a serious chance of allowing him to take over the world, but can't come up with a way to ensure his own safety in the event of a setback, comes across as kind of ludicrous.

CHOOSING THE FIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES

Since heroes take the active role in campaigns more often than not, they often determine the circumstances under which they fight more frequently than the villains do. This tends to mean the heroes catch the villains when they're less able to come to one another's aid. Heroes jump in as a group and typically pick off small units of the enemy team until the situation is unbalanced in their favor.

To keep this from making all your campaign's fights hopelessly tilted toward your heroes, try the following tactics:

Don't Give The PCs All Day To Study The

Enemy Position: Even if the PCs collectively have tremendous stealth and sensory abilities, they can't be permitted to plot out every square foot of a hostage situation or supervillain base. If they do, their advantage in a combat may be insurmountable, which ruins the dramatic tension of the scene. Ways to keep them from spending all day to draw their diagrams include endangering someone inside the target zone (forcing the heroes to act immediately or watch an innocent perish), and to have the heroes' continued presence in one spot be discovered if they remain too long.

Remember, if the PCs don't have the entire floorplan of the target zone memorized, they also don't know where all the supervillains are. It also helps matters if supervillains are present in their civilian identities — a superhero scanning a base interior won't know who's a super and who's a civilian.

Consider The Virtues of Traps And Reflection:

Supervillains could have things set up so anyone not wearing a specific sort of tracer gets blasted by defensive weaponry; the base could be flooded with a gas all the bad guys routinely receive the antidote to; and Reflection can prove devastating to heroes who suddenly appear and throw their most powerful attacks at the villains. In short — villains don't just sit around passively, waiting for heroes to show up and fight them. Intelligent villains (and most villains, even if mentally unbalanced, aren't truly stupid) plan in advance to make their foes' lives more difficult, and to keep themselves safe.

Villains Can Have Danger Sense, Too: If one or more villains have this Talent and are smart enough to communicate sensations of danger to their fellows without alerting the heroes, the heroes' job becomes much harder.

THREE-DIMENSIONAL VILLAINY

When creating a villain, try to make him three-dimensional — give him a variety of qualities and personality traits, some good, some bad. Very few people are entirely evil, or entirely good, even in the comics. If a villain is so awful the heroes can find no way to sympathize or empathize with him, the heroes are far more likely to find a way to kill him or let him die. Getting around those pesky Codes Versus Killing can be difficult, but a hero with enough motivation will find a way.

In addition, when a supervillain has some good traits, he also has thought processes that make his criminal career more reasonable to him. This allows him to consider himself to be a decent person, making his outrage at the continued interference by superheroes all the more realistic. It's also more likely that you'll think of interesting scenarios and subplots involving the villain, since you can make him appeal to the heroes as something more than just a combatant.

USING THE HEROES' PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLICATIONS

Many supervillains should have some trait that interacts in interesting ways with a hero's Psychological Complications. Take a look at the accompanying text box for some examples.

MAKING THEM PART OF THE HEROES' LIVES

Villains don't have to limit their involvement in a campaign to commencing a villainous plot, being beaten, being arrested or forced to flee, and then returning. There are other options available to you, especially for a well-developed, three-dimensional villain.

A villain not otherwise engaged in standard villainous activities can also be inventing new devices and procedures (sometimes to the detriment, sometimes to the benefit, of humanity), performing (some villains are actors, musicians, and the like), writing, composing, meddling in national affairs in legal ways (villains can resort to lawsuits and media campaigns just like ordinary mortals), and conducting their family and professional lives.

Player Characters can be part of those family and professional lives. A PC could be the child, sibling, spouse, in-law, or even parent of a supervillain. A PC's company could be a competitor or strategic ally of a supervillain's corporation.

Over time, supervillains and superheroes can conceivably become more important to one another than their more mundane associates and family members. Each is truly only great in the presence of the other, after all. As supers age and their closest friends retire, move away, or perish, they may find themselves growing more fond of their remaining longtime adversaries... if adversaries they even remain.

VILLAINS AND HEROIC PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLICATIONS

If A Hero Has:

Code Of Honor

There Might Be A Villain Who Is:

Someone with an identical code, but who's honor-bound to be a villain; someone extremely dishonorable

Must Protect Innocents

A despicable villain who uses the Code against the hero as often as he can ("You can capture me or save those Girl Scouts, hero — what's it gonna be?")

Code Versus Killing

A casual killer

Dislike of a specific group

A member of that group

Hatred Of Male Chauvinists

A male chauvinist; a submissive, cloying female who encourages male chauvinism; a woman who became a villainess because of damage suffered at the hands of a male chauvinist

Overconfidence

Someone who continually mocks the hero, or is better at the hero's skills, or both

COMING BACK FOR MORE... MOSTLY

Until a supervillain's personal goals are resolved (or become completely impossible to attain), he's unlikely to leave a campaign. He may be driven into exile or thrown into prison, keeping him out of the limelight for months or years at a time, but he'll be back. The recurring villain is, after all, one of the best-known features of the Superhero genre (see page 16).

Of course, it can give your players a sense of accomplishment if they remove a supervillain threat permanently, and a certain proportion of your campaign's villains should end up that way. Being removed permanently doesn't necessarily mean being killed. A villain could lose his powers, achieve his personal goals and retire, move away (for example, to rule a planet all his own, somewhere else in the galaxy), choose to switch to the good guys' side, or get thrown into prison and never have the chance to escape. Any one of these gives the PCs a feeling of accomplishment, so long as they had something to do with the outcome.

The only time when you should choose to retire a villain permanently without a major change taking place in his psyche is when none of the players appreciate him — when all the players react with personal dismay to his every return appearance. If changes to the villain's goals and tactics don't alter this situation, it's time to put the villain in a box somewhere and leave him there forever, regardless of how fond you may be of him.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-villainous NPCs actually follow the same guidelines as Villains for what makes them interesting and how they should interact with a campaign — with the significant difference that most of them don't have full-time criminal intentions. They, too, should have fully-detailed personalities, personal goals, relationships with one another and with the PCs, and the potential to change over time. What sets NPCs apart from villains is that they tend to have a different (and usually broader) range of motivations available to them. Most have less ambitious personal goals — they simply want to have the allotment of opportunity and reward they think they deserve. Many pursue success in economic arenas; many pursue love and affection; many just want to survive.

NPC TYPES

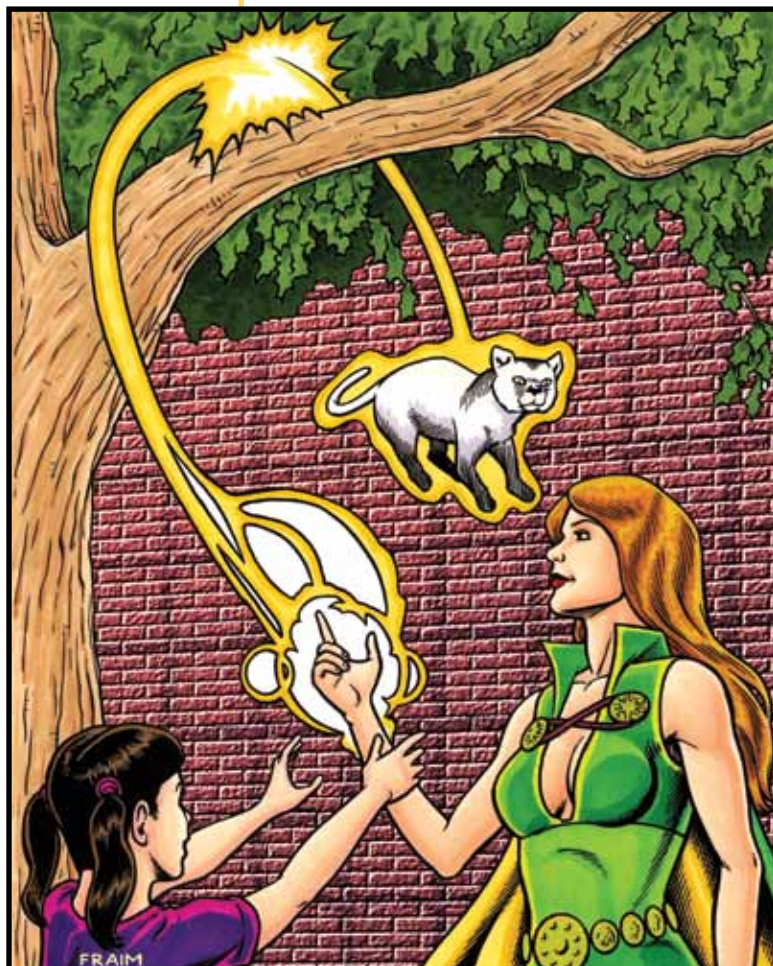
If at all possible, before the first adventure in a new campaign you should create a cast of NPCs — not necessarily in full character-sheet form, but in terms of name, appearance, occupation, and likely reaction to superheroes. (Alternately, you can save yourself some time by choosing NPCs out of a Hero Games product, such as *Everyman*.)

Over time, you'll add new NPCs to your cast of characters. Normally, this happens because you've set up an adventure that involves new characters or because, in the course of an adventure, a PC wants to find a type of character who's not already part of the campaign cast. (For instance, "I need to track down an expert in the field of marine biology and run these samples by him.")

The rest of this section lists and describes approximately fifty NPC types who appear frequently in Champions campaigns. The NPC types likely to be of most frequent use to you in a standard campaign, and therefore the ones you might want to consider creating first, are marked with an asterisk (*).

Activist: An activist is someone who tries to keep issues he considers important in the news and in the minds of lawmakers, usually with the intention of influencing public opinion in a particular direction. Activists can be part of a campaign in a variety of ways: some might oppose superheroes in general, considering their effect on society to be dangerous; others want to enlist supers in their activism ("This is Black Swordsman with a word of advice: don't smoke."). A very few, those whose activism extends to violence, might actually end up as the villains of an adventure. Comic book activists tend to be very passionate people and often get in trouble because of their concerns, which also makes them a good choice for romantic interest characters.

Anchorman: Because superheroes appear in the news, and because the news often alerts heroes to the onset of trouble, PCs will see the faces of local news anchors a lot. It doesn't take much effort to personalize those faces, giving them names and mannerisms, and subsequently you can use those characters in other ways in the campaign. News anchors do charity events (that are sometimes



the focus of supervillain activities); some struggle for a big news break or acting opportunity that allows them to leave local news; and they can become the targets of stalkers (including super-powered ones).

***Archaeologist:** Archaeologists fill many roles in a campaign. A surprising number of them stumble across ancient artifacts that turn them into supers. An even greater number of them stumble across ancient menaces that kill them. But the greatest number simply do their jobs, finding, cataloguing, and interpreting information about the physical remains of human civilization, and they can provide expert advice to superheroes. It's helpful for a campaign's PCs to be aware of one scholarly archaeologist, perhaps the idiosyncratic professor at a local university, whom they can turn to about questions of history and civilization.

Artist: Fine artists, commercial illustrators, sculptors, photographers, performance artists, graffiti artists, and more can play interesting roles in your campaign. These creative people don't necessarily have a lot to do, story-wise, with adventures, but game worlds are as full of them as the real world, and they do make interesting romantic interests. In addition, if the heroes find an artist who's capable of doing police-style sketches of suspects and is willing to receive impressions through telepathic contact, they'll have a helpful resource for bringing criminals to justice.

Athlete: A campaign's athletes can range in stature from a member of the local professional sports franchise to an amateur who stays in training for local charity marathons. Mad scientists sometimes kidnap athletes to experiment on (their excellent physical conditioning makes them good choices, since they're far more likely to survive the treatments than the common man); athletes can stumble across game-fixing plots or other criminal enterprises; and, because of their focus and physicality, they make good romantic interests.

Bail Bondsman: When someone is arrested and bail is set for him, if he can't come up with the required portion of the bail, he may turn to a bail bondsman. A bondsman puts up that money (for a fee) and then does everything in his power to make sure the suspect actually stays in town and shows up for his trial (if he skips, the bondsman loses the bail). Bail bondsmen sometimes hire bounty hunters to chase down people who've skipped bail; in a Superhero world, they may turn to superheroes to ask for the same help. Supers seldom suffer when they cultivate working relationships with bail bondsmen; the bondsmen may have tips that are useful when anticipating upcoming crimes, and the super may find himself in need of being bailed out.

Bartender: Most appearances by bartenders in fiction tend to follow a certain pattern: the hero enters the bar and asks the bartender a question about something the bartender doesn't want to discuss; the hero resorts to bribery or physical

threats and gets his information; the hero leaves. (It's to be suspected the money more than compensates for the physical abuse, else there would be a tremendous turnover in bartenders.) But a bartender character can be a useful regular NPC in a campaign; he sees a lot of traffic through his establishment, hears a lot of drunken confessions and mutterings, and, if he's skilled at his job, mixes a good drink.

Boyfriend/Girlfriend: Though every campaign needs a certain number of characters to be established as romantic partners of prominent PCs and NPCs, and for others to be available as potential partners, "boyfriend" and "girlfriend" don't actually belong on this list. This is because any character in a campaign who is a romantic partner also needs to belong to one of the other character types (for example, "Businessman/Boyfriend" or "Police Officer/Girlfriend"). If a romantic partner doesn't belong to some other role, then he or she will mostly sit around waiting to be taken out on a date or being kidnapped so the PCs can perform a rescue. This doesn't lead to an interesting character, and players don't really care about a disinteresting one.

***Burglar/Thief:** This NPC type can range from the very classy cat burglar who shows considerable style with every theft to the drunken, shirtless guy the PCs pick up on routine patrols every Friday night. Recurrent burglar or thief characters have a lot of use in the campaign: they can steal items that turn out to be mystical artifacts and unleash danger upon the world; steal items that local organized crime wants back very badly; stumble across a PC's Secret Identity; or the like. And don't forget the virtues of the retired or reformed burglar/thief: having reluctantly turned to some more honest way of making their living (or having become able to live off the proceeds of their lives of crime), they make good contacts for heroes, often have a helpful working knowledge of the region's organized crime, and can help identify others in their trade through *modus operandi* or clues no one else could correctly interpret.

Businessman: The most common sorts of businesspeople regularly encountered by PC superheroes are corporate tycoons whose corporate manipulations set storylines into motion. The PCs are also likely to encounter representatives of companies that manufacture and sell superhero-level equipment, as well as company presidents and officers whom they need to question during investigations.

Celebrity, Local: In addition to the news anchors and athletes described earlier, local celebrities can include radio personalities (popular DJs), humorists and comedians, retired war heroes, businessmen who have a measure of local fame (such as the eccentric business owner who does all his own bad commercials), famous columnists and critics, and so forth. The PCs are likely to bump into local celebrities at fund-raising events and to save them from stalkers.



Charity Worker: These sorts of people share many of the same story-type advantages as activists (above), but are not as extreme in their relationships with local government and business. Because they come into contact with people who are at the brink of financial collapse and despair, charity workers are very likely to stumble onto events that point toward adventures that are ready to pop.

Collector: There are as many different types of collectors as there are things to collect — artwork, coins, statuary, stamps, movies, autographs, toys, railroad ties, roleplaying games, commemorative plates, and the like. Some collectors are simply acquisitive completionists, but others may be scholars in their fields of interest, and therefore good contacts for PCs to cultivate. Collectors can also get into trouble — such as when they obtain an item that's dangerous or have a valuable object stolen — which can also bring them into contact with superheroes.

***Congressman:** It's good to develop at least one of the region's senators or representatives; superheroes are likely to encounter this person at one time or another, and the politician is equally likely to seek out the supers for matters relating to national government. Comic book Congressmen can pull strings to help obtain justice for those people it has bypassed, lobby to get major industries set up in their regions, attract the ire of terrorists and assassins, and so on.

***Coroner:** Comic books are full of dead people, and superheroes often need to know how it happened. Cultivating a working relationship with the county coroner is a good idea for PCs. In addition, the discipline is such a macabre one that it's an excellent opportunity to create a very eccentric NPC, though the death-obsessed or death-oblivious kook coroner is something of a cliché.

***Crime Boss:** Every group of superheroes should have at least a peripheral knowledge of how organized crime operates in its area. This means you should give a name, personality, and *modus operandi* to the most significant local crime lords, and possibly to their chief lieutenants, as early as possible in the campaign. Crime bosses tend to operate their syndicates as businesses, meaning they're frustratingly elusive to indict and convict; this gives them staying power in a campaign. (And do remember that in a four-color superhero world, most crime bosses are keenly aware of what supers can do; they may hire supervillains to protect them, and almost certainly employ technicians to set up security measures to help counter superheroes' special senses and other abilities.) Note also that crime bosses don't have to be adversaries in every story. When they have enemies in common with superheroes, they may find a way to cooperate with the PCs.

***Doctor:** If the superheroes don't have a physician among their members or on staff, it's useful for them to know of a good non-super doctor. Local medics can do more than patch up injured supers and diagnose their mystery ailments: they can alert heroes to unusual medical situations (odd injuries that point to the presence of some sort of monster or alien, diseases that threaten to become epidemics, physiological changes that suggest someone is developing super-abilities). The multidisciplinary physician working at the city's main hospital is a mainstay of comic books, but specialists are also helpful — geneticists, bacteriologists, biologists, botanists, and psychiatrists can also figure prominently in investigations. Any superhero who has specialized medical needs should know a doctor who can meet those needs.

Driver: The professional driver is an occasional guest star in a superhero story. Supers often need to question cab drivers, limo drivers, and chauffeurs about the movements of their clients. A normal-level superhero with a sense of tradition might employ a personal driver for his super-car.

Fire Chief: The head of the city's fire department may play a role in adventures, specifically in situations where a villain's responsible for a series of arson crimes. Fire chiefs can also be good consultants when dealing with supervillains who use flame; they can help determine what accelerants the villains use, discover the temperatures at which the supers' powers operate, and so on.

Firefighter/EMT: Rank-and-file firefighters are not as useful in a campaign as the fire chief, but, because they're courageous people in a critical occupation, they do make good friends, DNPCs, and romantic interests for PCs. The same is true of emergency medical technicians.

Gambler: A professional gambler offers many of the same benefits as the Burglar/Thief: He may have connections, however tenuous, with organized crime, and operates in a realm that gives him insight into weird events on the horizon. Professional gamblers can also be useful in setting up "sting" operations to trick villains.

Ghost: In a campaign that makes use of the supernatural, it's appropriate to have a ghost or two wandering around. Typically, ghosts fall into one of two categories. The first is a nearly mindless spirit that haunts a place, acting as a signpost to an unsolved crime or unresolved tragedy. The second is a fully developed personality whose death may have been an inconvenience or even a tragedy but didn't serve to slow the character down much. The second type is better suited to humorous campaigns or those with elaborately developed mystic themes; otherwise it strains harder at the players' willing suspension of disbelief.

Gossip: A character who lives to acquire personal information and then pass it on to others can be either extremely annoying or extremely helpful to the Player Characters... or both. Gossips have the unsettling habit of revealing information that creates friction in relationships or that causes months of surveillance to be wasted (at the worst possible time, of course). On the other hand, they're great treasure troves of information about people, including local crime figures, politicians, and supervillains.

***Governor:** The leader of the state government offers many of the same benefits as the Congressman, above, and you ought to at least know this character's name, political affiliation, and primary motivations.

***Inventor:** Naturally, many superheroes are inventors, but there are others who aren't supers. Some have an unfortunate habit of creating menaces that escape to endanger the community. Some fabricate gadgets and weaponry for superheroes, or supervillains, or both. Some make discoveries that they bring to the superheroes as starting-points for new adventures ("My new jumpspace EMR monitor is detecting wave fluctuations that resemble communications, and I think I've been able to decode portions of the alien language... they're coming here...").

Investigator: If the heroes don't have someone with detective skills among their number, they'll find it helpful to have a working relationship with a local private investigator. Even if they do, over the course of a campaign's duration, they're certain to encounter other investigators: private eyes, insurance investigators, and the like. Investigators also have an unhealthy habit of staggering into a PC's presence mortally wounded, gasping out cryptic clues, and then dying, launching the heroes into a new adventure.

***Lawyer:** Superheroes will meet a lot of lawyers in a campaign. They tend to fall into one of several categories: prosecuting attorneys (members of the district attorney's office who are responsible for making convictions in criminal cases); defense attorneys (whose usual job is to keep criminals captured by the heroes out of jail, but who are sometimes called on to keep superheroes themselves from being convicted); and civil attorneys (who either sue people, or protect a client from being sued). There are also attorneys who are experts in superhero law, international law, salvage law, and possibly even interplanetary law (in the right campaign), any of whom the PCs might wish to consult. Occasionally one will find an attorney who's reformed — given up the practice to run a game company, for example.

Martial Arts Master: Many superheroes are martial artists, and some of them can even count themselves as masters, but even they occasionally have to turn to the true masters of their respective arts. NPC martial arts masters tend to be aged (one reason why they're not out fighting

supervillains themselves), wise, and experienced (each one's knowledge of the Martial World, and sometimes of mysticism, secret societies, or history's mysteries is unique). Because they're aged, wise, and experienced, they also tend to be quite eccentric characters, providing you with a good opportunity for some acting.

***Mayor:** Most Champions campaigns are set primarily in an urban area, or give the PCs frequent cause to visit a particular city. The local community's mayor is certain to be affected by super-activities, so you should develop him early. The mayor makes statements about supers to the local press, appears at the same charity functions the PCs do, and takes steps to make the community a safer one even when this inconveniences supers. The GM can help establish the tone of a campaign by deciding how the mayor feels about and normally reacts to supers — a hero-friendly mayor makes life easier for the PCs, a hero-neutral mayor sometimes helps and sometimes hinders them, and a hero-hostile mayor makes things difficult at every step.

Mechanic: If the supers operate super-vehicles and don't want to do all their own maintenance, they'll eventually require the services of a trustworthy mechanic. A mechanic can be an employee of the superhero team or a garage mechanic they regularly turn to. Mechanics make good "personality" NPCs, and the stereotype of the grease monkey who turns out to be a cute young woman exerts an impressive fascination on the minds of some gamers.

Medium: In a comic book world, there are two types of spiritualists: Those who use trickery to pretend to be in contact with the spirit world, and those who actually have powers that let them speak with spirits. Both types are useful in a campaign. Fake spiritualists can implement scams that take people for millions of dollars and become trusted advisors of businessmen and politicians. Spiritualists who actually possess powers can be crucial in some superhero stories — they may even initiate adventures by bringing news or prophecies to the heroes.

Military Officer: If the campaign setting includes a local military base, it's useful for you to know the name of its commander. In addition, many campaigns make use of military special forces such as supervillain capture teams or special rescue units, and these personnel can come into regular contact with superheroes.

***Occult/Paranormal Investigator:** Assuming none of the PCs fill this role for a campaign, it's useful for the heroes to encounter someone who spends his life digging at the seamy underside of the occult world. Such characters might be genuine seekers after knowledge and truth, tabloid reporters with an unhealthy habit of stumbling over genuine supernatural events, or skeptics adept at exposing fakers. Any of them can be helpful consultants for a PC team.



***Patriarch:** This character is the leader of a prominent family. Patriarchs may also be businessmen, lawyers, politicians, or whatever, but their principal role in a campaign is as the ultimate authority in the affairs of their family members. They tend to be middle-aged or older, very forceful of personality, and pursuing agendas that are neither evil nor good but are in what they consider the best interests of their families. Therefore it's possible for them to be in vicious conflict with the PCs one minute and be arm-in-arm helpful the next, possibly without any lingering feelings from one situation to the other.

In a campaign, it's useful to have one important family to point at, and occasionally to use in meddling with local or regional events in such a way as to affect the Player Characters. It can also be interesting to have several different supers (heroes, villains, or preferably both) belong to a specific prominent family, especially when they start out the campaign not being aware of one another as supers.

Performer: Into this category falls actors, musicians, and the like, to whatever extent is appropriate for the local setting. (Settings such as Los Angeles, Nashville, and New York City are naturally going to have considerable numbers of performers to draw on.) Performers, like local celebrities, can easily become the target of kidnappers and stalkers; it's also not unknown for a lonely and somewhat deranged supervillain to capture one in an effort to make the performer his consort. Note that you doesn't have to create performers out of whole cloth; it's permissible to use real-world celebrities in cameo appearances in your campaign. This can be a real treat for players who enjoy that sort of thing.

***Police Chief/Captain:** The local police chief determines in large part the state of relations between his department and superheroes. If the police chief is friendly or neutral toward heroes, then official relations will probably be cordial. If he's hostile, then the heroes might still be able to have friendly relations with individual officers, but these relationships will have to remain secret.

Police chiefs tend to fall into one of three categories in a Champions campaign: Reform; Conventional; and Corrupt. A Reform police chief has recently taken the job and is determined to restructure the police force from top to bottom, either because it's outdated (it needs new equipment, new techniques, new attitudes), inefficient (officers get new training and irritating motivational courses), or corrupt (the new chief ferrets out crooked cops and cooperates extensively with the Internal Affairs Division, making him/her very unpopular with the rank and file). A Conventional chief believes his department is operating at an acceptable level of efficiency and honesty (and may be correct). A Corrupt chief may be in the pocket of local organized crime or may have found ways to make the department a profit center, in which case justice is for sale in the local community.

All these attributes are similarly appropriate for local sheriffs, heads of special police units (like state rangers), and other law enforcement agencies prominent in your campaign.

***Police Investigator:** Player Characters will inevitably run into local police investigators on a regular basis; after all, police detectives and superheroes both investigate crimes. There's likely to be a bristly, somewhat competitive atmosphere between police and superheroes (the supers consider the police to be hampered by tradition and foolish laws; the police consider the supers to be amateurs who screw up convictions through their extralegal antics; both attitudes tend to be correct). In the comics, police investigators tend to be smart, idiosyncratic people, making them fun for you to play and making them appropriate for romantic leads, DNPCs, and friends of PCs.

***Police Officer:** Likewise, superheroes frequently encounter uniformed officers (as well as equivalent peace officers such as deputy sheriffs and state troopers). Here, too, we have the cooperative but competitive interaction of the police and supers. But because cases tend to be turned over to investigators when they're not instantly resolved, PC heroes don't usually establish as strong relationships with uniformed officers as they do with investigators, whom they deal with far more regularly.

The President: If the PCs' team is of sufficient prominence that they're involved with matters of national interest on a regular basis, they're likely to be in occasional contact with the President (or, outside the US, the principal government representative or leader). Except for the security surrounding him and appropriate difficulty in getting appointments to speak with him, the President functions in a campaign much as the Governor (above) does.

Priest: Into this category falls any religious authority figure, from the kindly old priest to the glassy-eyed cult recruiter. Priestly characters can be either beneficial or harmful (depending on the true natures of their various churches and denominations), weak or powerful (some may actually receive superpowers from godly beings), knowledgeable or deluded (depending on how close a relationship their doctrine has to reality), pro-super or anti-super, and so on. If any of the campaign's PCs have strong religious feelings, you should develop priest-type characters for them to be acquainted with: the father-confessor, the nun who helped raise them when they were orphans, the urban minister/activist whose attempts to improve the lot of his people get him in trouble again and again, the cultist who's only in it for money and sex, the neopagan who's anxious to make the world understand that witches are nature-worshippers rather than tools of Satan, and so on.

Professor: In addition to their responsibilities teaching students at the university and justifying their existence with academic publications, professors can be useful sources of information to PCs. Each one is theoretically an expert in one or more fields of human study. For every Knowledge Skill in the book, there are professors at various universities who embody them. Therefore it's useful for PCs to cultivate long-lasting relationships with them. For some reason, especially in movies from the Fifties but all throughout the comic book generations, gaunt, absent-minded professors tend to have very attractive children who are less obsessive than their parents and make excellent romantic interests for PCs.

Reporter: Reporters fill several useful roles in a campaign. They write or broadcast stories that alert PCs to situations. They stumble across clues that further PC investigations. They dig away at heroes' Secret Identities, causing heroes to have to go to extreme measures to protect their private lives. They get killed when curiosity leads them into danger, causing heroes to have to seek justice on their behalf. Because they're relentlessly curious and have little respect for authority figures, they make fun NPCs for a GM to play, and stubborn, dogged romantic interests for PCs to have to cope with.

Shop Owner: Especially in campaigns where heroes protect a specific community, shop owners make good regular contacts, much as bartenders do. Because they're fixed to a vulnerable address, they can be preyed upon by organized crime or disorganized robbers. Because they have a regular clientele, they can be a rich source of information. Because they regularly deal with goods in a particular field, they can become knowledgeable about those fields, making them as helpful as professors.

Support Personnel: Some hero teams have civilian operatives who perform secondary tasks for the organization — maintenance of vehicles, routine medical aid, research, and the like. Heroes naturally encounter their support personnel on a frequent basis, making it easy for friendships to begin. It's very helpful for you to establish names and personalities for all support personnel attached to a superteam, if for no other reason than the fact that it increases the verisimilitude of your setting.

Teacher: Unlike the professor, teachers are not often used as information repositories. Instead, they usually become involved in personal-interest stories, especially those involving DNPCs (who are notoriously troublesome students). Teachers can also notice changes, especially unfortunate ones, in their students, and bring their suspicions to PCs, precipitating investigations.





Valet/Butler: Wealthy PCs may have personal servants. Valets and butlers bring a bit of class to a campaign, and you can also use them to inject wry humor and social commentary into your stories. Valets and butlers tend to be physically normal, but have endless patience, a dry wit, and considerable conversational skills. On the other hand, some of them have led... interesting... lives before becoming “gentlemen’s gentlemen,” and come to their positions with a variety of unusual Skills and abilities.

Watchdog: Government agencies and private interest groups sometimes hire individuals to keep an eye on others — and “others” sometimes includes superhero groups. Superhero watchdogs try to make sure superhero groups obey the law, promote the watchdog group’s agenda, or act as role models for today’s youth. Watchdog characters are invariably pains in the rear end for superheroes, but they do help keep life interesting.

NPC ROLES

Separate from their particular “type,” NPCs also have roles within a campaign — roles chiefly reflecting how they relate to Player Characters. Any of the NPC types above can relate to PCs in any of these ways:

Admirer: An NPC might be a fan of the PC, and exist chiefly to shore up his self-image and remind him just how important he is to the community and the world. Admirers can be charming indicators of community opinion, or a source of comic relief who constantly inconvenience a hero by efforts to remain close to him.

Adversary/Foil: An NPC can constantly oppose a PC without being a villain. He might perform a valuable story function through his opposition; this is an *Adversary*. He might just be a cheerful troublemaker who pokes and prods at the PC whenever he gets a chance; this is a *Foil*. A hero’s girlfriend’s brother might be a foil, as might the neighborhood postman, a newspaper reporter, or the team’s chief mechanic. A government watchdog could be an adversary, as could the child protective services representative keeping an eye on the PC’s home life or a police officer waiting for the hero to get into trouble.

Colleague: An NPC could belong to the same profession as the PC (either as a superhero or in private life), and thus be someone the PC constantly encounters in a professional environment. Colleagues often socialize together, and this creates grapevines by which valuable information can reach the superhero.

DNPC: If the character frequently gets into trouble, and drags a PC in after him, he’s a Dependent Non-Player Character.

Follower/Sidekick: This character is a junior partner of the PC, usually very helpful to his career or goals. Occasionally, the actions of the follower or sidekick drag the hero into greater trouble. The PC usually adopts a paternal attitude toward the follower/sidekick (sometimes to that character’s distress) and tries to help the character through life’s bumps and obstacles.

Relative: Any character could be related to a PC — including the NPCs types described above and the villain types described earlier. As a GM, you should value each PC’s relatives because, typically, PCs can’t get rid of them — they’re related for life, providing a perpetual weakness you can exploit.

Romantic Interest/Significant Other: And, of course, an NPC could be the PC’s romantic partner.

SUPERHEROIC COMBAT AND ADVENTURING



For the most part, the combat and adventuring rules in 6E2 cover superheroic battles and adventures very well. Here are a few additional rules and options specifically for the Superheroes genre.

NEW AND ADJUSTED RULES

The *HERO System* rules are designed to simulate any of heroic fiction. However, as generic rules, they often work best if “fine-tuned” a bit for each genre. This section contains a few optional adjustments to existing rules, and new rules, that make the game work more like a comic book superhero story.

ATTACKING WHILE COVERED

It’s a terrible idea in real life, but characters in the comics and movies occasionally attack someone who has them Covered with a gun or other weapon, and manage to do so without getting attacked. Thus, the optional rules for escaping from Cover on 6E2 85 are very appropriate for Superhero games.

BOUNCED ATTACKS

Superheroes often use blunt missile weapons — thrown billy clubs, shields, weighted disks, and the like — against their enemies, carefully planning the ricochets to hit multiple targets (a form of Multiple Attack, usually) and/or to make the weapon bounce right back to the character so he can catch it and throw it again right away. The rules for Bounced Weapons on 6E2 44 cover this tactic.

COMBAT AND REVELATORY PRESENCE ATTACKS

You can use the optional rules for revelatory Presence Attacks’ effect on combat, which are most suited for Adventure- and Drama-oriented campaigns, if you wish. See pages 54 and 58 for details.

THE FASTBALL SPECIAL

A “fastball special” is a special form of Grab By, Move By, or Move Through in which a character without significant movement abilities of his own is thrown by a high-STR character at a designated target. It works like a normal Grab By, Move By,

or Move Through, except that the “fastball’s” velocity depends on the high-STR character’s ability to throw him. Use the Throwing Table on 6E2 81 to determine how fast and far a character can be thrown. For example, if a character has an extra 25 STR with which to make a Throw, and he makes a Standing Throw as part of a fastball special, the “fastball” has a velocity of 20m.

To perform a fastball special, have the thrower perform a *Throw Maneuver* using the “fastball” against the target. The CV modifiers for the maneuver the fastball plans to use don’t apply to the Throw, but the normal -4 OCV for throwing an unbalanced, non-aerodynamic missile do. If the Attack Roll with the Throw succeeds (*i.e.*, the thrower put the “fastball” in a position to make a HTH Combat attack against the target), the “fastball” then makes his own Attack Roll; CV modifiers for the maneuver he uses apply to his roll.

Example: *Ironclad (STR 60, OCV 7) is going to throw Nighthawk (STR 20, OCV 8) in a “fastball special” so he can perform a Grab By to snatch a magic amulet out of a villain’s hands. Nighthawk weighs 100 kilograms, so Ironclad has 50 STR more than he needs to lift his friend. Ironclad’s running throw allows him to toss Nighthawk 80m. The villain is DCV 7. Ironclad makes an Attack Roll and rolls an 8, which allows him to hit the villain — the -3 OCV for a Grab By doesn’t apply to his roll, but Nighthawk is unbalanced and non-aerodynamic (-4 OCV). That means Nighthawk is in position to perform his maneuver. Nighthawk has an OCV of 8, +1 Overall Level, for 9, but suffers the -3 OCV penalty for the maneuver (and -4 DCV). He rolls an 8 and hits! He gets +8 STR for the maneuver, giving him 5½d6 for his attempt to wrest the amulet from the villain.*

The “fastball” character gets a Full Phase in which to act, since his movement is being supplied by another character. Typically he devotes the whole Phase to making the attack. However, before being thrown, or after traveling halfway to his target (*i.e.*, making a “Half Move”), the character could use a Zero Phase Action to activate a power. That could be something simple (making his claws grow so he can use them with the attack), or something complicated like activating a Body-Affecting Power or Movement Power (see below).

At the GM's option, the "fastball" can use another Combat Maneuver or Martial Maneuver, such as a Grab, Martial Disarm, Martial Strike, or Passing Strike, as part of the attack, but still get the typical velocity bonus to damage/STR as if performing a Move By. This can cause game balance problems, but may be appropriate for some situations.

CHANGING FORM

The fastball special rules assume the "fastball" keeps the same size, form, and mass he had when thrown. However, Body-Affecting Powers can interact with a fastball special maneuver in various ways. The easiest thing is for the GM to just ignore this entirely, except for purposes of determining the character's mass (and thus how far he can be thrown). But GMs desiring greater "realism" (and thus complexity) should consider using the following rules.

Density Increase: If a character has Density Increase active at the moment he's thrown, use it to determine his mass. If he activates the power in the middle of the maneuver, re-calculate how far the thrower could have thrown him. If he's already traveled that far or further, he immediately drops to the ground. If he still has some meters left to travel at his higher mass, he travels them, but no further. If a high-mass character falls on a target, use the rules for dropped objects on 6E2 141 to determine how much damage he does (possibly adding a die or two to account for the velocity from the Throw, if appropriate).

Desolidification: A character has to be solid to be thrown (unless the thrower has STR that can affect Desolidified objects, in which case consider the Desolidified character to have his normal mass for purposes of calculating the Throw distance). However, the character could activate Desolidification after making a Half Move, and thus move through solid objects in his path. The problem with doing so is that the rules would not normally allow him to turn his Desolidification off in time to hit the target and injure him. In this case, the GM can either grant an exception to that rule, or allow an exception if the character succeeds with a roll with an appropriate *Power Skill* or other Skill.

Duplication: If a character Duplicates while in mid-throw, the Duplicates have his same velocity and trajectory, and hit the target if he would. The GM may impose restrictions, based on common sense and dramatic sense, regarding how many "fastball Duplicates" can hit a single target (two or three is usually a good maximum).

Growth: Growth functions just like Density Increase regarding the way it increases mass.

Multiform and Shape Shift: If a character uses one of these powers to alter his form in a way that increases his mass, apply the rules for Density Increase to determine what happens. If his change of shape alters his balance and/or aerodynamic qualities, apply the *worse* of the two modifiers from the *Thrown Object Range Modifier* table on 6E2 82 to the thrower's Attack Roll. For example, if the character starts out neither balanced nor aerodynamic (-4 to thrower's OCV), but changes shape to a balanced object (-2 OCV), the thrower still suffers the -4 OCV. Similarly, if the character starts out balanced and aerodynamic (-0 OCV), but changes form to be non-aerodynamic (-2 OCV), the thrower suffers a -2 OCV penalty.

Beyond that, the GM should use his common sense and dramatic sense to determine the effects of changing shape. For example, some shapes may be so broad or flat that they slow the character down, subtracting meters from his velocity.

Shrinking: Fastballs often start out Shrunk, since that allows the thrower to toss them a long way (and doesn't effect the STR with which they strike!). If they increase their size in mid-flight, apply the rules above for Density Increase to determine how much they slow down.

Shrinking in mid-throw has an effect opposite that of Density Increase. When the character Shrinks, determine how far the initial throw would have thrown him at his new mass. Add *half* the extra meters to the character's meters traveled and velocity for damage purposes.

Example: *Shrinker, at regular height and mass, is thrown by someone with 30 extra STR (so she's traveling 48m). After making a Half Move, she takes a Zero-Phase Action to Shrink down to the point where she weighs .2 kg. At that weight, the thrower has 75 extra STR for throwing purposes (for a distance of 120m). Half the difference is $(120-48 = 72) 36m$, so Shrinker now travels $(48+36) 84m$, using that velocity to calculate damage if she hits the target.*

Stretching: Stretching may allow a character who won't travel quite far enough because of the throw to "add" a few meters onto the end of the maneuver and manage to strike his target. Unusual alterations of form via Stretching should be dealt with as discussed under *Multiform And Shape Shift*, above.

MOVEMENT

The basic fastball special rules assume the "fastball" doesn't have Movement Powers that would allow him to reach the target, or that his Movement Powers aren't powerful enough to let him get that far and still attack. But that may not always be the case, and a proper combination of throwing velocity and Movement Powers can yield some interesting results.

A “fastball” with any amount of Flight can use 2m of Flight as a Half Phase Action to change the direction he’s traveling as a fastball by up to sixty degrees without losing any of his fastball velocity (or adding to it). At the GM’s option, if the character applies one Movement Skill Level, or makes a DEX Roll at -4, he can turn up to 120 degrees without losing any fastball velocity. This is a good way to make a Surprise Move or hurl the fastball around a corner.

At the GM’s option, if the “fastball” has more meters of Flight than the number of meters he’s been thrown, he can add the excess to the throwing meters, thus increasing both his distance traveled and velocity-based damage. For example, if Ironclad throws Sapphire 20m, and Sapphire has Flight 30m, she can add (30-20) 10m to her distance traveled and velocity for damage purposes.

Alternately, but also at the GM’s option, if the “fastball” has any number of meters of Flight, he can add those directly to his fastball velocity, “stacking” both of them to achieve a much higher velocity (and thus greater distance traveled and damage done). Using the example above, that would allow Sapphire to travel 50m and do a total of +8d6 damage with a Move Through. This option can be extremely unbalancing for the game, though, so GMs should consider carefully before allowing characters to use it in the game.

If for some reason a “fastball” with Flight wants to slow down, he can apply half his meters of Flight to counteract his thrown velocity as a Half-Phase Action.

If the “fastball” has Teleportation, he can make a Half Move with his Teleportation during the throw to either increase the distance he’s thrown (but not the damage from velocity), or to alter his direction of attack and thus possibly gain a Surprise Move bonus (this tactic works best if the fastball has the *Position Shift* Adder for his Teleportation).

OPTIONAL EFFECTS OF DAMAGE

Most of the Optional Effects of Damage from 6E2 108-17 — Wounding, Impairing, Disabling, Knockdown, and Bleeding — are inappropriate for Champions campaigns. (They’re not illogical, they’re not bad — they just don’t have much of a place in a Superhero environment.) On the other hand, the rules for Knockback are extremely appropriate for the superhero genre, and should be used in all but the most “realistic” games.

The rules for Hit Locations and Placed Shots are generally inappropriate for Champions games; most GMs don’t use them. However, it’s appropriate to use the Hit Location chart on occasions when you want to determine randomly where an attack strikes a target, purely for descriptive effect (just don’t use any of the modifiers or multipliers). Characters can also use Placed Shots for such heroic actions as shooting a gun out of a thug’s hand, and perhaps even for things like bypassing a target’s armor.



RESTRICTED RECOVERIES

HERO System combats can take a long time; Superhero combats even more so. It’s possible to protract a combat beyond the point that anyone is having fun by having each unconscious character Recover to consciousness at exactly the rate prescribed by the rules. Instead, if a combat has turned substantially against the supervillains, have the unconscious ones regain STUN from Recoveries at a slower-than-normal pace so the combat ends in a more timely, dramatic fashion. If necessary, just don’t give them any Recoveries at all. (If nothing else, you should do this to put a stop to the markedly unheroic and totally game rules-oriented habit of hitting an unconscious foe “just to make sure he stays down.”) If all the PCs are unconscious at the same time, allow them to remain so — the assumption being that the villains did whatever it took to keep them unconscious — regardless of how close they might have been to waking up. (The players won’t like this, but will probably understand the fairness of the tactic.)

SUPERHERO ENVIRONMENTS

The *Environment* chapter of 6E2 talks about the world Player Characters live in — how dangerous it can be, how its components break. Those rules all apply to a Champions environment, but GMs need some additional details relating specifically to superhero campaigns.

STOPPING MOVING THINGS

Superheroes occasionally need to stop enormous moving objects, like a jet crashing to Earth or an asteroid that's been hurled at their space station base like a missile. 6E2 26 has rules for this.

BREAKABLE OBJECTS

In a Champions campaign, the list of “breakable objects” is somewhat more generous than that of any other campaign type. Breakable objects can include fallout shelters, aircraft carriers, mountaintops, and civic centers. A few additional rules are needed to allow the joy of breaking everything within sight to better resemble what happens in the comic books.

MAKING THE WORLD MORE FRAGILE AND THE HEROES MORE DURABLE

The text box on 6E2 170 discusses the possibility of making objects easier to break to better simulate certain genres and settings. Superheroes is one of those genres. In the comic books heroes can smash through tanks, blast through walls, punch down vault doors, and otherwise wreak havoc on the environment around them if the story calls for it. You can do this using the normal *HERO System* rules, but it will be a lot easier for your players, and a lot more fun in general, if you adopt some of the suggestions for making objects more fragile.

Similarly, 6E2 201 discusses how to alter weapons damage for genre simulation purposes. In a Champions game, nothing gets across the “feel” of being a superhero better than walking through a hail of gunfire while barely getting scratched. If you want to let players do that without having to spend all their points on defenses, try some of the suggestions on that page.

PROJECTILES INTO BUILDINGS

When characters send projectiles into buildings, worry only about the PD and BODY of the exterior walls. Consider everything within a building — furniture, personnel, interior walls and partitions, you name it — that's within the path of a hurled/Knocked Back projectile or superhuman to not be there. The projectile punches through or brushes aside any such obstacles without losing speed or force. When calculating the effects of Knockback damage on a person, worry only about the effects of the exterior walls. The result is city mayhem wherein supers blast through buildings

with startling speed, just as it happens in the comics. If an object has enough momentum to penetrate one exterior wall but not the other, it has come to rest somewhere within the building — not necessarily against the far wall. The GM can decide for dramatic effect where the object stops.

When people within those buildings might be hit by projectiles, use the attacker's original Attack Roll and calculate whether it hits the potential target, assuming the attacker is OCV 0 and the target has half DCV (unless the target saw the incoming object coming, in which case he gets full DCV). If the attack hits, then the projectile strikes the target, with the usual effects for a Thrown attack.

If desired, the GM can also use this rule for energy-based Blasts and other Ranged attacks that have a physical impact, not just physical projectiles.

BREAKING BUILDINGS

Sometimes characters do so much damage to a building that they make it fall down!

The rules on page 13 of *The Ultimate Base* state as follows:

1. The **BODY of a Base (a building)** is determined from the integrity of the average wall, and not the overall material bulk or composition of the building.
2. The overall **BODY of a Base (building)** equals its **BODY multiplied by its Size (BODY x SIZE)**.
3. A **Base (building)** reduced to 0 **BODY cannot function**, but is not yet fully destroyed — it can be repaired. A Base reduced to negative its own BODY is destroyed and cannot be repaired.

However, for Champions purposes, where you want to allow for dramatic destruction and the possibility of heroes having to rescue innocents from collapsing buildings, some more precise rules may be helpful.

A building's integrity is endangered when it sustains damage equal to a multiplier times the BODY of its exterior walls. The accompanying table indicates the multiplier, which depends on the size and sturdiness of the building. For example, suppose a large building (x10 multiplier) has reinforced concrete exterior walls (8 PD, 5 BODY). When it sustains 50 BODY in damage, its integrity is compromised. This means it's in danger of collapsing. At 10x BODY in damage, it has a 15- roll (made at the end of every day) to remain upright. For every additional 10x BODY it sustains, the building's roll is lowered by one, and the time interval is lowered by one line on the Time Chart (see the accompanying table).

For Area Of Effect attacks, vehicle collisions, and other attacks that impact large amounts of a building at once, the GM may, in his discretion, apply a multiplier to the BODY done, solely for purposes of determining building collapse. For example, suppose a Giant Dinosaur (STR 75) has an Area Of Effect attack (Tail Sweep) it can make with his STR. It does 18 BODY to a building.



Given the nature of the attack, which would cause a lot more structural damage than even a powerful Blast, the GM chooses to double the BODY, but only for purposes of determining whether (and when) the building falls down.

If a building collapses, everyone in it takes a number of dice of Normal Damage equal to the BODY rating of the exterior walls, +1d6 for each floor above the ground the person is on. For example, a person on the eighth floor of a building with 5 BODY walls takes 13d6 Normal Damage if the building collapses. At the GM's option, a character may be able to make an appropriate Skill Roll (such as Breakfall or Contortionist) to reduce this damage somewhat — or, even better, leap out the window before the building falls down.

If a collapsing building falls *on* a character, that character suffers damage based on the weight of the building. Determine how much STR it would take to lift the building (or the discrete chunk of it that hits the character), and then use that STR to apply Normal Damage to the character.

Of course, there are plenty of other dangers involved in a building collapse. Characters might get electrocuted by damaged wiring, find themselves trapped in a fire, or impaled on a sharp object of some sort. See the *Living In A Dangerous World* rules in 6E2 for more information.

At the GM's option, these rules can also be used for breaking other large, roughly hollow objects, such as a supervillain's secret mountaintop aerie. Simply assign the object an appropriate PD score (if it doesn't already have one). Based on the shape, structure, and nature of the object, the GM may want to change how often the roll is made.

