NINJA HERO™

A MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGN BOOK FOR THE HERO SYSTEM AND CHAMPIONS

by
Aaron Allston

CREDITS

Author/ Designer: Aaron Allston

Editor/Developer: Rob Bell

Cover Illustration: Jackson Guice

Interior Illustration: Pat Zircher

Layouts: Andrew Christensen, Edward Dinwiddie

Project Specific Contributions: *Series Editor:* Rob Bell; *Page Design:* Jennifer Kleine; *Layout:* Andrew Christensen, Edward Dinwiddie; *Cover Design:* Andrew Christensen; *Editorial Contributions:* Jo Lori "To protect the innocent" Drake, JB "Them balls of string" Brunkhart, Coleddman Charlddton.

Special Contributions — Earl S. Cooley III, Bob Quinlan, Luray Richmond, Sean Summers.

Playtesting — Mark Bennett (Payao Sarasin), Earl S. Cooley III (Tai Yim O'Malley), Kerry Gaber (Ram Jafar), Denis Loubet (Wu Feng), Luray Richmond (Yasmin), Mark Richmond (Big Jim Williams), Sean Summers (Leo Hudson).

The Commentators from the Red October BBS — Stephen Beerman, Ben Ellinger, Adrian Ownby, Nonie Quinlan, Kenneth Scott, Allen Varney, Wayne Walls.

Editor's Dedication: To Danny Ruff and Shira Tachi — the first HERO System ninja I ever saw.

ICE MANAGEMENT — *Art Director/Production Manager:* Terry K. Amthor; *Sales Manager:* Deane Begiebing; *Editing & Development Manager:* Coleman Charlton; *President:* Peter Fenlon; *CEO:* Bruce Neidlinger; *Controller:* Kurt Rasmussen.

ICE STAFF — *Marketing Consultant:* John Morgan; *Print Buyer:* Bill Downs; *Production Supervisor:* Suzanne Young; *Editing & Development Staff:* Kevin Barrett, Rob Bell, Pete Fenlon, Jessica Ney, John Ruemmler; Terry Amthor ; *Graphics & Production Staff:* Andrew Christensen, Edward Dinwiddie, William Hyde, Jennifer Kleine, I. Haines Sprunt, Kevin Williams; *Sales & Customer Service Staff:* John Brunkhart, Jo Lori Drake; *Finance Staff:* Heidi Heffner; *Shipping Staff:* John Breckenridge, Kurt Fischer, David Johnson.

Ninja Hero™ is Hero Games' trademark for its superhero roleplaying game using the Hero system.
Champions® and *Champions, The Super Roleplaying Game*™ are Hero Games trademarks for its superhero roleplaying game using the Hero System.
Hero System™ is Hero Games' trademark for its roleplaying system. *Ninja Hero* Copyright © 1990 Hero Games. All rights reserved. *Champions* Copyright © 1981, 1984, 1989 by Hero Games. All rights reserved. *Hero System* Copyright © 1984, 1989 by Hero Games. All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying (except Character Sheets for personal use only), recording, or computerization, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Publisher: Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

Printed in U.S.A., First Printing 1990

Produced & Distributed by Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., the exclusive manufacturer of Hero Games.

STOCK #: 501

ISBN 1-55806-095-2

INTRODUCTION 3
So, What IS *Ninja Hero*, Really? 3
Arrangement of the Rulebook 3
How to Use Ninja Hero 4
A Short Glossary 4
A Word of Caution 4

CHARACTER CREATION

CHARACTER DESIGN 6
Character Stereotype s 6
What Is a Black Belt? 8
MARTIAL ARTS 9
Maneuvers 9
Skills 9
Style Elements 9
Martial Arts Maneuvers 11
Maneuvers and Weapons 12
Martial Arts Styles 13
Modifying and Building Styles 26
Learning Martial Arts 26
Learning New and Multiple Styles 28
SKILLS 29
Weapon Familiarities 33
PERKS 34
TALENTS 35
POWERS 36
Heroic Campaigns 36
Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns 37
Wild Martial Arts Campaigns 44
DISADVANTAGES 50
PACKAGE DEALS 54
The Ninja 54
The Samurai 55
The Kenshi 56
Chinese Knight (Shih) 56
Chinese Master 57
Buddhist Warrior-Monk 57
DESIGNING STYLES 58
Style Conception 58
Choosing Maneuvers 58
Designing New Maneuvers 58
Mongoose Style 64
Designing Martial Arts Styles 65
The Complete Mongoose Style 66
Martial Arts Design Sheet 66
Extra DC 67
Weapons 68
Other Ways to Build Martial Arts 68

COMBAT RULES

CLARIFICATIONS 71
COMBAT MODIFIERS 72
COMBAT MANEUVERS 73
SPECIAL CASES 79
Using Martial Arts When Bound 80
FIGHTING TACTICS 81
OPTIONAL RULES 82
OPTIONAL MARTIAL ARTS DESIGN RULES 88
Special Martial Arts Guidelines 88
Sample Maneuvers 89
The One-Maneuver Martial Art 90

SOURCEBOOK

HEROIC GADGETS AND WEAPONS 92
Ranged Weapons 92
Melee Weapons 92
Unusual Weapons 94
Armor 95
Master List of Weapons 96
Miscellaneous Gadgets 101
Gadget and Weapon Creation Rules 101
Poisons in Heroic Campaigns 104
Special Weapons 104
SUPERHERO GADGETS AND WEAPONS 106
Ranged Weapons 106
Melee Weapons 106
Unusual Weapons 109
Armor 109
Master List of Weapons 109
Miscellaneous Gadgets 109
Gadget and Weapon Creation Rules 110
BELTS AND RANKS 111
FOREIGN TERMS 112
Glossary 112
Pronunciation Guide 112
MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS 113
ORIENTAL NAMES 114
Japanese Names 114
Chinese Names 114
Korean Names 115
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY 115

GAME-MASTERING

CAMPAIGNING 118
Existing Campaigns 118
New Campaigns 118
Five Power Levels of Campaigns 120
Continuity 122
The Ground Rules 123
The Setting 124
Character Creation (The GM Perspective) 125
Elements of Martial Arts Adventure 127
Designing the Adventure 129
Running the Adventure 132
Campaign Elements 133
ADVENTURES 137
Shinobiyama (Ninja Mountain) 137
Fists of the Warlord 154
Warriors in Valhalla. 159
NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS 167
Yooso (The Elements) 167
Sipristi 173



INTRODUCTION

David Li stood before the garish, carved jade throne and looked impassively on the face of his enemy — at last, at last. "It is time to put all tricks and deceptions behind us," he said coolly. "All your hirelings, all your lieutenants, all your elegant traps have not served to keep me away. You killed my father and my sister... you betrayed every teaching of our family... and now you will die for it, Uncle."

Li Haifeng, drug king of Hong Kong, could not keep from his face the anger and frustration he felt. David and his friends had cut a bloody swath through Hiafeng's hired hatchet-men, his hardy soldiers, his exquisitely-trained bodyguards. Haifeng's past had just caught up with him.

The drug lord rose, his jade silk tunic sliding across his catlike muscles. "You will die as your father died," he scoffed. "He could not stand before my Ribbon-Hand technique. You, too, will fall before it..."

He struck faster than the eye could see, but David caught the incoming blow with the X of his crossed forearms, saw the amazed widening of his uncle's eyes, and executed a lightning-fast counterpunch that rocked Haifeng back on his heels. "I've learned something since last we met," David shot back. "Such as the weaknesses of the Ribbon Hand. Master Chen sends his regards." He followed through with a spinning legsweep that turned into a snap-kick mere inches before it connected; his heel cracked into Haifeng's inner knee, hurling the older man to the foot of his throne.

So far, so good — but Haifeng was still strong, still canny, and still dangerous...

Welcome to *Ninja Hero*, the *Hero System* supplement of martial arts adventures.

SO, WHAT *IS* NINJA HERO, REALLY?

Ninja Hero is the first *Hero System* Campaign Book; that means it's a stand-alone genre book supplementing the *Hero System Rulesbook*. But it's also a *Champions* campaign book, adding detail and options to a *Champions* superheroic campaign.

Players and GMs who like heroic-level campaigns, with two-fisted but very human adventurer-heroes, will find a wealth of material here to expand the combat horizons of their campaigns. The same is true of players and GMs who prefer four-color *Champions* campaigns. The martial arts rules from the *HERO System Rulesbook* may, basically, do all the things you want your comic-book martial arts to do... but we're going to show you how to do more than that.

Regardless of the power level you play in your own campaign, *Ninja Hero* can add something to your campaign, something which is made possible by the universal nature of the *HERO System* rules.

You probably already know the basic rules for martial arts construction and combat from the *HERO System Rulesbook*; this supplement builds on that foundation to let you simulate just about everything you see in martial arts movies, comic books, and fiction.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE RULEBOOK

Ninja Hero is arranged this way:

Chapter One is *Character Creation.* In this chapter, you'll learn all you need to know about creating a martial artist character for a *HERO System* campaign. Included in this chapter are rules for Character Conceptions, Martial Arts, other Skills, Perks, Talents, Powers, Disadvantages, Package Deals... and optional rules for designing your own martial arts maneuvers. This chapter is primarily for players, but the GM should be familiar with it as well.

Chapter Two is *Combat Rules.* This chapter discusses interpretations, modifications, and variants for the *HERO System* to allow you to showcase martial arts action. In this chapter, we talk about clarifications to the existing combat rules, interesting new ways to use old maneuvers, special combat situations, and tactics. We also provide a number of optional rules you can use to customize your martial arts campaign. This chapter is for players and GM alike.

Chapter Three is the *Sourcebook.* It's a handy resource of useful information. Most of the chapter is taken up with gadgets and weapons — especially weapons appropriate to a martial arts adventure. Also included are facts about real-world martial arts terminology and outfits, and lists of oriental names for players to use in naming their eastern characters. This chapter is for players and GM alike.

Chapter Four is *Game-mastering*. The first section in the chapter deals with Campaigning: How to create a campaign and its NPCs, how to work up martial arts adventures, handy ways to simulate classic bits from martial arts fiction. Also included are numerous adventures and NPCs which can be used in a variety of martial arts campaigns. This chapter is for the GM's eyes only; the GM may allow his players to read the Campaigning section, but the players must not read the *Adventures* and *Non-Player Characters* sections.

HOW TO USE NINJA HERO

Ninja Hero hasn't been written just for martial arts campaigns, or for superheroic campaigns, or for heroic campaigns, or for any special sort of campaign; it's useful to *any* sort of campaign.

If you don't want the martial arts to be any more intrusive in your campaign than they already are, then just plunder this rulebook for its weapons and NPCs.

If you want to increase the number of martial arts in your existing campaign, then use the Martial Arts from the *Character Creation* chapter. If you want to design new arts for use in your campaign, and the GM allows it, then use the Designing Martial Arts rules from the same chapter.

If you'd like to take a break from your usual campaign and start a high-kicking campaign devoted to martial arts action, *Ninja Hero* will tell you how to do that, too.

Whatever you want to use this supplement for, the first thing you need to do is to read it. Players will need to read the *Character Creation* chapter, and may wish to read the *Combat Rules* and *Sourcebook* chapters. The GM will need to read the entire book.

Once he's read through the book, the GM will need to decide how much of it he wants to incorporate into his game. Among the many things to choose from are the rulebook's weapons and gadgets, optional rules, and martial arts design guidelines. The *Campaigning* section of the *Game-mastering* chapter, especially, provides advice on this subject, but the final decision belongs to each individual GM.

When he's made his decision, the GM should let his players know which sections and elements of this supplement he's using, and which he's forbidding; he also needs to tell his players whether he's starting a new campaign, or incorporating *Ninja Hero* material into his existing campaign, or both.

That's all it takes to get started. Once you have started, you should be able to continue using *Ninja Hero* for quite some time to come.

A SHORT GLOSSARY

To avoid a certain amount of confusion, we need to define some of the more common terms you'll find in *Ninja Hero*. These terms include:

Ch'i: The quasi-mystical source of energy which the martial artist learns to channel through training and proper breath control.

Dojo: Japanese word for a martial arts school or training hall.

Heroic Campaign: A campaign in which the characters all have the Normal Characteristic Maxima disadvantage (worth 0 points), are built on fewer Character Points than a superhero, and can carry around equipment and weapons of normal technology without spending points for them.

Ninja: A feudal-era Japanese spy and reconnaissance expert, often considered an assassin; or, a modern-day practitioner of the *ninjutsu* martial art.

Sensei: Japanese term for teacher or master.

Style: A particular form of martial art. In *Ninja Hero*, this refers to the collection of maneuvers, skills, special style elements, and disadvantages which comprise a particular form of martial art.

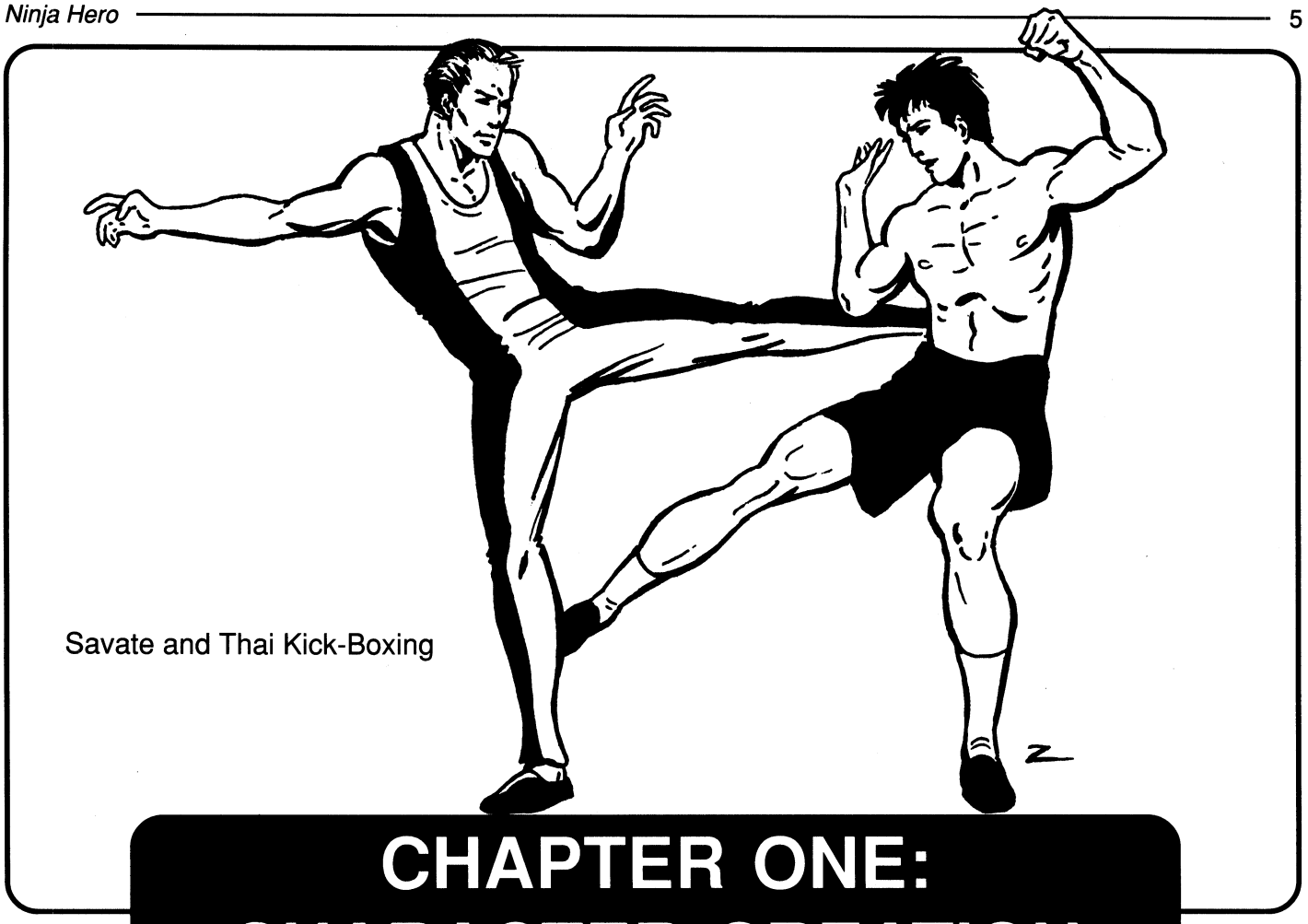
Superheroic Campaign: A campaign in which the characters are all superhuman beings built on far more Character Points than normal people (even heroic normal people), where the characters routinely exceed the Normal Characteristic Maxima which ordinary people adhere to, and where they must spend their own Character Points on all items of equipment and weapons they routinely carry.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Readers — especially those who are practitioners of martial arts in real life — need to note that *Ninja Hero* is first, foremost, a supplement of *movie-style* martial arts action. It's not that we have any disrespect for the martial arts as they are practiced in the real world; but the drive to improve one's health and character, and the search for personal enlightenment, that go hand-in-hand with real-world martial arts are not what we're trying to simulate.

Ninja Hero is for the admirers of grim, brilliantly-executed comic books with martial arts protagonists; it's for the admirers of Hong Kong kung fu movies, Japanese *chambarra* films, and their American martial arts film relatives. It's for players who want to role-play Bruce Lee or Jackie Chan, Toshiro Mifune or Sonny Chiba, Chuck Norris or Jean Claude van Damme, Lone Wolf and Cub or practically anyone drawn by Frank Miller.

It's time to begin. Gentlemen, start your *nunchaku*...



Savate and Thai Kick-Boxing

CHAPTER ONE: CHARACTER CREATION

In this chapter, we're going to tell you how to put together characters — all sorts of characters, but especially martial arts player-character heroes.

Players who want to use *Ninja Hero* will tend to use this supplement for one of three purposes: To create new characters for new martial arts campaigns, to create new characters for existing campaigns, and to revise old characters in existing campaigns.

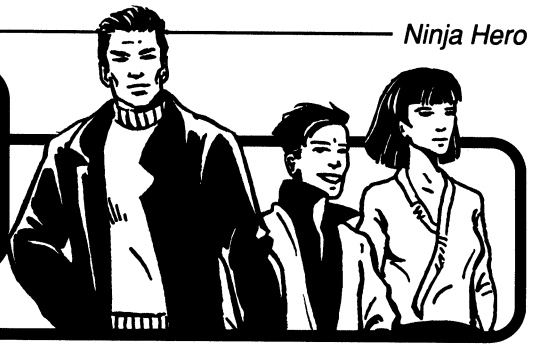
The first step in this process is to find out what the GM is allowing and what he isn't. You can't assume that your GM will like and approve of every rule and every power within *Ninja Hero*. (This is especially true for the optional rules, many of which are only appropriate for martial arts campaigns.) Give the GM time to read the supplement, then ask him which parts of it he's approving and which he's not.

At that point, when creating characters for new or existing campaigns, all you have to do is follow the GM's ordinary campaign requirements and limitations, using those parts of these rules which he is allowing.

However, you may find yourself wanting to revise an existing character because something in *Ninja Hero* better simulates your original conception of the character. That, too, requires specific permission from your GM, so make sure that all the changes you want to make meet with his approval.

With that said, let's talk about designing new martial arts characters.

CHARACTER DESIGN



When you're building new characters for existing campaigns, you simply follow the established campaign guidelines for character creation.

When you're building characters for a new campaign, such as a short-run martial arts campaign, the GM will provide character creation guidelines for them as well. If the GM is having a hard time determining what sort of point base he wants for the PCs, we recommend the following arrangements:

Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, Type One: Base 75 points, up to 75 points in Disadvantages, no more than 25 points in any one category of Disadvantage. Characters receive the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage worth 0 points, and can carry normal weapons and technology for free. This is a more realistic martial arts campaign in which the PCs are good fighters, but not supermen; they have high human-level characteristics and little or no "super-powers."

Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, Type Two: Base 100 points, up to 100 points in Disadvantages, no more than 50 points in any one category of Disadvantage. Characters receive the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage worth 0 points, and can carry normal weapons and technology for free. This is a more realistic martial arts campaign in which the PCs come very close to being supermen in terms of their physical statistics and the damage they can do... but they still have little in the way of "super-powers."

Wild Martial Arts Campaign, Type One: Base 100 points, up to 100 points in Disadvantages, no more than 50 points in any one category of Disadvantage. Characters receive the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage worth 0 points, and can carry normal weapons and technology for free. In this campaign, the characters are built on points identical to the "Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, Type Two," but have access to a wide variety of martial arts super-powers, some of which look ridiculous outside the genre of martial arts adventures.

Wild Martial Arts Campaign, Type Two: Base 100 points, up to 150 points in Disadvantages, no more than 50 points in any one category of Disadvantage. Characters can (but do not have to) take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage worth 20 points. They must purchase with their own Character Points any weapons and equipment they plan to carry regularly. This is a superheroic campaign — at least in the power of its characters. Characters built on these rules will rival superheroes in power, even if they are "just" non-costumed martial artists.

The *Campaigning* section of the *Game-mastering* chapter goes into much greater detail on concerns the GM should think about when establishing the ground rules for his campaign. The GM should read that section; the players can do so if they wish.

CHARACTER STEREOTYPES

Once you know what sort of guidelines your GM is implementing, you can decide on your character conception.

There are many types of characters common to martial arts adventures, whether they be comic-book, cinema, or print-fiction martial arts. They include:

THE AVENGER

This character has been wronged in the past and now his life is a continuing quest for vengeance. Often the campaign will center around clashes between this hero (and his friends) and the group or clan which wronged him in the past, though this is not a good approach to take if the other characters don't want always to fight this one hero's Hunted.

Any other character stereotype can become The Avenger for a single storyline. All it takes is a nasty or treacherous attacked aimed at someone the PC loves...

The Avenger character tends to have martial arts skills including brutal, devastating maneuvers. He may have many weapons-related abilities. He may have a Psychological Limitation such as Code of Vengeance (see under *Disadvantages* later in this section).

A variation on the Avenger is *The Maimed Avenger*, who has a physical limitation (usually a missing limb or eye) for which he wishes to exact vengeance.

The Avenger role is equally well-suited to male and female PCs.

THE HONORABLE NINJA

This character could have been born into a Japanese ninja clan, or adopted into one; he could have been a *gaijin* (an outsider or foreigner) whom the clan agreed to train; or he could be a practitioner of a type of modern ninjutsu which claims no ties to historical ninjutsu, but which works to redevelop the art. Either way, the character is a ninja.

The Ninja character is usually built with the Ninja Package Deal provided later in this chapter.

Adventures involving this character should deal as much with espionage and stealthy assaults as with all-out martial arts combat.

The Honorable Ninja role is equally well-suited to male and female PCs; female ninja are called *kunoichi*.

THE IRRITABLE STUDENT

This character is a promising physical specimen who knows some martial arts and is eager to learn more. However, he's saddled with a teacher who seldom teaches him anything directly related to fighting; the teacher makes him perform excruciating and meaningless exercises and chores, hardly ever showing him actual blows or moves, speaking in meaningless aphorisms all the time. Naturally, the student is frustrated and irritable.

(Of course, the master is using these exercises and chores to condition the student's body and instill reflexes important to his art, but the student is as yet incapable of realizing this.)

For a character to be the Irritable Student, the campaign must feature a prominent PC or NPC master who is training him (and perhaps other player-characters) throughout the course of the campaign.

The Irritable Student character should be built with high physical characteristics and a minimal amount of maneuvers (give him the minimum black belt equivalent: Three maneuvers valued at 10 points or more total, an 8- roll with his art, and the Style Disadvantage). He often has no other useful skills, and usually has a Psychological Limitation such as Aggressively Impatient: Common, Strong (15 pts).

This role is better suited to male PCs than female, but that's not a restriction; it's simply that more characters in this role are male.

THE KICKBOXING CHAMPION

The character is a professional kickboxer (probably in full-contact karate, though any martial art which has a professional sports version is appropriate). He may be an active contender, the current champion in his weight division, or a retired fighter.

Many of his adventures will revolve around him discovering that his pals or competitors on the professional circuit have gone bad and begun using their arts for crime; often, the character will be called on by the police to act as a consultant in martial arts-related crimes.

The Kickboxing Champion tends to have a well-rounded martial arts style, a few skill levels, and skills related to the business: Streetwise, Gambling, etc. He often has the psychological limitation *Overconfident.*

This character is more commonly male than female, but that is not a restriction, just a tendency.

THE KICKBOXING COP

This character is a policeman, federal agent, or private investigator who just happens to know a martial arts style.

In most campaigns, he's much more independent than peace officers are supposed to be: He's much less prone to report all details of his investigations, or the fact that he's just kicked three minor hoodlums into the hospital while pursuing his case. (This helps streamline his reports and keeps his martial arts friends out of trouble.)

The Kickboxing Cop usually has a spare, stripped-to-the-bone martial arts style (three or four maneuvers and a few skill levels) and numerous skills related to his profession: Deduction, Criminology, WF: Small Arms, Perk: Police Powers, Contacts, Favors, Streetwise, enhanced Perception, etc.

This character is just as likely to be female as male.

THE KNIGHT-ERRANT

This character is the classic adventurer: He travels, seeking out trouble and setting it right wherever he finds it.

This character tends to be a professional adventurer; he'll have good martial arts abilities, but his choice of other skills will reflect the campaign setting. In a modern campaign, he'll probably have several travel-related skills (Driving, Piloting, Skiing), numerous Contacts and Favors, and skills related to some adventuring profession (private investigator, spy, etc.)

In a historical campaign, the Knight-Errant can be built with something like the Chinese Knight package deal from later in this chapter.

This character is as likely to be female as male.

THE MASTER

This character is a teacher of martial arts and the philosophies of his style.

He is often built with most or all maneuvers from his style, and perhaps maneuvers from other styles, making him a very versatile fighter. Often he is built with somewhat lower physical characteristics than the younger heroes he's teaching, but lots of combat skill levels to make up for the deficit.

He may have the Age disadvantage (though he doesn't have to take that disadvantage). He is also likely to take the Psychological Limitation Inscrutable (Common): 10 pts; this makes him reluctant to explain why he's ordering his students to do the things they're doing, which continually frustrates them.

The Master is most likely to be male, but especially in Chinese Viewpoint stories can be female.

THE NAIVE HERO/HEROINE

This character is a prime physical specimen with a fine command of his martial art; his greatest problem is that he is naive. He may have been sheltered all his life; he certainly has never spent time on the streets. He's gullible and susceptible to the wiles of swindlers, con men, and spies.

The Naive Hero/Heroine often has good martial arts abilities (numerous maneuvers and skill levels) and some profession-related skill. This character should take the Psychological Limitation "Naive: Common (10 pts)" and role-play it to the hilt.

This character is usually, though not always, male.

THE RONIN

This character is an unemployed samurai. He is often forced to wander and undertake short-term assignments (many of them nasty or ones which put him in moral dilemmas) in order to make his living.

The Ronin usually takes the Samurai/Ronin package deal found later in this chapter.

This character type is usually male.

THE SAMURAI

This character is normally a samurai in the employ of a lord in feudal Japan; his adventures generally involve him trying to achieve personal goals (such as revenge) while meeting his obligations to and achieving the goals of his lord (which may directly or indirectly conflict with his own goals).

This character must take the Samurai package deal found later in this chapter.

Though most fighting samurai are male, they may be female.

THE SERIOUS STUDENT

This character, like the Irritable Student, appears in campaigns where a teacher is an important PC or NPC. Unlike the Irritable one, this character is sober and studious (and, usually, more boring than the Irritable Student).

The Serious Student is built much like the Irritable Student, but without the Impatient disadvantage.

This role is equally well-suited to male and female characters.

THE SIDEKICK

This character is a buddy of one of the other characters; if the campaign centers around a school, he's another student of the school.

This is a demanding role to play, because (by definition) the Sidekick is not as good a martial artist as the character who is his friend. He should be built with a minimum number of martial arts maneuvers and fewer skill levels than his friends have.

On the other hand, he could have a variety of abilities which make him just as useful to the group as the top-line fighter: He could have Streetwise and dozens of street contacts, he could have scientific or technical skills the group needs, etc.

But if no player is willing to have distinctly less fighting versatility than the group's standard, then the Sidekick should not be a player-character; if he appears at all, he should be an NPC (often either a DNPC or a Follower).

A variation of the Sidekick is the *Comic Sidekick*, who's a bit goofy, foolish or stupid.

Sidekicks may be either male or female, though Comic Sidekicks are almost always male.

THE UNWILLING FIGHTER

This character, though he is a master of the martial arts, doesn't want to fight. He has other goals, such as the pursuit of philosophy or the desire to be a humble gardener.

For some plot-driven reason, he becomes the target of the villains (perhaps he doesn't let the villains maim or kill his employers, which gives them fits). Finally, the villains' actions drive him over the edge and for a brief and bloody period of time he becomes The Avenger (see above).

The Unwilling Fighter is usually an excellent martial artist, having many skill levels and at least four or five maneuvers. But the martial arts are not his profession; he must have skills pertaining to whatever he does to make his living.

This character is more likely to be male than female.

THE WARRIOR-MONK

This character is the Buddhist priest, and probably has the Buddhist Warrior-Monk package deal. Usually, the Warrior-Monk role is combined with another role, such as Monk/Avenger, Monk/Knight-Errant, and Monk/Unwilling Fighter.

The Warrior-Monk is usually built with something like the Warrior-Monk Package Deal from later in this chapter.

Though the Warrior-Monk is more likely to be male than female, there were female Warrior-Nuns.

LAST NOTE ON THE STEREOTYPES

The characters built for your campaign do not have to use any of these stereotypes; these roles are merely aids in character-building.

Once you have your conception in place, it's time to begin implementing it in game terms. This means buying the skills (including martial arts maneuvers), perks, powers, and statistics you want, and taking the Disadvantages that help define your character.

But before we get into that, let's answer a quick question:

WHAT IS A BLACK BELT?

We're not asking what a black belt is in the real world — just what being a black belt means in the HERO System. So here, we'll talk about how to simulate various levels of martial arts ability in the HERO System.

When a character has bought all required (i.e., marked with a (*) skills and elements in a style, and at least one maneuver from the style, he is said to be a practitioner of the style. You may consider him to be at a low-to-medium rank in the art (for example, a yellow or orange belt).

When a character has bought all required skills and elements and has bought at least two maneuvers from the style, he is considered at a medium rank in the style (for example, a blue or green belt).

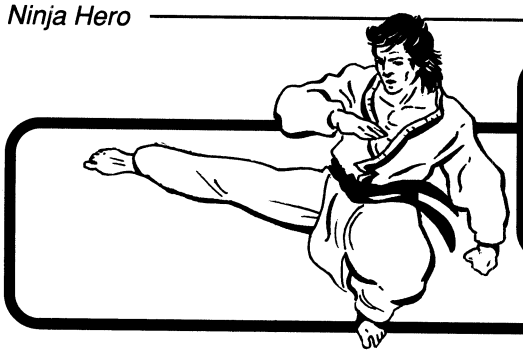
When a character has bought all required skills and elements and has bought at least 10 points' worth of maneuvers from the style, he is considered a higher-ranking practitioner of the style (for example, a purple or brown belt).

When a character has bought all required skills and elements, has bought at least 10 points' worth of maneuvers from the style, and has bought the KS for the style on an 8- or better roll, he is considered to be at the bottom of the top rank of practitioners of the style (for example, a first-degree black belt). He may take the Style Disadvantage at this rank, if the GM is using this rule.

In general, you might calculate that for every maneuver in the art (above 3) that the black belt knows, or for every two skill levels (in the art) he has learned, he is one dan (i.e., black belt rank) higher; thus, three maneuvers means first-degree, four maneuvers means second-degree, etc., on up to fifth-degree.

Above fifth-degree, dan are usually awarded according to the practitioner's participation in the art (especially as a teacher, but also as a competitor).

In the real world, in American martial arts training, it takes an average of about four years of steady instruction to achieve a first-degree black belt.



MARTIAL ARTS

This section is a sourcebook on martial arts styles. Below, you'll find numerous styles appropriate for *HERO System* player-characters to buy.

A *martial arts style* is represented in the *HERO System* by four "ingredients." These are Maneuvers, Skills, Style Elements, and Style Disadvantages.

Every style listed in this section will be explained in terms of those four ingredients, plus a little history, description, and Optional Rules.

MANEUVERS

In the *HERO System*, martial arts styles are principally made up of *maneuvers*. You already know how maneuvers work from your *HERO System Rulesbook* (if not, please review the *Combat Maneuvers* section of that rulebook).

All the styles in this section are built from the list of maneuvers found under *Martial Arts Maneuvers*. This is an elaboration on the list found in your *HERO System Rulesbook* (under the description of the skill *Martial Arts*).

However, in the individual styles, the names of maneuvers are often changed, to better reflect the differences between the styles. For example, the Martial Strike will be called a *bencao* (front thrust kick) in Capoeira and a *cross* in Boxing.

SKILLS

Many styles recommend that the character take certain skills. These skills listed with the styles are not free; the character must buy them with his own points. (Confusion arises on this point because an earlier edition of *Champions* included some "free" skills with martial arts styles, while the current edition does not.)

Most teachers will eventually teach most of the recommended skills to his pupils. However, since it is possible for the art to be taught by individuals interested only in teaching fighting, most skills are not *required* of the practitioner. Some *are* required: They are marked with an asterisk (*).

This all means that if a character learns a style from a normal teacher, he will ultimately learn these skills as well. If he's learning the style from a quick-and-dirty practitioner or someone not interested in passing on the art's traditions, he can get away with not learning the skills. The GM decides whether a teacher is performing traditional instruction or quick-and-dirty instruction.

WF stands for Weapon Familiarity.

KS stands for Knowledge Skill. See the *Skills* section for an explanation of what this Knowledge Skill does in a campaign.

STYLE ELEMENTS

Elements are special additions which change the way styles are performed. There are two types of Elements: Extra DC and Weapons.

EXTRA DC

You should already be familiar with *Extra DC*; it's explained under the *Martial Arts* skill description in the *HERO System Rulesbook*. We elaborate on Extra DC later in the book.

No style ever requires that Extra DC be taken with the style. In fact, in some heroic campaigns, characters will not be able to take Extra DC, as we discuss in the *Campaigning* section.

WEAPONS

Weapons is a special element which allows some or all of a style's maneuvers to be performed with a specific weapons group.

If a martial art is already designed to be performed with a weapons group (as Arnis, Fencing, Kenjutsu and Kobu-jutsu are), then adding another Weapons element would allow its use with a different weapons group.

Another type of Weapons element is called the Barehanded element. Adding the Barehanded element to a style which normally uses weapons allows the character to use the maneuvers when he is unarmed.

Weapons elements, and how they work with martial arts maneuvers, are discussed later in the book.

STYLES WITH WEAPONS, STYLES WITHOUT

Several styles below are listed with Weapons elements.

If a style is not listed with a Weapons element, you cannot take one for it. For example, Judo has no weapons techniques; you cannot buy a Weapons element for Judo maneuvers.

Some arts for which weapon use is permissible just are not appropriate for all weapons. For example, Boxing is listed with a Cestus Weapons Element. Though modern boxing is not taught with cesti, a boxer, if properly trained, could learn to use his boxing with cesti. However, he could *not* learn to use his boxing with polearms, so the GM should refuse a request to buy Weapons Element for polearms with Boxing.

With unarmed combat styles, Weapons Elements are optional. If a Weapons element is listed with a style, the purchaser does not have to take it.

With armed combat styles, one Weapons Element will be mandatory — but free. For example, with Fencing the character receives the Swords Weapons Element for free. (He must still buy Weapon Familiarity with those weapons.)

Not all weapons are suitable for use with all maneuvers. After the list of martial arts maneuvers later in this section, you'll find a list of which weapons go with which maneuvers.

STYLE DISADVANTAGE

Style Disadvantage is actually a Distinctive Features Disadvantage. It uses the variant "Conditional" rules found in the *Disadvantages* section of this book.

It constitutes a 10-point Distinctive Features built this way: "Large group can identify character; character is noticed and recognized." The "large group" constitutes anyone in the Martial World, i.e. any martial artist or character who belongs in the Martial World. (The Martial World is described in the *Campaigning* section of the *Game-mastering* chapter.)

As an ordinary Disadvantage, it is listed in the Disadvantages column of the character's record sheet.



What Styles Can Take It

Any style which constitutes a Martial Arts Style approved by the GM may have the Style Disadvantage. Note: Dirty Infighting, Football, and Generic Martial Arts are not Martial Arts Styles for this purpose; they do not have a Style Disadvantage associated with them.

Who May Take It

A character who has learned 10 points' worth of maneuvers from one specific martial art (and it must be a martial art listed with the Style Disadvantage), and has taken at least an 8- Knowledge Skill with his art, may take the Style Disadvantage. If he has less than 10 points' worth of maneuvers or hasn't taken the Knowledge Skill he may not have the Disadvantage.

Who May Not Buy It

Someone who builds a "martial arts style" out of nothing but HERO System powers and/or skill levels may not take a Style Disadvantage. A Style Disadvantage may only be taken for martial arts styles built from martial arts maneuvers.

Taking It Late

If your already-played character learns Martial Arts at some later time, he may take the Style Disadvantage only if the GM allows. We discuss that subject later in this chapter.

Only One

A character may only have one Style Disadvantage. If he learns both Aikido and Karate, their Style Disadvantages combine together into one Disadvantage for both Aikido and Karate which is still worth -10 pts.

What It Does

The purposes of the Style Disadvantage are discussed in the *Disadvantages* section.

OPTIONAL RULES

If your campaign uses hit locations, you may use these Optional Rules in your campaign.

Each package is listed with a set of Optional Rules pertaining to hit locations. Each maneuver is described in terms of its normal Hit Location Roll.

Some maneuvers are listed with 2d6+1 Location Rolls, especially punches. Some are listed with 3d6 Location Rolls, especially kicks. Some are listed with 2d6+7 Location Rolls, especially low kicks. If your GM wishes, in your campaign you utilize the Location Roll given for each individual maneuver. This is another thing which helps keep the Boxing Cross (a 2d6+1 location) from looking just like the Capoeira *bencao* (a 2d6+7 location), though both are based on the Martial Strike.

When such maneuvers hit body locations, they are affected normally by those locations. When a 2d6+1 location punch hits the head, it gets extra damage. When it hits the armh its damage is reduced, as normal.

Some maneuvers, on the other hand, are listed as automatically hitting specific body parts. When they are so listed, they get no extra damage or lose no damage for hitting those body parts. Obviously, they'll avoid sectional armor if there is no armor on those body parts... but they don't get any damage modifiers for the body location they've hit.

For example, the Dirty Infighting "Low Blow" maneuver is listed as having an automatic location of 13 — Vitals. The blow automatically hits the Vitals if it hits at all. However, it does no extra damage for hitting the Vitals; it just does its normal 2d6 NND, with no additional damage.

If such a maneuver were to get the additional modifiers for hitting vulnerable body parts, the maneuver would be far too unbalanced. Think of the player who takes an Offensive Strike maneuver (a STR +4d6 Strike) who defines it as always hitting a head location — and think of the incredible damage he'd routinely do to his opponents!

Some maneuvers are listed as taking "general" locations. Their damage is never multiplied or divided. Maneuvers such as Throws, Legsweeps, Takedowns, and some special blows are so listed.

Naturally, if you use Hit Locations but don't wish to use these optional rules, you don't have to; all blows would therefore have 3d6 Hit Location rolls. But if you don't want to have boxers pummelling peoples' shins, you should think about utilizing these rules.

Note: Just because a maneuver has, say, a listed Location Roll of 2d6+1, this doesn't make it any easier for the practitioner to take an aimed shot to the head. An aimed shot to the head will still take a -8 OCV. A character with a 2d6+7 location can't even *hit* a head under ordinary circumstances (the lowest he can roll is a 9, Shoulder); he'll have to get his opponent on the ground in order to take a head shot.

MARTIAL ARTS MANEUVERS

Below is the long list of maneuvers from which this section's martial arts are constructed.

In the chart, the *Maneuver* column gives the maneuver's generic name (though most are renamed when placed in specific martial art styles).

The next column, *Phs*, indicates what part of a phase the maneuver takes to perform. Most are half-phase maneuvers; some, like the haymaker, are full-phase plus one segment and land at the end of the segment after the maneuver is launched.

The next column, *Pts*, gives the maneuver's cost.

The next two columns, *OCV* and *DCV*, show the combat value modifiers of the maneuver.

The last column, *Damage/Effect*, describes (in short form) what the maneuver does when used successfully.

MARTIAL ARTS MANEUVERS TABLE

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Basic Strike	1/2	3	+1	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Choke Hold	1/2	5	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
Crush	1/2	4	+0	+0	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
Defensive Block	1/2	5	+1	+3	Block, Abort
Defensive Strike	1/2	5	+1	+3	STR Strike
Fast Strike	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Flying Tackle	1/2	3	+0	-1	STR +v/5 Strike, You Fall, Target Falls, FMove
Grappling Throw	1/2	3	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike; Target Falls; Must Follow Grab
Killing Strike	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Killing Throw	1/2	5	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC); Target Falls
Legsweep	1/2	3	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
Martial Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Martial Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Martial Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Martial Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
Martial Grab	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Martial Strike	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Martial Throw	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls
Nerve Strike	1/2	4	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
Offensive Strike	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Passing Strike	1/2	5	+1	+0	STR +v/5; FMove
Reversal	var	4	-1	-2	STR +15 to Escape; Grab
Root	1/2	4	+0	+0	STR +15 to resist Shove; Block, Abort
Sacrifice Disarm	1/2	5	+2	-2	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Sacrifice Lunge	1/2	4	+2	-2	STR +v/5; FMove
Sacrifice Strike	1/2	5	+1	-2	STR +4d6 Strike
Sacrifice Throw	1/2	3	+2	+1	STR Strike; You Fall, Target Falls
Shove	1/2	4	+0	+0	+15 STR to Shove
Shove Takeaway	1/2	5	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, +10 STR to Take weapon away
Takedown	1/2	3	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls
Weapon Bind	1/2	4	+1	+0	STR +10; Bind

Abort: The character can abort his next Phase to perform this maneuver on a segment not normally his Phase. (See *Aborting an Action* in the *HERO System Rulesbook*.)

Bind: This maneuver element can only be used against a weapon. A successful Bind will lock up the opponent's weapon and keep him from attacking; it will also allow the character to shove his opponent around the field.

For a description of the Bind maneuver and its effects in combat, see *Weapon Bind* in the *Combat Rules* chapter, under *Combat Maneuvers*.

Block: This prevents the opponent's attack from hitting the target, and sets up the defender to strike first on the next phase (assuming they both act in the same phase). (See *Block* in the *HERO System Rulesbook*.)

Disarm: A character who successfully performs a Disarm can try to knock a weapon or other hand-held device from his opponent's grasp. Both characters make STR rolls, counting only BODY. If the defender rolls more BODY, he holds onto his weapon. If the attacker rolls more BODY or the rolls are tied, the weapon goes flying 1/2d6 hexes in the direction of the strike (which is the attacker's choice, subject to GM approval). (See *Disarm* in the *HERO System Rulesbook*.)

Extra Segment: This maneuver does not land until the bottom of the next segment (just like a Haymaker). A character may perform a half-move and then launch a maneuver which requires an Extra Segment.

FMove: This maneuver may be performed at the end of a full move instead of just a half-move.

This does not mean it is a 0-phase maneuver. If performed after a half-move or no move at all, it still counts as a half-move action.

Grab: With a successful Grab, the character has gotten a hold on an opponent. He may now apply STR damage to his opponent or may throw his opponent to the ground. This function is also known as Grab Opponent.

Grab Weapon: With a successful Grab Weapon maneuver, the character has managed to grab his opponent's weapon (in such a manner that the grabber will not be hurt by the weapon). They now execute a STR vs. STR contest. (This takes 0 time for both of them and is performed each time the Grab Weapon maneuver is successfully performed.) If the Grabber wins, he wrests the weapon away and can use it. If the target wins, he wrests the weapon away and can use it. If the roll is a tie, both hold on to the weapon and neither can use it.

Must Follow: This maneuver must follow some other specific successful maneuver. If the first maneuver is performed successfully, on the next phase, and not before, the attacker can perform the Following maneuver. The attacker can also perform the Following maneuver after itself. For example, Crush can Follow a Grab or a previous Crush. A maneuver listed with "must follow" must make a to-hit roll each phase; even if the target is Grabbed and at reduced DCV, no hit is automatic.

NND(1): This is a No Normal Defense attack (see the *No Normal Defense* Power Advantage in the *HERO System Rulesbook*). The defense for this attack is wearing solid armor or having Lack of Weakness.

NND(2): This is a No Normal Defense attack (see the *No Normal Defense* Power Advantage in the *HERO System Rulesbook*). The defense for this attack is having solid armor on the neck, or not having to breathe.

Take Full DMG: The attacker takes damage from the maneuver. The attacker takes normal damage equal in DC to the damage done by the attack: Therefore a 2d6 Killing Attack, 6d6 Normal Attack, and 3d6 No Normal Defense Attack (all of which are 6 DC attacks) would do 6d6 Normal Damage to the character.

Target Falls: Successful use of this maneuver throws the target to the ground. This isn't necessarily a brute-force maneuver; it could be, but could also be a joint-lock bearing the target to the ground. The fact that most maneuvers with this ingredient are Strikes does not mean that in the maneuver the attacker necessarily punches or kicks the target; that just indicates that the maneuver does the attacker's STR damage to the target, usually from hitting the ground.

v/5: The maneuver gets a damage bonus based on the relative velocity of the two combatants. The maneuver does +v/5 in d6 normal damage.

Var: The Escape maneuver normally takes a half-move to perform. However, when a character is first grabbed, he can perform a Casual Strength STR roll to escape, using half his STR (plus half his bonus for the Escape maneuver); this takes no time. Escape doesn't constitute an attack; if a character Escapes his hold and has a half-move left, he can then attack.

You Fall: The attacker automatically falls down, in the hex where he performed the attack, regardless of whether or not the attack is successful.

MANEUVERS AND WEAPONS

We explained above that some martial arts can be used with weapons. But not all weapons can be used with all maneuvers; a kick can't be used with a machete, and a dodge isn't improved by a spear.

The following list is a general guideline for which sorts of weapons can be used with which maneuvers. The GM should use common sense when dealing with a weapon not found on this list; compare it to weapons on this list and decide which weapons it most closely corresponds to. That will serve as a rule-of-thumb guide as to which maneuvers a character can use with the weapon.

Maneuver Type	Can Be Used With These Weapons:
Basic Strike	* (See below)
Choke Hold	Staves, Weapon Shafts, Garrotes, Chain & Rope Weapons, Nunchaku, Three-Section Staff, Shinobi-Zue
Crush	None
Defensive Block	* (See below)
Defensive Strike	* (See below)
Fast Strike	* (See below)
Flying Tackle	None
Grappling Throw	None
Head-Butt	Helmet Spikes, Other Head-Worn Weapons
Kick	Ashiko
Killing Strike	* (See below)
Killing Throw	None
Legsweep	Staves, Tetsubo, Shinobi Zue, Polearm Shafts, Nets
Martial Block	All Melee Weapons, Shields
Martial Disarm	* (See below)
Martial Dodge	None
Martial Escape	None
Martial Grab	Nets, Whips, Chain & Rope Weapons, Shinobi-Zue
Martial Strike	* (See below)
Martial Throw	None
Nerve Strike	* (See below), but only normal-damage weapons Offensive Strike * (See below)
Passing Strike	* (See below)
Punch	All Melee Weapons
Reversal	None
Root	None
Sacrifice Disarm	* (See below)
Sacrifice Lunge	* (See below)
Sacrifice Strike	* (See below)
Sacrifice Throw	None
Shove	All Large (L) Melee Weapons, Shields
Takeaway	All Melee Weapons
Takedown	Staves, Polearm Shafts, Nets, Whips, Chain & Rope Weapons Weapon
Bind	All Melee Weapons, Shields

*: If defined as Punch, see Punch; if defined as Kick, see Kick; if defined as Head-Butt, see Head-Butt

When you're using normal, non-martial maneuvers from page 153 of the *HERO System Rulesbook*, compare the non-martial maneuver to the maneuvers in the chart above. You can use a non-martial Block with the sorts of weapons used with the Defensive and Martial Blocks; you can use a non-martial Disarm with the sorts of weapons used with Martial and Sacrifice Disarms; and so on.

MARTIAL ARTS STYLES

Following are descriptions of numerous martial arts styles in *HERO System* terms. These arts are not confined to the latter part of the 20th century; many date back into the first millennium BC, or perhaps further back than that.

AIKIDO

This is a Japanese art founded in 1942 by Morihei Ueshiba and derived from the earlier Aiki-jutsu. It stresses discipline and a nonviolent attitude. The art, as practiced in combat, concentrates on balance, rhythm, and use of an opponent's force against him. It largely involves redirecting an opponent's energies, especially in throws and takedown maneuvers.

AIKIDO

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
Extend Ch'i	1/2	4	+0	+0	STR +15 to resist Shove; Block, Abort
Hold	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Strike	1/2	5	+1	+3	STR Strike
Takedown	1/2	3	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls
Throw	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls

Skills
Breakfall *
KS: Aikido
Enhanced Perception (Vision)

Elements

Weapons	+1	Use Art with Swords
	+1	Use Art with Staff

Style Disadvantage -10

The Strike maneuver is not from Aikido as it is normally taught today, but rather from the art's ancestor, aiki-jutsu.

Some teachers of aikido teach the relationship of the art's maneuvers to the use of blades and staff.

Optional Rules: The Strike may be either a punch or a kick, and this choice can be made before each attack with the maneuver. If a punch, it takes a location roll of 2d6+1; if a kick, it takes a location roll of 2d6+7; if it is not specified, it takes a location roll of 3d6. None of the other maneuvers require location rolls; those which do damage do generalized damage.

ARNIS/KALI/ESCRIMA

Arnis, Kali and Escrima are related Philippine martial arts. They are very much weapons-oriented arts, but they include barehanded techniques taught to more advanced students.

Malays settling the Philippines from the 2nd century BC onward were experts in knife-fighting techniques. Chinese fleeing their native land in the 9th century AD brought their martial arts to the area, and Kali emerged from the synthesis of the two combat styles.

Arnis, the modern form of the art, utilizes 30" sticks in place of the knife or sword-and-knife techniques of the earlier Kali. It is usually fought with two sticks (muton) or single stick (solo baston). The art has been adapted to other weapons styles as well, especially nunchaku and other karate weapons. However, there are still plenty of traditional kali practitioners, experts in the use of their art with bladed weapons.

The style below comprises both traditional and modern-day elements of the art. For Arnis, the art is originally bought usable with clubs (the sticks); that's the default version presented below. For Kali, the art is bought usable with swords. Students can later add unarmed combat and karate weapons via the *Barehanded* and *Weapons elements.*

In either form, it is a fast, efficient, brutal style of combat.

ARNIS/KALI/ESCRIMA

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Kick	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Nerve Strike	1/2	4	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
Punch	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Takedown	1/2	3	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls
Weapon Bind	1/2	4	+1	+0	STR +10; Bind

Skills
KS: Arnis
WF: Swords
WF: Karate Weapons
WF: Off-Hand

Elements
Weapons
+1 Use Art with swords
+1 Use Art with Karate Weapons Barehanded
+1 Use Art Barehanded

Style Disadvantage -10

Used with Clubs Weapon Group; Clubs Weapon Element is Free.

Note: *The Kick may be learned only after the character has bought the Barehanded element to use the art with unarmed combat.*

Remember, characters have weapons familiarity with the clubs group at no point cost. That's why WF: Clubs is not listed among the Skills for this package.

Optional Rules: The Punch takes a 2d6+1 location roll. The Kick takes a 2d6+1 location roll. The Nerve Strike takes a 2d6+1 location roll unless the character has learned to use the art with unarmed combat, at which time it takes a 3d6 location roll (since his legs and feet are now also employed in that maneuver). The other maneuvers do not require location rolls.



Aikido and Capoeira

BOXING, ANCIENT

This is a martial arts style of several races in the ancient world (reaching into the Bronze Age and prehistory), especially the Greeks and (Asian) Indians. A form of boxing known as *ch'uan p'o* was known in China as early as 700 BC. Ancient Boxing is simpler than modern boxing, nowhere near as scientific or punishing in application.

In the Greek form of the art, fighting stance consists of the pugilist keeping his blocking (usually left) arm outstretched before him, with the hand usually open, and keeping his striking hand cocked back for blows.

BOXING, ANCIENT

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Jab	1/2	5	+1	+3	STR Strike
Punch	1/2	3	+1	+0	STR +2d6 Strike

Skills
KS: Boxing

Elements
Weapons +1 Use Art with Cestus

Style Disadvantage -10

The Jab and Punch maneuvers may be used with the cestus; see the *Gadgets and Weapons* section for stats on this weapon.

Optional Rules: The jab and punch both take location rolls of 2d6+1; the block doesn't take a location roll. Alternatively, if you wish to better simulate the way boxing took place in classical Greece, you can say that the jab and punch are automatically head shots but do no extra damage for striking the head (no multiples of STUN or BODY), since ancient Greek boxing blows were only directed at the head.

BOXING, MODERN

Modern boxing is a gradual evolution of ancient boxing. According to legend, some effort at systemizing boxing as a sport took place 700 years ago, when St. Bernard taught boxing to youths to keep them from knifing one another. In England, the practice of prize-fights began some 200 years ago, with contests fought with bare fists, though this sport was illegal and frequently raided.

In 1865, the Marquis of Queensberry drafted his famous rules for the sport; his rules called for the use of boxing gloves and timed rounds in boxing matches. It is around that time that this martial arts style becomes available to player-characters; before the middle of the 19th century, characters should buy Ancient Boxing if they want to box.

BOXING, MODERN

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Clinch	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Cross	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Hook	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Jab	1/2	5	+1	+3	STR Strike
Skills					
KS: Boxing					
Paramedic					
Elements					
Weapons				+1	Use Art with Cestus
Style Disadvantage					-10

Nobody today teaches boxing with the cestus. However, the maneuvers will work with a cestus, should someone be mad enough to train with one. Therefore, the Weapons element is still in place in the modern Boxing package, though few boxers purchase it.

Optional Rules: The Jab, Cross, and Hook take location rolls of 2d6+1; the other maneuvers take no specific location rolls.

CAPOEIRA

Capoeira is the national martial art of Brazil. Its origins lie in Angola, where its ancestor was a type of ritual dance. The martial art's development began after 1530, when the first Angolan slaves were brought into Brazil; many of them escaped to live in free communities. Capoeira was the fighting style they developed to resist attacks by government forces. It was banned in 1707, and "went underground" when its practitioners converted it into a dance form, disguising its combat effectiveness.

Among the art's unusual features are its dance-like footwork and the acrobatic prowess of the practitioners. For many maneuvers, practitioners (called *capoeiras* or *capoeiristas*) will stand on their hands and attack with powerful kicks. One reason for this part of the art was that it allowed capoeiristas to fight while their hands were manacled; therefore, the art requires that its practitioners take the Acrobatics skill.

Capoeiristas also added razor-fighting techniques to their repertoire, so the art includes a Weapon Familiarity with razors. None of the listed maneuvers add CV or damage bonuses to razor attacks, however, so this is considered just an additional skill, not a Weapons Element.

Capoeira is practiced to the accompaniment of musical instruments, including the musical bow, drums, bells, and tambourines, so skill with those instruments is included among the skills for the style.

CAPOEIRA

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Cabecada (Head-Butt)	1/2	3	+1	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Bencao (Front Thrust Kick)	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Armado da Costa (Crescent Kick)	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Rasteira (Legsweep)	1/2	3	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
Skills					
Acrobatics *					
Breakfall					
WF: Straight Razor					
KS: Brazilian Music					
Style Disadvantage					-10

The *armado da costa* maneuver can also be called the *martelo* (roundhouse kick) or, when performed in acrobatic mode (with the capoeirista standing on one or both hands) as the *meia lua.*

Optional Rules: The *bencao* and *armado da costa* kicks have a location roll of 2d6+7, unless the practitioner successfully uses his acrobatics to stand on his hands, in which case the location roll is 2d6+1. The *cabecada* head-butt is backwards: Its normal roll is 2d6+1, and goes to a 2d6+7 if the attacker stands on his hands. (If both attacker and target are upside-down, the location rolls revert to normal.)

CLASSIC COMIC BOOK

The martial arts style called *Classic Comic Book* in the *HERO System Rulesbook* is here called *Generic Martial Arts*; see below.

COMMANDO TRAINING

Commando training is the quick-and-dirty art of elimination of the enemy. Its origins are with the armed forces; many a marine in World War II was taught the principles of commando training. Today, systemized commando styles such as Combato are taught like any other martial art, and commando training maneuvers are often taught as self-defense combat styles by police departments, rape prevention activists, and others.

COMMANDO TRAINING

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Aikido Throw	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls
Boxing Cross	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Choke	1/2	5	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
Jiu-Jitsu Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Karate "Chop"	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Kung Fu Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort

Skills
Breakfall
WF: Small Arms

Elements
Weapons +1 Use Art with Knives
+1 Use Art with Clubs

Style Disadvantage -10

The Karate "Chop", Judo Disarm, and Kung Fu Block can be used with clubs and knives (if the practitioner buys those Weapons elements); the only advantage that the latter two maneuvers receive is the OCV bonus that most knives carry.

Optional Rules: The Boxing Cross and Karate "Chop" take location rolls of 2d6+1; the Throw, Choke, Disarm and Block take no location rolls.

DIRTY INFIGHTING

This is not a martial art; this is a set of maneuvers which skilled streetfighters can learn. It is also taught to women as a series of rape-prevention maneuvers (especially the Disarm, Low Blow, and Throw). Since it is not a formal martial art, it receives no Style Disadvantage.

DIRTY INFIGHTING

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Kidney Blow	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Low Blow	1/2	4	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
Punch	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Roundhouse	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Throw	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls

Skills
Streetwise
WF: Common Melee Weapons

Elements
Weapons +1 Use Art with Clubs

The "clubs" most often used with Dirty Infighting include bottles, pool cues, and other weapons of opportunity.

Optional Rules: The Punch, Roundhouse, and Kidney Blow take location rolls of 2d6+1. The Disarm takes no specific location. The Low Blow is automatically a Vitals shot, but receives no extra damage (no STUN multiples) for hitting the Vitals area.

FENCING

Fencing is a European sword-fighting technique which developed during the Renaissance (ca 15th century AD). It made use of long, light blades (especially rapier and sabre) and knives (including daggers, stilettos, and main gauches). In combat situations, fencers often fought "in the round" (i.e., not confining themselves to the imaginary straight line utilized by modern fencers).

Modern-day fencing makes use of much lighter, springier weapons with capped tips (to keep them comparatively safe); these include foil and epee.