BREAKING BUILDINGS TABLE

Multiplier	Example
x3 to x5	A small or flimsy building (a small home)
x6 to x9	An average building (a typical detached residential home, a small office building)
x10 (or more)	A large or especially sturdy building (most superhumans' bases, skyscrapers, large office complexes)

Building Has Taken	Roll	Roll Every
1x Multiplier BODY	15-	Day
2x Multiplier BODY	14-	6 Hours
3x Multiplier BODY	13-	1 Hour
4x Multiplier BODY	12-	20 Minutes
5x Multiplier BODY	11-	5 Minutes
6x Multiplier BODY	10-	Minute
7x Multiplier BODY	9-	Turn

SUPERHERO-WORLD PHYSICS

Superhero-world physics differs from real-world physics in important ways. If you want to run a campaign that simulates the comics, follow these guidelines; if not, stick as close to “reality” as you prefer.

A Good Explanation Is More Important Than

Scientific Accuracy: To put it another way, “pseudo-scientific reasoning outweighs real-world scientific reasoning,” and the dramatic needs of the story/character trump real-world science. Typically, it’s enough for a player to have a good working knowledge of scientific buzzwords rather than hard science — the skill to string together an effective rationale for how a character’s power works is more important than a grounding in real physics. In short, if it sounds good, it works!

To take this “law” one step further, if a player/character has a “scientific principle” that supports or explains a power, any real-world scientific principle that would oppose or negate that explanation can conveniently be ignored. The same applies to any real-world scientific principle that makes a power, maneuver, or stunt “impossible.” For example, “realistically,” a high-STR throw could easily destroy many objects. But that’s annoying and undramatic for the superhero genre, so Champions gamers ignore it.

On a related point, it’s worth noting that characters in superhero stories almost never question the scientific implausibility of what they do. When a brick picks up a building, he doesn’t wonder why it holds together so well — he just accepts that it does so.

Characters Ignore Inconvenient Science: If, realistically, a character’s power would have some sort of negative side effect, typically he isn’t affected by it or can ignore it. Thus, speedsters don’t burn up from the friction they generate (or destroy the surfaces they run on), characters who can move at high velocities can breathe without difficulty, energy bolts don’t cause painful “recoil” within the character’s body (or any action/reaction at all, unless the character wants them to), high-STR leaps don’t cause a devastating release of energy behind them, and so on.

Big Things Have Lots Of Physical Integrity When

Lifted/Thrown: Buildings, capital ships, and other large constructions are so well engineered that when a superhero picks them up, often tilting them at angles they were never meant to endure, they remain intact. (On the other hand, these objects are no harder to damage than normal if directly attacked.) For perhaps related reasons, the human components of cyborgs are as tough as their artificial components where the two come together; the machinery never tears free of the flesh and bone, no matter how drastically they’re stressed in ordinary use.

Energy Can Take On Physical Form:

Characters can create objects or weapons of solid energy, create fields of shaped energy, or have bodies of solid energy, even though uncontained energy normally dissipates.

Extra Mass Comes From/Goes Into Alternate Dimensions:

If a player has no better explanation for the question of where a character gets any extra mass required by the special effects or nature of his powers, or loses mass to, don’t be shy about invoking the notion that it all has to do with alternate dimensions of reality. The “extradimensional energy” explanation works for a lot of other powers, too, if properly tailored.

Physical Laws Are Universal, Not Multiversal:

The so-called “universal laws of physics” may function very differently (or not at all) in other dimensions. In a “Ditkospace” dimension, for example, the landmasses may be discrete chunks floating through the aether at various angles, with no common direction of gravity among them.

Size Alteration Does Not Impair Function:

Characters who are significantly larger or smaller than normal human size don’t lose effectiveness because of it, and can conveniently ignore the square/cube law. Superhumans with Shrinking are as strong, and have as many meters of movement, as normal; characters with Growth don’t collapse (or break bones) under their own weight.



CHAPTER
FOUR

THE CHAMPIONS



THE CHAMPIONS

Membership: Defender, Ironclad, Kinetik, Sapphire, Witchcraft.

Background/History: The Champions began as a gleam in the eye of a wealthy and talented young man named James Harmon IV. Inspired to fight crime and villainy by the destruction of Detroit, Harmon used his intellect to design and build a suit of powered armor. Christening himself *Defender*, he enjoyed some success as a superhero in his hometown of New York City. But after being defeated by a skilled team of VIPER supervillains, Defender realized he needed both a fresh start and some teammates of his own.

Since New York already had several super-teams, in 2001 Harmon moved to Millennium City. Though full of superhuman activity, the “City of the Future” didn’t yet have a superteam of its own, and he decided it was time for that state of affairs to change. With the blessing of the city fathers, he called a press conference to announce his arrival in Millennium City and put out the word — he was looking for a group of like-minded individuals willing to band together to protect the city from Mechanon, VIPER, and anything else that might threaten its safety and security.

It didn’t take long to get a response. Almost before the press conference had ended, he got a call from Sapphire’s agent, asking if she could try out for the team. To this day Defender isn’t entirely sure whether she got involved partly as a publicity stunt, but neither he nor any of the other Champions can deny her passion for helping others, or her dedication to duty. After talking with her, Defender made her the first member.

After rejecting a few other superheroes whose attitudes, powers, or personal circumstances didn’t suit the team he had in mind, Defender walked into his office one evening to find the mysterious crimefighter known as Nighthawk sitting there waiting for him. Like Defender, Nighthawk had discovered there were criminals he couldn’t handle on his own. Any man who could get past his security systems interested Defender, and it didn’t take long for him to discover that Nighthawk, though somewhat more intense than most superheroes, would make a valuable teammate. Now they were three, and the newly-allied heroes, after some discussion, chose to name themselves *the Champions*.

Notable victories against VIPER and Firewing in 2001 brought the Champions favorable attention, but it was a different sort of threat — a crashing starship — that brought them their fourth member. When they got a report of an out-of-control space vessel heading toward the city, they joined up with some other heroes to divert the craft. It was flying too fast for them to stop, so they did the only thing they could: they knocked it off-course and right into Lake St. Clair. The impact destroyed the ship, and they feared the pilot was dead... until Ironclad waded ashore. Grateful for their help, Ironclad became an informal ally of the heroes of Millennium City for several weeks, but then accepted Defender’s invitation to join the Champions.

An almost-deadly encounter with the minions of Takofanes the Undying Lord during the Halloween season of 2001 left Defender and his teammates painfully aware they lacked any sort of mystic expertise. As luck — or perhaps fate? — would have it, Witchcraft showed up at their headquarters the next week. After several years of fighting crime informally, she’d decided it was time to dedicate herself to the struggle against evil full-time. She was a perfect fit, both temperamentally and powers-wise, and the other four didn’t hesitate to vote her in.

At that point, the group’s membership stabilized for several years. Although none of them were as experienced as most members of the Justice Squadron or the Sentinels, the Champions soon established a notable record as skilled crimefighters, and in time their power and professionalism grew. The list of their accomplishments during the first decade of the twenty-first century is a long one: defeating newly-arisen master villains such as Interface and King Cobra; preventing Black Paladin and Talisman from taking over Witchcraft’s body to resurrect a powerful medieval witch; fending off Mechanon’s attack on Millennium City in a fifty foot-tall body; battling the evil mentalists of PSI; an attack by Cybermind on Defender; and even being transported to an alternate dimension to team up with heroes from another world to battle Dr. Destroyer and other villains in the so-called “Reality Storm.” Recently the team cemented its reputation as the premiere defenders of Millennium City by fighting off an invasion by the alien Qularr and preventing

Takofanes from using the spirits of the thirteen heroes who died in the Battle of Detroit to destroy the city in his “Blood Moon” plot.

But some might say the group’s worst crisis came in 2006, when it underwent a membership change. For years there’d been friction between Nighthawk’s hard-nosed attitude toward crime-fighting and the rest of the team’s preferred methods. He began conducting a major undercover investigation that eventually required him to fake his own death. When the rest of the team found out the truth, Nighthawk’s breach of their trust was too much to take. He left the team before the others could expel him, content to pursue his war on the underworld in his own way. To replace him the Champions recruited a long-time ally, the speedster Kinetik. With his help the Champions have risen to new heights, earning world-wide accolades for their many triumphs over threats to both Millennium City and the world. In many ways they’ve eclipsed the Justice Squadron and the Sentinels as America’s best-known superhero team.

Group Relations: For the most part, the Champions get along well. Each of them considers the other members his friends, not just “workmates,” and it shows in their concern for one another, the way they socialize together during their “off hours,” and their dedication to teamwork.

All of the Champions would agree it’s Defender who does the most to keep the group together and content. Though their opinions and methods may differ, though they may have different lifestyles or come from very different places, they all have a deep and abiding respect for the man who brought the team together. Something about Defender’s manner and approach to superheroing just seems to inspire loyalty and camaraderie.

After years of dancing around their feelings for one another, Defender and Witchcraft began dating in 2005. It hasn’t been the easiest romance — supervillain attacks (particularly by Talisman) keep disrupting their dates, Defender’s mother keeps trying to set him up with “good society girls” because he can’t introduce Witchcraft to her until they have a decent cover story explaining what she does all day, and they sometimes annoy their teammates by speaking French to one another — but so far it seems to be going well and their friends couldn’t be happier for them. Supehero fan magazines are constantly speculating about wedding bells.

The other linchpin of the team, despite being the most recent member, is Kinetik. He tends to be the most “grounded” of the Champions, and years of experiencing raising his siblings have made him good at solving problems and defusing tensions. Sometimes the rest of the team wonders what they did without him all those years... especially since he can clean Homestead top to bottom in less than a minute!

THE CHAMPIONS AUXILIARY

The Champions know that every superhero team needs help occasionally, so they’ve established an *auxiliary members* program for their hero allies. An auxiliary Champion doesn’t enjoy the full benefits of team membership, but it definitely makes his job easier and raises his profile in the Superhero World. As of 2009, auxiliary members include:

- *Dr. Silverback*, simian super-scientist;
- *Nightwind*, a skilled martial artist and part-time investigator;
- *Blockhead*, a super-strong crimefighter with a body made of stone and a taste for fine cigars;
- *Ultratech*, a gadgeteer; and
- *Crusader*, a blaster-wielding “street soldier” who spends most of his time fighting gang crime on the city’s west side.

Additionally, the Champions have other allies they can call upon if necessary. One is their former member Nighthawk, who’s been known to lend his criminalistic expertise to the team’s investigations. Another is the Millennium City 8, a team of strange heroes who first banded together when the Champions were involved in the Reality Storm crisis.

The Champions govern themselves with a charter specifying the obligations, responsibilities, and benefits of belonging to the team, and setting forth important procedures (like standards for new and auxiliary members). Routine administrative matters, such as scheduling, are left to Defender and/or SOCRATES; more serious matters are subject to group vote, with majority rule applying in all cases.

Tactics: The Champions have developed a wide array of battlefield tactics for use against their foes, and they practice constantly to refine their moves, develop new stratagems, and find ways to counteract supervillains’ powers. Typically Defender, Ironclad, and Sapphire are the frontline combatants, with Kinetik darting in and out to disrupt enemy actions as much as possible and Witchcraft acting as backup and support. That can vary depending on the nature of the threat; Witchcraft often takes point against mystic foes, for example.

Campaign Use: As of 2010 the Champions are probably the most prominent superteam in the Champions Universe, but you should adapt them to suit your campaign if necessary. If you don’t want to have your PCs share the limelight, get rid of the Champions altogether and let the PCs be the Champions instead. If you prefer to have a different team in Millennium City, move the Champions to New York, Los Angeles, or some other major city.

DEFENDER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15+25	STR	22*	12- (17-)	Lift 200 kg (6,400 kg); 3d6 (8d6) HTH damage [1 (4)]
15+10	DEX	23*	12- (14-)	
15+15	CON	15*	12- (15-)	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	EGO	5	12-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
5+3	OCV	20*		
5+3	DCV	20*		
4	OMCV	3		
5	DMCV	6		
3+2	SPD	23*		Phases: 4, 8, 12 (3, 5, 8, 10, 12)
5	PD	3		Total: 20 PD (15 rPD)
5	ED	3		Total: 20 ED (15 rED)
7	REC	3		
20	END	0		
10	BODY	0		
32	STUN	6		Total Characteristics Cost: 172 *: OIF (Powered Armor; -½)

Movement: Running: 12m
Flight: 40m

Cost	Powers	END
40	Power Pack: Endurance Reserve (160 END, 30 REC) OIF (-½)	0
40	Weapons Array: Multipower, 60-point reserve; all OIF (Powered Armor; -½)	
4f	1) Electric Bolt: Blast 12d6 OIF (-½)	6
4f	2) Wrist Bolt Gun: Blast 8d6, OIF (-½) Autofire (5 shots; +½); OIF (-½)	6
1f	3) Overload Blast: RKA 3d6 OIF (-½), Increased Endurance Cost (x4 END; -1½), Required Roll 14-, Burnout (-¼)	16
4f	4) Focused EMP Pulse: Dispel 13d6 Variable Effect (any Electricity power one at a time; +½); OIF (-½)	6
3f	5) Electro-Bolos: Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED OIF (-½), 12 Charges (-¼)	[12]
1f	6) Force Gauntlets: HA +4d6 OIF (-½), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)	2
30	Powered Armor: Resistant Protection (15 PD/15 ED) OIF (-½)	0
27	Jet-Boots: Flight 40m OIF (-½)	4
6	Communications Suite: HRRP (Radio Group) OIF (-½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0
3	Heat Sensors: Infrared Perception (Sight Group) OIF (-½)	0

Perks

10 Money: Wealthy

Skills

10 +2 with Weapons Array
8 +1 HTH
6 +2 with Electronics Skills (Computer Programming, Electronics, Systems Operation)
3 Computer Programming 13-
3 Electronics 13-
3 High Society 13-
3 Inventor 13-
1 Language: French (basic conversation; English is Native)
2 CK: Millennium City 11-
2 KS: The Superhuman World 11-
3 Mechanics 13-
2 SS: Chemistry 11-
2 SS: Physics 11-
3 Systems Operation 13-
3 Teamwork 12- (14-)
1 TF: V-Jet

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 228

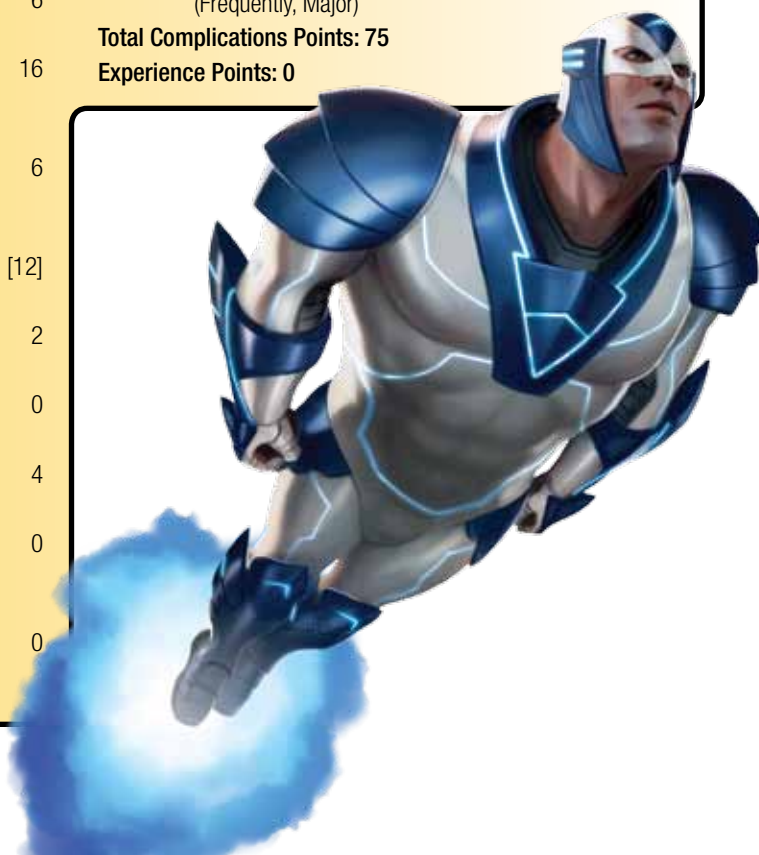
Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

20 **Hunted:** Mechanon (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 **Hunted:** VIPER (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing
(Common, Total)
15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity (James Harmon IV)
(Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0



DEFENDER

Background/History: James Harmon IV, scion of the wealthy Harmon family of New York City, grew up surrounded by the portraits and memoirs of his famous ancestors. His great-grandfather, the first James Harmon, explored the wilds of Africa and began the family fortune in the mid-nineteenth century. James II was a fearless member of Eliot Ness's "Untouchables" during Prohibition, and a solo crimefighter in the Thirties. James III, his father, earned the Congressional Medal of Honor for his service in World War II and later quintupled the family fortune by turning Harmon Industries into a top-notch defense contractor. His father made it quite clear that he expected James to establish a similar record of accomplishment — "to give back to others of what you've so richly received — intelligence, money, and strength."

But James didn't feel very heroic. All he really liked to do was putter around with electronics and computers. He'd built his first computer when he was 13, and for a time he thought he could satisfy his father with some sort of astounding technological breakthrough that would make the world a better place.

The Battle of Detroit changed all of his plans.

Something about that horrific event awakened his slumbering bravery and determination. Someone had to fight fiends like Doctor Destroyer. Someone had to hold the line against the darkness creeping across the world. *That* was how to be a hero today — you had to stand up to the forces of evil threatening the world. So that's what he would do.

Inspired by the brave heroes he'd seen fighting in Detroit, he spent the next year of his life building a suit of powered armor equipped with the best systems his genius could design and his father's money could pay for. Christening himself *Defender*, he began a one-man battle against the supervillains of New York, scoring several notable victories. But a terrible defeat at the hands of a group of VIPER villains badly shook his confidence and convinced him he needed allies.

Deciding he needed a change, Harmon packed up his armor and moved to Millennium City. The "City of the Future" was already a hotbed of superhuman activity, but it still lacked a superteam of its own. He announced that he was forming a team of heroes to protect the city... and the world. A few weeks later, his new team, the Champions, made its debut, and he's been the team's leader ever since.

Personality/Motivation: James Harmon IV — or Defender, as he's better known to the world at large — is the living, breathing embodiment of the word "hero." He gives of himself unstintingly, taking on any mission to combat evil or save the helpless. He's absolutely fearless, caring nothing for the dangerousness of a situation if only he can do something helpful.

Although his former teammate Nighthawk sometimes described him as "naive," in truth Defender knows well what evils the world holds, and because of that he takes his role as a superhero, and as leader of the Champions, very seriously. He considers himself a role model and conducts himself accordingly. His attitude and achievements have inspired respect and admiration among millions of people, and he takes advantage of that to lead charity drives and help other causes... when he's not saving the world from alien invaders or Mechanon.

Despite his accomplishments, James continues to feel the burden of living up to his famous ancestors. It doesn't help that his need to maintain a secret identity (to protect his family) prevents him from claiming credit for what he's done. As a result, his father and mother think of him as a playboy and disappointment, even though he's already put all of his ancestors to shame.

Although his girlfriend is a powerful mystic, Defender is skeptical about the existence of magic. He's convinced there's a rational, scientific explanation for the abilities of people like Witchcraft and Dark Seraph.

Quote: "All right, team, let's hit 'em hard! If they make it past us, millions of lives are in danger!"

Powers/Tactics: Although Defender is smarter, tougher, and faster than the average person (not to mention a gifted inventor), his "superpowers" all come from his suit of powered battlearmor. A marvel of modern technology, it provides far more than just protection. His weapon array, including several different types of electric blasters, allows him to dish out more damage than your average platoon, and his boot-jets give him air combat capability with a high degree of maneuverability. He's constantly tinkering with the suit, finding ways to improve its performance or adapt it for specific situations.

In battle, Defender usually prefers his Electrobolos, which can restrain many opponents without harming them. If they don't work, his Electric Blast is his first option for single foes, or his Pulse-Blast for groups — unless his opponent has electrical powers, in which case he'll try his EMP Pulse. Only in the most desperate situations does he use his Overload Blast; he has a deep respect for all life (even that of supervillains), and risks his full power only when it's absolutely necessary.

Appearance: Defender's powered armor has a white framework "etched" with high-tech light-lines, plus blue boots, gauntlets, hip-pads, shoulders, and collar. His helmet is white and blue; it leaves the lower half of his face visible (but protected by an invisible force-field) so he looks human and not like a robot. Out of his armor, James Harmon is a tall, dark-haired man in his late 30s, with a sort of simple handsomeness many women find irresistible. He favors "dressy casual" clothes.

THE CHAMPIONS THEN AND NOW

Although the history of the Champions goes up to 2009, when they're among the most powerful and respected heroes on Earth, the character sheets presented here represent them at the beginning of their careers, in 2001. You can find character sheets for what they're like in 2009 in *Champions Universe*.

IRONCLAD

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
60	STR	50	21-	Lift 100 tons; 12d6 HTH damage [6]
18	DEX	16	13-	
30	CON	20	15-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
7	OCV	20		
6	DCV	15		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
25	PD	23		Total: 25 PD (20 rPD)
25	ED	23		Total: 25 ED (20 rED)
20	REC	16		
60	END	8		
15	BODY	5		
60	STUN	20		Total Characteristics Cost: 259

Movement: Running: 12m
Leaping: 40m

Cost Powers

END

15	Dorvalan Gladiatorial Sword: HKA 2d6 (4d6 with STR) 3 OAF (-1)	
20	Ironclad Perseid Physiology: Resistant (+½) for 20 PD/20 ED	0
9	Iron Body: Life Support (Safe Environment: Low Pressure/Vacuum, High Pressure, High Radiation, Intense Cold, Intense Heat)	0
5	Perseid Eyes: Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)	0
14	Iron Body: Knockback Resistance -14m	0
18	Super-Strong Legs: Leaping +36m (40m forward, 20m upward)	1
6	Bracer Communicator: Radio Perception/Transmission 0 OIF (-½), Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-¼)	0

Skills

32	+4 HTH
3	Climbing 13-
3	Combat Piloting 13-
1	AK: Malva 8-
2	CK: Millennium City 11-
1	KS: The Superhuman World 8-
2	Language: English (fluent conversation; Perseid is native)
1	Language: Malvan (basic conversation)
1	Tactics 8-
3	Teamwork 13-
3	TF: Science Fiction And Space Vehicles, V-Jet
2	WF: Perseid Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 136

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

15	Hunted: Firewing (Infrequently, Mo Pow, Kill)
20	Hunted: VIPER (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
15	Psychological Complication: Code Versus Killing (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Complication: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate)
10	Vulnerability: 2 x STUN from Magnetic Attacks (Uncommon)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

4



IRONCLAD

Background/History: Far from Earth, orbiting the star Phi Cassiopeia, is the planet Dorvala. Similar to Earth in many ways, it is the homeworld of the Dorvalan, or Perseid, Empire, a government encompassing numerous star systems. The Dorvalans, though not possessing powerful faster-than-light drives, had by the Earth year 2000 AD developed primitive FTL capability — enough to settle nearby systems and begin interacting with the greater Galaxy.

Drogen Lar dreamed of might and glory as one of the feared Dorvalan Space Marines. But after he finished training, Lar found life in the military rather mundane. Instead of storming citadels in distant worlds, he spent his days cleaning test tubes and sweeping floors in a starship engineering lab.

One day Lar was adjusting some smelting equipment when it exploded, showering his body with an experimental alloy. Instead of being killed by the wave of molten metal, Lar was transformed as the alloy melded with his cellular structure, transforming him into a being of living metal!

While he was recovering in a military hospital, Lar was visited by a group of admirals. They explained to him that his transformation hadn't exactly been an accident. His physical profile indicated that his body might be able to "bond" to the experimental metal, so they arranged the "accident" in an attempt to create a Dorvalan super-soldier. They expected him to be grateful for this "opportunity."

Instead, Lar was furious and repulsed at his superiors' underhanded and dishonorable conduct. Using his new-found powers to smash his way out of the base, he stole a small starship. He headed for a strange world called Malva, where he'd heard that super-powerful beings were pitted against each other in gladiatorial contests for rich rewards.

When he finally arrived at Malva years later, he learned the rumors were true. His great strength and armored body made him one of the most powerful gladiators, but by no means *the* most powerful. For the first time since his transformation, he found himself challenged, sometimes even bested. Among the greatest of his rivals in the arena were two other beings of great power: a Malvan named Ariax Thone; and a being from the far side of the galaxy who called himself Tren Tarrec Dazeur.

As time went on, the duels in the arena became bloodier and bloodier, all to satisfy the whims of the Malvans and their Phazor, or High King. Lar soon became disgusted with it all, the moreso because he despised his rivals — Thone pretended to be honorable, but found subtle methods

to cheat his way to victory when necessary; Dazeur was arrogant and condescending, lording over all whom he defeated. But Lar was trapped; the Phazor would not let any of his gladiators depart Malva.

At long last, an opportunity to escape arose, and he took it. Stealing a small starship, he made his way off Malva — only to find that his understanding of the Malvan tongue wasn't enough for him to use their advanced navigational equipment properly. Flying out of control across the Galaxy, he crash-landed on a primitive blue world its inhabitants called Earth.

Lar's approach didn't go unnoticed. His ship was detected shortly after it entered Earth's solar system. Although no superhumans were able to stop him from crashing into Lake St. Clair not far from Millennium City (Defender and Sapphire could only make sure it hit the lake, rather than the city proper), film of him wading ashore was widely broadcast, and newsmen's frequent comment that he looked like "an ironclad cutting through the waves" soon earned him his *nom de guerre*. Before long, he was fighting crime alongside the heroes who'd tried to stop his crash. He found this new pursuit not only exciting, but morally beneficial (unlike gladiatorial fighting). Eager for a permanent group of friends and teammates to work and live with, he accepted to Defender's invitation and became the fourth member of the Champions.

Personality/Motivation: Although not Human, Ironclad possesses in large measure a strong dose of what's called "humanity." He's kindhearted and noble, always sympathetic to those in need or who require the assistance of one such as himself. When not fighting alongside his teammates, he often uses his awesome strength to help build clinics and shelters for the poor.

Like many superhumans with great strength and resilience, Ironclad has a sense of confidence sometimes bordering on braggadocio. He doesn't think anything can really hurt him, and that sometimes leads him to stick his neck out a little further than he should. Even hard lessons learned at the hands of Mechanon and his old nemesis Thone (now the supervillain Firewing) haven't cured him of this tendency.

Believing himself stranded on Earth for the rest of his life, Ironclad is extremely curious about his new homeworld. His initial unfamiliarity with Earth culture was often a source of unintentional humor for his teammates, but over the years he's learned a lot from living here (though some of the things he's picked up from television still lead to amusing mistakes at times). If it weren't for his appearance, he could just about pass as a Human if not questioned too closely.

Quote: "You can't intimidate me — I've fought for my life in the arena against far worse than you."

Powers/Tactics: Ironclad is a Dorvalan, or “Perseid” in Human parlance. He comes from the fourth planet orbiting Phi Cassiopeia, a star 200,000 times brighter than Sol. Perseids are far more resistant to energy and radiation than Humans, and have a special ocular membrane that protects their eyes from bright light.

In addition to his natural gifts, Ironclad possesses great powers as a result of the “accident” that melded his flesh with an unusual experimental alloy. Strong enough to lift a hundred tons and able to resist most forms of attack without suffering harm, he’s a classic “brick.” Like most bricks he excels at hand-to-hand combat, but he has a few additional skills, like the ability to pilot spacecraft, that most superhumans lack.

Unfortunately, having a quasi-metallic body also causes him some problems. First, it renders him unusually vulnerable to attacks based on magnetic force — a weakness Mechanon, among others, has exploited. Second, it makes him unusually heavy. He weighs 2,000 kilograms, which makes it difficult or impossible for him to go onto the upper floors of buildings, ride in normal vehicles, or even walk down the street without leaving “footprints” in asphalt and concrete. He’s learned how to work around this in most situations, but still has a well-deserved reputation as the most destructive member of the Champions.

In combat, Ironclad is a little cannier than most bricks, thanks to his years in the Malvan arena. He often Holds his Action, allowing his opponent to attack first (maybe several times) so he can assess their technique and weaknesses before he strikes. When he does hit, he hits hard and accurately, though he often Pulls his Punch until he knows an opponent can tolerate a full-strength blow.

Ironclad sometimes carries a sword that was made for him on Malva. Although designed to resemble traditional Dorvalan blades, the weapon’s reinforced so he can use it at full strength without breaking it. He’d never wield it against a living person, but it’s perfect for hacking robots, demons, golems, and inanimate objects to bits.

In his spare time, Ironclad enjoys watching television and movies, attending cultural events, and otherwise learning about Earth and her peoples. He also indulges in a Perseid artform called “etch-sculpting,” in which the artist uses his hands to mold, and etch designs in, various soft materials. For Ironclad, “soft” materials include things like granite and steel, resulting in some unusual pieces of art (often highly sought after by collectors; he sometimes auctions them for charity).

Appearance: Standing nearly seven feet tall and with a build to match, Ironclad would dominate nearly any situation even if he weren’t obviously (a) from another planet and (b) made of metal. His metallic body preserves his Perseid features, including the small, symmetrical rows and knobs on top of his head and shoulders. He wears garments made for him on Malva in the style of ancient Dorvalan warriors: golden boots, thigh-plates, left gauntlet and pauldron, and helmet, plus a broad leather belt.

KINETIK

Background/History: Brendan Grant was born to a working class Detroit family in 1974. His parents encouraged him to study hard so he could go to a good college and make a better life for himself. All seemed to be going according to plan. He won a merit scholarship to attend the University of Michigan and planned to study chemistry. But before he could head off to Ann Arbor the Battle of Detroit happened.

Both of Grant’s parents died during the Battle of Detroit getting their three younger children to safety. But without a parent in the house, Grant’s younger brothers and sister would have to go into foster care. Grant wasn’t about to let that happen, so he gave up his dream of college and took a job working for Dew Chemicals. He kept the family together, supporting them on his salary.

At Dew Grant was fortunate enough to be assigned to work for the brilliant scientist Luther Beckett, a researcher working on the cutting edge of bio-technology and chemistry. Beckett recognized Grant’s innate talent and took the young man under his wing, giving him an education that rivaled anything he could have learned at university. Soon Grant was Beckett’s top aide.

One fateful night in 1999, Grant was working late when a fire broke out in a neighboring lab, releasing a potent cocktail of gasses from several different experiments. By the time Grant realized what was happening, he’d already been exposed to the fumes.

When Grant awoke in the hospital several days later, he quickly discovered that the chemicals he’d been exposed to in the fire had changed his body — he now thought, reacted, and moved at superhuman speed. He could run faster than the speed of sound, and his body generated an “aura” that protected him from the harmful effects of friction. Remembering how his parents had died saving their children’s lives, and the heroic actions of the superheroes who’d defeated Dr. Destroyer, Grant decided he could do the same. He adopted the costumed identity of *Kinetik* so he could help defend the citizens of Millennium City.

In his first few years as a crimefighter, Kinetik spent a lot of time fighting the schemes of organized crime and groups like VIPER. He worked with the Champions on several occasions, earning the team’s admiration and trust. When they offered him a spot on the team in 2006 he jumped at the chance, and since then his infectious good nature and speed-based combat tactics have made him a key member of the group. He and Sapphire get along particularly well. But there’s absolutely no truth to the gossip magazine rumors that the two of them are dating; he’s simply gone with her to a few functions so she didn’t have to show up unaccompanied.

KINETIK

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
26	DEX	32	14-	
23	CON	13	14-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	4	12-	
12	PRE	2	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
9	OCV	30		
9	DCV	30		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
7	SPD	50		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12
9	PD	7		Total: 15 PD (6 rPD)
8	ED	6		Total: 14 ED (6 rED)
8	REC	4		
50	END	6		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristics Cost: 208

Movement: Running: 12m
Flight: 40m/40 km

Cost Powers

		END
72	Super-Running: Flight 40m MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); Only In Contact With A Surface (-¼)	4
30	Speedster Tricks: Multipower, 30-point reserve	
3f	1) Vibro-grip: HKA 1d6 (1d6+1 with STR) Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Penetrating (+½)	0
2f	2) Supersonic Finger-Snap: Blast 3d6 NND (defense is Life Support [Safe Environment: High Pressure] or armored head-covering; +1); No Range (-½), Gestures (must hold hand near target's ear; -¼)	3
1f	3) Dizzying Spin: Drain DEX 3d6 No Range (-½), Requires A DEX Roll (-½)	3

Martial Arts: Speedster Martial Arts

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
5	Passing Strike	+1	0	5d6 + v/10, FMove	
5	Passing Throw	0	0	5d6 + v/10, Target Falls, FMove	
5	Rapid Punch	+1	-2	9d6 Strike	
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)				
24	Protective Aura: Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED) Only When Moving (-¼)				0
12	Protective Suit: Resistant Protection (6 PD/6 ED) OIF (-½)				0

Talents

- 3 Lightning Calculator
- 4 Speed Reading (x10)

Skills

- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 2 CK: Millennium City 11-
- 2 PS: Scientist 11-
- 3 Sleight Of Hand 14-
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Biochemistry 13-
- 1 2) SS: Microbiology 11-
- 2 3) SS: Physics 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 192

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 30 **DNPC:** Joyce, Ronnie, and Phillip (three younger siblings)
(Frequently; Incompetents; Unaware of character's Social Limitation: Secret Identity)
- 10 **Hunted:** The New Purple Gang (Frequently, Less Pow, Capture/Kill)
- 15 **Social Limitation:** Secret Identity (Brendan Grant)
(Frequently, Major)
- 20 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from Chemical Attacks (Common)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

4



Personality/Motivation: Kinetik, despite his name and powers, is a fairly laid-back and relaxed guy. He enjoys helping people and using his powers to stop crime, but he doesn't get too hung up with angst over whether he could be doing more or why he, of all people, was gifted with superpowers. He's a well-adjusted individual who takes it all in stride. Becoming a member of the Champions only made him more self-confident about himself and his place in the world.

As one of the most popular superheroes in Millennium City, Kinetik is regarded as a role model in the black community, a fact of which he is well aware (sometimes painfully so). He goes out of his way to pay special attention to black neighborhoods, and always tries to conduct himself as befits someone who inspires others. He has nothing but scorn for famous people who only care about money and act like jerks.

Kinetik is a font of useless information, and enjoys offering up tidbits of data about any given subject in a sort of geeky way. For fun he puts his hard-won knowledge to work filling in crossword puzzles.

Quote: "When will you dimwits learn you can't run away from me?"

Powers/Tactics: Kinetik's powers derive from exposure to the strange gasses generated by the Dew Chemicals fire, which somehow altered his body to make it capable of attaining much faster running speeds than normal humans can. At his ordinary combat speeds he runs faster than 50 miles an hour, and when he "kicks into overdrive," he can travel many times the speed of sound. His body automatically generates a protective energy field that shields him from the friction and other harmful effects of moving so quickly. (In game terms, he gets the extra defense only if he makes at least a Half Move using his Super-Running power; the extra defense lasts until his next Phase, though he can maintain it uninterrupted by making a Half Move in that Phase.) Unfortunately, his accelerated metabolism makes him vulnerable to chemical attacks (including drugs, gasses, and poisons).

Kinetik has learned how to use his hyper-accelerated body to create many combat effects. Besides simply moving past people at high speeds and striking them (most of his Martial Maneuvers), he can deliver dozens of punches in the blink of an eye (his Rapid Punch), snap his fingers quickly enough to create a mini-sonic boom right next to someone's head and stun him, vibrate his hand into objects or people to create painful wounds, and spin someone so quickly they become extremely dizzy and lose their balance. He can also perform many tasks, from reading to cleaning house, much more quickly than normal people can.

Compared to many starting superhumans, Kinetik's powers are fairly weak, and he knows it (though his high SPD gives him something of a compensating edge). He's most effective against large numbers of thugs or gangsters, and much less use against powerful supervillains. So he usually focuses his efforts on clearing out henchmen and minions, supporting his more powerful teammates, distracting powerful foes, and keeping innocent bystanders safe. When direct action's needed, he usually relies on his Passing Strike and other attacks that let him remain mobile.

Appearance: Kinetik is a black man in his mid-thirties. He wears a skintight costume, red with a white "lightning bolt" motif, plus heavy black boots and shoulderpads and a half-face helmet with white lightning bolts on the sides. He's lean, not heavily-muscled, and his hair is cut short (or sometimes shaved off entirely).

SAPPHIRE

Background/History: Corazon Valenzuela — "Corrie" to her friends — has never known what it was like to be ordinary. She began singing as a child, becoming a major music star in her mid-teens. She never believed she'd ever find anything she loved more than making music... but when she was 17, one of her concerts was attacked by a supergroup of villains who hoped to hold her for ransom.

Unfortunately for the villains, Valenzuela had more than just a spectacular singing voice. The stress of the attack caused her dormant mutant powers of energy manipulation to suddenly manifest. Before she'd even had a chance to think, she'd blasted the bad guys into unconsciousness with flares of glowing blue energy.

The media was ecstatic: a rock star superhero! At first, Valenzuela was dubious about this new development. Her life was already hectic enough with concert tours and appearances. But the more she thought about it during those first few months, she began to see that she could do more than just entertain — she could help people in life-changing ways using her superpowers.

She named herself *Sapphire* after the blue color of her energy powers and began fighting crime. It turned out to be tremendously exciting and rewarding. When she learned Defender was looking to start up a new supergroup in Millennium City, she immediately signed on to become one of the Champions... and she's been with the team ever since. Sometimes even she's not certain how she juggles singing, personal appearances, acting, and crimefighting, but somehow she's always available when the Champions — and the world — need her.

Personality/Motivation: Of all the Champions, Sapphire is the most outgoing, and the one who seems the least serious. She's been a major media star for years (and still is), and she enjoys living the rock 'n' roll high life. She spends a lot of time being squired around to the most fashionable places in the world by the most handsome bachelors in the world, appearing in movies, performing at concerts, and recording new albums.

Sapphire's used to showing herself off, and she does so as a superheroine as well as a performer. Early in her career she was prone to pulling flashy stunts in battle that looked great on camera but didn't accomplish much — or even put her in danger. As she became more confident and secure, she toned down the flash and focused more on developing her abilities... but even today sometimes she can't resist giving the onlookers a thrill or making some villain look stupid.

While Corrie loves the spotlight and doesn't want to be anywhere else, there's a small part of her that would be happy just to settle down and live a quiet, normal life. That's not likely to happen anytime soon, but it does sometimes manifest in her spending an ordinary Sunday at home reading, or going for long walks by herself.

Despite having her pick of famous and handsome men from around the world, Sapphire had sort of a crush on Defender for awhile, which sometimes put her at odds with Witchcraft. But over the years she outgrew those feelings and has become the closest of friends with her fellow superheroine. She's delighted that her teammates have found love with each other, although she's somewhat envious. She'd like to find her Mr. Right... or at least her Mr. Cuddly.

Quote: "It's not everyone who can fight crime and look this good!"

Powers/Tactics: Sapphire is a mutant with abilities of energy generation and projection. Physiological studies indicate that her cells seem to function as "biological batteries," absorbing energy from sunlight, motion, and other sources which Sapphire instinctively converts and releases to cause various effects. She can fire bolts of energy, protect herself with a force-field, and even use her powers to fly. Unfortunately, her mutant physiology is unusually sensitive to radiation (which can cause her severe harm) and vulnerable to attacks based on light (they somehow "polarize" her cellular structure, causing her powers to feed back on themselves and hurt her). Her powers manifest with a sapphire-blue color, hence her name.

In combat, Sapphire usually opens up with her Sapphire Bolt or Bright Bolt, finding it's easier to fight most supervillains when they can't see. Then she follows up with a Power Bolt. That's about the extent of her tactical thinking, though Defender and Ironclad are both trying to teach her other ways to fight.

Ironically, the same superstar status that makes people question Sapphire's abilities as a superhero has actually provided her with more experience than any other Champion. Everywhere she goes bad guys attack her either for the notoriety of being able to say they've fought her... or in Foxbat's case, for the chance to get an autograph.



SAPPHIRE

Val Char Cost Roll Notes

15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
23	DEX	26	14-	
23	CON	13	14-	
12	INT	2	11-	PER Roll 11-
14	EGO	4	12-	
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
8	OCV	25		
8	DCV	25		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
6	SPD	40		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
9	PD	7		Total: 21 (12 rPD)
12	ED	10		Total: 24 (12 rED)
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
36	STUN	8		Total Characteristics Cost: 198

Movement: Running: 12m
Flight: 30m

Cost Powers

60	Sapphire Energy Powers: Multipower, 60-point powers	END
6u	1) Power Bolt I: Blast 12d6	6
6f	2) Power Bolt II: Blast 8d6	0
	Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	
6f	3) Sapphire Bolt: Sight Group Flash 12d6	6
5f	4) Bright Bolt: Blast 8d6	6
	<i>plus</i> Sight Group Flash 4d6	
	Linked (-½)	
6u	5) Stun-Bolt: Blast 6d6	6
	NND (defense is Resistant Protection (ED) defined as a force-field; +1)	
36	Force-Field: Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED)	0
45	Power-Riding: Flight 30m	0
	Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	

Perks

5 Money: Well Off

Talents

6 Striking Appearance: +2/+2d6

Skills

3 Conversation 14-
3 High Society 14-
2 Language: English (fluent conversation; Spanish is Native)
3 PS: Singer 14-
3 PS: Singing 14-
3 Charm 14-
3 Teamwork 14-
1 TF: V-Jet

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 202

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
20 **Hunted:** VIPER (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
15 **Social Complication:** Public Identity (Corazon Eldora "Corrie" Valenzuela) (Frequently, Major)
10 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from Light-Based Attacks (Uncommon)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

Appearance: Sapphire's beautiful face, with deep brown eyes and framed by her straight brown hair (usually worn long and tied back), is known to people all over the world from her concerts, music videos, television and movie appearances, and charity work. In public as a celebrity, she dresses provocatively, but always at the height of fashion, often setting trends for others to follow. As a superheroine, she sometimes tries different costumes depending on her mood, but usually wears blue short-shorts and a midriff-baring top, accessorized with a blue-white short leather jacket, thigh-high blue high-heeled boots, and blue gloves. Around her neck she often wears a choker (sometimes set with one of her namesake gems; it may sparkle and glow when she uses her powers, leading some to consider it their source).



WITCHCRAFT

Background/History: Bethany Duquesne and her twin sister, Pamela, were raised in a seemingly ordinary suburban home near Detroit and grew up as seemingly normal kids. But things aren't always what they seem — her parents were witches devoted to the dark powers, and they groomed their daughters to follow in their footsteps. Pamela, a cruel and spiteful child, eagerly followed their path, but the kind-hearted Bethany found it disturbing. So she rebelled by being the nicest person she could be.

Both girls were to be formally inducted into the Circle of the Scarlet Moon, the powerful coven their parents belonged to, on their eighteenth birthdays. Pamela exultantly spoke the oaths and performed the blood sacrifices that would tie her forever to the dark powers. But when it was her turn, Bethany couldn't do it. Horrified by what she'd seen and heard, she turned and ran, using her powerful magical gifts to flee her family forever.

Bethany wandered aimlessly for a time, using magic to survive the harsh life of the streets. Eventually she drifted into Vibora Bay and got a job at an occult bookstore. There, Bethany used her powers once or twice to stop street crimes and save innocent people from peril, and found that she enjoyed helping others.

Bethany's activities attracted the attention of the Trismegistus Council, a secret brotherhood of benevolent wizards. They took Bethany under their care and completed her training.

Bethany was content to remain with the Council for several years, but eventually felt a call to return home. Detroit had become Millennium

City by this time, but there were still people who needed her help. Taking the name *Witchcraft*, Bethany operated as a solo superhero, but always felt there was more she could do. When Defender issued the call for heroes to join his Champions, Witchcraft joined the team in the hope that a group of heroes could accomplish deeds no single superhero could.

Eager to reclaim one of her power, the Circle of the Scarlet Moon continues to pursue Witchcraft, often making her life difficult. Even worse is her sister, now the supervillainess Talisman, who rejected the Council long ago to seek her own dark path. Talisman hates Witchcraft bitterly and often tries to harm or kill her. But so far the only lasting harm she's inflicted is a curse that leaves Witchcraft vulnerable to spells of winter. Witchcraft has tried to find a way to lift the curse, but so far without success.

Personality/Motivation: Of all the Champions, Witchcraft is the least outspoken or outgoing. Even after years of superheroing she's still somewhat shy, preferring to remain in the background while the flashier, more extroverted members of the group grab the spotlight. Part of this is just her nature, but early in her career she suffered from strong self-doubt. Although she knew it was irrational, she felt she was somehow "tainted" by her upbringing and her parents' evil magics, and that she wasn't really worthy to be a superhero. At times this caused her to hesitate when she should have acted more decisively. But nothing's as good for one's self-esteem as saving the world a few dozen times, so over the years Witchcraft has become far more confident and sure of herself. Her romance with Defender has only helped further.

WITCHCRAFT

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
18	DEX	16	13-	
18	CON	8	13-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
23	EGO	13	14-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
6	OCV	15		
7	DCV	20		
8	OMCV	15		
8	DMCV	15		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
4	PD	2		Total: 14 PD (10 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 16 ED (10 rED)
8	REC	4		
35	END	3		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristics Cost: 168

Movement: Running: 12m
Flight: 30m



Cost	Powers	END
60	Greater Witcheries: Multipower, 60-point reserve	
6f	1) Witchfire: Blast 9d6 Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)	2
6f	2) Fascination: Mind Control 9d6 Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)	2
6f	3) Glamour: Mental Illusions 9d6 Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)	2
6f	4) Irresistible Slumber: Mental Blast 6d6	6
6f	5) Terrors Of The Dark: Drain PRE 6d6	6
4f	6) Man Into Frog Spell: Severe Transform 4d6 (humans into frogs, heals back if target is kissed by royalty of the opposite gender or Witchcraft voluntarily "dispels" the magic) Limited Target (humans; -½)	6
30	Shield Of Sorcery: Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED)	0
30	Wings Of The Zephyrim: Flight 30m	3
38	Lesser Witcheries: Variable Power Pool (Magic Pool), 30 base + 30 control cost Only Magic (-¼), Can Only Be Changed With Access To Spellbooks (-½)	var
3	Magesense: Detect Magic 13- Concentration (0 DCV; -½)	0

Perks

6 Contact: The Trismegistus Council 11-

Talents

3 Striking Appearance: +1/+1d6

Skills

10 +2 with Greater Witcheries Multipower
1 High Society 8-
3 KS: Arcane And Occult Lore 13-
2 KS: Demonology 11-
3 KS: Witchcraft 13-
1 CK: Vibora Bay 8-
1 Language: French (basic conversation; English is native)
1 Language: Latin (basic conversation)
3 Stealth 13-
3 Teamwork 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 232

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

20 **Hunted:** Circle Of The Scarlet Moon (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Corrupt)
10 **Hunted:** Talisman (Infrequently, As Pow, Kill)
20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity (Bethany Duquesne) (Frequently, Major)
5 **Vulnerability:** 1½ x STUN from Ice/Cold (Uncommon)
5 **Vulnerability:** 1½ x BODY from Ice/Cold (Uncommon)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

EXAMPLE POWERS FOR LESSER WITCHERIES VPP

Athame: When facing demons, monsters, and other terrifying mystic foes for whom her *Code Versus Killing* does not apply, Witchcraft sometimes carries her enchanted silver dagger.

HKA 1d6 (1½d6 with STR); OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼) (total cost: 7 points) *plus* HKA +1d6 (total of 2½d6 with STR); OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼), Only Versus Evil Mystic Beings (-1) (total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 12 points.

Awareness: At most times, when she doesn't need her Lesser Witcheries for something else, Witchcraft uses her spells to give herself the mystical ability to sense danger.

Danger Sense (immediate vicinity, any danger) 13-. Total cost: 30 points

Beast Shape: Witchcraft sometimes finds it useful to take the form of small animals — birds, rodents, and the like — to travel unnoticed or spy on her

enemies. She needs to learn a separate spell for any given form.

Multiform (any one animal form of up to 150 points). Total cost: 30 points.

Seeming: With this spell, Witchcraft can alter her outward appearance.

Shape Shift (Sight and Hearing Groups, any humanoid form), Imitation. Total cost: 28 points.