As a martial art, Fencing is automatically designed for use with the Swords weapons group. (It's intended for use with lighter fencing weapons such as the rapier, sabre, foil, and epee, but in swashbuckling campaigns can be used with heavier cutlasses, broadswords, etc. if the GM allows.) Fencing maneuvers may not be bought for other classes of weapons (no polearms, no axes, etc.), or for use in unarmed combat. Fencers often do use other weapons — especially such things as cloaks and bucklers — but those weapons do not utilize the Fencing weapon maneuvers.

FENCING

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Bind	1/2	4	+1	+0	STR +10; Bind
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Fleche	1/2	4	+2	-2	STR +v/5; FMove
Lunge	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Parry	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Slash	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Takeaway	1/2	5	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, +10 STR to Take Weapon Away
Thrust	1/2	5	+1	+3	STR Strike

Skills
KS: Fencing
WF: Swords *
WF: Off-Hand

Style Disadvantage-10

Used with swords Weapons Group; Swords Weapon Element is Free

Fencing has many maneuvers, but very few fencers buy them all. This results in a wide variance between the styles of individual fencers.

The GM should also allow fencers to buy a Martial Dodge which is not dependant on weapons; especially skillful fencers can perform spectacular dodges even when disarmed.

Optional Rules: The Fleche, Lunge, Slash and Thrust take location rolls of 3d6 when used with a medium or long blade, or 2d6+1 when used with a short blade (like a dagger or short sword); the other maneuvers do not take location rolls.

FOOTBALL

This style is included partly for whimsy's sake, and partly to demonstrate the unusual things that you can do in the creation of martial arts styles.

These maneuvers are based on the moves of offensive and defensive lineman. Many football players will merely have high physical stats and a KS: Football; most good players will also have one or two of these maneuvers; famous NFL veterans will have most or all of these.

This is certainly a useful and formidable array of maneuvers for a football-based character to have, and is entirely appropriate. However, since it is not a formal martial art, there is no Style Disadvantage for the style.

FOOTBALL

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Blocking	1/2	4	+0	+0	STR +15 to resist Shove; Block, Abort
Flying Tackle	1/2	3	+0	-1	STR +v/5 Strike, You Fall, Target Falls, FMove
Foul	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Rush	1/2	4	+0	+0	+15 STR to Shove
Sack	1/2	3	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls
Strip	1/2	5	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, +10 STR to Take Weapon Away

Skills
Enhanced Vision
KS: American Football
Running
Skill Levels, Throwing/Catching

The "Foul," incidentally, can be any attack including spearing, clipping, a quick punch down in the dogpile, or the clothesline maneuver (extending your arm straight, at neck height, right in front of a runner).

Optional Rules: The Foul maneuver takes a location roll of 2d6+1. The other maneuvers take no location rolls; the Flying Tackle and Sack do generalized damage.

GENERIC MARTIAL ARTS

This is a set of maneuvers you can buy in campaigns where you want characters to have martial arts but don't want to bother with information on or comparisons between martial arts styles. This is the sort of martial arts often learned by superheroes training with a number of tutors espousing different styles.

Since it is not a formalized style, it receives no Style Disadvantage.

GENERIC MARTIAL ARTS

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Kick	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Punch	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Throw	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls

Skills
Breakfall
WF: Common Melee Weapons

Optional Rules: The Punch takes a location roll of 2d6+1; the kick takes a location roll of 2d6+7; the Block, Throw, and Dodge don't utilize locations rolls.

HWARANG-DO

This is an ancient Korean martial art which also incorporates a lot of healing knowledge. It dates back some 1,800 years and was, tradition has it, developed by a Buddhist monk named Won Kwang Bopsa. The priest taught his technique to many young nobles of his day, who were called *hwarang*; the *hwarang* were a combination of knights, statesmen, and military generals.

The art makes use of punches and kicks, blocks, joint locks and joint breaking, nerve strikes, chokes, and many other techniques. It also teaches weapons use.

HWARANG-DO

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Choke	1/2	5	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
Finger Strike	1/2	4	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
Hand Strike	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Joint Break	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Joint Lock	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Kick	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6Strike

Skills
Breakfall
KS: Hwarang-Do
KS: Korean Healing
Paramedic

Elements

Weapons	+1	Use Art with swords
	+1	Use Art with Polearms
	+1	Use Art with Clubs
	+1	Use Art with Staves

Style Disadvantage -10

As with other unarmed combat styles which allow weapons use, the Hwarang-Do practitioner can learn to use his art with no weapons, with only one, or with several, as he sees fit.

Optional Rules: The Hand Strike takes a location roll of 2d6+1. The Kick and Finger Strike take a location roll of 3d6. The Choke is automatically a head location, but receives no extra damage for being a head location. The Joint Break takes a location roll of 3d6, but you must reroll any location of 10-13; the Joint Break is not used against those locations. The Block and Joint Lock do not use location rolls.

JIU-JITSU

This Japanese art (whose more philosophical counterpart is *judo*) grew out of the integration of the weapons techniques of *katori shinto ryu* and grappling techniques during the 15th century. The name *jiu-jitsu* (or jujutsu) was first used in the late 17th century. Knowledge of jiu-jitsu was spread world-wide by travelling Japanese practitioners in the early years of the 20th century.

The usual jiu-jitsu technique involves bearing an opponent to the ground and then pinning him there or rendering him unconscious. The art utilizes hip throws, sweeping throws, shoulder and neck locks, and a sacrifice body drop.

JIU-JITSU

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Choke Hold	1/2	5	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
Joint-Break	1/2	5	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC) Target Falls
Joint-Lock	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Legsweep	1/2	3	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
Sacrifice Throw	1/2	3	+2	+1	STR Strike; You Fall, Target Falls
Slam	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls

Skills
Breakfall *

Style Disadvantage -10

The dangerous Joint-Break maneuver is not taught in normal judo; it is taught in jiu-jitsu.

Optional Rules: The Choke Hold is automatically a head location, but receives no extra damage for being a head location. None of the other maneuvers take location rolls.

KARATE

Karate was developed from the same ancient traditions that led to the development of Kung Fu. By the fifth century AD, on the Okinawa Islands, a weaponless combat system called *te* (hand) had developed. Later, when the teachings of the Shao-lin Temple in China were carried to Okinawa, some of the Shao-lin techniques were infused with the *te* art.

During the 15th century, the Japanese who occupied Okinawa forbade the natives to carry arms and *te* began to flourish as an art form; at the time, it went by several names, including *te* and *karate* (a term which originally meant "China hand," but which in the 20th century was redefined to mean "empty hand").

In 1905, an Okinawan instructor named Gichin Funakoshi introduced Okinawa-te to Japan, teaching it in public schools. At that time, its name was formalized as karate. After World War II, American servicemen stationed in Japan learned the art, which helped to spread it worldwide.

Karate, as a *HERO System* martial art, may be bought initially one of two ways. As karate, it is an unarmed fighting style. As *kobu-jutsu*, it is an armed Okinawan fighting style, using bo (staff), sai, nunchaku, tonfa (threshing handles), and kama (sickles).

Karateka (karate practitioners) can buy the Weapons element to learn kobu-jutsu techniques, and kobu-jutsu practitioners can buy the Barehanded element to learn empty-hand techniques for their art. For our purposes, the two styles are functionally identical.

KARATE

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Punch, Snap Kick	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Knifehand Strike ("Chop")	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Side or Spin Kick	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike

Skills
KS: Karate
WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons
WF: Off-Hand

Elements
Weapons +1 Use Art with Karate Weapons
+1 Use Art with Staff

Style Disadvantage -10

VARIANT FORM: KOBUJUTSU

Maneuvers: Same as above; the Kick can only be bought if the practitioner has bought the Barehanded element, below.

Skills: Same as Above; WF is Required (*)

Elements
Weapons +1 Use Art with Staff Barehanded
+1 Use Art Barehanded

Style Disadvantage -10

Used With Karate Weapons Group; Karate Weapons Element is Free

The Knifehand Strike maneuver above may also be interpreted as the *Spearhand Strike*, a thrusting maneuver. The Knifehand Strike was for decades popularly known in America as the "karate chop."

The Side Kick and Spinning Kick are presented here as one maneuver.

Optional Rules: The Punch and Knifehand Strike take location rolls of 2d6+1. The Side Kick and Spin Kick take location rolls of 3d6. The Block, Disarm, and Dodge do not take location rolls.

KENJUTSU

Kenjutsu is the samurai's sword art. It requires the use of blades (especially Japanese blades such as the katana, wakizashi, and no-daichi); you cannot buy a +1 point Weapons Elements to allow use of these maneuvers with other weapon groups or with unarmed combat.

The elements of the art originated some 1,500 years ago, and kenjutsu schools flourished in Japan beginning in the 9th century AD (which is when the maneuvers from this style first become available to player-characters).

One of its most famous practitioners and teachers was the samurai Miyamoto Musashi, author of *A Book of Five Rings*, a psychological guide to strategy and competition. Musashi lived, fought, and taught his famous two-sword (Nito-ryu) technique during the early 17th century.

Kenjutsu is known as *kum do* in Korea; a sporting version of the art, *kendo*, has been taught worldwide beginning after World War II.

KENJUTSU

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Bind	1/2	4	+1	+0	STR +10;
Bind Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Evade	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Lightning Stroke	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Running Stroke	1/2	5	+1	+0	Weapon +v/5; FMove
Sacrifice Stroke	1/2	5	+1	-2	STR +4d6 Strike
Slashing Stroke	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Takeaway	1/2	5	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, +10 STR to Take Weapon Away

Skills
Ambidexterity Talent
Breakfall
Fast-Draw Talent
KS: Kenjutsu
Sleight of Hand
WF: Swords *
WF: Off-Hand
WF: Thrown Sword

Elements
Barehanded +1 Use Art Barehanded (Bind, Block, Disarm, Evade, Takeaway maneuvers only

Style Disadvantage -10

Used with swords Weapon Group; Swords Weapon Element is Free

Optional Rules: The Lightning Stroke, Sacrifice Stroke, and Slashing Stroke take location rolls of 3d6; the Running Stroke takes a location roll of 2d6+1. The Bind, Block and Takeaway do not take location rolls.

KENJUTSU SUB-STYLES

Kenjutsu, throughout Japanese history, was usually taught in schools with different swordsmanship techniques; some of these schools continue today. If you want your swordsman character to belong to one of these schools, you can buy maneuvers which pertain especially to that school.

A kenjutsu practitioner does not have to belong to any school, or can be built with many maneuvers and rightfully claim to have studied several styles.

Mijin Style

Mijin Style emphasizes power and speed; it concentrates on leaping and running attacks. The most famous Mijin maneuver is the Soaring Lark stroke, a leaping ground-to-sky attack.

The Mijin stylist must know the Running Stroke, which is the Soaring Lark stroke. Extra inches in running or leaping are recommended.

Muto Style

Muto is a style of fighting without the sword. A muto specialist buys the Barehanded element for his art; this allows him to use the Bind, Block, Disarm, Evade, and Takeaway maneuvers when unarmed. Important Note: It does not allow the character to use the Stroke maneuvers unarmed! With this tactic, an unarmed swordsman can take his attacker's blade away and then use it on his attacker. This is considered an advanced technique, one to be taught only to the best students.

The muto stylist must know the Block, Evade, and one Stroke maneuver, and buy the Barehanded element for his art. He often also buys WF: Thrown Sword.

The GM can forbid any player to take the Barehanded element; it's supposed to be a secret technique, and the GM has final say as to which characters it may have been taught to.

Nito Style

This is the two-swords style whose popularity is attributed to Musashi Miyamoto, Japan's most famous swordsman. Miyamoto was a swordsman early in the Tokugawa shogunate (i.e., in the first half of the 17th century).

The Nito stylist is trained to deal with multiple attackers. He can use his sword in either hand, or can fight with two swords, one in each hand.

The Nito swordsman must know the Bind, Block, and any one Stroke maneuver, and must have the WF: Off-Hand skill. The best Nito experts have the Ambidexterity talent as well, but this is recommended for stylists, not required of them.

Suio Style

This kenjutsu style has been popularized in an acclaimed series of Japanese movies and *manga* (comic books). The suio ("water") style is characterized by all-out offense, speed, power, and risk-taking.

Required maneuvers are the Lightning Stroke, the Running Stroke, and the Sacrifice Stroke; the character should take, but is not required to take, Breakfall.

A special suio technique is to stand knee-deep in water with the blade beneath the water's surface. The swordsman will strike from this watery position, using Sleight of Hand skill to confuse his enemy as to his intent. In the game, the character must have Sleight of Hand skill to perform this technique, and the GM can arbitrarily assign OCV bonuses to such attacks based on the success of the skill roll and the overall situation.

Yagyu Shinkage School

During the Tokugaway era (early 17th to mid 19th centuries), the single most influential school for Japanese fencing was the Shinkage school, which produced many excellent swordsmen from the Yagyu family.

The Shinkage style is cautious, compared to many kenjutsu styles, and disarming techniques are emphasized.

Required maneuvers are Block, Disarm, and any one Stroke.

KUNG FU (WU SHU)

Kung Fu, in Chinese, simply means "hard work" or "skill." The name *Wu-Shu* (meaning "war art") is the art's official name in China. Until about 1928, it was also known as *kuo-shu*.

The origins of Kung Fu might date back as far as the Shang Dynasty (16th century BC), but most scholars conclude that it began to develop sometime in the fifth century BC. A swordsman's art which became prominent during the Chou Dynasty (770 BC-221 BC) may have been a contributor to kung fu; so might have *pankration* (see that style below), from times when Alexander the Great took pankratiasts with him on his conquests (including his journey to India).

The first emperor of China, Ch'in Shih Huang-Ti, banned the practice of unarmed martial arts during his reign (in fact, he banned and persecuted any thought or activity he considered too close to free will or free thinking), but open practice resumed in 206 BC, after his death.

In the sixth century AD, an Indian buddhist priest named Bodhidharma (called P'u-T'i-Ta-Mo in China) came to the Shao-lin Ssu (Young Forest Temple) in China's Honan province. The Shao-lin temple had been built in the late fifth century AD by Emperor Hsiao-Wen to honor another Indian monk, Bodhiruchi.

The Indian fighting style which Bodhidharma taught there, blended with combat techniques already known to the Shao-lin priests, became known as *wai-chia*; it eventually evolved into both Kung Fu and Karate (see the entry above for Karate). Kung fu and unarmed combat were not confined to the Shao-lin monastery; the first martial arts schools in China also began teaching during the sixth century AD. This is the earliest period that player-characters could buy something resembling the Kung Fu style maneuvers; characters in the sixth century AD can buy the Block, Disarm, Dodge, Grappling Punch, Legsweep, Punch, and Throw maneuvers, with the Punch serving both as Punch and Kick.

Throughout China's turbulent history, Kung Fu continued its evolution. The Shao-lin temple was destroyed more than once, its surviving priests scattering to the winds and teaching their art in all parts of the nation. Uncountable variations on the style were developed over the next millennium.

Kung Fu was brought to the U.S. during massive Chinese immigration during the 1840s, though it was not popularly taught to non-Chinese students until the 1960s.

Kung Fu is a very fragmented art, with innumerable different styles and techniques; we'll speak more about those styles momentarily.

KUNG FU (WU SHU)

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
Joint Lock/Grab	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Kick	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Knife Hand	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Legsweep	1/2	3	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
Nerve Strike	1/2	4	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
Punch	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Throw	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls
Tiger/Dragon Claw	1/2	4	+0	+0	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
Uproot	1/2	4	+0	+0	+15 STR to Shove

Skills

Acrobatics
Breakfall
Contortionist
KS: Chinese Healing
KS: Kung Fu
Sleight of Hand
WF: Common Melee Weapons
WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons
WF: Hook Sword
WF: Three-Section Staff
WF: Wind and Fire Wheels
WF: Off-Hand

Elements

Weapons	+1	Use Art with Axes/Maces/Picks
	+1	Use Art with Swords
	+1	Use Art with Chain Weapons
	+1	Use Art with Clubs
	+1	Use Art with Hook Sword
	+1	Use Art with Polearms
	+1	Use Art with Staff
	+1	Use Art with 3-Section Staff
	+1	Use Art with Whip
	+1	Use Art with Wind/Fire Wheels

Style Disadvantage -10

Optional Rules: The Knife Hand, Punch and Nerve Strike take location rolls of 2d6+1. The Tiger Claw takes a location roll of 2d6+1, constituting the location where the Grab landed; other Grabs do not need a location rolled for them. The Kick usually takes a location roll of 3d6, but in some styles (see below) takes a 2d6+7 location roll. The other maneuvers take no location rolls.

KUNG FU SUB-STYLES

There are hundreds of Kung Fu styles; many of them fall into certain broad categories. It would be very impractical (in this supplement) to create an entire, different set of maneuvers even for each major category, so here we'll discuss ways to simulate some of the different styles without resorting to buying different sets of maneuvers for each.



Fencing and Kenjutsu

Incidentally, a *Ninja Hero* character doesn't have to choose a Kung Fu style for his character. He can choose to remain a generic Kung Fu practitioner and not worry about the plethora of specific styles available to him. Even if he does choose a specific Kung Fu style, he can still buy maneuvers from the rest of the main list of Kung Fu maneuvers.

Bear Style

This style simulates the fast, overpowering strike of the bear. The practitioner uses the same hand for powerful open-palm strikes, blocks, and counterstrikes, instead of striking with one hand and blocking with the other.

To be counted a practitioner of Bear Style, the character must know the Block and Punch maneuvers.

The character using this style often puts half or more of his skill levels into increasing the damage of the Punch maneuver.

Chin Na Style

This style began development in the early 1600s for use by soldiers and policemen. It is a good style for subdual and restraint of prisoners. It is a style less dependant on force than on a knowledge of human anatomy; it achieves its damage by attacking vulnerable points known to medicine.

To be counted a practitioner of Chin Na, the character must know the Chinese Healing skill, at least on an 8-. He must have at least three of the following maneuvers: Block, Escape, Joint Lock/Grab, Knife Hand, Nerve Strike.

Choy Lee Fut

This style was developed in the early to mid 19th century.

To be counted a practitioner of Choy Lee Fut, the character must know any three of the following maneuvers: Block, Kick, Punch, Throw.

This style often makes use of Weapons Elements, including Polearm, Whip (Chain Whip), Staff, and Swords.

Drunken Style

This style is actually a variation on the other styles; you can fight with just Drunken Style, or can have Drunken Monkey, Drunken Crane, etc.

To be counted a practitioner of Drunken Style, the character must know the Acrobatics and Contortionist skills and any three Kung Fu maneuvers.

When performing Drunken Style, the character doesn't have to make his Acrobatics skill roll every phase. When performing Drunken style, the character must observe all the other guidelines for the style he is appending Drunken technique to.

If the character has skill levels, more must go into OCV instead of DCV; if it is at all possible, skill levels must always be configured so that the character's OCV is higher than his DCV.

Visually, the style involves drunken staggering and swaying (requiring the Acrobatics) and utilizes attacks which (because of the drunken stances and approaches) are deceptive and hard to see coming (hence the higher OCV).

Hung Gar Style

This style developed for use in close quarters such as narrow alleyways; it is a very good style for streetfighters.

To be counted a practitioner of Hung Gar, the character must know any three of the following maneuvers: Block, Grab, Kick, Knife Hand, Punch, Tiger Claw. (Tiger Claw requires Grab.)

Monkey Style

The Monkey Style was developed in the mid-19th century by a jailed fighter who continually watched the monkeys around the jail (monkeys were often used at jails, as they screeched when prisoners escaped).

The character fights from a crouching stance reminiscent of a monkey's.

To be counted a practitioner of Monkey Style, the character must have Acrobatics, Breakfall, and Sleight of Hand skills, and any three of the following maneuvers: Block, Disarm (defined as a kicking disarm), Dodge, Kick, and Legsweep.

Each phase the character utilizes Monkey Style, he must make both his Acrobatics and Sleight of Hand rolls. If he succeeds in both, the GM has the target make a Visual Perception Roll. If the Sleight of Hand roll beats the Visual Perception roll, then the monkey stylist gets an OCV bonus to his maneuver.

The GM can apply this as an arbitrary +1 to +3 bonus based on how clever he thinks the maneuver is (determined from the player's description of the attack), or he can give the maneuver a bonus based on how much better the Sleight of Hand roll was than the Visual Perception Roll (with a maximum of +3 to OCV). As the opponent gets used to the character's fighting style, the GM can optionally decrease the OCV bonus provided by the style.

Naturally, if the roll contest was a tie, or the target made his Visual Perception roll better, or the attacker missed either Acrobatics or Sleight of Hand, no bonus is awarded.

Monkey Style is also fought with the staff.

Praying Mantis Style

This style, developed from a fighter's observation of the praying mantis in combat, concentrates on grasping, clawing, and punching maneuvers. It was developed 350 years ago.

To be counted a practitioner of Praying Mantis, the character must know the Block maneuver, and at least two of the following maneuvers: Disarm, Joint Lock, Kick and Punch.

When fighting an opponent, the Praying Mantis stylist usually uses a Block against an incoming attack and follows up (on his next phase) with one of the other maneuvers. Typical sequences include Block, Disarm; Block, Punch; and Block, Joint Lock, Punch. Alternatively, he delays, puts most or all his skill levels into DCV (with the visual effect being that he blocks, rather than dodges, incoming attacks) and responds to attacks with any of the attack maneuvers.

Shao-Lin Crane Style

This is an open, flowing style. The practitioner shapes his hands like crane's beaks; the style adopts many one-legged stances. Blocks are performed with the backs of wrists or with the open hand.

To be counted a practitioner of Shao-Lin Crane style, the character must know Block, Nerve Strike, and Punch maneuvers.

Shao-Lin Dragon Style

This style simulates the coiling of the Chinese dragon; the practitioner moves with his waist loose and supple, and the style makes use of circular waist movements and hip-turning movements.

In this style, the attacker grabs his target, blocks attacks, and counterstrikes with fast punches. The style also involves a grab called the Dragon Claw and joint-locking techniques.

To be counted a practitioner of Dragon style, the character must know any three of the following maneuvers: Block, Dragon Claw, Grab, Joint Lock, Kick, Punch.

To use Dragon Style, the character primarily utilizes one of these two combinations: Block followed by the Grab, or Grab followed by Block followed by Punch. He also uses the Joint Lock/Grab maneuver and Dragon Claw (which is mechanically the same as the Tiger Claw).

Shao-Lin Leopard Style

Leopard Style is a fast, rugged, up-close combat style. It concentrates on powerful flattened-fist blows (representing the attacks of a leopard's paws).

To be counted a practitioner of Leopard Style, the character must know the Block, Dodge, and Punch maneuvers.

When performing Leopard Style, if the character has only one or two skill levels, he must put both of them into OCV (during the Block and Punch maneuvers, not during the Dodge); if he has more than two, he must put at least two into OCV.

Shao-Lin Snake Style

This is a sinuous, weaving combat style. The hands, simulating the snake's strike, are used for fingertip strikes to the target's temples, eyes, throat, and other vital regions; the style also uses kicks.

To be counted a practitioner of Snake Style, the character must know the Block, Dodge, Kick, Nerve Strike, and Punch maneuvers.

Shao-Lin Tiger Style

This style simulates the ripping action of a tiger's claws. The practitioner uses a rigid open-hand technique with fingers curled like claws, and makes use of palm-heel strikes and claw-hand strikes, both swung with downward arcs; he also uses palm-heel blocks and forearm blocks.

To be counted a practitioner of Tiger Style, the character must know any three of the following maneuvers: Block, Dodge, Grab, Nerve Strike, Punch, and Tiger Claw. Tiger style is also fought with the broadsword (Darn-Do).

Shorinji Kempo

Shorinji kempo is the Japanese pronunciation of *shao-lin ch'uan-fa*, or shao-lin kung fu. According to tradition, Chinese monks visited Japan before it became closed off to foreigners in the 17th century and taught their kung fu art to the Buddhist monks. Today, the art, adapted to the Japanese way of life and philosophies, still thrives.

In *Ninja Hero*, we use the kung fu style to represent shorinji kempo; a kempo practitioner can buy any or all kung fu maneuvers and refer to them as kempo. Purists will note that this is a gross oversimplification of the real-world relationship between kempo and kung fu, but we'd rather oversimplify it here than not present it anywhere at all.

White Crane Style

This Tibetan style, which simulates the moves of both cranes and apes, involves three basic principles: Evading attacks instead of blocking them in order to increase counterattack speed, confusing the target with many arm sweeps, and moving in to the opponent for a better angle of attack. It began development in Tibet some 500 years ago.

To be counted a practitioner of White Crane, a character must know any three of the following maneuvers: Dodge, Kick, Punch, Nerve Strike.

When the character is performing White Crane, skill levels, if present, are normally placed so that the character's DCV is higher than his OCV, so that high DCV allows the character to continuously attack.

Wing Chun Style

This style was developed in the 18th century by a fighting Buddhist nun; it was developed to be an aggressive, practical style. It involves aggressive, up-close fighting techniques including short punches, low kicks, and leg sweeps.

To be counted a practitioner of Wing Chun, the character must know any three of the following maneuvers: Block, Kick, Legsweep, and Punch. The Kick takes a 2d6+7 location roll.

Other Styles

As you can see, there is considerable overlap between the maneuvers required for the various styles. If a character wishes, he can consider himself a practitioner of multiple styles if he knows the minimum required maneuvers and skills for each; in combat, he can describe how and when he switches between styles.

There are many other animal and non-animal Kung Fu styles, far too many to list here.

NINJUTSU

Ninjutsu is a stealth and espionage-oriented art which saw its greatest development in the 13th to early 17th centuries in Japan. Its practitioners, the ninja, were warrior-assassin-spies; most belonged to the Iga and Koga mountain clans. They were the supreme reconnaissance experts and saboteurs of their day.

In the 17th century, a ban and crackdown forced the ninja to become even more secretive about the practice of their art; the heyday of the ninja was over, and most people believed the art and its practitioners were extinct. But in recent years, ninjutsu has come down out of the mountains again and been practiced more openly; it has been imported to and is taught in the U.S. and other countries. Additionally, several martial artists, especially in the U.S., have set about redeveloping ninjutsu; they claim no association with the historical ninjutsu style, but practice most of the same tactics and skills.

The word "ninjutsu" refers to all the arts and skills of the ninja; the combat fighting style is more correctly known as *taijutsu*.

NINJUTSU (TAIJUTSU)

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Choke Hold	1/2	5	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
Nerve Punch	1/2	4	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
Punch or Kick	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Spear Hand	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Takeaway	1/2	5	+0	+0	Grab Weapon,+10 STR to Take Weapon Away
Takedown	1/2	3	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls

Skills
KS: Ninjutsu
WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons*
WF: Common Melee Weapons
WF: Off-Hand
See the Ninja Package Deal in the *Character Creation* chapter.

Elements

Weapons	+1	Use Art with Swords
	+1	Use Art with Fist-Loads
	+1	Use Art with Karate Weapon
	+1	Use Art with Polearms
	+1	Use Art with Staff
	+1	Use Art with War-Fan

Style Disadvantage -10

You might be asking, what's the difference between the martial art above and the Ninja Package Deal from the *Character Creation* section?

Well, actually, the two are quite different and a person does not need to have one to have the other.

A character can be a student and practitioner of ninjutsu without being a ninja; therefore, he can learn the martial art without taking the Package Deal.

Also, a character can be a ninja without having the ninjutsu martial art; theoretically, he could substitute some other martial art, such as karate. Being a ninja depends more on the non-combat skills, rather than the martial maneuvers that one knows.

Therefore, neither the martial art nor the package deal requires the other.

Optional Rules: The Punch/Kick maneuver takes a location roll of 3d6. The Nerve Punch, Spear Hand, and Punch take location rolls of 2d6+1. The Choke is automatically a head shot, but receives no extra damage for the head location. The other maneuvers do not require location rolls.

PANKRATION

Pankration is a Greek word meaning "all-powerful." This is an ancient Greek fighting style, one of the world's earliest comprehensive martial arts. There is some speculation, because of the fact that Alexander the Great took pankratiasts with him on his conquests, and they gave demonstrations during those travels, that pankration might have had some slight influence on Eastern martial arts styles.

Pankration was performed in the Olympic Games first in the 7th century BC, though it could well be much older than that.

Pankration is a brutal sport involving grappling, punching, stomach-kicking, legsweeping, joint-locking and joint-breaking. Pankration matches were fought until one contestant acknowledged defeat (or collapsed); there were no timed rounds.

Pankration has been redeveloped in the modern world and is being taught today by some practitioners.

PANKRATION

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Bend Joint	1/2	4	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
Break Bone	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC
Crush	1/2	4	+0	+0	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
Grab	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Kick or Punch	1/2	3	+1	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Legsweep	1/2	3	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls

Skills
KS: Pankration

Elements

Weapons	+1	Use Art with Cestus

Style Disadvantage -10

The maneuver listed as Kick or Punch is precisely that; the pankratiast can choose each round whether he wishes to punch or kick. (This keeps the practitioner from having to buy redundant Basic Strike maneuvers, one for punch, one for kick).

Pankratiasts often bought the Block from Ancient Boxing; many knew the Jab as well, and so were equally proficient in Pankration and Boxing. Many also knew Wrestling.

Optional Rules: The Punch takes a location roll of 2d6+1. The Kick takes a location roll of 2d6+7. The Break Bone takes a location roll of 2d6+1, or 3d6 if the target is on the ground, not standing. For the Bend Joint, you can makes a location roll of 3d6, but you must ignore and re-roll any location of 10-13; however, the location is for visual effects only, and has no effect on the damage done by the maneuver. The Crush, Escape, and Grab take no location rolls.

SAVATE

Savate (known as *boxe Francaise savate* or *la boxe Francaise*) is a French martial art; its development began in 17th-century Marseilles. Originally a type of kicking brawling style, early in the 18th century it was synthesized with English boxing maneuvers. Today it is a full-featured and respected martial arts style.

Savate combines boxing-style punches with a variety of kicks. The art also includes cane-fighting techniques.

A savate fighter is called a *savateur* (fem. *savateuse*) or *tireur*. Rank is indicated by an inch-wide colored band around the wrist of the savate glove; ranks from lowest to highest are purple, blue, green, red, white, yellow, bronze, silver, and gold.

SAVATE

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Coup de pied bas (low kick)					
	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6
Strike Coup de pied chasse (side kick)					
	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Crochet (Hook)	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
Direct (Jab/Cross)					
	1/2	5	+1	+3	STR Strike
Footsweep	1/2	3	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls

Skills
KS: Savate
WF: Swords
WF: Cane

Elements

Weapons	+1	Use Art with Swords Weapons
	+1	Use Art with Clubs (Cane)

Style Disadvantage -10

To simulate the older, pre-boxing form of Savate, do not buy the Direct or Crochet maneuvers.

The *coup de pied chasse* maneuver can also be called the *coup de pied fouette* (round kick), *coup de pied en reverse lateraux* (lateral reverse kick), and *coup de pied en reverse frontaux* (front reverse kick).

Only the Crochet, Disarm, and Direct maneuvers work with the Weapons allowed for Savate.

Optional Rules: The *coup de pied bas* has a location roll of 2d6+7, the *coup de pied chasse* has a location roll of 3d6, the *direct* and *crochet* have location rolls of 2d6+1. Damage from the footsweep is general (no location), and the block and disarm don't require location rolls.

SUMO WRESTLING

Sumo wrestling is a Japanese art form which developed in the century before Christ. It is traditionally practiced by huge, heavy fighters who are trained for years to have the physique and endurance of a sumo wrestler.

The object of sumo wrestling is to push the opponent out of the ring or bear him down to the ground inside the ring. Matches are usually very short, but are preceded by lengthy ceremonies.

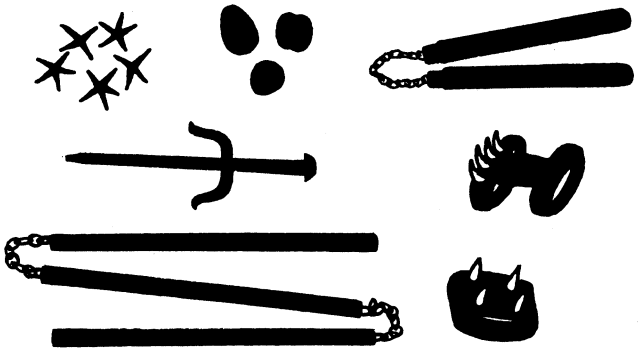
SUMO WRESTLING

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
Grab	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Grappling Throw					
	1/2	3	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike; Target Falls; Must Follow Grab
Root	1/2	4	+0	+0	STR +15 to resist Shove; Block, Abort
Shove	1/2	4	+0	+0	+15 STR to Shove
Slap	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike

Skills
KS: Sumo Wrestling

Style Disadvantage -10

Optional Rules: The Slap takes an automatic head location, but does no extra damage because of the head location. The other maneuvers take no specific location.



TAE KWON DO

This Korean martial art began systematic development in the seventh century, when it was called *t'ang-su* (meaning "T'ang hand," named after the Chinese dynasty which was in power when the t'ang-su principles were adopted by the Koreans). Later names for this art as it developed were *subak* and *kwonpup*.

After the 16th century, the art continued development under the new name of *tae kwon* ("foot and fist," or "kicking and punching"). The art was forced underground in 1907, when the Japanese occupied Korea. In 1953, well after World War II, when Korea was freed from Japanese rule, it became *tae kwon do* ("the way of kicking and punching").

Tae kwon do is regarded as a powerful, combat-intensive martial art, relying on forceful punches and high circling kicks; it is also famous for its colorful flying side kick.

TAE KWON DO

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Arm Sweep Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Crescent Kick Block	1/2	5	+1	+3	Block, Abort
Flying Side Kick	1/2	5	+1	-2	STR +4d6 Strike
Front Kick	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Knifehand/Spearhand	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Punch or Elbow, Strike	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6
Strike Side or Roundhouse Kick	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Takedown	1/2	3	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls

Skills
Breakfall
KS: Tae Kwon Do
WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons

Elements

Weapons	+1	Use Art with Swords
	+1	Use Art with Clubs Weapons
	+1	Use Art with Karate Weapons Weapons
	+1	Use Art with Staves

Style Disadvantage -10

The Weapons Elements are not part of the traditional art, but many tae kwon do instructors teach weapons use anyway.

Optional Rules: The Front, Side and Roundhouse Kicks take location rolls of 3d6. The Flying Side Kick takes a location roll of 2d6+1. The Punch or Elbow Strike takes a location roll of 2d6+1.

THAI KICK-BOXING

This fighting style, called *Muay Thai* in Thailand, was developed sometime before the end of the 16th century, but records of the art have been lost and so it is not known just how long ago the art was developed. Refugees from the Yunnan province of China fled south and merged with the Khmer people; as the populations merged, so did their two forms of unarmed combat, which became Muay Thai.

This is a very brutal, punishing fighting style, one which is very lean and economical. It uses blocks, punches, elbow-strikes, kicks, and foot pushes. It has no throws.

THAI KICK-BOXING

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Elbow/Knee Killing Strike	1/2	4	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
Foot Push	1/2	4	+0	+0	+15 STR to Shove
Low Kick	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Punch/Elbow Strike	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Roundhouse Kick/Knee Strike	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike

Skills
KS: Thai Kick-Boxing

Style Disadvantage -10

Optional Rules: The Punch and Elbow Strike take a location roll of 2d6+1; the Low Kick and Knee Strike take a location roll of 2d6+7; the Roundhouse Kick and Elbow/Knee Killing Strike take a location roll of 3d6. The other maneuvers require no location rolls.

WRESTLING

Wrestling, as a martial art, dates back into prehistory. In history, famous examples of wrestling arts include the wrestling practiced in Greece, China and India from their earliest recorded histories. Wrestling continues as a popular collegiate and professional sport today.

The package below includes moves several varieties of wrestling practiced today, including modern, Greco-Roman, Russian *sambo*, and professional wrestling.

WRESTLING

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Choke	1/2	5	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
Hold	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Reversal	var	4	-1	-2	STR +15 to Escape; Grab
Slam	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls
Take Down	1/2	3	+2	+1	STR Strike; You Fall, Target Falls

Skills
Breakfall

Style Disadvantage -10

Optional Rules: None of the Wrestling maneuvers takes a location roll.

WRESTLING, PROFESSIONAL

Professional Wrestling, though it has only recently become a mania in the U.S., has been with us all through the 20th century.

The package below is for a pro wrestler who has real combat ability. Such a character would always pull his punches or do 0 damage with attacks in the ring, relying on his Acting to make it look damaging, but could still use his art to good effect in situations outside the ring.

WRESTLING, PROFESSIONAL					
Maneuver	**Phs**	**Pts**	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage/Effect**
Body Slam	1/2	3	+2	+1	STR Strike; You Fall, Target Falls
Crush	1/2	4	+0	+0	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
Duck	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Fist/Forearm Smash	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Grab	1/2	3	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
Head-Bash	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Stomp	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Skills					
Acrobatics					
Acting					
Breakfall *					
Elements					
Weapons	+1		Use Art with Clubs		
Style Disadvantage					-10

The "clubs" referred to under the Weapons Element usually includes stools, chairs, microphones, and other weapons of opportunity found around the ring.

Optional Rules: The Fist Smash/Forearm Smash takes a 2d6+1 location roll. The Head-Bash is struck with the head, against the target's head; it takes an automatic head location but does no extra damage because of the location. The Stomp takes an automatic Foot location if the target is standing (damage is not reduced because of location); if the target is prone, it takes a 3d6 location roll. None of the other maneuvers takes a location roll; they do generalized damage.

MODIFYING AND BUILDING STYLES

Those of you who are practitioners and/or fans of the martial arts will doubtless have objections to the way some of these styles are built. Even more will ask, "Where's my favorite martial art?" when it's not represented in the list above. Many popular martial arts are not represented in the list above.

For you, we offer a solution. You can actually build your own martial arts maneuvers and styles. If you don't like the way one of the styles above is constructed, or want to see a martial arts style not presented in this section, you can always build one from scratch and submit it to your GM for approval. To learn how, move on to the *Designing Martial Arts* section.

LEARNING MARTIAL ARTS

Most characters defined as martial artists will be created with at least ten points' worth of martial arts maneuvers from one style, an 8- roll in the Knowledge Skill of that style, and the 10-point Style Disadvantage. That's the arrangement for the "basic black belt" character, and there's nothing complicated about it.

Things get a little more complicated as existing characters use their experience to improve their martial arts or buy new martial arts abilities.

LEARNING MARTIAL ARTS FROM SCRATCH

It could happen that an already-existing character wants to learn a martial arts style from the ground up. Finding a teacher is all plot-related, something for the player and GM to work out between them. Here, we're going to talk about the way the character buys the style.

Knowledge Skill

The character should first spend one point for an 8- Knowledge Skill with his style. Characters don't learn any maneuvers before taking that KS.

Elements

If the style requires an Element (such as Weapons Element), the character must buy that element next.

Required Skills

A few styles require that the character purchase specific skills. Such skills, in the listings of martial arts styles, are always marked with an asterisk ("*"). For example, Aikido and Judo cannot be learned without Breakfall; Kenjutsu cannot be learned without WF: Swords.

The martial artist character must buy all required skills before buying any maneuvers. He need only spend 1 point on each Knowledge Skills, for an 8- roll. He must spend at least 3 points for any General or Characteristic-based skill.

Maneuvers

The character then can learn one maneuver after another until he has bought at least ten Character Points' worth of them.

Style Disadvantage

Ultimately, the character can take the 10-point Style Disadvantage for his style, which helps offset the cost of the Martial Arts style. This can only be taken with GM approval, though. If the character has learned the martial art style after being created, his GM may not wish him to receive new Character Points for the new Disadvantage.

Following are the different ways GMs may approach this question in their own campaigns.

Allow the Character to Take the Style Disadvantage: The GM allows the character to add the Style Disadvantage to his list of Disadvantage and add the value of it to his Character Points. However, the Style Disadvantage still cannot exceed the Disadvantage point limits already set for the campaign. For instance, if the campaign has a 75-point cap on Disadvantage points, and the character already has 70 points of Disadvantages, if he adds the 10-pt Style Disadvantage he only gets 5 points' worth of value. Likewise, if the campaign has a 25-point cap on Disadvantage points from any one category of Disadvantage, and the character already has 25 points' worth of Distinctive Features, then the additional Style Disadvantage will bring him 0 points.

Allow the Character to Trade the Style Disadvantage For Another Disadvantage: The GM allows the character to trade in another Disadvantage which the player had already been trying to buy down or buy off, and take the Style Disadvantage in its place. For example, recently the character has beaten his 10-point Hunted in a climactic fashion, and it's an appropriate time to get rid of that Hunted. The character erases the Hunted and substitutes the Style Disadvantage for it. Note: This can only be done when there already exists a logical, plot-driven reason for the Disadvantage to be changed. Reasons such as "I'm tired of it" and "I like the Style Disadvantage better" are not sufficient.

Disallow the Style Disadvantage: The GM doesn't allow the character to take a new Disadvantage. The GM feels that since a character doesn't receive points from new Hunteds every time he makes a new enemy, or points from new Rivalries when he finds himself in competition with a new character, he shouldn't receive points from a new Disadvantage, either.

Require the Style Disadvantage... But Worth 0 Points: The GM insists that the character take the Style Disadvantage Disadvantage, but it's worth 0 points to him. This reflects the fact that the character's style will be obvious, but also reflects the GM's philosophy that new Disadvantages don't bring new points to the character.

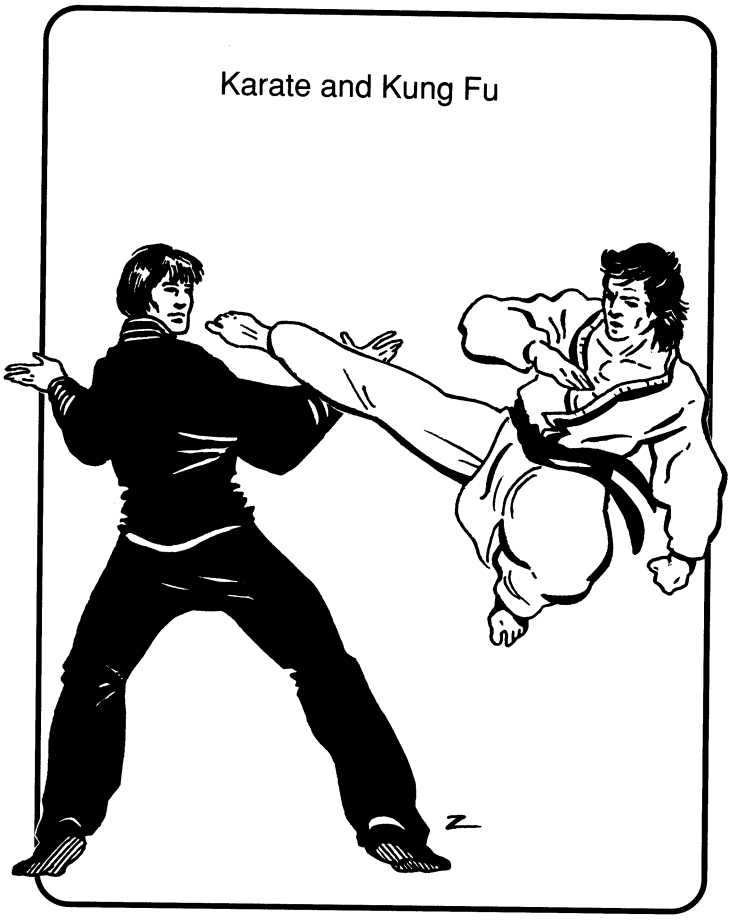
Of these four approaches, we recommend the second choice: *Allow the Character to Trade the Style Disadvantage For Another Disadvantage*. This approach has the advantages it gives the point-cost incentive to learn martial arts maneuvers and yet doesn't bring the character a lot of new points out of nowhere.

RATE OF LEARNING

How fast should characters learn new martial arts?

In the real world, the normal practitioner can earn a black belt in an average of four years. In the *HERO System*, that corresponds to an expenditure of only three or four Character Points per year on Martial Arts maneuvers and skills, far too slow for most adventure genre purposes.

However, also in the real world, some legitimate martial arts champions have earned their black belts in much less time; one famed heavyweight full-contact karate champion earned his in only seven months, which is more like spending two Character Points per month on Martial Arts maneuvers and skills.



PCs who begin play with a black belt's worth of maneuvers, skills and elements, therefore, can be presumed to have taken anywhere from half a year to four years to earn their belts.

But when PCs are learning new maneuvers and arts, after they've already begun play, we recommend you follow one of these approaches:

One CP Every Adventure: The character can spend one experience point on Martial Arts maneuvers, skills, and elements every adventure. This presumes that he's receiving regular training in the campaign setting. This means it will take quite a while (ten to fifteen game sessions) to earn a black belt's worth of maneuvers and skills. This is a good approach for more realistic heroic campaigns.

Two or Three CP Every Adventure: The character can spend two or three experience points (the GM decides which) on Martial Arts maneuvers, skills, and elements every adventure. This presumes that he's receiving regular, and extraordinarily intensive, training in the campaign setting. With this approach, it will only take four to seven adventures before a character has learned a competitive level in his martial arts style. This is a good approach for heroic martial arts campaigns and for superheroic campaigns.

Spend Many CP During Training Breaks: If the campaign skips a lot of time, the character, with GM permission, can splurge quite a lot of experience points into his martial arts. In other words, if the campaign skips six game-months between adventures, the character could conceivably drop quite a few points into his martial arts. Again, the character must be receiving regular training within the campaign setting. A realistic expenditure rate would be 2 CP every game month; an acceptable expenditure for heroic martial arts campaigns, and presuming very intensive training, would be 4 CP every game month; and in wild martial arts campaigns and superheroic campaigns, 6-8 CP every game months are feasible.

LEARNING NEW AND MULTIPLE STYLES

Some characters will want to learn new martial arts styles in addition to their basic style, and some will just wish to purchase individual maneuvers from a number of styles to supplement their basic style. This is fine, logical, and realistic; we encourage it. But there are a few rules that pertain to it.

BUYING MANEUVERS OUTSIDE YOUR STYLE

It is perfectly all right for a character to learn a maneuver from a style different than his own, or (if the GM allows) to create a new maneuver from the optional maneuver design rules. A character should know at least three maneuvers in his original style before he buys an "outside" maneuver; once that requirement is met, he can buy anything the GM will allow him.

The player must have an acceptable rationale for his character knowing this outside maneuver — he must know a PC or NPC who could have taught him, for instance. If he buys the maneuver after he begins play, he is subject to the time constraints chosen by the GM (see above under *Rate of Learning*), and must have a logical means to learn the maneuver (i.e., access to a teacher and time to learn it).

If character wishes to learn only one or two maneuvers outside his style, he doesn't have to buy a KS in that style. Naturally, once he's spent at least 10 pts on maneuvers from that style, and buys his 8- KS in that style, he qualifies as a black belt (or equivalent) in that style.

OUTSIDE MANEUVERS AND THE WEAPONS ELEMENT

If your basic style includes the Weapons element for a particular weapon, and you buy a maneuver from a second style, you still can use the new maneuver with the weapons permitted for your style.

For example, if you know karate and have bought the Weapons elements for Karate Weapons and Staff, then buy the Fencing Takeaway, you can use the Fencing Takeaway with both Karate Weapons and Staff.

This is possible because the martial artist adapts his new maneuvers to his old style. However, there are some restrictions on it.

First, the maneuver still has to be appropriate for the weapon. A Fencer who learns the Side/Spinning Kick can't use the kick with a blade. See the chart under *Martial Arts Maneuvers and Weapons* in the *Martial Arts* section to remind you which types of maneuvers go with which types of weapons.

Second, a character with at least ten points of maneuvers in one style can buy an outside maneuver and use that maneuver with his style's weapons. However, he can't use all his original style's maneuvers with the Weapons Element from the single outside maneuver.

Example: *Okamura Masao knows karate; he knows ten points' worth of maneuvers and has bought the Weapons Elements Karate Weapons and Staff for his karate. He now learns the kung fu Punch maneuver and the kung fu Weapons Elements of Clubs and Swords from a kung fu teacher. He can use the Punch with his karate weapons and staff. However, he cannot use his Karate maneuvers with Clubs and Swords.*

However, if the practitioner knows two complete styles, he can use maneuvers from either art with the Weapons Elements he's purchased for either art.

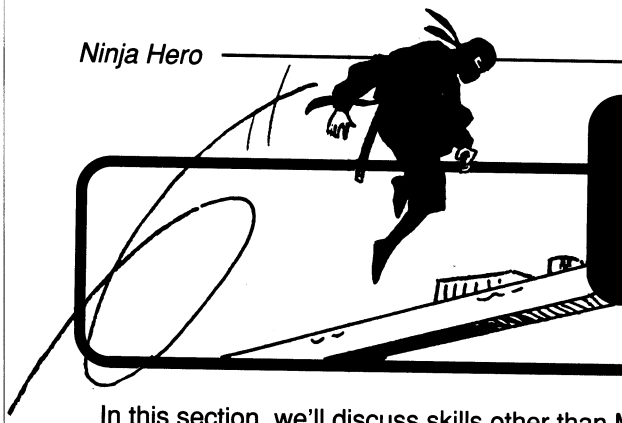
Example: *Years later, Okamura Masao has learned both Karate and Kung Fu (he has at least ten points of maneuvers in each. He has bought the Karate Weapons and Staff Weapons Elements for his Karate, and the Clubs and Swords Weapons Elements for his Kung Fu. Now, he can use his Karate maneuvers and his Kung Fu maneuvers with Karate Weapons, Staff, Clubs, and Swords.*

BUILDING NEW MANEUVERS AND STYLES

A character can (with his GM's permission) create all-new maneuvers or even entire styles with the optional rules from the *Designing Martial Arts* section.

Note that a character who designs his own martial art, if it turns out to be an efficient and competitive style, will eventually find himself the object of students who wish him to teach them — and of gunfighter-mentality martial artists who wish to challenge him to prove that their own style is better.

The character who designs an all-new style and finds himself in demand as a teacher should buy PS: Teacher and set up his own *dojo* (school). The campaign can revolve many plots around the hero's school, especially plots concerning the activities of enemy schools.



SKILLS

In this section, we'll discuss skills other than Martial Arts and what they mean when used with Martial Arts or in a Martial Arts campaign.

Most skills from the *HERO System Rulesbook* are useful in *Ninja Hero* adventures. Some are more useful than normally, or have special applications in martial arts campaigns. Important Note: These special applications should not be used in a regular, non-martial arts campaign, except with special GM permission. They include:

ACROBATICS

Acrobatics is a very appropriate skill for martial artist characters. Here are some of the ways it's used:

Requires Acrobatics Skill Roll

In some martial arts campaigns, the Superleap power is bought with the "Requires a Skill Roll" limitation, where the skill is Acrobatics.



Acrobatics and Being Thrown

A character can use Acrobatics to resist being thrown by any maneuver which is supposed to throw him to the ground (including both Martial Arts maneuvers and the good old Grab & Throw combination). With a successful Acrobatics roll at a -3 penalty, the character can keep his feet and is not thrown down.

However, this doesn't keep him from taking damage from the throw maneuver. Some Throws are fist-strikes hard enough to take a character off his feet; others are leg-sweeps where the damage comes from the attacker's blow to the backs of the character's legs; the standard Grab & Throw will slam a character hard onto the ground, even if he makes his Acrobatics roll and keeps his feet. Therefore, even if the Acrobatics roll is successfully made at -3, the character takes full damage from the Throw maneuver.

Acrobatics and Being Prone

A character who is thrown or knocked down, one who isn't able to keep his feet, can use Acrobatics another way.

Once he is prone, if he makes a half-roll (i.e., if his roll is a 13, he must roll a 7 or under), he can immediately get his full DCV, though he is prone. If he fails his half-roll, he takes ordinary DCV modifiers for being prone. But on his next active phase, with a successful ordinary Acrobatics roll he can get his full DCV even while remaining prone.

Now, you may be wondering why he'd want to stay prone. He may not have a choice: If the character has been injured so that one leg isn't working right, thus keeping him from standing up, he'll have to stay down and will want to use his Acrobatics to keep his DCV up.

ACTING

Martial artists often use Acting skill to simulate a greater injury than they have actually received; this often makes their opponent overconfident and allows the character to make a surprise attack.

Use of the skill in this way is done as a skill vs. skill roll against the target's Perception roll. The GM decides, based on how clever he feels the ploy is and how likely the target is to believe it (the Overconfidence disadvantage usually comes into play here), how much of an OCV bonus to give the character. If the ploy is not really clever, or the target knows that the character does this all the time, or the target makes his Perception roll better than the character makes his Acting roll, then no bonus is possible. (In fact, the GM may give the target an OCV bonus, as the Acting character will probably have to reduce his mobility and hence his DCV in order to make a fake injury look convincing.)

This skill can also be used to imitate some other character's personal fighting style.

Acting to simulate personal fighting styles isn't usually of much use in a campaign. However, if the bad guy who has this skill wants to frame the hero for a crime, he could Disguise himself as the hero, then perform some heinous crime before witnesses who swear it was the hero — they didn't just recognize his face, they recognized his moves. (This is accomplished as a skill vs. skill roll between the Acting skill and the onlookers' Perception rolls; only onlookers familiar with the real person have a chance to roll.)

To do this, the actor must share at least two combat maneuvers in the same martial arts style as the person he's mimicking. If the actor is a karateka and he's trying to imitate a judoka, and does not have any judo maneuvers, then he's out of luck.

BREAKFALL

Breakfall may be used to reduce the damage a character takes from any maneuver that throws him to the ground. With a successful Breakfall roll, the character only takes half damage for the attack.

However, he suffers a -1 penalty to his roll for every 2d6 damage in that attack. For instance, if the Throw is supposed to do him 6d6 damage, he'll take a -3 penalty to his Breakfall roll. If he still makes it, he'll only take 3d6 damage. If he fails, he'll take all 6d6.

This works even if the Throw attack is defined as a punch that is strong enough to knock the character down; some but not all of the damage comes from the punch, and that successful use of Breakfall eliminates the half of the damage that comes from hitting the ground.

A character cannot perform a Breakfall roll and an Acrobatics roll in the same phase both to resist being thrown and to reduce the damage from being thrown. He can only use Acrobatics or Breakfall against a given Throw attack.

COMBAT SKILL LEVELS

Here are some unusual things you can do with Combat Skill Levels.

Clarification: 3-pt Skill Levels with a Martial Art

If a character has bought 3-pt skill levels with a single martial art (say, karate), and has purchased a Weapons element for that art (for example, to use karate weapons with the karate maneuvers), the character can use those skill levels with weapons used with the martial arts maneuvers.

However, if the character buys maneuvers from outside his art (say, a kenjutsu sword maneuver), the 3-pt skill levels with his original art can not be used with the "outside" maneuvers.

In general, characters are better off buying 5-pt skill levels in hand-to-hand combat, as these levels will be usable with the martial arts maneuvers, other maneuvers bought outside the character's style, ordinary *HERO System* combat maneuvers, and weapons not used within the character's style.

Combat Skill Levels with Non-Weapon Weapons

A character could buy 3-pt skill levels with Non-Weapon Weapons. Here's what it means and what it does:

When a character picks up a piece of furniture or other unusual item, a weapon of opportunity, and slugs a target with it, the GM usually just determines what sort of club the item corresponds to and assigns damage based on that.

However, if a character buys 3-pt Skill Levels with Non-Weapon Weapons, the GM should take a different approach. He should consider the item being picked up and then which three types of maneuvers his Skill Levels apply to when he's using this weapon. (As you know, 3-pt Skill Levels normally only affect three maneuvers.) He should make his decision based on the look of the item and how he imagines it would be used in combat.

Here are some general guidelines for types of non-weapons and what combat effects they might have:

Non-Weapon Combat Effects

Flexible, Lengthy: Skill levels apply to Block, Choke Hold, Strike

Rigid, Intricate Bulky: -OCV with damaging attacks; Skill levels apply to Disarm, Pin, Grab

Rigid, Simple, Bulky: -OCV with damaging attacks; Skill levels apply to Block, Disarm, Pin

Example: *A small bookshelf doesn't look like a good weapon to hit people with; someone using it to Strike with should take about a -3 OCV penalty. But a character could maneuver an attacker into stabbing at him between the shelves, and then rotate the bookshelf to Disarm the weapon, Pin the weapon, or lock the joint of the attacker. Therefore the GM decides that the character gets his OCV/DCV bonuses with Disarm, Pin, and Grab maneuvers. Small bookcases aren't much good for hitting people, so the GM might give it 2d6 of normal damage.*

Example: *A sawhorse also doesn't look like much of a striking weapon, though it's better than a bookshelf; give it a -1 OCV. Like the bookshelf, it does have small areas which the attacker could use to trap an incoming limb or weapon, and its shape is suited to blocking attacks. Therefore the GM decides that the character can use his skill levels with Block, Disarm, and Pin maneuvers. Sawhorses have rigid legs with narrow points on them, so the GM might give it 3d6 of normal damage.*

Example: *A garden hose looks like it would do negligible damage, so consider it to be a 0-damage weapon. However, it doesn't look clumsy; it shouldn't take an OCV penalty. It also looks as though it could be used to catch incoming weapons (blunt weapons only — sharp ones would cut right through), or to choke a foe; the metal cap at the end could be swung at the target. Therefore the GM decides the character can use his skill levels with Block, Choke Hold, and Strike maneuvers using the hands (i.e. Punches, not Kicks). Garden hoses aren't terribly effective weapons, so the GM will probably give it 1d6 of normal damage.*

Non-Weapon Weapons are all considered Clubs for purposes of a character's familiarity with them... and everyone automatically has Weapons Familiarity with Clubs.

Combat Skill Levels Bought as Powers

Interesting variants on Combat Skill Levels appear in the *Martial Arts Powers* section. They're listed in that section instead of this one because they're bought with limitations, and so are treated more like powers than skills.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL: ANALYZE STYLE

KS: Analyze Style costs 3 points for an INT-based roll, with a +1 to the skill roll per +1 character point spent. To make an Analyze Style roll, the character must be able to observe his target while the target is fighting for at least one full turn.

This skill gives the character the ability to assess an enemy's fighting ability; it may only be used while watching the enemy fight. The degree by which the character makes his KS: Analyze Style roll determines how much information he can gain:

Makes Roll By	Information Gained
0 (Exactly)	Whether the target is poor, medium, good, or master-level
1 or 2	How the target compares to the character: i.e., "I'm far superior to him," "It would be a close thing but I think I'd win," "It's anybody's guess who would win," "He has the edge over me," or "I don't stand a chance."
3 or 4	Physical Limitations and Vulnerabilities possessed by target (the GM decides if these are limitations the skill can detect; "Lame" would be, while "2x BODY from Poisons" would not be, for example)
Half or Better	Location of the target's open Gate (if the target has the Breath Control power from the *Powers* section).

KS: Analyze Style has another function: It acts as the required skill for the *Analyze Style* Aid power described in the *Powers* section.

In this context, the skill allows the character to analyze the fighting style of another character, which in turn allows the character to increase his own abilities against that specific opponent for a brief time.

The character with KS: Analyze Style gets a +2 to his skill roll if his target possesses a Style Disadvantage (see the *Disadvantages* section).

The Lack of Weakness power also affects KS: Analyze Style; each point of Lack of Weakness provides a -1 penalty to the skill.

KS: Analyze Style is an INT-based Knowledge Skill. It costs 3 pts to buy, +1 to the roll for +1 pts.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL: CHINESE HEALING

Chinese Healing is a combination of herbal medicine and acupuncture. It corresponds, in game mechanics, to KS: Medicine. But unlike KS: Medicine, it costs 3 points for an INT-based roll, +1 pt per +1 to the roll.

Chinese Healing works to put the body's internal systems back in balance to combat disease or cope with traumatic injury. To this end, it uses herbal remedies and acupuncture techniques.

In terms of game mechanics, it works just like KS: Doctor (the character will need to buy a 1-pt License perk separately if he wishes to have a license to practice as a man of medicine, also like KS: Doctor).

In a campaign, it can also be used to undo the effects of Dim Mak attacks (see *Dim Mak* in the *Powers* section). A character with Chinese Healing skill can make a normal skill roll to detect that his patient is suffering from Dim Mak techniques. To cure his patient, he must make a skill vs. skill roll against the Chinese Healing skill of the character who performed that Dim Mak attack. If he wins the roll, he can "turn off" the effects of the Dim Mak attack. This cure doesn't instantly heal the victim back to health; it just stops the progressive effects of the Dim Mak and allow the patient to begin healing normally. If he fails the roll, he can do nothing to forestall the continuation of the Dim Mak effects.

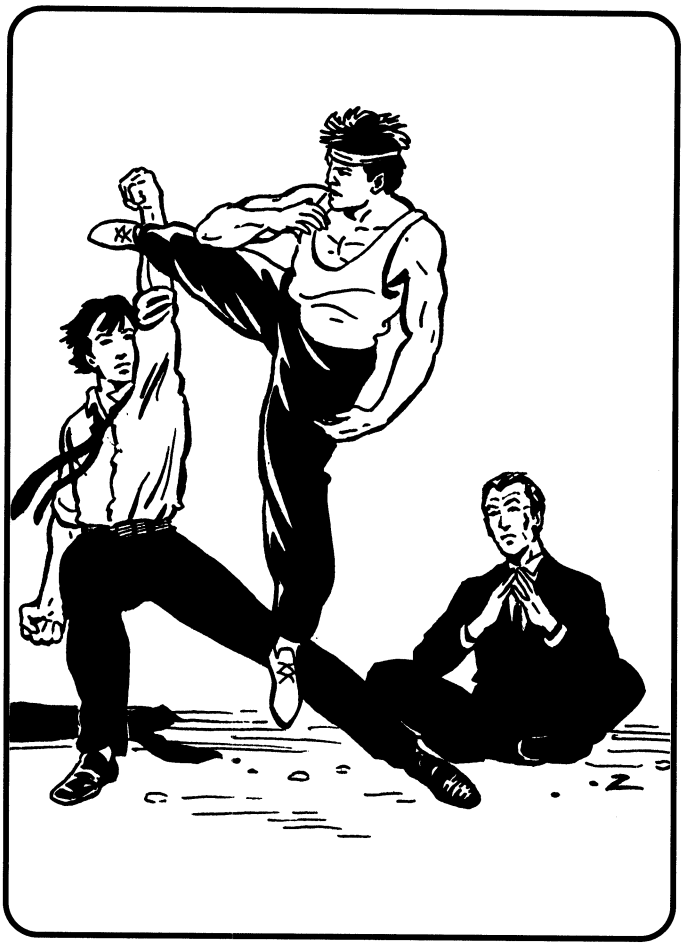
Chinese Healing is a Knowledge Skill. It costs 3 pts to buy an INT-based roll, +1 to the roll for +1 pt.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL: KOREAN HEALING

This skill, part of the Hwarang-do style, is identical to the Chinese Healing skill, with some regional variations.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL: THE MARTIAL WORLD

The Martial World is, in modern-day campaigns, a worldwide martial arts subculture; you find it in any nation or city where there are martial arts schools or traditions.



KS: The Martial World is similar to *Streetwise* skill, except that it deals only with the world of the martial arts. The *Streetwise* skill doesn't do much good in the martial world, because those who belong to that subculture are rather insular and closed-mouthed about the martial world when talking to outsiders.

A successful KS: Martial World roll will allow a hero to use the Martial World grapevine to hear about unusual events and happenings in the martial world, to send messages to other people in the martial world.

When a hero hears that someone is using an interesting but little-known taijutsu technique to perform assassinations, a successful KS: Martial World roll might let him figure out who to talk to in order to find out who the culprit is; it keeps the character informed as to who's on top in the sporting competition forms of the martial arts; it keeps him up to date with current affairs in the significant martial arts schools around the world.

The Martial World is also discussed in the *Campaigning* section.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL: MON

Mon are symbols and designs used to represent Japanese families; every major Japanese family, especially the more traditional ones, has a distinctive *mon* design. Knowledge Skill with *mon* gives a character a good grounding in the recognition of these designs. He can recognize famous designs without a skill roll, and can recognize others with a successful skill roll. This can be important in martial arts campaigns centered around Japan, where recognizing a character's family by his *mon* can make all the difference in determining who is friend and who is foe.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL: SPECIFIC MARTIAL ART

You saw in the *Martial Arts* section that every Martial Arts style recommends purchase of the Knowledge Skill for that art. The skill does have some functions in a campaign:

History: The character has a grounding in the history of his style. He'll know the factors that led to its development, the influences which affected the art and the names of the major personalities who contributed to its development. With a successful skill roll, the character can answer more difficult questions about the art's history.

Philosophy: The character has an understanding of the philosophical side of his art. Most Eastern martial arts have a very important philosophical side to them, often grounded in Buddhism. This is seldom important in an action-adventure game, though wise practitioners of the art are often inclined to baffle young adventurers with cryptic riddles and metaphors, which a successful Knowledge Skill roll can help unravel.

Personalities: The character knows major practitioners of the art, at least by name and reputation. If the art is practiced as a sport (for example, karate has a full-contact sport as a sideline), the character will know who the current champions and contenders are with a successful skill roll. In modern-day campaigns, he will also know what they look like due to appearances in magazines covering the art.

Schools: The character can, with a successful roll, recognize the precise style of another practitioner of the same art. One karateka (karate practitioner) observing another in combat can make his skill roll; with a successful roll, he will know (or at least have a good idea) of which branch of the art the other character learned, and may (if he makes his roll by 3 or better) know exactly who trained this character.

Symbols: The character can also (again with a successful roll) recognize the distinctive symbols used by many schools or branches of his art. Where appropriate, the character can recognize variations in the weapons used by different branches of his art. For example, different ninja clan were supposed to have different-looking shuriken; a character with KS: Ninjutsu could look at a shuriken, and with a successful roll (assuming that it was indeed a shuriken belonging to a specific school or clan, not just a store-bought thing) could recognize its school or clan of origin.

Other Styles: With a successful roll at a -2, the character can recognize a style not his own. He might see a fighter in combat, make his roll, and recognize that the other fellow was performing savate maneuvers. The GM can apply additional penalties based on how unfamiliar he believes the character to be with the style he's observing. This use of the skill doesn't allow the character to recognize specific schools or styles of the other art.

Analyze Style: If the character has the KS: Analyze Style skill, and has a KS of the same style being used by the character he's analyzing, he can use his KS as a complementary roll to the Analyze Style skill.

LANGUAGE: NINJA CLAN CODES AND SYMBOLS

This is a skill which only ninja belonging to ninja clans may learn. It is a series of secret code-words, hand-signs and commands, meaningless to one who does not know the language. It allows the ninja to communicate secretly and silently with one of his own clan.

It is always bought this way: 2 points in a language (Ninja Clan Codes), and 1 point for Literacy (Ninja Clan Symbols). Buying more points in the language doesn't do any good.

Each ninja clan has its own set of codes and symbols; consider them to be linguistically unrelated for purposes of learning more than one.

Two ninja of the same clan, sitting together, could hold an ordinary conversation with normal speech and exchange secret information through use of code-words and hand-signs which are not detectable by or appear meaningless to the casual observer. A ninja in the field can give tactical commands to his subordinates through spoken words and hand-signs. A ninja can bury an important object at a particular site and leave a "meaningless scratch" on a wall or tree nearby; a ninja of his own clan can interpret the scratches and find the buried goods.

Consider this a complete language which may be performed at any time either with voice, or with hand-signs, or both. It is not a very sophisticated language, so the GM can assign INT rolls and INT roll penalties to ninja trying to communicate sophisticated or complicated thoughts or stories when using the language.

WEAPON FAMILIARITIES

Ninja Hero introduces many weapons to the *HERO System*. Not all of them use the normal Weapon Familiarities presented in the *HERO System*.

In the *HERO System*, you saw the normal Weapon Familiarity Groups: Common Melee, Uncommon Melee, Common Missile, Uncommon Missile, Small Arms, Uncommon Weapon, and Heavy Weapon.

In *Ninja Hero*, we need to introduce a few more. We're adding two large (2-pt) weapon familiarity groups (Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons and Thrown Martial Arts Weapons) and several 1-pt groups within them and within the categories from the *HERO System*.

WEAPON FAMILIARITY GROUPS

Common Melee Weapons (Additions)

Axes, Maces, and Picks (also includes Chinese Axe)

Clubs * (also includes Jo, Hanbo)

Fist-Loads * (includes Ashiko, Brass Knuckles, Cestus, Fist-Load, Shuko)

Polearms (also includes Chai-Dao, Darn-Do, Naginata, Nine-Dragon Trident, Tai-Dao, Yari; this familiarity permits effective use of the bladed end, while combat use of the shaft requires Staff familiarity)

Swords/Blades (also includes Bokken, Butterfly Knife, Cutlass, Epee, Foil, Jien, Katana, Knuck-Knife, Kris, Main-Gauche, Ninja-To, No-Daichi, Rapier, Saber, Shinai, Tanto, Tetsu-To, Wakizashi, Yoroi-Toshi)

Uncommon Melee Weapons (Additions)

Garotte

Net

Straight Razor

Whip (includes Chain Whip)

Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons

Chain and Rope Weapons (includes Kusari, Kusarigama, Kyogetsu Shoge, Manriki-Gusari, Shinobi-Zue chain)

Karate Weapons (includes Kama, Nunchaku, Sai, Tonfa)

Staff (includes Quarterstaff, Bo Staff, Shinobi-Zue staff, Tetsubo, Polearm Shafts)

War Fan

Uncommon Martial Arts Melee Weapons

Flying Guillotine

Hook Sword

Three-Section Staff

Wind and Fire Wheels

Common Missile Weapons (Additions

Bows (includes Yumi, Hankyu)

Thrown Knives/Axes (includes Chinese Axe, Kama, Sai, Shuriken, Tanto, Yoroi-Toshi)

Uncommon Missile Weapons (Additions)

Blowgun

Fukimi-Bari

Thrown Chains & Ropes (includes Kusari, Kusarigama, Kyogetsu Shoge, Manriki-Gusari)

Thrown Sword (includes Bokken, Katana, Ninja-to, Shinai, Wakizashi)

*: Characters get this Weapon Familiarity group for free.

What This Means

Under *Common Melee Weapons*, we're just pointing out that many of these martial arts weapons are included in the ordinary Weapon Familiarities from the *HERO System*. For example, Oriental swords such as the katana are included under the old Common Melee Weapons "Swords" familiarity; Oriental polearms such as the naginata are included under the Common Melee Weapons "Pole Arms" familiarity.

The *Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons* groups can be learned individually for 1 pt per group, or all these groups can be learned for 2 pts total.

The *Common Missile Weapons* group does already include the Japanese longbow, the yumi, and the ninja half-bow, the hankyu.

With *Uncommon Melee Weapons, Uncommon Martial Arts Melee Weapons,* and *Uncommon Missile Weapons*, a character must buy each group separately, at 1 pt per group; he cannot spend 2 pts to know all the *Uncommon Melee Weapons* groups, for instance

WEAPON FAMILIARITY: OFF-HAND 

A special Weapon Familiarity which is suitable for all *Ninja Hero* campaigns is called WF: Off-Hand.

WF: Off-Hand costs 1 point. When a character possesses this skill, he gets a +1 to DCV when carrying a weapon in each hand.

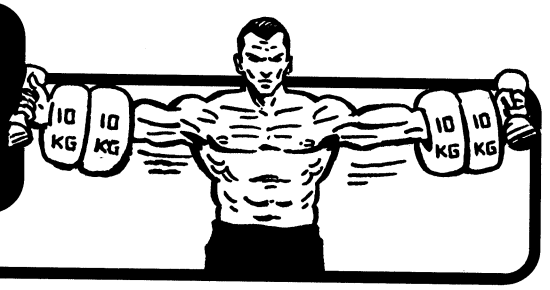
Example: *Yasmin is a DEX 20 character. She has the WF: Off-Hand skill. When she uses a war-fan in one hand, she has a DCV of 7. But when she has one in each hand, she has a +1 DCV, for a final DCV of 8.*

Note that WF: Off-Hand is not necessarily suited to other types of heroic campaigns, and is definitely not suited to normal superheroic campaigns. Therefore, the GM may choose to disallow it from any campaign other than martial arts campaigns.

You can only buy WF: Off-Hand once for a character. He may not take it three times to have a +3 DCV when carrying two weapons.

WF: Off-Hand is not the same as the Ambidexterity talent. A character who has WF: Off-Hand gets a +1 DCV bonus when using a weapon in each hand. But if he attacks with the weapon in his off-hand, he suffers the usual OCV penalty for off-hand attacks, unless he has also bought Ambidexterity. WF: Off-Hand cost: 1 pt.

PERKS



Perquisites which are useful in *Ninja Hero* campaigns include:

CONTACT

Contacts which martial artist characters often have include:

The Ex-Master: The martial arts expert who trained the character. If bought as a contact, he won't normally come along with the hero on his adventures, but can often answer questions about the hero's newest opponent or give the hero additional between-adventures training.

The Old Buddy: This character was in the armed forced with the hero, was a co-student with them back in the old days, etc. He's often a lower-grade martial artist himself; frequently, he is also a weaponsmith of some sort. He can make (normal) weapons for the hero, or can protect the rescued NPC when the hero doesn't need to be burdened with the presence of a non-fighter.

FAVORS

Martial artist characters often have favors from people whom they've rescurom muggings, from assassination attempts, etc.

FOLLOWERS

The most common type of Follower for a martial artist to have is a student. Many martial artists accumulate non-fighters or beginning fighters who wish to learn from them. The character can guide the student's development by deciding how much to spend on his Follower perk; when the Follower reaches an ample level of ability and it is time for the characters to part, the player-character can "turn in" his Follower and get his points back. He has to use those points to buy off Disadvantages related to the Follower, or to buy other Followers, Bases, Vehicles, and such things — he cannot spend them on characteristics, skills, or powers.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Kirisutogomen (10 pts)

This is a Fringe Benefit which can only be taken in feudal-era Japanese campaigns. It is the right of the samurai to kill anyone of a lower social class. In some periods, samurai all had this right, but different samurai would implement it in different ways. More calm and philosophical samurai would exercise it only when deliberately offended; touchier samurai would kill anyone who accidentally stepped across their blades, bowed down not quite far enough, or otherwise inadvertently bothered the samurai for any reason.

License to Practice/Doctor (1 pt)

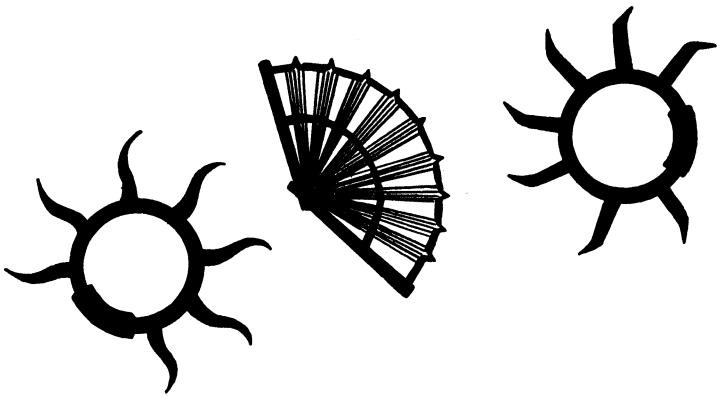
This is the ordinary license necessary to practice as a physician; characters with Chinese Healing skill who wish to practice should take this license in order to become legally-practicing acupuncturists.

Right to Marry (1 pt)

This is a necessary perk of Buddhist monk characters.

Right of Shelter (1 pt)

This is a necessary perk of Buddhist monk characters. It doesn't mean that the character has the right to barge into peoples' homes and demand food and shelter; it does mean that in predominantly Buddhist countries or regions, the character with this Perk, if he is known to be a monk, will always have someone offer him shelter (usually a peasant or a monk from the local monastery).



MONEY

Martial arts campaigns are not about money, and so a martial artist character should only take the Money perk as part of his background conception. If he's a multi-millionaire who is also a martial artist, he should take Wealthy; if he has chosen a lifestyle where he is continually impoverished, he should take Destitute.

VEHICLES AND BASES

The most common sort of base found in a martial arts campaign is the school. Only masters and master villains have schools, and so a character with a base should also be teaching his "agents," or students.

Point-purchased special vehicles are very uncommon in martial arts campaigns.

The GM may decide that martial arts characters in his campaigns do not get to buy bases or vehicles with their own points, and are limited to the sorts of bases and vehicles bought with money.



TALENTS

Many of the Talents from the *HERO System* are very useful in *Ninja Hero* settings. The most important ones include:

AMBIDEXTERITY

Many martial artists, especially those who specialize in two-weapon techniques (fencers, kenjutsu swordsmen, etc.) have this talent, which allows them to use their off-hand with no OCV penalty.

COMBAT SENSE

Many martial artists are trained to fight when blindfolded or blinded; that's what Combat Sense is. Most blind martial artists have this talent; and it can be a life-saver to a sighted martial artist when the lights go out, when his opponent blows some dust into his eyes, etc.

DANGER SENSE

Likewise, Danger Sense can alert the martial artist to an attack even when there is no obvious sign of that attack coming. This is a Talent of skilled masters, intuitive martial artists, and characters with animal-like senses. However, as with all stop-sign Talents, it requires special permission from the GM.

DEFENSE MANEUVER

This is an appropriate Talent for a character experienced in fighting in massed combats. Beginning martial artists usually do not have it; experienced ones eventually acquire it, and should not be discouraged from doing so.

FAST-DRAW

As usual, this Talent is used for 0-phase readying of one's weapons. In Japan, this art is called iai-jutsu; that's the samurai's ability to unsheathe his sword instantly and attack without hesitation.

Note that this Talent has another function, though it's one which is not usually of much use in combat. It can be used to snatch things out of someone's hand before he can close his hand. Frequently, the martial artist character does this little trick to impress someone. He has the other person hold something in his open palm, and tells the fellow he can snatch the object out of his hand before the fellow can close his hand. With a successful Fast-Draw roll vs. the target's DEX roll, he can do this. (If both characters have Fast-Draw, they must make a skill vs. skill roll to see who wins.)

The character can also use Sleight of Hand skill, if he possesses it, to make a switch. With successful Fast-Draw and Sleight of Hand rolls (the target can make a Perception roll in a skill vs. skill contest with the Sleight of Hand), our hero can take the object off the other fellow's palm and drop another in its place... without the target realizing that it has happened. The target will feel the object in his hand and think he won the contest.

FIND WEAKNESS

Many characters will want to take this Talent; it's awfully handy, after all.

But it's just as dangerous to a *Ninja Hero* campaign as to ordinary HERO System campaigns. The GM should be careful when allowing it in his campaign.

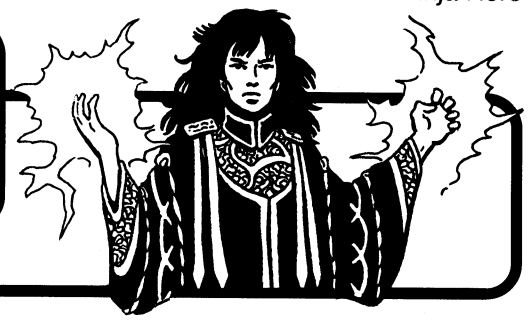
LIGHTSLEEP

In a world filled with ninja and other stealthy intruders, Lightsleep is a good thing for player-characters to buy...

SIMULATE DEATH

This is an unusual ability in a *Ninja Hero* campaign, and is usually only taken by martial arts masters who have total control over their bodies.

POWERS



This section describes powers which martial arts characters can buy.

We're not talking about weapons; there's a separate section for that subject.

What we are talking about are powers which true-human martial artist characters can be allowed to buy. Though these characters aren't considered superheroes, they're allowed to buy certain specific super-powers in order to simulate the abilities with which expert martial artists are credited.

FIVE TYPES OF CAMPAIGNS

We've divided this section into five sub-sections corresponding to different types of campaigns. They include: Heroic Campaigns, Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, Wild Martial Arts Campaigns, Street-Level Superheroic campaigns, and Normal Superheroic campaigns

The definition of each type appears below, under the headline for that type; these terms are also explained in the *Campaigning* section. We've divided these powers this way because powers which are appropriate to a Wild Martial Arts Campaign, a campaign patterned after the more extreme Chinese kung fu films, are not all going to be appropriate in a gritty, realistic campaign where martial arts is just one element among many.

Therefore, the GM should decide which of the categories his campaign belongs to, and only choose powers from that category — or design powers which are similar in effect and effectiveness to the powers from that category.

RESTRICTIONS ON POWERS

Many of the powers listed in this section will be given with limits which aren't Limitations — they're restrictions on the level of power the character can buy, not formal Limitations which make it cheaper to buy the power.

You might ask, "Why should I accept this restriction if it doesn't get me some points back?"

The answer is this: These are the same sorts of limitations you see the GM place on damage and defenses you can buy within his campaign. These restrictions have been built into the powers so that they're balanced for use in specific types of campaigns. Exceed those limits and they're no longer balanced, and the GM should deny you the right to buy the power at all. These restrictions make it possible to buy superpowers in a campaign setting where it would otherwise be impossible.

HEROIC CAMPAIGNS

For purposes of *Ninja Hero* definitions, Heroic Campaigns are campaigns where all the characters have the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage (generally required of all characters, and worth 0 points to the characters).

The damage done by characters doesn't usually come near the damage levels of superheroic campaigns; generally it's in the 4-8 DC range.

Martial arts are not necessarily the main theme of the campaign, and superpowers of any sort are rare and should be heavily restricted. Characters can *not* usually take the Extra DC element on their martial arts.

Almost any action-adventure campaign with human-level characters falls into this category.

The following powers, within certain limitations, are appropriate to most Heroic Campaigns:

Aid: Ch'i

Damage Resistance

END Reserve

AID: CH'I

Because martial arts characters often tap into their inner strengths, or the principals of ch'i, it is permissible to allow them to buy Aid powers with numerous limitations on them.

(1) Aid powers in these campaigns should be limited to 3d6 Character Points of Aid.

(2) The maximum number of Character Points that can be added to a characteristic *cannot* be increased; i.e., if you have 3d6 Aid, you cannot add more than 18 Character Points to the affected characteristic.

(3) The following advantage is required: Invisible Power Effects (to three sense groups, +1).

4) The following limitation is required: Usable on Self Only (-1/2).

(5) The following limitations are recommended or appropriate: Activation, Concentrate, Extra Time, Gestures, Incantation, Increased Endurance Cost. The character is not *required* to take any of these unless the GM says so.

(6) Aid can be bought for the following characteristics: STR, CON, EGO, PRE, REC, END, STUN.

(7) Aid *cannot* be bought for the following characteristics: DEX, BODY, INT, COM, PD, ED, SPD.

(8) The Aid cannot be moved down on the time chart; this Aid must wear off at 5 character points per Turn (or sooner; the character could add a limitation for it to wear off at 5 character points per Phase). Naturally, when the power is used to raise a temporarily-drained characteristic up to its starting value and beyond, it won't wear off below its starting value.

(9) You cannot put Aid powers into a power framework such as a Multipower; all such powers must be bought individually. Here's an example of a power bought this way. This consists of the character summoning his energies to boost his PRE for a more effective war-shout:

Example: *Aid PRE, 3d6 Character Points, Invisible Power Effects (+1) (30 active points). Self Only (-1/2), Activate 14- (-1/2), Increased Endurance 5x (-2). Total Limitation: -3. Cost: 7 pts. Costs 15 END per use.*

Remember, these limitations and guidelines are for normal, non-martial arts heroic campaigns. Some of the restrictions diminish or vanish in campaigns which are wilder or oriented more toward martial arts.

DAMAGE RESISTANCE

It is permissible for characters in heroic campaigns to buy some Damage Resistance. It must be bought with the following limitation:

Only vs. Unarmed Martial Arts Killing Attacks (-2).

This way, the character is able to resist the worst effects of martial arts killing attacks, but has no extra defenses vs. the knife of a mugger, the claws of a bear, the gun of an assassin, or any other type of killing attack.

In Heroic Campaigns, the GM should let characters buy less Damage Resistance than the power's Minimum Cost normally allows. In the HERO System, characters are normally required to buy at least 5 points of Damage Resistance; in N*inja Hero*, they can buy from 1 to 4 points instead if they wish.

END RESERVE

A character in a Heroic Campaign can set up an END Reserve. The REC bought for it must have the Limitation "Only Works if Character Can Recover Normally (-1/4)." The character may not have any powers which draw from it, including his own Strength characteristic.

What good is it, you ask? Well, a character could buy this as the ability to hold his breath. For a mere 5 pts on END and 1 pt on REC, the character can buy 50 END for use when holding his breath. This can greatly prolong the time it takes the character to drown or to give in to the effects of surrounding gas fumes. (See *Holding Breath and Drowning* in the *Recovery* section of the *HERO System Rulesbook*, pg 167.)

Obviously, the REC of the END Reserve should be defined as working only when the character can breathe normally. Even a well-conditioned pearl diver can't stay underwater indefinitely.

The character may not spend more than 5 Character Points on his END Reserve, for a maximum of 50 END. The GM should allow characters to buy less than the listed Minimum Cost (which is also 5 Character Points) of END Reserve.

HEROIC MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGNS

Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns are campaigns where the characters have the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage, just as with normal Heroic Campaigns. The damage done by characters approaches the low end of superhero damage levels (is usually in the 6-8 DC range). Martial arts are very important to the structure of the campaign. The movies of Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris are good examples of this campaign power level.

Characters can, with GM permission, buy several types of restricted powers in this campaign.

Whether characters can take the Extra DC element on their martial arts is up to the GM; normally, it is permissible, so long as the damage normally done by the character doesn't exceed the limits the GM has placed on his campaign.

The following powers are appropriate to Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, except where noted:

Aid: Analyze Style
Aid: Ch'i
Aid: Kiai
Armor
Clinging
Combat Skill Levels Bought as Powers
Damage Reduction
Damage Resistance
Drain: Dim Mak Techniques
END Reserve
Energy Blast or RKA with Indirect
Enhanced Senses
Gliding: Walk With No Trace (Hing Kung)
Hand-to-Hand Attack or HKA with Damage Shield
Lack of Weakness
Mental Defense
Missile Deflection & Reflection
Tunneling

AID: ANALYZE STYLE

This is a special type of DEX Aid used in conjunction with the *Analyze Style* skill from the *Skills* section.

Here are the limitations on the power:

(1) This is bought as DEX Aid.

(2) The character may only buy up to 2d6 Character Points of DEX Aid (which results in a maximum of 12 Character Points of DEX, or 4 points of DEX). He may increase the amount of character points his Aid will hold, up to 48 Character Points of DEX (or 16 points of DEX).

(3) The following limitations are required: Usable on Self Only (-1/2), Requires a Skill Roll (Analyze Style skill), (-1/2), Extra Time — Full Phase (-1/2), Must Watch Target Fighting Someone Else for One Full Phase Per Skill Roll (-1/2), Failed Skill Roll or Interruption Prevents Further Skill Rolls At This Time (-1/2), Concentrate 1/2 DCV While Power is Being Turned On (-1/4), Only for Increasing OCV and DCV (-1/4), Only vs. One Observed Foe (-1). Total Limitation: -4.

(4) The delay for loss of the Aid's benefits may be bought up to -5 Character Points per 5 Minutes (a +1/2 advantage). It may not be bought up higher than that. A character doesn't have to buy it up that high if he does not wish to.

In play, what happens is this:

A character with the power observes his enemy fighting. (Often, a character will ask one of his friends or order his student to confront the enemy so that the character can perform his observation.)

Each phase the character can watch his target fighting, he may make his Analyze Style skill roll; with each successful roll, he can activate his Aid power.

Each application of his Aid power increases his DEX: Only to improve his own OCV and DCV, and only against this one opponent. It doesn't improve his Speed, his placement on the Combat Order Sheet, his DEX skill rolls, or anything of the sort. If the hero fights a character other than his target, he doesn't get the DEX bonus; however, if he finishes with the other character and returns to his target before his DEX aid wears off, then he'll still benefit from the power.

If he fails a skill roll, or is interrupted from his concentration (i.e., if someone attacks or distracts him), he can make no further Analyze Style skill rolls against this opponent during this fight. (Exactly how long a "fight" is varies, but we'll say that it's long enough for all hostilities to cease and for the character's Aid bonus to wear completely off. Until both of these conditions are met, consider the "fight" still in effect.)

This means that once he misses a roll, or is interrupted from his observation, or simply stops making his roll for any reason, he's now gotten all the benefit from his power that he can get; he should then set about attacking his target (or running away, if that is what's called for).

He'll fight his enemy with his OCV and DCV substantially improved. Gradually, his Aid will wear off; this corresponds to his opponent figuring out how to compensate for the weak spots in his own fighting style.

Here's an example of how this power is built:

Example: *Aid, 2d6 Character Points to DEX, can hold up to 48 CP of DEX (equalling +16 DEX), 28 pts active; Wears Off at 5 CP/5 Minutes (+1/2), 42 pts active. Usable on Self Only (-1/2), Require a Skill Roll (Analyze Style, -1/2), Extra Time Full Phase (-1/2), Must Watch Target Fighting Someone Else/One Phase per Skill Roll (-1/2), Failed Skill Roll/Interruption Prevents Further Rolls (-1/2), Concentrate 1/2 DCV (-1/4), Only for OCV/DCV (-1/4), Only vs. One Observed Foe (-1): 8 pts; -4 to Analyze Style Skill Roll.*

AID: CH'I

To reflect the sorts of changes which take place between normal Heroic campaigns and martial arts Heroic campaigns, here are the limitations you face when building ch'i-based Aid powers in the latter sort of campaign.

(1) Aid powers in these campaigns should be limited to 4d6 of Aid for some characteristics, 2d6 of Aid for others (see item #6 below).

(2) The maximum number of Character Points that can be added to a characteristic cannot be increased; i.e., if you have 4d6 Aid, you cannot add more than 24 Character Points to the affected characteristic.

(3) The following advantage is required: Invisible Power Effects (to three sense groups, +1).

(4) The following limitation is required: Usable on Self Only (-1/2).

(5) The following limitations are recommended or appropriate: Activation, Concentrate, Extra Time, Gestures, Incantation, Increased Endurance Cost. The character is not required to take any of these unless the GM says so.

(6) Aid can be bought for the following characteristics: STR, CON, EGO, REC, END, STUN at a maximum limit of 4d6 of Aid, or BODY, PD, ED at a maximum limit of 2d6 of Aid. BODY Aid powers *must* be taken with the limitation "Aid can only raise Characteristics to starting values, -1/2." See further on in this section (*Aid: Kiai*) for options for PRE Aid powers.

(7) Aid *cannot* be bought for the following characteristics: INT, COM, SPD. See above under *Aid: Analyze Style* for DEX.

(8) The Aid cannot be moved down on the time chart; this Aid must wear off at 5 character points per Turn (or sooner; the character could add a limitation for it to wear off at 5 character points per Phase).

(9) You cannot put Aid powers into a power framework such as a Multipower; all such powers must be bought individually.

Here's an example of a power bought this way. This consists of the character summoning his energies to boost his Strength in dire situations:

Example: *Aid STR, 4d6 Character Points, Invisible Power Effects (+1) (40 active points). Self Only (-1/2), Activate 14- (-1/2), Concentrate 0 DCV While Power Is Turned On (-1/2), Extra Time Full Phase (-1/2), Increased Endurance 5x (-2). Total Limitation: -4. Cost: 8 pts. Costs 20 END per use.*

Naturally, in Wild Martial Arts Campaigns, these limitations are further reduced.

AID: KIAI

Kiai is the art of the war-shout, the mighty shout which surprises opponents, upsets their timing, sometimes even stuns them. In Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, this can most effectively be bought as an Aid power which increases Presence.

(1) PRE Aid bought as a Kiai shout should be limited to 8d6 Character Points of Aid.

(2) The maximum number of Character Points that can be added to a characteristic cannot be increased; i.e., if you have 4d6 PRE Aid, you cannot add more than 24 Character Points to Presence.

(3) The following advantage is required: Invisible Power Effects (to three sense groups, +1).

(4) The following limitation is required: Usable on Self Only (-1/2).

(5) The following limitations are recommended or appropriate: Activation, Charges, Offensive PRE Only (worth -1/2), Increased Endurance Cost. As before, the character is not required to take any of these unless the GM says so.

(6) The Aid cannot be moved forward on the time chart; this Aid must wear off at 5 character points per Turn (or sooner, as described under *Aid: Ch'i*).

(7) You cannot put Aid powers into a power framework such as a Multipower; all such powers must be bought individually.

A sample of a Kiai Shout power might look like this:

Example: *Aid PRE, 6d6 Character Points, Invisible Power Effects (+1) (60 active points). Self Only (-1/2), Offensive PRE Only (-1/2), Four Charges (-1), Costs END (-1/2), Increased Endurance 4x (-1 1/2). Total Limitation: -4. Cost: 12 pts. Costs 24 END per use.*

A character might buy the power this way to begin with; but as he gained in experience, he'd doubtless buy off the Charges limitation, buy down the Increased Endurance, and perhaps buy up the dice of effect.

ARMOR

Armor is not an appropriate power for Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns or for Wild Martial Arts Campaigns. If characters want resistant defenses, they can buy Damage Resistance as described in this section; Damage Reduction is also effective against the BODY of attacks. Additionally, Armor can be bought as equipment (see the *Gadgets and Weapons* section, and the *Weapons and Armor* section of the *HERO System Rulesbook*.

CLINGING

Clinging is inappropriate for Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns.

COMBAT SKILL LEVELS BOUGHT AS POWERS

Though it's not normally appropriate to buy Skill Levels as powers, you can do so in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns for certain purposes.

Important Note: Remember that Combat Skill Levels bought with Limitations only affect OCV (or, very rarely, only affect DCV); see the *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 23, under *Combat Skill Levels* for more on this.

H-to-H Skill Levels which Cost END

In the movies especially, a character may go out to fight, find his opponent was tougher than he thought, and begin really concentrating on the fight — fighting "above himself," tiring himself out faster, but fighting more effectively.

To simulate this, we allow characters to buy Hand-to-Hand Skill Levels (costing 5 pts each) to be bought with limitations. The required limitations are: Cost END (-1/2), Cost 2x END (-1/2). No other limitations or advantages may be used, and only 5-pt Hand-to-Hand skill levels may be bought this way.

With this arrangement, we have skill levels each costing 1 END/phase to use. If the character faces a foe he needs to use the extra ability against, he uses his END-powered combat skill levels.

H-to-H Levels Depending on Acrobatics, DCV Only

To simulate the incredible DCV which acrobatic martial artists have when using their Acrobatics skill, you can purchase 5-pt Hand-to-Hand skill levels with this limitation: Requires Skill Roll (Acrobatics, -1/2).

These skill levels affect only DCV, not OCV.

Remember, each two skill levels (10 active points) result in a -1 to the Acrobatics roll.

H-to-H Levels Only For Removing Hit Location Penalties

You can buy 5-pt Hand-to-Hand Combat Skill Levels with the following limitation: Only For Reducing Hit Location Penalties (-1). An OCV 8 characters with eight of these skill levels would could not use these levels to raise his OCV when attacking; his skill levels can't be put on OCV or DCV. However, he'd find it just as easy to hit a Head location as a Chest.

H-to-H Skill Levels Only for Coordinating Attacks

You can buy 5-pt skill levels Only For Coordinating Attacks (-1 to -2). See page 149 of the *HERO System Rulesbook* for rules on coordinating attacks.

The limitation Only For Coordinating Attacks (With Anyone With Whom You've Trained) is a -1.

The limitation Only For Coordinating Attacks (With One Specific Person) is a -2. If the one person later happens to die or leave the campaign, the character can eventually "trade in" his points; he must use those powers to buy new skill levels for coordinating attacks with other partners.

DAMAGE REDUCTION

Martial arts characters absorb an incredible amount of abuse in the movies and fiction and come back for more. Therefore, it's all right for them to buy a limited form of Damage Reduction.

We highly recommend that characters take this power in martial arts campaigns. Having this power can mark the difference between being a good, effective minion-type character and being a master martial artist or damage-resistant hero; therefore, only player-characters and the best NPC martial artists (aged teachers, master villains, powerful villain minions, etc.) should be built with this power.

In Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, Damage Reduction can only be bought with these limitations:

(1) Damage Reduction can only be bought up to 50% reduction, resistant.

(2) Damage Reduction can only be bought for physical damage, not energy or mental damage.

(3) Required limitations include: Character Must Be Aware of Attack (-1/4).

(4) Optional limitations include: Only vs. STUN Damage (-1/2) (this means the power reduces STUN but not BODY from attacks); and Activation Roll Equal to Character's EGO Roll (-1 to -1/4) (the character must make an EGO roll whenever he takes damage, and if he fails his roll he takes full damage).

The most typical ways for beginning characters to buy the power include:

Example: *Damage Reduction, 50% Physical, Resistant (30 active points), Must Be Aware of Attack (-1/4), Activation Roll (-3/4, assuming a 12- EGO Roll): 15 pts.*

Example: *Damage Reduction, 50% Physical, Resistant (30 active points), Must Be Aware of Attack (-1/4), vs. STUN Damage Only (-1/2): 17 pts.*

With this arrangement, the character must know he's being attacked (this is automatic against most attacks from the direction he's facing, but can require a Perception Roll or even Danger Sense Roll with surprise attacks). In one form of the power, he must force himself not to feel the pain, hence the Activation ROll (EGO Roll) requirement.

Characters with this arrangement cannot buy their Activation Rolls up higher than their EGO Rolls, which may make them want to have strong EGOs, which is appropriate for martial arts heroes. If a character has an EGO Roll of 13-, he can buy a 14- Activation Roll, since there is no 13- Activation Roll limitation.

Note that Damage Reduction does not affect Dim Mak attacks (see immediately below).

DAMAGE RESISTANCE

As in Heroic campaigns, characters in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns can buy Damage Resistance. It must be bought with the following limitation:

Only vs. Unarmed Martial Arts Killing Attacks (-1).

(The limitation is not worth as much in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns because unarmed killing attacks are so much more common in such campaigns.)

In Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, the GM should let characters buy less Damage Resistance than the power's Minimum Cost normally allows. In the HERO System, characters are normally required to buy at least 5 points of Damage Resistance; in N*inja Hero*, they can buy from 1 to 4 points instead if they wish.

DRAIN: DIM MAK TECHNIQUES

Dim Mak is the infamous "delayed death touch," a nearly magical method of striking (or even merely touching) an opponent, transferring ch'i energy, and causing an imbalance in the target's body that will eventually kill him. This is a Chinese technique, and not widely known; the GM should restrict its purchase so that only one or two PCs ever learn Dim Mak. (If several characters know it, it becomes mundane and boring, not the dangerous, mysterious art it should be.)



In a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, the power is bought this way:

(1) Dim Mak is bought as Drain — mostly BODY Drain, though other Drains can be added to simulate the effect of the victim's body wasting away.

(2) In a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, characters are limited to 10d6 Character Points of Drain. With non-BODY Drains linked to the BODY Drain, characters are limited to 6d6 Drain.

(3) Dim Mak powers must be bought with the following advantages: Invisible to Sight and Sound (+3/4), Time Delay (+1/4), BODY Returns at a Rate of 5 Character Points/Week (+1 1/2). (This last advantage can be improved still further, to 5 CP/month or per season, if the buyer wishes to spend the points.)

(4) Dim Mak powers must be bought with the following special limitation: Limited — Damage Taken in Time Increments. The damage of a Dim Mak attack doesn't take effect all at once; the victim sickens before dying. Therefore, 1d6 Drain is applied when the Time Delay period is reached (or the Trigger occurs; see item #6 below). Each time increment after that, another 1d6 Drain is applied. (If the Dim Mak technique is built as several Drains — for instance, a BODY, STR and CON Drain — 1d6 of *each* is applied at each time increment). The two appropriate time increments are 1d6 per 5 Hours (-1/4) or 1d6 per Day (-1/2); above that amount of time, the character will begin to heal, possibly as fast as the Dim Mak technique does him damage.

(5) Dim Mak powers must also be bought with this special limitation: Can Be Cured by Chinese Healing (-1/4). A character with the Chinese Healing skill might be able to cure a Dim Mak attack. He can't make his roll to cure the victim until the onset of the first 1d6 of damage. Since Dim Mak practitioners must also have Chinese Healing (see item #6 below), the GM should resolve this as a skill vs. skill roll between the two characters with Chinese Healing. (Also, if the victim is below 0 BODY, the character trying to heal him suffers a -1 penalty to his skill roll for every 2 BODY the victim is below 0 BODY.)

(6) Dim Mak powers must be taken with the following (more typical) limitation: Character Must Make Ordinary Chinese Healing Skill Roll; 16+ Automatically Misses (-1/4) — see the *Skills* section. This is *not* the same as the limitation "Requires a Skill Roll." This limitation doesn't take any penalties for the active point base of the power, while "Requires a Skill Roll" requires a -1/10 active points. This limitation is basically a 15- Activation Roll also requiring that the character know Chinese Healing and make his roll successfully.

(7) The following advantage is appropriate for Dim Mak powers but may only be taken instead of (not in addition to) the Time Delay advantage: Trigger (+1/2, can be changed each time power is used). Usually, the Trigger is a certain number of steps taken by the victim: After three steps, 100 steps, 1,000 steps, or whatever, the target will begin suffering the effects of the power.

(8) These limitations are appropriate (but not required) for Dim Mak powers: Attacker Must Make a Special Sequence of Blows Against Target (one blow, -0; two blows, -1/4; three blows, -1/2; four blows, -3/4; five or six blows, -1). Attacker Must Make Very Accurate Blows Against Target (each blow is at -3 OCV for placement, -1/2; each blow is at -8 OCV for placement, -1). Special Sequence of Blows Do 0 Damage (-1/2). Timing Must Be Perfect: Attacker May Not Miss a Phase or a Hit (-1). In other words, the attacker must hit his target in several places around the body in order to set up the Dim Mak chain reaction. One (easy) way to buy it might be Five Blows (-1), no other limitation; this means the attacker must first hit his target five times, and on the sixth may apply his Dim Mak attack. One (very difficult) way to buy it might be Five Blows, Each at -8, Do 0 Damage, Timing Perfect (total limitation: -3 1/2). The attacker would have to hit his target every phase with a 0-damage strike (no damage is rolled, and there is no other combat effect), each blow at -8 OCV, not missing a single attack (he cannot miss, he cannot be blocked, etc. or he will have to start over); only after all that is set up can he, on the sixth blow, apply the Dim Mak touch. The player and GM should decide what these preparatory blows look like, what locations they are to hit (with a -3 modifier, the character can be presumed to hit anywhere he wishes on the character's torso; with a -8 modifier, the character can be presumed to hit any target on the body he wishes), etc.

(9) Dim Mak powers are hand-to-hand and so may not be bought with the Ranged advantage.

A character struck by a Dim Mak attack who goes below 0 BODY can be treated by a character with Professional Skill: Doctor. A successful skill roll merely means that the character will not perish swiftly (in other words, he won't lose 1 BODY every post-segment 12 from being at 0 BODY or below); skills such as Paramedic and Professional Skill: Doctor cannot keep the Dim Mak effects from continuing.

Note that it's permissible to buy a Dim Mak attack that far exceeds the campaign's normal active point limits. This is because the limitations on the power keep it from being as lethal as its active point totals would otherwise indicate.

Here's an example of a Dim Mak attack as a PC might buy it:

Example: *10d6 Character Points of Drain, BODY; 6d6 Drain, STR. Invisible to Sight and Sound (+3/4), Time Delay (+1/4), BODY Returns at a Rate of 5 CP/Week (+1 1/2) (280 active!). Limited, Damage Taken in Time Increments (1d6 BODY and STUN Drain per Day, -1/2); Can be Cured by Chinese Healing (-1/4); Character Must Make Ordinary Chinese Healing Skill Roll (-1/4); Attacker Must Make Sequence of Five Blows, Each at -3 OCV, Blows do 0 Damage, and Timing Must be Perfect (-3); 2 Charges/Day (-1 1/2); Activates on 15 or less (-1/4). Total Limitation: -5 3/4. Total Cost: 41 pts.*

Obviously, Dim Mak techniques are very costly, as the heavily-limited example above shows. They are most appropriate for really evil villains or very wise masters, but player-characters can buy the technique (if the GM approves).

END RESERVE

Powers in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns may not be based on END Reserves, but (as with normal Heroic Campaigns) a character could buy an END Reserve which allows him to hold his breath for a great length of time. As before, the character may not spend more than 5 Character Points on it, for a maximum of 50 END.

ENERGY BLAST OR RKA WITH INDIRECT

This power allows the character to simulate the showoff technique of stacking bricks, striking the top one, and leaving it unharmed while destroying one of the bricks beneath; it has some possible combat uses as well (for example, when a villain is on the other side of a wall, our hero could hit the wall and transmit all the damage of his blow to the target, without the wall itself acting as armor against the attack).

These powers are bought with the advantage Indirect (+1/4, always comes from the same location) and the limitations No Range (-1/2), Target Must Be Touching Barrier (-1), Attack Must Be Made Through Barrier (-1/2). The No Range is taken because these attacks are still supposed to be hand-to-hand blows. The Target Must Be Touching Barrier limitation is there because if the target is not, the attack's energy cannot be transmitted to him. As usual, the power may not be bought with more damage than the best of the character's normal martial arts attacks.

A typical example this power is this:

Example: *Energy Blast, 8d6. Indirect (+1/4, always comes from the same location) (50 active). No Range (-1/2), Target Must Be Touching Barrier (-1), Attack Must Be Made Through Barrier (-1/2): 17 pts.*

ENHANCED SENSES

Many Enhanced Senses are appropriate to characters in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns. Most are bought with various limitations. The list of Enhanced Senses, and whether or not they are appropriate, follows:

Active Sonar: This is very unusual... simply because of the sound emitted by the character. Human characters will have to take the limitation "Visible to Sound Group" — worth a -0 (Visible, a -1/4 limitation, requires that three whole sense groups be able to detect the power, which is inappropriate here). Basically, the character whistles or emits some other regular noise which acts as his "sonar." This power is most appropriate to the "blind master" character.

Discriminatory Sense: This is a power which is appropriate to any character defined as having a higher awareness. No special limitations are required. Blind characters often have Discriminatory Touch.

Enhanced Perception: This is also appropriate for any alert character, but the GM should establish and enforce limits on the amount of Enhanced Perception a character can take; a total bonus of +3 to a sense is more than adequate for most campaigns.

High Range Radio Hearing: This power is inappropriate for hero-level human beings to have... except in a radio gadget.

Infrared Vision: A martial artist character could have this power, if bought with limitations like Costs Endurance (-1/2) and/or Extra Time To Activate, 1 Turn (-1). This is the martial artist's ability to adjust his eyes to the darkness much faster and better than ordinary people can; the character must have had some specialized training in his past to be able to do this.

Example: *IR Vision, Costs END (-1/2), One Turn to Activate (-1): Costs 2 pts.*

Mental Awareness: This, too, is a power permissible to characters who are supposed to have achieved some sort of heightened awareness. However, it is very inexpensive and so many characters may want it; it's not appropriate for several characters in a campaign to have. Therefore, the GM should limit things so that only one or (perhaps) two characters in a campaign have this power.

Microscopic Vision: Inappropriate for hero-level human beings.

N-Ray Vision: Inappropriate for hero-level human beings.

Radar Sense: Inappropriate for hero-level human beings; use Active Sonar (above), Spatial Awareness or Targeting Sense (below).

Radio Hearing: This power can be taken by just about any human being if he also takes the limitations of a 12- (or worse) Activation Roll and No Conscious Control. ("Doctor, I keep hearing somebody who isn't there talking to me in Spanish...") Aside from accidentally receiving radio signals on his fillings, a character should not be able to buy this as a power.

Radio Listen and Transmit: Inappropriate for hero-level human beings.

Range: Inappropriate for hero-level human beings.

Spatial Awareness: This is appropriate for characters in these campaigns, especially for master martial artists who fight as well when blinded as not. Again, not all PCs in a campaign should have this power, but its cost is likely to discourage everyone in a campaign from buying it.

Targeting Sense: Targeting Sense with Hearing is an appropriate thing for a master fighter to have; see the notes on Spatial Awareness (above). Targeting Smell and Targeting Taste are not as appropriate; don't use them in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns.

Telescopic Sense: Inappropriate for hero-level human beings. A generous GM might allow a character to buy a maximum of +2 to PER rolls with the limitations described above for Infrared Vision.

Tracking Scent: This is rare, and is perhaps more appropriate for the "boy raised by wolves" sort of character... but there's nothing that says such a character couldn't be a martial artist in a martial arts campaign.

Ultrasonic Hearing: Inappropriate for hero-level human beings.

Ultraviolet Vision: Can be purchased with the same limitations as Infrared Vision, above.

360 Degree Sensing: This can be bought only for the character's Hearing sense group or a special Spatial Awareness. It is most efficient when combined with Spatial Awareness, or with Active Sonar or Targeting Hearing; this is common in martial arts fiction and cinema.

GLIDING: WALK WITH NO TRACE (HING KUNG)

Characters in hero-level martial arts campaigns cannot fly or glide (except with a boarding pass).

However, they can purchase the Gliding power for one special purpose only: Walking without leaving any tracks.

They buy Gliding with the limitation Only For Not Leaving Tracks (-2). This means that when they're "gliding," they look just as though they're walking or running normally; when the floor drops out from under them, they fall normally; if they step on marbles or tetsu bishi, they suffer appropriately.

But they don't leave any trace of their passing. A character can walk over rice paper or fine sand and not leave footprints. When using this power, he can walk across pressure sensors and pressure triggers and not set them off.

A character may not buy his Gliding faster than — or even as fast as — his ordinary running. He may not buy extra noncombat multiples with the power. If he has a physical limitation which would prevent him from walking or running, he cannot buy this power.

This technique is called *hing kung* in Chinese.

A typical purchase looks like this:

Example: *Gliding, 6" (6 pts. active); Only For Not Leaving Tracks (-2): 2 pts.*

HAND-TO-HAND ATTACK OR HKA WITH DAMAGE SHIELD

A character can purchase an attack with the Damage Shield advantage to simulate effective counterpunch and counterstrike techniques.

Some notes on the way it should be purchased:

(1) If the power is bought as an Energy Blast, it will need to be defined as a Physical Blast. You may not take the "No Range" limitation with it; that's intrinsically a part of Damage Shields.

(2) The damage done by the Damage Shield may not exceed the amount of damage the character can do with the attack the power is "substituting for." In other words, if the character has a 6d6 Punch attack, but no hand-to-hand killing attack, and he's defining his Damage Shield as a counterpunch, then the Damage Shield should do 6d6 Normal Damage (or less) — not a 2d6 Kill or an 8d6 Normal Damage attack.

(3) The following limitation must be for this power: Requires Successful To-Hit Roll (-1/2). The attack shouldn't hit automatically — it should depend on an Attack roll, just as with any other attack. (However, an advantage to this power is that it doesn't take a character's attack action; after his Damage Shield counterstrike, or even several, he'll still have an action left).

(4) Damage Shields may not be bought with Persistent. If they are bought to 0 Endurance, the character must take the limitation "Does Not Work When Stunned (-1/4)." Don't forget that Damage Shields may not be bought with the "No Range" limitation.

(5) If the power is based on a weapon (i.e., it's defined as a weapons flourish), then it should be bought with the limitation "Cannot do more damage than the weapon being used would normally do (-1/4)." For example, let's say that a character who can do 2 1/2d6K with his katana buys a Damage Shield which he defines as a deadly

weapons flourish. He's limited (by note #2 above) to 2 1/2d6K damage with the Damage Shield, and he does that damage when using his katana. However, during a fight, he loses his katana and is forced to rely on his dagger, with which he can only do 1d6+1K. His Damage Shield will only do 1d6+1K while he uses the dagger. Later, in the same fight, he switches to a greatsword with which he can do 3d6 damage. However, his Damage Shield is still limited to only 2 1/2d6K — that's the limit of his power.

Here are two examples of Damage Shield powers appropriate for martial arts campaigns:

Example: *Counterstrike: Energy Blast (Physical), 6d6 (30 active pts). 1/2 END (+1/4), Requires Successful To-Hit Roll (-1/2). Total Cost: 25 pts.*

Example: *Blade Kata: HKA, 2d6 (30 active pts). 1/2 END (+1/4), Requires Successful To-Hit Roll (-1/2), Cannot Do More Damage Than The Weapon Being Used Would Normally Do (-1/4). Total Cost: 21 pts.*

When a character using this power is hit in hand-to-hand combat, this power automatically activates. The character's base OCV is used, plus any OCV and DCV modifiers Combat skill levels, as they were arranged before he was struck. Other skill levels do not apply. With a successful roll to hit, the character will counterstrike his opponent; if the roll to hit fails, the Damage Shield does no harm to the target.

LACK OF WEAKNESS

Characters in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns may buy up to 5 points of Lack of Weakness.

MENTAL DEFENSE

Characters in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns may buy Mental Defense, anywhere from the minimum 5 points to a maximum of 10 points.

MISSILE DEFLECTION & REFLECTION

A classic cinema martial artist trick is to bat away incoming arrows, thrown knives, shuriken, etc. — even to snatch them out of the air and throw them back at the attacker. This is done with Missile Deflection & Reflection.

A martial artist in a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign can buy Missile Deflection up to the 10-point level: He can deflect arrows, sling stones and other non-gunpowder projectiles. Many martial artists buy it at the 5-pt level (vs. thrown objects only).

A character can buy bonuses to his Missile Deflection roll normally, at 2 pts. per +1.

Characters can buy Reflect at +20 points; this Reflect is only usable against thrown weapons, however. If the character has only bought the 5-point basic Deflection, this does not affect the cost. If he's bought the 10-pt Deflection vs. Non-Gunpowder Projectiles, then he can apply a limitation (vs. Thrown Weapons Only, -1/4) only to the +20 pt. cost of Reflect. (If the character buys Reflect at +30 pts. instead, so that he can Reflect attacks back against targets other than the original attacker, he can apply the same limitation to the whole +30 pts.)



Martial artists in these campaigns can buy their Deflection to affect attacks not aimed directly at the character for the usual +1/2 advantage.

To buy the +1 advantage to deflect attacks at range, the character will also have to have some sort of Focus limitation (i.e., he throws objects in the path of incoming missile attacks to deflect them).

Some characters prefer to buy Deflection with a focus; war-fans, swords, shields and other weapons are especially appropriate for this.

If a character buys the Focus limitation with the explanation that he can use anything he picks up to Deflect incoming attacks, this is an Obvious *Inaccessible* focus. It's considered Inaccessible because it's very difficult to disable; if you take away the character's bar-stool, he can just pick up a cash register and Deflect with it instead.

A typical purchase of Missile Deflection & Reflection might look like this:

Example: *Missile Reflection. Can Deflect Non-Gunpowder Projectiles; Can Deflect Attacks Not Aimed Directly at Character (+1/2) (15 active pts); OIF Any Focus (-1/2). Can Reflect Attacks At Any Target (30 active pts); vs. Thrown Weapons Only (-1/4); OIF Any Focus (-1/2). Cost: 27 pts.*

The classic cinema-ninja trick of catching an enemy's thrown knife or shuriken and hurling it back at him would preclude use of the OIF limitation; if you want that ability, buy the power without a focus limitation.

POWER DEFENSE

It'll occur to some players that in a world which allows Dim Mak attacks, a bit of Power Defense be a good thing to have.

Unfortunately for those players, this isn't allowed in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns. Dim Mak is expensive and supposed to be scary; characters *cannot* take Power Defense to defend against it.

SUPERLEAP: REQUIRES ACROBATICS ROLL

In many martial arts films, masters of the art can leap prodigious distances, though acrobatic training seems to be required for this.

To simulate this, buy Superleap with the limitation Requires a Skill Roll (Acrobatics, -1/2).

In Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, you can only buy enough Superleap to double your basic leap.

This is an exception to the normal rule about minimum cost for Superleap. In the normal HERO System rules, the minimum cost is listed as 5 pts. But in this campaign setting Superleap has no minimum cost, and you cannot Superleap to more than double your STR leap.

Example: *A STR 20 character can normally leap 4". Therefore, in a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, he can buy no more than 4" of Superleap. This costs 4 pts, with a -1/2 limitation for Requires an Acrobatics Roll, resulting in a final cost of 3 pts. Four Active Points does not result in a minus to the Acrobatics roll.*

TUNNELING

Some unusual characters (including some film ninja) can dig themselves down into soft terrain, basically grinding themselves into the earth and covering themselves with a thick coating of the earth. (They usually do this when concealed by smoke from a smoke grenade, by darkness, etc.). This is a good method for them to escape capture.

To simulate this in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, a character can buy a maximum of 1" of Tunneling. This, again, is an exception to the usual minimum cost listings; the minimum cost for Tunneling would normally be 20 pts (which is 4" Tunneling, or 2" with the "fill in behind" function). That's too much for this sort of campaign, so we suspend that rule for this genre.

The power must be bought with the following limitation: Maximum Distance 1" Per Tunnel (-1). This means that the character can dig his way into the earth to conceal his entire body... but he can't keep digging a tunnel through the earth.