Spell Of Vitality: Since her spells consume much energy, before she goes into combat Witchcraft often prepares this spell.

+40 END and +10 REC. Total cost: 18 points

Voice Of The Mind: Witchcraft sometimes prepares this spell when she expects a crisis or battle to erupt, since it allows her to maintain constant contact with all of her teammates.

Mind Link, any eight minds at once. Total cost: 30 points

Quote: “The powers of bright-moon and witch-fire are mine to command. Back, foul creature, or feel their touch!”

Powers/Tactics: Witchcraft is a naturally gifted practitioner of the arts of magic. At the stage of her career represented by this character sheet, many of her spells are still somewhat weak. But her talent is enormous, and as her skill grows so will her power, until she is one of the greatest spellcasters on Earth.

Witchcraft's favorite spells, which she relies on the most in combat, are her Greater Witcheries. She usually begins battle with something relatively harmless (like Fascination, Glamour, or Irresistible Slumber), escalating to more dangerous forces only if she must. All of her other spells are her Lesser Witcheries, of which she can only cast a few at a time.

Witchcraft often gestures and incants when casting her spells, but she doesn't have to — she's just used to doing so. She's perfectly capable of using any of her powers even when bound and gagged.

Appearance: Witchcraft is a beautiful young woman in her early 20s, with bewitching green eyes and shoulder-length red hair. Her beauty and youth have led several opponents to underestimate her, to their quick chagrin. When engaged in superheroics, she wears a short green tunic with gold piping, a gold belt made of circular links, green slippers, and a green cape lined with gold. She conceals her identity with a minor glamour that makes those who see her face forget exactly what she looks like.



TEAM RESOURCES

Thanks to various members' wealth, benefits showered upon them by grateful governments, and donations from several altruistic private citizens, charities, and public corporations, the Champions have plenty of resources to call upon besides their own superpowers. It's a good thing, too — it takes a lot to fight crime these days!

HOMESTEAD

The Champions headquarters, Homestead, is located in Millennium City. The first version of the building was a renovated three-story office building whose conversion into a super-base was funded partly by Defender and Sapphire, but mostly by donations from several charitable organizations and government grants. When that headquarters was almost completely destroyed during the "attack of the fifty-foot Mechanon" incident in September 2006, the team and various charities pooled their funds, commissioned the services of renowned superbase architect Rodger Bright, and built a new one next to the City Center. Shaped largely like an enormous letter C, it's become one of the most distinctive buildings in the city, and was the focus of the superhero resistance during the 2009 Qularr invasion.

Homestead consists of a four-story building with a basement and sub-basement. A pleasant lawn and water features surround the building, making it a spot of green amidst the asphalt and skyscrapers. (The team's V-Jet is kept in an underground hangar in part of the basement; part of the lawn is actually a hatch door that opens so it can land or take off.)

The first floor mainly consists of public areas. A visitor always enters through the lobby, where Jeanine McGillicuddy, the Champions's receptionist, greets them. Mrs. McGillicuddy has a well-deserved reputation as a tough old battle-axe who wouldn't even back down for Firewing. She carefully preserves this reputation by not revealing to her employers that she spends her spare time fostering kittens for Millennium City Pet Rescue. (Witchcraft's familiar, Sunshine the cat, has learned of this weakness... and the fact that Mrs. McGillicuddy keeps a box of cat treats in her desk drawer.) The first floor also includes conferences rooms, a lecture hall, cooking and eating facilities, and offices.

The second floor, to which access is restricted, includes the team members' rooms and several guest bedrooms. Few visitors spend any time here. The third floor, also restricted access, contains the laboratories, monitor/situation room, and some space for expansion. The fourth floor primarily includes storage rooms, the team's trophy room, an entertainment lounge, and various utilitarian features.

The basement includes the V-Jet hangar, parking for the team and its staff, and utility subsystems (the HVAC equipment, the base's backup generator, and the like). The sub-basement is the most restricted and secure part of the base. Mostly it consists of a gymnasium and training facility suitable for the Champions to train and practice with their powers (they call this "the Proving Grounds"). In another part of the sub-basement there's a vault for storing dangerous materials and anything the Champions want to keep secure.

CHAMPIONS PERSONNEL

Besides Mrs. McGillicuddy, the Champions have several full-time employees.

Wendy Brooks, a pert young lady who works for the Champions as their housekeeper and cook, spends most of her time on the first floor, though her cleaning duties take her throughout the building (except for the below-ground levels). Wendy dreams of being a superhero herself someday (though she'd never admit it to her bosses), and is quick to drop whatever she's doing if she thinks she sees an opportunity to "help" the Champions. She spends her spare time working out, jogging, and studying criminology. She's got a crush on Defender and doesn't particularly care for Witchcraft as a result.

Although not exactly an employee, Denise Dumont works at Homestead as the team's liaison with the Department of Superhuman and Paranormal Affairs and the federal government. Her presence results from a deal struck some time ago when the Champions felt they needed national police authority to accomplish a mission, and the government wouldn't grant it without a concession from them. Since Dumont was put in place to provide regular reports and intelligence, the Justice Department has been much more

HOMESTEAD

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
10	Size	20	80m x 40m x 40m meters; OCV+ 10
10	PD	12	
10	ED	12	
10	BODY	8	Total Characteristics Cost: 52

Cost Abilities & Equipment

Cost	Abilities & Equipment	END
0	Location: City	0
3	Communications Systems: HRRP OAF Immobile (-2), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0
13	Vault: +10 BODY and +10 PD/+10 ED for a 10m x 6m x 6m area Partial Coverage (-2)	0
16	Security Sensors: Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups) Multiple Perception Points (up to eight at once), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Immobile (-2), Affected As Radio Group As Well As Sight/Hearing Groups (-¼), Fixed Perception Point (-1)	0
1	Security Sensors: Infrared Perception (Sight Group) OAF Immobile (same; -2), Linked (to Clairsentience; -½)	0
1	Security Sensors: Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group) OAF Immobile (same; -2), Linked (to Clairsentience; -½)	0

cooperative about granting the Champions police powers when they need them. The unspoken terms of the deal are that as long as the Champions submit to having Dumont as an “advisor,” the government won’t worry too much about working with them; if that changes, the members’ lives as crimefighters could become much harder. Despite her sometimes difficult working situation, Dumont is generally friendly and competent — but quick to invoke her implied authority if she feels the Champions are trying to keep her away from something she needs to know about. She’s 32 years old and considered attractive by most people who know her.

PAYING FOR THE TEAM’S RESOURCES

In the campaign featuring the Champions as PCs, the characters didn’t have to chip in Character Points to cover the cost of Homestead, SOCRATES, and the V-Jet. Instead, as discussed on page 114, the GM gave them the base and plane for free, as a way of encouraging them to form a team and remain a team. Additionally, that allowed him to create the NPCs for the base, and establish certain relationships between the team, the government, and various corporations that he can exploit later for story purposes.

In a campaign where the PCs had to pay for these Perks, they’d each have to contribute 6 Character Points toward the base, 7 toward SOCRATES, and 11 toward the V-Jet (with the GM graciously kicking in the spare points where necessary).

Skills And Laboratories

10	High-Speed Internet Access: KS: Everything 30- OAF (computer terminal; -1)	0
9	Crime Lab: Criminology 12-	
5	Reference Library: KS: General Knowledge 14-	
11	Science Lab: Electronics 13-	
11	Science Lab: Mechanics 13-	
4	Science Lab: SS: Physics 13-	
4	Science Lab: SS: Robotics 13-	
11	Weapons Lab: Weaponsmith (Firearms, Energy Weapons) 13-	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 99

Total Base Cost: 151

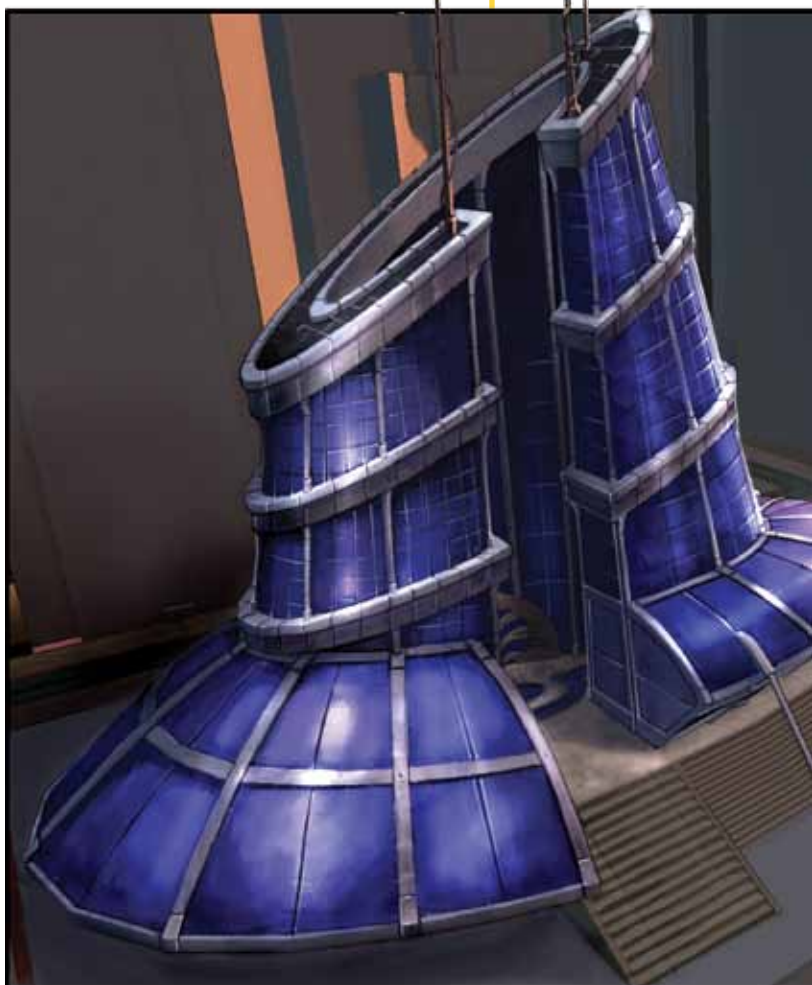
Value Complications

10	DNPC: Wendy Brooks (the Champions’s housekeeper) (Infrequently, Normal)
10	DNPC: Jeanine McGillicuddy (the Champions’s receptionist) (Infrequently, Normal)
10	DNPC: Denise Dumont (government watchdog) (Frequently, Normal, Useful Noncombat Position)
10	Hunted: United States government (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
10	Hunted: UNTIL (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15	Social Complication: Publicly Known (Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Points: 65

Total Cost: 151/5 = 30

4



THE V-JET

The Champions often have to travel to other states or countries when time is of the essence. In those situations they rely on their powerful, high-tech aircraft, the V-Jet. The V-Jet was funded partly by Defender, but mostly by several aerospace firms based in or near Millennium City who donated time, expertise, and materials toward the project.

The V-Jet takes its name from its shape, and citizens often recognize it because it's appeared in so many news reports. It consists of a central body shaped like a rounded wedge, with two forward-pointing wings attached to either side of the body at the rear. Capable of vertical takeoff and landing, and built mainly for speed, it can reach approximately Mach 10. Passengers are protected from the effect of these velocities by a sophisticated internal force-field. The V-Jet carries enough concentrated fuel to fly at full speed for up to day.

If an enemy attacks the V-Jet, the Champions can fight back with twin blasters mounted on either side of the craft's nose. Hatches in the roof and floor also allow flying members of the team to exit the vehicle to do battle; low-level force-fields allow them to exit the craft without overly disrupting the flow of air over the body.

Typically Ironclad pilots the plane, which the manufacturers specially reinforced to carry his weight. Defender and Sapphire are also trained to fly "the ship" (as the team calls it), and Witchcraft and Kinetik intend to learn soon.

SOCRATES

To help run their headquarters and assist them with their fight on crime, the Champions, with the aid of several corporations and private citizens who donated their time and skills, custom-built a supercomputer for Homestead. Christened SOCRATES, this artificially intelligent thinking machine operates all of the base's primary equipment and labs (using artificial arms, or "waldoes," when necessary), monitor the sensors, assist with research, or provide entertainment. It speaks with an educated (and sometimes a little stuffy) male accent.

In 2006, the team began a project to build SOCRATES "stations" in various locations throughout Millennium City. Made of nigh-indestructible plastic that can't be written or painted on, they allow citizens to access a wide variety of city services, send inquiries to the team or public officials, and report crimes in progress.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Their work requires the Champions to interact and maintain relations with a number of important institutions and agencies.

THE MILLENNIUM CITY GOVERNMENT

Thanks to their numerous efforts to save the city, their participation in civic and charitable projects, and the good image they maintain, the Champions have an excellent relationship with the Millennium City authorities. Although they don't have formal police sanction, the MCPD has no problem working with them, and frequently calls them when it encounters situations it can't handle on its own.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

The Champions have so far enjoyed cordial relations with the government not only of Millennium City, but the United States. The Department of Justice doesn't entirely trust the team, since it's consistently refused to participate in its sanctioning program. But it has, on occasion, temporarily bestowed those powers (once using the opportunity to force the Champions to accept an on-site government liaison, Denise Dumont), and frequently consults with the Champions or seeks their aid. Many other nations around the world also value the Champions' assistance.

PRIMUS

The Champions enjoy slightly less pleasant relations with PRIMUS, the government's primary organization for combatting supercrime. The leaders of PRIMUS regard the Champions (and most other superteams) as amateurs who tend to cause as many problems as they solve most of the time. PRIMUS has worked with the Champions in the past, and almost certainly will do so in the future, but it always tries (and usually fails) to take control of the operation and informally "deputize" the Champions instead of letting them think they're equals. Some of the rank-and-file are less rigid, and gladly call in the Champions when there's trouble PRIMUS personnel can't easily handle on their own.

UNTIL

In contrast, the Champions work well with UNTIL. Since UNTIL was founded in part to work with and manage superhuman assets for world security and the benefit of mankind, its organizational attitude is different from that of PRIMUS, which is primarily a law enforcement agency. UNTIL has so many superhuman resources to call on, it doesn't have to impose on the team's time often, but it won't hesitate to do so if a menace arises it thinks the team is particularly suited to handle. The Champions' conduct during several past missions has really impressed some UNTIL leaders, who follow the team's exploits and read their reports on a regular basis.

SOCRATES

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	EGO	5	12-	
15	DEX	10	12-	

5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
4	SPD	20	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12	

Total Characteristics Cost: 77

Cost Powers

5	Waldoes:	Extra Limbs (two or more mounted at necessary locations throughout Homestead)
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Talents

3	Clock:	Absolute Time Sense
5	Memory:	Eidetic Memory
3	Calculator:	Lightning Calculator
3	Instant-On Feature:	Lightsleep
4	Scanner:	Speed Reading (x10)

Skills

3	Criminology	13-
3	Electronics	13-
4	AK: Earth	14-
4	AK: Home Nation	14-
4	CK: Campaign City	14-
2	KS: Archived Recent News	11-
3	KS: Current News	13-
10	KS: General Knowledge	20-
3	KS: Popular Movies	13-
3	KS: Popular Music	13-
3	KS: Video Games	13-
3	KS: Superheroes	13-

END

0

3	KS: Supervillains	13-
2	KS: World History	11-
2	KS: World Politics	11-
3	Mechanics	13-
3	PS: Household Management And Maintenance	13-
3	SS: Astronomy	13-
3	SS: Biology	13-
3	SS: Chemistry	13-
3	SS: Geology	13-
3	SS: Physics	13-
3	Systems Operation	13-
3	Weaponsmith (Firearms, Energy Weapons)	13-

Programs

1	Monitor Camera System, Report Anomalies
1	Plot Distance, Travel Times Between Specified Locations
1	Scan and Enter Data
1	Search Reference Material For Information On A Topic
1	Operate Laboratories
1	Show/Provide Entertainment
1	Send Emergency Call to Team Members If Specified Protocols Are Not Met

Total Abilities Cost: 109

Total Computer Cost: 186

Value Complications

20	Psychological Complication:	Code Versus Killing, Harming, Or Allowing Harm To Come To Humans (Very Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Complication:	Secret Programming The Champions Don't Know About (Uncommon, Total)

Total Complications Points: 35

Total Cost: 186/5 = 37

THE U-JET

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
8	Size	40	12.5 x 6.4m x 6.4m; mass 25 tons; -8 KB; OCV+ 5
50	STR	0	Lift 25 tons; 10d6 HTH [0]
25	DEX	30	
7	OCV	20	
7	DCV	20	
5	SPD	30	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
8	PD	9	
8	ED	9	
20	BODY	2	Total Characteristics Cost: 160

Movement:	Ground:	12m
	Flight:	20m/20km

Cost Powers

45	Magna-Jet Engines:	Flight 20m
		MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1), Usable As Swimming (+¼), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge for entire Multipower (1 Day; +0)

END

[1cc]

27	Starboard Forward Blaster:	RKA 3d6 [64]
		64 Charges (+½); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees forward; -½)
5	Port Forward Blaster:	same as Starboard Forward Blaster [64]
13	Radar Array:	Radar (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Telescopic (+14 versus Range Modifier) 0
		OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
4	Communications Systems:	HRRP 0
		OAF Bulky (-1½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
19	Sealed Environment:	Life Support (Safe Environments: High Pressure, High Radiation, Intense Cold, Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing) 0
15	Structural Enhancements:	+20 STR 0
		Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Only To Increase Lifting Capacity (-1)

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 128

Total Vehicle Cost: 288

Value Complications

15	Social Complication:	Publicly Known (Frequently, Major)
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Total Complications Points: 15

Total Cost: 288/5 = 58



ENEMIES

During their short, but intense, career as a superteam, the Champions have fought and defeated many supervillains and other menaces to society. Here are a few of the members of their “rogues’ gallery”; you can find dozens more villains for your campaign in *Champions Villains*.

4



ARMADILLO

Background/History: In 1993, fresh out of the Juvenile Detention Center, Randall Gordon joined the Army. He'd spent most of his young life beating up other kids for their lunch money; he figured he might as well get paid for being violent.

Eager to make some extra bucks following basic training, Gordon volunteered for something called Project Sunburst, a wargame of some sort. It turned out to be an unscrupulous experiment to test soldiers' ability to survive a nuclear strike. When the blast hit, Gordon passed out. He awakened in the hospital, where he learned from the doctors that he was one of the lucky ones — most of the other test subjects had died right away. But the docs couldn't find a thing wrong with him — just some minor changes in his brainwave patterns.

An astute Army scientist suggested that the changes to his neurochemistry might make Gordon perfect for the Man Amplification Project, the Army's effort to develop cheap, practical powered armor for soldiers. So far MAP personnel hadn't had any success creating a suit the ordinary ground-pounder could use, due to limitations in the cybernetic technology they'd invented. Maybe with Gordon it would be different. Sensing the possibilities, Gordon agreed.

It worked like a charm — Gordon's modified brain could control the armor! While the MAP scientists were congratulating themselves and talking about how much good they could do with the armor, Gordon turned the blasters on them. Do good? Ha! With a weapon like this, he could steal a lot more than lunch money. After smashing his way out of the MAP facilities, he stalked off into the night and became the supervillain *Armadillo*.

Personality/Motivation: After nearly ten years as Armadillo, a decade mixing successful crime sprees with periodic stays in prison, Gordon still gets a big kick out of being Armadillo. He loves all the powers the suit gives him, and usually can't resist announcing what he's about to do to the rest of the world (so everyone will be impressed, naturally). Despite the problems this causes him, he still does it, time and again. Eventually he'll learn not to (*i.e.*, spend some Experience Points to buy off that Psychological Complication).

Armadillo's other big weakness is his inability to withstand the charms of women. He's got no problems fighting superheroines — they can give as good as they get, after all — but any woman who smiles at him sweetly can twist him around her little finger. (When a female character uses an Interaction Skill or pleasant Presence Attack on him, double the effectiveness of any Striking Appearance she has that's defined as "beauty.")

Randall chose the name Armadillo because of his suit's tunneling capability (and armadillos do sort of have armor, too). Anyone who laughs at the name, or mocks him and his armor, gets blasted.

Quote: "Now I'm gonna knock you right through that wall with my Wrist Blasters!"

Powers/Tactics: Armadillo's powers all derive from his suit of battle armor, which comes equipped with three different blasters (located in the palms, on the wrists, and on the shoulders), the ability to burrow through the earth at tremendous speeds (and likewise to tear or tunnel through thick walls and the like), and various defensive and sensory systems. He's become skilled at using the suit, and years of repairing and modifying it have made him a pretty good tinkerer.

In combat Armadillo usually relies on his Palm Blasters, switching to the other blasters only when he needs to cut through heavy armor (Wrist Blasters) or take out large numbers of relatively lightly-protected foes (Shoulder Blasters). He's not much of a tactician; he just starts blasting away at the most convenient target, or does whatever his employer orders him to do.

Armadillo takes full advantage of his suit's ability to dig tunnels. Not only is it a great way to escape, but by making his tunnel twist and turn he can set up ambushes for pursuing heroes and then collapse the tunnel on them. In battle, if there's no cover available and he doesn't need to be mobile, he'll tunnel down about 1m to create some cover for himself.

Unfortunately the Armadillo suit has some weaknesses. The cybernetic systems that control it aren't as efficient or well-protected as they should be, so magnetic attacks or certain mental attacks cause the wearer to suffer agonizing headaches. Armadillo hopes to get this problem fixed eventually (*i.e.*, when he can buy off his Vulnerabilities with Experience Points).

Campaign Use: Armadillo is a pretty straightforward mercenary villain. He'll work for anyone who can pay him or give him a reasonable shot at some major loot, so you can easily work him into other villain teams or have a more powerful villain hire him for "backup." His ties to Project Sunburst might also provide some scenario fodder — maybe the master villain Sunburst will try to recruit him for his organization, or perhaps a PC also has some connection to that ill-fated experiment.

If Armadillo needs to be more powerful for your game, you have several options. First, you could increase his STR, making him more of a "brick" than he is now. (You may also need to bump up his defenses a bit.) Second, you could give his suit more weapons, or make the ones he already has more powerful. Right now he's just got a lot of blasters, which doesn't give him too many tactical options. Third, you could give him the *Tactics* and *Teamwork* Skills and make him a smarter combatant. To weaken him, reduce his defenses some, drop his Tunneling to 16m (or less), and maybe reduce his Multipower to a 50 Active Point reserve.

ARMADILLO

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10+40	STR	27*	11- (19-)	Lift 100 kg (25 tons); 2d6 (10d6) HTH damage [1 (5)]
10+8	DEX	11*	11- (13-)	
10+18	CON	12*	11- (15-)	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	1	11-	
10+5	PRE	3*	11- (12-)	PRE Attack: 2d6 (3d6)
3+3	OCV	10*		
3+3	DCV	10*		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
2+3	SPD	20*		Phases: 6, 12 (3, 5, 8, 10, 12)
6	PD	4		Total: 26 PD (20 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 24 ED (20 rED)
9	REC	5		
20	END	0		
15	BODY	5		
40	STUN	10		Total Characteristics Cost: 123

*: OIF (battle armor; -½)

Movement:	Running:	12m
	Leaping:	20m
	Tunneling:	24m

Cost	Powers	END
36	Power Supply: Endurance Reserve (160 END, 21 REC) OIF (-½)	0
40	Blaster Array: Multipower, 60-point powers all OIF (battle armor; -½)	
3f	1) Palm Blasters: Blast 12d6 OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-¼)	6
3f	2) Wrist Blasters: RKA 2½d6 Armor Piercing (x2; +½); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-¼)	6
3f	3) Shoulder Blasters: Blast 8d6 Autofire (5 shots; +½); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-¼)	6
3f	4) Tunneling Mode: Tunneling 24m through 12 PD material OIF (-½)	5
17	Battle Claws: HKA 1d6 Armor Piercing (+¼) (2d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)	0

9	Battle Armor: Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing; Safe Environments: Low Pressure/Vacuum, High Pressure) OIF (-½)	0
40	Battle Armor: Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED) OIF (-½)	0
7	Flashguard Helmet: Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points) OIF (-½)	0
7	Flashguard Helmet: Hearing Group Flash Defense (10 points) OIF (-½)	0
7	Defense Field: Power Defense (10 points) OIF (-½)	0
5	Leg Servos: Leaping +16m (20m forward, 10m upward) OIF (-½)	1
3	IR Sensors: Infrared Perception (Sight Group) OIF (-½)	0
3	UV Sensors: Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group) OIF (-½)	0
6	Communications Suite: HRRP (Radio Group) OIF (-½), Affected As Sight/Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0

Talents

8	Onboard Computer: Absolute Range Sense, Absolute Time Sense, Bump Of Direction, Lightning Calculator OIF (-½)	
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Skills

10	+2 with Blaster Array Multipower Attacks	
3	Electronics 12-	
2	KS: Professional Sports 11-	
2	KS: The Superhuman World 11-	
1	KS: The US Army 8-	
2	Navigation (Land) 12-	
2	PS: Soldier 11-	
3	Mechanics 12-	
3	Streetwise 11- (12-)	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 228

Total Cost: 351

400 Matching Complications (75)

20	Hunted: U.S. Army (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)	
20	Psychological Complication: Announces His Actions Before Taking Them (Very Common, Strong)	
15	Social Complication: Public Identity (Randall Gordon) (Frequently, Major)	
10	Vulnerability: 1½ x STUN from Mental Blasts (Common)	
5	Vulnerability: 1½ x STUN from Magnetic Attacks (Uncommon)	

Total Complications Points: 70

Experience Points: 0

Appearance: The Armadillo armor is a fairly big and bulky suit of powered armor colored a sort of rust red (with a grey chest-plate); several parts of it have a sort of “scale” motif reminiscent of its namesake. The power pack and systems in the back of the suit rise up over the wearer’s head, giving him something of the look of a burrowing animal. The Wrist Blasters mounted on the back of the hand are the most prominent weapons; the Palm Blasters and Battle Claws are also easily seen when he holds his hands right, but the Shoulder Blasters don’t pop out of their compartments until they’re needed. Armadillo often wears a satchel to carry loot in, since he needs his hands free to tunnel.

Randall Gordon himself is 5’11” tall and weighs about 200 pounds — he’s no muscleman, but he doesn’t have a lot of fat on him either; he’s mostly big-boned and beefy. He has blonde hair and blue eyes, sports a moustache, and usually wears casual clothes.

GREEN DRAGON

Background/History: Chow Deng was born to a poor peasant family in central China. As soon as he could walk, he went to work in the fields assigned to the family. One day, when Deng was only eight years old and his sister Lin five, his parents were both killed in a tractor accident... one whose cause was never precisely determined.

Orphaned and alone, the two siblings barely eked out a living with help from some of the villagers. After they’d lived this hardscrabble existence for more than a year, a group of green-robed monks showed up at their hut. All his life Deng had heard about them in village tales told late at night, but he’d never expected to actually see one of them. They resided in an isolated monastery more than an hour’s walk from the village, where they lived as their predecessors had for centuries.

The monks made Deng a tempting offer: they’d teach him the ancient fighting arts so he could enter something called “the Tournament of the Dragon” and triumph. In return, they’d support him and his sister. Deng accepted without hesitation.

Many long years of training followed. Intensive exertion brought out Deng’s natural gifts for the martial arts; he grew into a strong, proud young man, far more skilled at combat than anyone else at the Jade Monastery. He thought he was ready for the Tournament, but the monks soon dashed his hopes — they told him he had many more years to go.

Deng wouldn’t accept that. It sounded ridiculous to him. In fact, the whole Tournament thing sounded a little ridiculous. Why work and work for that, when he could use his skills to make good money in America? Taking his sister with him, Deng fled the monastery and made his way to the United States. The monks never found them, if in fact they ever pursued them.

Deng quickly became disgusted with America and its people. His masters had told him Americans were undisciplined and foolish, and they were right. His sister, on the other hand, was enchanted. While he was content to live apart from those around him, she embraced America and all of its unique qualities. This disgusted him, too, but despite his harangues, she did as she wished.

Deng began testing his skills by picking fights, which led to confrontations with police officers. Beating them up wasn’t much harder than beating up other martial artists. But then he met someone more his size: the superhero Shugoshin. Deng fought well, but he couldn’t overcome his gaudily-clad foe’s skill. The incident infuriated him. Being beaten — and by a *Westerner!* — was the most humiliating thing that had ever happened to him.

Soon after that Deng fell in with the tongs. They’d heard of his fight with Shugoshin and were impressed with his skill and power despite his loss. He began doing “jobs” for them, jobs that not only earned him fat paychecks but gave him the chance to practice his fighting skills and vent his rage. He crippled or maimed many of his opponents, but he didn’t care. His masters nicknamed him *Lù Lóng*, “Green Dragon,” and gave him a costume like the ones other martial artist “supervillains” wore. He took the name and the costume as a badge of honor.

Green Dragon soon found out he could make even more money working for other criminal organizations, such as VIPER. He became a mercenary villain, working for whoever could pay him top dollar and give him an opportunity for a good fight.

Personality/Motivation: Some martial artists acquire their skills through strength of character and willingness to sacrifice a part of their lives for the sake of overall personal growth. Green Dragon isn’t one of those martial artists. He’s a headstrong, stubborn, proud, angry young man who’s learned his skills through a combination of innate talent and pure cussedness. Essentially he’s a bully stubborn enough to learn martial arts. He uses his fighting skills to push people around, to make himself feel “big,” to get what he wants. He doesn’t tread the path of self-restraint and inner peace, as most martial artists of his level of ability do. In fact, he’s so busy fighting his way through the jungle he probably couldn’t even find that path.

On top of this, Green Dragon is a vicious anti-Western bigot (despite the fact that insults to *his* ethnicity often send him into a rage). He considers Westerners, particularly Americans, to be lazy, undisciplined, and stupid. As far as he’s concerned, beating them up and taking their money is just cultural evolution in action.

But Green Dragon isn’t wholly without good qualities. He’s an honorable person and warrior. To him, “honor” means he won’t attack opponents from ambush or “fight dirty,” fight women (unless they attack him first), use weapons (again, unless they’re used against him first), or “dishonor” himself through sinful or licentious conduct.



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The conflict between his bigotry and his desire to be honorable seems never to have occurred to him.

The only thing in the world that means more to Green Dragon than fighting is his younger sister, Lin. He loves her very much, but expresses his love through a stifling overprotectiveness that's beginning to *really* annoy her now that she's an independent young woman. Her chosen career — actress — is scandalous and repugnant to him, and he's doing everything he can to make her live a more "womanly" life. (His attitudes about women are just one of Green Dragon's many "traditional" opinions; as Lin has observed, his views are "twelve thousand miles and two thousand years away!")

Quote: «American dog! Now I will show you what *true* kung fu is!»

Powers/Tactics: Green Dragon has two qualities that make him a powerful fighter. The first is his strength; years of farm labor and heavy training have given him great lifting and hitting power. The second is his speed; Green Dragon is fast, faster than most superheroic martial artists. His training has emphasized Kung fu substyles that make the best use of his speed and strength, such as Bear, Dragon, and Shaolin Tiger. He's studied many other substyles of Kung fu as well.

However, Green Dragon also has attributes that hamper him in battle. Chief among these are his pride, anger, and impetuosity. Unlike other martial artists of similar power, he's spent little time on "mystic foolery" such as *ch'i* abilities. His power and skill are essentially stagnating; he's gone as far as he can go without delving into the more esoteric aspects of the martial arts, which he has neither the patience nor the discipline to do.

Green Dragon's fighting tactics are fairly simple and straightforward. He attacks quickly and hard, hoping to take his opponent down easily. Only if this proves unworkable does he resort to more advanced tactics such as acrobatic maneuvering and *tien-hsueh* strikes. Due to his relatively low defenses, he often uses his Martial Dodge when facing foes with powerful attacks. His tactics are further circumscribed by his "honor," as described above. He also has a tendency to announce his presence and make a brief, haughty speech before he attacks someone.

Campaign Use: Deng makes a great antagonist for a martial arts-oriented hero, particularly one of Western descent. As a Hunter, he's not very imaginative, simply attacking his foe at inconvenient moment or teaming up with other villains to cause him trouble.

If Green Dragon isn't powerful enough for your campaign, boost his STR to superhuman levels (he underwent ancient mystic Chinese rites to get superpowers) and increase his defenses to just above campaign averages (and perhaps make part of them Resistant). If he's too powerful, reduce his STR to 20, his DEX to 24, his SPD to 6, and get rid of some or all of his Extra DCs.

Appearance: Green Dragon is 5'8" tall and weighs 175 pounds, most of it rock-solid muscle. He wears a costume colored light and dark green, with a "scale" pattern to it (like snakeskin). His mask is dark green, with two flares projecting outward across either side his face which are embroidered with gold and orange threads. The eyepieces of the mask are lined with a sort of transparent gauze that makes his eyes look like they're solid white. The chest, arms, and legs of the costume are dark green; the gloves, boots, and trunks are lighter green.

GREEN DRAGON

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	15	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH damage [2]
27	DEX	34	14-	
18	CON	8	13-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
14	EGO	4	12-	
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
10	OCV	35		
9	DCV	30		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
7	SPD	50		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12
10	PD	8		Total: 10 PD (8 rPD)
10	ED	8		Total: 10 PD (0 rED)
10	REC	6		
35	END	3		
15	BODY	5		
40	STUN	10		Total Characteristics Cost: 233

Movement: Running: 18m
Leaping: 18m

Cost Powers

Martial Arts: Kung Fu

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 55 STR
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge all attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	60 STR vs. Grabs
5	Flying Kick	+1	-2	13d6 Strike
3	Joint Lock/Grab	-1	-1	Grab, 55 STR
5	Kick	-2	+1	13d6 Strike
4	Knife Hand	-2	+0	1d6+1 HKA (2½6 w/STR)
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	10d6 Strike, Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	11d6 Strike
3	Throw	+0	+1	9d6 + v/10, Target Falls
4	Tien-hsueh Strike	-1	+1	4d6 NND (1)
4	Tiger/Dragon Claw	+0	+0	13d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
4	Uproot/Sand Palm	+0	+0	60 STR Shove
16	+4 Damage Classes (already added in)			
7	Use Art with Blades, Clubs, Hook Sword, Polearms, Staff, Three-Section Staff, Wind And Fire Wheels			
2	Stances: Multipower, 3-point reserve, all Cost END (-½)			
1f	1) Cat Stance: +2 Lightning Reflexes Costs END (-½)			
1f	2) Crane Stance: +1 OCV with Block Costs END (-½), Requires A DEX Roll (-½)			
1f	3) Horse Stance: Knockback Resistance -2m Costs END (-½)			
1f	4) Phoenix Stance: +1 OCV with Block & Legsweep; Costs END (-½), Requires A DEX Roll (-½)			
1f	5) Tiger Stance: +1 with Tiger/Dragon Claw Costs END (-½)			

4	Iron Skin Technique: Resistant (+½) for 8 PD	0
7	Leaping: Leaping +14m (18m forward, 9m upward)	1
6	Swift: Running +6m (18m total)	1

Talents

15	Danger Sense 12- (in combat)
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Skills

16	+2 HTH	
4	Dodging and Deflecting: +4 OCV with Block	0
	Only To Block Ranged Physical Projectiles (-1)	
3	Acrobatics 14-	
3	Breakfall 14-	
3	Climbing 14-	
3	Contortionist 14-	
3	Disguise 12-	
3	Gambling (Dice Games, Poker) 12-	
3	KS: Kung Fu 12-	
2	KS: Chinese History And Culture 11-	
2	KS: Chinese Healing 11-	
1	Language: English (basic conversation; Mandarin Chinese is Native)	
3	Shadowing 12-	
3	Stealth 14-	
3	Streetwise 13-	
4	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles, Small Rowed Boats	
7	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons, Hook Sword, Three-Section Staff, Wind And Fire Wheels	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 183

Total Cost: 416

400 Matching Complications (75)

5	DNPC: Lin Chow (younger sister) (Infrequently, Normal; Useful Noncombat Skills)
10	Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Always Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
15	Enraged: if honor insulted or hears an ethnic slur (Common), go 8-, recover 11-
15	Psychological Complication: Honorable (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Complication: Disdain For Occidentals And Western Culture (Common, Strong)
15	Social Complication: Public Identity (Chow Deng) (Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 16

OGRE

Background/History: In need of a random group of test subjects for its latest invention, a Devolutionizer Ray designed to turn ordinary people into super-strong quasi-australopithecines, ARGENT kidnapped a couple dozen people from a sporting event in Denver. One of the people it grabbed was Jack Stevens, a computer programmer.

One by one, Jack saw his fellow prisoners led out of the room, and soon heard the agonizing screams as their captors did... *something* to them. Then the guards came in and motioned to him. They took him into a laboratory and strapped him down, smashing him in the side with a rifle butt when he tried to break free. Then Jack heard an odd-pitched whine and saw bizarre lights inside his brain. Pain ripped through his body. He screamed and screamed, it seemed like forever, but then the pain slowly faded away and he passed out.

And that's the last time Jack Stevens remembered anything. The Devolutionizer Ray worked on him, at least partially. It transformed him into a brutish proto-humanoid, strong enough to rip cars in two or punch through armor plating, but dumb as a bag of hammers. It wiped out most of his memories of his old life, leaving only the recollection of being captured, forced into a lab, and tortured. The thought of the torture enraged him. He snapped the restraints the ARGENT scientists had put him in, smashed through one of the lab's walls, and proceeded to destroy the entire facility as a way of punishing the "bullies." Slightly calmer after so much "exercise," he wandered off into the night before the cops arrived. Soon "the Ogre" (as one of his early employers dubbed him) was a well-known, and easily-manipulated, figure on the supervillain scene.

Personality/Motivation: The Devolutionizer Ray affected Ogre's mind as well as his body, making him intensely stupid. He has difficulty remembering things (particularly complicated subjects, like detailed attack plans). When he's involved in a scenario, at some point the GM should make an EGO Roll for him. If Ogre fails the roll, he's forgotten an important fact; if he realizes this, his frustration may make him do something destructive.

In one respect, Ogre's memory is quite good. He vividly recalls being captured and tortured (though he doesn't know by who, exactly). This has left him with a strong dislike of "bullies," his term for anyone who tries to hurt other people, forces other people to do things they don't want to, makes fun of other people, or the like. "Bullies" also include just about anyone who tries to stop Ogre from doing something Ogre wants to do (unless they use very gentle persuasion and somehow appeal to his "good side"). Many supervillains have exploited Ogre by tricking him into thinking a particular hero is a "bully."

Quote: "You not stop Ogre! Ogre smash *all* bullies!"

Powers/Tactics: Ogre lacks the intelligence to formulate any sort of sophisticated tactics. Typically he picks an opponent — the most "bully"-like one, or the one who's hurt him the most in the current or past combats — and smashes them with all his strength. He particularly enjoys Haymaking his Punch, and will do so whenever there's a reasonable chance he'll succeed (for example, if his opponent is Stunned).

Campaign Use: Ogre is a straightforward brick, useful as a hireling or patsy for a more intelligent or sophisticated villain. However, Jack Stevens was an ordinary, even upstanding, citizen; if a way could be found to reverse the Devolutionizer Ray's affects on Ogre's intelligence, he'd probably switch gears and become a superhero — or a super-strong volunteer worker.

To make Ogre more powerful, increase his STR or SPD, or give him some Damage Reduction. You could also add a few more "brick tricks" like his Super-Strength Smash-Through. To weaken him, reduce his STR and defenses.

Ogre really isn't smart enough to Hunt heroes; he doesn't have the intelligence or memory needed to formulate a Hunting plan and carry through on it. He's good at holding grudges, though; if a hero (particularly another super-strong character) has defeated him repeatedly, he'll always go after that "bully" first.

Appearance: Ogre is a huge, thick-limbed man with reddish-purple skin. His prominent brow-ridges, skull-ridge with thatch of black hair, and pointed ears betray his proto-human nature. He usually wears a black tank top, red pants, grey boots, and heavy steel bracers and belt.

OGRE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
65	STR	55	22-	Lift 200 tons; 13d6 HTH damage [6]
20	DEX	20	13-	
33	CON	23	16-	
5	INT	-5	10-	PER Roll 10-
10	EGO	0	11-	
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
30	PD	28		Total: 30 PD (20 rPD)
24	ED	22		Total: 24 ED (24 rED)
20	REC	16		
65	END	9		
20	BODY	10		
74	STUN	27		Total Characteristics Cost: 270

Movement: Running: 12m
Leaping: 46m

Cost	Powers	END
13	Roomsweeper: Area Of Effect (1m Radius around character; +¼) for 65 STR Personal Immunity (+¼); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)	2
13	Devolutionized Body: Hardened (+¼) for 30 PD/24 ED	0
34	Devolutionized Body: Resistant (+½) for 30 PD/24 ED, Hardened (+¼)	0
21	Super-Strong Legs: Leaping +42m (46m forward, 23m upward)	3
18	Super-Strength Smash-Through: Tunneling 1m through 15 PD material Requires A STR Roll (-½), No Noncombat Movement (-¼)	3
6	Animalistic Senses: +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0

Skills

24	+3 HTH
1	KS: The Superhuman World 8-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 130

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

30	Enraged: Berserk in combat (Very Common), go 11-, recover 14-
15	Psychological Complication: Devolutionized Memory (Common, Strong)
30	Vulnerability: 2 x Effect from Mental Powers (Very Common)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0



PULSAR

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
23	DEX	26	14-	
23	CON	13	14-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
11	EGO	1	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
7	OCV	20		
7	DCV	20		
3	OMCV	0		
4	DMCV	3		
6	SPD	40		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
13	PD	11		Total: 23 (10 rPD)
17	ED	15		Total: 27 (10 rED)
10	REC	6		
45	END	5		
14	BODY	4		
50	STUN	15		Total Characteristics Cost: 189

Movement: Running: 12m
Flight: 20m



Cost	Powers	END
60	Energy Powers: Multipower, 60-point powers	
6f	1) Power Blast I: Blast 12d6	6
6f	2) Power Blast II: Blast 8d6	0
	Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	
6f	3) Stun-Blast: Blast 6d6	6
	NND (defense is ED Resistant Protection defined as a "force-field" or the like; +1)	
2f	4) Powered Punch: HA +5d6	2
	Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)	
30	Force-Field: Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED)	0
30	Power-Flight: Flight 20m	0
	Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	
	Martial Arts: Commando Training	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Notes	
3	Aikido Throw +0 +1 3d6 + v/10, Target Falls	
4	Boxing Cross +0 +2 5d6	
4	Choke -2 +0 Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)	
4	Karate "Chop" -2 +0 ½d6 HKA (1d6+1 with STR)	

Skills

15	+3 with Energy Powers Multipower
4	+2 with Flight
3	Combat Driving 14-
3	Concealment 11-
3	Demolitions 11-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 11-
2	KS: The Superhuman World 11-
1	KS: VIPER 8-
1	KS: U.S. Army 8-
3	Power: Energy Powers 14-
2	PS: Soldier 11-
5	Security Systems 12-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Stealth 14-
3	Streetwise 12-
1	Systems Operation 8-
2	TF: SCUBA, Snow Skiing

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 211

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

20	Hunted: VIPER (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Complication: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate)
15	Social Complication: Public Identity (Frank Costen) (Frequently, Major)
10	Unluck 2d6
15	Vulnerability: 1½ x STUN from Physical HKAs (Very Common)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

PULSAR

Background/History: It didn't take Frank Costen long to discover there aren't too many things you can do when you're a high school dropout who's been dishonorably discharged from the Army. Sure, you can get drunk and start barfights, but only if you've got money to buy liquor. It wasn't long before Frank didn't even have that.

When Frank got a tip about a VIPER recruiting drive he jumped at the chance. He figured he'd be perfect for it — with his military experience, he was a shoe-in! He'd be on his way to the big time before he knew it!

The tip turned out to be good, and Frank was soon being given a physical by some VIPER scientists. After taking a look at his test results, the scientists made him an offer. They were looking for some "special recruits" to become part of an elite VIPER fighting force. Was he interested?

This time, Frank was certain his luck was changing. He was right — but not the way he thought. The "evaluation test" for the "elite fighting force" turned out to be experiments in human mutation. As the electronic hum of the machinery he was strapped to rose in pitch, Frank felt intense pain sear through every cell of his body. And then it got worse. And worse.

Frank was in so much agony he barely noticed when the machinery exploded around him. It was a couple of minutes before he realized he was lying on the floor in a heap of rubble — and the pain was gone! In fact, he felt... better. More alive, more vital, more — energetic. His body was bursting with energy!

Almost without thinking, Frank blasted the rubble off his body and stood up. He was glowing green, but he didn't care. All he cared about was getting back at those scientists. A few minutes and three dead scientists later, Frank was finally knocked out and restrained by VIPER soldiers. When he came to, the Nest Leader made him an offer: come to work for VIPER, or be killed. Frank knew a losing hand when he saw it, so he signed up.

He didn't like it, though. Not wanting to be bossed around was what led to his dishonorable discharge, after all. At the first opportunity, he blasted his way out and never looked back. Since then, Frank — using the name Pulsar — has been a common sight on the supervillain scene. Sometimes involved with a scheme of his own, sometimes working for other criminals, he's fought most of the major superheroes in America, and a lot of the minor ones. He's done precious little winning, though. Somehow things just don't seem to go his way. But this *next* job, see, it's *perfect*; nothing can possibly go wrong....

Personality/Motivation: Pulsar is, at heart, a lazy underachiever. He thinks of himself as the stuff master villains are made of and one of the most powerful men in the world. He explains all

his failures away as "bad luck." But the truth is he doesn't work hard at anything; he expects to be given fame, fortune, and women on a silver platter, and he has an excuse for everything that goes wrong.

Despite his numerous failures, losses, and periods of imprisonment, Pulsar has an overweening sense of self-confidence. He's convinced he has the power to defeat anyone, and he's quite susceptible to flattering comments and extravagant praise (especially from women). Despite his well-known dislike for taking orders, it's not difficult for a charismatic person to manipulate Pulsar into doing his bidding.

Quote: "Now you'll see what *true* power is!"

Powers/Tactics: VIPER's experiments in mutating humans granted Pulsar energy powers. He can fire power-blasts, fly, and protect himself with a force-field. He can even use his power to "juice up" an otherwise ordinary punch — a tactic he loves to use to show how macho and tough he is.

Even though he's had military training, Pulsar has little grasp of tactics. Mainly he shows off, blasting the biggest, most obvious, or most important target to show his power. He likes to Haymaker his power blasts when he can, more for the impressiveness than the extra damage. (He always follows them up with a Presence Attack.)

The only downside to Pulsar's powers is the way they altered his molecular structure, making him vulnerable to physical objects that pierce his skin — bullets, knives, claws, and so on. Energy seeps out of cuts and punctures like blood gushing from a wound, causing him intense pain. For this reason, he avoids opponents with such attacks whenever he can.

Campaign Use: Pulsar is a good "throwaway" villain you can use in just about any scenario. He can work with just about anyone, be manipulated into doing just about anything, and always seems to find a way to escape from prison.

As a Hunter, Pulsar is dangerous mainly because he loves to plan ambushes and often seems to attack at the worst possible time. If he can, he'll use his Shadowing to follow his target around until he senses "just the right moment to strike!"

If Pulsar's too weak for your campaign, scale him up by giving him a few more energy powers (maybe a Barrier, Telekinesis, or the like) and by increasing the DCs in his attacks and/or the number of CSLs he can apply to them. If he's too strong, just decrease his DCs, and perhaps a few of his Characteristics.

Appearance: Pulsar wears a bodystocking that's colored a green-tinted chrome. On his chest there's a white starburst symbol with a silvery green center. His half-face mask, the same color as his bodystocking, includes a set of darker green eye-protecting goggles. His boots and short gloves are a metallic green.