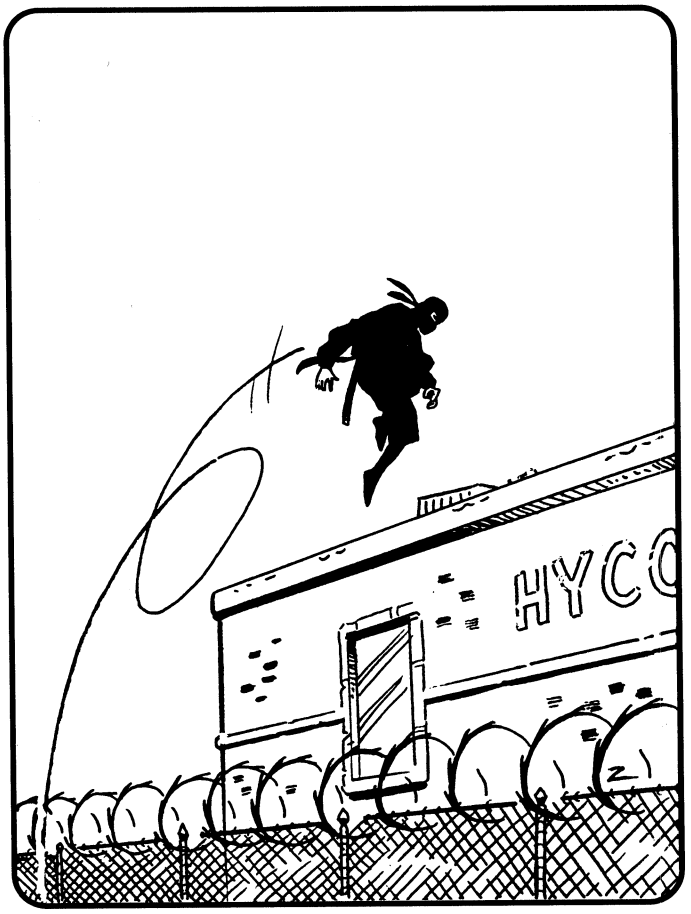
The character can't buy the "dig through +1 Def for +3 pts" function. He can only dig through soft, 1 Def material such as sand, fresh-turned soil, mud, bog, etc.

The character *must* buy the "can fill tunnel behind him" function for +10 pts, and must always use that function.

To make the area he has dug into look natural (i.e., undisturbed), he should use Concealment skill; the GM can assign severe minuses on terrain where it would be hard to conceal signs of digging (such as a neat grass lawn, where sod would be torn up and flung in all directions). Dusty and sandy terrain is much better for this purpose.

Such a power will usually look like this:

Example: *Tunneling, 1"; can fill hole in behind (15 pts). Maximum Distance 1" Per Tunnel (-1): 7 pts.*



WILD MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGNS

In these campaigns, the characters probably have Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage... but it's up to the GM whether this is required of all characters in the campaign (i.e., it's mandatory, and brings the character 0 points) or it's just something they can take if they wish to (and is consequently worth points as a Disadvantage).

The adventures are heavily oriented around martial arts, and the action is stranger, deadlier, and wilder.

Characters reach beginning superhero-campaign damages (typically, the 8-12 DC range), though a GM might wish for his campaign to feature much deadlier combat with higher damage limits. The wilder Chinese kung fu movies are good examples of this campaign power level.

Characters can buy many different types of somewhat-restricted powers in this campaign. Characters can usually take the Extra DC element on their martial arts.

Many of the powers listed below are similar to the powers listed above for Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns; the difference is that they are generally less restricted. If a power appears in the listing above but is not revised in the listing below, then restrictions on that power are not relaxed for Wild Martial Arts Campaigns.

These powers are all appropriate to Wild Martial Arts Campaigns, except where noted:

Aid: Analyze Style
Aid: Arrays
Aid: Heal
Clinging
Damage Reduction
Damage Resistance
END Reserve
Energy Blast: NND Breath Attack
H-to-H Attack or HKA: Autofire
H-to-H Attack or HKA: Selective
Lack of Weakness
Mental Defense
Missile Deflection & Reflection
Ranged Killing Attack: OIF
Superleap: Requires Acrobatics Roll
Telekinesis
Power Advantage: Armor-Piercing
Power Advantage: Invisible Power Effects
Power Framework: Multipower

AID: ANALYZE STYLE

This power works just the same as in Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, except that the character may buy up to 4d6 Character Points of DEX Aid, and may increase the amount of Character Points his Aid will hold up to 63 Character Points of DEX (or 21 points of DEX).

AID: ARRAYS

An Array is a fighting style where two or more fighters have trained together so long and so well that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts: When fighting together, the partners in the array are much more formidable than when fighting alone or fighting alongside someone who is not their partner.

A character can buy DEX Aid for himself with these advantages, limitations and restrictions:

(1) Aid powers in these campaigns should be limited to 6d6 Character Points of DEX Aid.

(2) The maximum number of Character Points that can be added to a characteristic cannot be increased; i.e., if you have 6d6 Character Points of Aid, you cannot add more than 36 Character Points to the affected characteristic (this translates into a limit of +12 DEX).

(3) The following advantage is required: Invisible Power Effects (to three sense groups, +1).

(4) The following limitations are required: Only for Increasing OCV and DCV (-1/4), Self Only (-1/2); Usable Only When Within 5" of Specific Other Person(s) (-1 1/2 to -1/2). The Specific Other Persons limitation is worth: -1 1/2 if all members of a specific team must be present; -1 if only one specific other person (a permanent partner) must be present; or -1/2 if one or more members of a specific team (the team may have up to seven characters total) must be present. The OCV/DCV Only limitation means that the character doesn't change his place on the Combat Order Sheet; this helps to keep the power from irritating the GM.

(5) The Aid can be moved forward on the time chart, up to wearing off at a rate of 5 CP/5 minutes (+1/2). It may not be taken for a slower rate than that.

If characters in an array are separated in combat beyond the 5" range, the Aid bonus is not usable at that moment... but it does not wear off instantly. If the characters get back within range of one another before the Aid wears off, then the Aid bonus is instantly restored.

Here's an example of how the Array Aid works.

Example: *Jiro and Eiko are a brother-and-sister fighting Array. Each of them buys the following power: Aid, 6d6 Character Points to DEX. Invisible Power Effects (+1), 60 pts. active. Self Only (-1/2), Usable Only When Within 5" of Brother/Sister (-1), Only Increases OCV and DCV (-1/4): 22 pts; 6 END.*

If they later became part of a larger fighting team, one with five members, they could either decide that the power worked only when all members were within 5", or worked when any one other member was within 5". Assuming they chose the latter, the power would become:

Example: *Aid, 6d6 to DEX. Invisible Power Effects (+1), 60 pts. active. Self Only (-1/2), Usable Only When Within 5" of any member of five-man team (-1/2), Only Increases OCV and DCV (-1/4): 27 pts.*

AID: HEAL

In Wild Martial Arts Campaigns, you can buy Aid to Heal someone else. There are two rationales for this: Kiai (the ch'i-based shout of martial arts warriors, which is said to be able to heal as well as harm), and Chinese Medicine. Therefore, for a character to buy this power, he must take it one of these two ways:

Kiai Healing

In Wild Martial Arts Campaigns, this power must be taken with these factors:

(1) The Aid is limited to 4d6 of effect. It may be bought either as the normal 4d6 CP to BODY, or as 4d6 Healing as per page 58 of the *HERO System Rulesbook* (see *Aid*).

(2) The following advantage must be taken: Invisible to Sight (+1/2), Usable At Range (+1/2).

(3) The following limitation is not required but is appropriate: Extra END. An example of the purchase of this power:

Example: *Aid, 4d6 Healing, Invisible to Sight (+1/2), Usable at Range (+1/2), 40 active. Increased END 5x (-2): 13 pts.*

Chinese Medicine Healing

On the other hand, Healing based on the application of Chinese Medicine must be bought this way:

(1) The Aid is limited to 8d6. It can be bought either as the traditional Aid to BODY, or the optional Healing (see the *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 58 under *Aid* for more on this). The GM may, if he wishes, also allow the character to buy up to 4d6 of Aid to other characteristics listed above under *Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns* for *Aid: Ch'i.*

(2) The following advantage must be taken: Invisible to Three Sense Groups (+1).

(3) The following limitations must be taken: Requires Skill Roll (Chinese Healing, -1/2); Does Not Work vs. Dim Mak Unless Skill vs. Skill Roll is Successful (-1/4); Extra Time (at least 1 Turn (-1); longer times are very acceptable); Obvious Accessible Focus (either herbs or acupuncture needles, character choice, -1).

(4) The following limitation is optional; the GM might permit a character to take a Healing power exceeding the recommended limit if it has this limitation: Healing Wears Off Instantly When Acupuncture Needles Removed (-1). In other words, the acupuncturist is able to apply techniques to get a badly-wounded warrior back on his feet, but the recovery only lasts as long as the needles remain in the body; a Grab or Disarm removing a needle will make the Healing benefit go away instantly.

An example of purchase of this power:

Example: *Aid, 8d6 Character Points to BODY (40 active pts). Requires Skill Roll (Chinese Healing, -1/2), Not vs. Dim Mak unless Skill vs. Skill Roll Succeeds (-1/4), Extra Time 5 Minutes (-2), OAF Acupuncture Needles (-1): 8 pts; -4 to Chinese Healing skill roll.*

CLINGING

Clinging can be purchased in Wild Martial Arts campaigns. The GM should decide which of the following limitations (any one or several) he wishes to impose on it:

Sideways Movement is 1/2 Ground Mvmnt. Rate: -1/4

No Ceiling Movement or Angles of Less than 80°: -1/4

With the first limitation shown above, the character would be about as slow going sideways as he would climbing, which is appropriate to Clinging in a martial arts campaign. With the second limitation, the character can scale shallow inclines, steep inclines, vertical (90°) inclines, and even overhangs up to 80°, but not any overhang steeper than that.

Here's an example of the purchase of this power:

Example: *Clinging, Normal STR; 10 active pts. Sideways Move at 1/2 Ground Rate (-1/4), No Ceiling or Angles Less than 80° (1/4): 7 pts.*

Characters should not be allowed to buy up the STR of their clinging; their base STR is quite enough.

DAMAGE REDUCTION

In Wild Martial Arts Campaigns, characters c*an* buy Damage Reduction vs. energy (but not mental) attacks. However, they must take no more than 50% damage reduction, and it must have one of the two following limitations (and can have both): Character Must Be Aware of Attack (-1/4); and Activation Roll (equal to EGO Roll, -1/4 to -1).

DAMAGE RESISTANCE: BREATH CONTROL

In Wild Martial Arts Campaigns, characters can buy Damage Resistance defined as Breath Control.

Breath Control allows the character to make himself much more resistant to damage. With Breath Control, the character is able to close of certain vulnerable energy points called "Gates," making most of his body resistant to killing damage.

However, one gate must always remain open, leaving the character vulnerable to attack there; the player must define which gate it is when the character buys the Breath Control power. When a location is actually two locations (for example, location 7 is forearm, and the character has two, right and left), the player can define which one it is. If he wishes his open gate to be in his right hand, he defines it as Location 6 (Right). In combat, when someone attacks him and hits the proper location, unless he specifically aimed for the proper one, he must roll 1d6; a 1-3 means he hit the left limb, a 4-6 means he hit the right.

Notes on buying Breath Control:

(1) The character may only buy Damage Resistance to physical attacks.

(2) He may buy it only with the following limitations: Not vs. Guns (-1/4; i.e., vs. H-to-H, Thrown and Muscle-Powered Weapons Only); One Hit Location Left Undefended (-1/4) (or 15- Activation, if you're not using Hit Locations).

(3) In lower power-level campaigns, characters should be permitted to purchase less Damage Resistance than the minimum listed for the power in the *HERO System Rulesbook*.

If the campaign uses the Hit Location chart, and the player chooses for the open gate to be a hit location which reduces the damage of an attack (Locations 6-8, 15-18), then he must take the following Vulnerability: 2x BODY to attacks to his Gate (Uncommon), 10 pts.

This only gives the character points to spend if he bought Breath Control when he was first created. If the character buys Breath Control after he's created, and defines his open gate as being in one of the limb locations, he does still get the Vulnerability, but he doesn't get any Character Points for it.

Here's an example of Damage Resistance bought in this fashion. It presumes a PD 8 character.

Example: *Damage Resistance on PD 8 (4 pts active). Not vs. Guns (-1/4), Location 3 (forehead) Left Undefended (-1/4): 3 pts.*

Important Note: This is very inexpensive and very good to have. If the GM puts it in a campaign, just about every player will want to have it. Small bladed weapons will be next to useless; only martial arts, large weapons, and guns will be effective at all. If the GM prefers to keep his PCs respectful of lesser killing-damage weapons, he should *not allow this power in his campaign.*

END RESERVE

With Wild Martial Arts Campaigns, characters can begin buying their superpowers based on END Reserves. At this point, the listed Minimum Cost for END Reserves (5 character points) should be observed.

ENERGY BLAST: NND BREATH ATTACK

This is an unusual power not entirely inappropriate for a martial arts campaign. The owner of this attack lives on a special diet (a Dependence Disadvantage is appropriate, but not required). When he wishes to, he may summon up a huge breath of noxious, horrible stench which can be used to overpower, sicken or knock out enemies. This sort of attack comes as a great surprise. It is very appropriate for villain characters — it's an attack for a weird lieutenant or the master criminal to pull out at a dramatic moment.

It can be bought in this fashion:

Example: *Energy Blast, 6d6; No Normal Defense (+1, defense is Life Support/Does Not Need to Breathe), Area Effect (Cone) (+1), Personal Immunity (+1/4) (97 pts active); Four Charges (-1), Full Phase to Activate (-1/2), Costs END (-1/2), Costs 2x END (-1/2), No Range (-1/2): 24 pts.*

H-TO-H ATTACK OR HKA: AUTOFIRE

A character can buy Hand-to-Hand Attack or even a Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack with the Autofire advantage. This simulates the quick-handed martial artist who is able to punch his foe so fast and so often that he looks like a blur.

Damage for the attack should not exceed the character's usual martial arts damage (and the GM may prefer for it to be one or two Damage Classes less than that damage).

An example of such an attack might look like the following. Let's say a character has a STR of 20 and gets +6d6 from his best maneuver (a Martial Strike). For the character to have a similar autofire attack, he'd buy:

Example: *Hand-to-Hand Attack, 6d6, Autofire 5 shots (+1/2), 1/2 END (+1/2): 36 pts.*

Remember that Reduced END bought for an Autofire attack costs twice as much as usual, therefore 1/2 END is +1/2 and 0 END is +1. The attack above would cost 5 END per attack.

H-TO-H ATTACK OR HKA: SELECTIVE

Another way to do a "punch-several-guys-at-the-same-time" power is to buy Hand-to-Hand Attack or Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack with the advantages Area Effect Radius (+1) and Selective (+1/4).

This way, the character could make one attack each on every enemy in his hex and in surrounding hexes. Because it's bought with the Selective advantage, the character doesn't have to hit everything in those hexes... just enemies he wishes to target. Remember, though, with the Selective advantage, the character doesn't hit every target as if the target were DCV 3; he must attack against the target's normal hand-to-hand DCV.

Though the attack is area effect, it cannot extend into further hexes because it's a hand-to-hand power. If the character wants to buy this power with a long focus such as a polearm, he can buy a ranged attack, or else buy a couple of inches of limited Stretching also based on the polearm.

Such a power would look like this:

Example: *Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack, 1d6, Area Effect Radius (+1), Selective (+1/4): 34 pts.*

LACK OF WEAKNESS

Characters in Wild Martial Arts Campaigns may buy up to 10 points of Lack of Weakness.

MENTAL DEFENSE

Characters in Wild Martial Arts Campaigns may buy Mental Defense, anywhere from the minimum 5 points to the maximum the GM allows.

MISSILE DEFLECTION & REFLECTION

This power works just as in the *Heroic Martial Arts Campaign* section, with one exception: Characters can buy the power to be effective against gunpowder-based projectiles.

RANGED KILLING ATTACK: OIF

A character could buy a Ranged Killing Attack, up to the campaign's limits, based on a focus — the focus defined as any weapon of opportunity (any focus that he happens to pick up, and which the GM agrees is suitable to be used for a thrown killing attack). An olive, a foam rubber ball and a pastry are not appropriate, but practically anything harder or sharper is (including silverware, pebbles, broken-off chair legs, playing cards, bicycle spokes, etc.).

This power would be bought with the Obvious Inaccessible Focus limitation. This is because it's so very hard to disable; if a character has a gun and you take it away, he can't launch another ranged killing attack until he gets another gun. But if a character has this power and you take his trowel away, he can re-arm himself with any appropriate weapon of opportunity... therefore it's an OIF.

An example of purchase of this power:

Example: *Ranged Killing Attack, 2d6; 30 active pts. OIF (appropriate weapons of opportunity, -1/2): 20 pts.*

SUPERLEAP: REQUIRES ACROBATICS ROLL

This power works just as it did in the *Heroic Martial Arts Campaign* section, above, except that the character can buy more Superleap.

We're not placing a limitation on the amount characters can buy, but we recommend that GMs do so appropriate to their campaigns.

At lower-power-level campaigns, we recommend a limit of 10" of Superleap. However, some of the wilder martial arts movies have characters who can leap to the horizon; if you're simulating this sort of film, no limit on active points is really appropriate.

TELEKINESIS

If the GM permits, a character could buy Telekinesis, defining it as martial arts usable at range through the character's extension of *ch'i*.

Such Telekinesis could not exceed the damage done by the character's normal martial arts attacks, and must be bought with the Advantage: Invisible to Sight Group (+1/2).

POWER ADVANTAGE: ARMOR-PIERCING

A character may wish to have armor-piercing martial arts. It's not allowable to put a Power Advantage (Armor-Piercing) on a Skill (Martial Arts), so this must be simulated another way.

The character must buy a different attack power (especially Hand-to-Hand Attack and Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack) and buy the Armor-Piercing Advantage for it. He doesn't have to buy Armor-Piercing for his STR as long as he only uses STR up to the unmodified active point cost of the power.

An example: Let's say a character has STR 15 and a slew of maneuvers giving him up to 7d6 damage. He can buy:

Example: *Hand-to-Hand Attack, 4d6; 0 END (+1/2), Armor-Piercing (+1/2); 24 pts.*

This will give him a 6d6 armor-piercing normal attack.

You might be asking yourself, why doesn't it give him 7d6? STR 15 is 3d6, plus 4d6 from H-to-H Attack equals 7d6, right? Well, that's wrong — in this case.

4d6 of H-to-H Attack is 12 points' worth of power (not counting the Armor-Piercing advantage). Therefore, the character, since he has not bought Armor-Piercing for his STR, can only add STR 12 to it — for +2d6. Thus, it's a 6d6 attack. If he were to buy Armor-Piercing for his STR, he could have his full 7d6.

POWER ADVANTAGE: INVISIBLE POWER EFFECTS

What if a character wants to be such a fantastic martial artist that his martial maneuvers are too fast to see? The same rule expressed above in *Power Advantage: Armor-Piercing* applies here — approximately.

The character should buy a separate attack power (Hand-to-Hand Attack or Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack) and apply the Invisible Power Effects advantage to it.

He must *also* buy Invisible Power Effects for his STR if he plans on adding damage from his STR.

As an example, the same STR 15/7d6 damage character mentioned above buys:

Example: *Hand-to-Hand Attack, 4d6; 0 END (+1/2), Invisible Power Effects (vs. Sight, +1/2): 24 pts.; and Invisible Power Effects (vs. Sight) on STR 15: 7 pts.*

If the character doesn't buy the Invisible Power Effects for his STR, then the attack is invisible only when used at its purchased damage; whenever the character adds damage from his STR, the attack becomes visible.

Characters should only be able to buy Invisible Power Effects for one sense group. If they're allowed to buy a Fully Invisible attack, they'll be able to get away with murder (literally and figuratively) in the campaign.

POWER FRAMEWORK: MULTIPOWER

One of the greatest differences between Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns and Wild Martial Arts Campaigns is this: Wild Martial Arts Campaigns can make use of Multipowers.

Even so, the GM should work extra-hard to make sure that all the powers in the Multipower are logically linked together. Should a character be allowed to buy his Armor-Piercing Killing Attack (a fist blow), his NND Breath Attack, and his Gliding (Only For Not Leaving Tracks) in the same Multipower? No. Though they are remotely linked by the buzzword "Martial Arts," they are, in game terms, three wildly different effects and should not be in the same multipower.

When allowing Multipowers in such a campaign, the GM should never allow questionable powers, even some of the ones described in this section (such as skill levels bought with limitations). *They don't belong in Multipowers or other Power Frameworks.* They're already on the verge of being abusive; putting them in a Multipower makes them *definitely* abusive. Just Say No.

Below are some examples of Multipowers which are appropriate for most Wild Martial Arts Campaigns.

The Multipower Martial Art Style

The following Multipower is (approximately) a Martial Art. Essentially, it's a series of attacks which the builder has defined as a Martial Art. This Multipower assumes a STR 20 character and a 10 DC cap on campaign damage.

This sort of Multipower doesn't count as a Style for purposes of the character acquiring a Style Reputation. A Style Reputation may only be taken for a martial arts style built with the rules from the *Designing Martial Arts* section.

45	Multipower (Martial Arts Attacks, 45 Active)	**END**
4 u	H-to-H Attack, 6d6, Armor-Piercing, 0 END	0
4 u	H-to-H Attack, 6d6, Autofire 5 Shots, 0 END	0
4 u	H-to-H Attack, 6d6, Area Effect Radius, Selective	4
4 u	HKA, 2d6, 0 END	0

Naturally, used with a STR 20, all the H-to-H Attacks go up to 10d6, and the HKA goes up to 3d6+1. Of course, the character spends the END for his STR in addition to any listed for the multipower slot. Moreover, unless he buys his STR with the appropriate advantages, he can't add his STR to the Autofire or Area Effect slots.

This set of abilities is too expensive for most games, but is not at all inappropriate for super-level games... and it can be quite effective.

The Kiai Multipower

Kiai, the art of shouting and utilizing ki (ch'i) energy, can do more than surprise (PRE Attack) an enemy. It can, according to tradition, be used to knock an enemy out cold, to promote healing, and even to do damage to or kill an opponent.

A Multipower using all of these abilities might look like this:

20	Multipower (Kiai Powers), 40 Active, 3x END(-1)	**END**
2 u	Aid, Heal 4d6 (Optional Cost, *HERO System Rulesbook pg* 58), Invisible Power Effects (vs. Sight, +1/2), Usable At Range (+1/2)	12
2 u	Aid, 4d6 to PRE, Invisible (+1), Self Only (-1/2)	12
2 u	EB, 4d6, No Normal Defense (+1)	12
2 u	RKA 1d6+1, Invisible to Sight (+1/2), Increased STUN (+1/2)	12

The defense on the NND attack is Ear Covering (such as earmuffs), or Making an EGO Roll at -3.

The Ch'i Multipower

For most *Ninja Hero* purposes, ch'i is used to draw strength to one or more of a PC's characteristics for a brief period of time. A typical multipower using the Aid power looks like this:

13	Multipower (Ch'i Powers), all powers Self Only (-1/2), Extra Time Full Phase (-1/2), 0-DCV Concentrate (-1/2), 2x END (-1/2), 40 Active	**END**
1 u	Aid, 4d6 to STR, Fully Invisible (+1)	8
1 u	Aid, 4d6 to EGO, Fully Invisible (+1)	8
1 u	Aid, 4d6 to REC, Fully Invisible (+1)	8
1 u	Aid, 2d6 to PD, Fully Invisible (+1)	4
1 u	Aid, 2d6 to ED, Fully Invisible (+1)	4

Note that the character with this Multipower can only use one of the first three slots at a time, but can have both the fourth and fifth on at the same time. However, since each use takes a full phase to activate, the character cannot turn them both on at the same time; one would be done on one phase, and the other on a later phase.

Aid, Multipowers and Switching Slots

If a character is receiving a characteristic bonus from an Aid power in a multipower, and the user of the multipower changes multipower slots, the Aid recipient loses his bonus.

Example: *Master Toshio has drawn on his ch'i to increase his Strength in combat. He's downed his foe, but he's tired and another enemy is mere phases from reaching him. Toshio drops the STR Aid and switches to a REC Aid so that he'll recover faster. His extra STR goes away as soon as he changes slots.*

However, an Aided characteristics do not fall below their starting values, even if the multipower is switched.

Example: *Master Toshio has been hit with a willpower-deadening drug. He summons up his ch'i to overcome its effects. His EGO has been drained from 18 to 13. He uses his Aid EGO slot, and rolls 14 Character Points, or 7 EGO, which shoots his EGO up to 20. Moments later, he has to switch back to his STR Aid. The bonus EGO "goes away," but he's left with his original EGO of 18, not his reduced EGO of 13.*

STREET-LEVEL SUPERHERO CAMPAIGNS

Street-Level Superheroics are low-powered superhero campaigns. In the majority of these campaigns, characters must take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage, but they do receive full points for the Disadvantage.

The adventures aren't usually centered around martial arts, but the majority of super-characters will probably possess martial arts skills.

Characters start out at typical beginning superhero-campaign damages (the 8-12 DC range).

Depending on the rationale for the campaign, characters could buy many unusual martial arts-related powers.

Characters can usually take the Extra DC element on their martial arts.

All the powers listed for Heroic Campaigns and Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns are appropriate for most Street-Level Superhero Campaigns; naturally, the GM has the final say on that subject. Players can build powers from the Wild Martial Arts Campaigns section if the GM says they're all right; he should look at each one to make sure that it conforms to his perception of his campaign.

No specific power examples are listed below, but here are some recommendations for you to implement the *Ninja Hero* rules into your street-level superhero campaign.

First, in a street-level superhero campaign, superpowers are more efficient than martial arts maneuvers. Therefore, the character should buy most of his "martial arts attacks" as superpowers, preferably in power frameworks such as multipowers. Martial arts maneuvers which are still very efficient include the Dodges, Blocks, "Target Falls" maneuvers, and maneuvers which give the character STR boosts for specific tasks.

Second, in a street-level superhero campaign, powers do not have to have all the limitations loaded on them in the earlier parts of this section. If they *do*, they'll behave more like powers in the martial arts movies, but they don't have to.

For example, a martial-artist superhero could have Damage Reduction which affects Mental, Energy, and Physical attacks, not just Physical ones. His Superleap can be truly fantastic.

Third, in a street-level superhero campaign, characters will usually be building gadgets from their own points rather than relying on ordinary technology. This means that they can build gadgets which exceed the abilities of gadgets presented in this chapter. A street-level super's katana does not have to be limited to the damage listed for that weapon in the Gadgets and Weapons section, nor do his nets, his shuriken, or any of his other weapons; he need merely obey the campaign's posted damage limits.

With all these factors out of the way, the street-level superhero character can use most of the character creation advice from this chapter. They can use the character stereotypes, the martial arts maneuvers which are still efficient in this setting, and the types of powers common both to comic books and martial arts movies.

NORMAL SUPERHERO CAMPAIGNS

In normal superhero campaigns, characters seldom take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage.

Adventures aren't usually centered around martial arts, though many characters are martial artists.

All the powers listed earlier in this section, and more besides, are appropriate for such campaigns. Characters can take the Extra DC element on their martial arts, up to the normal power range limits of the campaign.

The powers presented earlier in this section can serve as bases or examples for you to use, though you'll want to increase their power levels up to the normal power range for the campaign.

The advice for street-level superhero campaigns also applies to normal, four-color superhero campaigns. Of course, there are other things to consider.

In a normal superhero campaign, unlike heroic campaigns and most street-level superhero campaigns, there are a lot of "brick" characters around — i.e., characters with very high STR scores, scores from 30 up to 70 or more.

Players may find it more efficient to buy such characters with slightly diminished STR scores and a few martial arts.

For instance, you can build a Brick with STR 60, or with STR 45 and 15 points in martial arts. Let's say he buys the Offensive Strike, Legsweep, and Martial Grab.

With the first approach, he has a Punch of 12d6, costing 6 END, and can perform a Haymaker of up to 18d6.

With the second approach, he has a Punch of 9d6, and can perform a Haymaker of up to 13 1/2d6. He also has an Offensive Strike of 13d6, a Legsweep doing 10d6, and a Martial Grab at STR 55, all costing 4 END.

Which of these is more efficient? Neither is, really, just depending on the character's conception. The first character has higher primary and secondary stats and can do much more damage with his Haymaker. The second character can do a little more damage, saves a lot of END, and is a bit more versatile as a fighter. So, to answer the question of whether you want to build him the first way or the second, you should decide which of these two approaches best answers your mental image of the character.

DISADVANTAGES



Many of the HERO *System* Disadvantages are especially appropriate to *Ninja Hero* characters, or have special functions in a martial arts campaign. Some of the Disadvantages are quite inappropriate. Let's discuss which are which.

AGE

Age is a very uncommon Disadvantage in martial arts adventures. For example, the ancient Chinese kung fu master who trains the hero is usually lithe, vigorous, and tough enough to thrash the hero (at least, until the final stages of training).

For this reason, characters in martial arts campaigns should never be required to take the Age Disadvantage; they can be 90 years old and still have the same Characteristic Maxima as younger characters. (However, like younger characters, they will have to buy at doubled cost any INT, PRE or EGO that exceeds a score of 20.)

On the other hand, Age does not affect a character's DEX and SPD, so a very aged character with Extra DC to make up for his lack of physical strength can still be a very effective martial artist.

DEPENDENT NPC

DNPCs in martial arts adventures really are more at risk than in other genres. Martial arts adventures are often revenge melodramas, and so DNPCs are abused and killed a lot more frequently than in other genres. Characters taking DNPCs should bear this in mind.

That doesn't make the DNPC less of a limitation than in other genres, though. The DNPC will get in trouble just as often, and the trouble will be worse. If the DNPC is killed, you can be sure that the player-character has quite a few other cousins, naive younger siblings, and lovers to act as the DNPC in the next adventure.

If the PC gets tired of this, he should buy off the Disadvantage. If he doesn't, and just starts letting his DNPCs be maimed or killed because it's inconvenient to rescue them, or he gets bored with the whole affair and decides not to avenge them, then he'll certainly pick up a nasty Hunted to replace the DNPC. The Hunted will be the family and friends of the DNPC, intent on killing the PC for his insult to their clan.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: STYLE DISADVANTAGE

In most *HERO System* campaigns, everyone can detect a character's Distinctive Features Disadvantage. However, that's not always the case: Some Distinctive Features can only be detected by a certain group of onlookers or under certain conditions. We call this a *Conditional* Distinctive Features Disadvantage, and the Style Disadvantage associated with most Martial Arts Styles is one of these.

You buy a Conditional Distinctive Features Disadvantage this way:

Points	Concealability
5	Only small group can identify character, *or* identification requires technology or major effort
10	Large group can identify character, *or* identification requires simple tests
15	Everyone can identify character immediately
Bonus	**Reaction**
+0	Noticed and recognized
+5	Always noted; causes major reaction or prejudice
+10	Causes extreme reaction (abject fear, unabiding lust, complete disgust)

The Style Disadvantage

The martial arts Style Disadvantage which accompanies most styles is bought as a conditional Distinctive Features, built this way: "Large group can identify character; character is noticed and recognized (10 pts)."

The Style Disadvantage has three functions.

First, any martial arts practitioner observing the character with the Style Disadvantage will, with a simple INT roll, recognize the style (unless it is some strange, secret art, in which case he will recognize that fact). If the character does not have a Style Disadvantage, it takes a successful KS roll of the art being practiced, or an INT roll at a -2, to recognize the style he is practicing.

Second, since (in martial arts adventures) many martial arts styles and schools are enemies or competitors, the Style Disadvantage acts as a "Major Prejudice" factor to practitioners of the enemy style. (On the other hand, other practitioners of the same style may decide to help the character against their mutual enemies.)

Third, a character using the Analyze Style skill on a target with a Style Disadvantage receives a bonus to his skill roll; see the description of that skill.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: OTHER TYPES

One type of Distinctive Features is very common in martial arts adventures: Ninja Night-Suit (also called the *igabakama*).

If the character usually wears the traditional ninja dress to perform his martial arts heroics, then he should take this Disadvantage. (Note that a ninja character doesn't have to wear a distinctive ninja outfit. Most players prefer for their characters to do so, however.)

In modern times, the Disadvantage looks like this:

Distinctive Features: *Ninja Night-Suit (Easily concealable, Is Noticed and Recognizable): 5 pts.*

In feudal Japanese campaigns, the Disadvantage should instead be:

Distinctive Features: *Ninja Night-Suit (Easily concealable, Causes Extreme reaction (fear and loathing): 15 pts.*

Other Distinctive Features which frequently appear in martial arts adventures include:

Bearing: The character has a distinctive attitude which makes him easier to recognize. The feudal samurai has this Disadvantage. It becomes a strong habit of the character, a habit which is hard to break, so it is bought this way: Concealable (with major effort), Is Noticed and Recognizable: 10 pts.

Scars: The character has facial scars, usually from a previous martial arts fight with an opponent who will appear in some later adventure. Bought as Concealable with Disguise Skill, Is Noticed and Recognizable: 10 pts.

Tattoo: The character wears tattoos, either purely decorative ones or tattoos which identify his clan, business, or martial arts school. Bought as Easily Concealable (under clothes), Is Noticed and Recognizable: 5 pts. If the tattoo is of a famous, hated order, it might instead be: Easily Concealable (under clothes), Causes Extreme reaction (hatred). This can be used with the conditional Distinctive Features, if only martial artists recognize the tattoo.

Yakuza Mutilation: Some members of the Japanese yakuza (organized crime families) apologize for grievous mistakes by cutting off their little fingers and offering them to their lords; if this token of apology is accepted, he does not have to kill himself. This is bought as Easily Concealable (wear gloves), Causes Major Prejudice.

HUNTED

Hunted is a Disadvantage which is both very common and quite rare in martial arts adventures.

This is because, in the *HERO System*, Hunteds are ongoing Disadvantages. The characters are often Hunted by the same villain across years of play-time.

In martial arts adventures, characters are hunted all the time... but it's not usually the same Hunter. At the end of one adventure, the characters obliterate their enemy; at the beginning of the next, they make a new enemy who won't rest until the heroes are dead.

Therefore, in campaigns which are dedicated to martial arts adventures, we recommend that characters take a Hunted Disadvantage which looks like this:

Example: *Hunted, As Powerful as PCs, NCI, 11-: 20 pts.*

The exact set of characters involved in Hunting the heroes will change from adventure to adventure as they're killed and replaced... but the PCs are constantly being hunted by enemies, and so should get the Disadvantage points for that.

PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATION

Several Psychological Limitations, mostly codes of behavior, are appropriate in these campaigns. They include:

Code of the Bushi

This is the code of the Japanese warrior/retainer. Samurai had it; so did many ninja.

The Bushido Code demands absolute obedience to one's lord, even if he demands that the character kill himself or destroy all that he loves. This means that the samurai character will often be n a situation where his own goals conflict with those of his lord's, and his Psychological Limitation demands he follow his lord's dictates above his own.

A cruel thing to do to a samurai character is have him insulted or dishonored, but have his lord order him to leave the insulting character alone; the character is placed in a position where he will either have to kill himself or will have to wait, suffering from the insult and resulting loss of face, until his lord's order is rescinded.

This limitation is bought this way:

Example: *Code of the Bushi: Common, Total: 20 pts.*

Code of the Buddhist Monk

This is the code of most Buddhist monks. This code mandates that the character cannot initiate violence (though he can defend himself); he must remain celibate; he cannot eat red meat.

Note that, historically, many monks did not take this limitation; it is not required of the Buddhist Monk package deal, merely recommended for it.

It is bought this way:

Example: *Code of the Buddhist Monk: Common, Strong: 15 pts.*

Code of the Chinese Knight

The Chinese Knight is described below, under *Package Deals*.

His code of behavior demands that he right any wrongs he sees, correct any social injustices; he must keep any oaths of loyalty he takes, and must meet all obligations he accepts; he must always honor good people; he must spend all his money on good deeds and good times. It is bought this way:

Example: *Code of the Chinese Knight: Very Common, Total: 25 pts.*

Code of the Chinese Master

The Chinese Master is described below, under *Package Deals*.

His code of behavior demands that he never refuse a challenge from another fighter. He can, if he chooses, answer a challenge by directing one of his students to meet the challenger; this is usually done to "screen" challengers so that the Master is forced only to fight the best challengers. This Disadvantage is bought this way:

Example: *Code of the Chinese Master: Common, Strong: 15 pts.*

Code of Vengeance

The character with this Disadvantage is driven to acts of vengeance. How often he is driven to take revenge determines how much the Disadvantage is worth.

Must Avenge All Insults to Friends, Family, Protected Parties or Self: Very Common, Total: 25 pts. The character must exact revenge on anyone who insults his friend, his relative, anyone under his protection (or whom he suddenly decides to protect), or himself. Most insults require only the vengeance of a good beating. Maiming, an attempted assassination, or any other vicious insult requires that the insulter be killed.

Must Avenge All Insults to Self: Common, Total: 20 pts. This is like the one above, but only applies to insults directed at the PC. This Disadvantage can also be defined as *Must Avenge All Insults to Self and Lord* for the same point value, and it is this Disadvantage which the Samurai buys.

Must Avenge Murder of Any Friend, Family Member, or Protected Party: Uncommon, Total: 15 pts. This naturally requires that the killer be himself killed, and that whomever collaborated with him or ordered the murder also be killed. This really becomes a limitation when the relative was killed "properly" — he was a crook and was killed by a cop or a hero, for instance.

Gunslinger Mentality

This character must challenge any martial artist whom he hears referred to admiringly or who demonstrates great skill in his presence. This character must know which of them is the better fighter and will not rest until the other fellow fights him. (A particularly unscrupulous gunfighter-mentality villain will capture or kill a hero's DNPCs and friends in order to force him to fight.)

This is bought as:

Example: *Gunslinger Mentality: Common, Strong: 15 pts.*

PUBLIC IDENTITY

This Disadvantage is only occasionally taken by martial arts characters, mainly by famous fighters who have gone into a career in the movies and are now widely recognized.

A character cannot take *Public Identity, Martial Artists Only.* That sort of thing is actually a Reputation.

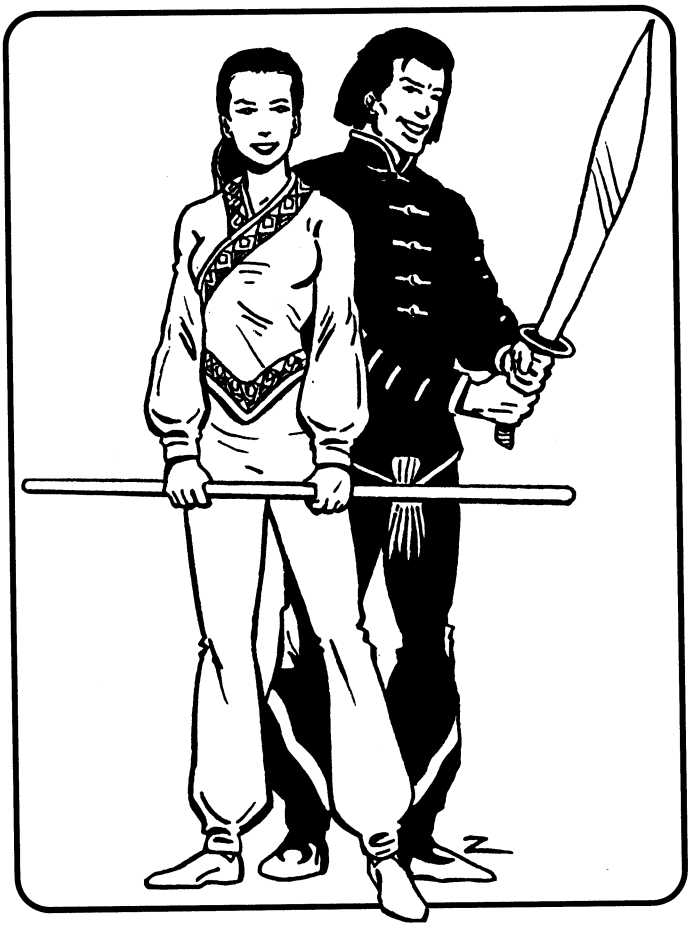
REPUTATION

Various reputations which are appropriate to martial arts campaigns include:

Reputation: Chinese Master. 8-: 5 pts. This is an optional Disadvantage which Chinese Masters can take... if they wish. When a character has this Disadvantage, it means that other characters know of his Chinese Master Psychological Limitation and can easily goad him into a challenge. A Chinese Master without this Reputation is not known or recognized for what he is; he could be a long-retired fighter with no one knowing that he is a great teacher of the art.

Reputation: Famous Fighter. 11-: 10 pts. This is bought by characters who are champions in sports martial arts. A character who went from the martial arts field to achieve fame in films could also take the Public ID Disadvantage. This Reputation is a Disadvantage because the character will constantly be assailed by idiots who want to know if he's as tough as he's made out to be, and by Gunslinger Mentality fighters who have to find out who is the better fighter.

Reputation: "Hands Registered as Lethal Weapons." 8-, Extreme Reputaion: 10 pts. Actually, the character's extremities *aren't* registered as weapons — that's a braggart's conceit — but the character is known to the police, who consider him a fighter and a trouble-maker.



Police who check his name with their records will tend to be hostile to him and consider him a suspect in any martial arts-related attacks where the identity of the perpetrator is not known.

Reputation: Vicious Fighter. 11-, Extreme Reputation: 15 pts. This is bought by characters who needlessly kill or maim; such characters usually also have several villainous Psychological Limitations. It's not a "Gosh, He's a Tough Dude" Disadvantage for player-characters; it's a Disadvantage for toughs, brutes and villains in need of a quick trip to the cemetery.

RIVALRY

Ordinary Rivalries between two PCs are acceptable.

Another type of Rivalry common in martial arts adventures is this:

Rivalry With Another School: Professional: 5 pts.

This means that all characters who learned their art from this specific school have a not-too-fierce rivalry with another specific school. Rivals from that other school should show up in numerous adventures, always challenging or interfering with the PC. They're not the villains of the adventures — they're nuisances, sometimes very capable ones, who delay the hero, intrude on him when he's doing something much more important, etc.

When a rivalry between schools is a bloody feud, it should be bought as a Hunted.

VULNERABILITY: ATTACKS TO ONE LOCATION

One especially appropriate Vulnerability is this: The character takes extra damage from blows to one specific body location. This is bought as an Uncommon attack. A character can have Vulnerabilities such as these:

1 1/2x STUN, Attacks to One Location (Uncommon): 5 pts.

2x STUN, Attacks to One Location (Uncommon): 10 pts.

1 1/2x BODY, Attacks to One Location (Uncommon): 5 pts.

2x BODY, Attacks to One Location (Uncommon): 10 pts.

A character can have one of these, or several. Some examples include:

Glass Jaw (2x STUN, Location 5 — chin): 10 pts.

Old Internal Injuries (2x STUN, 10 pts, and 1 1/2x BODY, 5 pts, Location 12 — stomach): 15 pts.

For each Vulnerability, the player defines a specific body location which, if hit, will activate the Vulnerability. Each location should correspond to one number from 3-18 on the Hit Locations Chart, just as the two examples above showed. When a Hit Location result actually indicates two body parts (for example, there are two Locations 6 — i.e., two hands), the character only has to define one of them as receiving the Vulnerability (for example, Left Hand).

If the campaign uses Hit Locations, then any blow which rolls that location activates the Vulnerability. This can be from a random roll on the Hit Location chart, or can be an aimed attack at that precise body part.

If the campaign doesn't use the Hit Locations chart, then the GM has a choice. Either he can use the Hit Locations chart, not using their usual damage modifiers, or he can treat each Vulnerability has having an 8-Activation Roll.

If the campaign uses the Hit Locations chart, and the character with this limitation places his Vulnerability on a body part which normally modifies damage, then both the location damage modifier and the Vulnerability modifier are used. For example, a character takes 2x STUN to his Left Knee (Location 15). He's hit in the left knee for a killing attack where 6 BODY is rolled. To Location 15, this normally results in 3 BODY and 3 STUN. This character, who receives 2x STUN to that knee, actually takes 3 BODY and 6 STUN.

With normal damage attacks, the character first applies the multiplier for the Vulnerability, *then* subtracts his PD from the attack, *then* modifies the damage for the location roll.

For instance, a character takes 1 1/2x STUN to Stomach (Location 12) blows. He has PD 8. He's hit in the stomach with a Punch doing 25 STUN, 8 BODY. Because of his Vulnerability, he actually takes 37 STUN and 8 BODY. Now he subtracts his PD, and so takes 29 STUN and 0 BODY. Then he applies the modifications for the location; Stomach location does x1.5 to Normal STUN, x1 to BODY, so the character has taken a grand total of 43 STUN from the attack.

Many players will wish to take this Limitation on arms and legs, because in campaigns utilizing Hit Locations they start out with a x1/2 multiplier (for location) on damage. But that's fine, if you're using the optional Hit Location rules from the *Martial Arts* section; these locations are hit more often by 2d6+1 and 2d6+7 Hit Location rolls than by 3d6 Hit Location Rolls, and so they'll be hit often enough to keep this Disadvantage balanced.

VULNERABILITY: TO SPECIFIC STYLES

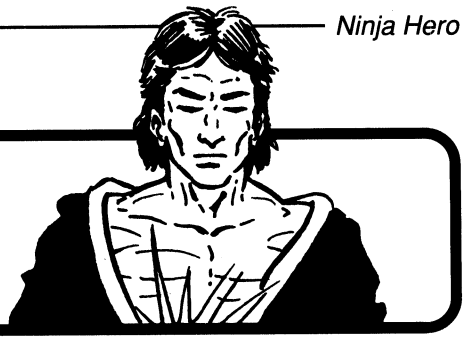
Likewise, a character could take a Vulnerability to a specific martial arts style. The commonness of that style in the campaign would determine how much the disadvantage was worth.

Obviously, major styles would be more common than rarer ones: Karate (all types) is going to be more common than White Crane-Style Kung Fu.

This is a good Disadvantage for aged masters who teach player-characters. It explains why they can't go out and attack the bad guys themselves; they're Vulnerable to the bad guys' style.



PACKAGE DEALS



Here are Package Deals for several of the most common character-types found in martial arts adventures.

THE NINJA

In feudal Japan, ninja were reconnaissance experts, spies, and assassins. The principles of ninjutsu began development as early as the 7th century AD and reached their height during the Tokugawa era (17th-19th centuries AD).

The earliest name for the ninja was *shinobi*, or "stealer-in," i.e. one who sneaks in. Ninjutsu (including both the martial art and the other skills associated with the ninja) was originally called *shinobi-jutsu*.

Ninja belonged to extended ninja clans, most of which were located in the Iga and Koga mountain areas of Japan. They were often associated with one specific noble family which utilized their services on an exclusive or near-exclusive basis.

Ninja fell into one of three ranks within their families. The low man was the *genin*, the agent-level ninja who performed the dangerous missions; in Tokugawa times, known genin were the lowest form of life in the Japanese social strata. The middle-man was the *chunin*, the functionary of the ninja clan, sub-leader and planner. The top rank was that of the jon*in*, the ninja group or family leader who drew up, accepted or refused contracts.

There were female ninja, called *kunoichi*, who learned traditional ninja abilities but were especially good at espionage through seduction and infiltration.

Ninja practiced a special meditative technique called *kuji kiri*, or "nine ways cutting," which involved lacing the fingers together before them in order to evoke special abilities, strengths, and powers.

After the end of the Tokugawa era, in the late 19th century, the ninja families went into decline; their skills were not of much use in a peaceful Japan. According to some modern historians, the last true ninja used their skills in World War II, and no one practicing genuine ninjutsu is alive today; according to other modern sources, some ninja families retained and handed down their skills until the modern era, and their ninjutsu is still being taught, even by Americans who have learned the art.

There are two ways to use ninja in a modern martial arts campaign.

(1) The Evil Ninja. With this approach, all ninja were assassins used by ruthless Japanese lords, and their modern descendants are equally evil killers for hire.

(2) The Warrior Ninja. With this approach, ninja were *bushi* — honorable warriors who served their families with their arts just as samurai served theirs. Though labelled assassins, their principal role was that of spy and reconnaissance expert. This approach is taken in many Japanese and American films.

Once the GM has decided whether ninja are bad or simply warriors, he has to make another choice:

(1) Ninja Are All Japanese. With this approach, only Japanese are taught ninjutsu; the ninja societies are very secretive still.

(2) Gaijin (Outsiders) Are Trained. With this approach, non-Japanese are occasionally, or perhaps frequently, taught. Usually, though, in the ninja clan there is one die-hard traditionalist who is infuriated that gaijin are being taught, and will be the devout enemy of any non-Japanese ninja who survives his training. Many movies have been made featuring American and even Chinese ninja.



Following is the package deal for ninja characters.

NINJA	
Cost	**Skills**
9	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Garotte, Blowgun, Fukimi-bari
10	Ninjutsu or Karate Maneuvers (choice)
1	KS: Ninjutsu or Karate (choice), 8-
3	Language: Ninja Clan Codes and Symbols (Literate)
3	Stealth
3	Concealment
3	Climbing
3	Breakfall
3	Acrobatics
6	Two from the following list (choice): Contortionist, Conversation, Demolitions, Disguise, Fast-Draw Talent, KS: Cartography 12-, KS: Dancing 12-, KS: Healer (Doctor) 12-, KS: Singing 12-, High Society, Lockpicking, Meteorology, Paramedic, Riding, Seduction (especially for Kunoichi), Sleight of Hand, Security Systems, Survival, Tracking, Weaponsmith.
-3	Package Bonus
41	**Package Cost**
	OPTIONAL SKILLS:
3	Bugging
3	Electronics
3	Mechanics
2	WF: Small Arms
	OPTIONAL DISADVANTAGES:
-10	Hunted, Ninja Family, More Powerful, NCI, 11-, Mildly Punish, Watching (x1/2); this is the Disadvantage of a ninja who is loyal to his ninja clan.
-15	Hunted, Ninja Family or Crime Organization, More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2); this is the Disadvantage of a ninja who is an operative for a modern crime family.
-5	Distinctive Features: Ninja Night-Suit (Easily concealable, Is Noticed and Recognizable); this is the Distinctive Features Disadvantage of a *modern-day* ninja character. Ninja do not *have* to wear the night-suit regularly; if they intend to, they should take this Disadvantage.
-15	Distinctive Features: Ninja Night-Suit (Easily concealable, Causes Extreme Reaction — fear and loathing); this is the Distinctive Features for *feudal-era* ninja characters.
-10	Style Disadvantage: Ninjutsu

THE SAMURAI

Samurai were the warrior-retainers of noble Japanese families. They were trained in the use of the sword, spear, naginata, and bow. They tended to be in excellent physical condition and were expected to lay down their lives for their lord at any time.

Note that, in the package below, samurai are not required to know any Kenjutsu maneuvers. Lesser samurai just have Weapon Familiarities and skill levels, and can still be quite effective as fighters. More skilled samurai generally buy Kenjutsu maneuvers.

The word *samurai* means "retainer." The word for warrior was *bushi*. Masterless bushi (including many samurai who became mercenary when they were banished or when their lords died) were called *ronin*.

There were women samurai. Historically, they usually did not serve as warriors; in the movies, they often appear in warrior roles. Women samurai tend to prefer the naginata to the sword.

At the end of the 19th century, the samurai class was disbanded. However, most of the fighting arts of the samurai have survived into the 20th century, and there are modern Japanese who consider themselves to be samurai in the old tradition.

SAMURAI	
Cost	**Skills**
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons
3	Riding
8	Combat Skill Levels (Choice)
9	Three from the following list (choice): Acting, Breakfall, Fast-Draw, High Society, a Knowledge Skill at a 12- roll (Calligraphy, Classical Japanese Literature, Dancing, Divination, Gardening, Go, Hawking, Mon, Healing, Music, Painting, Poetry, Siege Warfare, Tea Ceremony, Woodcut Art), PS: Teacher 12-, Tactics, Weaponsmith.
10	Fringe Benefit: Kirisutogomen (License to Kill Lower Classes)
-3	Package Bonus
-20	Code of Vengeance: Must Avenge All Insults to Self and Lord (Common, Total)
11	**PACKAGE COST**
	OPTIONAL SKILLS:
10	Kenjutsu Maneuvers (Choice)
1	KS: Kenjutsu
	OPTIONAL DISADVANTAGES:
-10	Samurai Bearing: Concealable (with major effort), Is Noticed and Recognizable
-20	Code of the Bushi (Common, Total) Though it is not required in the package deal, most samurai learned the kenjutsu martial arts style.

Samurai and ronin (both feudal and modern-era) may, but do not have to, take the optional Disadvantages. A ronin character should only take the Code of the Bushi if he intends to find a master, or drifts from master to master and behaves as a true samurai when employed by those masters.

A modern-day samurai does not have to learn the Riding skill.

In campaigns which limit a character to 25 points of Disadvantages from any one Disadvantage category, the character who takes both Codes will only receive 25 points instead of 40.

THE KENSHI

The Kenshi is the Japanese sword-master — the brilliant swordsman and kenjutsu teacher. A character can take this package in addition to the samurai/ronin package, but does not have to; a modern-day kenshi could be a kendo or kenjutsu instructor. This package can be taken both for historical and modern-day campaigns.

KENSHI (Swordmaster)	
Cost	**Skills**
2	WF: Common Melee Weapons
10	Kenjutsu Maneuvers (choice)
2	KS: Kenjutsu, 11-
2	PS: Sensei (Teacher), 11-
3	KS: Analyze Style (INT-based)
8	Aid, 2d6 Character Points to DEX, Can Hold Up to 48 CP of DEX (equalling +16 DEX), 28 pts active; Wears Off at 5 CP/5 Minutes (+1/2), 42 pts active. Usable on Self Only (-1/2), Require a Skill Roll (Analyze Style, -1/2), Extra Time Full Phase (-1/2), Must Watch Target Fighting Someone Else/One Phase per Skill Roll (-1/2), Failed Skill Roll/Interruption Prevents Further Rolls (-1/2), Concentrate 1/2 DCV (-1/4), Only for OCV/DCV (-1/4), Only vs. One Observed Foe (-1) (see the *Powers* section for a description of this ability)
-3	Package Bonus
-10	Style Disadvantage: Kenjutsu
12	**Package Cost**

It is recommended that the character take a high DEX and SPD as well as many Combat Skill Levels with kenjutsu or hand-to-hand combat in order to substantiate the character's role as a swordmaster.

CHINESE KNIGHT (SHIH)

The Chinese Knight was a wandering hero-adventurer of China before the advent of the 20th century. In Chinese, he was called the *shih*.

Chinese Knights had no special rank in Chinese society; like all warriors, they ranked below scholars. They were not part of a sweeping fraternity of warriors.

Instead, they were individuals who separately adopted similar codes of behavior, wandered their world, practiced their kung fu artistry, lived a carefree existence when the times were good and set about changing things when the time were bad.

The downfall of the Chinese Knight occurred during the Boxer Rebellion, at the turn of the 20th century, when the Chinese Knights and other kung fu fighters found they couldn't stand before the withering fire of foreign guns. However, a modern-day Chinese character could (with GM permission) take the Chinese Knight package deal, especially if he is the type of character who tends to promote individual honor, kung fu, and heroism among his fellow countrymen.



It *is* appropriate for female characters to take the Chinese Knight package. Chinese cinema often features strong, capable kung fu heroines.

The Chinese Knights' code of honor demands that they:

(1) Right any wrongs they see (especially by helping the weak against the strong);

(2) Correct any social injustices (i.e., throw down the big guy who is oppressing the little guy);

(3) Keep any oaths of loyalty they take, and meet all obligations they accept;

(4) Honor good people; and

(5) Spend all wealth on good deeds and good times (they're boisterous heroes who love festivities but do not save or hoard their wealth; they are usually penniless, spending any treasures they receive to help others or to hold celebrations).

Note that the Chinese Knight can be placed in excruciating dilemmas if the GM brings item #3 into conflict with item #4. For example, a Chinese Knight might meet an honorable fellow who is being persecuted by a wicked lord, and might promise to kill that lord. When he meets that lord, he discovers that his target is actually an honorable man and the first fellow he met was a liar.

The Chinese Knight is thus caught between two of his mandates: He must perform the service he promised, and yet he must honor and befriend this good person he has just met.

In such a situation, the Knight has to think very fast to get out of the dilemma; one difficult and grim solution is for him to injure or maim himself so that he is physically incapable of accomplishing his original mission, thus excusing himself from execution of that mission.

CHINESE KNIGHT	
Costs	**Skills**
10	Kung Fu Maneuvers (choice)
1	KS: Kung Fu, 8-
8	Combat Skill Levels (choice)
9	Three from the following list (choice): Acrobatics, Breakfall, Concealment, Contortionist, Gambling, High Society, Persuasion, Sleight of Hand, Streetwise.
2	Professional Skill, 11- (choice)
-3	Package Bonus
-25	Code of the Chinese Knight (Very Common, Total)
2	**Package Cost**
	OPTIONAL SKILLS:
2	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons
	OPTIONAL DISADVANTAGES:
-10	Style Disadvantage: Kung Fu

The professional skill chosen by Chinese Knights is often a menial one, such as cook. This allows them to go from place to place, earning their living in a simple and honest manner, without attracting attention to themselves in times when they shun such attention.

CHINESE MASTER

This character is the aged martial arts master, teacher of many students — including, perhaps, another player-character.

CHINESE MASTER	
Cost	**Skills**
10	Kung Fu Maneuvers (choice)
4	KS: Kung Fu, 13-
2	KS: Master (Teacher), 11-
3	KS: Chinese Healing, 12-
3	Paramedic
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons
-3	Package Bonus
-15	Code of the Chinese Master (Common, Strong)
8	**Package Cost**
	OPTIONAL DISADVANTAGES:
-10	Age (60+). This Disadvantage is not normally recommended for Chinese Master characters, many of whom seem to be in better shape than their pupils.
-10	Disadvantage: Kung Fu
-5	Reputation: Chinese Master

BUDDHIST WARRIOR-MONK

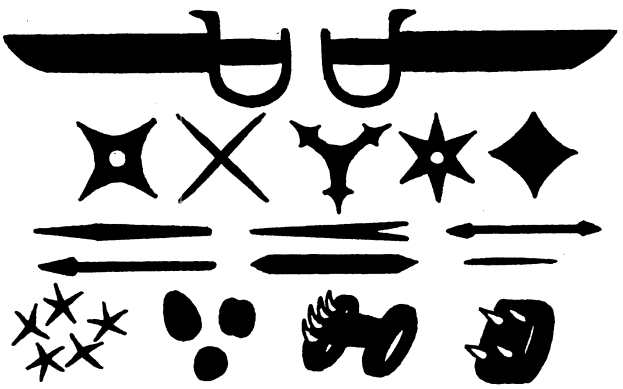
The Chinese warrior-monk is a Buddhist priest who has supposedly taken up the study of arms in order to improve his health and his understanding of the way to enlightenment, and also to defend himself in times of trouble.

Buddhist monks were supposed to live humble lives, to fight only to defend themselves, to remain celibate and to refrain from eating meat.

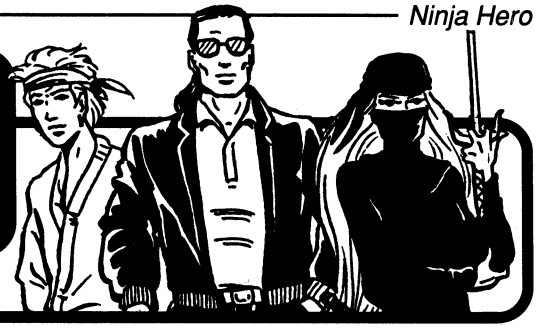
However, not all warrior-monks were stout adherents to the Buddhist monk's code. Some were libertines, indulging themselves in pleasures of food and the flesh. Others were thinly-disguised military officers, leading their monks in open acts of warfare. Therefore the Code of the Buddhist Monk is an *optional* Disadvantage; a character who wishes to be more worldly does not have to take it. He may find himself a political outcast within his temple, however, just depending on how he conducts himself.

Buddhist nuns were also sometimes involved in the martial arts. The Wing Chun kung fu style was, according to legend, principally developed by a Buddhist warrior-nun.

BUDDHIST WARRIOR-MONK	
Cost	**Skills**
10	Martial Arts Maneuvers (choice: Kung Fu in historical or modern China, Hwarang-do in historical Korea, Kenjutsu or Wrestling in historical Japan, plus Karate in modern Japan)
2	KS: Specific Martial Art
2	KS: Buddhism, 11-
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons
1	Perk (Fringe Benefit): Right to Shelter
1	Perk (Fringe Benefit): Right to Marry
-3	Package Bonus
17	**Package Cost**
	OPTIONAL DISADVANTAGES:
-10	Style Disadvantage for Martial Art Chosen
-15	Code of the Buddhist Monk (Common, Strong)



DESIGNING STYLES



You can design your own Martial Arts style from the ground up, not basing it on any of the styles described in the preceding section.

Designing a Martial Arts style requires three steps.

First: You come up with the Style Conception: What principles govern the martial art, what likely effect those principles will have on the choice of maneuvers, and what those maneuvers look like when employed.

Second: You Design Maneuvers which correspond to those principles. Every maneuver designed for a style should be influenced by the style conception.

Third: You Design the Style, taking the individual maneuvers, adding special Style Elements, deciding which Skills are associated with the art, and determining whether or not the style should have a special Disadvantage, the Style Disadvantage, associated with it.

STYLE CONCEPTION

The first step in the design process is deciding on the Style Conception. This involves coming up with a common philosophy, approach or theme to relate all the style's maneuvers to one another.

Style Conceptions often fall into one of the three following categories: The Animal Kingdom, Energy Flow, and Constraints.

THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

Martial Arts relating to the Natural World are often inspired by some animal, and the martial art is designed to evoke the power, speed or other advantage of that animal.

Example: *Let us say that you particularly admire the way the mongoose can fight and kill deadly vipers such as the cobra. Therefore, you wish to make a Martial Art called Mongoose Style.*

The Mongoose dances around in front of its enemy, eluding the lightning-swift strikes of the snake, until finally it can bite the snake behind the head and hold it so that the snake can no longer reach it. Eventually the mongoose's continued bite will kill the snake.

A Mongoose Style martial art would therefore concentrate on highly defensive maneuvers such as Block and Dodge. It would have at least one high-DCV attack to correspond to the ordinary bite, and another to simulate the lethal damage the mongoose does when it is able to get the prey into a helpless position.

Many martial arts are derived from animal motifs. When designing new ones, you can venture into more fanciful animals which probably haven't inspired styles in real life.

ENERGY FLOW

The second major category of Style Conception is that of Energy Flow — that is, the direction and redirection of energy. One martial art might, for instance, try to utilize Lines of Force and would therefore concentrate on powerful, straight-in attacks, while another would utilize Circular Motion and would concentrate on redirecting the other fellow's energy (through throws and grabs especially).

CONSTRAINTS

Finally, many martial arts are brought into being to deal with Constraints — circumstances which would ordinarily not allow effective fighting.

For example, Brazilian capoeira is a fighting style developed among slaves in that country. It was designed to allow the practitioner to fight while manacled, so unlike most martial arts, the capoeira practitioner does not fight with a penalty when he has his hands chained or tied in front of him.

Martial Arts designed around specific constraints should be bought with the skill which deals with the restraining. Capoeiristas must learn to tumble, to walk on their hands, to launch kicks when upside down — moves which call for the skill Acrobatics. Therefore, the capoeira martial arts style requires the skill Acrobatics.

CHOOSING MANEUVERS

Having conceived of the martial arts style, you must now choose maneuvers which are appropriate for it.

Choose as many maneuvers as possible from the big list of maneuvers in the Martial Arts section. That saves a lot of time and effort. You may be able to choose *all* maneuvers necessary to your martial arts style from that list.

However, if none of the maneuvers from this list precisely matches your image of one of your art's maneuvers, you can design that maneuver from scratch — if your GM says it's all right. Below are guidelines for how to do that.

DESIGNING NEW MANEUVERS



Once you have your basic martial arts conception in hand, you can begin designing maneuvers appropriate for it. In this section, we'll be designing a martial art, the Mongoose Style mentioned in the example above.

THE BASIC MANEUVER

Most maneuvers are based on the standard Strike maneuver (the Strike maneuver which all characters know — see *Combat Maneuvers, HERO System Rulesbook*, pp 152-155). That is, they take half a phase to execute, grant a +0 OCV and +0 DCV, and do the character's STR damage (or his weapon damage if he is wielding a weapon).

Maneuvers can instead be based on the standard Block or Dodge maneuvers, as described later in this section.

ADDING ELEMENTS

Then, you add different *elements* to the maneuver. You can increase or decrease the OCV and DCV modifiers. You can increase or decrease the damage done by the maneuver. You can change the type of damage done by the maneuver. You can make the maneuver Disarm or Grab an opponent. Each change is called a Maneuver Element; the ones which improve the maneuver are helpful elements and those which decrease its efficiency are restrictive elements.

COST RESTRICTIONS

When creating maneuvers with this system, you operate under one important restriction:

No Maneuver can Cost Less Than 3 Points or More Than 5.

If your maneuver cost comes out to be less than 3, rewrite the maneuver or round the cost up to 3. If, for example, you wanted a maneuver that was +0 OCV, +0 DCV, and gave you +2d6 damage, this would ordinarily cost only 2 points... but since the minimum maneuver cost is 3 points, you must either improve the maneuver to cost 3, or must round the cost up to 3 without any improvement, as you choose.

If your maneuver cost comes out to be more than 5, tone the maneuver down until it costs 5 points or less. For example, you could build a maneuver that gives you +2 OCV, +3 DCV, and gave you +4 Killing DC. However, this would cost 18 points, and the listed maximum is 5. You'd have to tone the maneuver way down in effectiveness and bring it down to 5 points or less.

UNARMED VS. ARMED

Also, when creating the new martial art, you must decide at the beginning whether or not it is an unarmed style or an armed style.

Unarmed styles include what we think of as traditional martial arts: Karate, kung fu, aikido, etc. Frequently, an unarmed style cannot be used with weapons: For example, an aikido practitioner picking up a sword cannot use his aikido maneuvers with the sword. However, the Weapons style element (described late in this section) will allow some unarmed styles to utilize weapons.

Armed styles include such arts as kenjutsu (the samurai's sword-fighting technique), kali/arnis, fencing, and kobujutsu (the armed variety of karate). Frequently, an armed style cannot be used without weapons: For example, a fencer without a blade cannot perform his fencing maneuvers. However, the Barehanded style element will allow some armed styles to be used bare-handed.

If a weapon is an armed style, it may only be used with weapons from one or more 1-point weapon groups specified by the style designer (and subject to GM approval).

Sample groups could include Swords/Blades, Karate Weapons (katana, sai, nunchaku, tonfa), and so forth. See the Skills section for more on this.

When you've made the decision, if a weapon is required, note that on your character sheet beside the martial art listing. When writing up the Style, when you note that the Style has a Weapon Familiarity with the appropriate group of weapons, put an asterisk (*) next to that Weapon Familiarity so that the buyer will know that it is compulsory, not optional. This choice does not affect the cost of the style or its maneuvers. An Offensive Strike bought only usable with a Blades costs exactly the same as an Offensive Strike bought for unarmed use.

As you'll recall, when using a martial art with killing-damage weapons, each +2d6 or +2 DC of Killing damage from the martial arts maneuver turns into +1 DC to the weapon's damage. For example, if you're using a Karate Punch (+2d6 damage) with a sword blow, you'd get +1 DC to your sword damage.

The martial arts in the previous section are all unarmed except when otherwise listed. With some of these styles, you may also learn how to use the art with a specific group of weapons; those options are listed with the martial arts descriptions. When building new martial arts, the GM has to approve any decision to make the art usable with a class of weapons.

MANEUVER BASIS

When designing a maneuver, the first thing to ask yourself is this: What is the purpose, or basis, of the maneuver?

In this martial arts design system, we use eight Maneuver Bases. Some of these bases are Exclusive, meaning that a maneuver can only have one of them. Some of them are Non-Exclusive, meaning that a maneuver can have just one or can have *more* than one of them, and that non-exclusive bases can be alone in a maneuver or can be put in a maneuver with exclusive bases.

MANEUVER BASES

Exclusive Basis	**Purpose of Bases**
Bind	Locks up an opponent's weapon
Block	Blocks an incoming attack
Disarm	Attempts to knock loose an opponent's weapon
Dodge	Gives the character a DCV bonus vs. attacks
Grab Weapon	Gives the attacker a hold on the opponent's weapon
Strike	Does damage to the opponent
Non-Exclusive Basis	**Purpose of Bases**
Exert	Uses non-damaging strength on the opponent
Grab Opponent	Gives the attacker a hold on the opponent
Throw	Puts the opponent on the ground

You're familiar with Bind from the previous section, and with Block, Disarm, Dodge, Strike, Grab, and Throw from the *HERO System Rulesbook*. Note that the Throw basis, in and of itself, does not do damage to a target; a Throw maneuver *could* be gentle enough to do no damage at all to a foe.

The Exert basis means that the character is able to exert his Strength (usually with a bonus from the maneuver) on his target for one specific purpose. That purpose may be to increase the chances of a successful Disarm, to decrease the target's chances to break out of a Grab, to push the target back, etc. Many Exert maneuvers were in last section's maneuvers chart. The extra STR from the Exert does not cost extra END.

You can only use one Exclusive Basis in a maneuver. You can't, for instance, create a maneuver that performs both a Block and a Strike. A maneuver doesn't have to have an Exclusive Basis; some use only a Non-Exclusive Basis.

You can use none, one, or several Non-Exclusive Bases in a maneuver. For example, you could have a maneuver where you get a hold of a target and make it very hard for him to escape (the Grab basis with the Exert basis); you could have one where you throw a target very roughly to the ground, doing him harm (the Strike basis with the Throw basis); you could have one where you get a hold on a target and hit him simultaneously (the Strike basis with the Grab basis).

Whatever you choose, this is all just the work of conceiving of the maneuver — and understanding the limitation of which sorts of bases may be put in a maneuver in combination and which may not be.

To build the maneuver, to buy those bases, you have to start shelling out Character Points for Maneuver Elements.

TYPES OF DAMAGE

Maneuver damage comes in three types: N-Damage (normal damage), K-Damage (killing damage), NND (no normal defense damage). A single maneuver may have only one of these three types of damage.

MANEUVER ELEMENTS

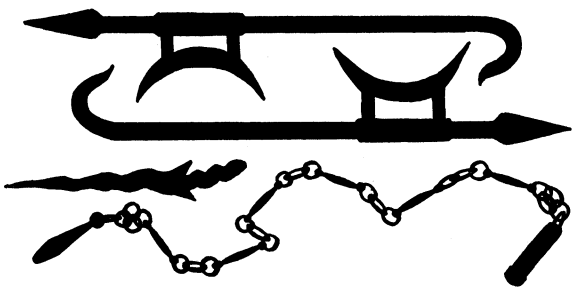
Below are the Maneuver Elements which may be used to make a maneuver more individual and specialized.

In the first column is the name of the element.

In the second column is the brief description of the element and its cost to the maneuver.

In the third column is the maximum amount of the element which may be added to a maneuver.

Take your Strike maneuver and add the elements which will customize it to your satisfaction; make sure that the cost is between 3 and 5 points; and then you'll have a complete maneuver.



HELPFUL ELEMENTS		
Element	**Description**	**Maximum**
Abort	+1 pt if you can abort to maneuver	Take Once
Bind	+1 pt to bind enemy weapon	Take Once
Block	+0 pts if maneuver is based on Block instead of Strike (Abort is Free)	Take Once
DCV +	+1 pt per +1 DCV up to +2; +2 pts for additional +1 DCV up to +3	+3
Disarm	+2 pts if maneuver disarms opponent	Take Once
Dodge	+0 pts if maneuver is based on Dodge instead of Strike (Abort is Free)	Take Once
FMove	+3 pt if can attack after full move	Take Once
Grab Oppt	+3 pt if hit Grabs opponent	Take Once
Grab Weap	+3 pt if hit Grabs target's weapon	Take Once
K-Damage	+3 pts per +1 DC (Killing)	+4 DC/K
N-Damage	+1 pt per +1d6 normal DMG up to +2d6, +2 pts per additional +1d6	+4d6
NND DMG	+1 pt per +1/2d6 NND up to +1d6, +2 pts per additional +1/2d6 NND	2d6
NND OCV +	+1 pt per +1 OCV up to +2	+2 OCV
STR +	+1 pt per +5 STR up to +10 STR, +2 pts per additional +5 STR	+20
STR Strike	+0 pts if maneuver is based on Strike (+0 OCV, +0 DCV, does STR damage)	Take Once
Throw	+1 pt to throw opponent to ground	Take Once
v/5	+1 pt to do +v/5d6 extra damage	v/5

RESTRICTIVE ELEMENTS		
Element	**Description**	**Maximum**
DCV -	-1 pt per -1 DCV up to -2	-2
DCV Fall	-1 pt if you fall	Take Once
Follow	-2 pts if maneuver must follow other specific successful maneuver	Take Once
OCV -	-1 pt per -1 OCV up to -2	-2
OCV STR -	-1 pt if maneuver is at half STR, -2 pts if maneuver uses no STR	No STR
Take DMG	-2 pts if attacker takes full damage	Take Once
Time +	-1 pt if attack takes extra segment (landing at end of next segment)	Take Once

"Take Once" means the element can only be taken once in a maneuver. You cannot, for instance, take "Fall" three times for -3 pts to the maneuver cost, and explain that you fall down three times during the maneuver execution. That's not just silly, it's rules abuse.

ELEMENT DESCRIPTIONS

These are the maneuver elements:

Abort

The character can abort his next Phase to perform this maneuver on a segment not normally his Phase. (See *Aborting an Action* under *Beginning Combat* in the Combat and Adventuring section of the *HERO System Rulesbook*.) This adds +1 point to the cost of the maneuver.

Important Note: *You can* never *Abort to any maneuver that does damage or is in any way aggressive. Therefore, Abort may* only *be built into Blocks, Dodges and Escapes (an Escape is an Exert maneuver where the STR bonus is only usable for getting out of an enemy's Grab).*

Bind

This maneuver element can only be used against a weapon.

Bind is an exclusive basis, so a maneuver with Bind may not also have any of the following elements: Block, Disarm, Dodge, Strike.

This element adds +1 point to the cost of the maneuver.

Block

This maneuver is based on the normal Block, granting basic modifiers +0 to OCV and +0 to DCV. As with the normal Block, it keeps attacks from hitting the target, sets up the defender to strike first on the next phase (assuming they both act in the same phase), and comes with a free Abort option.

A Block requires the character doing the blocking to compare his OCV to the opponent's OCV, rather than to his DCV. Once a character has decided to Block, he can block multiple attacks in a single Phase. (See *Block* under *Explanation of Standard Maneuvers* in the *Combat and Adventuring* section of the *HERO System Rulesbook*.) The Block element adds +0 points to the cost of the maneuver.

Block is an exclusive basis, so a maneuver with the Block element may not have any of the following elements: Bind, Disarm, Dodge, Strike.

DCV -

This is a penalty to the attacker's DCV. It is used to represent maneuvers which tend to expose the attacker to counterattack. The maximum penalty you can take on a maneuver is -3 DCV.

A character may not have both DCV - penalties and DCV + bonuses on the same maneuver.

DCV +

This is a bonus to the attacker's DCV. It is used to represent maneuvers which are so fast, graceful or unpredictable that they make the attacker more difficult to counterattack. The maximum bonus you can take on a maneuver is +3 DCV.

A character may not have both DCV + bonuses and DCV - penalties on the same maneuver.

Disarm

A character who successfully performs a Disarm can try to knock a weapon or other hand-held device from his opponent's grasp.

Both characters make STR rolls, counting only BODY. If the defender rolls more BODY, he holds onto his weapon. If the attacker rolls more BODY or the rolls are tied, the weapon goes flying 1/2d6 hexes in the direction of the strike (which is the player's choice, subject to GM approval). (See *Disarm* under *Explanation of Standard Maneuvers* in the *Combat and Adventuring* section of the *HERO System Rulesbook*.) This element adds +2 points to the cost of the maneuver.

Note: *Additional damage bought for the Disarm goes to increasing the character's Disarm strength, not to doing damage to the target; the Disarm never does damage to the target.*

Disarm is an exclusive basis, so a maneuver with the Disarm element may not have any of the other following elements: Bind, Block, Dodge, Strike, Dodge.

Dodge

This means that the maneuver is based on the Dodge maneuver instead of the Strike maneuver. The character starts out with no OCV (this maneuver can't do damage), +3 DCV, and can abort to the maneuver. This costs +0 points because it grants as many restrictions as advantages.

Additional DCV bought with the Dodge starts out costing 2 points per +1 DCV. You may not buy a Dodge maneuver with more than an additional +2 DCV (for a possible total of +5 DCV).

Important Note: *You cannot "buy down" the OCV of a Dodge maneuver (in other words, you can't take the "OCV -" element on it to reduce its cost).*

Dodge is an exclusive basis, so a maneuver with the Dodge element cannot have any of the other following elements: Bind, Block, Disarm, Strike.

Fall

You automatically fall down, in the hex where you performed the attack. This element subtracts 1 point from the cost of the maneuver.

In maneuver listings, this element is normally indicated by use of the phrase "You Fall."

FMove

This maneuver may be performed at the end of a full move instead of just a half-move. (This does not mean it is a 0-phase maneuver. If performed after a half-move or no move at all, it counts as a half-move action.)

For example, combining "FMove" with "Fall," "Throw," and "v/5" results in a flying tackle that can be performed at the end of a full run.

You cannot take this element on a maneuver that already has the "Time +" element.

This element adds +3 points to the cost of the maneuver.

Follow

This means that the maneuver must follow some other specific successful maneuver; that maneuver must be defined when the martial arts style is created. An example would be a maneuver which grants a bonus to Crushing STR; this maneuver may only be performed on the phase following a successful Grab.

Both attacks may not occur on the same phase; the required attack takes place on one phase, and the following maneuver on the next.

Since the Following maneuver does take place on the next phase, a new OCV to-hit roll must be made; visualize this as the attacker having to change grips to accomplish the maneuver. This is the case even when the maneuver is Following itself. With maneuvers following Grabs, the victim will be at a 1/2 DCV.

A Following maneuver may also Follow itself; for example, a Crush may follow a Grab or a previous Crush. For a Following maneuver to succeed, at least one of the maneuvers it Follows must have been successfully performed or maintained on the previous phase.

Example: *Thunderhead, a SPD 3 pro wrestler, has a Crush maneuver, which must follow a Grab. On Phase 4, he successfully Grabs Joe Hall "The Wrecking Ball." On Phase 8, he may use the Crush maneuver, since it follows Grab, but he must roll to hit against Hall's new, reduced DCV. If he misses, the Crush doesn't work, but he maintains the Grab on Hall. Whether he hits or he misses, on phase 12 he may use the Crush maneuver again, since it can follow itself, but again he must roll to hit.*

This element subtracts 2 points from the cost of the maneuver.

In maneuver listings, this element is normally indicated by use of the phrase "Must Follow (Name of Maneuver)."

Grab Opponent

This maneuver allows the character to get a hold on his opponent.

This maneuver may be defined as a simple hold placed on the enemy, as an elaborate joint-lock, or as a smooth weapon takeaway.

The Grabbing character may, in the same phase as a successful Grab is executed, apply STR damage to his opponent (crushing or strangling him) or may throw or bear his opponent to the ground (for normal STR damage).

This element adds +3 points to the cost of the maneuver.

Additional damage for this maneuver may be bought as N-Damage (for crushing or strangling), as additional STR for holding on to a struggling target, or as both; such a maneuver could have +2d6 damage, costing 2 points, *and* +10 STR for holding on, costing 2 more points.

Grab Weapon

This maneuver allows the character to get a hold on his enemy's weapon (or other item carried in hand).

The Grabbing character may, in the same phase as a successful Grab is executed, make a STR vs. STR roll against the target; if he wins, he wrests the held item away from his foe. (If the target wins, the target wrests it out of the character's grasp, and if the roll is a tie, neither can pull it away from the other).

This element adds +3 points to the cost of the maneuver.

Additional damage for this maneuver may be bought as additional STR for wresting the weapon away.

K-Damage

This stands for Killing Damage. If the maneuver does Killing Damage instead of Normal Damage, additional damage costs +3 points per +1 DC, up to a maximum of +4 DC.

The character's STR also adds to the maneuver's damage, at +1 DC per 5 points of STR, but this added damage may not more than double the purchased damage for the maneuver. (For example, if a maneuver does +2 DC of K-Damage, and the character with the maneuver has STR 15, he would be able to add +3 DC to the maneuver... except that this more than doubles the purchased damage of the maneuver. He can only add +2 DC to the maneuver, for a total of 4 DC, or 1d6+1 K.)

Important Note: *You may not mix damage types in a single maneuver. A maneuver may have only one of the following three types of damage bonus: K-Damage, N-Damage, or NND DMG. A maneuver* may *have both K-Damage and v/5, where each 5" of relative movement translates into +1 DC of added K-Damage.*

It's best to buy either +2 DC or +4 DC K-Damage for a maneuver. That way, if the maneuver is used with a weapon, you know that it will add either +1 DC or +2 DC to the maneuver, since maneuver damage is halved when applied to weapons. If the maneuver has +3 DC, when you halve it to apply to a weapon damage, it halves to +1 DC, not to +2 DC.

N-Damage

This stands for Normal Damage, and adds damage dice to the STR used with the maneuver.

It costs +1 point per +1d6 normal damage up to +2d6, then costs +2 points per additional +1d6 up to the maximum of +4d6 (therefore +4d6 would cost 6 points).

Important Note: *You may not mix damage types in a single maneuver. A maneuver may have only one of the following three types of damage bonus: K-Damage, N-Damage, or NND DMG. A maneuver* may *have both N-Damage and v/5, where each 5" of relative movement translates into +1d6 added N-Damage.*

It's usually best to buy either +2d6 or +4d6 N-Damage for a maneuver. That way, if the maneuver is used with a weapon, you know that it will add either +1 DC or +2 DC to the maneuver, since maneuver damage is halved when applied to weapons. If the maneuver has +3d6, when you halve it to apply to a weapon damage, it halves to +1 DC, not to +2 DC.

NND DMG

This stands for No Normal Defense Damage (see the description of the *No Normal Defense* power advantage from the *Power Advantages* section of the *HERO System Rulesbook*).

Each +1 point spent gives the maneuver +1/2d6 NND, up to its maximum of 2d6 NND. The character's STR does not add damage to this maneuver, and so NND DMG maneuvers must take the STR - element at the No STR level (for -2 pts).

As with any separately-purchased No Normal Defense attack, this maneuver must have a reasonably common defense, such as Life Support (doesn't need to breathe) for a choking attack or Armor for nerve strikes.

Important Note: *You may not mix damage types in a single maneuver. A maneuver may have only one of the following three types of damage bonus: K-Damage, N-Damage, or NND DMG. A maneuver* may *have both NND DMG and v/5, where each 5" of relative movement*

translates into +1/2d6 NND DMG. As usualy, the added damage cannot more than double the base damage; if the maneuver normally does 2d6 NND, then extra damage from a +v/5 element cannot boost the maneuver up to more than 4d6 NND, no matter how fast the characters were going.

OCV -

This is a penalty to the attacker's OCV. It is used to represent maneuvers which are awkward and less accurate than ordinary attacks. The maximum penalty you can take on a maneuver is -2 OCV.

This element subtracts 1 point from the maneuver per -1 OCV taken to the maneuver.

A character may not have both OCV - penalties and OCV + bonuses on the same maneuver.

OCV +

This is a bonus to the attacker's OCV. It is used to represent maneuvers which are so fast, powerful or unpredictable that the defender is less able to anticipate them. The maximum bonus you can take on a maneuver is +2 OCV.

This element costs +1 point to the maneuver per +1 OCV taken to the maneuver.

A character may not have both OCV + bonuses and OCV - penalties on the same maneuver.

STR -

The character using this maneuver cannot use some or all of his STR with the maneuver.

This element subtracts 1 point if he can only use half his STR with the maneuver, or 2 points if he can use none of his STR with the maneuver.

A character may not have both STR - penalties and STR + bonuses on the same maneuver.

STR +

The character may add to his STR for this maneuver.

This element costs 1 point per +5 STR up to +10 STR, then it costs +2 pts per additional +5 STR up to the maximum of +20 STR.

Important Note: *This STR must be defined as being for* one purpose only. *For example, it may be Only For Holding On with Grab, Only for Shoving, Only For Escaping Grasp, Only to Resist Shoving, etc.*

A Grab maneuver may have both an N-Damage bonus and a STR + bonus; the N-Damage would augment the STR damage done if the character decides to apply STR to hurt the victim, while the STR + bonus would improve his chances to hold onto the victim.

A character may not have both STR + bonuses and STR - penalties on the same maneuver.

Strike

This maneuver normally does damage to the target. It starts out with +0 OCV, +0 DCV, takes a half-phase to land, and does the character's normal STR damage to the target. Even if the maneuver is built in such a way that it does no damage to its target, it counts as an attack (i.e., the character cannot follow it with another action in the same phase).

It's possible to add the STR - element to the maneuver so that it does little or no damage, which is especially appropriate with Throw maneuvers which do no harm to the target.

The Strike basis is an exclusive basis, so a Strike maneuver may have none of the following bases in it: Bind, Block, Disarm, Dodge.

Take DMG

The character takes damage from the maneuver; this is especially appropriate for collision-based maneuvers. For example, a STR 15 character performing a STR +3d6 Tackle with the Take DMG element on it would do 6d6 damage to his victim and would also sustain 6d6 damage when he successfully performed the maneuver.

With NND and K-Damage attacks, the character takes an equivalent DC of normal physical damage: If the attack does 2d6 K (6 DC), the character sustains 6d6 normal physical damage, and if the attack does 2d6 NND (4 DC), the character sustains 4d6 normal physical damage.

This element subtracts 2 points from the cost of the maneuver.

Throw

Successful use of this maneuver throws the opponent to the ground; in maneuver listings, this is indicated with use of the words "Target Falls," "He Falls," or "Opponent Falls," instead of "Throw." Throws are typically bought as Strikes, so that the target takes the attacker's STR damage from being bounced off the ground.

This element adds +1 point to the cost of the maneuver.

Important Note: *As a clarification for owners of earlier editions of Champions, the Throw element and the Martial Throw maneuver do* ***not*** *automatically Block incoming simultaneous attacks. See the Combat Rules section for an explanation of the relationship between Throws and simultaneous attacks.*

Time +

This maneuver takes extra time to perform. This element is especially appropriate for maneuvers where the attacker must prepare himself for a second or two before launching the attack. You cannot move in the phase you perform this attack. This is best used to simulate maneuvers where you have to stand in one place to summon a lot of power into a strike, and is sometimes taken with the DCV - element.

This element subtracts 1 point from the maneuver cost if the attack does not land until the bottom of the next segment.

You cannot put this element on a maneuver that already has the "FMove" element.

In maneuver listings, this element is indicated in the Phase column of the chart, where "1+" is listed instead of "1/2."

v/5

The maneuver gets a damage bonus based on the relative velocity of the two combatants. The maneuver does +v/5d6 normal damage, where "v" is the relative velocity.

For example, if two attackers are rushing together at 8" each, their relative velocity is 16"; the attack gets +3d6 normal damage. If one is running toward the other at 6", the relative velocity is 6" and the attack gets +1d6 normal damage. Even if a character is only making a half-move, his velocity is counted as if it is his full running speed, because characters can accelerate to their full running speed with a half-move. Therefore, if a character has 8" of running, and makes a 4" half-move, you count his velocity as 8".

This element adds +1 point to the cost of the maneuvers. It may only be bought once.

Important Note: *v/5 may also be added to NND DMG and K-Damage attacks. There, it adds +1 DC (1/2d6 NND or +1 DC killing damage) per 5" of velocity.*

MANEUVERS AND LOCATIONS

You saw in the previous section that many maneuvers utilize location rolls other than the standard 3d6 location roll.

This is an optional rule which may be adopted (or not) as your campaign's GM sees fit. If the campaign does not use hit locations, then this rule is automatically unusable. Even if the campaign does use hit locations, the GM does not have to permit its use.

If the campaign does use hit locations, and the GM does decide to permit its use, then each maneuver should be assigned one of the following location rolls: 2d6+1, 2d6+7, 3d6, No Roll, and No Location.

The maneuver suffers no OCV penalty based on these locations, even though (for example) 2d6+1 and 2d6+7 ordinarily suffer a -2 OCV (see the HERO System Rulesbook, *Optional Effects of Damage*, under *Special Hit Locations*).

2d6+1: This is a High Shot. Most fist strikes (punches), elbow strikes, and head-butts should be assigned this location.

2d6+7: This is a Low Shot. It's best suited to kicks which normally center around the stomach, groin and legs.

3d6: This is the normal, all-around location roll. It is best suited to kicks which can range from head to foot; these are very common in martial arts styles. This location is also well-suited to attacks from long weapons (such as swords, whips, staves, etc.)

The Mongoose Bite



No Roll: The maneuver is automatically assigned a specific hit location — usually head or vitals. However, because it is automatically assigned a specific location, the damage going to that location is unmodified. If the attack automatically goes to the head (as a Choke Hold and some head-butts will), then the maneuver's damage is not multiplied because of the location. If the attack automatically goes to a hand (as some nerve-pinches could), then the maneuver's damage is not halved because of the location.

No Location: The maneuver gets no location at all — it doesn't need one. Either it does no damage, so that no location roll is needed (for example, the Dodge or Block), or it does damage in such a generalized fashion that there is no chance of the damage being multiplied or halved for various body locations (as is the case with many throws and takedowns).

MONGOOSE STYLE

Now, as an example of use of these rules, let's put together the Mongoose Style maneuvers described earlier in this section.

We decided earlier that the Mongoose Style would have a Block, a Dodge, a high-DCV attack to simulate the mongoose bite, a grab, and a maneuver to perform damage on a held foe. We'll add another maneuver: An Escape, which is appropriate for the high-DEX, wiggly mongoose. Now, let's build these six maneuvers.

According to our earlier definition, most or all of the Mongoose Style maneuvers will be high DCV.

Mongoose Bite: This maneuver, a crushing technique using the hands, is performed after the Mongoose Grab: The attacker proceeds to crush the defender's skull, break bones, etc. It is a killing attack. OCV -2 (-2 pts), DCV -2 (-2 pts), K-Damage +4 DC (12 pts), Follows Grab (-2 pts), Time/Extra Segment) (-1 pt). Total: 5 points. If you use the optional location rules, the Mongoose Bite takes a 2d6+1 location roll; this indicates where the Grab landed.

Mongoose Block: Unlike the ordinary Martial Block, this maneuver is high-DCV but nothing special for OCV, even though the Block is an OCV vs. OCV attack. So, we take +0 OCV (0 pts), +3 DCV (4 pts), Block (0 pt, includes Abort). Total: 4 points. If you use the optional location rules, the Mongoose Block takes No Location.

Mongoose Dodge: This is the ordinary Martial Dodge: OCV not relevant, DCV +5 (maneuver starts with +3 DCV; +2 more DCV costs 4 pts), Dodge (+0 pt), Abort (+0 pt because it's part of the Dodge element). Total: 4 points. If you use the optional location rules, the Mongoose Dodge takes No Location.

Mongoose Escape: This is similar to the ordinary Martial Escape, but has a slightly better DCV. OCV +0 (0 pts), DCV +1 (1 pt), +15 to STR vs. Grabs (4 pts). Total: 5 points. (The extra DCV doesn't help during the Escape, but does help if the character is attacked in the same phase once he is free.) If you use the optional location rules, the Mongoose Escape takes No Location.

Mongoose Grab: This is what enables the Mongoose practitioner to get his hands on his foe. It's not even as accurate as the normal Martial Grab but still gives the martial artist a DCV bonus. OCV -2 (-2 pts), DCV +2 (2 pts), Grab (3 pts). Total: 3 points. If you use the optional location rules, the Mongoose Grab is normally counted as taking No Location. If it's followed by a Mongoose Bite, you check for the location of the Grab and Bite with a 2d6+1 location roll.

Mongoose Strike: This is a fast blow that does only the character's normal STR damage. OCV +0 (0 pts), DCV +3 (4 pts). Total: 4 points. If you use the optional location rules, the Mongoose Strike takes a 2d6+1 location roll.

Those are the basic maneuvers of the style. They give the character what we described originally: A fast, highly-defensive style which allows the character to keep at range, grab his target, and destroy his target with the fearsome "bite." Now, let's see how to incorporate those maneuvers into a HERO System Martial Arts Style.

DESIGNING MARTIAL ARTS STYLES

You've already seen how to start with a design philosophy and create all a style's maneuvers to be in accord with that philosophy.

If you can't come up with a philosophy that ties all the maneuvers together, throw them away and start over; an attempt to sneak a bogus style past your GM is nothing but campaign abuse.

But if you do have a consistent theme and have built several maneuvers according to it, you can now put them together into a Martial Arts Style.

HOW MANY MANEUVERS?

A Martial Arts Style may not have less than three maneuvers. We recommend that martial arts have at least five maneuvers, but a style can have as few as three. In the previous section, the only Martial Arts Styles given with fewer than five maneuvers was Ancient Boxing.

The style may theoretically have as many maneuvers as the designers want, but you'll soon reach a point of diminishing returns, where each new maneuver overlaps others to such a degree that it's fairly worthless.

Of course, to purchase martial arts, a character must spend at least 10 points on maneuvers, which means a minimum of two 5-point maneuvers. We recommend that most styles have many more than this.

GM APPROVAL

The GM gets the final say on whether any maneuver or martial arts style is appropriate for his campaign. Once a martial arts style is approved for his campaign, he may later, after sufficient playtesting, decide that the style must be revised or dropped entirely, and should do so if it is too efficient or abusive.

How can you tell if a style is too efficient or abusive? One good sign is if everybody in the campaign wants to buy it all of a sudden. This means that it is so combat-efficient that players are more than happy to trade in their characters' individuality for something that is especially point-efficient. When this happens, reevaluate the martial art, see which maneuvers are "too good," and modify things so that the style's efficiency is slightly reduced—but only slightly. Then, begin evaluating it again.

STRUCTURE OF THE STYLE

A Martial Arts Style consists of the following ingredients:

Maneuvers

Skills

Elements

Style Disadvantage

You've already seen how to build the maneuvers, so let's tackle the other three ingredients.

SKILLS

Every Martial Art Style in the previous section came with a list of skills. These are skills that a well-rounded martial artist of this particular style should have. Most, however, are not absolutely mandatory, as it is possible for a character to learn the maneuvers without learning all the associated skills.

Most arts recommend a Knowledge Skill with the style. As a general rule of thumb, knowing 10 points' worth of maneuvers from a style and having an 8- Knowledge Skill with the style constitute a black belt in that martial art.

Some recommend specific weapons familiarities, Acrobatics and/or Breakfall, and even such skills as Stealth, Climbing, or Streetwise, all depending on the origins and special goals of that martial art.

A skill listed with an asterisk (*) must be bought with the art. Fencing can't be learned without familiarity with Blades weapon group, and capoeira can't be learned without Acrobatics, for example.

ELEMENTS

These are special style elements which affect all maneuvers in a specific style.

Extra DC — +4 pts for +1 DC with all normal M-Arts attacks (also counts as +1/2 DC with all killing M-Arts attacks)

Weapons — +1 pt to be able to use maneuvers in a style with one weapons group; called "Bare-Handed" when added to a weapon-based art to allow its use without weapons

For a fuller explanation of these two elements, see *Extra DC* and *Weapons* later in this section.

STYLE DISADVANTAGE

Finally, a true martial arts Style can be taken with a Style Disadvantage. You read about the Style Disadvantage in the previous section. If the Martial Style you've created is approved for it by the GM, it may take a Style Disadvantage. That approval should only come if all the style's maneuvers are built around a consistent conception and the GM does not think the style designer has created a style that is abusive to his campaign.

REDUNDANT MANEUVERS

A martial arts style should not be bought with redundant maneuvers. For instance, if the style has a fast, damaging (but not too brutal) punch, you might define that with the Fast Strike maneuver from the Martial Arts section. And if the same style has a fast and damaging kick that still falls short of the raw damage of a roundhouse kick, you might also want to define that as the Fast Strike maneuver from that section.

But that's putting the same maneuver twice in the same martial arts style. A player isn't going to want to buy the same maneuver twice, under two different names.

If a real-world style has two different moves that work out, in game mechanics terms, to be the same maneuver, just put that maneuver in the style *once*. You can, if the GM approves, give it both names (for example, "Punch/Kick"); also with GM approval, you may be able to assign a different optional location roll to each name (for example, the Punch taking a 2d6+1 roll, the kick taking a 2d6+7 roll); if you don't want to deal with that complexity, just assign the maneuver a 3d6 location roll instead.

Situations where there's a temptation to put in redundant maneuvers occur most often when someone is adapting a real-world martial art to the game. When a player is designing his own art from scratch, this is less likely to happen.

THE COMPLETE MONGOOSE STYLE

So, as an example of how to assemble a Martial Arts style, here again is Mongoose Style.

We already know the maneuvers. This leaves Recommended Skills, Elements, and the Style Disadvantage.

Recommended Skills: Knowledge Skill: Mongoose Style is an appropriate skill. Acrobatics is appropriate, as is Running (to represent the mongoose's ground speed in combat). Since the mongoose has short little claws and teeth, it would not be inappropriate for Mongoose practitioners to have Weapons Familiarity with Blades and Shuko (a weapon you'll read about in the Gadgets and Weapons section).

Elements: Extra DC may not be required of a style. Weapons is not inappropriate, but the only appropriate weapons would be knives (short blades) and shuko, the clawed climbing hand-weapon of the ninja; in the style, these weapons will represent the mongoose's claws and teeth.

Style Disadvantage: Since we're envisioning this as a formal martial art, it should indeed have a Style Disadvantage.

So the Mongoose Style looks like this:

MONGOOSE STYLE

Maneuver	Phase	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Bite	1+	5	-2	-2	+4 DC K, Follows Grab, Extra Segment
Block	1/2	4	+0	+3	Block, Abort
Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Abort
Escape	1/2	5	+0	+1	+15 to STR vs. Grabs
Grab	1/2	3	-2	+2	Grab
Strike	1/2	4	+0	+3	STR Strike

Recommended Skills
Acrobatics
KS: Mongoose Style
Running
WF: Blade

Elements

Weapons	+1
Use Art with Short Blades Weapon	+1
Use Art with Shuko Style Disadvantage	-8

If there's anything left to add, it's a history. So:

Mongoose style developed in India sometime during the 9th-10th centuries AD, but was known only to a few Buddhist monasteries. However, in the late 17th century, a Mongoose stylist turned away from his faith and began the worship of Kali; he joined an order of thugs (Indian strangler-assassins) and taught them his art.

The art was nearly wiped out during the British Empire's crackdown of the thugs during the 19th century, but did survive among the descendants of the thugs. Some of them turned away from the path of thuggee and practiced the art solely as a means of self-defense and exercise.

Today, Mongoose Style is still a fairly obscure art. There is one Buddhist monastery teaching the ancient, pure form of the art. Sects of Mongoose-stylist thugs are rumored to survive. But, mostly, the art is taught by Indian martial artists, especially in larger cities such as Calcutta and Bombay. Some Mongoose instructors have emigrated to the U.S., and so many large U.S. cities have Mongoose schools.

MARTIAL ARTS DESIGN SHEET

For your convenience in working up martial arts maneuvers and styles, we've included a Martial Arts Design Sheet at the end of this section. Its use is self-explanatory.

EXTRA DC

You're familiar with this from the *HERO System Rulesbook*. On the Martial Maneuvers Table (page 31 of that book), it's listed as +1 DC in the bottom of the chart.

Let's discuss Extra DC to clarify some points.

ADDING EXTRA DC TO MANEUVER DAMAGE

Extra DC adds to damage from martial arts maneuvers. It adds both to armed and unarmed martial arts maneuvers. If the maneuver is a fist punch, Extra DC applies; if the maneuver is a martial strike requiring use of a sword, Extra DC applies.

It does not add to any other sort of damage: Not to damage used with non-martial arts maneuvers, not to unarmed attacks bought with the Hand-to-Hand Attack or Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack Powers, etc.

Here is how Extra DC adds to Maneuver damage:

Each +1 DC from Extra DC Adds: +1d6 to normal damage maneuvers (armed or unarmed) +1/2d6 to NND maneuvers (armed or unarmed) +5 STR to STR bonuses included with maneuvers

Each +2 DC from Extra DC Adds: +1 DC to killing damage of killing attack maneuvers (armed and unarmed)

Each +1 DC from Extra DC adds +1d6 to normal damage maneuvers. This is true of both unarmed and armed maneuvers for weapons which you can use with your martial art style (see *Weapons*, below).

Each +1 DC from Extra DC adds +1/2d6 to NND maneuvers. This is true of both unarmed and armed maneuvers for weapons which you can use with your martial art style (see *Weapons*, below).

Each +2 DC from Extra DC adds +1 DC to the killing damage of killing attack maneuvers. This is true of both unarmed and armed maneuvers for weapons which you can use with your martial art style (see *Weapons*, below).

Each +1 DC adds +5 STR to the STR bonuses from maneuvers built with the "Exert" basis.

LIMITED EXTRA DCS

Some players will come to the conclusion that if you can buy +1 Extra DC with *all* those uses, you should be able to buy +1 Extra DC for only one (say, for +1d6 only to normal damage attacks) for, oh, 1 or 2 points.

That's not true. That's not allowed. It's abusive to the rules and to a campaign for which it's allowed. For this reason, it's forbidden.

BASE DC OR ADDED DC?

Extra DC is counted as base DC when used with an unarmed martial arts maneuver. This is important when you're trying to calculate how much STR damage you can add to an unarmed killing strike.

For example, a character has a 2 DC K-Damage maneuver (which does 1/2d6 K). His bonus to the damage from STR cannot more than double the base damage for the maneuver. If he has a 15 STR, he can only use 10 of his STR with the maneuver, resulting in a 1d6+1 K attack. (If he used all 15 STR, it would add +3 DC, but since the maneuver only has 2 DC to begin with, this is not allowed; he can only add another +2 DC.)

But if he has an Extra +2 DC with his style, this gives him an extra +1 DC with his K-Damage maneuver, and this is counted as base maneuver damage. Therefore, the maneuver is now 3 DC, or 1d6 K, so he can use his whole 15 STR and do 2d6 K with the maneuver.

When used with armed martial arts maneuvers, Extra DC counts as added weapon damage. This means that it cannot more than double the damage listed for the weapon. In fact, Extra DC and extra STR and Combat Skill Levels used to increase damage, all put together, can still not more than double the damage listed for the weapon.

For example, let's say a character has 20 STR and a martial art usable with a sword. The martial art includes a +2 DC K-Damage maneuver and he has bought +4 DC from Extra DC.

This character picks up a 1 1/2d6 sword requiring STR 10. The base weapon damage is 1 1/2d6, or 5 DC. His 20 STR, since it is 10 points over the weapon requirement, gives him +2 DC. His +2 DC damage from his martial arts maneuver gives him another +1 DC with the weapon. His +4 DC from Extra DC give him yet another +2 DC with the weapon. He uses 2 Skill Levels to increase his damage further, getting another +1 DC.

Therefore, he gets a total of +6 DC from his STR, the maneuver, Extra DC, and Skill Levels used for extra damage. But since the base weapon damage is only 5 DC, his bonus is limited to +5 DC. In his hands and with that maneuver, the sword does 10 DC, or 3d6+1 K damage. A 1 1/2d6 K weapon can never be made to do more than 3d6+1 K damage.

PUSHING EXTRA DC

Extra DC damage cannot be pushed.

EXTRA DC IN MARTIAL ARTS STYLES

Extra DC is never a required part of the Martial Arts style. Therefore, it is not listed with any Martial Arts style from the previous section. It is an option which players, with the GM's permission, may add to an art. Often, especially in heroic campaigns, the GM will refuse that permission. See the *Campaigning* section for more on this subject.

EXTRA DC AND OUTSIDE MANEUVERS

Extra DC applies to *all* martial arts maneuvers you have bought (excepting things like Blocks and Dodges, where it has no function), whether or not those maneuvers belong to your base style. If a character knows maneuvers from several styles, the Extra DC element affects every one of them. It does not affect the ordinary combat maneuvers every character knows (i.e., normal Strike, etc.)

For instance, a kung fu practitioner who has kung fu maneuvers and Extra DC, who then buys a kenjutsu maneuver, can apply his Extra DC to the kenjutsu maneuver.

WEAPONS

A martial arts style is initially built for unarmed use or for use with one 1-point category of weapons.

By spending +1 point for the Weapons element, the character can utilize the appropriate maneuvers of his Martial Art with a specific 1-point melee weapons group. If bought to allow unarmed combat with a normally-armed maneuver, this is instead called the Bare-Handed element.

To buy a Weapons Element for a weapons group, you must already have bought Weapon Familiarity with that group.

WEAPONS ELEMENT AND WEAPON FAMILIARITY

This +1 point does not buy Familiarity with that weapons group; the character must still buy that separately. But it does allow him to use the maneuvers with a weapon from that group.

NO TWO-POINT WEAPONS GROUPS

Each +1 point for the Weapons element must be paid for each 1-point weapons group. Unlike Weapon Familiarities, the character cannot pay +2 points and be able to use all Common Melee Weapons with his martial art; he'll have to spend +1 point for Clubs, +1 for Axes, Maces, and Picks, +1 for Pole Arms, +1 for Swords (i.e., Blades), and +1 for Two-Handed Weapons, for instance.

MARTIAL MANEUVERS USED WITH WEAPONS

When performing a Martial Arts maneuver with a weapon, the character gets the maneuver's OCV and DCV bonuses and penalties in addition to the weapon's.

He also adds any damage bonus from the maneuver.

With normal damage weapons, each +1d6 from the maneuver becomes +1d6 with the weapon (with the usual restrictions about not more than doubling the weapon's original damage). With killing damage weapons, each +2 DC from the maneuver translates into +1 DC to the weapon damage (again with the same restrictions).

This isn't just for heroic campaigns; it works in *Champions*, too. Let's say a character has a "power tonfa" built as a 6d6 Hand-to-Hand Attack power. He has a STR of 20. He has the Karate Punch maneuver (+2 DCV, +2d6 damage). And he has the Weapons element enabling him to use his Karate with Karate weapons. When using his Karate Punch maneuver with his STR and his power tonfa, he'll do 12d6 damage!

Not all maneuvers go with all weapons. A chart early in the Martial Arts section gave you general guidelines as to which maneuvers are appropriate for which weapons. The GM should use common sense to decide which weapons not listed are appropriate for which maneuvers.

NORMAL MANEUVERS USED WITH WEAPONS

Naturally, a character can use normal (non-martial arts) maneuvers with weapons for which he's bought Weapon Familiarity; the martial arts Weapons Elements has no bearing on this.

OTHER WAYS TO BUILD MARTIAL ARTS

There are a couple of other ways to build pseudo-Martial Arts in *Ninja Hero*.

THE COMBAT SKILL LEVELS "MARTIAL ART"

One way to represent a somewhat limited but still very effective martial art is to structure it entirely with skill levels — not using any maneuvers.

For example, a three-point Combat Skill Level gives you a +1 in three maneuvers.

Let's say you pay 24 points to buy eight of them, and you specify that they apply to the normal Strike, Dodge, and Grab maneuvers. You call this a martial arts style. Here's what you can do with this "style."

When using your normal Strike, you could have +8 OCV, or +8 DCV, or +4 OCV and +4 DCV, or any other combination adding up to +8. You could also plow some or all of the levels into increasing your damage, at +2 skill levels per +1 DC; if you put them all into damage, you'd have +0 OCV, +0 DCV, and +4d6 normal damage (though the added damage can't exceed the damage from your STR; you'd have to have STR 20 to use this effectively).

When using the normal Dodge, you would have +11 DCV. This is enough of a bonus to make most superhero-powered attackers blanch.

When using the normal Grab, you could add parts of it into OCV or DCV as before, or again could be used to increase the damage of the attack (the squeezing part of the Grab) by up to +4d6, or to an amount equal to that done by the character's normal STR, whichever is less.

This is a perfectly viable arrangement. You can't do some things that are possible with martial arts maneuvers, but you can achieve much higher OCVs and DCVs for a similar expenditure of points.

However, if your campaign limits characters to a maximum OCV, the "skill levels martial art" still cannot exceed that maximum. If the campaign limits characters to OCV 13, then a character cannot buy eight +1 skill levels unless he has a normal OCV of 5.

Additionally — and this is an absolute restriction — you can't buy a batch of skill levels, define them as a martial arts style, and then take a Style Disadvantage for them. The Style Disadvantage can only be taken for styles built with maneuvers.

THE MULTIPOWER "MARTIAL ART"

Another way is to build a multipower which simulates numerous martial arts abilities; we discussed this earlier in the chapter, in the Powers section.

MARTIAL ARTS DESIGN SHEET

Name of Style: _____

Style Conception and Origin: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

The basic Martial Art is (Circle One): Armed / Unarmed ?

If the Basic Martial Art is Armed, what is its Weapon Group? _____

Maneuver Name:

Phs	OCV	DCV	Elements	Cost
___	___	___		___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___

Maneuver Cost: ___

Maneuver Name:

Phs	OCV	DCV	Elements	Cost
___	___	___		___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___

Maneuver Cost: ___

Maneuver Name:

Phs	OCV	DCV	Elements	Cost
___	___	___		___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___

Maneuver Cost: ___

Maneuver Name:

Phs	OCV	DCV	Elements	Cost
___	___	___		___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___

Maneuver Cost: ___

Maneuver Name:

Phs	OCV	DCV	Elements	Cost
___	___	___		___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___
			_____	___

Maneuver Cost: ___

Recommended Skills

_____

_____

_____

Elements

_____

_____

_____

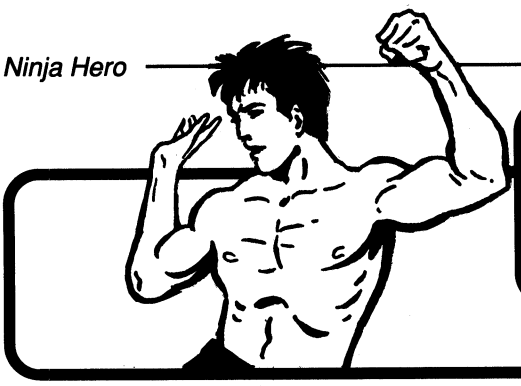
(Add "*" to Mean that Skill or Element is Required)

Does Style Have a Style Reputation Worth -10 Pts? YES / NO



CHAPTER 2: COMBAT RULES

At the heart of a martial arts campaign is fighting, and this chapter is all about making changes and clarifications to the HERO System combat rules in order to simulate martial arts action.



CLARIFICATIONS

Here, we'll try to clarify certain HERO System rules which are obscure or are often misinterpreted.

AID

The power Aid constitutes an Attack power. This means that, whenever Aid is used, whether on the character wielding the power or on another character, it is an Attack. It takes half a phase and is the last thing the character can do in his phase.

AVERAGE DEFENSES

Some martial maneuvers do generalized damage instead of being able to damage one hit location. This is fine in campaigns not using Hit Locations, or even campaigns which use Hit Locations and in which the characters have one consistent defense all over their bodies (for example, PD 7 protects every location with PD 7).

But what happens if the character sustaining the generalized damage has more defense in some locations and less in others?

When this happens, you calculate the character's Average Defense.

The easiest way to do this is to add up the character's defenses at each location and divide by 16, the number of hit locations the body has.

Example: *Ralph Kidder, karateka, is wearing full-contact karate armor (Def 2, PD 6, thus 8 points of defense vs. normal attacks) on locations 4-7, 12-13, and 16-17. His normal PD is 5. Thus he has 13 PD on 8 locations, 5 PD on 8 locations. We calculate (13x8) + (5x8) = 104 + 40 = 144. Dividing 144 by 16, we get 9. Ralph's Average Defense vs. normal attacks which do generalized damage is 9 PD.*

It's easy for a character to improve his Average Defense by wearing heavy boots and gloves a lot. That's all right: The hands and feet are useful in situations in which the character is taking generalized damage (for example, when he's thrown, the character slaps the ground to absorb some of the impact.)

But be warned: A character who wears heavy boots and gloves all the time just to get the armor benefit is minimaxing (i.e., using the rules to benefit himself regardless of role-playing considerations); you, as the GM, may be in trouble if he minimaxes in several other ways as well.

If a character wears partial-coverage armor a lot, the GM should require him to list his Average Defense on his character sheet, so he doesn't have to calculate his Average Defense every time he takes generalized damage..

ENDURANCE AND MARTIAL ARTS

Martial Arts maneuvers cost no END.

However, all Martial Arts maneuvers require the character spend the END for his STR. If your campaign uses the normal rules for STR and END, a STR 15 character will spend 1 END every time he throws a martial maneuver, and a STR 20 character will spend 2 END.

In heroic campaigns, GMs have the option of making STR use cost 1 END per 5 STR. We don't recommend this for *Ninja Hero* campaigns; in martial arts adventures, characters are able to fight for a long time, so the END cost should be 1 per 10 STR.

HAND-TO-HAND ATTACK (POWER)

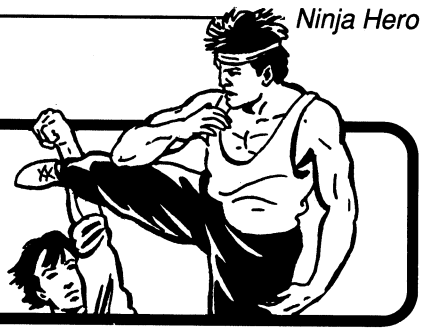
The Hand-to-Hand Attack power causes a certain amount of confusion because it's bought at +1d6 per 3 pts.

This means that if a character pushes his H-to-H Attack power by 10 active points, he gets +3d6 damage, not +2d6 damage.

THROWN WEAPONS

Thrown Weapons don't benefit from martial arts maneuvers. If a character can use his martial art with axes, and can also throw his axes, he cannot use (say) his Offensive Strike maneuver when throwing his axe... only when using it in hand-to-hand combat.

COMBAT MODIFIERS



This section supplements the Combat Modifiers text from the *HERO System Rulesbook*, pages 147-151. These rules apply only to martial arts campaigns, unless the GM wants to add them as house-rules to his other campaigns.

MULTIPLE ATTACKERS BONUS

The Multiple Attackers Bonus from the *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 150, is not appropriate for martial arts campaigns. Therefore, you should not use this rule in this genre.

In fact, in martial arts adventures, when too many people concentrate attacks on a single target, they get in one another's way. (Martial artists don't fight in a side-by-side shield wall formation; they move around a lot, and tight quarters will really cramp their styles.)

You should use this martial arts-campaign rule instead: If more than two martial artists attack the same character in the same phase, each attacker after the second suffers a cumulative -2 OCV for every attack (again, after the second one) that has preceded his.

Example: *Six minion ninja attack Tanaka Eiko on the same phase. The first one attacks at full OCV. The second one attacks at full OCV. The third one takes a -2 to his OCV, the fourth a -4, the fifth a -6, and the last a -8.*

This does not apply only to adjacent or hand-to-hand combatants. Someone firing an arrow into that mess will have to cope with all the extra moving bodies and will suffer an OCV of -2 for every person (after the second) fighting his target in hand-to-hand combat.

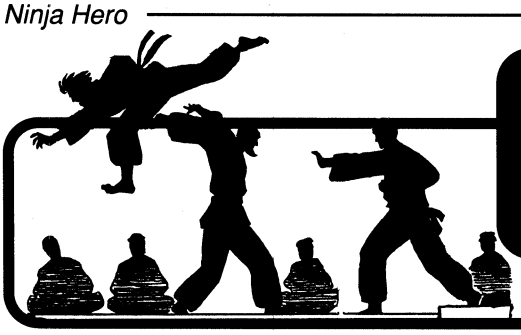
Additionally, in such complicated fights, the GM can check (with whatever rules or guidelines he likes) to see if missed shots hit unexpected targets: In such a crowded situation, it's perfectly appropriate for one attacker's missed shot to hit his buddy.

SURPRISE MOVE

Characters can receive Surprise Move bonuses (see the *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 151) for wildly acrobatic attacks.

To receive an Acrobatic Surprise Move bonus, the player has to describe the maneuver to the GM. It has to be a maneuver which the GM thinks would be a surprise to the target. The PC has to make his Acrobatics roll successfully. The target may, at the GM's discretion, make a Perception roll in a Skill vs. Skill contest against the PC's Acrobatics roll. If the PC wins or ties, he gets his OCV bonus; if the target wins, he doesn't.

If the PC fails his Acrobatics roll, he doesn't get any OCV bonus. In fact, he may, at the GM's discretion, miss his attack altogether (no roll to hit is even necessary) or suffer a substantial OCV penalty. Either way, he should be at a reduced OCV when he lands in order to reflect the botched Acrobatics attempt. If he falls flat on the ground, he suffers normal modifiers for being prone; otherwise, he should suffer a -1 to -3 DCV penalty from his awkward landing.