TACHYON

Val Char Cost Roll Notes

50	STR	40	19-	Lift 25 tons; 10d6 HTH damage [5]
20	DEX	20	13-	
25	CON	15	14-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6

7 OCV 20

7 DCV 20

3 OMCV 0

3 DMCV 0

5 SPD 30 *Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12*

24 PD 22 *Total: 24 PD (24 rPD)*

24 ED 22 *Total: 24 ED (24 rED)*

15 REC 11

50 END 6

14 BODY 4

50 STUN 15 **Total Characteristics Cost: 238**

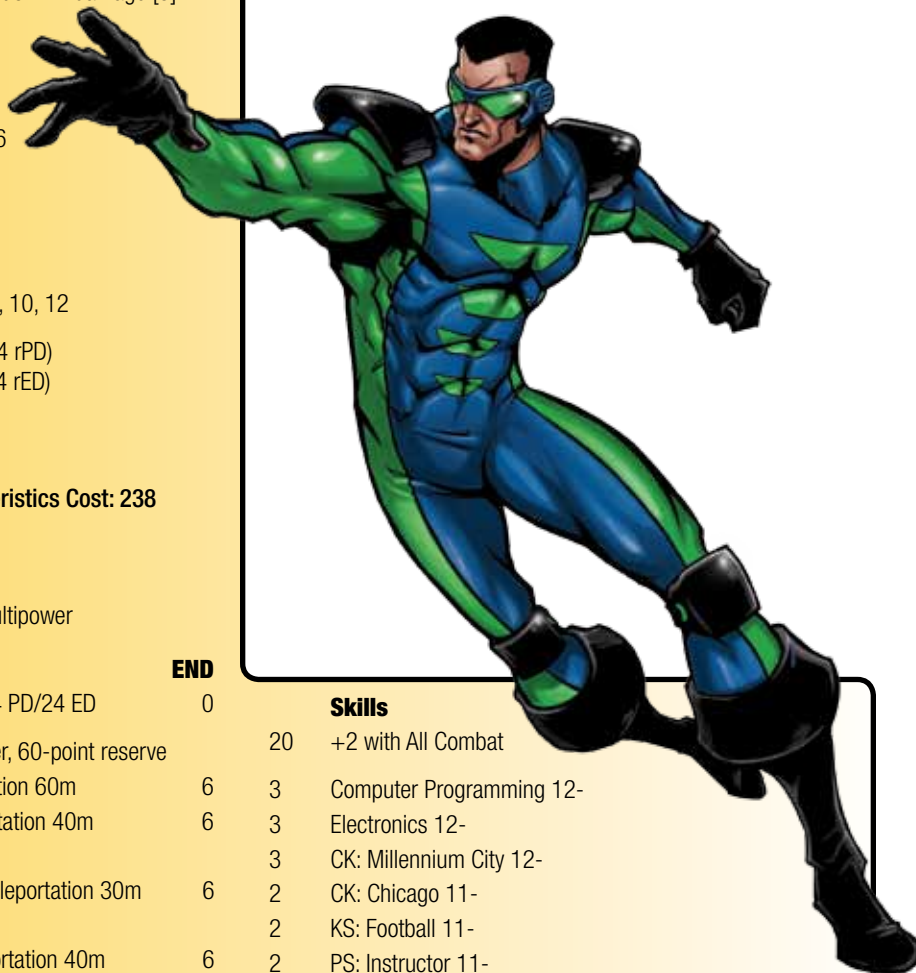
Movement: Running: 12m
Leaping: 20m
Teleportation: See Multipower

Cost Powers

24	Toughness: Resistant (+½) for 24 PD/24 ED	0
60	Teleportation Powers: Multipower, 60-point reserve	20
6f	1) Basic Teleportation: Teleportation 60m	6
6f	2) Courier Teleportation: Teleportation 40m Position Shift, x8 mass	6
6f	3) Long-Range Teleportation: Teleportation 30m MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1)	6
6f	4) Focused Teleportation: Teleportation 40m Armor Piercing (x2; +½)	6
6f	5) Aportation: Teleportation 22m Usable As Attack (+1¼), Ranged (+½)	6
4f	6) Combat Aportation I: RKA 2d6 Penetrating (x2; +1); OIF (any small teleportable object; -½)	6
3f	7) Combat Aportation II: Blast 5d6 NND (defense is having Teleportation, gravitic, magnetic, or dimension-manipulation powers; +1); No Range (-½)	5
3f	8) Blink Teleport: +8 DCV Costs Endurance (-½)	4
2	Escape Routes: Two Fixed Locations for Teleportation (home; office)	0
8	Super-Strong Legs: Leaping +16m (20m forward, 10m upward)	1

Perks

2 Contact: prominent astrophysicist 11-



END

Skills

20	+2 with All Combat
3	Computer Programming 12-
3	Electronics 12-
3	CK: Millennium City 12-
2	CK: Chicago 11-
2	KS: Football 11-
2	PS: Instructor 11-
2	PS: Operate Telescope 11-
2	PS: Play Football 11-
5	SS: Astronomy 14-
3	Stealth 13-
1	Systems Operation 8-
1	Teamwork 8-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 185

Total Cost: 423

400 Matching Complications (75)

15	Psychological Complication: Must Prove That He's The Best (Common, Strong)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with another astronomy professor; Rival Is Aware Of Rivalry)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with Thunderbolt II; Rival Is Aware Of Rivalry)
15	Social Complication: Secret Identity (Prof. Steve Maxwell) (Frequently, Major)
15	Susceptibility: to kelvarite, 1d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon)
20	Vulnerability: 2 x Effect from Drains (Common)

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 23

TACHYON

Background: Born and raised in Chicago, Steve Maxwell always had a strong competitive streak. Whether it was sports, grades, or picking up girls, he had to try to be the best — and he usually succeeded. To no one's surprise, he ended up attending Millennium City University on a full ride because of his skill as a football player and his grades.

Maxwell's string of successes continued at MCU, but his enjoyment of college life was marred by one thing: another student, Rob Bleskind. Somehow they just rubbed each other completely the wrong way. Bleskind was every bit as competitive as Maxwell was, and every bit as good. Since they both were majoring in the sciences, they bumped into each other on campus all the time, and harsh insults were the least they usually exchanged. The campus cops broke up more than one fist-fight between them.

In Maxwell's senior year, MCU got an unprecedented opportunity — the chance to examine part of a strange meteorite that had hit Earth in Kentucky. One of the minerals in the meteorite was not found on Earth, and MCU was the first to have a chance to examine one of the chunks containing bits of this strange new rock, dubbed "kelvarite."

To Maxwell's delight, he was asked to participate in the analysis due to his strong background in astronomy. His enjoyment of the moment was spoiled when the professors brought Bleskind in as well because of his skills as a geologist. It was all the two of them could do to be civil to each other when the professors were around.

And then the professors left the room for a minute to get some equipment. What happened next is a matter of debate. Both Maxwell and Bleskind claim the other one began an unauthorized test. Or it may be that they got into a fight and knocked something over. Or maybe they didn't do anything. But regardless of what they did or didn't do, the meteor did something — it exploded! Both of them were showered with tiny particles and fragments of kelvarite. Bleskind, being closer to the meteor when the disaster occurred, was bombarded with more kelvarite than Maxwell was.

Maxwell woke up in the hospital. He was amazed to find out that he didn't feel any pain. In fact, he felt terrific! It didn't take long for him to discover that the accident had somehow granted him prodigious strength. And when a nurse opened the door and surprised him, he discovered another one of his powers — teleportation — purely by reflex. Fortunately, he got back into his room before the nurse noticed he was missing.

As he continued his studies, eventually earning a Ph.D in astronomy, Maxwell practiced with his powers. He developed fine control over his teleportation abilities and explored the extent and uses of his enormous strength. Being fairly self-centered and quite greedy, he soon began committing burglaries — an easy enough thing for a super-strong teleporter to do.

Today, Maxwell lives a double life. Most of the time he's one of the newest astronomy professors at MCU, teaching undergrads the ins and outs of stars, nebulae, and planetary formation. But when he feels like it, or when someone hires him to do a job, he hits the streets as Tachyon, stealing and committing mayhem as the mood takes him.

Personality/Motivation: Tachyon isn't a complex person as supervillains go. He's self-centered, greedy, and basically amoral, though he does a good job of covering these negative qualities and blending into normal society on a day-to-day basis. He still can't stand it when anyone beats him at anything — or even comes close to beating him — and will do whatever it takes to prove he's the better man. If a superhero defeats him, he'll keep coming back, again and again, until he achieves victory.

Tachyon thinks of himself as a scientist first and foremost; he genuinely loves his work, can talk about it for hours, and has a strong streak of scientific curiosity. He loves to know what makes things work, why they happen the way they do. If presented with a mystery or a puzzle, he often focuses on it intently, becoming more absorbed in it than he should be. A superhero who discovers this trait might be able to devise a clever trap for him.

Tachyon remains bitter rivals with Rob Bleskind, who's now better known as Thunderbolt. Each of them does his best to interfere with the other's work, taunt him, and make him miserable. They have yet to put their superpowers to the test against each other, but they know it's only a matter of time.

Quote: "Now you see me..." ::teleports behind opponent and punches him:: "...now you don't."

Powers/Tactics: Being bombarded with the mysterious alien mineral kelvarite (about which Earth science still knows very little) granted Tachyon an unusual and powerful suite of superhuman abilities. First, it greatly augmented his strength and resilience, giving him the ability to toss vehicles around and punch through armor plating with ease. Second, it somehow interacted with his bioelectric field to grant him teleportation powers. In addition to teleporting himself, he can teleport others (even against their will) or teleport small objects into people (causing terrible wounds). For a less lethal attack, he can simply "blink teleport" a person in and out rapidly, causing such strain to the person's system that the victim often passes out.

Tachyon has developed a number of tactics to take advantage of his abilities. For example, if he's facing someone, he can use his Courier Teleportation to 'port behind them so that he's looking at the target's back, and then punch them for all he's worth. He often combines his Aportation with a punch (Strike) as a Multiple Attack (his "Tele-Punch").

Although Tachyon doesn't know it yet, his kelvarite-based powers come with kelvarite-based weaknesses as well. For one thing, exposure to other kelvarite causes him pain (and could even kill him if it were prolonged). Fortunately, kelvarite is pretty rare; the only known sources on Earth right now come from a few meteorite fragments that the authorities keep under lock and key. Somehow the kelvarite in his body also makes him vulnerable to attacks that sap his abilities (*i.e.*, Drains).

Campaign Use: Tachyon is a powerful opponent with an unusual set of powers the GM can use to keep the PCs on their toes. He's difficult to keep imprisoned once captured, so he can always come back to get revenge.

To make Tachyon a little more powerful, boost his STR to 60, his Multipower reserve to 75, and his Multipower slots accordingly. You could also increase his SPD to 6. If you find he's too powerful for your game, try reducing his STR to 40, his SPD to 4, and/or his Multipower to a 50-point reserve.

As a Hunter, Tachyon is a dogged and determined foe. He'll usually start Hunting a hero because the hero humiliated or bested him in some way, and he's dead set on proving who the "better man" really is — if necessary, in front of a huge crowd of people, just so the whole city hears about it. He's not particularly vicious or interested in killing his targets, but he'll gladly beat them to within an inch of their lives and embarrass them thoroughly.

Appearance: Tachyon is a tall, extremely muscular man who wears a blue and green costume when committing crimes. His boots and short gloves are blue. Blue runs up the inner half of his leg and up the center of his chest, spreading out over his shoulders and ending where the shoulders meet the upper arms in a point. Green runs up the outer half of his legs and his sides, and all the way down his arms. His short gloves are blue. He wears a blue goggle-like mask and has short black hair. When he teleports, a field of bluish energy, a bit lighter in tone than his costume, surrounds his body and then fades away right after he disappears.

TALISMAN

Background/History: Pamela Duquesne is hot stuff, and she knows it. She's also evil stuff, but she doesn't really care about that. As far as she figures it, good and evil don't really matter. What matters is getting what you want, and being the best.

She goes by the name *Talisman* now — it's a lot cooler than Pamela — and she has a history both of getting what she wants and being the best. She was born into a witching family. Both Mommy and Daddy were dark witches in the Circle of the Scarlet Moon. So far, a perfect setting for a gal like Talisman. Except for one thing: her twin sister.

Where Talisman was selfish and self centered, Bethany was kind and generous. Where Talisman was outgoing and sexy, Bethany was shy and awkward. All of that goodie-two-shoes crap made her twin horribly annoying, but that wasn't the problem. The problem was that Bethany was just as magically talented as she was! It was completely unfair. She shouldn't have to share the limelight with a wimp like her sister.

Fortunately, little Bethany was too nice and wishy-washy to really take to their parents' teachings. Talisman, on the other hand, soaked up every nasty spell and dark magic that she could.

On their eighteenth birthdays, both girls were to be formally inducted into the Circle of the Scarlet Moon, the powerful coven their parents belonged to. It didn't surprise Talisman at all when Bethany freaked out and ran away from the ceremony. Good riddance! Eager for ever-greater power, Talisman stepped forward, swore the oath, and began to learn all the darkest and most powerful magics she could.

Eventually Talisman became dissatisfied with the Circle. It was too caught up in its petty internal politics, too hidebound, too obsessed with pointless rituals and traditions that only inhibited her ability to learn magic. She left, seeking other teachers. In time she studied with many, including the feared sorcerer-priests of DEMON and the demonic Dark Seraph. Other times she seduced powerful mages into teaching her their secrets. As long as she got more and more power, she didn't care what she did. If she had to be nice to someone, she could fake it. If she had to sacrifice an innocent child to the Lords of Hell, she could do that, too.

But she's done more with her life than study — she's not the sort to stay in the library all the time! She wants bright lights, big cities, fast money, and the adoration of beautiful people. And she gets all of that by using her powers to commit crimes. After all, being a supervillain is just another kind of power. With her mastery of darkness and hell-fire and other magical abilities, she's a match for most superheroes — including her weakling sister, who joined the Champions. Talisman eagerly looks forward to the day when she can finally destroy Witchcraft utterly. She almost succeeded once, but only managed to curse her. A rematch is only a matter of time.

TALISMAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
20	DEX	20	13-	
20	CON	10	13-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
21	EGO	11	13-	
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6

7	OCV	20		
7	DCV	20		
7	OMCV	12		
7	DMCV	12		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12

5	PD	3		Total: 19 PD (14 rPD)
7	ED	5		Total: 21 ED (14 rED)
6	REC	2		
70	END	10		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristics Cost: 183

Movement:	Running:	12m
	Flight:	40m

Cost	Powers	END
60	Mastery Of Darkness: Multipower, 60-point reserve	
6f	1) Fields Of Shadow: Darkness to Sight Group 12m radius	6
6f	2) Moving Shadows: Darkness to Sight Group 8m radius Mobile (+½)	6
1f	3) The Unavoidable Dark: Darkness to Sight Group 1m radius Usable As Attack (+1¼)	1
6f	4) Shadow Bolt: Blast 8d6 Double Knockback (+½)	6
6f	5) Shadow Embrace: RKA 1½d6 Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼), Constant (+½), ncontrolled (+½)	2
6f	6) Shadow Helm: Sight Group Flash 12d6	6
62	Mastery Of Hellfire: Multipower, 62-point reserve	
6f	1) Hellfire: Blast 12d6	6
6f	2) Hellfire Gate: Blast 8d6 Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½)	6
6f	3) Agonizing Hellfire: Blast 9d6 Armor Piercing (+¼)	6
6f	4) Writhing Hellfire: Blast 5d6 Constant (+½), Penetrating (+½), Uncontrolled (+½)	6
40	Foul Sorcery: Multipower, 40-point reserve	
4f	1) Domination: Mind Control 8d6	4
4f	2) Befuddlement: Mental Illusions 8d6	4
4f	3) Spell Of Torment: Mental Blast 4d6	4
3f	4) Touch Of Terror: Drain PRE 4d6 No Range (-½)	4

42	Ebon Void: Resistant Protection (14 PD/14 ED)	0
40	Wings Of The Zephirim: Flight 40m	4
40	Visions: Clairsentience (Sight and Hearing Groups) 4x Range (1,200m)	4
3	Magesense: Detect Magic 13- Concentration (0 DCV; -½)	0

Perks

2	Contact: a member of the Circle Of The Scarlet Moon 11-	
4	Contact: a Morbanes of DEMON 11- (very useful Skills and resources, has significant Contacts of his own)	
4	Contact: Dark Seraph 8- (extremely useful powers and resources)	

Talents

6	Striking Appearance: +2/+2d6	
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Skills

16	+2 with Ranged Combat	
3	High Society 14-	
3	CK: Vibora Bay 13-	
2	CK: Millennium City 11-	
3	KS: Arcane & Occult Lore 13-	
3	KS: Demonology 13-	
3	KS: Necromancy 13-	
3	KS: Witchcraft 13-	
1	Language: Latin (basic conversation)	
3	Charm 14-	
3	Stealth 13-	
3	Streetwise 14-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 419

Total Cost: 602

400 Matching Complications (75)

20	Hunted: Trismegistus Council (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)	
20	Hunted: DEMON (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)	
20	Psychological Complication: Utterly Self-Centered; Cares Only For Herself (Common, Total)	
15	Social Complication: Secret Identity (Pamela Duquesne) (Frequently, Major)	

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 202

Personality/Motivation: Cruel, sadistic, petty, manipulative, greedy, and supremely self-centered, Talisman is almost the complete opposite of her sister Witchcraft. Pamela is outgoing, bold, self-confident, openly sexy, and assertive, unlike the more shy, quiet Bethany. Long exposure to and use of black magic has corrupted her soul, and though she hasn't sold it yet, even that dire step down the path to damnation is likely only a matter of time.

Quote: "Enjoy the torments of Hell, little man."

Powers/Tactics: Talisman's powers derive from her study and practice of black magic. She has two specialties. The first is Darkness magics — the command and control of shadow for various purposes. Her Darkness-spells can black out an area, blind a foe, project shadowbolts, or eat a person to the bone with corruptive shadow power. Second, she's studied the manipulation of arcane Hellfire, with which she blasts and burns her enemies. She's also mastered sorcery and various general magics. Unlike Witchcraft, who sacrificed raw power for breadth of ability, Talisman has focused on learning spells more suited to her selfish desires and ignored the "minor magics" of "lesser witches." But her powerful magics can tire her easily if she's not careful (keep a close eye on her END usage).

Also unlike Witchcraft, Talisman has chosen the quick and easy routes to power, caring not for the harm they may inflict on the world, or ultimately on herself. Thus she possesses greater power (*i.e.*, she's built on more Character Points) than Witchcraft, though they've both been studying magic for roughly the same amount of time. Talisman's Experience Points reflect this moreso than they do greater experience (though in fact Talisman has had more opportunity to practice using spells on people than Witchcraft has, since she doesn't care about hurting or manipulating innocents for her own purposes).

Talisman often gestures and incants when casting her spells, but she doesn't have to — she's just used to doing so. She's perfectly capable of using any of her powers even when bound and gagged.

The Trismegistus Council, an order of benevolent mystics that Witchcraft associates with, would like to capture and neutralize Talisman, whom they regard as a great threat to the world (they won't explain exactly why to Witchcraft). DEMON, with whom Talisman has worked in the past, would like to find a way to force her to add her power to its ranks, but so far she's eluded the Inner Circle's snares.

Campaign Use: Talisman makes a good general-purpose mystic villain for a variety of scenarios, but works best when some element of her background — usually Witchcraft, but possibly a Hunted or the like — is also part of the story. That way she seems less like a two-dimensional evil spellcaster and more like the intriguingly wicked person she actually is.

If Talisman is too weak for your campaign, give her a Variable Power Pool like Witchcraft's, but make it larger and a little easier to use (once again, the easy path to power pays off... for now). If she's too strong, reduce her Mastery Of Darkness and Mastery Of Hellfire to a 40 or 50 point reserve, and a few of her Characteristics (DEX and CON, perhaps) by a point or three.

As a Hunted, Talisman is vindictive and vicious. She never forgets a slight, or passes up any opportunity to make her quarry miserable — or dead. Instead of simply blasting her foe, she'll try to find unusual curses, spells of torment, and other ways to harm him. She rarely Hunts on less than an 11-.

Appearance: Although she is Witchcraft's twin sister, Talisman can easily be distinguished from her hated sibling. She typically wears thigh-length black high-heeled boots, a black leather miniskirt, a black leather top with red highlights and a high red-lined collar that's strategically opened to show the red bra beneath, and long black gloves. She cuts her hair short and dyes it black. She conceals her identity with a minor glamour that makes those who see her face forget exactly what she looks like.

4





CHAPTER
FIVE

**THE CHAMPIONS
SOURCEBOOK**



GADGETS

Gadgets” refers to any sort of gear, equipment, or devices a Superheroes character might carry (as opposed to Vehicles, Bases, and the like, which are covered later in this chapter).

WEAPONS

Weapons are a major part of Superhero-world technology — and weapons that allow a normal person to affect a super (or even just to leave him with the mistaken impression that he can) are among the most common types found. Some examples follow.



BLASTER PISTOL

Effect: Blast 8d6

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 400m

Charges: 2 clips of 12 Charges

Breakability: 8 PD/ED

Description: The blaster pistol is a staple of Superhero environments, though often it’s not powerful enough to do real harm to a superhero. It is, in essence, a handgun that fires energy charges (so it has special effects far more interesting than those of a real-world firearm), but otherwise functions much like ordinary pistols. Villainous agencies often make use of blaster pistols, and each agency’s specific design is unique.

Here’s a typical blaster pistol using pulson technology, with several options so you can customize it. Each type is shown in a Blast configuration, but you can substitute an equivalent number of DCs of Ranged Killing Attack for the same cost.

Game Information: Blast 8d6 (40 Active Points); OAF (-1), 2 clips of 12 Charges (-0). Total cost: 20 points.

Options:

- 1) *Strong Blaster Pistol:* Increase to Blast 9d6. 45 Active Points; total cost 22 points
- 2) *Weak Blaster Pistol:* Decrease to Blast 6d6. 30 Active Points; total cost 15 points.

- 3) *Auto-Blaster Pistol:* This form of the Blaster Pistol can fire five-shot bursts. Reduce to Blast 6d6 and add Autofire (5 shots; +½) and 4 clips of 32 Charges each (+½). 60 Active Points; total cost 30 points.
- 4) *Focused Pulson Beam:* This version of the Blaster Pistol uses magnetic fields to more tightly focus the pulson beam, resulting in a more intense impact. Add Armor Piercing (+¼). 50 Active Points; total cost 25 points.
- 5) *Wide-Beam Blaster Pistol:* The focusing lens in the barrel of this form of the Blaster Pistol spreads the beam out significantly with no loss of power. Add Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +¼). 50 Active Points; total cost 25 points.



BLASTER RIFLE

Effect: Blast 10d6

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 620m

Charges: 30 Charges

Breakability: 12 PD/ED

Description: Blaster rifles, functionally, are more than scaled-up versions of blaster pistols. They’re a super-agent’s primary weapons rather than backup weapons. As with the Blaster Pistols, you can substitute Killing Damage for Normal Damage at the rate of 1 DC for 1 DC and keep the same cost structure.

Game Information: Blast 10d6, 30 Charges (+¼) (62 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 31 points.

Options:

- 1) *Strong Blaster Rifle:* Increase to Blast 12d6. 75 Active Points; total cost 37 points.
- 2) *Weak Blaster Rifle:* Decrease to Blast 8d6. 50 Active Points; total cost 25 points.
- 3) *More Clips:* Change to 2 clips of 30 Charges each (+½). 75 Active Points; total cost 37 points.
- 4) *Focused Blaster Beam:* Add Armor Piercing (+¼). 75 Active Points; total cost 37 points.
- 5) *Wide-Beam Blaster Rifle:* Add Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +¼). 75 Active Points; total cost 37 points.



5

- 6) *Blaster Assault Rifle*: Elite super-agents often carry this more powerful version of the Blaster Rifle. Increase to Blast 12d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½), 60 Charges (+½) (120 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 60 points.
- 7) *Blaster Sniper Rifle*: This larger, better-built version of the Blaster Rifle comes equipped with beam coherence technology and aiming systems that make it easy to hit distant targets. Add Increased Maximum Range (2,480m; +½) and No Range Modifier (+½). 112 Active Points; total cost 56 points.
- 8) *Aim-By-Eye Blaster Rifle*: This form of the Blaster Rifle has a small headset that attaches to the rifle via a cable. The rifle's built-in targeting systems track where the wearer of the headset looks, and aims the rifle accordingly. Add Line Of Sight (+½). 87 Active Points; total cost 43 points.



SUPER-BOW AND ARROWS

Effect: Various Attack Powers

Target: Varies

Duration: Varies

Range: Varies

Charges: Varying Charges per slot

Breakability: 18 PD/ED

Description: The signature weapon of the archer Weaponmaster, this gadget consists of a super-tech bow, a quiver full of shafts, and a selection of super-tech arrowheads. When the archer wants to use a particular type of arrow, he draws a shaft, attaches the right arrowhead to it, and lets fly. This gives him a lot of tactical flexibility in combat, but at the cost of taking more time to shoot — it requires a Full Phase to prepare and fire an arrow.

Since the typical Charge with these arrows is not a Continuing Charge, the Smoke Arrow (slot #7), which needs to last for 1 Turn, the “Continuing Charge” is bought as the *Time Limit* Advantage.

At the GM's option, a character using this type of super-archery may have to define how many of each arrowhead he carries; it's not "realistic" to carry 60 arrowheads for each of eight types of arrows (that's 480 arrowheads!). Typically this doesn't merit a Limitation (or, at most, a -0 Limitation), but the GM might allow a -¼ Limitation, *Defined Allocation*, if appropriate.

Game Information:

Cost Power

- 36 **Super-Bow And Arrows:** Multipower, 60-point reserve, 60 Charges (+½) for entire reserve; all OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)
- 2f **1) Broadhead Arrow:** RKA 3d6; OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)
- 1f **2) Chisel-Point Arrow:** RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+¼); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)
- 2f **3) Taser Arrow:** Blast 12d6; OAF (-1), STUN Only (-0), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)
- 2f **4) Explosion Arrow:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)
- 2f **5) Glue Arrow:** Entangle 4d6, 4 PD/4 ED, Sticky (+½); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)
- 2f **6) Flare Arrow:** Sight and Hearing Group Flash 11d6; OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)
- 2f **7) Smoke Arrow:** Darkness to Sight Group 8m radius, Time Limit (ends after 1 Turn or if exposed to high winds or rain; +¼); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)
- 2f **8) Knockout Gas Arrow:** Blast 4d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing] or appropriate Immunity; +1), Area Of Effect (8m Radius; +½); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)

Total cost: 51 points.



SUPER-MULTITOOL

Effect: HA +3d6, Blast 6d6, Swinging 10", Clinging

Target: Varies

Duration: Varies

Range: Varies

END Cost: Varies

Breakability: 6 PD/ED

Description: The Super-Multitool is an all-in-one gadget that incorporates one or more weapons as well as several other devices that can be useful in getting a hero out of a jam. Multitools can be shaped as billy clubs, bracers/vambraces, pistols, disks, or any number of other things (depending on how it's defined, it could be an OAF or OIF).

This device, whatever its shape, has several primary functions (though based on exactly how you define it you should remove slots if necessary — for example, a Bracer Multitool can't serve as a Lever or be Hurled, but a Billy Club Multitool can do both). It can act as a prybar or lever, tremendously boosting the character's STR for leverage-based purposes; it has a claw or hook that allows the character to grab onto an otherwise-difficult surface when flying or falling past it (note that this doesn't give the character the normal Clinging-based ability to run around on such a surface — just to stick to it); it lets the character add 3d6 to his punches when walloping someone; and it fires off and instantaneously retracts a swingline that allows the character to travel at a ferocious speed through appropriate terrains (such as skyscraper environments).

A Super-Multitool is not intended as a utility belt, mobile lab, or any other really elaborate set of gadgets. It's a comparatively simple gadget and normally should not have more than six to eight powers (*i.e.*, Multipower slots) in it.

Game Information:

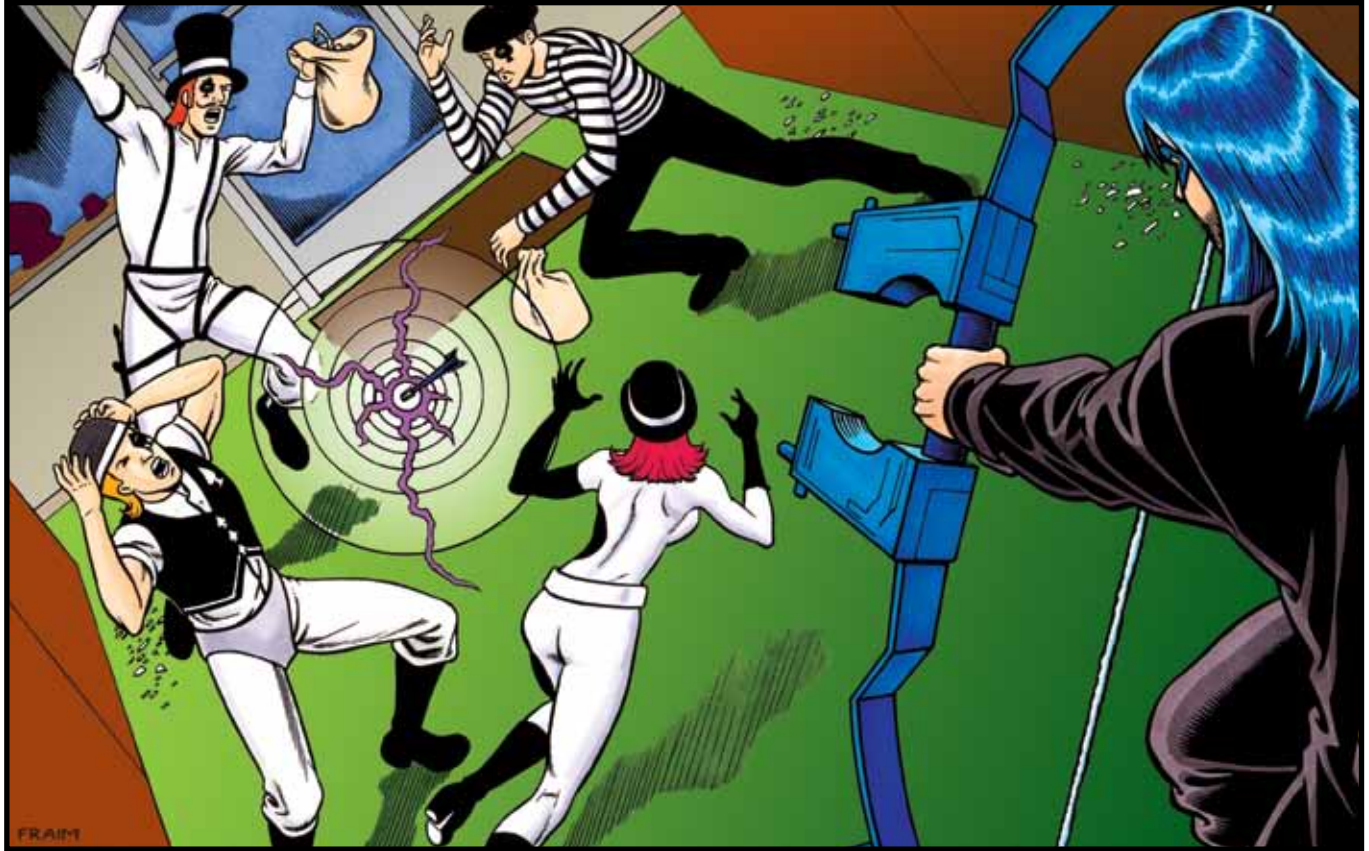
Cost Power

- 15 **Super-Multitool:** Multipower, 30-point reserve; all OAF (-1)
- 1f **1) Club:** HA +3d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 1f **2) Hurled Club:** Blast 6d6; OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Lockout (cannot use any slot in Multipower until Charge is recovered; -½)
- 1f **3) Swingline:** Swinging 20m, x8 Noncombat; OAF (-1)
- 1f **4) Wall-Grasping/Hanging Onto Projections:** Clinging (normal STR); OAF (-1), Requires A STR Roll (-½), Cannot Resist Knockback (-¼), No Movement Allowed (-½)
- 1f **5) Lever:** +20 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), Only For Leverage-Based Tasks (-½)

Total cost: 20 points.

Options:

- 1) **Inaccessible Multitool:** This form of the Super-Multitool is an OIF instead of an OAF. Change OAF (-1) to OIF (-½). Total cost: 27 points.



THROWING BLADES

Effect: HKA ½d6

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: RBS

Charges: 10 Charges

Breakability: 2 PD/ED

Description: This time-proven classic is a blade designed for throwing. Many heroes and supervillains use throwing blades. Some are run-of-the-mill throwing knives or the equivalent (shuriken, needles, and so on); they tend not to be of too much use against supers, but are sometimes used by supers against normal targets. Others are scaled up in power and versatility to be of use against supers. Depending on the character's costume, powers, theme, or the like, the blade can have just about any shape: a crescent moon; a bat; a spider's web; a star; or even an ordinary throwing dagger.

Game Information: HKA ½d6 (up to 1d6+1 with STR), Range Based On STR (+¼) (12 Active Points); OAF (-1), 10 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 5 points.

Options:

- 1) *Large Blades:* Increase to HKA 1d6. 19 Active Points; total cost 8 points.
- 2) *Small Blades:* Decrease to HKA 1 point. 6 Active Points; total cost 3 points.
- 3) *Sharp Blades:* Add Armor Piercing (+¼):
Standard: 15 Active Points; total cost 7 points.
Large: 22 Active Points; total cost 10 points.
Small: 7 Active Points; total cost 3 points.
- 4) *Multiple Blades:* The character can throw multiple blades at once. Add Autofire (5 shots; +½):
Standard: 17 Active Points; total cost 7 points.
Large: 26 Active Points; total cost 11 points.
Small: 9 Active Points; total cost 4 points.
- 5) *Sharp, Multiple Blades:* Add Armor Piercing (+¼) and Autofire (5 shots; +½):
Standard: 20 Active Points; total cost 9 points.
Large: 30 Active Points; total cost 13 points.
Small: 10 Active Points; total cost 4 points.
- 6) *More Blades:* Change to 20 Charges (+¼):
Standard: 15 Active Points; total cost 7 points.
Large: 22 Active Points; total cost 11 points.
Small: 7 Active Points; total cost 3 points.
- 8) *Throwing Disk:* This thrown weapon is a blunt disk intended to knock the victim out, rather than a deadly blade. Change to Blast 6d6 (30 Active Points); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 9 points.

DEFENSIVE GADGETS

The counterpart, and necessary complement, of weapons is defensive items — gadgets that protect their users from sustaining some or all of a weapon's damage.



ARMORED COSTUME

Effect: Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED)

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END: 0

Breakability: 8 PD/ED

Description: In addition to the *Bulletproof Spandex* costume described on page 12, superhumans may use several other types of protective costuming. The first is Armored Costumes. These aren't powered armor battlesuits, but rather bulkier, more rigid, more protective forms of Bulletproof Spandex, with thick armored padding and other improvements (including, typically, plenty of pockets). Armored Costumes aren't nearly as comfortable as Bulletproof Spandex, but can be just as stylish.

Game Information: Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED) (24 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 16 points.

Option:

- 1) *Heavy Armored Costume:* Increase to Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED). 36 Active Points; total cost 24 points.



FORCE FIELD DEVICE

Effect: Resistant Protection (18 PD/18 ED)

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 5

Breakability: 18 PD/ED

Description: This device, worn as part of a character's costume, generates a protective force-field around the wearer. It uses the character's body heat and kinetic motion to power itself. Typically it takes the form of a belt, but it could be any sort of OIF (bracers, a breastplate-like vest, or the like).

Game Information: Resistant Protection (18 PD/18 ED) (54 Active Points); OIF (-½), Costs Endurance (-½). Total cost: 27 points.

Options:

- 1) *Strong Field:* Increase to Resistant Protection (21 PD/21 ED). 63 Active Points; total cost 31 points.
- 2) *Weak Field:* Decrease to Resistant Protection (15 PD/15 ED). 45 Active Points; total cost 22 points.
- 3) *Built-In Battery:* This form of the device has a built-in internal battery that keeps it functioning until the character turns it off. Remove Costs Endurance (-½). Total cost: 36 points.
- 6) *Broad-Spectrum Force-Field:* This device generates an enhanced force-field that protects against more types of attacks. Change to Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED/8 Sight Group Flash Defense/8 Mental Defense/10 Power Defense) (75 Active Points); OIF (-½), Costs Endurance (-½). Total cost: 37 points.
- 7) *Concealed Harness:* This form of the Device can be woven into a costume or clothing so that onlookers don't know the character's wearing it. Change OIF (-½) to IIF (-¼). Total cost: 31 points.
- 8) *Expandable Resistant Protection:* Some versions of the Resistant Protection Harness have the capacity to expand out to protect persons and large objects carried by the wearer. Add Protects Carried Items. 64 Active Points; total cost 32 points.



MASK LENSES

Effect: Various Enhanced Senses and defenses

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Breakability: 1-2 PD/ED

Description: Mask Lenses are little inserts fitted into a hero's mask in front of his eyes. (By a tradition whose origins are long forgotten, they are usually white, but other colors are possible; some villains prefer red or green.) The standard version, the Polarized Mask Lens, protects a hero from sudden bright lights such as an enemy's Flash attacks. Other lenses provide vision enhancements.

Included in this listing are several other mask gadgets which aren't actually lenses. Insulated Ear Covers fit in a hero's mask over his ears, or are otherwise inserted into his ear canals. They do not interfere appreciably with his hearing, but protect him from sudden loud noises such as explosions and Hearing Group Flashes. A Psionic Shield generates an electromagnetic radiation field that interferes with the precise electromagnetic frequencies generated by psionic abilities, thus reducing the effectiveness of incoming Mental Powers.

**Game Information:****Cost Power**

- 4 **Polarized Mask Lenses:** Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points) (5 Active Points); IIF (-¼)
- 4 **Heat-Sensitive Mask Lenses:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); IIF (-¼)
- 4 **Nightsight Mask Lenses:** Nightvision (5 Active Points); IIF (-¼)
- 4 **UV-Sensitive Mask Lenses:** Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); IIF (-¼)
- 8 **X-Ray Mask Lenses:** Partially Penetrative for Sight Group (stopped by lead, gold, or force-fields) (Sight Group) (10 Active Points); IIF (-¼)
- 4 **Insulated Ear Covers:** Hearing Group Flash Defense (5 points) (5 Active Points); IIF (-¼)
- 8 **Psionic Shield:** Mental Defense (10 points) (10 Active Points); IIF (-¼)

**SPACE RING**

Effect: Life Support (exist in space safely); Flight 10m

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Breakability: 1-2 PD/ED

Description: A team that journeys into outer space frequently — particularly if it has a space-based headquarters — might develop a device like this to protect its members.

Space Rings help keep their wearers alive in hard-space situations. They're not intended to be a member's sole source of life support, since the air and flight thrust they supply only last one minute before being recharged. But if a character is suddenly exposed to the cold, the vacuum, and the hard radiation of space, this ring protects him — long enough for him to reach a pressurized area, hopefully.

The device is built as a finger-ring, the logic being that a character is unlikely to take off something this small and convenient. It uses the character's body heat to project a force-field that insulates the character (allowing him to preserve his body heat), reflects radiation, and holds tight against his flesh (preventing explosive decompression). The device also carries a tiny canister of pure oxygen which it can release once the wearer throws a tiny switch under the ring's flip-up stone; it's sufficient to allow the character to breathe for one minute. In addition, the character can flip another switch under the stone to vent excess pressure from an aperture in the force-field that's situated at his back, allowing him to propel himself forward, but the thrust is so gentle that this only works in microgravity situations (such as outer space), and it, too, lasts for only one minute after being activated.

Game Information:**Cost Power**

- 6 **Life Support Field:** Life Support (Expanded Breathing: Vacuum, Safe Environment: High Radiation, Intense Cold, Intense Heat, Low Pressure/Vacuum) (13 Active Points); IIF (-¼), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Minute (deactivated by any attack that inflicts STUN or BODY damage to the character; -1)
- 2 **Pressure Vent Propulsion:** Flight 10m (10 Active Points); IIF (-¼), Only In Microgravity (-2), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Minute (deactivated by any attack that inflicts STUN or BODY damage to the character; -1)

Total cost: 8 points

COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

Superteams and super-agent units can live and die by their ability to communicate with one another, so communications devices are a very necessary part of the superhuman lifestyle. Some standard models include convenient hands-free headsets and more versatile handsets.



RADIO COMMUNICATOR, BASIC

Effect: Radio Perception/Transmission

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Breakability: 2 PD/ED

Description: This is a radio reception and transmission device that's either loosely attached to a character's costume, easy to damage or disable in some way, or carried like a walkie-talkie or CommuniCard. It's voice-activated and set to one frequency, but the user can select other frequencies on the AM, FM, and police bands. Using it generally does not require any action from the user beyond turning it on at the start of the mission and turning it off at the end.

Game Information: Radio Perception/Transmission (10 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 5 points.

Options:

- 1) **Attached Radio:** This form of the Basic Radio Communicator is more firmly attached to the character, and thus difficult to take away or damage — he could wear it as part of his mask, beneath (or as part of) a helmet, and so forth. Change OAF (-1) to OIF (-½). Total cost: 7 points.
- 2) **Scrambled Radio Communicator:** Characters concerned with security sometimes add in a scrambler option to their radios. This is built as a Variable Power Pool of Languages (at Native accent level) in a Focus. (Although Skills are Special Powers, and therefore cannot be bought in Power Frameworks without GM permission, GMs should permit this construct, which is interesting, fun, and not especially abusive.) A successful Cryptography roll can decrypt a scrambler “language,” but users can counter the actions of cryptographers by changing the computer-generated “language” at frequent intervals (this constitutes changing the Pool and requires 1 Minute; to change the Pool in just a Full Phase, the character must succeed with a Cryptography or Systems Operation roll). Character also buys: Variable Power Pool (Scrambler Pool), 4 base + 4 control cost; IAF (-½), Only For One Language At A Time (-1). Total cost: 5 points. Total cost of device: 10 points.



RADIO COMMUNICATOR, ADVANCED

Effect: HRRP plus other functions

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Breakability: 5 PD/ED

Description: An Advanced Radio Communicator has much more functionality than the Basic model. It can broadcast and receive on a much greater number of frequencies, including visual ones such as television. It can detect the source of radio transmissions and estimate range and transmission strength, allowing heroes to find homing beacons and other transmission sources.

Additionally, Advanced Radio Communicators have powerful built-in computer functions, including: basic atlas entries on a city, national, and world scale; a user-maintained contacts database, including all team members, with private signal codes (allowing the user to send out a signal to a specific team member, to all members in a specific sub-group, to the team as a whole, and so on); and a sophisticated data management program that allows the user to specify handling of incoming messages (e.g., “Put MegaMan through to me immediately; take a message on all calls from Captain Norton”).

Among many superheroes, the most popular form of the Advanced Radio Communicator is the *CommuniCard* — a device the shape and size of a credit card with a built-in miniaturized viewscreen; it may double as an identity card. Other possibilities include a cell phone- or walkie-talkie-like device, a “communications sphere” accompanying the character, and so forth.

Game Information:

Cost Power

- | | |
|----|---|
| 5 | Communications: HRRP (Radio Group); OAF (-1), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½) |
| 12 | Broadcast Tracking: Detect Source Of Radio Transmissions (PER Roll) (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Analyze, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Range; OAF (-1) |
| 5 | Scrambled Transmission Function: Variable Power Pool (Scrambler Pool), 4 base + 2 control cost; OAF (-1), Only For One Language At A Time (-1) |
| 3 | Onboard Computer: Computer (see below); OAF (-1) |

Total cost: 25 points

ONBOARD COMPUTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	DEX	0	11-	
3	OCV	0		
3	DCV	0		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
Total Characteristics Cost: 0				

Cost Skills

2	AK: Earth 11-
2	AK: Home Nation 11-
2	CK: Campaign City 11-
2	KS: Contact Information 11-
4	PS: Personal Assistant 13-
3	Systems Operation 11-

Programs

1	Activate Homing Signal Upon Approved Remote Query
1	Automatically Signal Specific Team Member(s) On Verbal Cue
1	Automatically Dial Recorded Number On Spoken Cue
1	Prioritize Incoming Calls According To User Preferences
1	Send Emergency Call to Team Members If Specified Protocols Are Not Met
1	Search Reference Material For Information On A Topic

Talents

3	Clock: Absolute Time Sense
3	Calculator: Lightning Calculator
3	Instant-On Feature: Lightsleep

Total Computer Cost: 30/5 = 6



HOMING TRACER

Effect: Images to Radio Group, +4 to PER Rolls

Target: 64m Radius

Duration: Constant

Range: RBS

Charges: 1 Continuing Recoverable Charge

Breakability: 11 PD/ED

Description: This is a device a superhero can hurl onto a fleeing enemy's back or getaway vehicle so he can track that person later. Tracking the beacon requires any specialized Radio-perceiving device, such as a Radio Communicator (see various models above). Alternately, a character can change the gadget so that it broadcasts signals perceivable by some other sense (such as the *Broadcast Tracking* function of the Advanced Radio Communicator, the character's Danger Sense, or the like).

The Homing Tracer can reliably be "picked up" on tracking equipment primarily within a 64m radius. However, much like a character can see the beam from a flashlight from far away without being inside the beam, characters outside the 64m radius may still be able to track the Tracer, if the GM so permits: from 65-125m, the Image is at only +2 to PER Rolls; from 126-250m, it's at +0; from 251-500m it's at -2; beyond that it would require an Extraordinary Skill Roll to locate it.

Game Information: Images to Radio Group, +4 to PER Rolls, Area Of Effect (64m radius; +1¼), Usable As Attack (allows character to "stick" the Image to a target; +1¼), Range Based On STR (+¼), 1 Continuing Recoverable Charge lasting 1 Week (stops functioning if it gets wet or experiences severe radio interference; +1) (57 Active Points); IAF (-½), Set Effect (detectable signal; -1), Image Only Perceivable On Special Radio Frequencies (-0). Total cost: 23 points.

Options:

- 1) *Attached Advanced Radio Communicator:* Some characters prefer to build their ARCs into a costume, helmet, or the like so they're not so easy to take away. The most popular form of this ARC is probably the *Wrist Radio*, a device similar in size and shape to a wristwatch. Change OAF (-1) to OIF (-½) throughout. Total cost: 32 points.
- 2) *Advanced Computer Access:* The Communicator's computer is linked to one or more restricted-access databases or systems. Add Computer Link (cost depends on how expensive the Link is).



MOVEMENT DEVICES

Heroes, villains, and super-agents need to get around, and have come up with a wide variety of devices enabling them to do so.



JETPACK

Effect: Flight 30m

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

Charges: 1 Continuing Fuel Charge

Breakability: 6 PD/ED

Description: A common gadget among powered armor wearers and gadgeteers, this backpack-like device has a built-in rocket system that allows the wearer to fly. It uses a form of specially-refined and enhanced jet fuel. At the GM's option, a character could refuel with ordinary gasoline (which reduces the Flight to 24m, or even less).

If a Jetpack is not to a character's taste, you can use this write-up to represent any similar type of gadget: a Jetbelt; Jetbracers; Jet-Boots; Jet-Harness; and so on.

Game Information: Flight 30m (30 Active Points); OIF (-½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 2 Hours (requires specially-refined jet fuel, Difficult to obtain; -0). Total cost: 20 points.

Options:

- 1) *Strong Jetpack:* Increase to Flight 40m. 40 Active Points; total cost 27 points.
- 2) *Weak Jetpack:* Decrease to Flight 20m. 20 Active Points; total cost 13 points.
- 3) *Self-Powered Jetpack:* Instead of using fuel, this form of the Jetpack draws on the character's own energy. Remove Charges (-0). Total cost: 20 points.
- 4) *Jet-Staff:* Instead of being a worn backpack-like device, this is a metallic staff that projects a rocket blast, graviton manipulation wave, or the like out of the bottom end so the person holding it can fly. Change OIF (-½) to OAF (-1) and add Gestures (throughout; -½). Total cost: 12 points.
- 9) *Mach Speed Jetpack:* This powerful form of the Jetpack allows a character to fly at extremely high speeds, possibly Mach 10 or higher (assuming he has the ability to breathe at that speed, and resist the G-forces generated). Add MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1). 60 Active Points; total cost 40 points.



LINEGUN

Effect: Swinging 40m and other powers

Target: Varies

Duration: Varies

Range: Varies

END Cost: Varies

Breakability: 6 PD/ED

Description: A linegun is a device of some sort — usually pistol-like, but possibly built into a billy club, bracer, or similar device — that can project a thin, strong line of cord. It's primarily a transportation device, since it allows the character to swing, hoist himself up to rooftops, and so on, but can also be used as a winch or bolo.