COMBAT MANEUVERS

This text supplements the Combat Maneuvers section from the *HERO System Rulesbook*, pages 152-157. Again, these rules are good for martial arts campaigns, but should only be used at the GM's discretion in other types of campaigns.

BLOCK

Don't forget the visual element of combat you're describing. A Block is a Block, but visually it can be any number of things. A martial artist can Block a punch or weapon by catching the incoming wrist on his own wrist or forearm; he can Block a kick by using the forearm or a counterkick; he can Block a sword attack by clapping the incoming blade between his two hands (a popular technique in the movies).

Blocking and Missile Deflection

Here are some Missile Deflection guidelines which are appropriate to *Ninja Hero* campaigns, but which should not be allowed in other HERO System campaigns unless the GM particularly likes them.

(1) If the GM permits, a character can use his Martial Block maneuver with his Missile Deflection instead of his normal Block.

(2) If a character has Missile Reflection defined as catching a weapon and immediately throwing it back, he can instead just catch the weapon. He may then use it himself or throw it on a later phase. Throwing it on a later phase constitutes an attack, not just a continuation of his Missile Reflection.

(3) Weapons which have large striking surfaces can add their OCV bonuses to the Missile Deflection Block attempt. Such weapons include war fans and shields.

Blocking For Someone Else

It is possible to Block for someone else, which is especially useful if you are trying to defend an injured or defenseless person from an attacker.

To do this, you must be in range of either the attacker or the target with a hand-to-hand weapon. If your attack is Short or Medium, you must be in the same hex or an adjacent hex to either; if your attack has a range of 1" or more, you must be within that range.

You perform your Block at a -2 OCV, as usual against the attacker's OCV. If it succeeds, the attack is Blocked.

See also the rules for Interposing, below, under Optional Rules.

CHOKE HOLD

Two things to remember about the Choke Hold:

First, a character in a choke hold can't speak or shout. This is why it's a preferred technique for taking out guards.

Second, a character who is rendered unconscious by a Choke Hold can be killed by continued application of the maneuver. Once the Choke has rendered the target unconscious, if it is maintained it will do the target 1 BODY per Phase. (See the Holding Breath and Drowning rules from the *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 167.)

COVER

In martial arts movies, characters seem to be able to break out of being Covered with considerable ease; it doesn't require a distraction or a momentary lapse on the Covering character's part to effect this.

Therefore, in Martial Arts campaigns (but not other sorts of campaigns), a character can make an attack (usually a Disarm) while being covered, without the covering character going first, under the following circumstances:

1) If he makes a Fast-Draw roll (presuming he has that talent) better than the Visual Perception roll of the Covering character; or

2) If he makes a Sleight of Hand roll (presuming he has that skill) better than the Visual Perception roll of the Covering character; or

3) If he makes a DEX roll vs. than the DEX roll of the Covering character.

Before attempting to break the Cover, the character must decide which of the three methods he will use. (If he doesn't have Fast-Draw or Sleight of Hand, he has to use the third method.)

If the character who is trying to break the Cover fails his roll, the character Covering him can choose to attack him with the held Covering attack.

DISARM

Don't forget: Disarms aren't automatically successful when the Disarming character makes his roll to hit. As soon as he makes his roll to hit, he must make a STR vs. STR roll with his victim. If the victim of the Disarm wins that contest, then he keeps hold of the weapon.

If the GM wishes, a character who is Disarmed while completely unaware of the attack only gets his Casual STR (half his normal STR) to resist the Disarm.

DISARM TWO-HANDED WEAPONS

It is a little more difficult to Disarm a two-handed weapon than a weapon held in one hand. A character holding his weapon in both hands gets an extra +5 STR to keep ahold of his weapon in the STR vs. STR Roll.

DISARM INCOMING ATTACKS

Often a character will delay his attack to Disarm an incoming attack. This happens especially often when a character half-moves and then holds his action, waiting for his attacker to reach him.

But the Disarm vs. an Incoming Attack doesn't automatically mean that the attacker is disarmed before he performs his attack.

To decide who goes first, have both parties make a DEX Roll. The winner goes first.

If the Disarming character makes the DEX roll by more, he goes first, and successfully Disarms his opponent, who doesn't get his attack this phase.

If the Disarming character makes the DEX roll by more, goes first, and hits, but then fails to Disarm his opponent, his opponent gets an attack this phase. If the Disarming character makes the roll by more and goes first but misses, then he fails to Disarm, and his opponent can attack.

However, if the attacker makes his DEX roll by more, he goes first and attacks before the Disarm attempt. If the Disarming character is not Stunned or Knocked Out by the attack, he can then perform the Disarm.

Throws are handled the same way: They don't automatically negate the incoming attack.

GRAB

In the *HERO System Rulesbook*, the Grab maneuver allows you to do a couple of important things: Grab and Squeeze, or Grab and Throw.

We're going to add to that list. In *Ninja Hero* there are six possible actions to perform with the Grab:

Grab and Block
Grab and Control
Grab and Redirect
Grab and Shove
Grab and Squeeze
Grab and Throw

A character can only perform one of these additional elements in a phase. Having Grabbed a target, the character cannot Block and Redirect in the same phase, or Squeeze and Throw, or any other combination.

GRAB AND BLOCK

With this combination, you Grab someone — and then, at any time while the Grab is still in effect, you can block incoming attack (only one per Phase) with his body.

To do this, you perform the Grab normally. If the Grabbed character does not immediately escape, you can perform a Block with his body.

Roll your Block maneuver (or Martial Block maneuver) at a -2 to OCV. If it succeeds, you have Blocked, and the person you've Grabbed takes the damage of the incoming attack.

You can only Block this way once per phase, unlike ordinary Blocks.

This is a very useful thing for PCs to do. Note, though, that villains can also do this, and are fond of doing so with captured DNPCs and other innocents.

GRAB AND CONTROL

When you Grab someone, you can also attempt to Control him (i.e., turn him so that he cannot attack you as successfully).

To do this, make a STR vs. STR roll with the victim. (If this is immediately after you've Grabbed the victim and his phase hasn't yet come up, he does get a Casual STR roll.) If you roll 2 BODY more than he does on the STR vs. STR roll, you can turn him so that he is unable to strike you this phase. Each phase you want to maintain control, you must roll again.

This maneuver is very good for subduing someone you wish to speak to but not hurt; it does him no harm and gives you a phase or two in which to speak.

GRAB AND REDIRECT

Redirect follows a Grab directed at someone's weapon.

If you grab a weapon, you may then make a STR vs. STR roll to attack its wielder with that weapon.

If the STR vs. STR roll is successful (i.e., you tie or better his BODY total), you can attack him or a character in the same or an adjacent hex with the weapon. If your normal STR is enough to use the weapon, you don't suffer an OCV penalty. However, you do only the weapon's base damage; because your target is resisting, you don't get to use any of your STR that exceeds the weapon's STR Min.

GRAB AND SHOVE

Once you have Grabbed someone, you may attempt to Shove him backwards.

Make a STR vs. STR roll. If you succeed, you may shove the target back a maximum of 1". You move with the target and continue to hold on to him as you do so.

You may perform this option even after you've done a half-phase move and Grab/Shove. For example, a character with 7" of running moves 4" forward and Grabs his target successfully. He can now elect to Shove his target back 1", even though, at phase's end, he will have moved a total of 5" (more than his half-move) and still performed an attack.

Shoving does no damage to a target unless he is shoved into a surface such as a wall; in that case, he takes your STR damage. A STR 18 character shoving a target into a wall will do 3 1/2d6 normal damage to that target. If you're using Hit Locations, this is just generalized damage.

Anyone who Grabs can Shove. There's also a special martial Shove maneuver which allows characters to shove more effectively.

GRAB AND SQUEEZE

Grab and Squeeze does its normal damage to the opponent.

If you're using Hit Locations, note that a Grab maneuver which hits Head Location 5 will both do extra damage (Head locations take 2x STUN and BODY from normal attacks) and will also cut off the target's breath, making him unable to shout or talk (see the rules above for *Choke Hold*).

A Grab maneuver hitting Locations 3 and 4 do the extra damage, but don't cut off the victim's breath.

GRAB AND THROW

Grab and Throw acts just as described in the *HERO System Rulesbook*.

GRABBING AND HIT LOCATIONS

In the *HERO System Rulesbook*, the Grab immobilizes the target's arms and accessible foci. That approach presumes that the campaign does not use Hit Locations.

If the campaign does use Hit Locations, you should roll the location of any Grab maneuver; use a 2d6+1 Hit Location roll.

If you squeeze the Grabbed location, damage is modified according to the location. For instance, the damage is reduced by half if it's a Hand location or doubled if it's a Head.

You can try to Grab specific locations normally, with the usual hit modifiers. You can also try to hit locations outside the usual 2d6+1 range, by taking the hit location modifiers. For example, to Grab the character's foot would take the customary -8 OCV.

In a campaign which uses Hit Locations, you can still perform the Grab which binds both arms. This would require a -2 OCV penalty, similar to an upper body attack; damage done would be generalized damage rather than against a specific location. You could similarly bind the legs by hitting with a -2 penalty to OCV.

GRABBING AND COMBAT VALUES

When characters Grab one another in combat, it does some interesting things to their OCVs and DCVs, both against one another and against outside attackers.

The Grab maneuver presumes that the grabber is using both hands. If the grabber uses only one hand, he takes the following modifications: He is at -5 to STR, and can only use half of the STR bonus from any martial Grab maneuver. But if he manages to hold on, he can use his free hand for other attacks.

Example: *Ken the sumo wrestler is STR 20. He executes a Sumo Grab on his opponent, but uses only one hand, the better to pummel his foe with the other. Ken normally uses his full STR of 20 and gets a +10 STR from the Grab maneuver. But this time, using only one hand, he gets only STR 15 and +5 STR from the Grab maneuver. He is grabbing at STR 20.*

A Grabbed character is at 1/2 DCV. This means the character who has Grabbed him can launch additional attacks against his reduced DCV (if the grabber has a hand free, or a maneuver or power not requiring use of his hands — such as kicks, head-butts, Energy Blasts from his eyes, etc.), and anyone attacking the Grabbed character also attacks the reduced DCV.

A Grabbed character also finds it harder to attack the character who has Grabbed him. If the grabber has pinned both his arms, the Grabbed character is limited to maneuvers using his legs and head, and any powers not using his arms or hands. If the grabber has Grabbed only one arm, or some other part of his body, the Grabbed character is at a -1 OCV. The GM may also choose to disallow some of his maneuvers, including any defined as requiring a particular stance or approach considered impossible in a Grab: For instance, a spinning kick or side kick.

GRAPPLING AND WEAPONS

A Grabbed character finds it harder to use weapons. He can use any Short weapon at no additional penalty, any Medium weapon at a -2 penalty to OCV, and any Long weapon at a -4 penalty to OCV.

GRAB WEAPON

When one character Grabs another's weapon (whether with the Standard Maneuver "Grab" or some new martial maneuver with the Grab Weapon function), this does not affect the DCV of either character.

HAYMAKER

Don't forget that it is possible to perform a Haymaker with a killing-damage weapon (see *Adding Damage*, *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 159), or a normal damage weapon for that matter.

Though it's dangerous to perform a Haymaker (because of the penalty to your DCV), extra damage from a Haymaker adds +1 DC of Killing Damage for each +1d6 from the Haymaker, making it more efficient than damage added from martial arts maneuvers, which add +1 DC of Killing Damage for each +2d6 from the maneuver. Of course, the weapon can never do more than twice its base DC.

That makes this a good maneuver to perform against a Stunned foe or any stationary object. As usual, though, added damage from a Haymaker cannot more than double the base damage of the weapon.

Haymaker is its own maneuver. You cannot combine a Haymaker with, say, an Offensive Strike: You can perform one or the other.

MARTIAL ESCAPE

Note that this maneuver is usable against Entangles; a character who is Entangled may add his Escape STR bonus to his STR when trying to get free. Likewise, Martial Escape is usable against weapons which can perform the Grab maneuver, such as chains; in the STR vs. STR contest, the Grabbing character rolls his STR, the victim rolls his STR plus the bonus for Escape maneuver.

MOVE BY/MOVE THROUGH

It is also possible to add Move By and Move Through damage to weapon damage (either normal or killing damage). *Move By* and *Move Through* are described in the *HERO System Rulesbook* pages 154-155, and *Adding Damage* is on page 159.

Move By maneuvers add +1 DC (either 1d6 normal or +1 DC killing) damage to a weapons attack per 5" of relative velocity. As usual, the additional damage granted to a weapon from the maneuver and from excess STR cannot be greater than the weapon's base damage. A 1 1/2d6 sword (5 DC) cannot be improved to more than a 3d6+1 attack (10 DC).

Example: *Two samurai decide to leap past one another, performing an attack as they pass. Each has 8" of running, and a half-move will get them up to full running speed. When they strike at one another, each is moving at a rate of 8", and so the relative velocity is 16". Each samurai has 1 1/2d6 killing damage from his weapon, +1 DC from STR equals 2d6; the 16" velocity adds +3 DC, so the attack is now 3d6 killing damage.*

Move Through maneuvers add +1 DC damage to a weapons attack per 3" of relative velocity. Again, the added damage from velocity and STR cannot exceed the weapon's base damage (a 2d6 spear cannot ever exceed 4d6 damage).

Example: *Diamos the Spearman runs headlong into an opponent with his spear extended; this is the classic spear charge. Diamos does 2d6 for the spear, +1 DC for his extra STR making it 2d6+1. He is running at 8", which gives him (8/3=2.666) +3 DC to his weapon damage. With his spear charge, he does 3d6+1 damage.*

However, characters take damage from their own Move Throughs, as you know from the HERO System. If the target is knocked back or knocked down, the attacker takes 1/2 the damage he has done; if the target is unmoved, the attacker takes all the damage he has done.

But when the attacker is using a killing attack, he does not take killing damage. He takes an equivalent DC of normal damage. This is generalized damage; it is not applied to any one specific hit location.

Example: *Diamos decides to perform a spear-charge on a Tyrannosaurus Rex. (How the Tyrannosaurus Rex got there is another story entirely.) He performs the same Spear Charge on the dinosaur, and does 3d6+1 damage, seriously wounding it. However, he doesn't knock it down or over, so he takes full damage himself. The 3d6+1 killing damage equals 10 DC, so Diamos takes 10d6 of normal damage. Ouch.*

Note that Move By and Move Through are specific maneuvers. You can't do an "Offensive Strike Move Through," adding both +4d6 from the Offensive Strike maneuver and +v/3 damage from the Move Through. You use only the basic damage for the attack (for instance, STR from a punch, or weapon damage plus STR bonuses for a weapon) plus the velocity modifier. This means that if a character has a Killing Strike martial maneuver, he cannot use it with a Move By or Move Through: They're two distinct, separate maneuvers that cannot be combined.

At the GM's discretion, Move Bys and Move Throughs may add damage to NND attacks. Each 5" velocity from a Move By, or 3" velocity from a Move Through, adds +1/2d6 NND to the NND attack. The NND attack has to be some sort of physical punch or blow rather than an energy discharge, of course.

NERVE STRIKE

Use this rule only if you like it and are using Hit Location rules in your campaign. Read the sections on *Impairing* and *Disabling* before continuing (*HERO System Rulesbook*, pages 163-164).

Nerve Strikes can be used to Impair or Disable the areas they hit.

To Impair a location, the STUN done by the blow must be equal to or greater than the target's BODY score, either before or after modifiers for the Hit Location. If a character has 12 BODY, the nerve strike must do 12 STUN.

To Disable a location, the STUN done by the blow must be equal to or greater than 2x the target's BODY score, either before or after modifiers for the Hit Location. If a character has 10 BODY, the nerve strike must do 20 STUN.

Impairing and Disabling results from a Nerve Strike do not last very long. To determine how long they do last, roll 1d6:

Nerve Strike	Impairing/Disabling Time
1d6	Time Condition Lasts
1	1 segment
2	1 phase
3	1 turn
4	1 minute
5	5 minutes
6	1 hour or more (GM's option)

The precise effects of the Impairing or Disabling blow are just as in the *HERO System Rulesbook*; they just don't last as long.

PULLING A PUNCH

Characters can pull their punches when using Martial Arts maneuvers, suffering the usual penalties to OCV.

STANDARD MANEUVERS

It's strange, but the players of martial artist characters sometimes forget that their characters can still use the Standard Maneuvers — the non-martial maneuvers described on pages of 152 to 155 of the *HERO System Rulesbook.*

Any player-character who forgets or turns up his nose at the Standard Maneuvers is unnecessarily limiting himself. Most beginning martial artist characters won't start out play with martial maneuvers of every type... so a martial artist without Martial Grab should still use the standard Grab, a martial artist without the Martial Disarm can still use the standard Disarm, and a martial artist without the Martial Dodge can still utilize the standard Dodge.

The Standard Maneuvers may not all be as effective as their martial arts equivalents; but everybody has them.

SWEEP

The Sweep maneuver is very useful in martial arts combats. Refamiliarize yourself with it; it's in the *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 157.

In martial arts combats, the Sweep may be used in a variety of ways to simulate the martial artist's ability to fight several opponents at once. In *Ninja Hero* campaigns, it may be used with the character's STR, with his weapon damage, or with another martial maneuver; in non-martial arts campaigns, it may only be combined with another maneuver if the GM rules that it is legal.

Example: *David Li is fighting four minion-class thugs. He knows he is head and shoulders above them in his martial abilities. He tries to punch all four of them. He performs his Martial Strike (Punch) on them as a Sweep maneuver.*

He starts out with a base OCV of 11 (from DEX and skill levels). He is Sweeping four characters, so he gets a -2 OCV cumulative for each target after the first, resulting in a -6 OCV, or an OCV 5 vs. each foe.

His enemies have DCV 4. David needs a 12 or less to hit. He rolls an 11, an 8, a 12, and a 4. He has hit all four targets.

On his next phase, he does it again. He rolls a 12, a 9, and a 13. Since his third strike was a miss, he doesn't get to roll against the fourth target.

Sweep maneuvers are especially effective (and flashy) when combined with martial maneuvers such as Legsweep, Martial Throw, Flying Tackle and Disarm.

Sweep maneuvers do not apply to maneuvers such as Root and Escape (which are not attacks), Crush (which is an attack which follows another attack; the Sweep would have to be performed with the original Grab), Shove (which already can be used on several people at once).

A character can only perform a Sweeping Choke Hold, Crush, Martial Grab, Takeaway and Weapon Bind on two targets. Each attack requires a hand, and the martial artist only has two. (In a superhero campaign, a martial artist with the Extra Limbs power could conceivably sweep these maneuvers on more than two opponents, at the GM's discretion.) Grabbing the heads of two opponents and banging them together constitutes Sweeping a Grab and Crush.

A Sweep may not be used to hit the same opponent twice. There is an exception: If a target is holding one weapon in each hand, the character may Sweep-Disarm both weapons, counting each weapon as a separate target.



TAKEAWAY

When a character performs a Takeaway, he can immediately toss the weapon to someone or hand it to a character in his hex or an adjacent hex without losing any time or movement. If he tosses the weapon at someone to hurt or even distract him, that constitutes an attack and cannot be performed until his next active phase.

The Takeaway, visually, can look as rough as grabbing a weapon and yanking it out of the target's hand, or can be more elegant, looking like a Disarm in which the weapon flies out of the target's hand and into the attacker's.

THROW

When you delay to Throw an incoming attacker, your Throw does not automatically prevent his attack. See the rules for Disarm, above.

RESISTING THROWS WITH ACROBATICS

When a character is Thrown (through Grab and Throw, Grappling Throw, Legsweep, Martial Throw, Sacrifice Throw, or Takedown maneuvers), he may attempt to resist it and not be thrown if he has Acrobatics skill.

As described earlier (see the *Skills* section under *Acrobatics*), if the Thrown character can immediately make his Acrobatics roll at a -3 penalty, he keeps his feet. (Visually, he may have been thrown and somersaulted instantly back to his feet, or have jumped above the attacking Legsweep, etc.)

RESISTING THROWS WITH SUPER POWERS

Many super-powers enable a character to resist maneuvers built with the "target falls" factor.

When a power allows the character to resist being thrown, they also sometimes prevent him from taking damage from the maneuver. This works as follows:

If the maneuver is one where the attacker's impact knocks the target to the ground (such as Flying Tackle and Killing Throw), the target who uses super-powers to resist being thrown still takes full damage.

If the maneuver is one where the attacker knocks the target's feet from under him (such as Legsweep and Takedown), the target who uses super-powers to resist being thrown takes only half damage from the maneuver.

If the maneuver is one where the attacker levers, unbalances, or redirects the target into hitting the ground, and all the damage comes from the impact with the ground (maneuvers such as Grappling Throw, Martial Throw, and Sacrifice Throw), the target who uses super-powers to resist being thrown takes no damage from the maneuver.

Clinging

When a martial artist uses a maneuver with the "target falls" ingredient on a character with Clinging, he must also roll and win a STR vs. STR contest: His STR vs. the STR of the target's Clinging. If he fails, the target does not fall down. If he ties or win, the target does fall.

Density Increase

If the attacker's pushed STR (whether he is currently using it pushed or not) is inadequate to pick up the target, then his attack cannot throw the target down.

Flight

Flight can be used to resist Throws. If the character is not currently flying, has his Flight power available to him, and knows the attack is coming, he can use his Flight to resist being thrown; he will not be thrown down. (However, if a character is already flying, he can't; the attacker is already using his Flight against him with the throw maneuver.)

Growth

Just as with Density Increase, if the attacker's pushed STR (whether he is currently using it pushed or not) is inadequate to pick the target up, then his attack cannot throw the target down.

Knockback Resistance

If a character has any Knockback Resistance, he will not fall when struck by throw maneuvers where the attacker's impact knocks the target to the ground (such as Flying Tackle and Killing Throw). However, all other throwing maneuvers work normally on him.

WEAPON BIND

Here's how the Weapon Bind works:

The character using this maneuver performs an OCV vs. OCV attack as with a Block; a successful hit binds his opponent's weapon, resulting in a temporary deadlock. The attack does no actual damage. Normally, the attacker is also using a weapon, and binds the target's by pinning it up against the target's body. It is possible to use this maneuver bare-handed, usually by pinning the target's weapon arm against his body, or pinning the target's weapon under the target's own arm after a wild swing.

If the attack roll is successful, the two weapons are momentarily locked together; both fighters immediately make STR rolls. If the attacker wins or the roll is a tie, the bind stays in effect; if the defender wins, he breaks the bind and the fight can resume normally.

If the attacker wins another, immediate STR roll (which takes 0 time), he may also elect to shove his opponent back 1", maintaining the bind, as long as there is room for the defender to move backwards; if the attacker fails or merely ties this second STR roll, he may not do this. (Only one shove attempt may be made per phase.)

Each phase, on the phase of the character who goes first, both characters again roll the STR vs. STR rolls, as before; it takes 1/2 phase, but can be followed by an attack or movement. (If the weapon remains bound, that weapon cannot be used in the attack.) Note: If the character who has been Bound possesses the Escape maneuver or the Bind maneuver, he can use that maneuver's STR bonus in the STR vs. STR rolls. If he knows both, he can only use the bonus from one of them.

The defender can also break a bind automatically by moving 1" backwards on his movement portion of any combat phase.

While the characters are Bound together, they may still talk, attack with their other hands, etc. They are at their normal OCV and DCV against one another, but the Bound character is at 1/2 DCV against attacks from third parties, while the attacker is at full DCV vs. attacks from third parties.



SPECIAL CASES

Here, we're going to talk about special environments or situations which affect combat when they come up.

HIT LOCATIONS AND RELATIVE POSITIONS

If you're using the Hit Locations rules, you'll often find yourself in a position where two fighting characters are not facing one another while standing on level ground. You can, if you wish, use these hit location variations to simulate their differences in position and altitude.

Situation	Old Hit Location	New Hit Location
Attacker Well Above Target	All	1d6+3
Attacker Slightly Above Target	2d6+1	1d6+3
	2d6+7	2d6+4
	3d6	2d6+1
Attacker Grappling With Target	2d6+1	2d6+1
	2d6+7	2d6+7
	3d6	3d6
Attacker Slightly Below Target	2d6+1	3d6
	3d6	2d6+4
	2d6+7	2d6+7
Attacker Well Below Target	2d6+1	2d6+7
	3d6	2d6+7
	2d6+7	1d6+13
Both Prone, or Both Standing	2d6+1	2d6+1
	3d6	3d6
	2d6+7	2d6+7
Attacker Prone, Target Standing	All	2d6+7
Attacker Standing, Target Prone	All	3d6

Attacker Well Above Target: means the attacker is standing on a surface 3-5' higher than the target.

Attacker Slightly Above Target: means the attacker is standing on a surface 1-2' higher than the target.

Attacker Grappling With Target: means that one character has Grabbed the other; it doesn't matter which.

Attacker Slightly Below Target: means the attacker is standing on a surface 1-2' lower than the target.

Attacker Well Below Target: means that the attacker is standing on a surface 3'-5' lower than the target.

Prone: means lying on the ground.

This chart can be used for both hand-to-hand or ranged combat. For example, if a character is knocked to an attacker's feet (making him Prone and the target Standing), and has a gun, which is normally a 3d6 location roll, he'd now fire at the target with a 2d6+7 location roll.

ATTACKS ON DISADVANTAGED CHARACTERS

It's easier to perform Placed Shots (*HERO System Rulesbook*, page 163) on characters who are in some way disadvantaged and cannot use their full DCVs.

When a character is awake and trying to elude incoming attacks but is disadvantaged (i.e., he is prone, being grappled by a character or by weapons such as chains and lariats, confined to a wheelchair, Entangled, etc.), he gets only half his DCV. Placed Shots take the normal penalties (-8 for a Head shot, etc.).

When a character is awake, not restrained, and is in combat but is unaware of an incoming attack (for example, an attacker is creeping up on him from behind), he gets only half his DCV. Placed Shots take the normal penalties (-8 for a Head shot, etc.).

When a character is not in combat and is unaware of danger, he is at 0 DCV (optionally, the GM can place him at 1/2 DCV if he is still active, for instance if he is jogging). Placed Shots take half their normal penalties (thus -4 for a Head Shot, -3 for a Hand Shot, etc.).

When a character is not moving and is unaware of danger (for instance, if he is asleep), he is at 0 DCV. Placed Shots take half their normal penalties (thus -4 for a Head Shot).

USING MARTIAL ARTS WHEN BLINDED

As you know, when blinded, a character is at 1/2 DCV, 1/2 OCV in hand-to-hand combat, and 0 OCV with ranged combat; if he can make a non-targeting Perception Roll, then he is only -1 DCV, 1/2 OCV in hand-to-hand, and 1/2 OCV at range.

However, when a character Grabs another character, he gets a bonus in hand-to-hand combat. Grabbing and holding onto another character automatically gives the attacker a successful non-targeting Touch Perception Roll against that foe. Also, instead of having 1/2 his DCV, he is only at a -1 to his DCV against the target he has Grabbed.

In other words, if a blinded character can Grab his foe, he'll be only at -1 OCV and -1 DCV when fighting his opponent. He's still at 1/2 OCV against anyone he's not grabbing, and is at 0 DCV at range.

Blind wrestlers can be very effective.

USING MARTIAL ARTS WHEN BOUND

When a martial artist is bound, he suffers OCV and DCV penalties when fighting.

Hands Bound in Front: The character is at -1 DCV, and is at -1 OCV for all hand-to-hand and combat maneuvers. The GM may rule that he cannot use certain weapons (such as bows).

Hands Bound in Back: The character is at -1 DCV, and is at 1/2 OCV for all hand-to-hand and combat maneuvers. The GM may rule that he cannot use any hand weapons or punching maneuvers.

Feet Bound Apart: The character is at -1 DCV, and his running speed is cut in half. He is at -1 OCV because he is unable to move in on his foe as fast as normally. (This OCV minus is eliminated if he is Grappling his opponent; see *Grab*, above.) Having your Feet Bound, Apart means they are shackled together with chains which allow the character a very short, hobbled stride (usually 1'-2'). The GM may rule that the character cannot use any Kicking maneuvers (except through use of Acrobatics, or when the character is kicking from a prone position).

Feet Bound Together: The character is at 1/2 DCV, and his running (hopping) speed is reduced to 1"/phase. He is at 1/2 OCV because he is slower to move in on his foe. (This OCV minus is eliminated if he is Grappling his opponent; see *Grab*, above.) The GM may rule that the character cannot use any Kicking maneuvers (except through use of Acrobatics, or when the character is kicking from a prone position).

Combinations: These modifiers are cumulative. Two -1 modifiers means a 1/2 multiplier to the CV, and two 1/2 multipliers or a 1/2 and a -1 mean a 0 CV.

For example, a character with his hands bound in front and his feet bound apart is at 1/2 OCV, at 1/2 DCV, and is at half running speed. A character with his hands bound in back and his feet bound together is at 0 OCV, 0 DCV, and cannot run (though if he is able to get up, he can hop at 1" per phase; the GM should require a DEX roll at -3 or an ordinary Acrobatics roll to stand up unassisted, and one DEX or Acrobatics roll per phase of hopping).

Acrobatics Skill: A character with Acrobatics skill can negate the effects of being bound for each phase he successfully makes his skill roll. If the character's hands are bound in front, he receives a -1 to Acrobatics; if his hands are bound in back, he receives a -3; if his feet are bound apart, he receives a -2; if his feet are bound together, he receives a -5; and combinations of the above are cumulative (i.e., hands bound in back and feet bound together mean a -8). Each phase the character makes his Acrobatics roll at the listed penalties; if he succeeds, he can ignore the OCV and DCV penalties of his bound state during that phase.

Contortionist Skill: Contortionist skill, of course, will allow a character to slip out of bonds. Also, if the character has missed his Contortionist roll to slip his bonds, but the situation warrants (i.e., the GM says it's possible), the character with Contortionist can change "hands bound in back" to "hands bound in front" by contorting his bound wrists over his legs.

USING MARTIAL ARTS IN ZERO-G

It's not likely to come up very often, but a martial artist could find himself in Zero-G (no gravity). This could take place in a diving plane (such as the infamous "Vomit Comet" used to train astronauts) or in a space station adventure.

Effects of Zero-G on hand-to-hand combat fall into four categories: OCV Penalties, DCV Penalties, Damage Penalties, and Action/Reaction.

These penalties are all applied when the character is in free fall in Zero-G. If he is braced against a surface (for instance, if he is using magnetic shoes on a steel surface), they do not apply.

OCV/DCV PENALTIES

All side kicks, spinning kicks, and other attacks which require the character to have his feet on the ground take a -3 OCV when performed in free fall.

Martial arts characters are at 1/2 DCV when in free fall.

DAMAGE PENALTIES

All martial arts Strikes take a -1d6 damage penalty when performed in free fall, as they normally benefit from the character's secure contact with the earth or momentum arising from a leap from the earth.

ACTION/REACTION

Combat in free fall should always use the Knockback rules, even if the campaign normally only uses Knockdown rules.

Knockback in free fall is always rolled with 1d6 less than normally, as if the characters are flying — which they are. You roll 2d6, not 3d6, to calculate Knockback from martial arts attacks in Zero-G combat; you roll 1d6, not 2d6, to calculate Knockback from normal-damage attacks in Zero-G.

Instead of just being applied to the target, however, knockback is divided between attacker and target. If an attack does 4" knockback, then the target doesn't sail back 4" — both attacker and target sail away from one another 2".

The amount of knockback rolled is not the total knockback. It's the rate at which the characters move every segment (just like falling). A character who takes 2" of knockback will sail back 2" that segment, 2" the next segment, 2" the segment after that, and so on until he runs into something.

GRAPPLING

Grabbing someone negates OCV penalties for strikes and the Action/Reaction effect (when you've grabbed someone and hit him, doing knockback, neither of you goes anywhere).

KS: ZERO-G OPERATIONS

If a character wants to cancel Zero-g penalties, he should buy the Knowledge Skill: Zero-G Operations.

This is a 3-pt, DEX-based professional skill (+1 to the roll for +1 pt). A character with this skill can perform all ordinary tasks in Zero-G with none of the penalties listed above; when the task is especially difficult or complicated, he must make his Zero-G Operations roll. Failure merely means that he suffers the usual penalties, not that he can't perform the tasks.



FIGHTING TACTICS

Here are some tactics which characters can take in order to fight more effectively.

AVOIDING LIMBS

It's a fact that, in campaigns using the Hit Location rules, arms and legs get hit a lot in the HERO System. Therefore, we recommend that fighters attacking lesser opponents (minions, thugs, etc.) always take the -3 OCV penalty and attack the Chest location.

The -3 penalty will not cause a skilled fighter to miss an unskilled one very often, and attacks to the Chest location put a target down a lot faster than blows to the shin or the wrist.

COORDINATING TACTICS

Both player-characters and NPCs can increase their effectiveness in martial arts combat by working with one another. We're not just referring to the *Coordinated Attacks* rules (*HERO System Rulesbook*, page 149); this also applies to delaying for one another to achieve special results.

Example: *Two ninja (one with a kusari chain, the other with a katana sword) confront a target with a naginata. The target has held his action. The ninja take this course of action: One jumps at the target, but when the target swings, the ninja merely Blocks — he does not attack. The instant the naginata-wielder is committed to his attack, the other ninja uses his kusari for a Disarm. Now, the target is unarmed.*

The GM may decide to assign an OCV bonus to this sort of tactic; even if he does not, a successful attack of this sort is effective.

This sort of bait-and-switch tactic can also be very useful for the GM who wants to run a band of NPC martial artists who, individually, are no match for the PCs. They can coordinate their attacks in this and in similar ways to increase their team effectiveness.

TRADING OPPONENTS

Characters can sometimes achieve surprise results in combat by trading opponents on a prearranged signal. If the heroes are fighting back-to-back against two foes, one might call the code-word or give some other signal; both immediately turn and attack one another's foe. This is something the GM may choose to grant OCV bonuses for, especially if the players are especially creative at timing these attacks or describing how they work.

Naturally, persistent enemies can learn their code-words or signals, meaning that the tactic is not always useful.

BREAKING WEAPONS

In heroic *Ninja Hero* campaigns, weapons and gadgets have a DEF equal to their Active Points divided by 5. (see *Focus* in the *Hero System Rulesbook*). Each attack that exceeds the DEF of the focus removes one "Power" from the weapon. The DEF of a weapon is usually equal to its Damage Class.

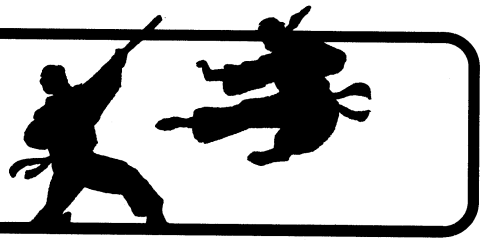
With regards to normal melee weapons, the only "Power" is the main attack of the weapon. (If the weapon has more than one attack, the GM should roll randomly to determine which one is affected.) Thus if the weapon is broken, its attack is destroyed. For example, a sword could have its blade borken.

A weapon only takes damage if it is specifically targeted and struck. Attacking a weapon is like a Disarm maneuver, -2 OCV.

Weapon breakage is normally only taken into account when the weapon is the target of a specific attack. Weapon breakage is ignored while blocking, parrying, and attacking. If the GM wants to check weapon breakageunder these circumstances, he can assume that the weapon breaks if it takes more than 2x its DEF while attacking, or 3x its DEF while delivering an attack.

These rules call for some extra record-keeping; a GM can always ignore them and check a character's Unluck at a dramatic times to see if a weapon breaks.

OPTIONAL RULES



These rules are included to add a certain amount of color to martial arts campaigns, but not every GM will want to use them, so they are very definitely optional rules.

CASUAL STRENGTH VS. BARRIERS

In martial arts films, characters often punch or thrust through a door, wall or even roof to stab the assassin on the other side.

This can already be done in the HERO System, but it's not as effective as in the martial arts films, because the damage done by your attack is reduced by the DEF and BODY of the intervening surface.

Therefore, we provide this optional rule: If a Casual Strength attack from the character does enough to penetrate the barrier, then the attack does not lose any damage to the barrier. The Casual Strength attack is based on half the character's strike damage or half his weapon damage, modified by his extra STR.

Example: *David Li knows his opponent is on the other side of the door. He cannot see his foe and so attacks at 1/2 OCV; however, his foe is trying to be still and stealthy, and does not see the attack coming in, so he is at 0 DCV. David rolls to hit, and successfully hits. His STR is 15, his Offensive Strike (kick) adding 4d6 to that, for a total of 7d6; therefore half of that is 3 1/2d6. The GM rules that the door has 2 Def, 2 BODY. David rolls his 3 1/2d6, coming up with 4 BODY, just enough to get through. David can do his full Kick damage to his unseen foe*

CONCEALED WEAPONS AND GADGETS

The Concealment rules from the HERO System presume that you're concealing Obvious, Accessible Foci with Concealment skill, and require a Perception Roll vs. Concealment Skill Roll (with various modifiers) to detect the object.

But many of the weapons built for *Ninja Hero* (the "Concealed" versions of the weapons) are built as Inobvious Accessible Foci; they're either already artfully built into another object, or their true purpose is cunningly disguised by clever decoration or construction. How, then, do you spot ahead of time a weapon built this way?

The Inobvious part of the focus limitation corresponds to a Concealment roll of 13- (11- base roll, +2 for the fact that the object is built into an object — see the *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 179, on the *Other Modifiers* chart).

Therefore, when someone is trying to spot an Inobvious (or Concealed version) object, that person makes a Perception roll while the object's owner or the GM makes the Concealment roll.

A successful roll only reveals that there's something unusual in the construction of the item; the perceiving character has to perform a hands-on search with another Perception Roll vs. Concealment Roll contest in order to be able to open the weapon up or determine what it does.

Naturally, once the Inobvious weapon is used as such, it's no longer Inobvious. When you pull the ninja-to out of the sheath that's disguised as a vacuum cleaner, the other fellow doesn't have to make a Perception Roll to realize what it is; its function is now obvious.

CRITICAL HITS

Warning: These critical hits rules, if added to a campaign, will make combat more dangerous and unbalancing. It should only be added to campaigns where the GM wants combat to be unpredictable and lethal.

A "critical hit" is a blow which is so accurate that it does a lot of extra damage.

A critical hit takes place when a character's roll to hit is less than half of what it needs to be in order to hit the target.

Example: *An OCV 6 character strikes at a DCV 5 character. He needs a 12 or less to hit. To critical, he needs less than a (12/2) 6 to hit — i.e., he must roll a 5 or below.*

Example: *An OCV 7 character strikes at a DCV 5 character. He needs a 13 or less to hit. To critical, he needs less than a (13/2) 6.5 to hit — he must roll a 6 or less.*

If a critical hit is struck, it does maximum damage for the attack. Therefore, a 2d6 Killing Attack will do 12 BODY. An 8d6 Normal Attack will do 48 STUN, 16 BODY. A 2d6 NND attack will do 12 NND STUN.

If Hit Locations are being used, a killing attack does the normal STUN multiplier for the location; 12 BODY to the Vitals corresponds to 48 STUN, for instance.

If Hit Locations are not being used, a killing attack does the maximum possible STUN; if the STUN Multiplier is 1d6-1, as it is on most killing attacks, then 12 BODY corresponds to 60 STUN.

Critical Hits are only employed on living targets. Critical Hit results against such targets as doors, walls and cars are ignored (it's far too easy to get a critical hit on a DCV-0 door, for instance).

HEALING

This is an optional rule for campaigns in which characters find themselves nicked to death before ever reaching the story's climax. If this is happening and you don't like it, use the following rule.

In combat, characters should keep track not just of how much BODY they lose, but to which attacks. Instead of just saying "I've lost 7 BODY," a player needs to be able to say, "I took three blows, one doing 1 BODY, one doing 2 BODY, and one doing 4 BODY."

Characters with PS: Doctor or KS: Chinese Healing can cure a little BODY damage from each wound. The character rolls his PS: Doctor or KS: Chinese Healing skill once for each wound. For each successful roll he makes, the character regains 1 BODY from that wound. Each wound may only be treated once, and may not regain more than 1 BODY from this treatment.

The treatment of each wound takes a minute or two per wound and requires bandages of some sort; even a wound defined as a nasty bruise should be taped up and supported. This is not a rule which is useful to characters during combat... only afterwards.

Paramedic skill does not confer this benefit: Only PS: Doctor and KS: Chinese Healing do.

HINDERING CIRCUMSTANCES

Not all martial arts combats are fought under flat, level, simple circumstances. Two samurai may duel while standing in a roaring river; a ninja may have attacked his target in a mud-wrestling ring; a martial artist may have knocked his target into a swimming pool and followed him in.

In such a case, the characters are said to be hindered. If the GM wishes, they can suffer penalties to OCV, DCV, and even the damage of their combat maneuvers.

However, certain skills will allow them to ignore the effects of these hindering circumstances — each phase, the character with the skill must make his skill roll, and if he succeeds he can ignore the hindering effects for that phase.

Here are some sample hindrances, recommended penalties for them, and the skills which allow a character to ignore those penalties.

Hindrance	Penalties	Pertinent Skill
Character is Drunk	-2 OCV, -2 DCV	None
Climbing Ladder	-1 DCV	Climbing
Climbing Cliff	1/2 DCV, -2 DC	Climbing
Mount is Bucking	-3 OCV	Riding
Slippery Ground	-1 DCV, -1 DC	Breakfall
Tightrope	-2 DCV, -2 DC	Acrobatics
Underwater	-2 DCV, -2 DC	KS: SCUBA Operations
Water Knee-Deep	-2 DCV *	Breakfall

*: Cumulative with "Slippery Ground" penalties if the character is standing on mud instead of a more stable surface.

HIT LOCATIONS: REDUCING DAMAGE

Some GMs like to use the Hit Locations, and the damage modifiers for them, but find that they result in too much extra damage for the type of campaign they are trying to simulate. Here's one way to reduce this extra damage slightly.

In the HERO System, as written, when a character takes damage to a specific location, you first roll the damage for the attack, then multiply or divide for the location, and then apply the damage to the target's defenses.

With these optional rules, though, you perform calculations in a different order. With normal attacks, you roll the damage for the attack apply defenses; and then multiply or divide for the location. With killing attacks, you apply the normal modifier to STUN before defenses, but apply the modifier to BODY after defenses.

This option is especially appropriate to campaigns based on movies and fiction where characters soak up a lot of damage and yet are expected to keep going.

EXAMPLES OF NORMAL DAMAGE ATTACKS

This example uses the normal rules:

Example: *Sonoda Toshio is hit in the head with a 5d6 normal-damage attack. The damage rolled is 18 STUN and 5 BODY. The NStun multiplier for a Head shot is x2; the BODYx multiplier for a Head shot is x2. Therefore, the attack is actually 36 STUN, 10 BODY. Tosho has 8 PD; therefore, he takes 28 STUN and 2 BODY from the attack.*

This example uses these optional rules:

Example: *Sonoda Tosho is hit in the head with a 5d6 normal-damage attack. The damage rolled is 18 STUN and 5 BODY. Subtracting Toshio's 8 PD, we get 10 STUN and 0 BODY. After multiplying for the Head location, we see Toshio has taken 20 STUN and 0 BODY.*

This is a little more complicated, but swiftly becomes second nature when used regularly.

DAMAGE TO LIMBS

Though this rule makes damage to vital areas a little less severe, it actually balances things by making damage to limbs (hands, feet, arms and legs) a little more severe. Characters will be taking BODY damage from blows that would not have hurt them under the regular rules.

This example uses the regular rules:

Example: *Toshio is hit in the arm by an 8d6 kick. The lucky kicker rolls high and gets 35 STUN and 10 BODY. Applying the x1/2 STUN and BODY multipliers for the Arm location, we get 17 STUN and 5 BODY. Subtracting Toshio's 8 PD, we see he has taken 9 STUN and 0 BODY.*

This example uses these optional rules:

Example: *Toshio is hit in the arm by an 8d6 kick. The kicker rolls high and gets 35 STUN and 10 BODY. First we subtract Toshio's 8 PD and see that he has taken 27 STUN and 2 BODY. Then we apply the x1/2 STUN and BODY multipliers for the Arm location; Toshio has taken 13 STUN and 1 BODY.*

HIT LOCATIONS: INCREASING DAMAGE

Some HERO System GMs dislike killing-damage weapons in their campaigns because they don't do a realistic amount of damage; they don't put victims down with even the spotty regularity of real-world weapons.

That's a fair criticism. The HERO System was set up to be heroic, meaning that characters can take a lot of damage and keep going. A GM can use the Disabling/Impairing rules to get around this, but those rules are a little complicated.

But it's easy to institute a simpler fix. If you want killing-damage weapons to do more damage, but don't want to use the Disabling/Impairing rules, or (worse) have to change all the damage dice of these weapons to what look like unreasonable amounts, try this simple tactic instead:

Double the BODYx Column of the Hit Location Chart for killing damage attacks.

With this approach, the Head and Vital locations have a BODYx multiple of x4, instead of x2, with killing damage only (normal damage would still use x2). Hands, Arms, Legs and Feet would be x1 instead of x1/2, and Shoulders, Chest, Stomach and Thighs would be x2 instead of x1. This makes killing damage weapons much more fearsome, but you don't have to fiddle with the damages listed for weapons in all Hero Games rulebooks and supplements.

We don't recommend this approach for martial arts genre campaigns, but it is appropriate for gritty, "realistic" campaigns in which martial arts sometimes appear.

IGNORING OPPONENTS

In the HERO System, it's possible to run right past and ignore a character who is standing in your way; even if he's holding his Phase to hit you, and you won't suffer any sort of penalty.

But that's not appropriate for martial arts campaigns. Therefore we recommend this optional rule:

If one character moves right past (i.e., through the same or an adjacent hex) a foe who is holding to strike at him, the moving character is treated as having only 1/2 his DCV against the attack.

If the character moves right up to the fellow waiting to attack him and stops there, or moves past in a Move Through and takes an attack at him, he keeps his normal DCV. After moving up to that hex and performing a maneuver (Strike, Block, Dodge, anything) the character can continue on during his next phase and suffers no DCV penalty... but he must spend at least one phase in conflict with his enemy or he will suffer the penalty.

INTERPOSING

In the HERO System, it's very difficult to defend someone else.

You can attack whomever is attacking him. Using the Block rules near the start of this section, you can even Block some attacks made against him. You can Dive for Cover in front of damage coming at him, but that's a desperation move: You'll automatically take the damage he would have taken.

But if you want to have a more aggressive (but dangerous) way to defend someone, you can use this optional rule. This rule is only used in hand-to-hand combat; it does not apply to missile combat.

To Interpose yourself into a fight, you move in between the attacker and the person you want to defend. Then you tell the GM what sort of a DCV penalty you want to take.

Every -1 you take to your DCV is a +1 to your OCV if the attacker again attacks the person you are defending. The attacker is aware of this; he can tell what you are doing and what the potential consequences are. The DCV penalty and OCV bonus are only against that one attacker; against all others, you have your usual OCV and DCV.

Example: *Tanaka Jiro is trying to defend his injured sister, Tanaka Eiko, from the attacks of an assassin. He moves between Eiko and the assassin, Interposing himself. He puts his skill levels into DCV and has a base DCV of 10; he opts to reduce it by 5, to 5. This tells the assassin that he's going to have to expose himself to Jiro's attack if he attacks Eiko; he'll need to fight Eiko first. If the assassin strikes at Eiko instead, Jiro gets a +5 OCV on his own attack — which could be a Block or an offensive attack. His base OCV is 7; it'll be an 12 vs. the assassin only, and only if the assassin attacks Eiko instead of him.*

A character who is unwilling to be defended can cancel the Interpose attempt by moving 1" in the direction of his attacker or otherwise declaring that he chooses not to be defended. If the Interposing character is aware of the decision, then the Interpose effects go away; he gets his full DCV back. If the Interposing character is not aware of the decision, then his DCV stays reduced... but he does not get an OCV bonus if the other fellow attacks the person the character thinks he's defending.

A character can Interpose in order to protect a doorway or window, in order to keep someone from getting through it. If the attacking character tries to get past him, the interposing character gets his OCV bonus.

These rules are complicated and not particularly intuitive, so we recommend that only GMs who have felt a particular need for more "defend-someone-else" options introduce the Interpose rules into their campaigns.

MYSTERY DAMAGE

This is an option which only works for GMs who are willing to keep track of more details in combat.

In real life, a person cannot take an injury and know "Aha, I've taken 4 BODY, it hurts but I'm not in any danger yet." He just knows he's hurt; he may have some vague idea of the wound's severity; he can have no confidence in his ability to shrug off the injury.

If you want to simulate this in the game, the GM himself must keep track of all BODY damage done by killing attacks; he can let the players keep track of their own STUN damage from killing attacks, and of STUN and BODY damage from normal attacks. He'll have to know how much BODY the characters start with, what their resistant defenses are and where. He must make sure the players tell him of any BODY their characters take from normal attacks, and must record that BODY with the killing damage they're taking.

Mystery Damage without Hit Locations

Whenever an NPC hits a PC with a killing attack, the GM rolls the damage, rolls the STUN multiplier, and announces something like this: "Ed, he's stabbed you in the chest, right below the ribs. It hurts a lot: Take 12 STUN."

Now, Ed knows only that it "hurts a lot" from the STUN total he took; he doesn't know how bad the injury is. He doesn't know if the GM rolled 3 BODY and a 4x STUN Multiplier; perhaps it was 6 BODY and a 2x STUN Multiplier; maybe it was 2 BODY and a 6x Stun Multiplier (only possible if the weapon had a +1 Stun Multiplier advantage) or even 12 BODY and a 1x STUN Multiplier.

To get an idea of how bad the wound is, he'll have to take a half-phase action and look at it. At that point, the GM should say nothing more than: "It looks shallow," or "It looks deep but you've had worse," or "It's deep and nasty-looking."

The characters will not know when they are mortally wounded, though the GM can tell them how they're bleeding like stuck pigs and swiftly growing weaker and weaker.

Mystery Damage with Hit Locations

Note, though, that when you use Hit Locations in your game, it becomes a bit more complicated. A character who is told that he has been stabbed in the stomach and has taken 12 STUN automatically knows that he received 3 BODY from the stab. Therefore, in campaigns which use Hit Locations, you have to do things a little differently.

In this sort of campaign, you don't just use the STUNx column from the Hit Location chart. You use that column, but also make two quick rolls. The 1d6 roll is for subtract/add: a 1-3 means subtract, and a 4-6 means add. The 2d6 roll is how much STUN to add or subtract to the STUN done by the attack.

Example: *Sonoda Toshio is hit in the Chest for 8 BODY. That 8 BODY to the Chest normally does 24 STUN. The GM now rolls 1d6 and gets a 1: Subtract. He rolls 2d6 and rolls a 7. He takes the 24 STUN, subtracts 7, and gets 17. He tells the player, "You've been hit in the chest; take 17 STUN." The player has no way of knowing how that amount was reached; it isn't possible for him to calculate how much damage he took.*

Alternately, the GM can simply keep track of the STUN of the attack, along with the BODY.

Problems

As noted, this method is complicated and requires the GM to do more work than usual. We don't recommend it for any GM unless he likes being the one to keep track of character damage, or has a special reason in a one-shot game to keep his players off-balance.

RETRAINING

In the Gamemastering chapter, we'll describe a type of adventure called the "Loss, Retraining, and Confrontation" plot. In this type of adventure, the character meets, fights, and loses to a villain, and finds that he must retrain if he is to defeat the villain. If you decide to run such an adventure, you have to decide what retraining means... within the context of the HERO System rules.

In the role-playing context, it's perfectly clear. The hero goes somewhere, finds someone who can train him, and then trains until he's a better fighter.

But what does this mean in the game? Does the character suddenly get enough free Character Points to be able to build up his character to a greater level of fighting ability? And if not, what does retraining do?

There are simple ways to do retraining in a *Ninja Hero* adventure. One works for one-shot adventures (or the first adventure in a campaign), and the other works in already-established campaigns.

One-Shot Adventures and First Adventures

If you plan for a one-shot adventure, or the first adventure in a campaign, to be a Loss, Retraining, and Confrontation plot, you first decide on the power level you want for your characters (i.e., Heroic or Wild, 75 or 100 base points, maximum levels for damage classes, etc.).

But you don't tell that power level to your players. No, you tell them to build their characters at a lower level — say, 25 to 50 character points less than you really intend, and a lower maximum level for OCV, damage classes, etc. than you ultimately intend for them to have.

Note: They'll gripe at having to put together weaker characters. Don't be surprised. Tell them it's all right, and to bear with you.

Run them through the first part of the story. Give them great initial success against the minion villains, whom they can trash with consummate ease. Then, lead them to the encounter with the master villain, who thoroughly beats them.

Next, get them to the teacher described for that plot. In the course of their training, you give them the points you originally "saved" for them. You might wish to let them spend it as they please (subject to the new maximum level limits on the campaign, of course), or you might require each one to spend some of it a certain way (to simulate the teacher's habit of training each character in his particular strength, and thereby shaping and individualizing each character's fighting style).

When the characters are through with their training, they are 25 or 50 points heavier, and well in shape for their rematch with the master villain.

Remember, though, that this only works once in a campaign, unless you plan on giving your characters another free 50 points each time you run this plot. That's why it is recommended only for one-shots and for adventures starting off a new martial arts campaign.

Established Campaigns

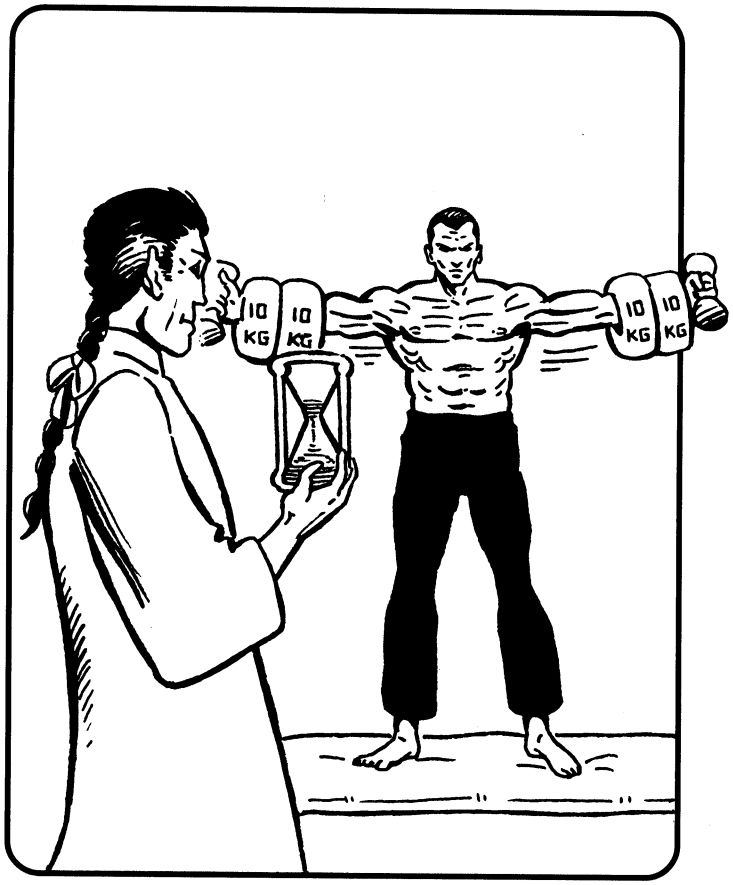
If you're running the "Loss, Retraining, and Confrontation" plot in a campaign that has already been established, you can do the retraining one of two ways.

If you don't mind upping the power level of your campaign, you can do retraining just as described above.

But if you don't want to change the power level of your campaign, you can... cheat.

Just establish, arbitrarily, that the villain has an incredible style which most people can't cope with and which only he knows how to use. When the PCs are fighting against this villain, give each of them a -8 OCV and -8 DCV.

This arbitrary penalty stays in place until the heroes go and train with the master who knows how to defeat the villain's style. (He doesn't know how to fight the villain's style, which is an important distinction we'll discuss in a minute). Their new master trains them until he's satisfied that they've learned his methods of coping with the villain's style... and the next time they fight him, they don't suffer the OCV and DCV penalties. They don't have to pay any points for this change (just as the villain didn't have to pay any points for the OCV/DCV minus the characters suffered initially); it was an arbitrary and plot-driven game mechanic, not something characters can buy.



Now that they don't suffer those OCV/DCV penalties, the characters should be able to fight the villain on his own level... and he should be a good martial artist, even without the advantage he has lost.

The reason the heroes' new master doesn't know how to fight in the villain's style is because the heroes would, logically, be able to learn the art from him. Once they did, every other fighter in the world (except for those few who knew their master's tricks) would be at a -8 OCV and -8 DCV whenever fighting them. No, only the villain actually knows that style; once he's dead, the style dies with him. The retraining only gave the heroes the ability to fight him with no minus; it did not make them supermen able to defeat all other fighters in the world the way they were initially defeated.

And if your players do decide that they just have to recreate the villain's art to give them ultimate superiority, let them begin to do so. But then spring a nasty surprise on them: The villain's art is an evil one, an art which requires its practitioners to "turn to the dark side" and become as evil as the villain was. If the characters continue to train in it, you, as the GM, get to assign them psychological limitations and behavior (such as "sociopath," "has no regard for human life," "greedy," etc.) which lose them their friends, allies, Followers and DNPCs; perhaps these limitations will force them to kill their own DNPCs and friends.

TRAINING

Here are some final notes on training in martial arts adventures:

First, characters often receive training while they think they are doing bizarre or inexplicable chores. Their master will assign them duties which, unknown to them, strengthen their bodies where they are weak. (A character who is weak in the waist might be assigned the job of policing the grounds for trash and leaves, barehanded, which makes him exercise his waist regularly; a character weak in the wrists might be told to stand stock-still and fan his master for hours on end, while the master just lies there and enjoys the cool breeze; and so on.) Characters generally don't understand what is happening and believe that the master is exploiting them; eventually, when their conditioning is nearly complete, he will be able to tell them what he was doing.

Second, though this doesn't happen often in martial arts stories, it sometimes happens that there is no living master of the art the characters need to learn. But there is a book, written by the art's last practitioner, from which they can learn the style... If they practice with great discipline and drive. Basically, the characters train themselves.

STR MINIMA ON WEAPONS

According to the *HERO System Rulesbook*, some weapons do additional damage at the rate of +2 DC per 15 STR over the STR Min (or +1 DC per 7 1/2 STR over the STR Min). Flails do additional damage at the rate of +2 DC per 12 1/2 STR over the STR Min. All other hand-to-hand weapons do additional damage at the rate of +1 DC per 5 STR over the STR Min. As an option, the GM may simplify some record-keeping by making all weapons +1 DC per 5 STR over the weapon's STR Min. However, this will give weapons with a Power Advantage (like Armor Piercing) a small bonus.