Game Information:

Cost Power

- | | |
|----|--|
| 15 | Linegun: Multipower, 30-point reserve; all OAF (-1) |
| 1f | 1) Swingline I: Swinging 40m, x4 Noncombat; OAF (-1) |
| 1f | 2) Swingline II: Leaping 40m (20m upward); OAF (-1), Only To Carry User Upward (-½), No Non-Combat Multiple (-¼) |
| 1f | 3) Swingline III: +5 to Climbing; OAF (-1) |
| 1f | 4) Winch: Telekinesis (10 STR); OAF (-1), Only To Pull Objects Towards User (-½), Affects Whole Object (-¼), Limited Range (15"; -¼) |
| 1f | 5) Bola-Line: Entangle 3d6, 3 PD/3 ED; OAF (-1), Lockout (cannot use Linegun's other powers until Charge is recovered; -½), Limited Range (30m; -¼), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼) |

Total cost: 20 points

Options:

- 1) *Line-Bracer:* This form of the Linegun isn't so easy to take away from the character. Change to OIF (-½) throughout. Total cost: 26 points.



FLIGHT RING

Effect: Flight 40m

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 4

Breakability: 8 PD/ED

Description: A team where every character is expected to have the ability to fly at a certain minimum speed, even if it's not part of his natural or usual repertoire of abilities, might develop and issue flight gadgets to its members. To keep the device from interfering with or spoiling a character's costume, it's built into an inconspicuous ring. The ring is loaded with microcircuitry and an antigravity engine powered by the wearer's body heat and kinetic motion.



In campaigns lacking technology this advanced, these devices should be larger than finger-rings, and probably as some other type of Focus (*i.e.*, OAF, IAF, or OIF).

Game Information: Flight 40m (40 Active Points); IIF (-¼). Total cost: 32 points.

Options:

- 1) *Strong Flight Ring:* Increase to Flight 50m. 50 Active Points; total cost 40 points.
- 2) *Weak Flight Ring:* Decrease to Flight 30m. 30 Active Points; total cost 24 points.
- 3) *Glowing Ring:* This form of Flight Ring is larger and glows when used, making it obvious where the character's ability to fly comes from. Change IIF (-¼) to OIF (-½). Total cost: 27 points.



TELEPORTATION HARNESS

Effect: Teleportation 40m

Target: Self

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

END Cost: 4

Breakability: 8 PD/ED

Description: This device, worn as part of a costume or perhaps even woven into the fabric of a costume or article of clothing (see option 5), can breach the dimensional barrier and transport the character up to 40m without his having to physically cross the intervening space.

Game Information: Teleportation 40m (40 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 27 points.

Options:

- 1) *Strong Harness I:* Increase to Teleportation 50m. 50 Active Points; total cost 33 points.
- 2) *Strong Harness II:* Add x4 Noncombat. 45 Active Points; total cost 30 points.
- 3) *Weak Harness:* Decrease to Teleportation 30m. 30 Active Points; total cost 20 points.
- 4) *Inobvious Harness:* This form of the Harness is worked into clothing or a costume, concealing it — as far as most observers can tell, the character's Teleportation power is natural, not the result of technology. Change OIF (-½) to IIF (-¼). Total cost: 32 points.
- 5) *Damageable Harness:* This form of the Harness is so fragile and easy for an opponent to grab that it's easy for someone to take it away from him or deny him the use of it. Change OIF (-½) to OAF (-1). Total cost: 20 points.
- 6) *Let's Go For A Ride:* The character can take one human-sized person along with him by wrapping his arms around that person. Add x2 Increased Mass. 45 Active Points; total cost 30 points.
- 7) *Built-In Battery I:* The Harness has a built-in battery and operates so smoothly that using it doesn't tire the character out at all. Add Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½). 60 Active Points; total cost 40 points.
- 8) *Built-In Battery II:* The Harness has an internal power source strong enough to operate it eight times before it needs recharging. Add 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 20 points.

- 9) *Long-Range Harness*: The Harness can also transport the wearer over long distances. Add MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1). 80 Active Points; total cost 53 points.
- 10) *Supervillain Getaway Teleporter*: This device gives ulcers to superheroes. It's a small apparatus, concealed on a supervillain's costume, that automatically teleports him to a predefined location from one to ten kilometers away when certain conditions are met. Those conditions include the villain speaking a certain keyword or not subvocalizing a word at least once per thirty seconds after speaking another keyword indicating imminent danger. Teleportation 20m, MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1), Trigger (Trigger can change each time power is used, activating Trigger takes no time, Trigger requires 1 Turn to reset; +¼) (45 Active Points); IIF (-¼), 1 Charge (-2) (total cost: 14 points) *plus* 1 Floating Fixed Location (5 Active Points); IIF (-¼) (total cost: 4 points). Total cost: 18 points.

RESTRAINT DEVICES

Superheroes and supervillains do a good job of capturing one another, and those who invest in researching and developing sophisticated restraint devices can also do a good job of holding on to their foes.



POWER NEGATOR

Effect: Suppress All Powers 15d6

Target: One character

Duration: Constant

Range: No Range

END Cost: 0

Breakability: 20 PD/ED

Description: When attached to a super, this device leeches away all of his powers. (It usually comes in the form of a collar, belt, or bracers that are built into Supercuffs).

Game Information: Suppress 15d6, Expanded Effect (all superhuman powers simultaneously; +4), Variable Special Effects (eight special effects simultaneously; +1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, deactivated by removing cuffs from victim; +½) (975 Active Points); OAF (-1), Fragile (only 20 PD/ED; -0), Costs Endurance (-0), No Range (-½), Only Works On Manacled/Restrained Subjects (-¼). Total cost: 354 points.



SUPERCUFFS

Effect: Entangle 12d6 (standard effect: 12 BODY), 18 PD/18 ED

Target: One character

Duration: Instant/Constant

Range: No Range

END Cost: 0

Breakability: 20 PD/ED

Description: Specially designed to hold superhuman prisoners, Power Negator Handcuffs (also available as legcuffs) serve two functions. First, they restrain the prisoner. They cover the entire hand so the captive can't use Accessible Foci, or employ Contortionist or Lockpicking to take them off. (The downside is, unless the guards are willing to take them off a prisoner at certain times, they have to feed him by hand, help him go to the bathroom, and so on.) Second, they negate the captive's powers using power negation technology. Power Negator Handcuffs are too large and bulky for a guard to carry on a routine basis.

The leg-restraining version of the Handcuffs looks like a set of high-tech boots linked by a high-tech cable. Unlike a standard Entangle they do not prevent the wearer from walking entirely; they just restrict him to a maximum of Running 4m.

Game Information: Entangle 12d6 (standard effect: 12 BODY), 18 PD/18 ED, Takes No Damage From Attacks (+½) (225 Active Points); OAF (-1), Fragile (only 20 PD/ED; -0), Set Effect (hands only; -½), No Range (-½), Must Follow Grab Or Target Must Be Willing (-½), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼). Total cost: 47 points.

DEATHTRAPS

Deathtraps are charmingly overengineered contrivances supervillains use to try to kill superheroes in a gruesomely picturesque and memorable fashion. They usually fail, because in their desire to prolong the heroes' agony, the supervillains typically give the heroes enough time to figure out how to escape. Some versions, despite the name, are intended only to harm or delay, not kill.

Here are a few sample deathtraps, easily adaptable for most villains — just change the special effects as appropriate.

TIMER- AND STRUGGLE-TRIGGERED ENVIRONMENT PLUNGER

In general terms, this is a container into which the supervillain puts the victim — either a superhero, one of the superhero's loved ones, or an innocent plucked off the street. After a certain amount of time, one portion of the container opens, allowing something awful currently outside the container to come in or permitting the victim to fall into something awful. The "something awful" could be acid, lava, poisonous reptiles, talk show hosts, or the like.

Time is one thing that triggers the device, but so is struggling. The more the victim struggles, the more likely he is to spring the trap prematurely. It's a deliciously vicious circle from the supervillain's point of view. Ways by which a superhero can defeat this trap include being very, very stealthy while struggling (the device gets a PER Roll to detect struggles; it doesn't detect them automatically); escaping in a Half Phase (it takes that long for the trap to activate); or utilizing a pertinent Skill or power the supervillain didn't account for.

The Plunger is built with Constant, to reflect the fact that the effect keeps coming after the victim every Phase — the sharks keep swimming in for another bite, the spikes growing out of the walls keep getting bigger, the acid keeps burning the character's flesh, or what have you. The trap's SPD equals that of the villain who built it. The trap keeps functioning until the victim is dead, it's destroyed, or the GM judges it would for some reason stop (it runs out of fuel, gets tired and leaves, or what have you). Then the villain has to reset it.

Cost Power

- 32 **Deadly Effect:** RKA 4d6 (or less, depending on GM's discretion), Constant (+½), Trigger (Trigger can change each time power is used, activating Trigger takes no time, Trigger requires 1 Turn to reset; +¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (135 Active Points); OIF Immobile (-1½), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), 1 Recoverable Charge (villain must reset trap for each new victim; -1¼)

- 11 **Deathtrap Sensors:** Detect Victim's Struggles 14- (no Sense Group), Discriminatory, Targeting Sense; OIF Immobile (-1½)

Total cost: 43 points.

SANDBLASTER OF THE GODS

This trap turns an area the heroes are traveling through into a howling corridor of abrasive material that threatens to flay the skin from their very bones. Generally, it consists of a contained environment (such as a tunnel) and a device at one end that blasts material such as sand, sharp bits of metal, or other awfulness at them for 1 Minute (assume the device has the same SPD as the villain who built it). The force of the wind propelling the ammunition is sufficient to hold many heroes against the wall or floor, prolonging their agony.

Cost Power

- 11 **Sandblaster of the Gods:** RKA 1d6, Area Of Effect (28m Line; +½), Constant (+½), Penetrating (x3; +1½) (52 Active Points); OIF Immobile (-1½), No Range (-½), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Minute (-1), Linked (-½)
- 25 **Force Of The Blast:** Telekinesis (50 STR), Area Of Effect (28m Line; +½) (112 Active Points); OIF Immobile (-1½), Set Effect (only to pin the characters to walls, floor, and ceiling; -½), No Range (-½), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Minute (-1)

Total cost: 36 points

SENSORY OVERLOAD CAPTURE TRAP

As 6E2 explains, players hate to have their characters captured. One way to do it that allows the characters to stagger around in pain for a bit (and perhaps find a way to escape, thus mollifying the players by giving the characters a chance to avoid their fate) is to use something like the Sensory Overload Capture Trap.

The SOCT activates when the heroes are all together exploring a chamber or passageway deep in the bad guy's base. When it goes off, it fills the area with psychedelic images, startling 3-D hallucinations, painful shrieks, bone-rattling vibrations, and other random, incomprehensible sensory cues. This sensory overload quickly causes them to collapse, though until they do fall down they're capable of using their powers on their surroundings (and thus, perhaps, escaping).

Mechanically, the SOCT works as a Constant NND — and the supervillain, having attuned the device to the superhero team in question, is not likely to have set things up so that any of his foes are immune. It has the same SPD as the villain who uses it.

Sensory Overload Capture Trap: Blast 4d6, Area Of Effect (32m Radius; +1), NND (defense is chosen by user; +1), Constant (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Trigger (Trigger can change each time power is used, activating Trigger takes no time, Trigger requires 1 Turn to reset; +¼) (85 Active Points); OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (-2). **Total cost: 19 points.**

FIELD OF MUCK DELAYING TRAP

Less of a menace than the previous three death-traps, the Field of Muck Delaying Trap is simply an area of a villain's base filled with some sort of substance that retards the progress of anyone moving through it. Anyone can move through it at a rate of 1m per Phase, but supers who are used to traveling much faster may find that they cannot do so until they reach its far edge. This is a good way for a supervillain to delay pursuers until he can get away.

Field Of Muck Delaying Trap: Entangle 10d6, 10 PD/10 ED, Area Of Effect (40m Radius; +1¼) (225 Active Points); OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (-2), No Range (-½), Victims Can Move Through Affected Area At 1m Per Phase And Are Only At ½ DCV (-1), 1 Charge (-2). Total cost: 27 points.

DESTROYING THE WORLD FOR FUN AND PROFIT: DOOMSDAY DEVICES

Finally, just for a bit of fun, here are three items of the sort that supervillains and criminal masterminds use to threaten the world. The threat of their use can be part of blackmail plot; their actual use can provide a serious challenge for the PCs to overcome.

EARTHQUAKE INDUCER

This apparatus causes earthquakes to take place. It takes five minutes to activate, and when it goes off, it creates an earthquake the equivalent of a STR 30 character shaking everything in a 50-kilometer radius for one minute. Because it's fully Indirect, not only can it affect everything within the area (objects inside buildings, for example), but Our Heroes can't easily figure out where the attack is coming from! Fortunately for the world, it can only be used once per day, and its effects only last for 1 Minute (it has the same SPD as the villain who uses it).

Earthquake Inducer: Telekinesis (30 STR), Area Of Effect (50m Radius; +1¼), Indirect (+1), MegaArea (each meter is 1 km wide, broad, and deep; +1), MegaRange (1m = 100 km; +1½), No Range Modifier (+½) (281 Active Points); OIF Immobile (-1½), Extra Time (5 Minutes; -2), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Minute (deactivated with off switch or a countervailing shockwave; -1), Only Affects Targets On The Ground (-¼). Total cost: 49 points.

MIND CONTROL WAVE EMITTER

This classic mad scientist apparatus, designed to bring every thinking person on Earth under the domination of the supervillain, is a transmitter whose electromagnetic emissions saturate the minds of the worldwide population. Very strong-willed people might withstand its effects, but it's far better for superheroes to detect its effects as it undergoes final testing and discover some way to find and destroy it.

Mind Control Wave Emitter: Mind Control 12d6; Telepathic (+¼), Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +¼), MegaArea (area covers the Earth; +2), Personal Immunity (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+¼) (330 Active Points); OIF Immobile Fragile (-1¾), Extra Time (1 Week to activate; -2¼), No Range (-½). Total cost: 60 points

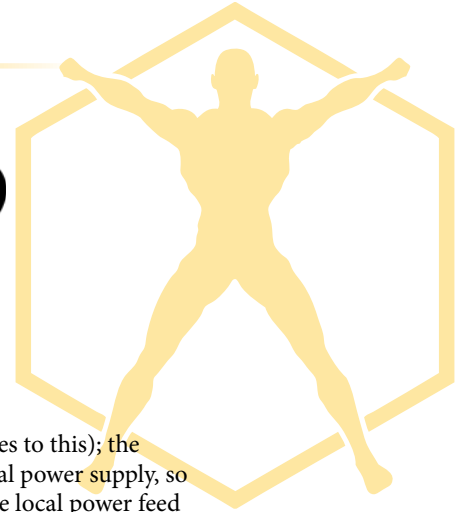
TSUNAMI BOMB

This device, dropped into the ocean some distance from shore and detonated, creates a tidal wave that travels (unlike natural tidal waves) in only one direction, toward the shore at which it was aimed. The wave takes several hours to reach its destination, during which time it's a surprisingly innocuous-looking swell in the ocean. When it nears shore it rises to a monstrous height, then hits about 320 kilometers (200 miles) of coastline with enough force to shatter homes, destroy boats, and devastate the ecosystem. If heroes detect the swell early enough, perhaps they can find some pseudo-scientific way to cancel it... such as detonating a similar bomb ahead of the swell and pointed back the other direction.

In game terms, the tsunami is an Area Of Effect (Line), but it moves and strikes "sideways" from (parallel to) the point where the bomb is detonated, rather than "straight" (perpendicular to) that point.

Tsunami Bomb: Blast 12d6, Area Of Effect (32m Line; +1), MegaArea (each meter is 10 km wide and deep; +1¼) (195 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Only Versus Coastal Areas (-1), 1 Charge (-2), Extra Time (wave needs 6 Hours to reach shore and take effect; -3½), Attack Can Be Reduced Or Eliminated By Correct Techniques During 6-Hour Travel Time (-1). Total cost: 20 points.

BASES AND VEHICLES



Weapons and force-fields aren't the only technology superheroes need. Most superteams have a headquarters (secret or otherwise) that they call home, and a vehicle or two to get them to the scene of the crime.

SUPERHERO BASES

Bases and headquarters — homes and/or operations centers to superheroes, supervillains, super-agents, master criminals, master spies, and world-affecting wannabes — are a staple of superhero campaigns and comics. This section provides some example Superhero bases and related equipment; feel free to modify them to suit your superteam, campaign, or personal preferences. For further information about creating Bases using the *HERO System* rules, see *The Ultimate Base*.

URBAN BASE

This is an example of a modest superhero/supervillain base situated within the city.

This base is comparatively small; it has enough room for living quarters for team members, office and lab space for members and employees, a small garage/hangar for vehicles, and so on. It's not set up to house a full-sized team jet, a major training facility, or the like.

This is a hidden and underground base, designed to be situated beneath a skyscraper, a city park, or the like. Its exits to the world above are secret ones, such as a hidden tunnel opening onto a subway track, an elevator exiting into an unused closet of the building above, a ramp leading into a restricted-access corner of a parking garage, and so on. Anyone searching for the base must overcome an 18- Concealment roll. If you want the base to be public, remove that Skill and adjust the base's cost accordingly.

This is a comparatively sturdy base, with 8 PD/8 ED and BODY 10, though it lacks really esoteric defenses such as teleportation shields or dimensional-breach detectors. However, it has a comprehensive system of visual and auditory sensors covering the inside of the base as well as nearby external locations of note

(the base's Concealment applies to this); the sensors have their own internal power supply, so they keep operating even if the local power feed and the Backup Generator are cut off or destroyed.

The relatively low total cost of the base means the facility is affordable even by novice teams. The total cost to the team is 28 points divided among all the team members. The team must pay for its computer and staff (Followers), if any, separately.

UNDERWATER BASE

This base, located deep beneath the surface of any major body of water, is larger and more functional than the Urban Base. (For Location purposes it's assumed to be in water that's right next to the campaign city, such as just offshore in a coastal area; for it to be a few miles out from the city (Suburbs) would cost +5 points; to be many miles out (Distant) would cost +10 points.) If built close to a city, it has a tunnel access to the city's surface; if built farther out, the base either needs vehicles capable of transporting team members to distant points relatively quickly, or a powerful teleporter such as the one shown for the Space Base (below).

Unlike the Urban Base, this base has a Cell Block, an area where the team can hold captured villains temporarily. The Cell Block has higher defenses than the rest of the base, and no one can Teleport into or out of it (unless their Teleportation has three or more levels of Armor Piercing). Psychic Energy Insulation in the walls makes it difficult to use Mental Powers in or through the Cell Block. If detainees attempt to escape, the team can use an Artificial Gravity Pinner to make it difficult or impossible for anyone in the Cell Block to move (on the average, a person trapped in the artificial gravity field needs STR 40 to even move).

The base's other major feature is a large training facility designed for superhumans. The "danger room" has high-defense walls, and mounted in and behind the walls are a variety of weapons — they can surround a hero with Darkness, hit him with low-yield Blasts, wrap him up in nets, erect energy walls in front of him, and create holograms of his enemies, teammates, or obstacles around him. It's not enough to hurt most superhumans, but can give them a workout.

The base has no weapons, but can channel electricity into its exterior shell as a tactic to shock oversized sea-life or unwary supervillains who come into contact with it. But this is only a token defense; the base chiefly depends on its superheroes to defend it.

The cost of this base makes it inconveniently expensive for most beginning superteams, but is appropriate to a team that's built up some experience and finds that its original base is no longer adequate for its needs.

SPACE BASE

Very experienced and powerful teams, or those that need to function with an autonomy not possible if they were headquartered within national boundaries, may choose to build a base in space — either in Earth orbit or on some mass such as the Moon. The base below presumes an orbital placement (to change it into a lunar or asteroid base, just remove the maneuvering thrusters).

To the functions of the Underwater Base, the Space Base adds Artificial Gravity (which can be turned off, and becomes disabled if power is interrupted), an imaging device for the War Room (that allows detailed holographic 3-D presentations of such things as landing zones, enemy bases, national events, and so forth), a core chamber that has its own artificial gravity, generator, life support, and communications (in case of disaster, the base complement can retreat there to stage operations or wait for rescue), and a teleportation device that can transport up to 16 team members and other personnel to anywhere on Earth.

This base loses the underwater base's electrified hull and replaces it with an exterior blaster cannon that's sufficient to damage to many types of attacking spacecraft, and a set of internal neural zappers that are adequate to render many attackers unconscious.

URBAN BASE

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
8	Size	16	50 x 25 x 25 meters; OCV+ 9
8	PD	9	
8	ED	9	
10	BODY	8	Total Characteristic Cost: 42

Cost	Abilities & Equipment	END
20	Location: City, Underground	0

Power Systems

13	Backup Generator: Endurance Reserve (100 END, 12 REC)	0
	OIF Immobile (-1½)	

Operations Systems

21	Hidden: Concealment 18-	0
3	Communications Systems: HRRP	1
	OAF Immobile (-2), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½), Costs Endurance (-½)	

13	Security Cameras: Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups)	5
	Multiple Perception Points (up to 16 at once); IAF Immobile (-1½), Affected As Radio Group As Well As Sight/Hearing Groups (-¼), Fixed Perception Points (-1)	

2	Multispectrum Cameras: Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
	IAF Immobile (-1½)	

2	Multispectrum Cameras: Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group)	0
	IAF Immobile (-1½)	

13	Laboratories: 13 points' worth of laboratories (players' choice)	
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Personnel Systems

3	Heating/Air Conditioning: Life Support (Safe Environments: Intense Heat, Intense Cold)	1
	Costs Endurance (-½)	

7	Sealable Environment: Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing)	1
	Costs Endurance (-½)	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 97

Total Base Cost: 139

Value Complications

None

Total Complications Points: 0

Total Cost: 139/5 = 28

OPTIONS

Cost Power

var	Super-Computer: Computer	
15	Security Personnel: 1 Follower built on 75 Total Points (you can double the number of Followers for each +5 Character Points)	
5	Civilian Personnel: 1 Follower built on 25 Total Points (you can double the number of Followers for each +5 Character Points)	

UNDERWATER BASE

Val Char Cost Notes

15	Size	30	250 x 125 x 125 meters; OCV+ 14
10	PD	12	
10	ED	12	
12	BODY	10	Total Characteristic Cost: 64

Cost Abilities & Equipment

15	Location:	City, Underwater	END	0
Power Systems				
16	Generator:	Endurance Reserve (100 END, 21 REC) OIF Immobile (-1½)		0
Tactical Systems				
49	Electrified Outer Shell:	Blast 8d6 Area Of Effect (Base's Surface Damage Shield; +2¼), Constant (+½), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF Immobile (-1½), No Range (-½), No Knockback (-¼)		7
Operations Systems				
21	Hidden:	Concealment 18-		0
3	Communications Systems:	HRRP OAF Immobile (-2), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½), Costs Endurance (-½)		1
13	Security Cameras:	Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups) Multiple Perception Points (up to 16 at once); IAF Immobile (-1½), Affected As Radio Group As Well As Sight/Hearing Groups (-¼), Fixed Perception Points (-1)		5
2	Multispectrum Cameras:	Infrared Perception (Sight Group) IAF Immobile (-1½)		0
2	Multispectrum Cameras:	Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group) IAF Immobile (-1½)		0
7	Sonar:	Active Sonar (Hearing Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees) OIF Immobile (-1½), Costs Endurance (-½)		2
1	Sound Pickups:	Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group) OIF Immobile (-1½)		0
4	Sound Pickups:	+5 PER with Hearing Group OIF Immobile (-1½)		0
12	Cell Block:	PD +8/ED +8 Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation (x2; +½); Partial Coverage (30m x 30m x 5m area; -2)		0
7	Cell Block Psychic Energy Insulation:	Mental Defense (20 points) Partial Coverage (30m x 30m x 5m area; -2)		0
26	Cell Block Artificial Gravity Pinner:	Telekinesis (40 STR) Area Of Effect (Any 8 2m Areas; +¾), Affects Deso- lidified (+½); IIF Immobile (-1¼), Only To Pull Objects Straight Down To The Floor (-1), Only Within Defined Area (30m x 30m area; -2)		13
20	Laboratories:	20 points' worth of laboratories (players' choice)		

Personnel Systems

4	Life Support Systems:	Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing, Safe Environment: High Pressure, Intense Cold) OIF Immobile (-1½), Costs Endurance (-½)		2
10	Training Facility:	PD +10/ED +10 Partial Coverage (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)		0
4	Training Facility Darkness Generators:	Darkness to Sight Group 4m radius OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)		2
22	Training Facility Blasters:	Blast 8d6 Variable Advantage (+½ Advantages; +1), Variable Special Effects (+½); OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)		10
9	Training Facility Electro-Net Projectors:	Entangle 4d6, 4 PD/4 ED OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)		4
12	Training Facility Forcewall Generators:	Barrier 8 PD/8 ED, 8 BODY (up to 16m long, 4m high, and 1m thick) OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)		5
10	Training Facility Hologram Generators:	Sight Group Images, -5 to PER Rolls Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +¾); OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)		4

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 269

Total Base Cost: 333

Value Complications

None

Total Complications Points: 0

Total Cost: 333/5 = 67

SPACE BASE

Val Char Cost Notes

18	Size	36	500 x 250 x 250 meters; OCV+ 16
12	PD	15	
12	ED	15	
15	BODY	13	Total Characteristic Cost: 79

Cost Abilities & Equipment

35	Location:	Distant, In Space	END 0
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Power Systems

28	Generator:	Endurance Reserve (200 END, 30 REC) OIF Immobile (-1½)	0
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Tactical Systems

48	Exterior Defensive Blaster:	RKA 4d6 [125] 4 clips of 125 Charges each (+1); OIF Immobile (-1½)	
15	Exterior Defensive Blaster:	7 more Blasters, as above, spaced equidistantly around the base's hull [125]	
24	Internal Neural Tranquilizer:	Blast 6d6 [16] NND (defense is having a neural system markedly different from humans' or wearing a team-member radio; +1); OIF Immobile (-1½), 16 Charges (-0)	
15	Internal Neural Tranquilizer:	7 more Tranquilizers, located at strategic points throughout the base (core chamber, teleporter room, hangar, four important hallways)	
5	Polarized Exterior Windows:	Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points) 0 Only Protects Versus Exterior Flashes Against Interior Personnel (-1)	

Operations Systems

5	Artificial Gravity Generator:	Telekinesis (10 STR) 1 IIF Immobile (-1¼), Only To Pull Objects Straight Down To The Floor (-1)	
2	Core Chamber — Backup Artificial Gravity:	Another Artificial Gravity Generator (total of 2) 1 Partial Coverage (20m x 20m x 5m area; -2)	
3	Communications System:	HRRP 1 OAF Immobile (-2), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½), Costs Endurance (-½)	
2	Core Chamber — Backup Communications System:	Another Communications System (total of two) 1 Partial Coverage (20m x 20m x 5m area; -2)	
13	Security Cameras:	Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups) 5 Multiple Perception Points (up to 16 at once); IAF Immobile (-1½), Affected As Radio Group As Well As Sight/Hearing Groups (-¼), Fixed Perception Points (-1)	

2	Multispectrum Cameras:	Infrared Perception (Sight Group) 0 IAF Immobile (-1½)	
2	Multispectrum Cameras:	Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group) 0 IAF Immobile (-1½)	
10	Radar Array:	Radar (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Telescopic (+30 versus Range Modifier) 4 OAF Immobile (-2), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½), Costs Endurance (-½)	
7	Conference Room Holo projector:	Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rolls 3 Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +¼); OAF Immobile (-2), Set Effect (holographic images of places on Earth or in Earth's solar system; -1)	
12	Holo projector's Database:	AK: Earth And Its Solar System 50- 4 OAF Immobile (-2), Costs Endurance (-½)	
12	Worldwide Danger Monitoring System:	Danger Sense 14- (any type of danger, any area, sense) 5 OAF Immobile (-2), Costs Endurance (-½), Requires A PS: Operate WDMS (or Systems Operation) Roll (-¼)	
12	Cell Block:	PD +8/ED +8 0 Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation (x2; +½); Partial Coverage (30m x 30m x 5m area; -2)	
7	Cell Block Psychic Energy Insulation:	Mental Defense (20 points) 0 Partial Coverage (30m x 30m x 5m area; -2)	
26	Cell Block Artificial Gravity Pinner:	Telekinesis (40 STR) 13 Area Of Effect (Any 8 2m Areas; +¾), Affects Deso- lidified (+½); IIF Immobile (-1¼), Only To Pull Objects Straight Down To The Floor (-1), Only Within Defined Area (30m x 30m area; -2)	
3	Maneuvering Thrusters:	Flight 10m 0 OIF Immobile (-1½), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1¼)	
30	Laboratories:	30 points' worth of laboratories (players' choice)	

Personnel Systems

- 6 **Life Support Systems:** Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing, Safe Environment: High Pressure, High Radiation, Intense Cold, Intense Heat, Low Pressure/Vacuum) 2
OIF Immobile (-1½), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 2 **Core Chamber — Backup Life Support Systems:** Another Life Support System (total of two) 2
Partial Coverage (20m x 20m x 5m area; -2)
- 72 **Team Teleporter:** Multipower, 217-point reserve all OAF Immobile (-2)
- 3f **1) Teleport Away From Base:** Teleportation 10m, x16 Increased Mass 10
MegaScale (1m = 100,000 km; +2¼); OAF Immobile (-2)
- 7f **2) Teleport To Base:** Teleportation 10m, x16 Increased Mass 22
MegaScale (1m = 100,000 km; +2¼), Usable As Attack (+1¼), Ranged (+½), MegaRange (1m = 100,000 km; +2¼); OAF Immobile (-2)
- 12 **Teleporter Synchronizer:** Detect Precise Location To Teleport To/From (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Analyze 4
MegaRange (1m = 100,000 km; +2¼); OAF Immobile (-2), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 10 **Training Facility:** PD +10/ED +10 0
Partial Coverage (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)
- 4 **Training Facility Darkness Generators:** Darkness to Sight Group 4m radius 2
OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)
- 22 **Training Facility Blasters:** Blast 8d6 10
Variable Advantage (+½ Advantages; +1), Variable Special Effects (+½); OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)
- 9 **Training Facility Electro-Net Projectors:** Entangle 4d6, 4 PD/4 ED 4
OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)
- 12 **Training Facility Forcewall Generators:** Barrier 8 PD/8 ED, 8 BODY (up to 16m long, 4m high, and 1m thick) 5
OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)
- 10 **Training Facility Hologram Generators:** Sight Group Images, -5 to PER Rolls 4
Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +¾); OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Within Defined Area (40m x 40m x 10m area; -2)

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 487

Total Base Cost: 566

Value Complications

None

Total Complications Points: 0

Total Cost: 566/5 = 113

BASE EQUIPMENT

Here's some equipment and systems suitable for most superhero bases.

BASE COMPUTER

The character sheet on page 238 represents a typical Base computer, programmed to oversee many Base functions but not capable of performing military or tactical tasks like firing weapons (for that, see the Military Computer and Tactical Computer, below). The options detail just some of the many possibilities for customizing this Computer to different superhero settings and facilities.

Computers on Bases with Endurance Reserves often take the Physical Complication *Requires Endurance From Base* (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing; 10 points). This means they need END (electrical power) to operate — typically 2 END per 100 Character Points (or fraction thereof) the Computer's built with. Other Base Computers have their own batteries or independent power sources.

ELEVATOR

Getting around inside a skyscraper or other large Base is difficult and tiring (to put it mildly) unless the Base has elevators. These are bought as Vehicles that move along defined routes within the Base itself. See page 239.

LABORATORIES

Listed below are the suggested guidelines for laboratory costs based on lab quality. Typically a lab requires a minimum of 2 cubic meters of space, but GMs may want designers to make labs with better rolls larger — for example, 2 cubic meters for a base roll, +1 cubic meter per +1 to the roll (or other expansion, such as buying additional subcategories). In many cases, it's also appropriate to increase the size of the lab by +1 cubic meter per person who can work in there at the same time.

Standard Laboratory: Characteristic-based Skill at 8-. Total cost: 1 point.

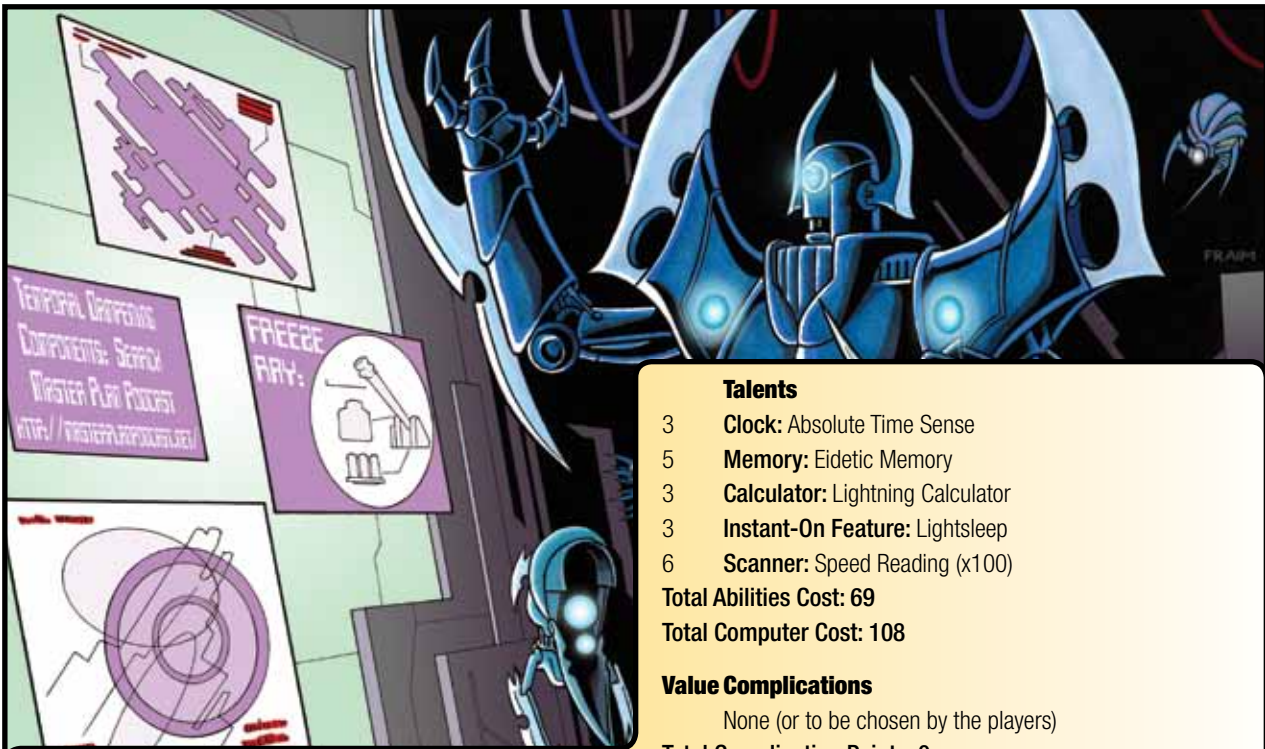
Basic Laboratory: Characteristic-based Skill at 11-. Total cost: 7 points.

High Laboratory: Characteristic-based Skill at 14-. Total cost: 13 points.

Advanced Laboratory: Characteristic-based Skill at 17-. Total cost: 19 points.

Extremely Advanced Laboratory: Characteristic-based Skill at 20-. Total cost: 25 points.

Ultra-Advanced Laboratory: Characteristic-based Skill at 23-. Total cost: 31 points.



STANDARD SUPERHERO BASE COMPUTER

Val Char Cost Roll Notes

15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
12	DEX	4	11-	
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12

Total Characteristics Cost: 39

Cost Skills

3	Computer Programming 12-
3	Cryptography 12-
11	AK: Area In Which Base Operates 20-
3	KS: Archived Recent News 12-
3	KS: Current News 12-
3	KS: Movies Database 12-
3	KS: Music Database 12-
5	KS: Superheroes 14-
5	KS: Supervillains 14-
3	Systems Operation 12-

Programs

1	Monitor Base Functions, Report Anomalies
1	Open/Lock Accessways
1	Operate Sensors To Scan For Designated Phenomena/Object
1	Scan And Enter Data
1	Search Reference Material For Information On A Topic
1	Send Emergency Call If Operator Incapacitated/Killed
1	Send Emergency Call If Specified Protocols Are Not Met

Talents

3	Clock: Absolute Time Sense
5	Memory: Eidetic Memory
3	Calculator: Lightning Calculator
3	Instant-On Feature: Lightsleep
6	Scanner: Speed Reading (x100)

Total Abilities Cost: 69

Total Computer Cost: 108

Value Complications

None (or to be chosen by the players)

Total Complication Points: 0

Total Cost: 108/5 = 22

OPTIONS

Cost Power

+11	Advanced Computer: +5 INT, +3 DEX
+22	Very Advanced Computer: +10 INT, +6 DEX
+33	Highly Advanced Computer: +15 INT, +9 DEX
+44	Ultra-Advanced Computer: +20 INT, +12 DEX
+21	Cyberkinetic Shielding I: +7 DMCV
15	Cyberkinetic Shielding II: Mental Defense (15 points)
10	Hardening I: Radio Group Flash Defense (10 points)
10	Hardening II: Power Defense (10 points)
12+	Artificial Intelligence: Include EGO 10 (or possibly bought up higher), +2 OMCV, +2 DMCV, and at least one 10-point (or more valuable) Psychological Complication
+1	Combat Subroutines: Add WF: Base Weapons
+15	Diagnostic Subroutines: Add Electronics 14-, Mechanics 14-, and Diagnostic Program
+7	Navigation Subroutines: Add Navigation (6 Character Points' worth) and Plot Distance, Travel Times Between Specified Locations
+20	Translator: Universal Translator 12-
+25	Science Base Computer: Add 25 Character Points' worth of Science Skills
+17	Underwater Base Computer: Add KS: Oceanographic Data 16-, KS: Sounds Of Underwater Life Forms 15-, SS: Marine Biology 11-, and SS: Oceanography 11-
+13	Space Base Computer: Add KS: Space Data 16-, KS: 7Alien Life Forms 15-, SS: Xenobiology 11-, and SS: Astronomy 11-
+5	Training Facility Control: Program: Run Programmed Training Facility Simulation (Up to 5 Resident In Memory)
+21	Computer Net Access: KS: Everything 30-
+41	Really Good Computer Net Access: KS: Everything 50-

PERSONNEL

Bases often have (semi-)permanent employees/residents or other personnel who work for the PCs, oversee the proper functioning of the Base, and so on. The most valuable and competent of these are bought as Followers, and so are discussed here; but many they could be DNPCs instead.

For any type of Base Follower, calculate the cost of the Followers separately and then add it to the cost of the Base after you calculate that cost. For superhero bases, you can use the Minion character sheets on pages 288-95 as a starting point — just adapt them from being villains or criminals to being security personnel and the like.

Example: *Defender has spent 120 points on his Base so far, and would now like to buy some guards for it. He buys 64 agents built on 100 Character Points (costing $100/5 = 20$ points, $64 = 30$ points; total 50 points). When Defender finishes calculating the cost of his Base, he'll add 50 points to it.*

Base NPCs fall into five basic categories:

Building Staff: These are personnel who take care of the Base and its components, including vehicular components. They include mechanics, electricians, repairmen, engineers, groundsmen and gardeners, pool-boys, janitors, and the like.

Service Staff: These people take care of the other people on site. They include butlers, maids, housekeepers, cooks, personal trainers, security guards, receptionists, medical personnel, and so on.

Enforcement: Depending on the exact nature of the PC group and its Base, there may also be an enforcement arm — a small paramilitary or police force, for instance. Skilled security guards or jailers may also fit into this category instead of Service Staff. These tend to be the most competent Base NPCs, though of course nowhere near as powerful or capable as the heroes themselves.

Family: Some heroes and villains may house their families in Bases, though this is usually the exception rather than the rule.

Pets: Finally, PCs and other Base inhabitants can have pets on-site — a master villain's pampered white cat (or his aquarium full of piranha!), a wilderness hero's trusty wolf, a madman's victim-devouring mutant octopus, or (stretching the definition only a little) a bad guy's kept woman/kept man.

When creating NPCs for a Base, give some thought to what position they fulfill in the team's/mastermind's organization. If you do, no NPC will seem inappropriate when found on-Base.

CAMPAIGN ROLES

Beyond just their positions within the organization's hierarchy, every Base NPC who appears repeatedly in the game ought to develop additional roles within the campaign. The GM doesn't have to decide on those roles initially; in fact, many will develop naturally as the character interacts more and more with the PCs.

ELEVATOR

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
2	Size	10	3.2 x 1.6 x 1.6 m; mass 800 kg; -3 KB; OCV +2
30	STR	10	Lift 1,600 kg; 6d6 HTH [0]
3	DEX	-14	
1	OCV	-10	
1	DCV	-10	
2	SPD	0	Phases: 6, 12
4	PD	3	
4	ED	3	
13	BODY	0	Total Characteristic Cost: -8

Movement: Ground: 0m
Flight: 6m

Cost Abilities & Equipment

END

4 **Going Up!:** Flight 12m 0
Restricted Path (-1), Limited Maneuverability (-1)
-12 **Only Flies:** Ground Movement -12m (0m total)
-2 **Only Flies:** Swimming -4m (0m total)

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: -10

Total Vehicle Cost: -18

Value Complications

None

Total Complications Points: 0

Total Cost: -18/5 = 1

OPTIONS

Cost Power

+3 **Express Elevator:** Add +4m to Flight
+2 **Science Fiction Elevator:** Add Sideways Maneuverability (+½) to Flight

Here are some examples of how this comes about. Suppose a superhero tends to damage his super-car a lot. Consequently, the vehicle spends a lot of time in the shop, and the superhero often goes down there to see how repairs are progressing. This means one or more mechanics inevitably develop some sort of personal relationship with that super. It could be just a cordial friendship, or perhaps it becomes romantic. In either case, what happens when (for example) the NPC asks the superhero for an ethically ambiguous favor?

Many PCs use the Base computers constantly and need new programs to perform tasks. They may be able to write those programs themselves, but the Base still needs an information manager to make sure those programs interact with one another and with the operating system in a friendly fashion. So the Base ought to have one head programmer, and that person will interact with the computer-using characters frequently. Lots of plot and subplots could arise from the relationship.

Just passing through the front gate and past the main security post every day, sometimes several times a day, gives the PCs a first-name acquaintanceship with the guard most often found on duty there. That provides the GM with the opportunity to develop that Follower further.



5

SUPERHERO VEHICLES

Superhero vehicles tend to serve one or both of the following functions in a campaign... and before a character buys one, he should find out from the GM whether the GM wants a vehicle fulfilling those functions. (The GM may prefer that the character have those functions as part of his powers instead.) These functions include:

Getting To Where The Action Is: This type of vehicle helps a hero who doesn't have a power that can get him from point to point in a timely fashion. This feature is especially appropriate for vehicles for teams that need to cross long distances (such as transcontinental trips or voyages to different star systems). Otherwise, some characters may have to resort to asking other characters to carry them, or get left behind.

Fighting And Rescuing: This sort of vehicle serves as an extension of the character, providing him with combat functionality he does not ordinarily have. There's a long tradition of supers using such vehicles (especially if the hero is essentially human), and vehicles of this type tend to be small one- and two-person craft. However, in more "stereotypical" four-color campaigns, the GM may prefer that characters use their powers to fight their adversaries, not their vehicles.

Each of the following sample vehicles is described both in game terms and in terms of its function within a campaign. For any of these vehicles you can buy the Computer described above, if desired. Just tailor it to vehicular operations by giving it the Skills and Programs needed to operate a vehicle (Combat Driving/Piloting, Navigation, Program: Plot Distance/Route/Travel Times Between Specified Locations, Program: Monitor Radar System, Report Lock-Ons, and so on).

TEAM SUPER-JET

This vehicle is a super-tech jet aircraft large enough to carry a good-sized team around and get them quickly to where the action is.

SUPER-CAR

This vehicle is designed to get a superhero, typically one who's mostly human, around the campaign city quickly and in style. The standard Super-Car is large enough for a driver and one passenger, is fast, is comparatively heavily armored, and possesses a number of offensive, defensive, sensory, and miscellaneous systems.

TEAM SUPER-JET OPTIONS

The standard Super-Jet is very configurable. A team purchasing a Team Transport can modify it with any and all of the following options, if they can afford the point cost.

Cost Optional System

- +5 **Aquatic Mode:** Add Usable As Swimming (+¼) to Flight
- 24 **Drill Mode:** Tunneling 12m through up to PD 6 materials
- 30 **Space Mode:** FTL Travel (1,000 LY/year) (may require additional adaptations to vehicle's Life Support systems and the like)
- 27 **Forward Blaster:** RKA 3d6, 64 Charges (+½) (67 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees forward; -½)
- 30 **Turreted Blaster:** RKA 3d6, 64 Charges (+½) (67 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 degrees on one side of vehicle; -¼)
- 36 **Forward Autoblaster:** RKA 3d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½), 64 Charges (+½) (90 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees forward; -½)
- 40 **Turreted Blaster:** RKA 3d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½), 64 Charges (+½) (90 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 degrees on one side of vehicle; -¼)
- 2 **Insulated Cockpit/Cabin:** Hearing Group Flash Defense (5 points) (5 Active Points); Only Protects Versus Exterior Flashes Against Interior Personnel (-1)
- 5 **Polarized Windows:** Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points) (10 Active Points); Only Protects Versus Exterior Flashes Against Interior Personnel (-1)
- 12 **Stealth Hull:** Invisibility To Radio Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (15 Active Points); Radar Only (-¼)
- 11 **Cloaking System:** Invisibility to Sight Group (20 Active Points); IIF Bulky (-¾)
- 19 **Disguise Systems:** Shape Shift (Sight, Hearing, Touch, and Radio Groups, up to four predefined shapes), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (34 Active Points); IIF Bulky (-¾)
- 10 **Sturdy:** +10 BODY
- 15 **Structural Enhancements:** +20 STR; Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (30 Active Points); Only To Increase Lifting Capacity (-1)

TEAM SUPER-JET

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
8	Size	40	12.5 x 6.4m x 6.4m; -8 KB; OCV+ 5
50	STR	0	Lift 25 tons; 10d6 HTH [0]
18	DEX	16	
6	OCV	15	
6	DCV	15	
4	SPD	20	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	PD	9	
8	ED	9	
18	BODY	0	Total Characteristics Cost: 124

Movement:	Ground:	12m
	Flight:	20m/20 km

Cost	Abilities & Equipment	END
40	Super-Jet Engines: Flight 20m MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge for entire Multipower (1 Day; +0)	[1cc]
13	Radar Array: Radar (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Telescopic (+14 versus Range Modifier) OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0
4	Communications Systems: HRRP OAF Bulky (-1½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0
19	Sealed Environment: Life Support (Safe Environments: High Pressure, High Radiation, Intense Cold, Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing)	0

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 76

Total Vehicle Cost: 200

Value Complications

None

Total Complications Points: 0

Total Cost: 200/5 = 40

SUPER-CAR

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
3	Size	15	4 x 2 x 2 m; mass 800 kg; -3 KB; OCV+ 2
25	STR	0	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [0]
18	DEX	16	
6	OCV	15	
6	DCV	15	
4	SPD	20	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	PD	12	
10	ED	12	
13	BODY	0	Total Characteristics Cost: 105

Movement: Ground: 42m

Cost	Abilities & Equipment	END
40	Engine: Ground Movement +30m (42m total), x8 Noncombat	0
4	Communications Systems: HRRP OAF Bulky (-1½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0
2	Nightsight Systems: Nightvision OIF Bulky (-1)	0
12	Headlights: Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rolls Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF Bulky (-1), Only To Create Light (-1), Limited Arc Of Use (60 Degrees forward, same horizontal level; -¾)	0
4	Heating/Air Conditioning: Life Support (Safe Environments: Intense Heat, Intense Cold)	0

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 62

Total Vehicle Cost: 167

Value Complications

None

Total Complications Points: 0

Total Cost: 167/5 = 33

SUPER-VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

Vehicle	Cost	System
Helicopter	50 (+10)	Flight 40m, x8 Noncombat
Hovercraft	25 (-15)	Flight 40m, x8 Noncombat; Not More Than 2m Above Ground/Water (-1)
Jet	43 (-3)	Flight 40m, x64 Noncombat; Stalls at Combat Velocity (-½)
Speedboat	12 (-40)	Swimming 40m, x4 Noncombat; Surface Only (-1)
Submarine	15 (-37)	Swimming 20m, x4 Noncombat
Tunneler	30 (-10)	Tunneling 12m through PD 6 material

A character can take two or more movement options, or use the *Usable As [Second Mode Of Movement]* (+¼) Advantage, to create a multiple-terrain vehicle. This can come as a real surprise to a supervillain who's used to thinking of a car as nothing but a car.