WEAPON LENGTHS

This optional rule is for use in heroic games; superhero campaigns don't need to worry about it. GMs of heroic campaigns do not need to include it if they find it inconvenient.

WEAPON RANGES

A Short or Medium weapon (including unarmed combat) can strike targets in the character's own hex or in adjacent hexes.

Long weapons are given with 1" or 2" ranges. A weapon with a 1" range can strike characters in adjacent hexes or 1" further than that. A weapon with a 2" range can strike characters in adjacent hexes or up to 2" further than that.

OCV PENALTIES

Unarmed combatants and wielders of short weapons are at a disadvantage when fighting opponents with long weapons. All weapons in the Gadgets and Weapons section are listed as Short, Medium, and Long for convenient reference when you are using this rule.

When a character with a Short weapon (including unarmed characters) fights a target with a Medium weapon, the character is at -1 OCV. When he fights a target with a Long weapon, he is at -2 OCV.

When a character with a Medium weapon fights a target with a Long weapon, the character is at -1 OCV.

The character with the longer weapon doesn't get a bonus to OCV.

Now, this OCV penalty only lasts as long as it takes the character with the shorter weapon to hit the target with the longer weapon. As soon as he's hit the target, it means that he's gotten inside his target's range, and the situation is reversed. The target with the longer weapon now has an OCV penalty identical to the penalty the character previously had. In order to get rid of the penalty, the target will have to back up 1" go get his range back, or will have to hit his foe in spite of the OCV penalty; such a hit means he has once again thrown his foe back to his preferred fighting range.



Example: *David Li is fighting Li Hiafeng. David is unarmed (corresponding to a Short weapon); Hiafeng is using the kwan dao, a polearm (a Long Weapon). David is at a -2 OCV penalty to hit Hiafeng.*

On his first phase of combat, he fails to hit Hiafeng; he's kept back at the range of the kwan dao. On the second phase, he hits Hiafeng, even with the -2 OCV penalty. This means he's gotten inside the weapon's reach. On the third phase, Hiafeng now has the -2 OCV penalty, while David is not penalized. Hiafeng will keep the -2 OCV until he manages to back up 1" or is able to hit David even with the penalty.

Now, when a character has a weapon the same length as his foe's (for example, if both have polearm Long Weapons), and yet decides to make an unarmed attack (for instance, kicking his opponent), he does not suffer the OCV penalty; because he has a weapon of length similar to his foe's, he fights at no range disadvantage.

SHIELDS AND LONGER WEAPONS

A shield constitutes a short weapon when it is used to attack a target (i.e., a shield-punch attack.) Therefore, a character trying to shield-punch a target holding a spear will suffer a -2 OCV.

However, the shield does not suffer an OCV penalty when its bearer chooses a Block maneuver, regardless of the length of the weapon being blocked. A shield blocks a dagger, a sword, a battle-axe and a pike with the same OCV.

WEAPON LENGTHS AND ENCLOSED SPACE

Long weapons aren't much good when you're fighting in a space the size of a telephone booth, and this optional rule is designed to simulate that fact.

In the following chart, we'll show a variety of different fighting environments and what their effects are on different types of weapons.

Setting	Unarmed	Short Weapons	Medium Weapons	Long Weapons
Coffin	-2	-3	n/p	n/p
Phone Booth	-1	-2	-3	n/p
Narrow Hallway (3' wide)	—	—	-1	-2
Room Crowded w/Furniture	—	-1	-2	-3
Doorway (3' wide)	—	-1	-2	-3
Room w/ Low Roof (6')	—	—	—	-1

—: Combat abilities are unaffected.
n/p: Use of this weapon is impossible.

OPTIONAL MARTIAL ARTS DESIGN RULES



If you're trying to simulate the movies which feature the most fantastic sorts of martial arts abilities, you'll find that the martial arts creation rules you just learned can't do everything you see in those films. Those rules are set up to be relatively balanced within normal HERO System campaigns; martial arts like the ones in the more spectacular movies are not balanced for most campaigns.

In this section, we'll provide some rules for expanding the martial arts creation system. However:

WARNING!

These rules don't work for mainstream HERO System campaigns. They are only suitable for some specialized martial arts campaigns. If you put them in mainstream HERO System campaigns, every point-conscious character will end up using them because they're very efficient... to the detriment of role-playing and character conception in your campaign.

They're not even intended for most *Ninja Hero* campaigns, only for the Wild Martial Arts Campaign (see the Powers and Campaigning sections for definitions of the "Wild Martial Arts Campaign"). GMs of other sorts of Martial Arts campaigns may want to use them; in those cases, we recommend that the GM allow each character to learn only one maneuver built with these rules.

Therefore, understand that these rules are not part of the official HERO System rules. You won't find any support for them in other Hero Games products or in the *Adventurers Club.* Don't bother sending submissions related to these rules to Hero Games. And don't mix these rules with your normal HERO System campaign.

The Paek-tu martial art (which appeared in the first edition of the *Strike Force* supplement) was built with rules similar to these, and should be considered as a part of this warning. Further playtest has indicated that they don't belong in any normal HERO System campaign (including the author's). Use such things only in specialized martial arts campaigns and don't mix them with regular campaigns.

SPECIAL MARTIAL ARTS GUIDELINES

With that said, here are guidelines for building martial arts exclusively for specialty martial arts campaigns.

MANEUVER COST

In this system, maneuvers can cost as few as 3 points or as much as 8 points (instead of the 5-point limit on the regular rules).

STYLE REQUIREMENTS

In this system, any martial arts style which includes one of these special maneuvers must have a minimum of five maneuvers. Not all the maneuvers have to be built with these special rules, but the style cannot have less than five maneuvers.

MULTIPLE MANEUVER BASES

As you'll recall, in the regular rules, a maneuver can only have one of the six exclusive Maneuver Bases: Bind, Block, Disarm, Dodge, Grab Weapon, or Strike. (A maneuver can have none, some or all of the non-exclusive Bases: Exert, Grab Opponent, and Throw.)

But in these Specialized Martial Arts Design rules, a maneuver can have more than one Exclusive Maneuver Basis — it can have as many as three. You could build a Block/Disarm, a Strike/Block, or a Bind/Block/Strike, for example.

Dodge, however, may not be used in these combined maneuvers; you cannot build a Dodge/Strike or a Dodge/Disarm, for example.

Also, you may not put two of the same Maneuver Basis in one maneuver. You cannot have a Strike/Strike, a Disarm/Disarm, or a Bind/Bind, for instance.

MULTIPLE BASES AND OCV

When two or more Maneuver Bases are put into the same maneuver, it has a detrimental effect on the maneuver's starting OCV.

Ordinary maneuvers, those with only one exclusive Maneuver Basis, start with an OCV modifier of +0. But if a maneuver has two or more exclusive Maneuver Bases, each one put in gives the maneuver an OCV penalty of -2.

Therefore, a normal Strike has a starting OCV modifier of +0. A Strike/Block, with two exclusive Maneuver Bases, has a starting OCV modifier of -4. A Block/Grab/Disarm has a starting OCV modifier of -6.

Naturally, purchase of the "OCV +" element can offset some or all of this penalty, but it does increase the cost of the maneuver. And, as before, you can only add up to a +2 OCV bonus from "OCV +". This means that if a maneuver starts with a -4 OCV penalty, you can only add up to +2 OCV to it, resulting in a final OCV of -2.

MULTIPLE BASES AND TIME

When two or more Maneuver Bases are put into the same maneuver, it also has a detrimental effect on the amount of time it takes to accomplish the maneuver.

Two Maneuver Bases means the maneuver is automatically a full-phase action. Three Maneuver Bases means the maneuver is automatically a full phase plus one segment action.

To reduce the time it takes to perform the action, you must spend 1 point on the maneuver to reduce it from 1 phase + 1 segment down to 1 phase, and another to reduce it from 1 phase down to 1/2 phase.

Example: *A maneuver is built as a Block/Disarm/Strike. It would naturally require one phase plus one segment to perform, like an ordinary Haymaker. The buyer may spend 1 point to reduce the time to one phase, or 2 points to reduce the time to 1/2 phase.*

MULTIPLE BASES AND ROLLS TO HIT

When a character uses a maneuver with two or more exclusive Maneuver Bases, he must roll to hit for each Basis. If he's using a Block/Strike, he must roll to hit for the Block, and then again for the Strike.

Each roll gets the maneuver's OCV penalty. Note that Combat Skill Levels must be divided between the two rolls.

Example: *Tanaka Eiko has a Block/Strike (see the chart below) which is a -4 OCV maneuver. She has a base OCV of 7 and four skill levels. She can't just put the four skill levels on OCV for Block/Strike; she may put all on the Block portion, all on the Strike portion, or some on each. One phase, she decides that her Block is most important and puts them all on Block. Therefore, her Block is at a penalty of +0 to OCV (making her Block OCV a 7) and her Strike at a penalty of -4 to OCV (making her Strike OCV a 3). The next phase, she puts two skill levels on each, and so has Block penalty of -2 to OCV and a Strike penalty of -2 to OCV (making her OCV for both parts a 5). The next phase, she goes on the defensive and puts all her levels into DCV. Therefore, her DCV is 11, and she has a Block penalty of -4 to OCV and a Strike penalty of -4 to OCV, making her OCV a 3 for both parts of the maneuver.*

One part of the maneuver could fail and another succeed. If the first part fails, the second one can still be attempted, unlike Sweep maneuvers.

One part of a maneuver might not be possible, but the other can still be attempted.

Example: *Takana Eiko is facing an assassin. She decides to Block/Strike. She goes first, so she'll Strike first, and her Block will take place when the assassin responds. She belts the assassin hard and Stuns him. He cannot strike her; therefore her Block is wasted, but the Strike is not negated by this.*

ABORT

In this set of rules, you can put the Abort element on a maneuver including Maneuver Bases other than Blocks, Dodges or non-damaging Exerts.

You could, for instance, have a maneuver that was a Strike you can Abort to.

What does it mean to the combat sequence when you can Abort to an Attack? Basically, it means this: Once the character has made an attack, on his next segment (if he has not already Aborted his next action phase) he can take his maneuver against a target within range of his special maneuver. At that point, he cannot attack again until the Phase after the Phase he just aborted (or, if he uses this same maneuver again, he can perform it on the segment after the Phase he just aborted).

Note that when you can Abort to an attack, you can only abort to the attack itself. You cannot Abort to move and attack. If a character is in a position where he is 1" away from a foe, he cannot abort to his special maneuver to attack that foe; he'll have to wait until his active phase and move over 1" first.

Some GMs find that the option of Aborting to an attack throws off their combat order sheets and thus their control over the combat taking place. If you find yourself in that condition, you should not use this option, even in specialty martial arts campaigns.

SAMPLE MANEUVERS

Below is a set of sample maneuvers built with these rules. Note that they do reflect the rule about OCV modifiers and extra time arising from multiple Maneuver Bases; all these are bought so as to be usable in 1/2 phase.

All are shown with unmodified OCVs and DCVs, and no damage bonuses. You can always modify them, using the normal costs for damage bonuses, OCV +, OCV -, DCV +, and DCV - elements.

Maneuver	Phase	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Bind/Strike	1/2	3	-4	+0	Bind, STR Strike, 1/2 Phase
Block/ Disarm	1/2	5	-4	+0	Block, Disarm, Abort, 1/2 Phase
Block/ Strike	1/2	3	-4	+0	STR Strike, Block, Abort, 1/2 Phase
Block/ Takeaway	1/2	5	-4	+0	Block, Grab Weapon, 1/2 Phase
Disarm/ Strike	1/2	3	-4	+0	Disarm, STR Strike, 1/2 Phase
Improved Throw	1/2	5	-4	+0	STR + v/5, Throw, Block, Abort, 1/2 Phase
Takeaway Throw	1/2	5	-4	+0	Grab Weapon, Throw, 1/2 Phase

Because of the minuses to OCV, most players will want to put a couple of extra points into the maneuvers to buy +2 OCV (for a final -2 OCV), and then buy a couple of extra 2-pt skill levels in that maneuver to achieve a +0 OCV modifier.

Here are comments on these maneuvers:

Bind/Strike: This maneuver requires that the character have a second hand free (either armed or unarmed, but still free to act) in order to perform the strike component. It can be performed if the character Binds with his weapon hand and strikes with his free off-hand, or when a two-weapons character uses one to Bind and one to Strike. If the Bind is unsuccessful, the Strike can still succeed.

Block/Disarm: With this maneuver, the character can block an incoming attack and simultaneously disarm the attacker — if the attacker was using a weapon, and if the character makes his STR vs. STR roll better than the attacker. The character can abort to this maneuver. If the Block is unsuccessful, the attacker gets to perform his attack, and only then does the character get to perform the Disarm. The character doesn't have to wait for an incoming attack to launch this maneuver, but if he is not responding to an incoming attack, he loses the Block for this maneuver; it acts as a simple Disarm instead.

Block/Strike: With this maneuver, the character can block an incoming attack and counterstrike immediately. The character can abort to this maneuver. If the Block is unsuccessful, the attacker gets to perform his attack, and only then does the character get to perform the Strike. The character doesn't have to wait for an incoming attack to launch this maneuver, but if he is not responding to an incoming attack, he loses the Block for this maneuver; it acts as a simple Strike instead.

Block/Takeaway: With this maneuver, the character can block an incoming blow and, with a successful STR vs. STR roll, instantly take the attacker's weapon (if one is present) away from the attacker. This maneuver cannot be aborted to as it is built. If the Block is unsuccessful, the attacker gets to perform his attack, and only then does the character get to perform the Takeaway. The character doesn't have to wait for an incoming attack to launch this maneuver, but if he is not responding to an incoming attack, he loses the Block for this maneuver; it acts as a simple Takeaway instead.

Disarm/Strike: With this maneuver, the character can attempt a Disarm of an enemy and then follow through with an immediate attack. If the Disarm is unsuccessful, the Strike can still be successful.

Improved Throw: This is similar to the Martial Throw, except that characters can abort to it, and it does Block incoming attacks.

Takeaway Throw: With this maneuver, the character performs a Takeaway on the target, taking his weapon away from him if his STR vs. STR roll is successful. He then follows through by throwing the opponent to the ground. If the Takeaway is unsuccessful, the Throw could still succeed.

THE ONE-MANEUVER MARTIAL ART

Some players, allowed to use these rules, will be tempted to create a "one-maneuver martial art," building all the elements they think they need into one maneuver, buying only that maneuver, and then using that maneuver exclusively in combat.

This is not allowed. A player designing his martial art style cannot just buy one independent maneuver. He must:

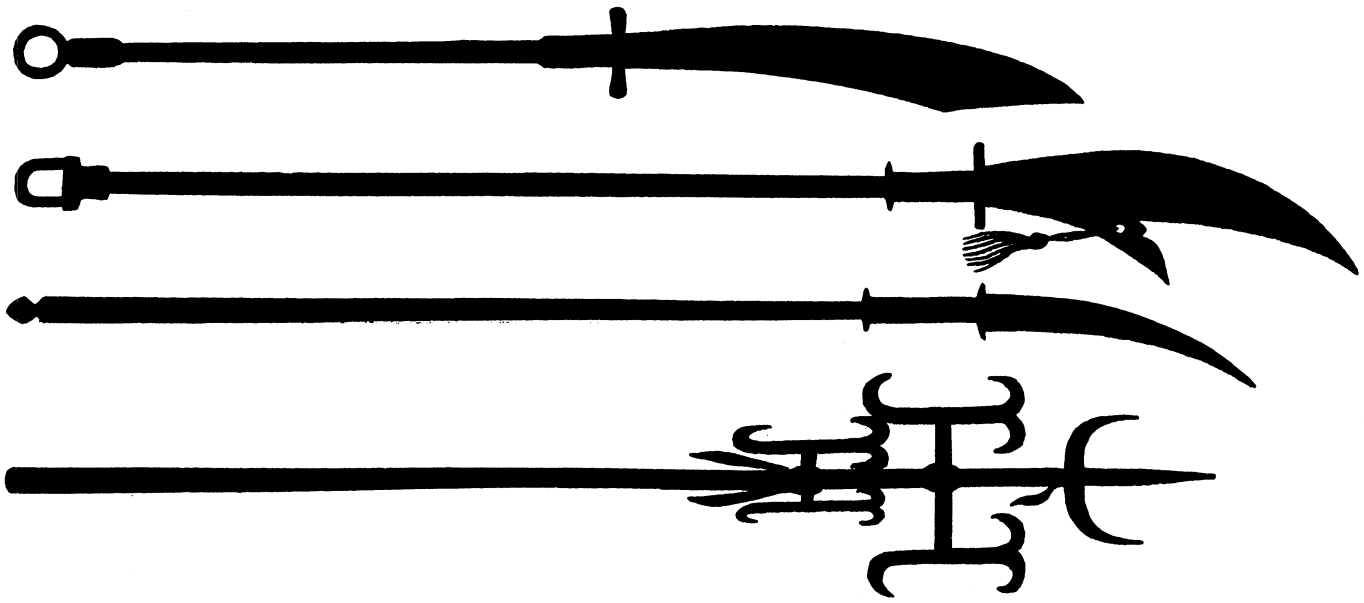
(1) Design a martial art of not less than five maneuvers.

(2) Have his character buy all five maneuvers before he can use any of them.

The GM should make no exceptions to this rule.

Alternatively, a maneuver built with these rules can be added to a character's already-purchased martial art style (for example, a character could add a Block/Strike to his Kenjutsu), so long as that style already has at least four maneuvers, this is perfectly permissible.

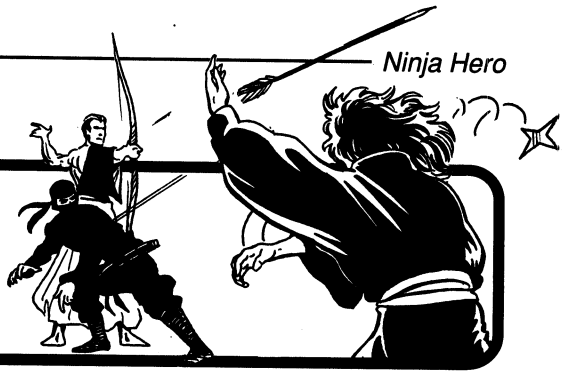
Polearms: Chai-Dao, Tai-Dao, Naginata, Nine-Dragon Trident



CHAPTER THREE: SOURCEBOOK

This chapter contains a lot of useful material pertaining to martial arts in the HERO System — especially weapons and other gadgets, but also including information on real-world martial arts, foreign terms, names, costumes, and helpful reference material.

HEROIC GADGETS AND WEAPONS



This section includes lists of appropriate martial arts gadgets and weapons, and guidelines for building new gadgets and weapons.

All these are for heroic campaigns; players and GMs of superheroic campaigns should skip on to Superhero Gadgets and Weapons, further on.

Following are several sections describing weapons commonly found in the martial arts genre. Though many are uncommon in everyday life, all these weapons are readily available in stores or bought through the mail.

In a heroic campaign, these weapons and gadgets do not cost character points.

In the charts in this section, weapon damage appearing without parentheses — for instance, 1d6+1 — refers to Killing damage, while weapon damage appearing in parentheses — for instance, (4d6) — refers to Normal damage.

RANGED WEAPONS

Typical ranged weapons found in martial arts film and fiction include the following:

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons commonly found in martial arts adventures include these:

WEAPON LENGTHS

All melee weapons in the chart above are rated as being Short, Medium, or Long weapons. (Unarmed combat is rated the same as Short weapons.) Ranged weapons are not so rated.

This is to facilitate use of the optional Weapon Lengths rule from the Combat Rules section. That rule basically says that a character with a shorter weapon attacking a character with a longer weapon is at an OCV penalty — he has to get within the range of the other weapon before he can attack. Read that section before deciding whether to use Weapon Lengths rules in your campaign.

RANGED WEAPONS (Heroic Campaigns)

Name	OCV	R Mod	Damage	STUNx	STR Min	shots	Notes
Bows							
Hankyu	0	0	1d6	0	7	24	2-Handed
Yumi, One-Man	0	+1	1d6+1	0	10	24	2-Handed
Two-Man	0	+1	1 1/2d6	0	13	24	2-Handed
Three-Man	0	+1	2d6	0	16	24	2-Handed
Four-Man	0	+1	2d6+1	0	18	24	2-Handed
Seven-Man	0	+1	2 1/2d6	0	21	24	2-Handed
Shuriken							
Bo	0	0	1d6-1	0	5/7	9	Throw 5
Large Star	0	0	1d6+1	0	10	9	
Small Star	0	0	1d6-1	0	5/7	9	Throw 5
Miscellaneous Weapons							
Blowgun	0	0	1 pt	-1	2	8	2-Handed
Fukimi-bari	0	0	1/2d6	0	3	1	In Mouth

MELEE WEAPONS (Heroic Campaigns)

Name	OCV	Damage	STUNx	STR Min	Notes
Axes & Maces					
Axe, Chinese	0	1d6	0	11	M; Throw
Blades					
Bokken	+1	(5d6)	—	10	M; Throw, 1 1/2-H
Butterfly Knife	0	1d6+1	0	10	M
Cutlass					M; +6 DEF on Hand
Using Blade	0	1d6	0	10	
Using Hilt	0	(3d6)	—	4	
Darn Do	+1	1d6+1	0	12	M
Epee	+1	(2d6)	—	7	M
Foil	+1	(1d6)	—	5	M
Hook Sword	0	1d6+1	0	13	M; +2 OCV w/Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway; +6 DEF on Hand on 11- Activation
Jien	+1	1d6	0	10	M
Katana	+1	1 1/2d6	0	12	M; Throw, 1 1/2-H
Knuck-Knife	+1	1/2d6	0	7	S; +6 DEF on Hand on 11- Activation
Kris (knife)	0	1/2d6	+1	7	S
Kris (normal)	0	1d6	+1	11	M
Kris (sword)	0	1d6+1	+1	15	M
Main-Gauche					S; +6 DEF on Hand
Using Blade	0	1d6-1	0	7	+2 OCV w/Block
Using Hilt	0	(3d6)	—	4	
Ninja-To	0	1 1/2d6	+1	15	M; Throw; 1 1/2-H
No-Daichi	+1	2d6	0	17	L; 2-H
Rapier	+1	1d6	0	10	M
Razor, Straight					
Large	0	1d6	-1	7	S; Reduced STUN Multiplier -1, Reduced Penetration
Small	0	1/2d6	-1	5	S; Reduced STUN Multiplier -1, Reduced Penetration
Sabre	+1	1d6	0	10	M
Shinai	+1	(2d6)	—	2	M; Throw; 1 1/2-H
Tanto	+1	1/2d6	0	5	S; Throw
Tetsu-To	0	2 1/2d6	0	20	M; 1 1/2-H
Wakizashi	+1	1d6	0	8	M; Throw
Yoroi-Toshi	+1	1d6-1 AP	0	10	S; Armor-Piercing
Chain and Rope Weapons					
Kusari	0	(4d6)	—	9	L; Throw; 2-H; +2" Range
Kusarigama or Kyogetsu Shoge					L; Throw; 2-H; +2" Range
Using Chain	0	(4d6)	—	9	
Using Hook	0	1d6	0	11	
Manriki-Gusari	0	(3d6)	—	8	M; Throw
Clubs (Do Not Require Weapon Familiarity)					
Hanbo	0	(3d6)	—	4	M
Jo	+1	(3d6)	—	7	M
Fist-Loads (Do Not Require Weapon Familiarity)					
Ashiko	0	1/2d6	0	5	S; +1 to Climbing Roll
Brass Knuckles	0	(2d6)	—	3	S; +6 DEF on Hand on 11- Activation
Cestus	0	(+1 DC/K)	0	n/a	S; Adds +1 DC/K to Punch Dmg
Fist-Load	0	(2d6)	—	3	S
Shuko	0	1d6-1	0	5	S; +1 to Climbing Roll

Name	OCV	Damage	STUNx	STR Min	Notes
Pole Arms					
Chai-Dao					L; 2-H; +1" Range
Using Blade	+1	1d6+1	0	12	
Using Shaft	+1	(3d6)	—	7	
Naginata					L; 2-H; +1" Range
Using Blade	+1	1 1/2d6	0	15	
Using Shaft	+1	(4d6)	—	8	9-
Dragon Trident					L; 2-H; +1" Range
Using Blade	0	1d6+1	0	13	+2 OCV w/Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Using Shaft	0	(4d6)	—	6	
Tai-Dao					L; 2-H; +1" Range
Using Blade	0	1 1/2d6	+1	18	
Using Shaft	0	(4d6)	—	6	
Yari					L; 2-H; +1" Range; Throw
Using Blade	-1	1 1/2d6	0	14	
Using Shaft	0	(4d6)	—	6	
Yari w/backhook					L; 2-H; +1" Range; Throw
Using Blade	-1	1 1/2d6	0	17	+2 OCV w/Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Using Shaft	0	(4d6)	—	6	
Misc. Weapons					
Bo (Staff)	+1	(4d6)	—	8	L; 2-H; +1" Range
Chain Whip	0	1d6	0	7	L; +1" Range
Flying Guillotine	-1	1d6	0	7	L; 2-H; +2" Range; Must be Aimed at Extremity
Garrotte					
Strangling	0	(3d6)	—	4	S; 2-H; Must Follow Grab & Be Aimed at Head
Wire	0	1/2d6	0	5	S; 2-H; Must Follow Grab
Kama	0	1d6	0	11	M; Throw
Nunchaku	+1	(3d6)	—	7	M
Sai					
Cinema	+1	1/2d6	0	8	S; Throw; +2 OCV w/Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Normal	+1	(3d6)	—	8	S; Throw; +2 OCV w/Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Shinobi-Zue	0	(4d6)	—	6	L; 2-H; +2" Range
Tetsubo	+1	(6d6)	—	11	L; 2-H; +1" Range
3-Section Staff	0	(4d6)	—	9	S/M/L; 2-H; +2 OCV w/Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway; +1" Range
Tonfa	+1	(3d6)	—	7	S
War Fan, Basic	0	(3d6)	—	6	S; +2 OCV w/Block
War Fan, Edged					S; +2 OCV w/Block
Blunt Attack	0	(3d6)	—	6	
Razor Attack	0	1/2d6	0	7	
Wind/Fire Wheels					
Saw-Blade	0	1/2d6	0	8	S; +2 OCV w/Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Traditional	0	(3d6)	—	8	S; +2 OCV w/Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway

Notes: S = Short Weapon; M = Medium Weapon; L = Long Weapon;
1 1/2-H = 1 1/2-Handed Weapon; 2-H = 2-Handed Weapon

UNUSUAL WEAPONS

Certain weapons aren't used to strike the victim; either the damage they do is unusual (like Flash), or they are not used to hit a target actively — they are tossed in his path for him to step upon.

None of these weapons has a STR Min worth calculating. Only the Net requires a Weapon Familiarity.

NETS

Small Net: A DEF 4, BODY 4 gadget which takes no damage from attacks (i.e., someone else can attack a netted target and the net will not protect the target). The small net is just large enough to hold a human being. See rules for the Entangle power in the HERO System Rulesbook.

Large Net: Identical to the small net, except that it can cover an entire hex (two meters in diameter) area. This large net is used as an Area Effect attack.

GRENADES

Flash: A small exploding item; it acts as a 2d6 Flash attack (see the rules for the Flash power in the *HERO System Rulesbook*), with the advantage Explosion.

Smoke: A small exploding item which acts as a 1" Radius Darkness field vs. Normal Sight (see the rules for the Darkness power in the *HERO System Rulesbook*).

DROPPED WEAPONS

Marbles: One handful of ordinary marbles can be scattered over a one-hex area. Any person who walks or runs onto that hex can be tripped up by the marbles; the attacker rolls the 14- activation roll, and if it activates the target falls down (for no damage). If the target can make a Dexterity roll, he can keep himself from falling.

Tetsu Bishi: A handful of these can be scattered over up to a one-hex area. If anyone moves onto the hex, the attacker rolls the 14- activation roll; if the tetsu bishi activate, the person in the hex takes 1d6 damage from stepping on the spikes.

ARMOR

Though body armor isn't very common in martial-arts adventures, a few types do show up with *some* regularity: Samurai armor, kendo armor, and body armor for full-contact karate sparring, for example. These sorts of armor are described under this headline.

The following types of armor are sometimes seen in martial arts movies:

FULL-CONTACT KARATE ARMOR

This is a set of vinyl or leather-covered padding designed to minimize risk of injury while characters are sparring or training. It includes the following pieces (not all of which have to be worn):

Name of Armor	Locations	Defense R / N	Weight (kg)
Face Guard	4-5	2 / 6	.1
Full Face Guard	3-5	2 / 6	.2
Gloves (2)	6	2 / 6	.2
Forearm Guards (2)	7	2 / 6	.1
Torso Guard	9-11	2 / 6	.8
Chest Guard	10-11	2 / 6	.7
Rib Guard	12	2 / 6	.4
Athletic Cup	13	2 / 6	.2
Shin Guards, Sm (2)	16	2 / 6	.1
Shin Guards, Lg (2)	16-17	2 / 6	.2
Leg Guard (2)	15-17	2 / 6	.3

The two columns listed under *Defense* are R for Resistant and N for Non-Resistant. Resistant defenses are bought as physical and energy Armor; non-resistant defenses are bought as Physical Defense and Energy Defense.

The Weight column is included for those heroic campaigns using the HERO System encumbrance rules (see the *HERO System Rulesbook* page 150). If your campaign doesn't use those rules, don't worry about the Weight column except to determine whether a character can lift the equipment at all. Weights are given in tenths of a kilogram.

You cannot "stack" armor; a character cannot wear a Face Guard and a Full Face Guard and get the benefits of both. He will only get the benefit of the greater of the two.

KENDO ARMOR

The armor used by kendoka (kendo practitioners) in their practices consists of several items.

The Men, or helmet, has a wire-frame mask and padded armor which covers the top and back of the head and the throat. Accompanying this are a heavy chest-plate and gloves which cover the forearms, both made of resilient padded material; a padded apron; and a lighter protective jacket.

In HERO System terms, it looks like this:

Name of Armor	Locations	Defense R / N	Weight (kg)
Men (Helmet)	3-5,9	6 / 0	1.8
Kote (Sleeves)	6-7	4 / 2	.5
Do (Breastplate)	10-11	4 / 2	1.1
Keikogi (Jacket)	8-11	1 / 1	.6
Tare (Apron)	12-13	2 / 2	.6
(R / N: Resistant Defense / Nonresistant Defense.)			

The Men has a additional limitation: It acts as Armor 0 vs. Guns. The Kote and Do have a similar limitation: Half-Value vs. Guns. In other words, bullets automatically bypass the armor of the helmet, and are automatically Armor-Piercing attacks against the K*ote* and Do.

LEATHER HAND-WRAPPINGS

Practitioners of ancient boxing (see Boxing, Ancient in the Martial Arts section) protected their hands by wrapping them in leather strips; this was the sort of protection that ultimately evolved into the boxing glove. A character who wraps his hands in this fashion has a piece of equipment that looks like this:

Name of Armor	Locations	Defense R / N	Weight (kg)
Hand-Wrappings (2)	6	4 / 0	.2
(R / N: Resistant Defense / Nonresistant Defense.)			

RAWHIDE HAND-WRAPPINGS

Rawhide hand-wrappings are just like leather hand-wrappings, with one exception. Rather like the cestus (see above in the melee weapons listing), rawhide wrappings can cause a little extra killing damage to the target.

SAMURAI ARMOR

This armor is arranged much like the kendo armor described above, except that it is designed to be protection in real warfare. It is made of metal and hardened leather plates, usually brightly ornamented with decorative enamels.

Name ofArmor	Locations	Defense	Weight (kg)
Hachi/Shikoro (Helm/Shoulders)	4-5	6	1
Happuri (Facemask)	3	6	.5
Kote (Sleeves)	6-7	4	1
O-Sode (Shoulders)	9	6	2
Tateage (Breastplate)	10-13	6	9.5
Haidate (Apron)	14-15	6	2.5
Sune-ate (Greaves)	16-17	4	.75
This armor is all resistant defense.			

This armor has a limitation: It is Half Value vs. Guns. For instance, the Hachi and Shikoro, DEF 6 vs. most attacks, is only DEF 3 vs. bullets.

MASTER LIST OF WEAPONS

To see which weapons require which Weapon Familiarities, see the box labelled *Weapon Familiarity Groups* (in the *Skills* section of the *Character Creation* chapter).

WEAPON AND GADGET DESCRIPTIONS

Ashiko: These are climbing claws strapped onto the ninja's feet; they are the companions to the *shuko*. They can be used as weapons when used with a kick attack. They provide a +1 to the wearer's Climbing roll if he has the Climbing skill. The character must wear both ashiko to get the +1 to his Climbing roll.

Axe, Chinese: This weapon has a medium-length handle and a single broad blade; it is chiefly used by southern Chinese kung fu fighters.

Blowgun: This is the classical weapon consisting of a long, hollow tube and numerous light darts to fire through it. The darts themselves do very little damage, but they are usually tipped with some sort of poison (see under Gadget Creation, below). The darts are nearly invisible and are fired silently, but can certainly be felt upon impact. A character who wants darts so light that they can't be felt will have to buy a fully-invisible blowgun with his own Character Points.

Bo: This is a 5'-6' hardwood staff. Use these game statistics for the Chinese staff, which is called a *kuen*. The bo is one of the five principal weapons of karate (the others are kama, nunchaku, sai, and tonfa); the kuen is the most famous weapon of kung fu.

Bokken: This is a wooden practice sword shaped like a katana. It does normal, not killing, damage. It's no toy or practice blade, though; it's made of heavy, tough wood, unlike the *shinai*. Many duels in feudal Japan were fought with bokken; it is possible to kill an opponent with it.

Brass Knuckles: This classic street weapon is a ridged brass knuckle-protector which protects the striking hand, allowing the character to strike harder. Brass Knuckles also provide 6 DEF (physical and energy, on an 11- activation roll) to the hand wearing them. The Japanese *tetsu*, a form of brass knuckles, uses these statistics.

Butterfly Knife: This short sword has a heavy, flat cleaver-like blade with one cutting edge. It is used by ninja and by Chinese kung fu practitioners; it is often used in pairs. The Willow Leaf Knife, which is very similar in appearance, shares the same statistics. The Butterfly Knife is not to be confused with the *balisong*, the switchblade-like street knife which is also sometimes called a "butterfly knife."

Cestus: This weapon is a glove with spikes or jagged protrusions along its knuckles and back. The character using it does his normal Punch damage, and also does 1 point of killing damage (he cannot add to this with his STR; it always does only 1 point of killing damage). The Cestus provides 4 DEF (physical and energy) to the hand wearing it.

Chai-Dao: This Chinese polearm is also called the "Bandit's Encampment Broadsword." It is usually about 5'3" tall, with 2'6" of that length a wicked curved blade; the rest is haft. Traditionally, it was used in camp defense, often to chop at the legs of horses riding through.



An armored samurai with katana and wakizashi

Chain Whip: This Chinese weapon is like a whip, but its length consists of metal plates connected by chain links; it has a slashing blade at the tip. It shares a Weapon Familiarity with the normal bullwhip, but does not have that weapon's range.

Cutlass: This is a European weapon, a short slashing blade with a heavy guard to protect the hand; it is included in *Ninja Hero* because it is used with Fencing style. The hand-guard provides 6 DEF (physical and energy) to the hand holding it; the character can attack with the blade or punch with the hand-guard.

Darn Do: This is the Chinese sabre, a long, heavy weapon with a curved blade.

Epee: This is a light steel practice sword modelled after the rapier; it has a light, flexible blade ending with a blunt steel tip (which is itself covered by a plastic cap), and is used only for thrusting. It is included in *Ninja Hero* because it is used with Fencing style.

Fist-Load: This is a small, heavy rod held in in the character's fist. A thong or ring protruding from the center of the rod goes around one or two of the wearer's fingers to hold it in place.

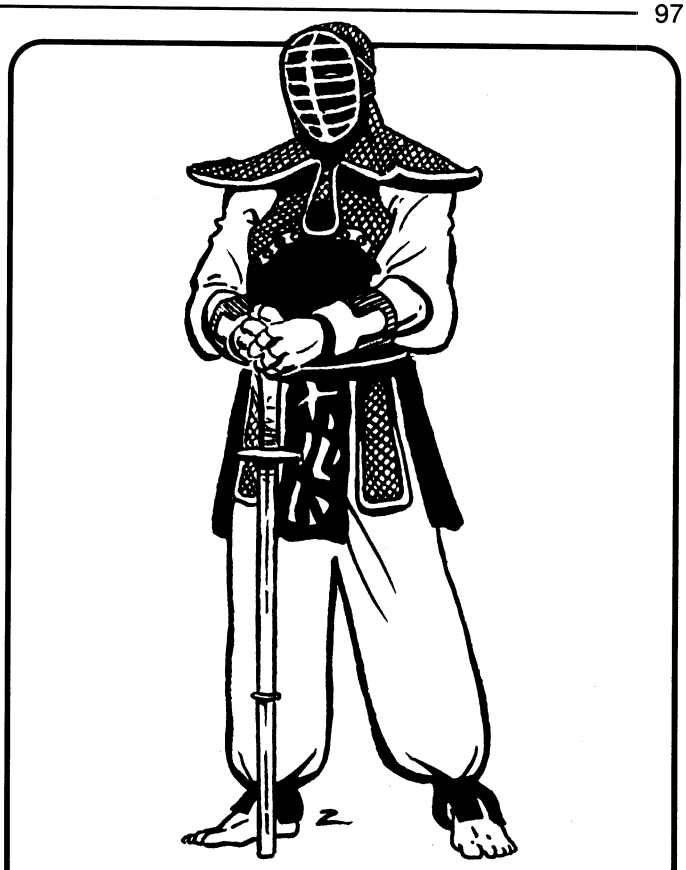
Flying Guillotine: This is a peculiar Tibetan weapon. It constitutes a metal hoop whose inner edge is very sharp; the hoop is attached to a rope. It's an effective ambush weapon; if the attacker can get above an unsuspecting target, he can drop it over the target's head and yank. It's somewhat less effective in active combat; the weapon only does damage if it hits an extremity (head, hand, arm, leg, or foot location). The attacker can roll locations normally, and attacks to Locations 9-14 simply fail to do damage; or he can choose to aim for specific locations, taking the OCV penalties for aiming.

Foil: This weapon is much like the epee, but even lighter and more flexible.

Fukimi-bari: These are darts which may be held concealed in the hand and thrown at an enemy or held in the mouth and blown into an enemy's face. (This weapon doesn't grant an automatic head shot; most users who place fukimi-bari in their mouths try to achieve a surprise result and take an aimed shot at the head). This is a ninja weapon.

Garotte: This is a strangling cord or wire. It comes in two varieties: The Strangling garotte, which may be any strong rope, scarf, or cord; and the Wire garotte, which is a piece of very sharp wire with a handle tied to either end. Both types are looped around the victim's neck and pressure is applied; therefore the garotte is usually used from surprise. It's an assassin's weapon. The Strangling garotte chokes the victim to death, and is not any good against any hit location except the head. The Wire garotte can slice through flesh, and can therefore cut a throat or cut a head entirely off; it will do harm to any body part it happens to be looped around. Note that any chain weapon described in this section can be used as a Garotte; the manriki-gusari is especially appropriate.

Grenades, Flash: These are small grenades which can momentarily blind an opponent. Such grenades are called *metsubishi* in Japanese. Grenades do not require a Weapon Familiarity. Alternatively, a "flash grenade" could be one use's worth of eye-irritating dust, either thrown at a foe or blown through an open-ended sword sheath.



A modern kendo practitioner with shinai

Grenades, Smoke: These grenades are sometimes used to blind and confound an opponent, and are just as often used by the wielder (especially ninja characters) to cloak their next action — such as hiding or preparing a new attack. Such grenades are called *metsubishi* in Japanese. Grenades do not require a Weapon Familiarity.

Hanbo: This is a fighting-stick weapon, 2' to 3' in length. Use these statistics also for the scabbard of a short sword (any blade with a base damage of 1d6) when used as a weapon.

Hankyu: This is a short, comparatively weak, easily-carried bow favored by ninja.

Hook Sword: This is a Chinese sword popular in some kung fu styles. It includes a straight, double-edged blade, a forward-curving hook at the end of that blade, a bladed crescent-shaped guard for the hand (providing 6 DEF to the hand on an activation roll of 11-), and a butt-spike protruding from the hilt. This weapon has a +0 OCV bonus for most maneuvers, but (because of its unusual configuration) gets a +2 OCV for maneuvers including the Bind, Block, Disarm, and Takeaway (i.e., Grab Weapon) maneuver elements. The Fire Wing sword uses the same statistics.

Jien: This is the light Chinese broadsword, often used in kung fu styles. The weapon's blade is straight, light, and double-edged; it's a thrusting weapon, and normally only the four inches at the tip of the blade are used in combat.

Jo: This is a single stick around 4' in length. Use these statistics also for the scabbard of a long sword (any sword with a damage of 1d6+1 or better) when used as a weapon, and for the sticks used in the *escrima* martial art.

Kama: This is the Okinawan sickle, which consists of a short handle topped by a short curved sickle blade. It is one of the five principal weapons of karate (the others are bo, nunchaku, sai, and tonfa). This weapon is often used in pairs.

Katana: This is the traditional samurai sword; it is the larger of the *daisho*, the pair of blades worn by the samurai. The *odachi* is an older-style blade using the same game statistics. The katana is worn in the belt, edge upwards. The *tachi*, another long Japanese blade, has identical game statistics to the katana, but is slightly more curved than the katana; the tachi is either worn in the belt (with the edge down) or worn over shoulder instead of in belt.

Knuck-Knife: This is a normal folding, lock-back blade... except that its handle is a set of brass knuckles.

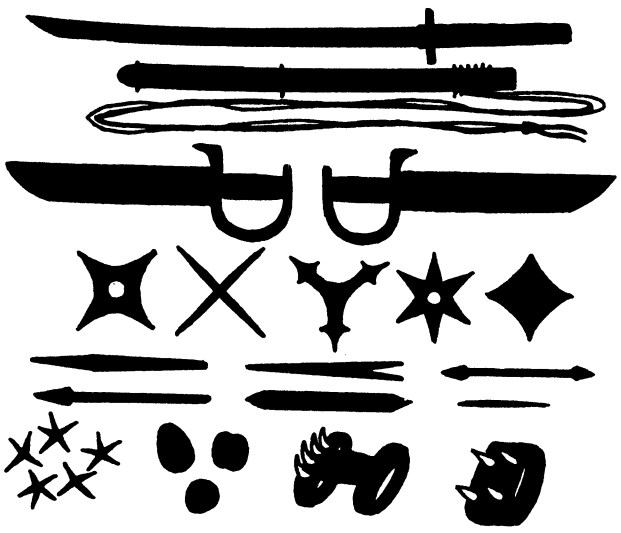
Kris: This weapon is the Malaysian double-edged, wavy-bladed sword. It is mainly a thrusting weapon, and the waves in the blade make wounds very, very painful. Kris blades vary in length from 5" to over 30". The Kris Knife stats shown are for a blade in the 5-10" range, the Normal Kris stats are for a blade in the 10-20" range, and the Kris Sword stats are for a blade in the 20" to 30" range.

Kusari: This is a chain weapon; it consists of a chain about 12' long with a weight on one end and a metal ring on the other. It can be thrown at a target to do him harm or to grab him (e.g., grab his legs to trip him, or wrap around his arms to bind him).

Kusarigama: This is a kusari with a kama (sickle) on one end. A Chinese kung fu weapon called the Flying Claw has identical game statistics. The wielder of the kusarigama holds the kama by the hilt and swings the chain to strike or grab a foe; once the target is grabbed, he follows up with the sickle end.

Kyogetsu shoge: This weapon is much like the kusarigama, but has a bladed grappling hook on the end instead of a kama. It is also carried as a grappling hook, its chain acting as its climb-line.

Main-Gauche: This is a European fencing dagger. It has a heavy hand-guard (6 DEF on the hand holding it) and extra-long quillions. It is especially good at, and so receives an extra +2 OCV for maneuvers with the Bind, Block, Disarm, and Takeaway (Grab Weapon) maneuver elements.



Weapons of the Ninja:
Ninja-to, Scabbard with Strangling Cord, pair of Butterfly Knives, Star Shuriken, Bo Shuriken, Tetsu Bishi, Ninja Grenades, Ashiko and Shuko

Manriki-gusari: Also simply called a manriki, this is a 3' chain with weights at both ends. It can be swung to strike a foe or thrown to ensnare him, just like the kusari.

Marbles: These are dropped where the character thinks targets will run. See the explanation of Marbles under Unusual Weapons for more details. Marbles do not require a Weapon Familiarity.

Naginata: This Japanese weapon consists of a 2-3' edged blade on long staff; the weapon is usually 7-8' long. It is traditionally a very popular weapon with female Japanese fighters. The weapon can be used as both a bladed weapon and as a staff; it is very versatile.

Nine-Dragon Trident: This Chinese polearm consists of a 6' shaft with a trident on top, plus two cross-bars further down (turned at 90° to one another) which bear an indescribable array of flanges and protrusions. It grants a +2 OCV to maneuvers including the Bind, Block, Disarm, and Takeaway (Grab Weapon) maneuver elements. In Chinese, it is called the *gao loon cha*.

Ninja-to: This weapon, also called the shinobi-gatama and ninja-ken, is the traditional ninja sword. It has a blade about 24" long and is about 40" long overall. It looks something like other Japanese swords such as the katana, but the blade is straight and the handguard is square instead of round. The ninja-to is used for digging holes in the earth as well as for fighting; this is an indignity the owner of a katana would never subject that type of blade to. Note that ninja only use these weapons on stealth missions; when disguised as ordinary people, they use whatever weapons were appropriate to those folk. Ninja also often use katana. The ninja-to scabbard is accompanied by a handy cord which serves as a garotte.

No-daichi: This is a Japanese two-handed sword.

Nunchaku: This weapon, one of the principal five weapons of karate (the others are bo, kama, sai, and tonfa), is an Okinawan wooden flail. It consists of two pieces of wood (each 12" to 14" long) connected by short chain or cord (itself 1" to 5" long). Nunchaku are often used in pairs.

Rapier: This is a long, narrow stabbing sword, a European fencing weapon.

Razor, Straight: This is the normal shaving implement; the large variety is larger than the types normally used by men for mere purposes of shaving. It is ineffective against Armor (it has the Reduced Penetration limitation) and doesn't do as much STUN as cleaving or stabbing weapons. It is the preferred weapon of capoeiristas. Two types of Straight Razors are shown on the chart, one of ordinary length and one extra-long.

Sabre: This is the European fencing sabre, a very sharp, curved weapon used principally for slashing. It is included in *Ninja Hero* because it is used with the Fencing style.

Sai: This weapon is one of the principal five weapons of karate (the others are bo, kama, nunchaku, and tonfa). It is is trident-shaped truncheon, some 15-20" long, made of metal. The point is blunted; it is not a stabbing implement. Due to its trident shape, the Sai receives an additional +2 OCV when performing maneuvers which include the Bind, Block, Disarm, and Takeaway (Grab Weapon) maneuver elements (thus receiving a total of +3 OCV with these maneuvers).

These statistics are also used for the *jutte* and *nunte* weapons. The jutte looks like the sai except that one of the tines is missing; this makes it easier to conceal, and in this guise it was a popular weapon among ninja. The nunte looks like the sai but one of its tines is bent backwards. The sai, jutte and nunte can be thrown; the three weapons share an identical Weapon Familiarity.

Sai, Cinema: Though historical sai appear never to have been sharpened, sai in movies are sometimes stabbing weapons.

Shinai: This is a bamboo practice sword shaped like katana and used in the art of kendo.

Shinobi-zue: This ninja weapon is a bamboo staff. One end is loaded with lead to do a lot of damage when it hits. The other is capped with a metal plug; when removed, this allows the concealed 6' chain to be drawn out of the weapon. The staff is used as a bo; the chain is used like a kusari but cannot be thrown.

Shuko: These are the ninja climbing claws worn on the hands; they can be used in hand-to-hand combat to slash a target. They also provide a +1 bonus to Climbing rolls (when wearing both the shuko and the ashiko, or foot-claws, the ninja gets a total bonus of +2 to Climbing rolls). A character cannot carry a weapon in a hand which has a shuko in it. And the characer must wear both shuko, one on each hand, to get the +1 to his Climbing rolls.

Shuriken: Commonly called throwing stars and throwing spikes, these are ranged weapons used by ninja and by modern martial artist heroes and villains. They come in three basic types:

Bo Shuriken are sharply-pointed metal spikes a few inches long. One to five bo shuriken may be thrown at a time; on the Ranged Weapons Chart for Heroic Campaigns, the second STR Min listed is for throwing more than one shuriken.

Large (Star) Shuriken are star-shaped metal disks several inches across, about half an inch thick, and possessing three to eight sharp points.

Small (Star) Shuriken are shaped the same as Large Star Shuriken, but are only about an eighth of an inch thick and a couple of inches across. One to five small star shuriken may be thrown at a time; on the Ranged Weapons Chart for Heroic Campaigns, the second STR Min listed is for throwing more than one shuriken.

Star shuriken are called *hira shuriken* in Japanese.

The Chinese have a weapon called Sleeve Darts (which are darts easily concealed in a sleeve), which correspond in stats to bo shuriken; the Chinese also have razor-edged coins which use the same statistics as small star shuriken. Many darts weapons, including specially-thrown nails or the narrow darts sometimes slipped into war fans, correspond to bo shuriken.

The Ranged Weapons Chart shows a load of 9 to 12 shuriken. Ninja traditionally carried nine, because that number has special significance to them.

Tai-Dao: This Chinese polearm is two meters long and topped with a heavy, curved blade. It was used both from foot and horseback. The *kwan dao* (also spelled *quan tao*) uses the same statistics as this weapon.

Tanto: This weapon is a Japanese dagger; it is heavily constructed, with a curved, single-edged, chisel-pointed blade. It is 9" or so long and has no hand-guard.

Tetsu Bishi: These are caltrops — four-pointed spikes which, when dropped on the ground, always land with one spike pointed up. When the character throws his tetsu bishi onto the ground, he rolls vs. DCV 3 to hit his target hex. Later, when a target walks into the hex where tetsu bishi have been thrown, the attacking player (or GM) rolls the 14- activation roll; if it succeeds, the target takes 1d6 damage. In campaigns which use hit locations, this damage is always to the character's feet (location 18). A character who sees the caltrops ahead of time (see the *Combat Rules* section for guidelines on perceiving inobvious objects) may move through the hex without tripping on the caltrops. Tetsu Bishi do not require a Weapon Familiarity.

Tetsubo: This is a Japanese war-staff. It is a 6' long hardwood staff covered with studded iron plate; the plated area of the shaft is octagonal rather than round.

Tetsu-To: This Japanese weapon is a heavy iron sword, curved in the Japanese fashioned, and is used by samurai and ninja alike as a strength-training weapon. It is too heavy for most people to use effectively in combat (see the weapon's STR Min).

Three-Section Staff: This is a Chinese kung fu weapon. It consists of three sections of wood connected by rings; each section is 18"-20" long. This weapon is used like a flail for long strikes, like a jo for in-close attacks, and is very good at maneuvers containing the Bind, Block, Disarm, and Takeaway (Grab Weapon) maneuver elements: It grants a +2 OCV with these maneuvers. If you're using the Weapon Lengths rules, the Three-Section staff is a special weapon: Other weapons attack against the Three-Section Staff as if the staff were a Long weapon, but the wielder of the Staff is never at an OCV penalty when the attacker gets inside his guard and strikes him. (For a further explanation of what this means, see the rules on Weapon Lengths in the Combat Rules section.)

Tonfa: This is the last of the five traditional weapons of karate (the others are bo, kama, nunchaku, and sai). It consists of a truncheon with handle protruding at 90 degrees near one end. It is often used in pairs. Unlike clubs, it does require a Weapon Familiarity (it's part of the Weapon Familiarity for Karate Weapons). However, ordinary people can pick up a tonfa and use it as ordinary club, keeping the normal weapon damage but losing the OCV bonus.

Wakizashi: This is the companion sword of the katana; it is the smaller of the *daisho* pair of samurai blades. The *kodachi* is the older form of the same blade.

War Fan: This weapon looks like a normal hand-fan, but is larger than purely decorative fans and is made of hardier materials. It is used two ways: Closed, it a punching weapon; open, it is effective at blocking attacks (+2 OCV with Block maneuvers). Special War Fans come with an additional blade option. The blade may be a razor edge on the vanes of the fan, used in a slicing motion when the fan is open, or it may be a spike at the base of the fan, used when the fan is closed. Both types are shown on the weapons chart earlier this section. Note that War Fans are also often used with small darts located in the vanes; if a character uses them, treat these darts identically to Bo Shuriken.

Wind and Fire Wheels: These are Chinese weapons. They consist of broad metal hoops a foot or two in diameter. Some feature protruding spikes and handles; other are plain hoops. They can be used to strike punches, and also receive a +2 OCV bonus when used with maneuvers with the Bind, Block, Disarm, and Takeaway (Grab Weapon) maneuver elements.

Yari: This is the Japanese spear. It comes in two versions. The normal version works just like any other spear. Another version comes with a back-hook (a backward-pointing spike mounted at the head), which gives the weapon a +2 OCV bonus when used with maneuvers with the Bind, Block, Disarm, and Takeaway (Grab Weapon) maneuver elements.

Yoroi-toshi: This weapon, the same approximate size and shape as the tanto, is a dagger designed to pierce armor. It is very heavy and very sharp, and does armor-piercing damage.

Yumi: This is the Japanese bow. It can be anywhere from 5' to 8' long, and, unlike Western bows, is not held in the middle; the handle is about one-third of the way from the bottom. Therefore it is easily used by horsemen. The "One-Man, Two-Man, Three-Man" designations indicate how many men it theoretically takes to string the bow; for our purposes, the STR Min of the weapon is also the STR Min it takes to string the bow.

CONCEALED AND INOBVIOUS WEAPONS

Almost every weapon described in this section can be carried as a *normal weapon* or as a *concealed weapon*. It's a tradition in martial-arts films — especially ninja movies — that many unusual weapons are disguised as ordinary objects. Following are some examples of weapons and ways they could be disguised in a campaign:

Blowgun: This can be disguised as a flute, or a walking stick; it can be combined with a jo or a used as a sword scabbard.

Bokken, Katana, Jien, Ninja-to, No-daichi, Wakizashi: These weapons could be concealed within a bo staff that acted as its sheath; about a foot and a half of the staff would actually be the hilt of the blade.

Brass Knuckles: This weapon could be fashioned as the lining of a pair of gloves or as the handle of a suitcase.

Cestus: This could be an ordinary-looking pair of gloves. An observer would not notice that the inner lining is Kevlar and that the first heavy blow with these will make short spikes poke through the outer lining.

Chain Whip, Kusari, Manriki-gusari: This weapon is easily worn as a belt.

Climb line, Kusari, Manriki-gusari, Marbles, Tetsu bishi: This sort of equipment is often carried inside the hollow hilt of another weapon.

Fist-Load: A fist-load can look like practically *anything*: a statuette, a strangely-heavy telephone receiver, etc.

Garrotte: This weapon can be an ordinary-looking (though reinforced) scarf or belt; wire garrotes can be built into the lining of clothes or into decorative hair-ribbons.

Grenades, Flash and Smoke: Disguised flash and smoke grenades can look like cufflinks, marbles, pebbles, fresh fruit, juggling balls, or anything small, roundish and inconspicuous.

Hanbo: A bo-staff could break down into twin hanbo.

Kusarigama: A kama (sickle) with a chain in its hollow hilt could be instantly converted into a kusarigama.

Nunchaku: A hanbo or an innocuous-looking walking cane could pull apart or unscrew into nunchaku; a bo staff could break down into two pair. Any normal-looking length of stout material, such as a tent pole, a flag staff, or a chair leg could conceal nunchaku...

Sai: One interesting prospect is that of the high-tech sai, an ordinary-looking stick which (at the press of a button) pops out the extra tines.

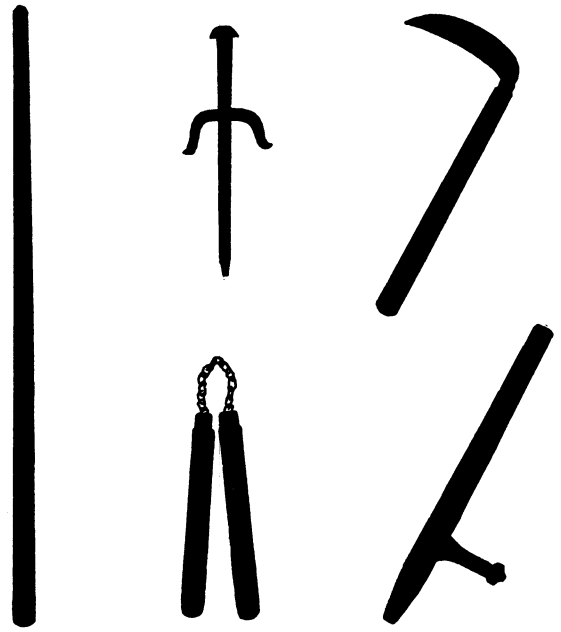
Shuriken: Small star shuriken can be disguised as buttons, loose change, the glittering baubles sewn onto the skirt of an exotic dancer, or the dangling elements of a mobile. They and bo shuriken are also naturals for inclusion in the hollow hilt of another weapon.

Three-section staff: One interesting prospect is to have a piece of lawn furniture break down into a pair of three-section staves.

Tonfa: This could be disguised as any normal cane or baton, with the perpendicular handle a locking swing-out mechanism.

War Fan: The best disguise for this weapon is to make it look like a normal fan, carried by some fashionable lady martial artist, and used for the normal purposes of keeping cool and flirting... until it's time for combat to begin.

Wind and Fire Wheels: These weapons may be worn as the brim of a hat.



The Classical Weapons of Karate:
Bo Staff, Sai, Nunchaku, Kama, Tonfa

LIMITS ON WEAPONS CHOSEN

In some heroic campaigns, characters don't usually carry weapons, and so use whatever weapons of opportunity come up in the course of the story. In other campaigns, characters routinely carry an arsenal — ninja adventures are the main example.

The GM is encouraged to let his characters take whatever they like, within his limits of tolerance. However, it is easy for a character to push the limits of reasonableness by taking hordes of weapons; it's simple to get in that habit when the character doesn't have to buy his weapons with his own points.

If the GM wants to limit the number of weapons his characters carry, he can take this approach: He should tell his players to look up all their characters' weapons on the superhero campaign charts later in this chapter. Each player should note down the superhero-campaign point cost of all the weapons he carries. If the weapon's purpose is obvious, he should take the cost from the Normal column; if the weapon's purpose is concealed, he should take it from the Concealed column.