OTHER SUPER-VEHICLES

To design other sorts of individual super-vehicles, simply remove the Super-Car's extra Ground Movement (this leaves it with 12m, costing 0 points — and the Speedboat and Submarine sell back even that). Then substitute any of the choices in the accompanying box. The costs in parentheses are the net costs after accounting for the Super-Car's reduced Ground Movement.

SUPER-VEHICLE OPTIONS

In addition to the equipment listed on the two vehicles above, here are some additional systems characters could install on their super-vehicles. (Note that some of these powers are not built with the *Focus* Limitation because they are intrinsic to the vehicle itself; taking them off would mean disassembling the vehicle either partially or totally.)

Cost Power

Weapons

- 17 **Flare Grenade Launcher:** Sight Group Flash 6d6, Area Of Effect (12m Radius; +¾) (52 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), 4 Charges (-1)
- 13 **Ram:** HA +4d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (30 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼), Only With Move Throughs (-1)
- 18 **Smoke Grenade Launcher:** Darkness to Sight Group 8m radius (40 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), 4 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Minute each (removed by high winds or rain; -¼)
- 40 **Vehicular Blaster:** Blast 8d6, No Range Modifier (+½), 60 Charges (+½) (80 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1)
- 40 **Vehicular Laser:** RKA 2½d6, No Range Modifier (+½), 60 Charges (+½) (80 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1)

Defense Systems

- 10 **Ablative Armor:** +8 PD/+8 ED (24 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Ablative (-½)
- 19 **Retractable Armor:** +8 PD/+8 ED (24 Active Points); Extra Time (Full Phase to activate; -¼), Nonpersistent (-0), Perceivable (-0)

Movement Systems

- 4 **Gripping Tires:** Clinging (normal STR) (10 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1½)
- 4 **Improved Maneuverability:** +2 with [specific form of movement]
- 2 **Nitrous Oxide Injector:** Additional x2 Noncombat for Ground Movement (5 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), 12 Charges (-¼)

Sensors

- 10 **Vehicular Cameras:** Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees) for Sight Group

Miscellaneous Systems

- 17 **Grapnel-Thrower:** Stretching 20m, x8 Noncombat, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (52 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Only To Grab And Pull (-1)
- 2 **Waldos:** Extra Limbs (2) (5 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1)

THE SUPERHERO GALLERY



Need a PC fast for a game that's starting in just a few minutes? Got to create a new supervillain team for your next game session but don't want to spend five hours doing it? Try *The Superhero Gallery*! Select the type of character you want, pick Skill Sets and Power Sets describing his basic abilities, round it out by spending a few more Character Points, choose some Complications, and you're set!

The Superhero Gallery is set up to allow you to pick from pre-built "sets" of Characteristics, Powers (of various types), Skills, and Complications for each of twenty common types of superheroes. (For Skills and Complications, there are also "general" sets, listed below, that you can pick for any character in addition to the character-specific sets with each sheet.) If you want to determine a character's powers totally at random, you can easily establish a rolling system to do that. For example, most characters have three Characteristic Sets you can choose from, so you could roll 1d6 to choose between them (1-2 means the first set, 3-4 the second, and 5-6 the third).

To streamline the process and make it possible to fit each character sheet on a two-page spread, the Superhero Gallery makes some assumptions about how superhuman characters are built. These include:

- characters are built as Standard Superheroic characters, with 400 Total Points (including 75 points' worth of Matching Complications)
- characters' attacks typically have about 60 Active Points' worth of effect
- most characters have a Multipower of attacks (and sometimes other abilities)
- the average SPD is 5, the average DEX in the 18-23 range
- the PCs are classic "four-color" superheroes with Codes Versus Killing (but you can easily change that Psychological Limitation to something else if you prefer)

CHARACTER TYPES

The twenty character types in the Superhero Gallery are:

- the *Aquatic*, which encompasses both characters who live and function underwater and characters who manipulate or control water;
- the *Blaster*, a "generic" Energy Projector with no specified special effect (unlike Fire, Ice, or Sonic) so that you can tailor him to whatever type of energy you prefer;
- the *Brick*, a super-strong, super-tough character;
- the *Earth/Stone* character, who controls and/or is made out of those substances;
- the *Electricity* character, an Energy Projector who can control and manipulate electrical energy;
- the *Fire* character, who can hurl flame-bolts and fireballs and protect himself with a sheath of flame;
- the *Gadgeteer*, who uses super-tech devices to accomplish things that his colleagues do with superpowers;
- the *Ice* character, who commands cold and frost and uses them to stop his foes dead in their tracks;
- the *Magnetism* character, who manipulates metal and magnetic forces with ease;
- the *Martial Artist*, who knows the most powerful secrets of unarmed combat;
- the *Mentalist*, who can affect others with the awesome power of his mind;
- the *Metamorph*, whose very body can change form or properties;
- the *Mystic Master*, whose cast spells or arcane artifacts put him on par with true superhumans;
- the *Powered Armor* character, who garbs himself in metal and circuitry so he can battle supervillains;
- the *Sonic* character, who controls and manipulates sound;
- the *Speedster*, who can move at incredible speeds;
- the *Stretcher*, who can elongate and contort his body in amazing ways;
- the *Telekinetic*, who can move objects without touching them;
- the *Weaponmaster*, an expert at combat using one or more weapons; and
- the *Weather Controller*, who can alter the weather and create localized weather effects.

MAKING ADJUSTMENTS

The Superhero Gallery provides a wide range of options for quickly creating a superhero (or supervillain), but it can't cover *everything*. So once you've got your basic character done, you should consider making some adjustments and modifications if you want to better represent the character you have in mind or set your character apart a little. There are several possibilities.

First, unless the GM says otherwise, you can often take some points from one thing and put them in another. You might buy a weaker Defense Power so you can increase the effectiveness of one of your Secondary Powers, or reduce your STR to buy some more Skills or a few extra points of STUN.

Second, not all point totals may come out perfectly even. For example, your character type's sheet may say to pick 30 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets... but you can only find 28 points' worth than you like, or really want 36 points' worth. If there's a shortfall you can make it up by adding a few points somewhere (like to a Characteristic or a Skill Roll); if you've spent too much you'll need to reduce something else by the same amount to make up for it.

Third, you can usually substitute one Skill for another Skill of the same value in a set. Most of the Skill Sets are built along a theme, but you can tweak that theme slightly if desired... or create your own theme with the same value.

Fourth, you can substitute one type of damage in an attack for the equivalent DCs in some other type of attack. Typically this means replacing Normal Damage (such as a Blast) with Killing Damage (such as an RKA), but there are plenty of other possibilities.

Fifth, you can add Power Modifiers. Most of the powers are pretty straightforward so that they can be assembled into sets easily. But you can change them to apply an Advantage or a Limitation if you like, as long as you either keep the Real Cost the same or make up the difference elsewhere. (You may still be restricted by Multipower reserve totals or the like, though.) In particular, for many character types joining several powers together with the *Unified Power* (-¼) Limitation may be highly appropriate.

Sixth, if a power already has Power Modifiers, you can change them. For example, you can substitute any other Power Modifier of the same value. For the Gadgeteer and Powered Armor (most of whose powers are OIFs) and the Weaponmaster (whose attacks are typically OAFs), you can change the type of Focus (though this may require you to recalculate costs and adjust accordingly).

5



GENERAL SKILL SETS

Here are several general Skill Sets that could apply to any of the characters in the Superhero Gallery. Each Gallery character also has two or more additional Skill Sets specific to him.

If a character takes multiple Skill Sets, he may get the same Skill from two or more Sets. In that case you should replace the duplicate with another Skill in some way. Taking a related Background Skills, buying any type of Skill Level, and improving the roll with the duplicate Skill (or some other Skill) are all good ways to do this. They're also a good way to round up the cost of a Skill Set if you need it to cost just a few more points.

ACCURACY SET

Cost Skills

- 24 +3 with Ranged Combat
- 12 +4 versus the Range Modifier with Ranged Attacks

Total cost: 36 points

ANIMAL TRAINER SET

Cost Skills

- 7 Animal Handler (7 points' worth)
- 3 Riding

Total cost: 10 points.

ATHLETE SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Acrobatics
- 3 Breakfall
- 3 Climbing

Total cost: 9 points

BEAUTIFUL/HANDSOME SET

Cost Skills

- 6 Striking Appearance (+2/+2d6)
- 3 Charm

Total cost: 9 points

BELOVED/RESPECTED HERO SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Persuasion
- 6 Positive Reputation (6 points' worth)

Total cost: 9 points

CAT BURGLAR SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Lockpicking
- 3 Security Systems
- 3 Stealth

Total cost: 9 points

CRUSADING REPORTER SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Conversation
- 3 Deduction
- 3 Relevant PS (INT) (Reporter, Writer, Journalist, Photographer...)
- 3 Streetwise
- 5 Contacts and/or Favors (5 points' worth)

Total cost: 14 points

DETECTIVE SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Criminology
- 3 Deduction
- 3 Forensic Medicine
- 3 Interrogation
- 3 Streetwise

Total cost: 15 points

FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Well-Connected
- 7 Contacts and Favors (7 points' worth)

Total cost: 10 points

GENERAL SKILLS SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Breakfall
- 3 Deduction
- 3 Stealth
- 1 Teamwork 8-

Total cost: 10 points

HACKER SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Computer Programming
- 3 Cryptography
- 3 Electronics
- 3 Systems Operation

Total cost: 12 points

HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT SET

Cost Skills

- 16 +2 HTH
- 24 Martial Arts

Total cost: 40 points

LEADERSHIP SET

Cost Skills

- 3 Persuasion
- 3 Tactics
- 3 Teamwork

Total cost: 9 points

MASTER OF POWER SET

Cost Skills

- 5 Power (player chooses Characteristic basis) +1
- 2 KS or SS related to powers 11-

Total cost: 7 points



MILITARY VETERAN SET**Cost Skills**

- 2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
- 2 PS: Soldier 11- (or the like)
- 3 Tactics
- 2 WF: Small Arms

Total cost: 9 points**PLAYBOY SET****Cost Skills**

- 3 Charm
- 3 Conversation
- 3 High Society
- 15 Money: Filthy Rich
- 6 Background Skills (player's choice)

Total cost: 30 points**SCIENTIST/SCHOLAR SET****Cost Skills**

- 3 Scientist *or* Scholar
- 17 Science Skills and/or Knowledge Skills (player's choice)

Total cost: 20 points**SIDEKICK SET****Cost Skills**

- 20 Follower (sidekick) built on 100 Total Points

Total cost: 20 points**SPY SET****Cost Skills**

- 3 Acting
- 3 Bribery
- 3 Combat Driving *or* Combat Piloting
- 3 Cryptography
- 3 Disguise

Total cost: 15 points**SURVEILLANCE SET****Cost Skills**

- 3 Bugging
- 3 Concealment
- 1 Security Systems 8-
- 3 Shadowing

Total cost: 10 points**TEAM PILOT SET****Cost Skills**

- 3 Combat Piloting
- 3 TFs (3 points' worth)

Total cost: 6 points**TECHNICIAN SET****Cost Skills**

- 3 Computer Programming
- 3 Demolitions
- 3 Electronics
- 3 Mechanics
- 3 Systems Operation

Total cost: 15 points**WEAPON USER SET****Cost Skills**

- 20 Combat Skill Levels appropriate to character's weapon(s) of choice
- 3 Fast Draw (choose group)
- 4 Weapon Familiarity (4 points' worth)
- 3 Weaponsmith (choose two subcategories)

Total cost: 30 points**WELL-RESPECTED SET****Cost Skills**

- 3 Persuasion
- 6 Perk: Positive Reputation (6 points' worth)

Total cost: 9 points**WHEELMAN SET****Cost Skills**

- 3 Combat Driving
- 3 TFs (3 points' worth)

Total cost: 6 points

GENERAL COMPLICATIONS SET

Every character type comes with three Complications Sets worth a full 75 Matching Points each, but you might want to substitute some of the Complications in a Set for one of the General Sets listed here. You could also pick 75 points' worth of General Sets and avoid the character-specific sets altogether if you prefer.

ACHILLES HEEL SET**Value Complications**

- 10 **Psychological Complication:** Fear Of [what the character's Susceptible and/or Vulnerable to]
- 30 **Susceptibility and/or Vulnerability:** 30 points' worth

CULTURAL ALIEN SET**Value Complications**

- 10 **Enraged:** when insulted through cultural misunderstandings (Uncommon), go 11-, recover 14-
- 10 **Hunted:** the authorities (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching) *or* Social Limitation appropriate to character's circumstances
- 15 **Physical Complication:** Unfamiliar With Earth Culture (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)

CURSE SET**Value Complications**

- 15 **Accidental Change** (choose appropriate circumstances) 11- *or* Susceptibility of equivalent value
- 15 **Distinctive Features:** monstrous/cursed form (Easily Concealed, Causes Extreme Fear or Disgust)
- 15 **Enraged/Berserk** (player's choice of conditions)
- 5 **Unluck** 1d6



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INFAMOUS HERO SET**Value Complications**

- 10 **DNPC:** someone who likes the character in his Secret Identity but despises his costumed persona (or vice-versa)
- 5 **Hunted:** the press (Frequently, Less Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 **Hunted:** personal enemy character has (supposedly?) wronged (Infrequently, As Pow, Capture/Kill)
- 15 **Negative Reputation** (part of the source of the infamy)

LOVE INTEREST SET**Value Complications**

- 10 **DNPC:** the character's boyfriend/girlfriend/spouse/subject of infatuation
- 15 **Psychological Complication:** In Love With [love interest] (Common, Strong)

RADIATION ACCIDENT SET**Value Complications**

- 20 **Hunted:** villain or organization involved in origin (player defines exact nature of Hunter)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** Fear Of [energy/circumstance related to origin] (Common, Moderate)
- 20 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from [energy/circumstance related to origin] (Common)

SEEKER OF VENGEANCE SET**Value Complications**

- 15 **Hunted:** personal enemy (Frequently, As Pow, Capture/Kill)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** Vengeful (Uncommon, Strong)
- 15 **Psychological Complication:** Hunting Personal Enemy (Common, Strong)

TRAGIC PAST SET**Value Complications**

- 10 **DNPC** (choose appropriate circumstances) *or* Destitute *or* Unluck 2d6 (player's choice)
- 15 **Hunted:** someone related to past (Frequently, As Pow, Capture/Kill)
- 15 **Psychological Complication:** Hatred Of [Group of Choice] (Common, Strong)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** Vengeful *or* Self-Destructive (player's choice) (Uncommon, Strong)

AQUATIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
6	ED	4		
8	REC	4		
40	END	4		
10	BODY	0		
32	STUN	6		
Total Characteristics Cost: 85 + choose one Characteristics Set = 205				

Cost Powers

90	Aquatic Attacks: Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
40	Aquatic Defense: choose one Defense Power
30	Aquatic Movement: choose one Movement Power
5	Aquatic Comfort: Life Support (Expanded Breathing: breathe underwater)
10	Aquatic Secondary Powers: choose 10 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

20	Choose 20 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets
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Total Powers & Skills Cost: 195

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

75	Choose one Complications Set
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Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

6f	Water Bolt I: Blast 12d6
6f	Water Bolt II: Blast 8d6, Double Knockback (+½)
6f	Water Spray: Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +½)
6f	Easy Water Bolt: Blast 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)
6f	Dehydration: Blast 6d6, NND (the defense is Life Support [Diminished Eating: no need to drink] or a body that lacks liquids; +1)
6f	Water Control: Telekinesis (32 STR), Affects Porous
4f+2	Water Form: Desolidification (affected by water, fire, and cold attacks), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-½) <i>plus</i> +4 STUN
4f+2	Aquatic Telepathy: Telepathy 12d6 (Animal class of minds); Aquatic Creatures Only (-½) <i>plus</i> +2 EGO or INT
4f+2	Aquatic Control: Mind Control 12d6 (Animal class of minds); Aquatic Creatures Only (-½) <i>plus</i> +2 EGO or INT
6f	Aquatic Command: Summon up to 4 Sea Creatures built on up to 150 Character Points, Expanded Effect (+¼), Friendly (+¼)
4f+2	Electric Eel Touch: Blast 8d6, NND (defense is Power defense or insulated rED; +½); No Range (-½) <i>plus</i> +1 DEX

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (120)

AQUATIC BRICK

Cost	Characteristic
40	+40 STR
10	+5 DEX
10	+10 CON
5	+5 PRE
5	+1 OCV
5	+1 DCV
10	+1 SPD
14	+14 PD
9	+9 ED
2	+2 REC
4	+20 END
6	+12 STUN

UNDERWATER DENIZEN

Cost	Characteristic
20	+20 STR
10	+5 DEX
5	+5 CON
10	+10 EGO
5	+5 PRE
10	+2 OCV
10	+2 DCV
9	+3 OMCV
9	+3 DMCV
10	+1 SPD
9	+9 PD
6	+6 ED
2	+2 REC
2	+10 END
3	+6 STUN

WATER MANIPULATOR

Cost	Characteristic
5	+5 STR
16	+8 DEX
5	+5 CON
5	+5 EGO
5	+5 PRE
15	+3 OCV
15	+3 DCV
6	+2 OMCV
6	+2 DMCV
20	+2 SPD
9	+9 PD
9	+9 ED
2	+2 REC
2	+10 END

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Tough Body I:** Resistant (+½) for 10 PD/10 ED *plus* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%
- 40 **Tough Body II:** Resistant (+½) for 20 PD/14 ED *plus* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Normal, 25% *plus* +3 ED
- 40 **Tough Body III:** Damage Negation (-4 DCs Physical and Energy)
- 40 **Water Shield:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Water Form:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% *plus* Resistant (+½) for 10 ED *plus* +5 PD

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 30 **Super-Swimming:** Swimming +60m
- 30 **Aqua-Flight:** Flight 24m, Usable As Swimming (+¼)

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 10 **Claws:** HKA ½d6 (up to 1d6+1 with STR)
- 10 **Delphine Sonar:** Active Sonar (Hearing Group); Costs Endurance (-½)
- 10 **Even Stronger:** +10 STR
- 10 **Sharp Teeth:** HKA ½d6 (up to 1d6+1 with STR)
- 3 **Undersea Dweller:** Life Support (Safe Environments: Intense Cold, High Pressure)
- 5 **Undersea Senses:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 **Undersea Senses:** Nightvision

SKILL SETS**Cost Skill Set**

- 6 **Finny Friends Set:** Animal Handler (Aquatic Animals), Riding, TF: Riding Animals (Aquatic)
- 5 **Marine Biologist Set:** Navigation (Marine) 8-, SS: Marine Biology 11-, SS: Oceanography 11-
- 10 **Ruler Of Atlantis Set:** Perk: Fringe Benefit: Head Of State (Atlantis)

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL AQUATIC COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

RULER OF ATLANTIS COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Must Protect Atlantis And Her People From All Threats (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

TIED TO THE SEA COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 5 **Dependence:** must immerse self in water at least once an hour or character's powers acquire a Required Roll 14- (Very Common)
- 20 **Enraged:** Berserk when suffering from effects of Dependence (Uncommon), go 11-, recover 14-
- 15 **Hunted:** 15 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)



BLASTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
8	ED	6		
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
36	STUN	8		

Total Characteristics Cost: 90
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 180

Cost Powers

- 90 **Blaster Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
- 40 **Blaster Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 40 **Blaster Movement:** choose one Movement Power
- 20 **Blaster Secondary Powers:** choose 20 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 30 Choose 30 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 220

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

- 6f **Energy Bolt:** Blast 12d6
- 6f **Energy Beam:** RKA 2½d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 6f **Piercing Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 6f **Detonating Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½)
- 6f **Pulse-Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½)
- 6f **Controllable Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Indirect (Path can change with every use; +½)
- 6f **Stun-Bolt:** Blast 8d6, NND (defense is Power Defense; +½)
- 6f **Easy Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)
- 6f **Energy Wall:** Barrier 8 PD/8 ED, 8 BODY (up to 4m long, 3m high, and ½m thick), Non-Anchored, Opaque (Sight Group)
- 6f **Energy Field:** Darkness to Sight Group 12m radius
- 6f **Energy Constructs:** Telekinesis (40 STR)

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 40 **Force-Field I:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED) *plus* Damage Negation (-1 DC Physical and Energy)
- 40 **Force-Field II:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Force-Field + Point Defense:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED), Costs Endurance (-½) *plus* Deflection
- 40 **Energy Form I:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Normal
- 40 **Energy Form II:** Desolidification

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (90)

AGILE BLASTER

Cost Characteristic

- 20 +10 DEX
- 3 +3 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 5 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 2 +2 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 3 +6 STUN

TOUGH BLASTER

Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 8 +8 CON
- 10 +2 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 8 +8 PD
- 8 +8 ED
- 2 +2 REC
- 4 +20 END
- 5 +5 BODY
- 5 +10 STUN

WELL-ROUNDED BLASTER

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 6 +2 DMCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 4 +4 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 6 +6 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 2 +4 STUN

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Energy-Flight:** Flight 40m
 40 **Energy Travel:** Teleportation 40m

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 8 **Energy Protection:** Radio Group Flash Defense (8 points)
 15 **Energy-Pulses:** Radar (Radio Group)
 5 **Energy Sense:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
 3 **Energy Sense:** Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group); Costs Endurance (-½)
 17 **Energy Sheath:** RKA 1d6, Area Of Effect (personal Surface — Damage Shield; +¼), Constant (+½); No Range (-½)
 5 **Eyes Of Energy:** Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
 20 **Light-Bending:** Invisibility to Sight Group
 12 **Radio-Sense:** HRRP (Radio Group)

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 5 **Aerobatics Set:** +2 with Flight; KS: Flying Vehicles 8-
 10 **Multi-Blaster Set:** Choose any two Autofire Skills
 10 **Precision Ranged Fighter Set:** +5 OCV with one specific energy attack
 10 **Two-Blast Fighting Set:** Rapid Attack (Ranged only); Two-Weapon Fighting (with innate Ranged energy attacks only)

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL BLASTER COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity or Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT BLASTER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity or Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
 10 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from an Uncommon attack form

ENERGY FORM COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity or Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
 20 **Susceptibility(ies) and/or Vulnerability(ies)** representing the fact that the character's body is made of energy



BRICK

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	Lift 3,200 kg; 6d6 HTH damage [3]
15	DEX	10	12-	
20	CON	10	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6

5 OCV 10

5 DCV 10

3 OMCV 0

3 DMCV 0

4 SPD 20 *Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12*

20 PD 18

20 ED 18

15 REC 11

60 END 8

15 BODY 5

40 STUN 10

Total Characteristics Cost: 155
+ choose one Characteristics Set =
275

Cost Powers

60 **Brick Defense:** choose 60 points' worth of Defense Powers

20 **Brick Movement:** choose one Movement Power

15 **Brick Secondary Powers:** choose 15 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

30 Choose 30 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 125

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

25 **Super-Tough Body:** Resistant (+½) for 25 PD/25 ED

28 **Super-Tough Body:** Resistant (+½) for 28 PD/28 ED

32 **Super-Tough Body:** Resistant (+½) for 32 PD/32 ED

18 **Resilient Body:** Hardened (+¼) for 25 PD/25 ED and Resistant (+½)

21 **Resilient Body:** Hardened (+¼) for 28 PD/28 ED and Resistant (+½)

24 **Resilient Body:** Hardened (+¼) for 32 PD/32 ED and Resistant (+½)

30 **Durable Body:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 25%, Resistant (or only one type at 50%)

60 **Durable Body:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Resistant

60 **Durable Body:** Damage Negation (-6 DCs Physical and Energy) (or any other combination that adds up to -12 DCs)

5 **Super-Strong Mind:** Mental Defense (5 points)

5 **Super-Strong Spirit:** Power Defense (5 points)

13 **Super-Durability:** Life Support (Extended Breathing: 1 END per 20 Minutes; Safe Environments: all)

MOVEMENT POWERS

Cost Power

20 **Flight:** Flight 20m

20 **Super-Strong Legs:** Leaping +40m

20 **Burrowing:** Tunneling 8m through 6 PD materials

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (120)

BASIC BRICK

Cost Characteristic

30	+30 STR
6	+3 DEX
10	+10 CON
10	+10 PRE
10	+2 OCV
10	+2 DCV
10	+1 SPD
8	+8 PD
8	+8 ED
3	+3 REC
5	+5 BODY
10	+20 STUN

BRAWLER

Cost Characteristic

10	+10 STR
10	+5 DEX
5	+5 CON
3	+3 INT
5	+5 PRE
15	+3 OCV
15	+3 DCV
10	+1 SPD
5	+5 PD
5	+5 ED
5	+5 REC
2	+10 END
10	+20 STUN
20	Martial Arts (20 points' worth)

BRUTE

Cost Characteristic

30	+30 STR
15	+15 CON
15	+15 PRE
5	+1 OCV
5	+1 DCV
12	+12 PD
12	+12 ED
5	+5 REC
2	+10 END
5	+5 BODY
14	+28 STUN

NIMBLE BRICK

Cost Characteristic

30	+30 STR
10	+5 DEX
10	+10 CON
5	+5 PRE
15	+3 OCV
10	+2 DCV
20	+2 SPD
5	+5 PD
5	+5 ED
5	+5 REC
5	+10 STUN

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 15 **Dense Form:** Knockback Resistant
-15m
- 15 **Eyebeams:** RKA 2d6; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)
- 15 **Fast Healing:** Regeneration (1 BODY per Minute) plus +1 REC
- 15 **Poke:** Armor Piercing (+¼) for up to 60 STR
- 15 **Super-Strong Eyes:** Telescopic (+10 PER versus the Range Modifier) for Sight Group
- 15 **Wind-Up Punch:** Double Knockback (+½) for up to 60 STR; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)

SKILL SETS**Cost Skill Set**

- 30 **Melee Set I:** +3 HTH, Breakfall, Tactics
- 30 **Melee Set II:** +1 Overall, +1 HTH, Defense Maneuver IV

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL BRICK COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

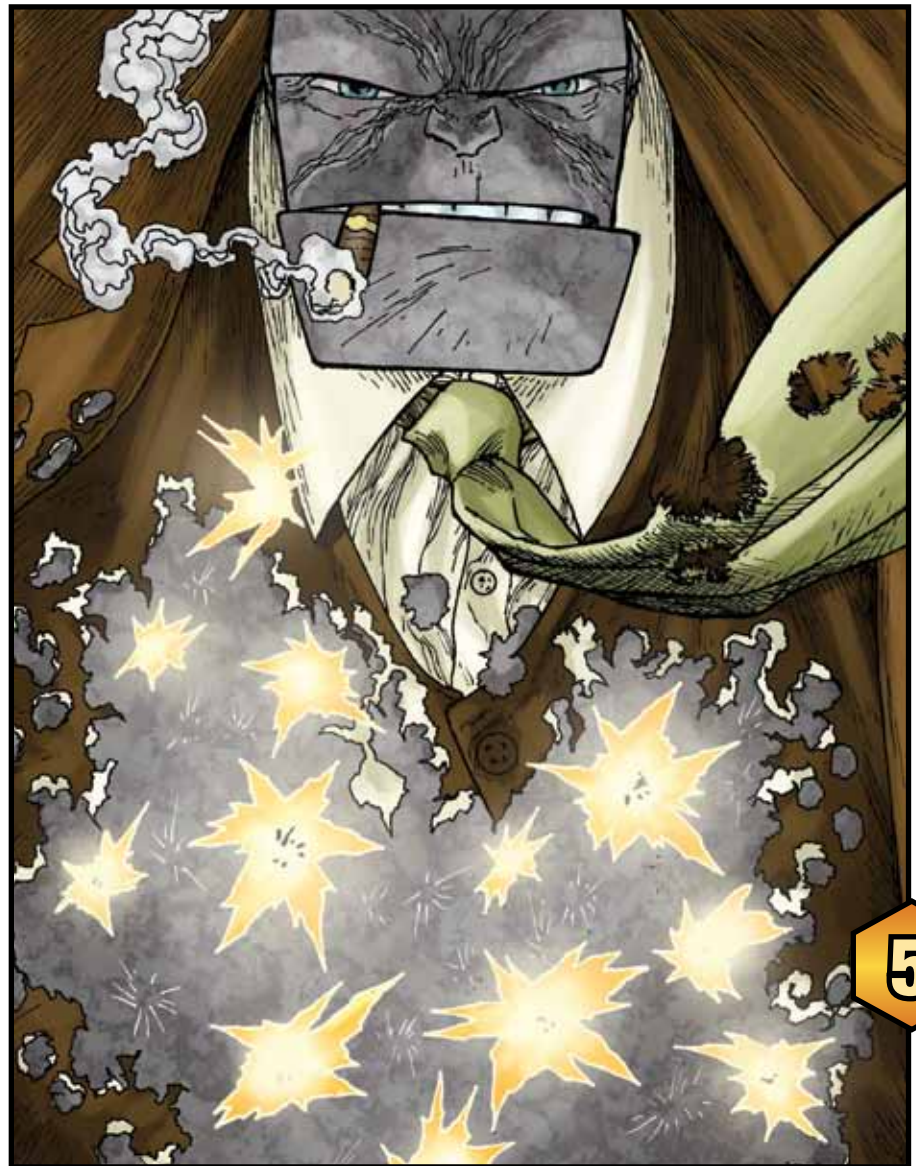
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

DENSE FORM BRICK COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Physical Complication:** Massive (weighs 16-31 times human normal) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT BRICK COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

**TITAN OPTION**

A *Titan* is a Brick whose powers derive from the ability to become superhumanly tall. To create one using this template, replace the Defense Set, Movement Set, and Secondary Power Set with 90 Character Points' worth of Growth (spend the remaining unspent 5 Character Points on Skills, Perks, and Talents). In combination with the basic character sheet and a Characteristics Set, this can make an extremely effective characters (and one whose STR violates the point/effectiveness ceilings used in many Champions campaigns), so the GM may also want to reduce the points in the Characteristics Set and require that they spent on secondary powers and the like. Note also that removing the Defense Sets leaves the character with no Resistant Defenses, so the character may want to trim some points out of Characteristics and Secondary Powers for defenses.

EARTH/STONE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
20	CON	10	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	PD	8		
10	ED	8		
8	REC	4		
45	END	5		
10	BODY	0		
40	STUN	10		

Total Characteristics Cost: 105 +
choose one Characteristics Set = 200

Cost Powers

- 90 **Earth/Stone Attacks:** Choose 90 points' worth of attacks
 40 **Earth/Stone Defense:** choose 40 points' worth of Defense Powers
 20 **Earth/Stone Movement:** choose one Movement Power
 20 **Earth/Stone Secondary Powers:** choose 20 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 30 Choose 30 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 200

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Power

- 90 **Body Of Earth/Stone:** +30 STR, +10 PD, +10 ED, +10 REC, +20 STUN, and Knockback Resistance (-20m)
 90 **Body Of Sand/Mud:** +10 STR, +1 DCV, +10 PD, +10 ED, +5 REC, +10 STUN, Knockback Resistance (-10m), and Stretching (20m, x8 body dimension)
 90 **Essence Of The Mountains:** Growth (+45 STR, +15 CON, +15 PRE, +9 PD, +9 ED, +9 BODY, +18 STUN, +7m Reach, +36m Running, -18m KB, 50,000 kg, +6 OCV to hit character, +6 PER Rolls to perceive character, 16 m tall, 8 m wide); Only When In Contact With The Ground (-¼) *plus* an additional 18 points' worth of Secondary Powers
 60 **Earth/Stone Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve, plus choose 5 of the following slots:
 6f **Rock Blast:** Blast 12d6
 6f **Rock Shard Spray:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +½)
 6f **Rock Darts:** RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (x2; +½), Autofire (5 shots; +½)
 5f+1 **Stone Lance:** Blast 8d6, Indirect (Source is always character, but Path can change from use to use; +½); Only Affects Targets Near Earth/Stone (within 15m; -¼) *plus* +1 CON
 5f+1 **Stony Prison:** Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED; Only Affects Targets On The Ground (-¼) *plus* +1 CON
 5f+1 **Mini-Quake:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½); Only Affects Targets On The Ground (-¼), Only Does Knockdown, Not Knockback (-0) *plus* +1 CON
 6f **Dust/Mud/Sand In Your Eyes:** Sight Group Flash 12d6
 4f+2 **Earthmoving:** Telekinesis (40 STR); Only Versus Earth/Stone (-½) *plus* +2 CON

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (95)

EARTH MANIPULATOR

Cost Characteristic

- 16 +8 DEX
 3 +3 INT
 5 +5 PRE
 15 +3 OCV
 15 +3 DCV
 20 +2 SPD
 4 +4 PD
 4 +4 ED
 2 +2 REC
 3 +15 END
 3 +3 BODY
 5 +10 STUN

EARTH/STONE FORM

Cost Characteristic

- 15 +15 STR
 10 +5 DEX
 5 +5 CON
 5 +5 PRE
 5 +1 OCV
 5 +1 DCV
 10 +1 SPD
 10 +10 PD
 10 +10 ED
 2 +2 REC
 3 +15 END
 10 +10 BODY
 5 +10 STUN

SAND/MUD FORM

Cost Characteristic

- 15 +15 STR
 10 +5 DEX
 5 +5 PRE
 10 +2 OCV
 10 +2 DCV
 20 +2 SPD
 5 +5 PD
 5 +5 ED
 7 +7 REC
 3 +15 END
 5 +10 STUN

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 30 **Earth/Stone Body:** Resistant (+½) for 30 PD/30 ED
- 20 **Earth/Stone Body:** Resistant (+½) for 20 PD/20 ED
- 40 **Earth/Stone Body:** Damage Negation (-4 DCs Physical and Energy) *(or any other combination that adds up to -8 DCs)*
- 10 **Earth/Stone Body:** Energy Damage Reduction, 25%, Normal
- 20 **Earth/Stone Body:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 25%, Normal *(or only one type at 50%)*
- 40 **Stony Armor:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED); Costs Endurance (-½)

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 7 **Avalanche Riding:** Running +10m; Side Effect (RKA 1½d6 to ground in an Area Of Effect (Line) equal in size to the distance the character moves, automatically occurs, only affects environment; -½) *plus* an additional 13 points' worth of Secondary Powers
- 20 **Burrowing:** Tunneling 8m through 6 PD materials
- 20 **Lithokinetic Boulder Riding:** Flight 20m

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 11 **Earthen Healing:** Regeneration (1 BODY per Minute); Only When In Contact With The Ground (-¼)
- 5 **Earthsight:** Partially Penetrative (through earth/stone) for Normal Sight
- 10 **Even Denser:** Knockback Resistance -10m (or an additional -10m)
- 10 **Master Tunneler I:** Add Fill In to Tunneling
- 10 **Master Tunneler II:** Add +4m and +3 PD to Tunneling
- 17 **Stone Body Weapons I:** Multipower with 15-point reserve, one slot HA +3d6, one slot HKA 1d6
- 15 **Stone Body Weapons II:** Armor Piercing (+¼) for up to 60 STR
- 5 **Underground Survival:** Life Support (Extended Breathing: 1 END per Minute; Safe Environment: Intense Heat, High Pressure)

SKILL SETS**Cost Skill Set**

- 5 **Geologist Set:** SS: Geology (INT Roll), Survival (Mountains, Desert, or Underground)
- 7 **Spelunker Set:** Climbing, SS: Speleology 11-, Survival (Underground)

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL EARTH/STONE COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

BODY OF EARTH/STONE COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Physical Complication:** Massive (weighs 16-31 times human normal) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MYSTIC EARTH/STONE COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 10 **Susceptibility:** takes 2d6 every 5 Minutes when not in contact with the ground (Common)
- 10 **Vulnerability:** 1½ x STUN from Fire Attacks (Common), *or* 2 x STUN from Air/Wind Attacks (Uncommon) *or* 2 x STUN from Water Attacks (Uncommon)



ELECTRICITY

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
8	ED	6		
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
36	STUN	8		

Total Characteristics Cost: 100
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 190

Cost Powers

- 90 **Electricity Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
- 40 **Electricity Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 40 **Electricity Movement:** choose one Movement Power
- 20 **Electricity Secondary Powers:** choose 20 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 20 Choose 20 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 210

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

- 6f **Lightning Bolt I:** Blast 12d6
- 6f **Lightning Bolt II:** RKA 2½d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼)
- 6f **Ball Lightning:** Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (25m Radius; +1)
- 6f **Stunning Zap:** Blast 6d6, NND (defense is ED Resistant Protection that Costs Endurance or is insulated; +1)
- 5f+1 **Lightning Flare:** Blast 8d6 + Sight Group Flash 4d6, Linked (-½) *plus* +1 CON
- 6f **Easy Lightning Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)
- 6f **Direct Current Paralysis:** Entangle 3d6, 3 PD/3 ED, Takes No Damage From Attacks (+1)
- 1f+5 **Lightning Punch:** HA +4d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½) *plus* +5 STR
- 6f **Cyberkinetic Control:** Mind Control 12d6 (Machine class of minds)
- 6f **Cyberkinetic Illusions:** Mental Illusions 12d6 (Machine class of minds)
- 6f **Cyberkinetic Searching:** Mind Scan 12d6 (Machine class of minds)
- 6f **Cyberpathy:** Telepathy 12d6 (Machine class of minds)

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 40 **Electric Shield I:** Resistant Protection (15 PD/15 ED), Costs Endurance (-½) *plus* Damage Negation (-2 DCs Energy)
- 40 **Electric Shield II:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Electricity Form I:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Normal
- 40 **Electricity Form II:** Desolidification (affected by Electricity, Metal, or Water attacks)

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (90)

AGILE ELECTRICITY

Cost Characteristic

- 20 +10 DEX
- 3 +3 CON
- 8 +8 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 2 +2 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 3 +6 STUN

TOUGH ELECTRICITY

Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 8 +8 CON
- 10 +2 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 8 +8 PD
- 8 +8 ED
- 2 +2 REC
- 4 +20 END
- 5 +5 BODY
- 5 +10 STUN

CYBERKINETIC ELECTRICITY

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 10 +10 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 5 +1 OCV
- 5 +1 DCV
- 15 +5 OMCV
- 12 +4 DMCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 2 +2 PD
- 3 +3 ED
- 4 +4 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 2 +4 STUN



MOVEMENT POWERS

Cost Power

- 40 **Lightning-portation:** Teleportation 40m
- 40 **Conductive Teleportation:** Teleportation 40m; Only Between Conductors Or Through Wires (-½) *plus* an additional 13 points' worth of Secondary Powers
- 40 **Riding The Lightning:** Flight 40m; Only Along Electrical Wires (-¾) *plus* an additional 17 points' worth of Secondary Powers

SECONDARY POWERS

Cost Power

- 13 **Charge Me Up!:** Aid DEX and SPD 3d6, Expanded Effect (+½); Aid Self Only (-1)
- 17 **Electric Sheath:** RKA 1d6, Area Of Effect (Personal Surface – Damage Shield; +¼), Constant (+½); No Range (-½)
- 20 **Electrosense:** Detect Electrical Fields (INT Roll) (no Sense Group), Range, Targeting
- 5 **Flare-Resistant Eyes:** Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
- 20 **Power Absorption:** Absorption 30 BODY (energy, half to END, half to STUN); Electricity Only (-½)
- 17 **Power Down:** Drain Electricity Powers 2d6, Variable Effect (any one Electricity power at a time; +½); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Limited Range (15m; -¼)
- 17 **Power Up:** Healing END 6d6; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Only Works On Electricity-Based Characters/Endurance Reserves (-2)

SKILLS

Cost Skill Set

- 9 **Cyberkinetic Manipulation Set:** Computer Programming, Security Systems, Systems Operation
- 9 **Electrician Set:** Electronics, SS: Electrical Engineering (INT), Systems Operation

COMPLICATIONS SETS

GENERAL ELECTRICITY COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 10 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from Water Attacks (Uncommon)

MUTANT ELECTRICITY COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 10 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from an Uncommon attack form (typically Water)

WEAK ELECTRICITY COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 15 **Susceptibility:** to being restrained with metal, 1d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon)
- 15 **Vulnerability:** 1½ x STUN (or BODY) from Metal Attacks (Very Common)
- 10 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN (or BODY) from Water Attacks (Uncommon)



FIRE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
8	ED	6		
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
36	STUN	8		

Total Characteristics Cost: 90
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 180

Cost Powers

- 90 **Fire Attacks:** choose Multipower Set or Pyrokinesis Set
- 40 **Fire Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 40 **Fiery Flight:** Flight 40m (if character cannot fly, spend these 40 points on something else)
- 20 **Fire Secondary Powers:** choose 20 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 30 Choose 30 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 220

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Power

Multipower Set

- 60 **Fire Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five of the following slots:
- 6f **Fire Bolt:** Blast 12d6
- 6f **Fire Beam:** RKA 2½d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 6f **Fireball:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½)
- 6f **Mini-Fireballs:** Blast 8d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½)
- 6f **Dragon's Breath Blast:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +½)
- 5f+1 **Flashfire Blast:** Blast 8d6 + Sight Group Flash 4d6, Linked (-½) *plus* +1 CON
- 6f **Dessication:** Blast 6d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Safe Environment: Intense Heat]; +1)
- 6f **Extinguish:** Dispel 13d6, Variable Effect (any Fire Power one at a time; +½)
- 6f **Wall Of Fire:** RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (25m long, 4m high Line; +¾), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 4f+2 **Advanced Fire Sheath:** RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (personal Surface — Damage Shield; +¼), Armor Piercing (+¼), Constant (+½); No Range (-½) *plus* +2 REC

Pyrokinesis Set (90 points total)

- 40 **Pyrokinesis:** Telekinesis (60 "STR"); Only Works On Fire (-1), Unified Power (-¼)
- 30 **Quench:** Drain Fire 2½d6, Variable Effect (any Fire Power one at a time; +½); Unified Power (-¼)
- 20 **Stoke:** Aid Fire 4d6, Variable Effect (any Fire Power one at a time; +½); Only Aid Other (-½), Unified Power (-¼)

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (90)

BURNING SPEED

Cost Characteristic

- 20 +10 DEX
- 3 +3 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 2 +2 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 10 +10 REC
- 3 +15 END

ENDURING FIRE

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 8 +8 CON
- 10 +2 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 8 +8 PD
- 8 +8 ED
- 12 +12 REC
- 4 +20 END
- 5 +10 STUN

SMOLDERING FIRE

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 4 +4 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 12 +12 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 2 +4 STUN



DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 40 **Fire-Shield I:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Fire-Shield II:** Resistant Protection (15 PD/15 ED), Costs Endurance (-½) *plus* Damage Negation (-1 DC Physical and Energy)
- 40 **Fire-Shield + Point Defense:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED), Costs Endurance (-½) *plus* Deflection; Only Versus Physical Missiles (-¼) *plus* an additional 4 points' worth of Secondary Powers
- 40 **Fire Form:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Normal

SECONDARY POWERS

Cost Power

- 17 **Basic Fire Sheath:** RKA 1d6, Area Of Effect (personal Surface — Damage Shield; +¼), Constant (+½); No Range (-½)
- 5 **Eyes Of Fire:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 **Eyes Of Fire:** Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
- 20 **Fire Absorption:** Absorption 30 BODY (energy, half to END, half to STUN); Fire/Heat Only (-½)
- 20 **Fire Protection:** Resistant Protection (+20 ED); Only Versus Fire (-½)
- 16 **Missile Melting:** Deflection; Only Versus Physical Missiles (-¼)
- 3 **Temperature Sense:** Detect Temperature (INT Roll)
- 4 **Warmth Control:** Life Support (Safe Environments: Intense Cold; Intense Heat)

SKILLS

Cost Skill Set

- 7 **Firefighter Set:** Demolitions, PS: Firefighter 11-, SS: Arson/Explosion Investigation 11-
- 8 **Solar Flare Set:** AK: The Solar System 11-, SS: Astronomy (INT), SS: Heliology (INT)
- 6 **Vulcanism Set:** SS: Geology (INT), SS: Vulcanology (INT)

COMPLICATIONS SETS

GENERAL FIRE COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity or Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT FIRE COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity or Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 10 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from an Uncommon attack form (typically Ice/Cold or Water)

FIRE FORM COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity or Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 20 **Susceptibility(ies) and/or Vulnerability(ies)** representing the fact that the character's body is made of fire

GADGETEER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	EGO	5	12-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	PD	3		
5	ED	3		
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristics Cost: 90 + choose one Characteristics Set = 180

Cost Powers

- 75 **Gadgeteer Attacks:** Choose Spare Parts Arsenal or Collection Of Gadgets
- 40 **Gadgeteer Defense:** choose 40 points' worth of Defense Powers
- 40 **Gadgeteer Movement:** choose one Movement Power
- 35 **Gadgeteer Secondary Powers:** choose 35 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 30 Choose 30 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 220

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Power

- 75 **Spare Parts Arsenal:** Variable Power Pool, 60 Pool + 60 Control Cost; all slots OAF (-1)
- 40 **Collection Of Gadgets:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; OIF (Gadget Harness or the like; -½)
- 3f **1) Sonic Blaster:** Blast 12d6; OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0)
- 2f **2) Laser Pistol:** RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼); OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0)
- 3f **3) Enervator Ray:** Drain 4d6, Variable Effect (any one Characteristic at a time; +½); OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0)
- 2f **4) Energy Grenades:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 8 Charges (-½)
- 2f **5) Glue Grenades:** Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED; OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 8 Charges (-½)
- 3f **6) Flare Generator:** Sight Group Flash 12d6; OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 16 Charges (-0)
- 4f **7) Intangibility Mesh:** Desolidification (affected by Sonic attacks), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 2f **8) Cloaking Mesh:** Invisibility to Sight Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 4f **9) Telekinesis Generator:** Telekinesis (40 STR); OIF (-½), 16 Charges (-0)
- 3f **10) Hologram Generator:** Images to Sight and Hearing Groups, -4 to PER Rolls, Area Of Effect (8m Radius; +½), 30 Charges (+¼); IAF (-½)
- 4f **11) Strength Augmentation Mesh:** +40 STR, 60 Charges (+½); OIF (-½)
- 3f **12) Darkness Ray:** Darkness to Sight Group 12m radius; OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0)

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (90)

ADVENTURING GADGETEER

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 6 +2 OMCV
- 6 +2 DMCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 3 +3 PD
- 3 +3 ED
- 4 +4 REC
- 5 +10 STUN

BRAINIAC

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 5 +5 INT
- 6 +6 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 9 +3 OMCV
- 9 +3 DMCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 6 +6 REC
- 5 +10 STUN

SOUND MIND, SOUND BODY

Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
- 12 +6 DEX
- 7 +7 CON
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 5 +1 OCV
- 5 +1 DCV
- 6 +2 OMCV
- 6 +2 DMCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 3 +3 PD
- 3 +3 ED
- 4 +4 REC
- 16 Martial Arts (16 points' worth)

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Force-Field Belt I:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED); OIF (-½)
- 40 **Force-Field Belt II:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED/10 Mental Defense/10 Power Defense); OIF (-½)
- 20 **Force-Field Belt III:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED); OIF (-½)
- 40 **Impact/Energy Absorption Field Belt I:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Resistant; OIF (-½)
- 40 **Impact/Energy Absorption Field Belt II:** Damage Negation (-6 DCs Physical and Energy) *or* any other combination that adds up to -12 DCs; OIF (-½)
- 10 **Helmet Psionic Shielding:** Mental Defense (15 points); OIF (-½)
- 10 **Attuned Force-Field:** Power Defense (15 points); OIF (-½)
- 10 **Helmet Flare Shielding:** Sight Group Flash Defense (15 points); OIF (-½)

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Jetboots:** Running +48m, Usable As Leaping (+¼); OIF (-½)
- 40 **Jetpack:** Flight 60m; OIF (-½)
- 40 **Jetskates:** Running +60m; OIF (-½)
- 40 **Springboots:** Leaping 120m; OIF (-½)
- 40 **Teleportation Matrix:** Teleportation 60m; OIF (-½)

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 9 **Gauntlet Buzzsaw:** HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+¼); OIF (-½), No STR Bonus (-½)
- 7 **Helmet Universal Camera System:** Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees) for Sight Group; OIF (-½)
- 6 **Helmet Communications Suite:** HRRP (Radio Group); OIF (-½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
- 2 **Helmet Audio Systems:** Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group); OIF (-½)
- 10 **Helmet Audio Systems:** Telescopic (+10 PER versus the Range Modifier) for Hearing Group; OIF (-½)
- 3 **Helmet Light Intensifier System:** Nightvision; OIF (-½)
- 13 **Helmet Linguistics Computer:** Universal Translator; OIF (-½)
- 7 **Helmet Radar Array:** Radar (Radio Group); OIF (-½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
- 10 **Helmet Telescopic Lenses:** Telescopic (+10 PER versus the Range Modifier) for Sight Group; OIF (-½)
- 5 **Targeting System:** +1 with All Ranged Attacks *or* All HTH Attacks (8 Active Points); OIF (-½)
- 3 **Thermographic Systems:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group); OIF (-½)

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 13 **Brainiac Set:** Cramming, Eidetic Memory, Lightning Calculator
- 13 **Engineer Set:** Demolitions, Inventor, Security Systems, Weaponsmith (4 points' worth)
- 10 **Tinkerer Set:** Electronics, Inventor, Weaponsmith (4 points' worth)
- 20 **My Li'l Robot Buddy:** Follower (robot built on 100 Total Points)

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL GADGETEER COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT GADGETEER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

OBSESSED GADGETEER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 25 **Hunted:** 25 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Psychological Complication:** Fascinated By Technology/ Science (Common, Strong)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)



ICE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
8	ED	6		
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
36	STUN	8		

Total Characteristics Cost: 90
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 180

Cost Powers

- 90 **Ice Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
- 40 **Ice Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 20 **Ice Slides:** Running +20m, Usable As Flight (Gliding) (+¼); Physical Manifestation (-¼), Side Effects (leaves big chunks of ice around the environment; -0) (if character doesn't use Ice Slides, spend these 20 points on something else)
- 30 **Ice Secondary Powers:** choose 30 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 40 Choose 40 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 220

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Power

- 6f **Ice Blast:** Blast 12d6
- 6f **Icicle Blast:** Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 6f **Easy Ice Blast:** Blast 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)
- 6f **Ice Darts:** RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (x2; +½), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 6f **Deep Freeze:** Blast 6d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Safe Environment: Intense Cold]; +1)
- 6f **Frozen Stiff:** Drain DEX and SPD 4d6, Expanded Effect (+½)
- 3f+3 **Ice Block:** Entangle 6d6, 8 PD/4 ED; Vulnerable (Fire/Heat; -1) *plus* +3 ED
- 6f **Blizzard:** Change Environment, -3 Sight Group PER Rolls and -5 Temperature Levels, Area Of Effect (64m Radius; +1¼), Personal Immunity (+¼)
- 6f **Ice Sheet:** Change Environment, -3 to DEX Rolls to remain standing, Long-Lasting (up to permanent in cold areas), Area Of Effect (32m Radius Surface; +1¼), Personal Immunity (+¼)
- 6f **Ice Wall:** Barrier 12 PD/8 ED, 10 BODY (up to 12m long, 4m high, and 1m thick)
- 2f+4 **Ice Gauntlets:** HA +4d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼) *plus* +3 STR, +1 CON

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (90)

BLACK ICE

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +10 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 10 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 2 +2 PD
- 2 +2 ED
- 4 +4 REC
- 3 +3 BODY
- 4 +8 STUN

ICE-COLD

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 5 +5 INT
- 5 +5 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 6 +6 PD
- 7 +7 ED
- 2 +2 REC
- 5 +10 STUN

THIN ICE

Cost Characteristic

- 16 +8 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 3 +1 OMCV
- 3 +1 DMCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 2 +2 REC

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Ice Armor I:** Resistant Protection (24 PD/16 ED); Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Ice Armor II:** Resistant Protection (18 PD/12 ED); Costs Endurance (-½) *plus* Damage Negation (-2 DCs Physical, -1 DC Energy); Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Ice Armor III:** Resistant Protection (24 PD/16 ED); Ablative (-½)
- 40 **Ice Form I:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Resistant; Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Ice Form II:** Damage Negation (-6 DCs Physical and Energy); Costs Endurance (-½)

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

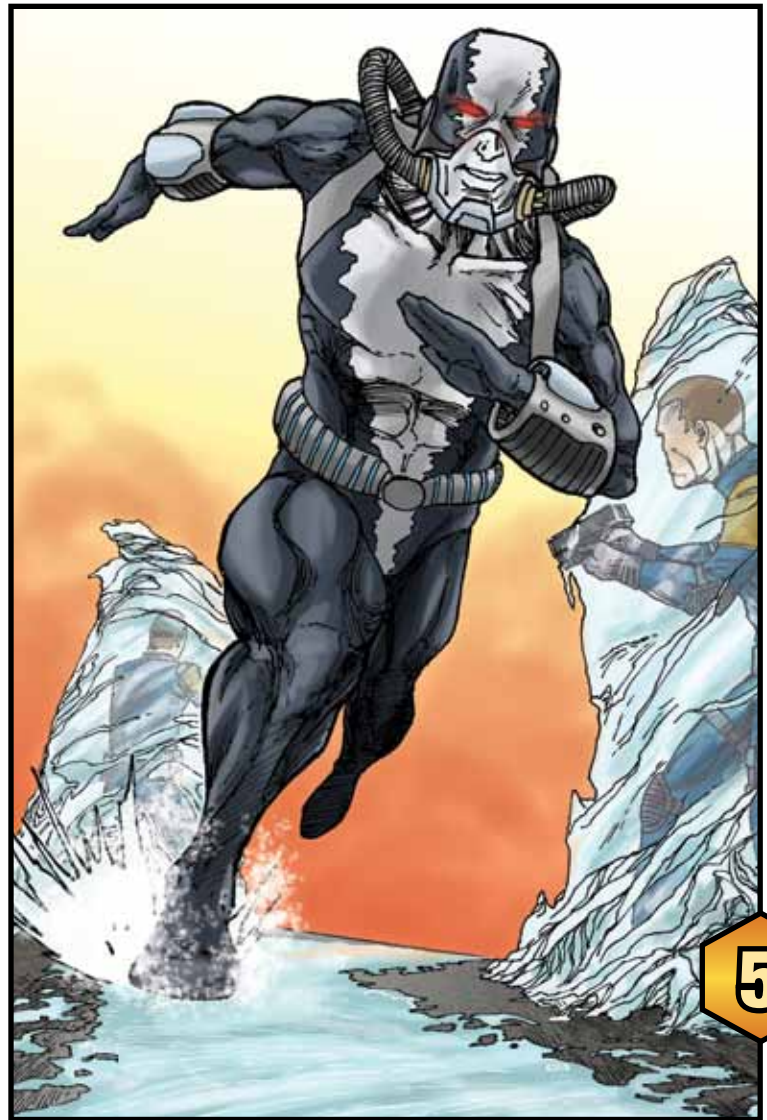
- 13 **Clear Ice Form:** Invisibility to Sight Group; Chameleon (-½)
- 5 **Coldvision:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
- 17 **Ice/Cold Protection:** Resistant Protection (+20 ED); Only Versus Ice/Cold (-¾)
- 18 **Rescue Ice Slide:** Flight 20m, Usable As Attack (+1¼), Ranged (+½); Costs Endurance (-½), Gliding (-1), Only To Slide People To The Ground (-¼), Physical Manifestation (-¼), Side Effects (leaves big chunks of ice around the environment; -0) (note: the GM may permit the character to buy this ability in a Multipower with Ice Slides, or to apply Unified Power (-¼) to both powers)
- 3 **Temperature Sense:** Detect Temperature (INT Roll)
- 4 **Warmth Control:** Life Support (Safe Environments: Intense Cold; Intense Heat)

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 6 **Arctic Survival Set:** Environmental Movement (Icewalking), Survival (Arctic/Subarctic) (INT +1)
- 7 **Cryogenics Set:** SS: Cryogenics (INT +2), SS: Physics 11-

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL ICE COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

**MUTANT ICE COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 10 **Vulnerability:** 1½ x STUN from a Common attack form (typically Fire/Heat)

ICE FORM COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 20 **Susceptibility(ies) and/or Vulnerability(ies)** representing the fact that the character's body is made of ice

MAGNETISM

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
8	ED	6		
10	REC	6		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
32	STUN	6		
				Total Characteristics Cost: 90
				+ choose one Characteristics Set = 180

Cost Powers

- 90 **Magnetism Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
- 40 **Magnetism Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 40 **Magnetic Force Riding:** Flight 40m (if character cannot fly, spend these 40 points on something else)
- 25 **Magnetism Secondary Powers:** choose 25 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 25 Choose 25 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 220

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

- 4f+2 **Magnetokinesis I:** Telekinesis (40 STR); Only Works On Ferrous Metals (-½) *plus* +2 CON
- 5f+1 **Magnetokinesis II:** Telekinesis (40 STR); Only Works On Metals (-¼) *plus* +1 CON
- 6f **Magnetic Bolt:** Blast 12d6
- 6f **Easy Magnetic Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)
- 4f+2 **Metallic Wrap-Up:** Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED; OIF (requires sufficient amount of ferrous metals of opportunity; -½) *plus* +1 DEX
- 6f **Ferrous Disruption I:** Dispel 13d6, Variable Effect (any Ferrous Metal-based power one at a time; +½)
- 3f+3 **Ferrous Disruption II:** RKA 4d6; Only Works On Ferrous Metals/Metal Objects (-1) *plus* +3 CON
- 6f **Electromagnetic Pulse:** Dispel 13d6, Variable Effect (any Electrical Device power one at a time; +½)
- 3f+3 **Gauss Blast:** Blast 9d6; OIF (small, blunt ferrous metal objects of opportunity; -½) *plus* +3 INT

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 40 **Magnetic Shield I:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Magnetic Shield II:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED) plus Damage Negation (-1 DC Physical and Energy)
- 40 **Magnetic Shield III:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED) *plus* Deflection; Only Versus Ferrous Metal Physical Projectiles (-1)

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (90)

AGILE MAGNETISM

Cost Characteristic

- 20 +10 DEX
- 4 +4 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 5 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 2 +2 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 2 +4 STUN

TOUGH MAGNETISM

Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 8 +8 CON
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 8 +8 PD
- 8 +8 ED
- 4 +20 END
- 2 +2 BODY
- 5 +10 STUN

WELL-ROUNDED MAGNETISM

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 3 +1 DMCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 4 +4 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 9 +9 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 2 +4 STUN

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 15 **Electromagnetic Radar:** Radar (Radio Group)
- 15 **Enhanced Magnetokinesis I:** Telekinesis (+20 STR); Only Works On Ferrous Metals (-½), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)
- 17 **Enhanced Magnetokinesis II:** Telekinesis (+20 STR); Only Works On Metals (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)
- 5 **Enhanced Magnetokinesis III:** Fine Manipulation for Telekinesis; Only Works On Ferrous Metals (-½), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)
- 6 **Enhanced Magnetokinesis IV:** Fine Manipulation for Telekinesis; Only Works On Metals (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)
- 21 **Magnetic Field Sense:** Spatial Awareness; Costs Endurance (-½)
- 8 **Magnetic Shielding:** Radio Group Flash Defense (8 points)
- 10 **Magnetic Storage Manipulation:** Computer Programming +6; Cost Endurance (-½)

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 8 **Theoretical Physicist Set:** SS: Magnetism (INT), SS: Physics (INT +2)
- 9 **Metal Parts Manipulator Set:** Lockpicking, Mechanics, Security Systems

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL MAGNETISM COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT MAGNETISM COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

**5****MAGNETISM FORM COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 20 **Susceptibility(ies) and/or Vulnerability(ies)** representing the fact that the character's body is made of coherent magnetic force

MARTIAL ARTIST

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
20	DEX	20	13-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
3	OMCV	0		
4	DMCV	3		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
10	PD	8		
8	ED	6		
8	REC	4		
40	END	4		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		

Total Characteristics Cost: 125
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 225

Cost Powers

- 60 **Martial Artist Attacks:** choose one Attack Power
- 20 **Martial Artist Defense:** choose 20 points' worth of Defense Powers
- 20 **Martial Artist Movement:** choose one Movement Power
- 30 **Martial Artist Secondary Powers:** choose 30 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 45 Choose 45 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 175

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Power

- 60 **Standard Martial Arts:** 60 points' worth of Martial Arts (including Extra DCs, Weapon Elements, and the like, but not additional related Skills)
- 60 **Skill Level Martial Arts:** 20 points' worth of Martial Arts; +5 with HTH Combat
- 40 **Martial Arts Multipower:** Multipower, 40-point reserve
- 3f **1) Power Punch/Kick:** HA +8d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 3f **2) Enhanced Punch/Kick I:** HA +6d6, choose one +¼ Advantage; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 3f **3) Enhanced Punch/Kick II:** HA +6d6, choose a different +¼ Advantage; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 3f **4) Augmented Punch/Kick I:** HA +5d6, choose +½ worth of Advantages; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 3f **5) Augmented Punch/Kick II:** HA +5d6, choose +½ worth of Advantages; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 3f **6) Ultimate Punch/Kick:** HA +4d6, choose +1 worth of Advantages; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 2f **7) Trained Strength:** +40 STR; Only To Disarm, Escape, Grab, And Throw (-¾)

5

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (100)

MYSTIC MARTIAL ARTIST

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +10 STR
- 6 +3 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 10 +10 INT
- 10 +10 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 5 +1 OCV
- 5 +1 DCV
- 12 +4 OMCV
- 12 +4 DMCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 5 +5 REC
- 5 +5 BODY
- 5 +10 STUN

SWIFT MARTIAL ARTIST

Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 5 +5 PD
- 5 +5 ED
- 4 +4 REC
- 5 +10 STUN

TOUGH MARTIAL ARTIST

Cost Characteristic

- 15 +15 STR
- 10 +10 CON
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 10 +10 PD
- 12 +12 ED
- 3 +15 END
- 5 +5 BODY
- 10 +20 STUN

- 40 **Mystic Martial Arts Attacks:** Multipower, 40-point reserve
- 3f **1) Ch'i Punch:** HA +8d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 4f **2) Dragon's Breath Fist:** HKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+¼)
- 3f **3) Ch'i Phoenix Fist:** HA +4d6, ACV (uses OMCV versus DMCV; +¼), Penetrating (+½); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 3f **4) Projected Ch'i:** Mental Blast 4d6; Limited Normal Range (20m; -¼)
- 3f **5) Ch'i Leeching:** Drain Characteristics 2d6, Expanded Effect (two Characteristics simultaneously; +½), Variable Effect (any two Characteristics at a time; +½); No Range (-½)
- 4f **6) Ch'i Sunburst:** Sight Group Flash 8d6

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 10 **Arrow-Blocking:** +4 OCV; Only To Block Ranged Attacks (-1)
- 10 **Iron Skin Technique I:** Resistant (+½) for 10 PD/10 ED (adjust cost for other totals)
- 20 **Iron Skin Technique II:** Damage Negation (-2 DCs Physical and Energy)
- 10 **Shield:** +4 DCV; OIF (-½), Requires A DEX Roll (-½)
- 20 **Spirit Dragon Mantle:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 20 **Supreme Dodging:** +4 DCV

MOVEMENT POWERS

Cost Power

- 20 **Acrobatic Leaping And Running:** Leaping +30m; Requires An Acrobatics Roll (-½) plus Running +10m
- 20 **Leaping And Running:** Leaping +20m and Running +10m
- 20 **Martial Leap:** Leaping +40m
- 20 **Martial Swiftess:** Running +20m

SECONDARY POWERS

Cost Power

- 9 **Ch'i Healing:** Healing BODY and STUN 2d6, Expanded Effect (+½); Extra Time (1 Turn; -1¼), Concentration (½ DCV throughout; -½), Requires An EGO Roll (-½)
- 15 **Ghost-Striking Hand:** Affects Desolidified (+½) for a single Martial Maneuver or HA with 60 Active Points' worth of effect; Increased Endurance Cost (x2; +½), Requires A DEX Roll (-½)
- 9 **It's All In The Reflexes:** Reflection (30 Active Points' worth); Only Works Against Thrown Objects/Weapons (-¾), Requires A DEX Roll (-½)
- 15 **Ninja Invisibility:** Invisibility to Sight Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Only Works In Darkness Or Shadows (-½), Requires A Stealth Roll (-½)
- 3 **Move Without Trace:** Flight 6m; Only Along The Ground (-¼), Requires A Stealth Roll (-½)
- 6 **Running Up Walls:** Clinging (normal STR); Only On Vertical Surfaces (-0), Must Make A Half Move Each Phase (-¼), Requires An Acrobatics Roll (-½)
- 14 **Saiminjutsu:** Mind Control 8d6; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Gestures (-¼), No Range (-½), Requires An EGO Roll (-½)
- 19 **Weapon Of Power:** HKA 1½d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), No Knock-back (-¼)

SKILLS

Cost Skill Set

- 6 **Alertness Set:** Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
- 15 **Blinded Warrior Set:** Combat Sense
- 10 **Dodging Set:** Defense Maneuver IV
- 9 **Lightning Warrior Set:** Fast Draw (two WF categories), Lightning Reflexes (+3 to act first with All Actions)
- 15 **Martial Intuition Set:** Danger Sense (INT)
- 6 **Mystic Warrior Set:** KS: Arcane And Occult Lore (INT), KS: Chinese History And Culture (INT Roll)
- 10 **Two-Handed Fighting Set:** Rapid Attack (HTH only); Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH only)

COMPLICATIONS SETS

GENERAL MARTIAL ARTIST COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MYSTIC MARTIAL ARTIST COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 20 **Psychological Complication** that reflects a vow, oath, curse, or other circumstances related to the character's mystic powers
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

TRAINED MARTIAL ARTIST COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)



MENTALIST

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
20	EGO	10	13-	
15	PRE	5	13-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
7	OMCV	12		
7	DMCV	12		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
6	ED	4		
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
32	STUN	6		

Total Characteristics Cost: 125
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 200

Cost Powers

- 90 **Mentalist Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
- 30 **Mentalist Defense:** choose 30 points' worth of Defense Powers
- 20 **Mentalist Movement:** choose one Movement Power
- 30 **Mentalist Secondary Powers:** choose 30 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 30 Choose 30 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 200

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

- 6f **Mental Assault:** Mental Blast 6d6
- 6f **Mental Control:** Mind Control 12d6
- 6f **Mindscales:** Mental Illusions 12d6
- 6f **Mental Searching:** Mind Scan 12d6
- 6f **Mindreading:** Telepathy 12d6
- 4f+2 **Mental Paralysis:** Entangle 2d6, 4 PD/2 ED, ACV (uses OMCV against DMCV; +¼), Takes No Damage From Attacks (+¾), Works Against EGO, Not STR (+¼); Mental Defense Adds To EGO (-½) *plus* +2 EGO
- 6f **Psychokinesis:** Telekinesis (22 STR), ACV (uses OMCV against DCV; +0), Line Of Sight (+½), Works Against EGO, Not STR (+¼); Mental Defense Adds To EGO (-½)
- 6f **Brain-Blast:** Blast 4d6, ACV (uses OMCV against DCV; +0), AVAD (Mental Defense; +1), Does BODY (+1)
- 6f **Brain Drain:** Drain Characteristics 4d6, Variable Effect (any one Characteristic at a time; +½), ACV (uses OMCV against DCV; +0), AVAD (Mental Defense; +0)
- 6f **Remote Viewing:** Clairvoyance (Sight and Hearing Groups), x4 Range (1,200m), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 30 **Psychokinetic Shield I:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED)
- 30 **Psychokinetic Shield II:** Resistant Protection (7 PD/7 ED/6 Mental Defense)
- 16 **Armored Costume:** Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED); OIF (-½)
- 14 **Mental Shields:** Mental Defense (14 points)

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (75)

ATHLETIC MENTALIST

Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 5 +5 PRE
- 5 +1 OCV
- 5 +1 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 4 +4 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 2 +2 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 3 +3 BODY
- 5 +10 STUN

BIG BRAIN MENTALIST

Cost Characteristic

- 6 +3 DEX
- 3 +3 CON
- 10 +10 INT
- 5 +5 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 9 +3 OMCV
- 9 +3 DMCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 2 +2 PD
- 2 +2 ED
- 7 +7 REC
- 3 +15 END
- 4 +8 STUN

WELL-ROUNDED MENTALIST

Cost Characteristic

- 6 +3 DEX
- 3 +3 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 5 +1 OCV
- 5 +1 DCV
- 3 +1 OMCV
- 3 +1 DMCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 3 +3 PD
- 3 +3 ED
- 4 +4 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 3 +3 BODY
- 4 +8 STUN

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 20 **Jet-Belt:** Flight 30m; OIF (-½)
 20 **Psychokinetic Levitation:** Flight 20m

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

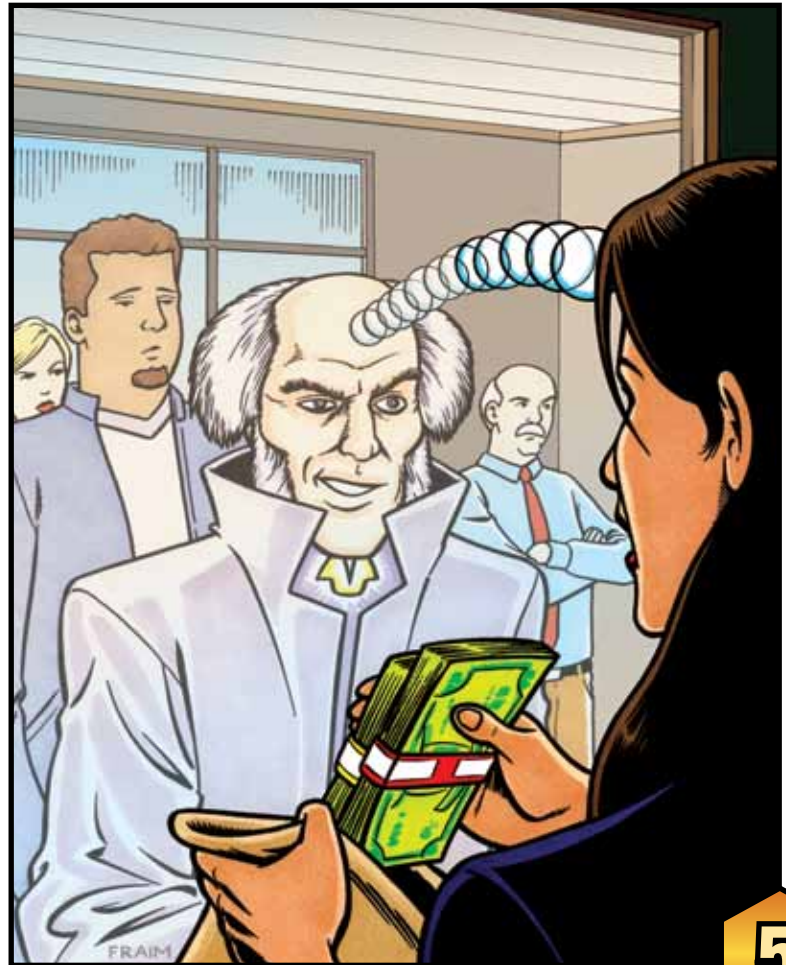
- 12 **Enhanced Mental Attack:** +30 points of effect for any one Multipower slot based on a Mental Power; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END; -1)
 30 **Mental Link:** Mind Link, any 8 minds at once
 30 **Mental Scanning:** Mind Scan 12d6; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)
 10 **Mental Shields:** Mental Defense (10 points)
 10 **Mindsense:** Detect Minds (INT Roll) (Mental Group), Discriminatory
 17 **Precognition:** Clairsentience (Sight and Hearing Groups), Precognition; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Precognition Only (-1), Vague And Unclear (-½)
 5 **Psionic Sense:** Mental Awareness
 17 **Retrocognition:** same as Precognition option, but change to Retrocognition

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 25 **Combat Precognitive Set:** +1 with All Combat, Combat Sense
 5 **Neuroscientist Set:** SS: Biology 11-, SS: Neurobiology (INT)
 7 **Parapsychologist Set:** KS: Arcane And Occult Lore 11-, SS: Parapsychology (INT), SS: Psychology 11-

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL MENTALIST COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)



5

MUTANT MENTALIST COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

SENSITIVE MENTALIST COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Enraged:** Berserk when affected by any Mental Power (Uncommon), go 8-, recover 11-
 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

METAMORPH

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	13-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
6	ED	4		
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	0		
Total Characteristics Cost: 90 + choose one Characteristics Set = 190				

Cost Powers

- 90 **Metamorph Powers:** choose one Metamorph Power Set
- 30 **Metamorph Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 30 **Metamorph Movement:** choose one Movement Power (and if necessary additional points' worth of Secondary Powers)
- 30 **Metamorph Secondary Powers:** choose 30 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 30 Choose 30 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 210

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

METAMORPH POWERS

Cost Power

- 90 **Animal Forms Set:** Multiform (64 alternate animal forms each built on up to 300 Total Points)
- 90 **Density Alteration Set:** Density Increase (400,000 kg mass, +60 STR, +12 PD/+12 ED, -24m KB) *plus* Desolidification *plus* +2 CON
- 90 **Growth Set:** Growth (+45 STR, +15 CON, +15 PRE, +9 PD, +9 ED, +9 BODY, +18 STUN, +7m Reach, +36m Running, -18m KB, 50,000 kg, +6 OCV to hit character, +6 PER Rolls to perceive character, 16 m tall, 8 m wide)
- 90 **Lycanthrope Set:** Multiform (2 alternate forms [animal-man and large animal] built on up to 400 Total Points) *plus* +5 points' worth of Secondary Powers
- 90 **Shapechanging Set I:** Multiform (4 alternate forms each built on up to 400 Total Points)
- 90 **Shapechanging Set II:** Shape Shift (Sight, Hearing, Smell/Taste, and Touch Groups, any shape), Cellular, Imitation, Instant Change, Makeover, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)
- 90 **Shrinking Set:** buy the following powers:
 - (36) Shrinking (.032 m tall [about 1 inch], .0004 kg mass, -12 to PER Rolls to perceive character, +12 DCV, takes +36m KB)
 - (16) **Growth Momentum:** HA +9d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼), Proportional (see 6E1 282; -½), Lockout (-½), Only Works Against Properly-Positioned Opponent (see 6E1 282; -½)
 - (30) **Walking Between Molecules:** Desolidification (affected by any attack that breaks the object character is in); Only To Pass Through Solid Objects (-½) *plus* Clinging (normal STR); Only To Remain Merged With A Body/Object If It's Moved Involuntarily (-2), Linked (to Desolidification; -½)
 - (8) 8 additional points' worth of Secondary Powers or Skills

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (100)

FLEXIBLE METAMORPH

Cost Characteristic

- 20 +10 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 5 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 4 +4 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 2 +2 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 5 +10 STUN

STRONG METAMORPH

Cost Characteristic

- 15 +15 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 10 +10 CON
- 10 +10 PRE
- 5 +1 OCV
- 5 +1 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 9 +9 PD
- 9 +9 ED
- 6 +6 REC
- 5 +5 BODY
- 6 +12 STUN

WELL-ROUNDED METAMORPH

Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 3 +3 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 5 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 3 +1 DMCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 6 +6 PD
- 6 +6 ED
- 2 +2 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 5 +5 BODY
- 5 +10 STUN
- 10 Martial Arts (10 points' worth)

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 30 **Form Cohesion:** Resistant (+½) for up to 12 PD /12 ED; Linked (2 PD/2 ED per level of Shrinking used become Resistant; -¼) *plus* choose an additional 20 points' worth of Secondary Powers and Skills
- 30 **Nice Try, Little Man:** +15 PD and +15 ED; Only Applies Versus Attackers At Least One Size Template Smaller (-¼) *plus* +3 PD and +3 ED
- 30 **Physical Form Integrity:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 25%, Resistant
- 30 **Tougher Skin:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED)

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 30 **Enhanced/Altered Legs:** Leaping +30m and Running +15m
- 29 **Grow Wings:** Flight 44m; Restrainable (-½)
- 19 **Micro-Flight:** Flight 24m; Linked (to Shrinking, gains 4m Flight per 6 points of Shrinking used; -¼)
- 25 **Surfing The Net:** Teleportation 20m, MegaScale (1m = 100 km; +1½); Only Through Cable/Phone Lines (-1)

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 9 **Animalistic Senses I:** +3 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups
- 5 **Animalistic Senses II:** Tracking for Normal Smell
- 5 **Animalistic Senses III:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 **Animalistic Senses IV:** Nightvision
- 19 **Arms Into Blades:** HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+¼)
- 5 **Grow Gills:** Life Support (Expanded Breathing: breathe underwater)
- 8 **Horrific Transformation:** +20 PRE; Only For Fear-Based Presence Attacks During/Right After Transformation (-1½)
- 4 **Human Lockpick:** Lockpicking (DEX Roll +3); Costs Endurance (-½), Only Versus Mechanical Key Locks (-1)
- 15 **Natural Weaponry:** HKA 1d6
- 13 **Opacity Alteration:** Invisibility to Sight Group; Doesn't Affect Worn/Carried Objects (-½)
- 22 **Enter The Macroverse/Microverse:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (any location in a single dimension [the Macroverse or the Microverse], corresponding to the point character is at in this dimension)

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 8 **Biologist Set:** SS: Anatomy (INT Roll), SS: Biology (INT), SS: Zoology 11-
- 11 **Werewolf Set:** +1 HTH, Shadowing, Stealth
- 19 **Shapeshifting Combatant Set:** +2 HTH, Breakfall
- 7 **Size Physicist Set:** SS: Biology 11-, SS: Physics 11-, SS: Size Physics (INT)

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL METAMORPH COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

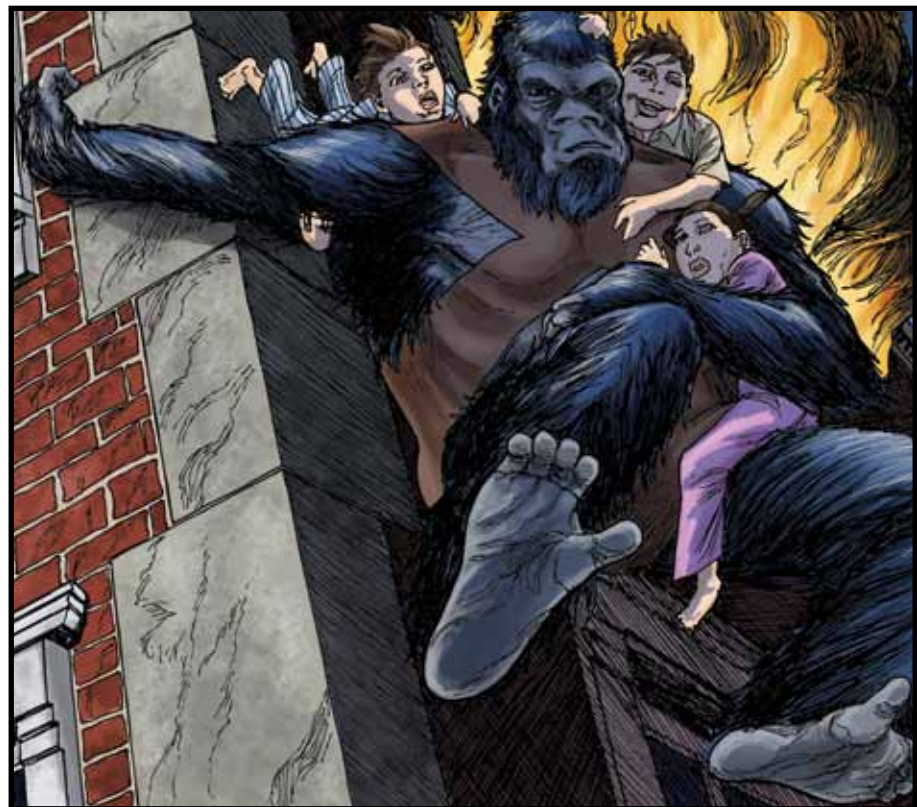
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

LYCANTHROPE METAMORPH COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 15 **Accidental Change:** 14- with an Uncommon circumstance, or 11- with a Common circumstance
- 15 **Hunted:** 15 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** one related to the character's lycanthropic nature
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT METAMORPH COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)



MYSTIC MASTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
15	EGO	5	12-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	PD	3		
5	ED	3		
6	REC	2		
50	END	6		
10	BODY	0		
28	STUN	4		

Total Characteristics Cost: 100
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 175

Cost Powers

- 105 **Mystic Powers:** Choose Mystic Mastery or Arts Arcane
40 **Mystic Defense:** choose 40 points' worth of Defense Powers
40 **Mystic Movement:** choose one Movement Power
20 **Mystic Secondary Powers:** choose 20 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 20 Choose 20 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 225

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

MYSTIC POWERS

Cost Power

- 105 **Mystic Mastery:** Variable Power Pool, 60 Pool
+ 60 Control Cost, Powers Can Be Changed
As A Half-Phase Action (+½) (must also take
Combat Mage Skill Set)
- 60 **Arts Arcane:** Multipower, 60-point reserve,
choose nine slots:
- 6f **Bolt Of Mystic Power I:** Blast 12d6
- 6f **Bolt Of Mystic Power II:** Blast 8d6 with any +½
Advantage
- 6f **Mystic Lightning:** RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing
(+¼), +21 Increased STUN Multiplier (+½),
Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 6f **Invoked Iridescence:** Sight and Hearing Group
Flash 11d6
- 6f **Invoked Illusions:** Sight, Hearing, Touch, and
Smell/Taste Images, -3 to PER Rolls, Area Of
Effect (16m Radius; +¾)
- 6f **Sleep-Spell:** Mental Blast 6d6
- 6f **Mystic Chains:** Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED
- 6f **Mind-Shackles:** Mind Control 12d6
- 6f **Mystic Blessing:** Aid Characteristics 5d6,
Expanded Effect (two Characteristics
simultaneously; +½), Variable Effect (any two
Characteristics at a time; +½)
- 6f **Weakness Spell:** Drain Characteristics 3d6,
Expanded Effect (two Characteristics
simultaneously; +½), Variable Effect (any two
Characteristics at a time; +½)
- 6f **Wizard's Hand:** Telekinesis (40 STR)
- 4f+2 **Mantle Of Concealment:** Invisibility to Sight
Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance
(0 END; +½) *plus* +2 INT
- 6f **Astral Ascension:** Desolidification (affected
by magic attacks), Reduced Endurance
(0 END; +½)

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (75)

MYSTIC BEING

Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
10 +5 DEX
5 +5 CON
3 +3 INT
2 +2 EGO
5 +5 PRE
5 +1 OCV
5 +1 DCV
10 +1 SPD
5 +5 PD
5 +5 ED
4 +4 REC
2 +10 END
3 +3 BODY
6 +12 STUN

MYSTIC SCHOLAR

Cost Characteristic

- 6 +3 DEX
3 +3 CON
5 +5 INT
8 +8 EGO
5 +5 PRE
5 +1 OCV
5 +1 DCV
9 +3 OMCV
9 +3 DMCV
10 +1 SPD
3 +3 PD
3 +3 ED
2 +2 REC
2 +10 END

WELL-ROUNDED MYSTIC

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
5 +5 CON
3 +3 INT
3 +3 EGO
5 +5 PRE
5 +1 OCV
5 +1 DCV
6 +2 OMCV
6 +2 DMCV
10 +1 SPD
3 +3 PD
3 +3 ED
4 +4 REC
2 +10 END
5 +10 STUN

- 4f+2 **Man Into Frog Spell:** Severe Transform 4d6 (human being into frog; heals back normally or if kissed by royalty); Limited Target (humans; $-\frac{1}{2}$) *plus* +2 EGO
- 6f **Mystic Barrier I:** Barrier 8 PD/8 ED, 8 BODY (up to 4m long, 3m high, and $\frac{1}{2}$ m thick), Non-Anchored, Opaque (Sight Group)
- 6f **Mystic Barrier II:** Barrier 12 PD/8 ED, 10 BODY (up to 12m long, 5m high, and $\frac{1}{2}$ m thick)

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 40 **Spell Of Protection I:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED); Costs Endurance ($-\frac{1}{2}$)
- 40 **Spell Of Protection II:** Resistant Protection (15 PD/15 ED/10 Power Defense); Costs Endurance ($-\frac{1}{2}$)
- 20 **Spell Of Protection III:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED); Costs Endurance ($-\frac{1}{2}$)
- 20 **Mystic Blocking:** Deflection
- 10 **Shield Of The Mind:** Mental Defense (10 points)
- 10 **Shield Of The Soul:** Power Defense (10 points)
- 30 **Tough Skin:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED)
- 10 **Unhuman Form:** Life Support (10 points' worth appropriate to character's form)

MOVEMENT POWERS

Cost Power

- 40 **Flight Spell:** Flight 40m
- 40 **Mage-Travel:** Teleportation 40m
- 40 **Monstrous Form:** Leaping +40m and Running +20m

SECONDARY POWERS

Cost Power

- 20 **Magesense:** Detect Magic (INT) (no Sense Group), Discriminatory, Range, Sense, Telescopic (+6 versus Range Modifier)
- 21 **Mystic Awareness:** Spatial Awareness; Costs Endurance ($-\frac{1}{2}$) (and take -1 point worth of Skills)
- 20 **Mystic Viewing:** Clairsentience (Sight Group)
- 20 **A Simple Spell Of Comprehension:** Universal Translator (INT)
- 20 **A Simple Spell Of Protection:** Life Support (Safe Environments: all; Self-Contained Breathing) *plus* +1 CON
- 20 **Trained Mind, Trained Body:** Martial Arts (20 points' worth)

SKILLS

Cost Skill Set

- 15 **Arcane Scholar Set:** Cryptography (Translation Only $-\frac{1}{2}$), KS: Arcane And Occult Lore (INT), 10 points' worth of KSs and Languages
- 7 **Archaeologist Set:** KS: History 11-, SS: Anthropology 11-, SS: Archaeology (INT)
- 19 **Combat Mage Set:** Power: Magic (INT Roll +8)
- 5 **Expert Set:** choose one KS (INT +2)
- 15 **Fallen God Set:** 15 points' worth of Skills pertaining to the god's sphere of influence (*e.g.*, Tactics and Weapon-smith for a war-god)
- 20 **Familiar:** one Follower built on 100 Total Points
- 8 **Mystic Creature Set:** Stealth, Survival (2 points' worth), Tracking
- 20 **Mystic Guardian Set:** Danger Sense (out of combat, general area) (INT); Costs Endurance ($-\frac{1}{2}$)

COMPLICATIONS SETS

GENERAL MYSTIC COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MYSTIC GUARDIAN COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 25 **Hunted:** 25 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Psychological Complication:** Must Guard [Area/Group] From Mystic Threats (Common, Strong)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MYSTIC BEING COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 20 **Accidental Change *or* Distinctive Features *or* Enraged/ Berserk *or* Susceptibility(ies) *and/or* Vulnerability(ies)** representing the type of being the character is
- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

5



POWERED ARMOR

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	7*	15-	Lift 3,200 kg; 6d6 HTH damage [3]
15	DEX	7*	12-	
20	CON	7*	13-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
15	EGO	5	12-	
20	PRE	7*	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6

4+2 OCV 5+7*

4+2 DCV 5+7*

3 OMCV 0

3 DMCV 0

3+1 SPD 10+7* *Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12*

5 PD 3

5 ED 3

6 REC 2

20 END 0

10 BODY 0

24+32 STUN 2+11* **Total Characteristics Cost: 100 + choose one Characteristics Set = 160**

*: OIF (Powered Armor; -½)

Cost Powers

30 **Power Supply:** choose one Power Supply60 **Powered Armor Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve (OIF [-½]); choose five Slots40 **Powered Armor Defense:** choose 40 points' worth of Defense Powers40 **Powered Armor Movement:** choose one Movement Power30 **Powered Armor Secondary Powers:** choose 30 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

40 Choose 40 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 125**Total Cost: 400**

400 Matching Complications (75)

75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75**Experience Points: 0**

POWER SETS

POWER SUPPLY

Cost Power

30 **Batteries I:** Endurance Reserve (124 END, 21 REC); OIF (-½)30 **Batteries II:** Endurance Reserve (100 END, 30 REC); OIF (-½)30 **Batteries III:** Endurance Reserve (76 END, 39 REC); OIF (-½)30 **Batteries IV:** +24 REC; OIF (-½) plus +105 END; OIF (-½)

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

4f **Energy Beam:** Blast 12d6; OIF (-½)4f **Pulse-Beam:** Blast 8d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½); OIF (-½)4f **Pulson Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Double Knockback (+½); OIF (-½)4f **Stunner Beam:** Blast 8d6, NND (defense is Power Defense; +½); OIF (-½)4f **Laser Beam:** RKA 2½d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼); OIF (-½)4f **Pulse Laser:** RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), Autofire (5 shots; +½), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼); OIF (-½)4f **Miscellaneous Weapons Array:** Blast 4d6, Variable Advantage (+½ Advantages; +1), Variable Special Effects (+½), Personal Immunity (+¼); OIF (-½)4f **Missile Launchers:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½); OIF (-½)4f **Mini-Missile Launchers:** Blast 4d6, Area Of Effect (12m Radius Explosion; +¼), Armor Piercing (+¼), Autofire (5 shots; +1½); OIF (-½)4f **Tangleweb Projector:** Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED; OIF (-½)4f **Flare Ray:** Sight Group Flash 12d6; OIF (-½)

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (60)

POWERED ARMOR BLASTER

Cost Characteristic

7* +10 STR

13* +10 DEX

3* +5 CON

3* +5 PRE

10* +3 OCV

10* +3 DCV

13* +2 SPD

1 +1 ED

POWERED ARMOR BRICK

Cost Characteristic

27* +40 STR

4* +3 DEX

7* +10 CON

7* +10 PRE

3* +1 OCV

3* +1 DCV

7* +1 SPD

2 +2 BODY

POWERED ARMOR GADGETEER

Cost Characteristic

7* +5 DEX

3* +5 CON

5 +5 INT

3 +3 EGO

3* +5 PRE

7* +2 OCV

7* +2 DCV

6 +2 OMCV

6 +2 DMCV

13* +2 SPD

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 60 **Powered Armor I:** Resistant Protection (30 PD/30 ED); OIF (-½) (and choose 20 fewer points' worth of Secondary Powers and/or Skills)
- 40 **Powered Armor II:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED); OIF (-½)
- 60 **Powered Armor III:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED/10 Mental Defense/10 Power Defense); OIF (-½) (and choose 20 fewer points' worth of Secondary Powers and/or Skills)
- 20 **Powered Armor IV:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED); OIF (-½)
- 40 **Impact/Energy Absorption Field:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Resistant; OIF (-½)
- 40 **Impact/Energy Absorption Field:** Damage Negation (-6 DCs Physical and Energy) (or any other combination that adds up to -12 DCs); OIF (-½)
- 10 **Psionic Shielding:** Mental Defense (15 points); OIF (-½)
- 10 **Force-Field:** Power Defense (15 points); OIF (-½)
- 10 **Flare Shielding:** Sight Group Flash Defense (15 points); OIF (-½)
- 20 **Survival Systems:** Life Support (Immunity: all Terrestrial Diseases and Poisons; Self-Contained Breathing; Safe Environments: all); OIF (-½) *plus* +2 CON

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Jetpack/boots:** Flight 60m; OIF (-½)
- 40 **Jetskates:** Running +60m; OIF (-½)
- 40 **Teleportation Matrix:** Teleportation 60m; OIF (-½)

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 16 **Armor Reconfiguration:** Multiform (into the same 400-point character with a different suit of powered armor) (80 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-¼), Costs Endurance (-½), Extra Time (Extra Phase; -¾), Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END; -1), Side Effects (if roll fails, armor gets jammed up and is useless until wearer takes 1 Turn to reboot systems and restore it to its original form; -1)
- 13 **Claws:** HKA 1d6 (up to 2d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+¼); OIF (-½)
- 6 **Cloaking System:** Invisibility to Sight Group (20 Active Points); IIF (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x5 END; -2)
- 6 **Communications Suite:** HRRP (Radio Group); OIF (-½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
- 10 **Extendo-Gauntlets:** Stretching 20m; OIF (-½), Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼)
- 9 **Gauntlet Buzzsaw:** HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+¼); OIF (-½), No STR Bonus (-½)
- 15 **Image Inducer:** Images to Sight Group, -6 to PER Rolls, Area Of Effect (personal Surface; +¼) (35 Active Points); IIF (-¼), Set Effect (only to make armor look like normal clothing; -1)
- 3 **Light Intensifier Systems:** Nightvision; OIF (-½)

- 13 **Magna-Gauntlets:** Telekinesis (20 STR); OIF (-½), Limited Range (20m; -¼), Only Works On Ferrous Metals (-½)
- 9 **Searchlight:** Images to Sight Group 1m radius, +4 to PER Rolls; OIF (-½), Only To Create Light (-1)
- 8 **Sensory Enhancement Systems:** +4 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups; OIF (-½)
- 5 **Targeting System:** +1 with All Ranged Attacks *or* All HTH Attacks (8 Active Points); OIF (-½)
- 10 **Telescopic Lenses:** Telescopic (+10 PER versus the Range Modifier) for Sight Group; OIF (-½)
- 3 **Thermographic Systems:** Infrared Perception (Sight Group); OIF (-½)

SKILL SETS**Cost Skill Set**

- 20 **Armored Warrior Set:** +2 with All Combat
- 10 **Armor Repair Set:** Electronics, Mechanics, Weaponsmith (4 points' worth)
- 12 **Inventor Set:** Computer Programming, Electronics, Inventor, Mechanics
- 10 **Test Pilot Set:** Combat Piloting, Electronics, Navigation (Air) 8-, Systems Operation

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL POWERED ARMOR COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

PROTOTYPE POWERED ARMOR COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Dependence:** requires high-tech replacement parts daily or all armor powers suffer a Required Roll 11- (Uncommon)
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

ANODYNE ARMOR COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 25 **Hunted:** 25 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 15 **Susceptibility:** takes 2d6 per Turn when not wearing armor's chestplate (Uncommon)



SONIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
8	ED	6		
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
36	STUN	8		

Total Characteristics Cost: 90
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 180

Cost Powers

- 90 **Sonic Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
- 40 **Sonic Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 40 **Sonic Movement:** choose one Movement Power
- 25 **Sonic Secondary Powers:** choose 25 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 25 Choose 25 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 220

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

- 6f **Sonic Beam:** Blast 12d6
- 6f **Focused Sonic Beam:** RKA 2½d6, Penetrating (+½)
- 6f **Piercing Sonic Beam:** Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 6f **Easy Sonic Beam:** Blast 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)
- 6f **Agonizing Sound:** Blast 8d6, NND (defense is Hearing Group Flash Defense or being deaf; +½)
- 4f+2 **Sonic Waves:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (8m Radius; +½); No Range (-½) *plus* +4 ED, Only Versus Sonics (-¾)
- 6f **Inner Ear Disorientation:** Drain DEX and CON 4d6, Expanded Effect (two Characteristics simultaneously; +½)
- 4f+2 **Shriek:** Hearing Group Flash 10d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) *plus* Hearing Group Flash Defense (2 points)
- 6f **Sound Cancellation:** Darkness to Hearing Group 20m radius
- 5f+1 **Hypnotic Sound:** Mind Control 12d6, ACV (uses OCV against DCV; +0), AVAD (Hearing Group Flash Defense; +0); Limited Normal Range (30m; -¼) *plus* +1 INT

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (90)

AGILE SONIC

Cost Characteristic

- 16 +8 DEX
- 3 +3 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 5 +5 PRE
- 15 +3 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 2 +2 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 4 +4 REC
- 3 +6 STUN

TOUGH SONIC

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 8 +8 CON
- 10 +2 OCV
- 15 +3 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 8 +8 PD
- 8 +8 ED
- 7 +7 REC
- 4 +20 END
- 5 +5 BODY
- 5 +10 STUN

WELL-ROUNDED SONIC

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 6 +2 DMCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 4 +4 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 6 +6 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 3 +3 BODY
- 2 +4 STUN

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Sonic Shield I:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED); Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Sonic Shield II:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED) plus Damage Negation (-2 DCs Energy)
- 40 **Sonic Shield III:** Resistant Protection (15 PD/15 ED/10 Hearing Group Flash Defense), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Sonic Form I:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Normal
- 40 **Sonic Form II:** Desolidification

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Riding Sound Waves:** Flight 40m
- 40 **Transform To Sound:** Teleportation 40m

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 9 **Amplification:** Images to Hearing Group, +4 to PER Rolls, Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +¼); Does Not Work In A Vacuum (-¼), Set Effect (can only amplify existing sounds the character can hear; -1)
- 10 **DeciBel Control:** Hearing Group Flash Defense (10 points)
- 3 **Enhanced Hearing I:** Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)
- 6 **Enhanced Hearing II:** +3 PER with the Hearing Group
- 10 **Enhanced Hearing III:** Targeting for Normal Hearing
- 15 **Sonar-Sense I:** Active Sonar (Hearing Group)
- 20 **Sonar-Sense II:** Active Sonar (Hearing Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)
- 10 **Sound-Bending:** Invisibility to Hearing Group

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 4 **DJ Set:** KS: Rock And Pop Music (INT), Systems Operation (audio equipment only; -1)
- 3 **Sound Technician Set:** Computer Programming 8-, Electronics 8-, Systems Operation (audio equipment only; -1)

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL SONIC COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT SONIC COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 10 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from an Uncommon attack form

SONIC FORM COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 20 **Susceptibility(ies) and/or Vulnerability(ies)** representing the fact that the character's body is made of sonic energy



SPEEDSTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
20	DEX	20	13-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
6	PD	4		
6	ED	4		
8	REC	4		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		
Total Characteristics Cost: 115 + choose one Characteristics Set = 200				

Cost Powers

- 60 **Speedster Movement:** choose one Movement Power
- 65 **Speedster Attacks:** choose Multipower Set or Speedster Martial Arts Set
- 30 **Speedster Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 30 **Speedster Secondary Powers:** choose 30 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 15 Choose 15 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 200

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

MOVEMENT POWERS

Cost Power

- 60 **Hyper-Running I:** Running +60m
- 60 **Hyper-Running II:** Flight 75m; Only In Contact With A Surface (-¼)
- 60 **Hyper-Flight:** Flight 60m
- 60 **Teleporting:** Teleportation 60m

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Power

Multipower Set

- 45 **Speedster Attacks:** Multipower, 45-point reserve; choose 5 slots
- 4f **Aportation:** Teleportation 16m, Usable As Attack (defense is Teleportation, Extra-Dimensional Movement, or Barrier; +1¼), Ranged (+½)
- 3f+1 **Battering Ram:** HA +6d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼), Only With Move Through/By (-1) *and* +5 with Move By, Move Through, and Grab By (character also gets +1 CON)
- 4f **Combat Aportation:** Blast 4d6, NND (defense is Teleportation, Extra-Dimensional Movement, or Barrier; +1)
- 3f+1 **Dizzying Spin:** Drain DEX 4½d6; No Range (-½) *plus* +1 CON
- 4f **Fast Time Bubble:** Aid SPD 5d6, Ranged (+½)
- 1f+3 **Let's Wrap This Up:** Entangle 4d6, up to 4 PD/4 ED; OIF (appropriate materials of opportunity; -½), No Range (-½), Extra Time (at least a Full Phase, and often longer, depending on how long it takes to get the materials; -½), Defense Depends On Materials Used (-½) *plus* +1 DEX, +5 END
- 3f+1 **Phasing Grip:** HKA 2d6, Penetrating (+½); No STR Bonus (-½) *plus* +1 CON
- 4f **Rapid-Fire Punch:** HA +9d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)
- 3f+1 **Run-And-Punch:** HA +4d6, Area Of Effect (Trail; +1); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼) *plus* +1 PD

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (85)

SCIENTIFIC SPEEDSTER

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 6 +6 PD
- 6 +6 ED
- 7 +7 REC
- 5 +25 END
- 5 +10 STUN

SWIFT SPEEDSTER

Cost Characteristic

- 14 +7 DEX
- 15 +3 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 30 +3 SPD
- 4 +4 PD
- 4 +4 ED
- 7 +7 REC
- 1 +5 END

TOUGH SPEEDSTER

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +10 STR
- 10 +5 DEX
- 8 +8 CON
- 5 +1 OCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 9 +9 PD
- 9 +9 ED
- 7 +7 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 5 +10 STUN

- 4f **Slow Time Bubble:** Drain SPD $4\frac{1}{2}d6$
- 2f+2 **Sonic Boom Fingersnap:** Blast $4d6$, NND (defense is Life Support [Safe Environment: High Pressure] or armored head-covering; +1); Gestures (must hold hand near target's ear; $-\frac{1}{4}$), No Range ($-\frac{1}{2}$), Does Not Work In A Vacuum ($-\frac{1}{4}$) *plus* +1 DEX
- 4f **Time For Sleep:** Blast $4d6$, NND (defense is temporal/dimensional manipulation powers or Life Support [Diminished Sleep]; +1)

Speedster Martial Arts Set

- 30 Martial Arts (30 points' worth)
- 32 +4 HTH
- 3 Defense Maneuver I

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 30 **Speedster Toughness I:** Resistant Protection (12 PD/8 ED)
- 30 **Speedster Toughness II:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED)
- 30 **Speedster Toughness III:** Physical Damage Reduction, 50%, Normal plus Energy Damage Reduction, 25%, Normal
- 30 **Blink Teleportation:** +9 DCV; Costs Endurance ($-\frac{1}{2}$)
- 30 **Blink-/Chrono- Point Defense:** Deflection plus +5 OCV with Deflection
- 30 **Time Shift Field:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED); Costs Endurance ($-\frac{1}{2}$), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; $-\frac{1}{2}$)

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 7 **Collision Protection:** Resistant Protection (10 PD); Only Versus Damage Sustained While Performing Move Bys/Throughs (-1)
- 30 **Cosmic Flyer:** FTL Travel (8 LY/year) plus Life Support (Safe Environments: High Radiation, Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing)
- 21 **Dimensional Traveler:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (physical location in a related group of dimensions [ones near Earth's] corresponding to character's location in this dimension); Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; $-\frac{1}{2}$)
- 20 **Mega-Movement:** MegaScale (1m = 1 km; +1) for up to 20m of movement with the character's chosen Movement Power
- 27 **Ultra-Speed Vibrating:** Desolidification (affected by sonic-, vibration-, and air-based attacks); Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; $-\frac{1}{2}$)
- 30 **Well-Rounded:** 30 more points' worth of Characteristics

**SKILLS****Cost Skill Set**

- 15 **Battering Ram Set:** +5 with Move By and Move Through
- 4 **Dimensional Traveler Set:** AK: The Multiverse 11-, Navigation (Dimensional)
- 15 **Hyper-Combat Set:** +5 with Move By, Disarm By, and Grab By
- 7 **Time Traveler Set:** KS: History 11-, SS: Chronal Physics (INT), SS: Physics 11-

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL SPEEDSTER COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT SPEEDSTER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

DIMENSIONAL SPEEDSTER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 25 **Hunted:** 25 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 15 **Susceptibility:** take $3d6$ instantly when Teleported involuntarily (Uncommon)

STRETCHER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	PD	5		
7	ED	5		
8	REC	4		
50	END	6		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		
Total Characteristics Cost: 85 + choose one Characteristics Set = 165				

Cost Powers

40	Basic Stretching: Stretching 25m, x8 body dimension
90	Stretcher Attacks: Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
40	Stretcher Defense: choose one Defense Power
20	Stretcher Movement: choose 20 points of Movement Powers
25	Stretcher Secondary Powers: choose 25 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

20	Choose 20 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets
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Total Powers & Skills Cost: 235

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

75	Choose one Complications Set
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Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

2f+4	Big Fist: HA +6d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼) <i>plus</i> +2 CON, +2 PD
2f+4	Velocity Damage: HA +5d6 (assumes 25m Stretching; recalculate if necessary); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼), Always Direct (-¼) <i>plus</i> +2 DEX
2f+4	Wraparound I: Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED; Feedback (-1), Lockout (-½), No Range (-½) <i>plus</i> +3 STR, +1 PD
2f+4	Wraparound II: Entangle 5d6, 5 PD/5 ED, Stops A Given Sense (Sight Group); Feedback (-1), Lockout (-½), No Range (-½) <i>plus</i> +3 STR, +1 PD
3f+3	Slingshot Strength: +40 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Only For Throwing (-½) <i>plus</i> +3 STR
4f+2	Spiky Body: RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (personal Surface — Damage Shield; +¼), Constant (+½), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +½); No Range (-½) <i>plus</i> +2 CON
5f+1	Puff Up: Growth (+30 STR, +10 CON, +10 PRE, +6 PD, +6 ED, +6 BODY, +12 STUN, +3m Reach, +24m Running, -12m KB, 6,400 kg, +4 OCV to hit character, +4 PER Rolls to perceive character, 8m tall, 4m wide) <i>plus</i> +1 CON
2f+4	Oozing Through Cracks: Desolidification (affected by any attack), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Does Not Protect Against Damage (-1), Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-½) <i>plus</i> +2 DEX

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (80)

AGILE STRETCHER

Cost Characteristic

16	+8 DEX
5	+5 CON
5	+5 PRE
15	+3 OCV
15	+3 DCV
20	+2 SPD
2	+2 REC
2	+10 END

STRONG STRETCHER

Cost Characteristic

20	+20 STR
10	+5 DEX
10	+10 CON
5	+5 PRE
5	+1 OCV
5	+1 DCV
10	+1 SPD
5	+5 PD
3	+3 ED
2	+2 REC
5	+10 STUN

WELL-ROUNDED STRETCHER

Cost Characteristic

5	+5 STR
10	+5 DEX
5	+5 CON
3	+3 INT
5	+5 PRE
10	+2 OCV
10	+2 DCV
10	+1 SPD
3	+3 PD
2	+2 ED
5	+5 REC
2	+10 END
5	+5 BODY
5	+10 STUN

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

- 40 **Resilient Form I:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED); Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Resilient Form II:** Damage Negation (-8 DCs Physical and -4 DCs Energy); Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Resilient Form III:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%, Resistant; Costs Endurance (-½)
- 40 **Stretching Away From Attacks:** +6 DCV; Costs Endurance (-½) *plus* 20 more points' worth of Secondary Powers

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

- 10 **Molding To Surfaces:** Clinging (normal STR)
- 10 **Parasail Form:** Flight 20m; Gliding (-1)
- 20 **Personal Brachiation:** Swinging 40m
- 20 **Spring-Legs/Bouncy Ball Form:** Leaping +40m
- 20 **Stretch-Sprinting:** Running +20m

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 25 **Even More Stretching:** Stretching +20m and increase to x16 body dimension
- 25 **Feature Molding:** Shape Shift (Sight, Hearing, and Touch Groups, any humanoid form) -plus +2 INT
- 25 **Few Internal Organs:** Life Support (Total, except for Immunities)
- 8 **Impact Absorption:** Knockback Resistance -8m
- 17 **Safety Pillow Form:** Breakfall (DEX +11); Costs Endurance (-½)

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 12 **Body-Bender Set:** Breakfall, Contortionist (DEX +3)
- 5 **Chemist Set:** SS: Chemistry (INT), SS: Plastics 11-

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL STRETCHER COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT STRETCHER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 10 **Vulnerability:** 2 x STUN from an Uncommon attack form

STRETCHER BIOCHEMISTRY COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 20 **Vulnerabilities:** 20 points' worth, representing the character's odd biochemistry (*e.g.*, to Cold, or to Chemicals)



TELEKINETIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
6	ED	4		
10	REC	6		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
36	STUN	8		

Total Characteristics Cost: 90
+ choose one Characteristics Set = 165

Cost Powers

- 30 **Basic Telekinesis:** Telekinesis (20 STR)
 90 **Telekinetic Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
 40 **Telekinetic Defense:** choose one Defense Power
 30 **Telekinetic Levitation:** Flight 30m (if character cannot fly, spend these 30 points on something else)
 30 **Telekinetic Secondary Powers:** choose 30 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 15 Choose 15 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 235

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

- 6f **Enhanced Telekinesis:** Telekinesis (+40 STR)
 6f **Telekinetic Bolt:** Blast 12d6
 6f **Easy Telekinetic Bolt:** Blast 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)
 6f **Telekinetic Spears:** RKA 3d6, Armor Piercing (+¼)
 2f+4 **Telekinetic Wrap-Up:** Entangle 6d6, up to 6 PD/6 ED; OIF (appropriate materials of opportunity with TK range; -½), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Defense Depends On Materials Used (-½) *plus* +1 DEX, +2 CON
 6f **The Big Squeeze:** Blast 6d6, NND (defense is Resistant Protection PD that costs END or Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing]; +1)
 6f **Ranged Attack Channeling:** Reflection (90 Active Points' worth)
 6f **Telekinetic Gyrtator:** Drain DEX 6d6
 4f+2 **Telekinetic Lockdown:** Entangle 4d6, 4 PD/4 ED, Constant (+½); Lockout (-½) *plus* +1 DEX
 3f+3 **Missile Projection:** Blast 9d6; OIF (small, blunt objects of opportunity; -½) *plus* +1 DEX, +1 CON
 6f **Telekinetic Barrier:** Barrier 8 PD/8 ED, 8 BODY (up to 4m long, 3m high, and ½m thick), Non-Anchored, Opaque (Sight Group)

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 40 **Telekinetic Shield I:** Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED), Costs Endurance (-½)
 40 **Telekinetic Shield II:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED) *plus* Damage Negation (-1 DC Physical and Energy)
 40 **Telekinetic Shield III:** +10 PD, +10 ED, and Deflection

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (75)

AGILE TELEKINETIC

Cost Characteristic

- 16 +8 DEX
 5 +5 CON
 5 +5 PRE
 10 +2 OCV
 10 +2 DCV
 20 +2 SPD
 2 +2 PD
 2 +2 ED
 2 +2 REC
 1 +5 END
 2 +4 STUN

WELL-ROUNDED TELEKINETIC

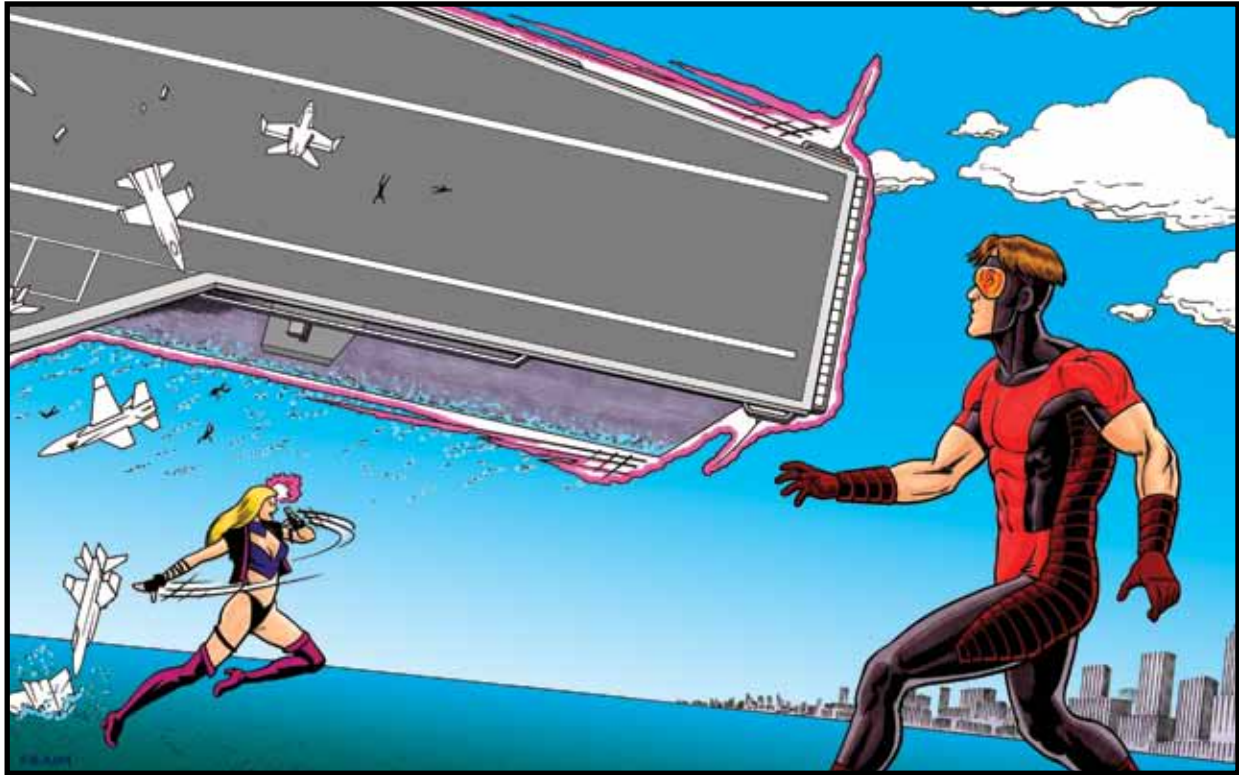
Cost Characteristic

- 5 +5 STR
 10 +5 DEX
 5 +5 CON
 3 +3 INT
 3 +3 EGO
 5 +5 PRE
 5 +1 OCV
 5 +1 DCV
 3 +1 DMCV
 10 +1 SPD
 6 +6 PD
 6 +6 ED
 3 +3 REC
 2 +10 END
 4 +8 STUN

WILLFUL TELEKINETIC

Cost Characteristic

- 10 +5 DEX
 5 +5 CON
 5 +5 INT
 8 +8 EGO
 5 +5 PRE
 10 +2 OCV
 10 +2 DCV
 6 +2 DMCV
 10 +1 SPD
 5 +5 REC
 1 +2 STUN



SECONDARY POWERS

Cost Power

- 9 **Dust Storm:** Change Environment (create dust cloud), -3 to Sight Group PER Rolls, Area Of Effect (up to 8m Radius; +½); OIF (dust or powdery materials of opportunity; -½)
- 7 **Precision Telekinesis:** Fine Manipulation for Telekinesis; Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)
- 10 **Protective Intrinsic Field:** Power Defense (10 points)
- 9 **Telekinetic B&E:** Lockpicking (DEX +5); Costs Endurance (-½)
- 21 **Telekinetic Field Awareness:** Spatial Awareness; Costs Endurance (-½)
- 13 **Telekinetic Pulse Awareness:** Radar (Touch Group), Range; Costs Endurance (-½)
- 7 **Telekinetic Touch:** Range for Touch Sense Group; Costs Endurance (-½)

SKILLS

Cost Skill Set

- 7 **Sculptor Set:** Forgery (Art Objects), KS: Sculpture 11-, PS: Sculpting (DEX)
- 9 **Telekinetic Manipulation Set:** Demolitions, Lockpicking, Mechanics
- 5 **Telekinetic Trickery Set:** Gambling (2 points' worth), Sleight Of Hand

COMPLICATIONS SETS

GENERAL TELEKINETIC COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

DEPENDENT TELEKINETIC FORM COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 10 **Dependence:** 10 points' worth reflecting the fact that the character needs a drug, procedure, or the like to maintain his telekinetic powers
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT TELEKINETIC COMPLICATIONS SET

Value Matching Complications (75)

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)



WEAPONMASTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
20	DEX	20	13-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	PD	6		
8	ED	6		
8	REC	4		
40	END	4		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		
Total Characteristics Cost: 110 + choose one Characteristics Set = 200				

Cost Powers

60	Weaponmaster Attacks: choose one Attack Power Set
20	Weaponmaster Defense: choose one Defense Power
20	Weaponmaster Movement: choose one Movement Power
50	Weaponmaster Secondary Powers: choose 50 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

50	Choose 50 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets
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Total Powers & Skills Cost: 200

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

75	Choose one Complications Set
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Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Power

Super-Archery Set

- 45 **Super-Bow And Arrows:** Multipower, 60-point reserve, 60 Charges (+½) for entire reserve; all OAF (-1); choose five slots
- 3f **Traditional Arrow:** RKA 2½d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼)
- 3f **Taser Arrow:** Blast 12d6; OAF (-1), STUN Only (-0)
- 3f **Explosion Arrow:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½); OAF (-1)
- 3f **Glue Arrow:** Entangle 4d6, 4 PD/4 ED, Sticky (+½); OAF (-1)
- 3f **Net Arrow:** Entangle 4d6, 5 PD/4 ED, Entangle And Character Both Take Damage (+¼); OAF (-1)
- 3f **Flare Arrow:** Sight and Hearing Group Flash 11d6; OAF (-1)
- 3f **Smoke Arrow:** Darkness to Sight Group 9m radius, Time Limit (ends after 1 Turn or if exposed to high winds or rain; +¼); OAF (-1)
- 3f **Knockout Gas Arrow:** Blast 4d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing] or appropriate Immunity; +1), Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +¾); OAF (-1)
- 3f **Boomerang Arrow:** RKA 2½d6, Indirect (Source Point is always the character, but Path can follow any angle; +½); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼)
- Super-Boomerang Set:** the same as Super-Archery, except: the reserve and all slots have Range Based On STR (-¼) (this replaces Beam, if applicable); the Net, Smoke, and Knockout Gas Boomerangs are 2f+1 (each provides +1 CON); the character chooses six slots; and he gets +1 DEX

CHARACTERISTICS SETS (90)

MYSTIC WEAPONMASTER

Cost Characteristic

5	+5 STR
5	+5 CON
3	+3 INT
3	+3 EGO
5	+5 PRE
10	+2 OCV
10	+2 DCV
20	+2 SPD
7	+7 PD
7	+7 ED
5	+5 REC
5	+5 BODY
5	+10 STUN

SWIFT WEAPONMASTER

Cost Characteristic

16	+8 DEX
5	+5 CON
5	+5 INT
5	+5 PRE
10	+2 OCV
10	+2 DCV
20	+2 SPD
4	+4 PD
4	+4 ED
4	+4 REC
2	+2 BODY
5	+10 STUN

TOUGH WEAPONMASTER

Cost Characteristic

10	+10 STR
8	+8 CON
5	+5 PRE
10	+2 OCV
5	+1 DCV
10	+1 SPD
10	+10 PD
10	+10 ED
7	+7 REC
5	+5 BODY
10	+20 STUN

Big Gun Set

- 32 **Very Big Gun:** Multipower, 45-point reserve, 120 Charges (+¾) for entire reserve; all OAF (-1), Beam (-¼), No Knockback (-¼)

2f **1) Single-Shot Mode:** RKA 3d6; common Limitations (-1½)

2f **2) Automatic Mode:** RKA 2d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½); common Limitations (-1½)

16 **Underslung Grenade Launcher:** RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-¾)

8 **Bayonet:** HKA 1d6 (up to 2d6 with STR); OAF (-1) *plus* +1m Reach

Two-Gun Set

22 **Big Pistols:** RKA 2d6, +2 Increased STUN Multiplier (+½); OAF (-1), 2 clips of 12 Charges each (-0)

5 **Big Pistols:** Another Big Pistol (total of 2)

7 **Rapid Fire:** Autofire (3 shots; +¼) for any non-Autofire RKA built on up to 60 Active Points; OIF (non-Autofire firearm of opportunity; -½), All Shots Must Be At The Same Target (-0), Requires A DEX Roll (-½)

26 Skills related to gunfighting

Sword Set

20 **Sword:** HKA 2d6 (up to 4d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+¼), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼); OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼)

20 Martial Arts pertaining to swordfighting

20 Additional Skills related to melee combat

Dual Sword Set: the same as Sword Set, but spend +5 points for a second Sword and reduce the additional Skills to 15 points

Claws Set

30 **Claws:** HKA 1½d6 (up to 3d6+1 with STR), Armor Piercing (+¼), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼); No Knockback (-¼)

30 Martial Arts that can be used with claws

DEFENSE POWERS**Cost Power**

20 **Armored Costume:** Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED); OIF (-½) *plus* +2 PD, +2 ED

20 **Can Take A Blow:** Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 25%, Normal

20 **Heavy Armored Costume:** Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED); OIF (-½)

MOVEMENT POWERS**Cost Power**

20 **Acrobatic Leaping And Running:** Leaping +30m; Requires An Acrobatics Roll (-½) *plus* Running +10m

20 **Jetboots:** Flight 30m; OIF (-½)

20 **Leaping And Running:** Leaping +20m and Running +10m

20 **Sprinter:** Running +20m

20 **Swingline/Grapple Arrow:** Swinging 80m; OAF (-1)

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

10 **It's Just A Scratch:** Regeneration (1 BODY per 20 Minutes)

15 **Lucky Warrior:** Luck 3d6

12 **Master Of [The Blade]:** Weaponmaster (+1d6 KA with one specific weapon)

20 **Master Of [Blades]:** Weaponmaster (+1d6 KA with a limited category of weapons)

16 **Rapid Healing Ability:** Regeneration (1 BODY per Turn)

22 **Weapon Flourish:** HKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (Personal Surface — Damage Shield; +¼), Constant (+½), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF (any bladed weapon of opportunity; -½), Cannot Do More Damage Than The Weapon Being Used Would Normally Do (-¼), Power Stops Working Instantly If Character Is Stunned Or Knocked Out (-¼), Not When Grabbed (-¼), Requires A DEX Roll (-½)

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

var Any Martial Artist Skill Set

9 **Alertness, Dodging, And Luck Set:** Defense Maneuver I; Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

20 **Basic Hand-To-Hand Combat Training Set:** Martial Arts (20 points' worth)

8 **Historian Set:** KS: Art History 11-, KS: World History (INT), KS: historical speciality (INT)

15 **Mowin' 'Em Down Set:** Choose any three Autofire Skills

20 **Well-Trained Combatant:** +2 with All Combat

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL WEAPONMASTER COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth

20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)

10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points

15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MYSTIC WEAPONMASTER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

20 **Hunted:** 20 points' worth

20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)

20 Psychological Complication that reflects a vow, oath, curse, or other circumstances related to the character's mystic powers

15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

TRAINED WEAPONMASTER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

10 **Distinctive Features:** Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group) (if this isn't appropriate, choose another Psychological Complication)

30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth

20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)

15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)



WEATHER CONTROLLER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	PD	3		
7	ED	5		
10	REC	6		
60	END	8		
10	BODY	0		
36	STUN	8		
Total Characteristics Cost: 90 + choose one Characteristics Set = 170				

Cost Powers

- 36 **Weather Alteration:** Change Environment (+/-5 Temperature Levels), Varying Combat Effects, Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +¼), Varying Effect (+1), MegaArea (1m = 1 km broad and wide; +1); Can Only Alter Existing Weather, Not Create Weather (-¼), Extra Time (time required depends on the severity of the change in the weather the character wants to create, but minimum of a Full Phase; -½), No Range (-½)
- 90 **Weather Attacks:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; choose five Slots
- 30 **Weather Defense:** choose one Defense Power
- 30 **Wind-Riding:** Flight 30m (if character cannot fly, spend these 40 points on something else)
- 29 **Weather Secondary Powers:** choose 29 points' worth of Secondary Powers

Skills, Perks, And Talents

- 15 Choose 15 Character Points' worth of Skill Sets

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 230

Total Cost: 400

400 Matching Complications (75)

- 75 Choose one Complications Set

Total Complications Points: 75

Experience Points: 0

POWER SETS

ATTACK POWERS

Cost Multipower Slots

- 6f **Lightning Bolt I:** Blast 12d6
- 6f **Lightning Bolt II:** RKA 3d6, Armor Piercing (+¼)
- 6f **Call Down The Lightning:** RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+¼), Indirect (Source Point is always the sky above the target; +¼), +2 Increased STUN Multiplier (+½)
- 6f **Wind Gust:** Blast 8d6, Double Knockback (+½)
- 4f+2 **Wind Cone I:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +½); No Range (-½) *plus* +1 DEX
- 4f+2 **Wind Cone II:** Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (16m Cone; +½), Double Knockback (+½); No Range (-½) *plus* +1 DEX
- 4f+2 **Wind Control:** Telekinesis (30 STR), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); Affects Whole Object (-¼) *plus* +1 DEX
- 3f+3 **Blinding Mist/Fog/Snow:** Change Environment, -4 to Sight Group PER Rolls, Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +¾), Varying Effect (any type of weather that could interfere with vision; +½), Personal Immunity (+¼) *plus* +1 DEX, +1 CON
- 6f **Instant Blizzard:** Blast 4d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Safe Environment: Intense Cold]; +1), Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +¾), Personal Immunity (+¼)
- 6f **Thunderclap:** Hearing Group Flash 10d6, Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +¾), Personal Immunity (+¼)
- 6f **Sleet-Covered Ground:** Change Environment, -2 to DEX Rolls to remain standing, Long-Lasting (up to permanent in cold areas), Area Of Effect (32m Radius Surface; +1¼), Personal Immunity (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
- 6f **Hailstorm:** Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (8m Radius; +½), Indirect (Source Point is always the sky above the target; +¼), Personal Immunity (+¼)
- 6f **Mini-Tornado I:** Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +¼), Personal Immunity (+¼); Random Knockback (-0)
- 6f **Mini-Tornado II:** Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +¼), Constant (+½), Personal Immunity (+¼); Random Knockback (-0)

DEFENSE POWERS

Cost Power

- 30 **Wind-Shield I:** Resistant Protection (15 PD/15 ED), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 30 **Wind-Shield II:** +5 PD, +5 ED, and Deflection

SECONDARY POWERS**Cost Power**

- 3 **Easy Weather Alteration I:** Add Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) to Weather Alteration
- 6 **Easy Weather Alteration II:** Add Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) to Weather Alteration
- 13 **Advanced Weather Alteration:** Increase to +/-8 Temperature Levels
- 11 **Lasting Weather Alteration:** Add Long-Lasting (20 Minutes) to Weather Alteration
- 4 **Personal Temperature Control:** Life Support (Safe Environments: Intense Cold; Intense Heat)
- 25 **Storm God's Might:** 25 more points' worth of Characteristics
- 3 **Temperature Sense:** Detect Temperature (INT Roll)
- 8 **Weather Eye:** Clairsentience (Sight Group), Precognition; No Range (-½), Precognition Only (-1), Only To Foresee The Weather (-2), Time Modifiers (-½)

SKILLS**Cost Skill Set**

- 5 **Meteorologist Set:** PS: Weather Prediction 11-, SS: Meteorology (INT)
- 10 **Storm God Set:** 10 points' worth of Skills pertaining to the culture or mythos the character comes from/belongs to

COMPLICATIONS SETS**GENERAL WEATHER CONTROLLER COMPLICATIONS SET****Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 **Psychological Complication:** another one worth 10 points
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

MUTANT WEATHER CONTROLLER COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 10 **Distinctive Features:** Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 30 **Hunted:** 30 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

STORM GOD COMPLICATIONS SET**Value Matching Complications (75)**

- 25 **Hunted:** 25 points' worth
- 20 **Psychological Complication:** Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 **Psychological Complication:** Must Control The Weather Responsibly (Common, Strong)
- 15 **Social Complication:** Secret Identity *or* Public Identity (Frequently, Major)

**CHARACTERISTICS SETS (80)****AGILE WEATHER CONTROLLER****Cost Characteristic**

- 16 +8 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 20 +2 SPD
- 3 +3 PD
- 3 +3 ED
- 2 +2 REC
- 3 +6 STUN

STORM GOD**WEATHER CONTROLLER****Cost Characteristic**

- 10 +10 STR
- 6 +3 DEX
- 10 +10 CON
- 10 +10 PRE
- 5 +1 OCV
- 5 +1 DCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 10 +10 PD
- 8 +8 ED
- 2 +2 REC
- 2 +2 BODY
- 2 +4 STUN

WELL-ROUNDED**WEATHER CONTROLLER****Cost Characteristic**

- 10 +5 DEX
- 5 +5 CON
- 3 +3 INT
- 3 +3 EGO
- 5 +5 PRE
- 10 +2 OCV
- 10 +2 DCV
- 3 +1 DMCV
- 10 +1 SPD
- 5 +5 PD
- 5 +5 ED
- 4 +4 REC
- 2 +10 END
- 3 +3 BODY
- 2 +4 STUN



MINION GALLERY

Supervillains are all well and good, but sometimes a villain needs henchmen, servants, or underlings to pull off his crimes! The Minion Gallery contains nearly a dozen generic lower-rank criminals to populate your scenarios with (or use as the basis for a PC, if desired). They include:

- the *Agent*, a uniformed, trained operative of a comic book style criminal organization, equipped with super-tech weaponry so he can take on superheroes;
- the *Alien Invader*, who's come to Earth armed with his strange alien technology to steal our woman, natural resources, and other treasures;
- the *Demon*, a lesser member of Hell's armies for evil sorcerers to summon;
- the *Mole-Man*, who threatens the civilizations of the surface world from below;
- the *Ninja*, master of stealth and martial arts assassination techniques;
- the *Robot*, a perfect henchman for technologically-oriented villains;
- the *Soldier* (whose character sheet you can also use for Cops and Terrorists with a few minor adjustments);
- the *Street Thug*, various gangsters and petty criminals your PCs might encounter; and
- the *Zombie*, an undead automaton who hungers for the flesh of the living!



AGENT

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
14	DEX	8	12-	
13	CON	3	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	PD	2		Total: 10 PD (6 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 10 ED (6 rED)
6	REC	2		
25	END	1		
12	BODY	2		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristics Cost: 63

Movement: Running: 12m

Cost Powers END

32	Blaster Rifle: Multipower, 52-point reserve	[32]
	32 Charges for entire Multipower (+¼); all OAF (-1)	
2f	1) Basic Setting: Blast 8d6	
	OAF (-1)	
2f	2) Autofire Setting: Blast 7d6	
	Autofire (5 shots, +½); OAF (-1), Limited Range (60m; -¼)	

Martial Arts: Brawling

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort	
4	Punch	+0	+2	5d6 Strike	
3	Throw	+0	+1	3d6 + v/10; Target Falls	
10	Armored Uniform: Resistant Protection (6 PD/6 ED)				0
	OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (does not protect Hit Locations 3-5 or 6-7; -¼)				
6	Helmet Radio: Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)				0
	OIF (-½), Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-¼)				

Skills

6	+2 with Blaster Rifle Multipower
3	Combat Driving 12-
3	Concealment 11-
3	Interrogation 12-
2	KS: The Local Underworld 11-
1	KS: The Superhuman World 8-
2	PS: Agent 11-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 99

Total Cost: 162

175 Matching Complications (50)

5	Distinctive Features: criminal organization's uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
10	Hunted: criminal organization (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15	Psychological Complication: Amoral And Greedy (Common, Strong)
20	Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Points: 50

Experience Points: 0

ALIEN INVADER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [1]
14	DEX	8	12-	
14	CON	4	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	3	12-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	PD	2		Total: 10 PD (6 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 10 ED (6 rED)
5	REC	1		
20	END	0		
10	BODY	0		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristics Cost: 69

Movement: Running: 12m
Flight: 12m

Cost	Powers	END
37	Raygun: Multipower, 60-point reserve 32 Charges for entire Multipower (+¼); all OAF (-1)	[32]
2f	1) Green Ray: Blast 10d6 OAF (-1)	
3f	2) Red Ray: Blast 8d6 Autofire (5 shots, +½); OAF (-1)	
1f	3) Orange Ray: RKA 2d6 OAF (-1)	
3f	4) Purple Ray: Drain Characteristics 4d6 Variable Effect (any one Characteristic at a time; +½); OAF (-1)	
16	Force-Field Belt: Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED) OIF (-½)	0
6	Helmet Communicator: HRRP (Radio Group) OIF (-½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0
8	Jetpack: Flight 12m OIF (-½)	1

Skills

5	+1 with Raygun Multipower
3	Stealth 12-
2	SS: Astronomy 11-
2	WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 88

Total Cost: 157

175 Matching Complications (50)

25	Distinctive Features: Hostile Alien (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction)
15	Psychological Complication: Wants To Conquer Earth (Common, Strong)
20	Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Points: 60

Experience Points: 0

5



DEMON

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
16	DEX	12	12-	
18	CON	8	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 8 PD (4 rPD)
8	ED	6		Total: 8 ED (4 rED)
9	REC	5		
35	END	3		
15	BODY	5		
32	STUN	6		Total Characteristics Cost: 103

Movement: Running: 12m
Flight: 20m

Cost	Powers	END
19	Demonic Claws: HKA 1d6 (1½d6 with STR) Armor Piercing (+¼)	2
25	Hellfire Aura: RKA 1d6 Area Of Effect (personal Surface — Damage Shield; +¼), Constant (+½), Penetrating (+½), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); No Range (-½)	4
4	Infernal Form: Resistant (+½) for 4 PD/4 ED	0
30	Infernal Form: Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%	0
40	Infernal Form: Life Support (Total, including Longevity: Immortality)	0
13	Demon Wings: Flight 20m; Restrained (-½)	2
5	Demon's Eyes: Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
	Skills	
8	+1 HTH	
7	Stealth 14-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 151

Total Cost: 254

275 Matching Complications (50)

20	Distinctive Features: Aura Of Infernal Evil (Concealable With Effort; Causes Fear)
20	Physical Complication: Must Obey Anyone Who Knows Its True Name (Infrequently, Fully Impairing)
20	Physical Complication: Restricted By Pentagrams, if confined within a pentagram cannot leave or affect anyone or anything outside the pentagram (Infre- quently, Fully Impairing)
25	Psychological Complication: Utterly Evil (Very Common, Total)
25	Susceptibility: to holy places and objects, takes 2d6 damage per Phase demon is on holy ground, in a holy place, or within 2m of a holy object (Common)

Total Complications Points: 110

Experience Points: 0

MOLE-MAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
13	DEX	6	12-	
18	CON	8	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
4	OCV	5		
4	DCV	5		
3	OMCV	0		
4	DMCV	3		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 8 PD (2 rPD)
8	ED	6		Total: 8 ED (2 rED)
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
10	BODY	0		
34	STUN	7		Total Characteristics Cost: 68

Movement: Running: 12m
Tunneling: 4m

Cost	Powers	END
20	Blasting-Staff: Multipower, 40-point reserve All OAF (-1)	
2f	1) Attack Blast: Blast 8d6 OAF (-1)	
1f	2) Digging Blast: Tunneling 4m through 6 PD materials OAF (-1)	
1f	3) Blast-Strike: HA +3d6 OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-¼)	1
2	Tough Skin: Resistant (+½) for 2 PD/2 ED	0
5	Adapted To The Dark: Nightvision	0
36	Adapted To The Dark: Detect Physical Vibrations 12- (Touch Group), Discriminatory, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Range, Targeting	0

Skills

3	+1 with Blasting-Staff Multipower
2	KS: Rock Types And Formations 11-
2	PS: Mining 11-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 74

Total Cost: 142

175 Matching Complications (50)

15	Physical Complication: Poor Eyesight (suffers -2 to all Sight PER Rolls in well-lit conditions) (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
20	Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Frequently, Severe)
20	Vulnerability: 2 x Effect from Sight Group Flash attacks defined as bright light (Common)

Total Complications Points: 55

Experience Points: 0



NINJA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
18	DEX	16	13-	
15	CON	5	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
14	EGO	4	12-	
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 4, 6, 9, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 14 PD (6 rPD)
8	ED	6		Total: 14 ED (6 rED)
7	REC	3		
30	END	2		
10	BODY	0		
28	STUN	4		Total Characteristics Cost: 116

Movement: Running: 16m

Cost	Powers	END
10	Ninja-to: HKA 1d6+1 (up to 2d6+1 with STR) OAF (-1)	2
7	Shuriken: RKA ½d6 Autofire (5 shots; +½); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 12 Charges (-¼)	[12]

Martial Arts: Ninjutsu

	<i>Maneuver</i>	<i>OCV</i>	<i>DCV</i>	<i>Notes</i>
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
5	Kick	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
4	Punch	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
3	Takedown	+1	+1	3d6 Strike; Target Falls
1	Use Art with Sword			

10	Armor: Resistant Protection (6 PD/6 ED) OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (does not protect Hit Locations 3-5 or 6-7; -¼)	0
4	Strong Runner: Running +4m (16m total)	2
6	Sharp Senses: +2 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups	0
Skills		
16	+2 HTH	
12	+1 Overall	
3	Acrobatics 13-	
3	Ukemi: Breakfall 13-	
3	Intonjutsu: Concealment 12-	
3	Henshojutsu: Disguise 12-	
2	Forgery (Documents) 12-	
2	KS: Ninjutsu 11-	
2	Language: Ninja Clan Codes And Symbols (fluent conversation)	
3	Lockpicking 13-	
3	Persuasion 11-	
5	Shinobi-iri: Stealth 14-	
4	Survival (Mountains, Temperate/Subtropical) 12-	
3	Tracking 12-	
6	WF: Common Martial Arts Weapons, Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons	
31	Additional Skills and Characteristics pertaining to the ninja's specialty	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 159

Total Cost: 275

275 Matching Complications (50)

10	Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Always Noticed And Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)	
20	Psychological Complication: Loyal To Clan (Common, Total)	
20	Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)	

Total Complications Points: 50

Experience Points: 0



ROBOT

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH damage [1]
15	DEX	10	12-	
10	CON	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
0	EGO	0	—	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6

6	OCV	15		
5	DCV	30		
0	OMCV	0		
0	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
8	PD	21		Total: 8 PD (8 rPD)
8	ED	21		Total: 8 ED (8 rED)
4	REC	0		
0	END	-4		
15	BODY	5		
—	STUN	—		Total Characteristics Cost: 123

Movement: Running: 12m

Cost	Powers	END
60	Built-In Weapons: Multipower, 60-point reserve	
6f	1) Blaster: Blast 8d6 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	0
6f	2) Laser: RKA 2½d6 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	0
4f	3) Tangleweb Projector: Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED 8 Charges (-½)	[8]
4f	4) Grenade Launcher: Blast 8d6 Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion; +½); 8 Charges (-½)	[8]

15	Robotic Form: Does Not Bleed	0
10	Robotic Form: No Hit Locations	0
45	Robotic Form: Takes No STUN	0
7	Robotic Form: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) on STR	0
6	Robotic Form: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) on Running	0
1	Robotic Form: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) on Leaping	0
1	Robotic Form: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) on Swimming	0
24	Robotic Form: Resistant (+½) for 8 PD/8 ED	0
26	Robotic Form: Life Support: Total (except for Safe Environments)	0
5	Visual Sensors: Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
12	Radio Sensors: HRRP (Radio Group)	0

Talents

3	Absolute Time Sense
3	Bump Of Direction
5	Eidetic Memory
3	Lightning Calculator

Skills

3	Computer Programming 12-
3	Cryptography 12-
3	Electronics 12-
3	AK: Earth 12-
2	KS: Everything 11-
3	Stealth 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 263

Total Cost: 386

400 Matching Complications (75)

15	Enraged: Berserk if exposed to intense magnetic fields (Uncommon), go 8-, recover 14-
25	Psychological Complication: Loyal To Master (Very Common, Total)
10	Vulnerability: 1½ x BODY From Gravity, Magnetic, Or Force Attacks (Common)

Total Complications Points: 50

Experience Points: 0

SOLDIER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 HTH damage [3]
12	DEX	4	11-	
13	CON	3	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	
12	PRE	2	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
4	OCV	5		
4	DCV	5		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	PD	2		Total: 10 PD (6 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 10 ED (6 rED)
6	REC	2		
25	END	1		
11	BODY	1		
26	STUN	3		Total Characteristics Cost: 43

Movement: Running: 12m

Cost	Powers	END
33	Assault Rifle: RKA 2d6 Autofire (5 shots; +½), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), 4 clips of 30 Charges each (+¾); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼)	[4x30]
7	Combat Knife: HKA 1d6 (up to 2d6 with STR) OAF (-1)	1
10	Body Armor: Resistant Protection (6 PD/6 ED) OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (does not protect Hit Locations 3-5 or 6-7; -¼)	0
5	Helmet: Resistant Protection (6 PD/6 ED) OIF (-½), Activation Roll 8- (only protects Hit Locations 3-4; -1¼)	0

Skills

3	Climbing 11-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2	KS: [Military Force] History And Customs 11-
2	PS: [member of military; e.g., "Sailor"] 11-
3	Stealth 11-
3	Tactics 11-
3	WF: Small Arms, Knives
6	Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 79

Total Cost: 122

100 Matching Complications (30)

5	Distinctive Features: Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
10	Hunted: military force character belongs to (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20	Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Points: 35

Experience Points: 22

STREET THUG

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 HTH damage [2]
12	DEX	4	11-	
13	CON	3	12-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
8	EGO	-2	11-	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
4	OCV	5		
4	DCV	5		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
5	REC	1		
20	END	0		
11	BODY	1		
24	STUN	2		Total Characteristics Cost: 35

Movement: Running: 12m

Cost	Powers	END
7	Handgun: RKA 1d6+1 OAF (-1), Beam (-¼), 8 Charges (-½)	[8]
5	Switchblade: HKA ½d6 (up to 1d6+1 with STR) OAF (-1)	1

Skills

3	Interrogation 12-
2	AK or CK appropriate to setting 11-
2	KS: Underworld Of city or neighborhood 11-
2	PS: Thug 11-
3	Stealth 11-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	WF: Small Arms, Knives
4	Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 34

Total Cost: 69

50 Matching Complications (25)

20	Hunted: police department or the like (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
5	Rivalry: Professional, with some other Street Thug

Total Complications Points: 25

Experience Points: 19



ZOMBIE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 800 kg; 4d6 HTH damage [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	
10	CON	0	11-	
5	INT	-5	10-	PER Roll 10-
0	EGO	0	—	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6

3	OCV	0	
3	DCV	0	
0	OMCV	0	
0	DMCV	0	
2	SPD	0	Phases: 6, 12
4	PD	9	Total: 4 PD (4 rPD)
2	ED	3	Total: 2 ED (2 rED)
4	REC	0	
0	END	-4	
10	BODY	0	
—	STUN	—	

Total Characteristics Cost: 16

Movement:	Running:	4m
	Leaping:	1m

Cost	Powers	END
10	Tireless: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) for STR	0
2	Tireless: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) on Running	0
1	Tireless: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) on Leaping	0
1	Tireless: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) on Swimming	0
15	Zombie's Body: Does Not Bleed	0
10	Zombie's Body: No Hit Locations	0
45	Zombie's Body: Takes No STUN	0

15	Undead Body: Resistant (+½) for 8 PD/2 ED	0
4	Undead Body: +2 PD Only Protects Against Slashing Or Piercing Attacks (-½)	0
3	Undead Body: +2 PD Only Protects Against Piercing Attacks (-1)	0
40	Undead Vitality: Life Support: Total (including Longevity: Immortality)	0
-8	Slow: Running -8m	
-1	Poor Leaper: Leaping -3m	
5	See Life: Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0

Skills

3	Climbing 11-
1	Language (GM's choice)
3	Stealth 11-
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 153

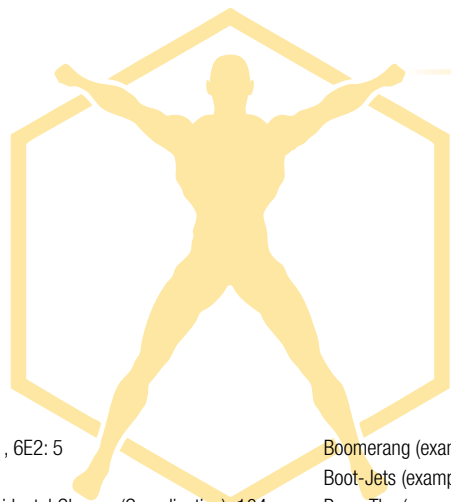
Total Cost: 169

175 Matching Complications (50)

15	Physical Complication: Affected By Necromancy (has EGO 13 for purposes of necromancy spells, and can be affected by necromancy-based Presence Attacks) (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
20	Physical Complication: Machine Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
15	Psychological Complication: Hunger For Human Brains (Common, Strong)

Total Complications Points: 50

Experience Points: 0



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