In this type of campaign, player-characters should carry under 30 character points' worth of gear (weapons and other gadgets) when going about their daily business, not expecting any trouble. When the characters are walking around in the streets, not anticipating trouble but ready for it, they should carry between 30 to 60 character points' worth of gear. When the characters are ready for revenge or arming themselves for a raid on an enemy base, from 100 to 150 character points' worth of gear is about par. At any time, but especially above 150 character points' worth of gear, the GM is well within his rights to draw limits on the numbers of weapons his characters are carrying.

MISCELLANEOUS GADGETS

Here are two examples of non-weapon gadgets commonly used by martial artist characters:

CLIMB-LINE AND GRAPNEL

This is a good 60' rope with a grappling hook or lariat loop at the end.

A Climb-Line does the following for a character: It gives him an ordinary DEX roll for climbs which would normally take a Climbing roll and might be seriously impaired or penalized.

For example, climbing a nearly-vertical cliff of slick mud would normally require that the character make a Climbing roll instead of just a DEX roll, and would bring the character a serious penalty to the Climbing roll. But if he lassos a tree-trunk at the top and climbs his rope, he can use his normal, unmodified DEX roll, or his Climbing skill, whichever is greater.

These bonuses cannot be combined with the bonuses for Ashiko and Shuko; the claws tend to tear up the rope.

Also, the climb-line can be used as a weapon; the character can lasso targets at a distance and then use his Strength against them (he can yank for his normal STR damage, or yank to Throw the target to the ground, or just keep his target Grabbed).

LINE-THROWER

This is a special gun or even a special arrow or crossbow bolt with a line attached.

A thrown line would confer much the same sort of benefits that the normal Climb-Line would, but can be launched at targets far away, up to 300" away — say, the gap between two skyscrapers more than two city blocks apart.

GADGET AND WEAPON CREATION RULES

All the gadgets and weapons previously listed in this section are considered "normal technology." They don't exceed the technological limits of the normal heroic campaign, and heroic characters should be able to carry them without paying their own Character Points for the privilege.

However, players may want their characters to have special, magical, unusual weapons which do exceed the campaign norms. For these two reasons, we'll talk about building new gadgets for the heroic *Ninja Hero* campaign.

Important Note: *You don't have to read this part if you don't plan to be building gadgets and weapons for heroic campaigns. If that's the case, skip on past this section.*

THE HERO SYSTEM RULESBOOK

Before continuing in this section, review the Buying Weapons and Armor rules from the *HERO System Rulesbook*, pages 204-206.

POWERS USED IN WEAPON AND ARMOR CREATION

The HERO System powers used to create most weapons and armor included in this section include:

Armor (either for armor suits or to provide a weapon with armor for the hand holding it)

Entangle (for nets)

Hand-to-Hand Attack (sometimes with Ranged advantage — Ranged is equivalent to the "Can be Thrown" factor)

Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack (sometimes with Ranged advantage, sometimes with +1 or STUN Multiple)

Ranged Killing Attack (very occasionally bought with Autofire, such as with small shuriken

Stretching (to give extra range to some long melee weapons)

OCV BONUSES AND PENALTIES

In *Ninja Hero*, weapon OCV bonuses and penalties are bought this way:

OCV bonuses which affect all uses of the weapon are bought as 5-point skill levels. Weapons should not have more than a +1 overall.

OCV bonuses which apply only to a tight group of maneuvers (normally, the Bind, Disarm, Pin, and Takeaway maneuvers) are bought as 3-point skill levels. The GM has the right to refuse any purchase of such skill levels for a weapon. Weapons should not have more than +2 levels for such a group of maneuvers. Weapons may *not take 3-point skill levels for normal Strike maneuvers.*

OCV bonuses which apply only to one type of maneuver (normally Block) are bought as 2-point skill levels. The GM has the right to refuse any purchase of 2-pt skill levels for a weapon. Weapons should not have more than +2 levels for a maneuver, and you cannot add a 2-pt level and a 3-pt levels in the same weapon. Weapons may *not take* 3-pt skill levels for Strike maneuvers.

STR MINIMA (Heroic Campaigns)

Just for the record, here is how all the STR Minima for the weapons at the beginning of this section were built.

(1) Figure the Active Cost of the Weapon's Attack Power. Take the points in the attack power; apply advantages to it; and *then* add the value of Combat Skill Levels and Range Skill Levels used on the weapon.

(2) Divide the result by 2 for muscle-powered weapons (-1 limitation) or by 3 for non-muscled-powered weapons (-3/4 limitation).

(3) If necessary, and if the GM approves, apply other special Weapon Limitations from the *HERO System Rulesbook*, page 204. In *Ninja Hero*, the STR Min -5 factor was routinely added to swords and sai which could be thrown, but not to other types of weapons.

ARMOR CREATION

The Armor Weight Chart on page 204 of the *HERO System Rulesbook* shows how to calculate armor weight, but only for a few categories of armor. If you want to know the weight of armor covering a location or group of locations not shown on the chart, such as the 3-5 (Head), you're out of luck... so here's the information you need.

To calculate the weight of a specific piece of armor, first find the Full-Coverage weight value of the DEF of the piece of armor. That's the last (right-hand) column on the Armor Weight Chart, *HERO System Rulesbook* pg 204.

Then, multiply that weight by the fraction from the chart below.

ARMOR COVERAGE AND WEIGHT

Location	Name	Fraction
3	Head	1/40
4	Head	1/40
5	Head	1/40
6	Hands	3/40
7	Forearm	1/40
8	Upper Arm	1/40
9	Shoulder	4/40
10	Upper Chest	4/40
11	Lower Chest	5/40
12	Stomach	7/40
13	Vitals	3/40
14	Thigh	3/40
15	Leg/Knee	2/40
16	Leg/Shin	2/40
17	Ankle/Foot	1/40
18	Foot	1/40

Round the number you get to the nearest 1/10 of a kg (if the result is 0, round it up to 1/10 kg). This is the weight of the piece of armor.

Then, if you're buying the armor with points, apply a limitation based on the number of locations the armor covers:

ARMOR COVERAGE AND COST

Covers # of Locations	Limitation
1 or 2	-2
3	-1 1/2
4	-1 1/4
5 to 7	-1
8 to 12	-3/4
13 or 14	-1/2
15	-1/4

Then, decide whether the armor has the listed mass, or more or less than that: 1/4 the listed mass, 1/2 the listed mass, or even twice the listed mass. If you're buying this armor with points, apply one of the following Armor Limitations and the Real Armor limitation:

ARMOR MASS AND LIMITATIONS

Mass	Limitation
No Mass	-0
Quarter Mass	-1/4
Half Mass	-1/2
Normal Mass	-1
Double Listed Mass	-1 1/2
Real Armor	-1/4

The Real Armor limitation should be applied to any piece of armor which the wearer must put on and take off like normal armor (taking, usually, more than one phase), and which the GM can use to restrict the character in certain situations (such as when swimming, or to increase long-term END loss in hot situations, etc.).

In Martial Arts campaigns, the No Mass limitation is only appropriate to magical or super-high-technological armor, which the character should have to buy with his own Character Points. Quarter Mass is appropriate to modern-day armor made from space-age materials; a character would only have to buy such armor with his own points when it is special in some other way (for example, if it exceeds normal modern levels of defense for body armor). Half Mass is appropriate to well-made historical armor and many types of modern-day armor; samurai armor and pre-gunpowder European armor would fall in this category. Normal Mass is appropriate to particularly clumsy historical armor types, such as European plate armor made after the appearance of gunpowder. Double Listed Mass is appropriate only to very strange armor, such as a Franklin stove worn as body armor, heavy armor worn on a non-human creature, etc.

For our purposes, nonresistant PD and ED in some types of armor (such as the full-contact karate armor presented earlier in this section) is weightless; it is not bought with the Mass limitation. Only resistant armor is bought with the Mass limitation.

NEW LIMITATIONS

The new limitations we've introduced in this section are all examples of the "Limited Use" limitation. They include:

Value	Description
-1/4	*-1 to STUN Multiplier* This is a limitation for HKAs and RKAs. Mechanically, it works just like the +1 STUN Multiple, except that it subtracts STUN damage. This limitation can only be taken twice, for a -2 to STUN Multiplier.
-1/2	*Weapon Does Less Damage From Added STR:* The weapon receives +1 DC for every 10 STR above STR Min. This is a limitation for weapons in Heroic Campaigns. It is used to simulate weapons which are deliberately designed to do less damage than they could otherwise.
-1/2	*STR Does not Add to Damage.* This is a limitation for HKAs and Hand-to-Hand Attack Powers, but normally used only in Superhero Campaigns. It is used to build weapons and powers which do the same amount of damage no matter how much STR is put behind them.
-1	*Does No Damage.* This is a limitation for Telekinesis. It's more severe than just TK with no Telekinetic Punch. This TK does no damage at all. (It's still possible to harm someone by shoving him over a cliff, though.)
-2	*Only to Throw Target to Ground.* This limitation to Telekinesis means the power cannot be used to carry people or objects around, to catch someone who is falling, etc. It is distinct from "Does No Damage," and the two limitations can be taken together on a TK power.
-1/4	*No Effect on Flying/Leaping.* This limitation on Attack Powers means that it does no harm to characters not touching the ground. It can be used to simulate an electrical attack that requires the character be grounded, or to build attacks where the character must step on some object to receive the damage.
-1/4	*No Noncombat Stretch.* This limitation on Stretching means the power does not grant any extra stretching distance when the character is out of combat.
-1/2	*Only to Grab.* This limitation on Stretching means the character cannot use it to Strike his target, only Grab and manipulate him.
-2	*Only Protects One Location (or Two Locations).* This is a limitation for Defense Powers in campaigns which use the Hit Locations chart. The builder of the power can define which one location is protected, or which two are protected. Each location covered must be one of the number locations on the Hit Locations chart; a character cannot say "This armor covers two of my locations, Head and Shoulders" because Head is already three locations (3-5) and Shoulders is another (9), making that a total of 4 locations. This limitation roughly corresponds to an 8- Activation Roll.
-1/4	*Must follow a successful Grab maneuver.* This limitation for Any Attack Power means that the character cannot use the power unless he has Grabbed his target. If the target is not in his grasp, the second power cannot be used.
varies	*Must be Aimed at Specific Location or Has No Effect.* This limitation on any Attack Power means that the power will not work if it strikes the wrong location. This limitation can only be used in campaigns which use the Hit Locations chart. The value for the limitation depends on how hard the location usually is to hit. If the Hit Location modifier is usually a -1 to a -3, there is no limitation. If it is usually a -4 to a -5, there is a -1/4 limitation. If it is usually a -6 to a -7, there is a -1/2 limitation. If it is usually -8 or worse, there is a -3/4 limitation. The user of this power can increase his chance to hit by striking from ambush, which usually reduces the Hit Location penalties for aiming at specific hit locations.
-1/2	*0 Value vs. Guns.* This limitation to Resistant Defense Powers means that the power acts as 0 Defense to bullets or other super-high-speed projectile attacks.
-1/4	*Half-Value vs. Guns.* This limitation to Resistant Defense Powers mean that bullets and other super-high-speed projectile attacks have an automatic Armor-Piercing advantage against this type of armor. (If the bullet is already Armor-Piercing, then only 1/4 of the defense is applied to the weapon damage.)

-1	*Only Entangles One Limb or Protrusion.* This limitation to Entangle means that the entangling projection only grabs onto one area of the target's body. When such a power is used on a victim, a Hit Location roll should be used to indicate where it has struck, even in games not normally using the Hit Locations chart. All areas not Entangled can still perform normally. This sort of power can be effective at gumming up enemies' foci, at throwing impromptu gags on offending mouths, etc.
-1/2	*Not vs. Resistant Defenses.* This limitation to Drain means that the Drain is activated by some focus or discharge that must strike the target in an unarmored spot. If, for instance, the Drain is a poison spread on a delicate needle which can't possible get through 1 DEF, then the Drain should take this limitation.
-1/4	*Linked Attack Must Do BODY.* This limitation to Drain is just like "Not vs. Resistant Defenses," above, except that the Drain is linked with some sort of killing attack. If the killing attack penetrates the target's resistant defenses and does BODY damage to the target, the Drain can activate. If the attack doesn't penetrate, the Drain is wasted.

THE FOCUS LIMITATION

When building gadgets in a martial-arts environment, remember that a gadget or weapon that is obviously such a thing is built as an OAF, while a concealed weapon or gadget, or one whose real purpose is disguised, is bought as an IAF.

POISONS IN HEROIC CAMPAIGNS

It's too easy by far for PCs in a heroic martial arts campaign, who don't have to spend their own points for real-world technology, to say "I'm spending two points to buy KS: Toxicology, and I'm going to brew up some curare to put on my blowgun darts and shuriken." Presto: For two points spent, you have gross casualties among your NPCs.

Therefore, in heroic martial arts campaigns, PCs have limits on the amount of poison they can use. (If they run across some poison in the course of the adventure and use it, that's a different matter; you, as the GM, need to make sure that they use up or lose all of it by that adventure's end, or they'll certainly keep it around to use later on.)

A player-character in a heroic campaign can build a poison worth up to 60 active points. And poisons do count against the character's equipment allotment (as described above under Limits on Weapons Chosen. If a character wants to build a more potent poison, he can — he spends his own Character Points, and is as usual subject to GM approval.

Poisons are bought as Drains, which can affect just about any characteristic. Deadly poisons always affect the BODY characteristics, but toxins can optionally affect many others — STR, DEX, CON, INT, EGO and REC especially.

Example: *Drain 4d6 Character Points of BODY, 1d6 Character Points of STR (50 pts). Ranged (+1/2), Linked Attack Must Do BODY (-1/4), 1 Charge (-2), OAF shuriken (-1). Cost: 18 pts.*

SPECIAL WEAPONS

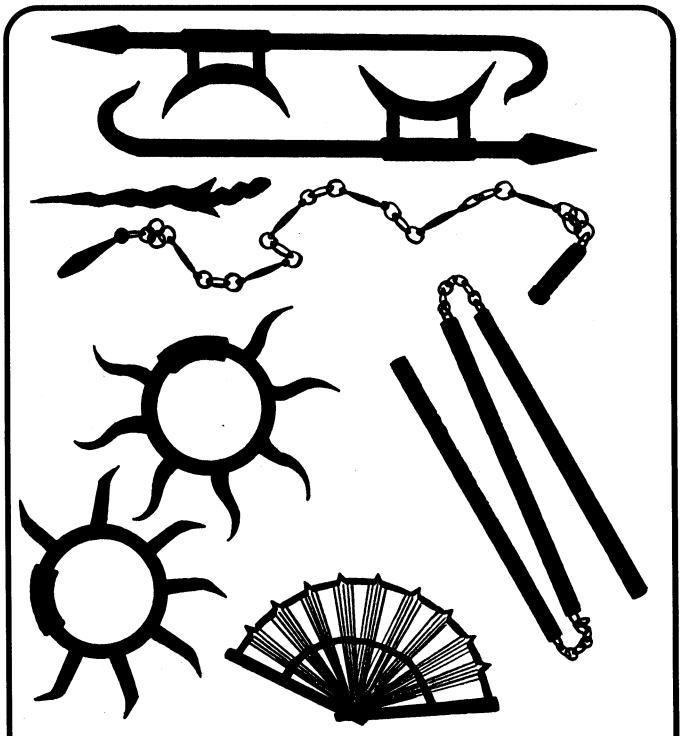
Many martial arts films feature some wonderful, magical weapon that is out of the ordinary in every way. Usually, they're the focus of the film: The weapon must be found, discovered, rescued, returned to its true owner, learned so that the hero can use it against his greatest foe, etc.

In martial arts campaigns, such weapons usually appear in heroic campaigns, and are built with the Independent limitation. If the hero gets the weapon, he can keep it (subject to the plot constraints on him); if he loses it, he'll probably never see it again.

It's up to the GM to decide whether a PC could start off play with a special weapon. If the GM says it's all right, the player must build it with his character's points, and must take the Independent limitation on it — the possibility of permanently losing all those points must always be on the character's mind.

Special weapons created by players may not exceed the campaign's limits on damage. However, with the GM's permission, they may be able to perform all sorts of magical tasks.

When you're buying Special Weapons with your own points, you don't have to spend any extra (or get any back) for choosing between Short and Medium weapon lengths. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages; short weapons are at a disadvantage when facing longer ones, but are easier to conceal or transport; medium weapons are seldom at that disadvantage, but are harder to conceal or transport.



Unusual Martial Arts Weapons: (clockwise) Hook Swords, Kris, Chain Whip, Three-Section Staff, War Fan, Wind and Fire Wheels

The GM shouldn't make a player buy a weapon with his own points if it doesn't substantially improve on or exceed the abilities of a similar weapon. If, for instance, a character wanted to build a staff that breaks down into a sword and a jo-staff, and the sword comes with a hollow hilt containing tetsu-bishi while the jo-staff has shuriken and marbles in the end, that doesn't constitute a weapon the character must pay his own points for... as long as each of those individual weapons is identical in stats to the appropriate weapons at the start of this section.

These examples are for heroic games, meaning that they include limitations such as 2-Handed Weapon and STR Min.

SOARING AXE OF THE EXECUTIONER

This is a huge twin-bitted axe with a chain wrapped around the haft. It can be used as an axe or as a kusari. Three times per day, the wielder can extend it to the length of the chain, whereupon the blade begins swinging around like a fan blade at the end of the chain, dicing everything in its path as the wielder swings it in a circle around him.

SOARING AXE OF THE EXECUTIONER	
9	Multipower: OAF Axe (-1), Independent (-2), Has a STR Min (Active Pts/2, STR Min -5: -1/2), 2-Handed Weapon (-1/2), 45 Active.
1 u	HKA 2d6 (Blade), +1 STUN Multiplier; 45 Active, STR Min 17.
1 u	Stretching 4", 0 END (+1/2); plus H-to-H Attack 5d6 (Chain); 45 Active, STR Min 17. and
11	Power Advantage: Area Effect Radius (4" Radius), Selective Target (+1 1/4), Hole In the Middle (fixed size, one hex) (+1/4), on HKA Slot: 67 Active Points; 3 Charges (-1 1/4), Full Phase (-1/2), Incantation (Prayer) (-1/4), Independent (-2), OAF Axe (-1). (The Advantage does not have the STR Min limitation on it and so does not increase the STR Min of the weapon when the advantage is used.)
22	**Total Cost**

THE CRAWLING SHURIKEN

This is a set of shuriken which don't just hit and do damage. They fly around or tear clean through obstacles in their path, leaving them unhurt; but when they hit their intended target, they do damage... and then they begin crawling their way into the target's body, continuing to do damage until the victim dies or the shurikens' evil energy is spent. They are so light and easy to throw that they do not require a STR Min.

THE CRAWLING SHURIKEN	
24	Ranged Killing Attack, 2d6 (30 pts); Armor Piercing (+1/2), Continuous (+1), Indirect (+1/4), Uncontrolled (+1/2), 97 Active Points; 4 Recoverable Charges (-1/2), OAF Shuriken (-1/2), Independent (-2) and
9	END Reserve, 240 END, 3 REC (30 pts); OAF Shuriken (-1/2), Independent (-2). Each shuriken is normally loaded with 60 END, enough for 6 phases of damage.
33	**Total Cost**

SWORDS OF THE TWINS

This is a matched pair of swords which can only be used by (a) twin siblings of a specific family who (b) practice the traditional family martial art style and (c) fight in an Array (see the Martial Arts Powers section) with one another.

Naturally, when the brother-and-sister player-character are old enough to leave home and adventure in the outer world, their aged grandfather retrieves these mirrorlike blades from the family vault for them to use in order to settle an old family score.

Each sword looks like this:

SWORDS OF THE TWINS	
12	Multipower: OAF Sword (-1; Personal Focus), Independent (-2), Has a STR Min (Active Pts/2, STR Min -10: -0); 50 Active.
1 u	HKA 1 1/2d6, Armor-Piercing (+1/2), +1 STUN Multiple (+1/2); 50 Active, STR Min 15.
1 u	Flash (Reflect Light Into Target's Eyes), 2 1/2d6, Area Effect Nonselective (+3/4), Increased Maximum Range (+1/4), Only In Brightly Lit Situations (-1/2); 50 Active, STR Min 15.
1 u	Aid PRE (Ch'i of the Ancestors), 5d6 CP to PRE, Self Only (-1/2), 8 Charges (-0); 50 Active, STR Min 15.
1 u	H-to-H Attack 7d6 (Flat of the Blade), Double Knockback (+3/4), Affects Desolidified (For Use on Enemy Family Ghosts, +1/2); 47 Active, STR Min 13.
16	**Total Cost**

THE DRAGON CLAW STAFF

This weapon looks like a walking-stick (or can be as short as a tonfa) with a large silver clenched dragon's claw as its head.

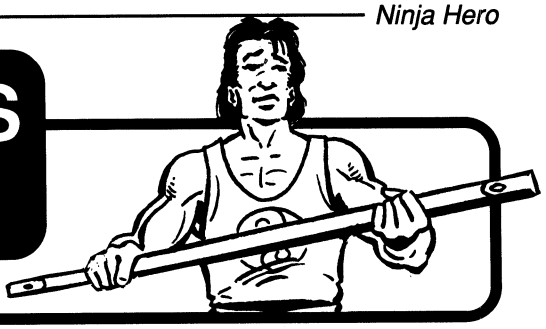
By manipulating the hilt, the wielder can make the claw open and close (closed, it does normal damage; open, it does killing damage), and fly out at the end of a line (for attacks at a 2" range) to strike or wrap around a target.

The Dragon Claw Staff looks like this:

THE DRAGON CLAW STAFF	
6	Multipower: OAF Staff (-1), Independent (-2), Has a STR Min (Active Pts/2, -1); 30 Active.
1 u	H-to-H Attack, 5d6, OCV +1, Active 17 pts, STR Min 8
1 u	H-to-H Killing Attack, 1 1/2d6, OCV +1, Active 27 pts, STR Min 13
1 u	Entangle 3d6, Active 30, STR Min 15, 1 Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4)
1 u	Stretching 2", 0 END, No Noncombat Stretch (-1/4), plus H-to-H Attack 5d6, Active 30, STR Min 15
1 u	Stretching 2", 0 END, No Noncombat Stretch (-1/4), plus H-to-H Killing Attack 1 1/2d6, Active 30, STR Min 15
11	**Total Cost**

You should have no trouble creating your own wonderful and unusual martial-arts weapons and gadgets.

SUPERHERO GADGETS AND WEAPONS



This section includes lists of appropriate martial arts gadgets and weapons, and guidelines for building new gadgets and weapons.

All these are for superhero campaigns; players and GMs of heroic campaigns should return to Heroic Gadgets and Weapons, earlier in this chapter.

In the charts in this section, weapon damage appearing without parentheses — for instance, 2d6 — refers to Killing damage, while weapon damage appearing in parentheses — for instance, (6d6) — refers to Normal damage.

RANGED WEAPONS

Important Note: *In this and subsequent charts, weapon damage appearing normally — for instance, 1d6+1 — refers to Killing damage, while weapon damage appearing in parentheses — for instance, (4d6) — refers to Normal damage.*

Typical ranged weapons found in martial arts film and fiction include the following:

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons commonly found in martial arts adventures include those on the chart on the following page.

THE ASHIKO AND THE SHUKO

These weapons are built with the following element: +1 to Climbing Rolls (2 active pts), OAF (for normal version, -1) or IAF (for concealed version, -1/2). Cost: 1 pt (either form).

When he uses both shuko and ashiko, the ninja gets +2 to his climbing roll.

Now, here's an important warning. It's easy to let this "buying-skill-bonuses-as-pieces-of-equipment" business get out of hand in a campaign. It's just cheaper than a character having to buy his skills with his own points, and some sorts of players will naturally gravitate to it.

Most campaigns should live by this rule: Only the GM can design skills bought as gadgets, and he should only do so when he sees a pressing need for that gadget to be present in order to simulate some sort of literary or movie element. That's why the ashiko and shuko are built as they are.

RANGED WEAPONS (Superhero Campaigns)

Name	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUNx	Shots	Cost Nl/Cn	Notes
Bows							
Hankyu	0	0	1d6	0	24	10/—	(1)
Yumi,							
One-Man	0	+1	1d6+1	0	24	14/—	(1)
Two-Man	0	+1	1 1/2d6	0	24	18/—	(1)
Three-Man	0	+1	2d6	0	24	22/—	(1)
Four-Man	0	+1	2d6+1	0	24	25/—	(1)
Seven-Man	0	+1	2 1/2d6	0	24	29/—	(1)
Shuriken							
Bo	0	0	1d6-1	0	9-12	9/12	(2),(3)
Large Star	0	0	1d6+1	0	9-12	12/17	(2)
Small Star	0	0	1d6-1	0	9-12	9/12	(2),(3)
Miscellaneous Weapons							
Blowgun	0	0	1 pt	-1	8	3/4	(4)
Fukimi-bari	0	0	1/2d6	0	1	-/4	(5)

Notes On the Chart

(1) Normal Version: 24 Recoverable Charges (+3/4), Concentrate at 1/2 DCV (-1/2), OAF (-1).

(2) Normal Version: 12 Recoverable Charges (+1/4), OAF (-1). Concealed Version: 12 Recoverable Charges (+1/4), IAF (-1/2).

(3) Autofire 5 shots (+1/2)

(4) Normal Version: Invisible to Sight and Sound (+3/4), OAF (-1), 8 Recoverable Charges (-0), -1 STUN Multiplier (-1/4), Concentrate at 1/2 DCV (-1/2). Concealed Version: Invisible to Sight and Sound (+3/4), IAF (-1/2), 8 Recoverable Charges (-0), -1 STUN Multiplier (-1/4), Concentrate at 1/2 DCV (-1/2). Note: All poisons bought for a blowgun dart are bought with these same advantages and limitations.

(5) Normal Version: IAF (-1/2), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4).

MELEE WEAPONS (Superhero Campaigns)

Name	OCV	Damage	STUNx	Cost NI/Cn	Notes
Axes & Maces					
Axe, Chinese	0	1d6	0	15/20	Usable at Range (Thrown)
Blades					
Bokken	+1	(5d6)	—	17/23	Usable at Range (Thrown)
Butterfly Knife	0	1d6+1	0	20/27	
Cutlass		—		17/22	+6 DEF on Hand (see Note #4); See Note #9
Using Blade	0	1d6	0		
Using Hilt	0	(3d6)	—		
Darn Do	+1	1d6+1	0	17/23	
Epee	+1	(2d6)	—	7/9	
Foil	+1	(1d6)	—	5/6	
Hook Sword	0	1d6+1	0	22/26	+2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway; +6 DEF on Hand, activates 11- (see Note #3)
Jien	+1	1d6	0	14/18	
Katana	+1	1 1/2d6	0	27/37	Usable at Range (Thrown)
Knuck-Knife	+1	1/2d6	0	14/17	+6 DEF on Hand, activates 11- (see Note #3)
Kris (knife)	0	1/2d6	+1	10/13	
Kris (normal)	0	1d6	+1	15/20	
Kris (sword)	0	1d6+1	+1	20/27	
Main-Gauche		—		16/20	+2 w/Block; DEF 6 on Hand (see Note #4); See Note #9
Using Blade	+1	1d6-1	0		
Using Hilt	0	(3d6)	—		
Ninja-To	0	1 1/2d6	+1	25/33	Usable at Range (Thrown)
No-Daichi	+1	2d6	0	28/37	+1" Range (see Note #2)
Rapier	+1	1d6	0	14/18	
Razor, Straight					
Large	0	1d6	-1	9/11	Reduced STUN Multiplier (-1/4); Reduced Penetration
Small	0	1/2d6	-1	6/7	Reduced STUN Multiplier (-1/4); Reduced Penetration
Sabre	+1	1d6	0	14/18	
Shinai	+1	(2d6)	—	8/11	Usable at Range (Thrown)
Tanto	+1	1/2d6	0	12/17	Usable at Range (Thrown)
Tetsu-To	0	2 1/2d6	0	30/40	
Wakizashi	+1	1d6	0	17/23	Usable at Range (Thrown)
Yoroi-Toshi	+1	1d6-1 AP	0	12/17	Armor-Piercing
Chain and Rope Weapons					
Kusari	0	(4d6)	—	19/25	Usable at Range (Thrown); +2" Range (see Note #1)
Kusarigama or Kyogetsu Shoge				18/26	Usable at Range (Thrown); +2" Range (see Note #1); See Note #9
Using Chain	0	(4d6)	—		
Using Hook	0	1d6	0		
Manriki-Gusari	0	(3d6)	—	9/12	Usable at Range (Thrown)
Clubs (Do Not Require Weapon Familiarity)					
Hanbo	0	(3d6)	—	7/10	
Jo	+1	(3d6)	—	10/13	
Fist-Loads (Do Not Require Weapon Familiarity)					
Ashiko	0	1/2d6	0	8/11	+1 to Climbing (see Note #5)
Brass Knuckles	0	(2d6)	—	8/10	+6 DEF on Hand, activates 11- (see Note #3)
Cestus	0	[+1 DC/K]	0	5/6	See Note #8
Fist-Load	0	(2d6)	—	4/6	
Shuko	0	1d6-1	0	8/11	+1 to Climbing (see Note #5)
Pole Arms					
Chai-Dao				23/30	See Note #9; +1" Range (see Note #2)
Using Blade	+1	1d6+1	0		
Using Shaft	+1	(3d6)	—		
Naginata				27/35	See Note #9; +1" Range (see Note #2)
Using Blade	+1	1 1/2d6	0		
Using Shaft	+1	(4d6)	—		See Note #9
Dragon Trident				26/34	See Note #9; +1" Range (see Note #2); +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Using Blade	+1	1d6+1	0		
Using Shaft	+1	(4d6)	—		
Tai-Dao				33/44	See Note #9; +1" Range (see Note #2)
Using Blade	+1	1 1/2d6	+1		
Using Shaft	+1	(4d6)	—		

Name	OCV	Damage	STUNx	Cost NI/Cn	Notes
Yari				22/29	See Note #9; +1" Range (see Note #2)
Using Blade	-1	1 1/2d6	0		
Using Shaft	0	(4d6)	—		
Yari w/backhook				25/33	See Note #9; +1" Range (see Note #2); +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Using Blade	-1	1 1/2d6	0		
Using Shaft	0	(4d6)	—		
Misc. Weapons					
Bo (Staff)	+1	(4d6)	—	14/19	+1" Range (see Note #2)
Chain Whip	0	1d6	0	14/19	+1" Range (see Note #2)
Flying Guillotine	-1	1d6	0	16/21	+2" Range (See Note #1); See Note #10
Garrotte					
Strangling	0	(3d6)	—	4/5	See Note #6
Wire	0	1/2d6	0	7/9	See Note #7
Kama	0	1d6	0	15/20	Usable at Range (Thrown)
Nunchaku	+1	(3d6)	—	10/13	
Sai					
Cinema	+1	1/2d6	0	13/17	Usable at Range (Thrown); +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Normal	+1	(3d6)	—	14/19	Usable at Range (Thrown); +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Shinobi-Zue	0	(4d6)	—	16/21	+2" Range (see Note #1)
Tetsubo	0	(6d6)	—	16/22	+1" Range (see Note #2)
3-Section Staff	0	(4d6)	—	15/20	+2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway; +1" Range (see Note #2)
Tonfa	+1	(3d6)	—	9/12	
War Fan, Basic	0	(3d6)	—	9/12	+2 w/Block
War Fan, Edged				12/15	See Note #9
Blunt Attack	0	(3d6)	—		+2 w/Block
Razor Attack	0	1/2d6	0		+2 w/Block
Wind/Fire Wheels					
Saw-Blade	0	1/2d6	0	13/17	Usable at Range (Thrown); +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway
Traditional	0	(3d6)	—	12/16	Usable at Range (Thrown); +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway

Note on Weapon Construction: All the weapons above are built with the Reduced END (0 END, +1/2) Advantage. Normal versions are bought as OAF (-1); Concealed versions are bought as IAF (-1/2).

Additional notes from the chart:

(1) This weapon is bought with an additional Power: Stretching, 2" (10 pts), 0 END (+1/2), No Noncombat Stretch (-1/4), Only for Weapon Maneuvers (-0), and is OAF (-1) in the normal form and IAF (-1/2) in the concealed form. Cost: 7 pts normal, 9 pts concealed. This cost is added to the weapon cost.

(2) This weapon is bought with an additional Power: Stretching, 1" (5 pts), 0 END (+1/2), No Noncombat Stretch (-1/4), Only for Weapon Maneuvers (-0), and is OAF (-1) in the normal form and IAF (-1/2) in the concealed form. Cost: 3 pts normal, 4 pts concealed. This cost is added to the weapon cost.

(3) This weapon is bought with an additional Power: +6 Armor (physical and energy, 18 pts active), Only Protects Location 6 (i.e., the hand holding the weapon) (-2), Activates 11- (-1), OAF (-1) for normal form or IAF (-1/2) for concealed form. Cost: 4 pts (normal or concealed form). This cost is added to the weapon cost.

(4) This weapon is bought with an additional Power: +6 Armor (physical and energy, 18 pts active), Only Protects Location 6 (i.e., the hand holding the weapon) (-2), OAF (-1) for normal form or IAF (-1/2) for concealed form. Cost: 4 pts (normal form) or 5 pts (concealed form). The cost is added to the weapon cost.

(5) This weapon is built with an additional Power: +1 to Climbing Rolls (2 active pts), OAF (-1) or IAF (-1/2). Cost: 1 pt (either form). This cost is added to the cost of the weapon.

(6) This weapon is built with an additional Limitation: Must follow a successful Grab maneuver (-1/4), must be aimed at the Head location or has no effect (-3/4).

(7) This weapon is built with an additional Limitation: Must follow a successful Grab maneuver (-1/4). This weapon is also *best* used when the attack is made against a head location, but this isn't a restriction on the power, for the sharp wire can cut any flesh it is wrapped around.

(8) The Cestus is not bought as most weapons are. When wearing a cestus, the character gets his normal STR damage (or punching maneuver damage). The Cestus adds just a little killing damage to the attack. It's bought as a +1 DC Killing Attack, 0 END (7 active pts), STR Does not Add to Damage (-1/2, the character cannot add damage from his STR), Linked to Punch Maneuver (-1/2), OAF (-1) or IAF (-1/2). Cost: 2 pts (normal version) or 3 pts (concealed version). *Also*, the Cestus includes: +4 Armor (physical and energy, 12 pts active), Only Protects Location 6 (i.e., the hand holding the cestus) (-2), OAF (-1) or IAF (-1/2). Cost: 3 pts (normal version *or* concealed version). Total Cost for Weapon: 5 normal, 6 concealed.

(9) This weapon is bought as a multipower with two slots. The larger slot defines the Active Point Base of the multipower (don't forget to include 0 END in its cost); both slots are bought as Ultras.

(10) This weapon only does damage when aimed at an extremity (taking a -8 OCV for head, -6 for hand, -5 for arm, -6 for leg, or -8 for foot). This is a -1/2 limitation. In a campaign which does not use hit locations, this means that the attacker using the weapon must always take a -6 OCV penalty when using the weapon.

Another thing to do to limit abuse: The Climbing bonus granted by the ashiko and shuko only give a bonus to a character who already has the Climbing skill; it adds nothing to the 8- Everyman Climbing skill that normal people have.

UNUSUAL WEAPONS

Certain weapons aren't used to strike the victim; either the damage they do is unusual (like Flash), or they are not used to hit a target actively — they are tossed in his path for him to step upon.

Each of the following powers is listed with a Charges limitation. Characters in superhero games who wish to carry more or less than the listed numbers of these weapons will have to recalculate their cost based on a different Charges limitation.

Name	Effect	NI/Cn Cost
Nets		
Small Net	Entangle, 4d6, Takes No Damage From Attack (+1/2), One Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4), OAF (-1) or IAF (-1/2)	28/33
Normal Net	Entangle, 4d6, Takes No Damage From Attack (+1/2), Area Effect (One Hex) (+1/2), One Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4), OAF (-1) or IAF (-1/2)	49/58
Large Net	Entangle, 4d6, Takes No Damage From Attack (+1/2), Area Effect Radius (9" radius) (+1), One Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4), OAF (-1) or IAF (-1/2)	46/55
Grenades		
Flash	2d6 Flash Sight, Area Effect (Radius) Nonselective (+3/4), 8 Charges (-1/2), OAF (-1) or IAF (-1/2)	14/17
Smoke	Darkness, 1" Radius, Normal Sight, 8 Charges (-1/2), OAF (-1) or IAF (-1/2)	5/7
Dropped Weapons		
Marbles	Telekinesis, STR 20, Area Effect One Hex (+1/2), Continuous (+1), Uncontrolled (+1/2), Activation 14- (-1/2), 2 Recoverable Charges (-1), Does No Damage (-1), Only to Throw Target to Ground (-2), No Effect on Flying/Leaping (-1/4), IAF (-1/2), DEX Roll Cancels Effect (-1/4)	/14
Tetsu Bishi	Ranged Killing Attack, 1d6, Area Effect One Hex (+1/2), Continuous (+1), Uncontrolled (+1/2), Activation 14- (-1/2), 2 Recoverable Charges (-1), No Effect on Flying/Leaping (-1/4), IAF (-1/2)	/14

Marbles and Tetsu Bishi are always supposed to be inconspicuous when dropped, so no OAF cost is given for them.

ARMOR

We haven't adapted the armor types given in the Heroic Gadgets and Weapons section (above) to present here. Superhero characters generally want to create armor which provides consistent defense over all the body locations, which does not have an encumbrance rating, etc. In superhero campaigns, such armor is usually built with higher DEF ratings than real-world armor, and simply *looks* identical to the real-world armors described in the Heroic Gadgets and Weapons section.

MASTER LIST OF WEAPONS

For descriptions of the weapons for this section, see the Master List of Weapons section above, under Heroic Gadgets and Weapons.

MISCELLANEOUS GADGETS

Here are two types of gadgets often used by martial artist heroes.

CLIMB-LINE AND GRAPNEL

A good 60' rope with a grappling hook or lariat loop at the end is bought this way: Stretching, 10" (50 pts), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4), No Noncombat Stretch (-1/4), Only to Grab and Takeaway (-1/2), OAF (-1) for normal form or IAF (-1/2) for concealed form. Cost: 12 pts (normal) or 14 pts (concealed).

A Climb-Line does the following for a character: It gives him an ordinary DEX roll for climbs which would normally take a Climbing roll and might be seriously impaired or penalized.

Also, the climb-line can be used as a weapon; the character can lasso targets at a distance and then use his Strength against them (he can yank for his normal STR damage, or yank to Throw the target to the ground, or just keep his target Grabbed).

LINE-THROWER

This is a special gun or even a special arrow or crossbow bolt with a line attached. (If bought as an arrow or bolt, the line-thrower cost is added to the cost of the weapon.)

One good way to buy it is this: Entangle 6 DEF (60 active), Entangle With 1 BODY (-1/2), One Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4), Only Entangles One Limb or Protrusion (-1), OAF (-1) for normal form or IAF (-1/2) for concealed form. Cost: 13 pts (normal form) or 14 pts (concealed form).

We've built it as Entangle because, with the Entangle power, you have the option of defining it as leaving a line stretched between the Entangler and his target.

A thrown line would confer much the same sort of benefits that the normally Climb-Line would, but can be launched at targets as far away as 5x the active points in inches (in the example we've just built, that's a range of 300" — say, the gap between two skyscrapers more than two city blocks apart).

GADGET AND WEAPON CREATION RULES

Creating Gadgets and Weapons in *Ninja Hero* is the same as creating focus-based powers in Champions; there's no difference.

All of the weapons for superhero campaigns in the charts above were built with the 0 END advantage. The normal (unconcealed) versions were built as Obvious Accessible Foci, while the concealed versions were built as Inobvious Accessible Foci.

There are some other points we can discuss for clarification:

OCV BONUSES AND PENALTIES

In *Ninja Hero*, weapon OCV bonuses and penalties are bought this way:

OCV bonuses which affect all uses of the weapon are bought as 5-point skill levels. Weapons should not have more than a +1 overall.

OCV bonuses which apply only to a tight group of maneuvers (normally, the Bind, Disarm, Pin, and Takeaway maneuvers) are bought as 3-point skill levels. The GM has the right to refuse any purchase of such skill levels for a weapon. Weapons should not have more than +2 levels for such a group of maneuvers. Weapons *may* not take 3-point skill levels for normal Strike maneuvers.

OCV bonuses which apply only to one type of maneuver (normally Block) are bought as 2-point skill levels. The Gm has the right to refuse any purchase of 2-pt skill levels for a weapon. Weapons should not have more than +2 levels for a maneuver, and you cannot add 2-pt levels to 3-pt levels in the same weapon. Weapons *may* not take 3-pt skill levels for Strike maneuvers.

INDEPENDENT LIMITATION

In the *HERO System Rulesbook*, the section on buying weapons and armor (pages 204-206) says that most weapons are bought with the Independent limitation. This is an error.

As we've already noted, there are two basic types of HERO System campaigns: Heroic, where heroes don't have to spend their own points on normal, everyday technology (weapons and gadgets); and Superheroic, where they do have to buy all weapons and they regularly carry.

Therefore, the only characters who have to worry about the cost of the gadgets in this chart are those in superheroic campaigns. And those characters are *not* usually going to use the Independent limitation.

Therefore, all the weapons and gadgets in the Superhero-Campaign weapons charts are built *without* the Independent limitation.

HAS A STR MIN LIMITATION

The HERO System also says that most weapons are built with the STR Min limitation. Again, in superheroic campaigns where characters spend their own points for weapons and gadgets, they don't normally take the STR Min limitation. Therefore, the charts for superheroic campaigns do *not* have a STR Min listed, and their costs do not reflect the presence of the "Has a STR Min" limitation.

SHOTS (Charges Limitation)

In the Superhero Ranged Weapons chart, the number in the *Shots* column for Ranged Weapons was used as the Charges limitation to calculate the cost of the weapon; they are always presumed to be Recoverable Charges. If you want to carry a different number of shots from the number listed, then recalculate the weapon's cost with a different Charges limitation.

HAND-TO-HAND VS. KILLING DAMAGE

There are many weapons which are built as Normal Damage weapons instead of Killing Damage weapons. In these rules, Normal Damage weapons are built with the Hand-to-Hand Attack power, while Killing Damage weapons are built with the Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack power. Thrown weapons take the "Ranged" advantage (+1/2). Ranged-only killing-damage weapons are built Ranged Killing Attack power.

Another important point: With the Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack power, a character can't add more damage from extra STR than he has bought in his power. If he has a 2d6 KA, he can boost that up to 4d6K if he has enough strength, but can't increase it above that level regardless of how great his strength might be.

The same is true, *in heroic campaigns only*, of weapons built with normal damage (i.e., with Hand-to-Hand Attack power). But that's heroic campaigns. In superheroic campaigns, normal-damage weapons just *add their damage to the character's STR or maneuver damage.*

In other words, in a superhero campaign, if a character has a STR of 40 and picks up a tonfa (which does 3d6 normal damage), then he can do 11d6 normal damage. It's as simple as that.



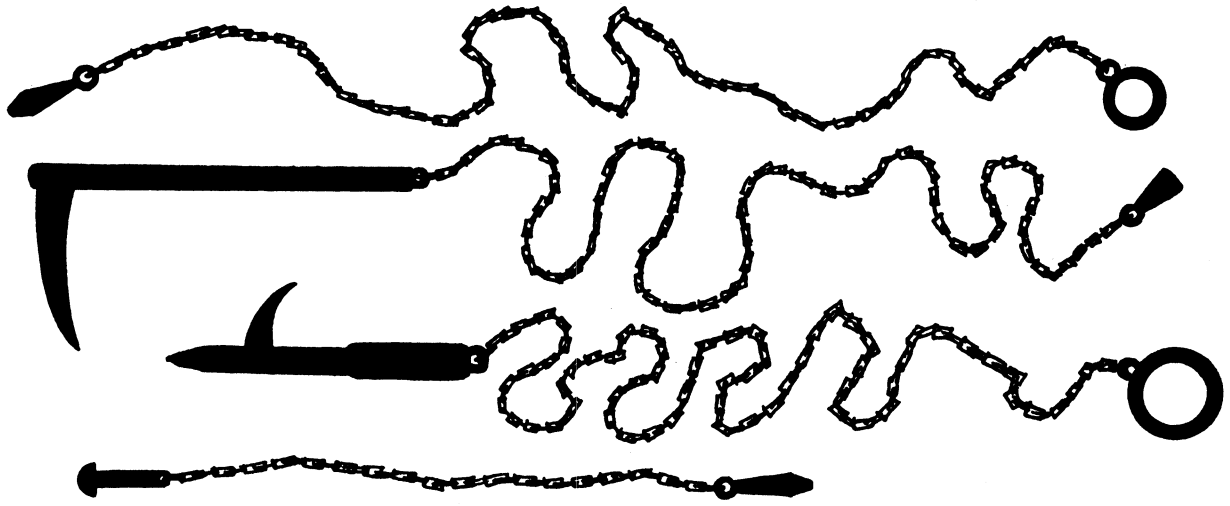
BELTS AND RANKS

Japanese, Okinawan, and Korean martial arts, as they are practiced to day, use a system of ranks indicated by the color of the belt worn by the practitioner. This belt-rank system is a 20th-century invention, a tool used to motivate students (especially Western students) to learn. In America, instructors of some Chinese martial arts have adopted the belt system to rank their students.

Belt ranks come in two categories: *kyu* (grade) and *dan* (degree). The following chart shows the belt arrangement for karate; variations on it are used in the other Japanese arts. In lowest order to highest, these ranks are:

Kyu (Grades)	Grade
Belt Initiate:	White or Red Belt
8th Kyu:	White Belt
7th Kyu:	Yellow Belt
6th Kyu:	Orange Belt
5th Kyu:	Green Belt
4th Kyu:	Purple Belt
3rd Kyu:	Brown Belt
2nd Kyu:	Brown Belt
1st Kyu:	Brown Belt

Dan (Degrees): All are Black Belts	
Degree	Name (Japanese)
1st Dan	Shodan
2nd Dan	Nidan
3rd Dan	Sandan
4th Dan	Yodan
5th Dan	Godan
6th Dan	Rokudan
7th Dan	Shichidan
8th Dan	Hachidan
9th Dan	Kudan
10th Dan	Judan
11th Dan	Juichidan (Judo Only)
12th Dan	Junidan (Judo Only)



Chain and Rope Weapons: Kusari, Kusarigama, Kyogetsu Shoge, Manriki-Gusari

FOREIGN TERMS



These are several of the terms which are commonly used in the martial arts. In the listing below, (J) means Japanese, (C) means Chinese, and (K) means Korean.

GLOSSARY

ai (J) harmony

aiki (J) harmony of effort, harmony of force

bu (J) military, martial

bushi (J) warrior

chambara (J) historical-period samurai films, usually quite bloody; name comes from "chan-chan bara-bara," the spoken sound effect for swords clashing

ch'i (C) spirit; breath; energy

ch'uan (C) fist, boxing

do (J,K) the way of; when applied to the end of the name of a martial arts style, it implies philosophical teachings as well as martial arts training (for example, karate-do means "the way of the empty hand")

dojang (K) training hall, school

dojo (J) training hall, school

fa (C) the way of; Ch'uan fa means "the way of the fist"

gaijin (J) outsider, foreigner; often a derogatory term

giri (J) duty, obligation

gup (K) grade; ranks below black belt in Korean martial arts

hapki (K) harmony

hwarang (K) flowering youth; an ancient term for a korean knight-general caste

hyung (K) forms, exercises, formalized training movements

ju (J) compliance

jutsu (J) the art of; when applied to the end of the name of a martial arts style, it indicates that this is primarily a combat system (for example, karate-jutsu means "the art of the empty hand")

ka (J) suffix meaning "practitioner of" (for example, judoka means "judo practitioner")

karate (J) empty hand (originally, China hand)

kata (J) forms, exercises, formalized training movements

ken (J) sword

ki (J) spirit; breath; energy

kobu (J) old-style fighting

kuen (C) forms, exercises, formalized training movements

kumite (J) free sparring training exercise

kung fu (C) hard work, well done

kwon (K) punching, or hand

kwoon (C) training hall, school

kyu (J) grade; ranks below black belt in Japanese martial arts; also means archery (kyujutsu is the art of archery)

obi (J) belt

ryu (J) school, style, or tradition (for example, Nito-Ryu means Nito Style)

sabom (K) teacher

sensei (J) teacher

sifu (C) teacher

tae (K) kicking, or foot

ti (K) belt denoting rank

wu shu (C) military arts

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

The pronunciation of the oriental terms and names in this book aren't intuitively obvious to most of us. Accordingly, here are some simple pronunciation guidelines.

But note: These are very simple guidelines, far too simple to cope with the vast number of dialects of some of these language, or with the irregular spellings produced by the different ways these languages are transliterated into English, or with the Roman alphabet's inability to accurately reproduce certain sounds.

JAPANESE WORDS

Most of the letters in transliterated Japanese words are pronounced similarly to their English counterpart. Vowels tend to be short (letter "a" is the sound found in "man" or "caught" rather than in "baby, for instance).

The trick to pronouncing Japanese words is this: These words are pronounced quickly, with no stress given to any of the syllables.

In English, we tend always to stress one syllable of any multi-syllable word. We say "bar-BAR-i-an" rather than "barbaryun."

Japanese is just the other way around; words are clipped out quickly and without undue stress on any syllable. Short vowel syllables are often ignored altogether.

For example, the Japanese woman's name Fujiko is not pronounced "fu-JI-ko." It's more like "foozhko," with the letter "i" nearly lost. In the Japanese word "akusento," meaning "accent" (yes, it's a loan-word from English), the "u" is almost completely lost.

That's a gross oversimplification of the way Japanese pronunciation works, but it will allow you to make these words sound more Japanese than English.

CHINESE WORDS

For the Chinese terms and names which appear in this booklet, there's no simple way for us to provide a pronunciation guide. There are too many different Chinese dialects (most involving complicated four-pitch tonal qualities), and they have been rendered into the Roman alphabet through two incompatible styles referred to as "Romanized" and "Pinyin" transliteration.

With that said, here are some rough guidelines to the pronunciation of certain syllables translated from the Chinese. In general, pronounce the word as it looks, with the following exceptions

Chinese	Approximate Letters (Pronunciation)
c	ts ch (chw)
dai	day dao (dow)
g	g (except at the end of a word; there, soft "k")
hu	hw
ng	rng
qi	chi
q	ch
xi	sh
yi	i (as in "piece")
zh	j
zi	tzyh, except at the end of a word: there, "tz"



MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS

Not all martial arts instructors use formalized uniforms in their classes, but many do. Descriptions of several uniforms and costumes common to the martial arts follow.

KARATE

The traditional karate uniform is the *gi*. The gi consists of the *uwagi*, or long-sleeved jacket, and *zubon*, or trousers. The *obi*, or belt, worn. Originally the standard gi was beige; today the standard gi is white.

Professional karate fighters wear gloves, foot-and-shin armor, and loose pants rather like warm-ups. They also wear athletic cups. Male karate professionals go bare-chested.

KUNG FU

The traditional kung fu outfit is a silk costume consisting of a long-sleeved tunic with white cuffs, *dang lung fu* (loose-fitting trousers gathered in at the ankles), and colorful sashes worn at the waist (these do not denote rank). Alternatively, a vest or shirt resembling a T-shirt is worn instead of the tunic.

NINJUTSU

The ninja night-suit, the costume worn by the ninja during missions, consists of three principal parts:

The *ibabakama* is the long-sleeved tunic and the trousers; it has many pockets in the sleeves, legs, and the body.

The *shinobi-zukin* is the ninja mask.

The *tabi* are the split-toed boots worn by the ninja for improved balance.

In ancient times, the ninja night-suit was colored in earth tones (green and brown), or white in winter weather. Today, most ninja are represented as wearing black night-suits. It would not be inappropriate for a modern ninja to wear his night-suit in modern camouflage patterns (either the green/brown forest camouflage or the mixed-gray urban camouflage patterns). Movie-style ninja can wear night-suits of any color, including red and white; in the films, this has no effect on their stealth abilities.

It is also to be noted that in ancient times the ninja did not often wear his night-suit; he usually went about in normal dress or disguised as a common farmer, merchant, etc.

AIKIDO

Most aikido practitioners wear a gi like that of karate; its jacket has sleeves that are less full than the karate gi. Senior practitioners wear the same jacket, but instead of the pants wear a black *hakama*, or divided skirt.

JUDO

Judo practitioners wear a gi like karate's, but made of heavier cloth and made without many seams (judo is harder on the clothes than many other martial arts).

TAE KWON DO

Tae Kwon Do wears a gi like karate's; it is called the *dobok*.

THAI KICK-BOXING

In the ring, Thai kick-boxers wear gloves and shorts (with athletic cups); they go barefoot and wear no other armor.

ORIENTAL NAMES



This section consists of several lists of names — Japanese, Chinese, and Korean. If you're having problems naming Asian characters, refer to the following lists and choose from them.

JAPANESE NAMES

Japanese names are presented with family name first, given name last. "Jim Smith" in the U.S. would be "Smith Jim" in Japan.

FAMILY NAMES

Abukawa, Aihara, Aoki, Arakida, Chiba, Egami, Endo, Fujimoto, Fukunaka, Furukawa, Gushiken, Hama, Hamada, Handa, Hayata, Hirata, Hiro, Hirose, Hitomi, Hosokawa, Igarashi, Iida, Ikeda, Inohara, Inokuma, Inoue, Ishida, Isobe, Iwahara, Kagabu, Kajitani, Kajiyama, Kamachi, Kaminaga, Kanesaka, Kasai, Kasamatsu, Kato, Katsu, Kawaguchi, Kenmotsu, Kimura, Kobayashi, Kojima, Kon, Kondo, Konishi, Kono, Kubota, Kuramoto, Maeda, Maehata, Matsumara, Matsumura, Matsuoka, Mitsukuri, Mitsuya, Miyajima, Miyamoto, Morioka, Morisue, Morita, Motoyoshi, Nakada, Nakamura, Nakatoni, Nakayama, Nataga, Ninomiya, Nishi, Nishimura, Nomura, Nose, Odaka, Oinuma, Okamura, Okano, Ono, Otani, Saito, Sakai, Sakamoto, Sakiyurai, Sasaki, Sekine, Shibata, Shibuki, Shimakage, Shinozaki, Shiokawa, Shiomi, Shirai, Shirasu, Shiskikura, Sohda, Sonoda, Sotomura, Sugiyama, Takabe, Takara, Takayama, Takayanagi, Takemoto, Tanaka, Tanida, Tsuji, Tsukahara, Tsukawaki, Tsurimi, Uemura, Usami, Yamakazi, Yamamoto, Yamashita, Yamawaki, Yano, Yokoyama, Yoshida, and Yoshikawa.

MALE GIVEN NAMES

Akinori, Akio, Akira, Eiichi, Eiji, Eizo, Haruhiko, Haruhiro, Haruki, Hiroshi, Hisato, Hitoshi, Isamu, Isao, Junzo, Katsumi, Kazuhiro, Kenichi, Kenji, Kiyoshi, Koji, Kyoji, Masami, Masao, Mitsuo, Motoki, Nobuyuki, Noritoshi, Sadayoshi, Sawao, Seiki, Shigeru, Shinji, Shinobu, Shinsaku, Sho, Shuji, Shumkichi, Shun, Sumio, Takao, Takashi, Takehide, Takeichi, Takeo, Takeshi, Takuji, Tashiro, Teriuihi, Toshio, Toyokazu, Tsutomu, Yasuhiro, Yoshihisa, Yoshio, Yoshiyuki, and Yukio.

FEMALE GIVEN NAMES

Akemi, Ayano, Echiko, Emiko, Etsuko, Fujiko, Ginko, Hideko, Hiroko, Hiromi, Juri, Katsuko, Katsumi, Kayoko, Keiko, Kimie, Kinuko, Kinuye, Kiyoko, Kiyomi, Kumi, Kunie, Kyoko, Makiko, Mariko, Masae, Masako, Mayumi, Michiko, Miwako, Miyoko, Norie, Noriko, Otsu, Sachiko, Sachiko, Saeko, Sata, Seiko, Setsuko, Shoko, Sumie, Suzue, Takako, Taniko, Toshiko, Toyoko, Yaeko, Yoko, Yoshike, Yukiyo, Yuko, Yumi, and Yuriko.

CHINESE NAMES

As with Japanese names, the family name goes first and the given name second.

FAMILY NAMES

Ba, Chang, Chen, Cheng, Cong, Dee, Fan, Fang, Fong, Gao, Han, He, Ho, Hou, Hsaio, Hu, Huang, Hui, I, Jianbua, Jiang, King, Kun, Kwan, Lai, Lan, Lang, Lei, Li (Lee), Liang, Liu, Lo, Ma, Qiu, Shih, Shiu, Song, Su, Sun, Tah, Tan, Tang, Ti, Tieh, Tong, Tsai, Wang, Wei, Wu, Xiu, Xu, Yang, Ying, Yip, Yu, Yuan, Yuen, Yun, Zeng, Zhang, Zheng, Zhou, and Zhu.

MALE GIVEN NAMES

Baio, Cheh, Chia-Liang, Chih, Fei, Feng, Gangsheng, Guoquiang, Haifeng, Ho, Hou, Hu, Kien, Kong, Kuang, Kuan-tai, Kung, Kungzheng, Liangde, Lieh, Loo, Lung, Man, Ning, Peng, Runming, Shiping, Shiyu, Shude, Song, Sze, Tan, Tao, Te, Wei, Weiqian, Weiqiang, Wu, Xiaopeng, Xiaoxuan, Yifu, Yixiao, Yu, Yuejiu, Yuwei, Zhiqiang, and Zhu.

FEMALE GIVEN NAMES

Chen, Ding, Haixia, Hseuh, Hui, Jiani, Jianping, Jihong, Juefeng, Juijuan, Jun, Lan, Lijuan, Ling, Lingjuan, Linwei, Liping, Mao, Meizhu, Min, Mingxing, Peihsi, Peijun, Peipei, Ping, Qing, Qiurui, Qun, Rongfang, Szu, Tse, Weihong, Xiaobo, Xiaojun, Xiaolan, Xiaoquin, Xilan, Xingjiang, Xiulan, Xiumin, Xuedi, Yan, Yanhong, Yanjun, Ying, Yong, Yuefang, Yueqin, Yumei, Yuzhu, and Zhen. Americanized Given Names

Often, Americanized Chinese will have a traditional Chinese given name but also adopt a Western given name for use among westerners. A woman who is Shih Tse to the Chinese might be Sandra Shih to the Americans.

KOREAN NAMES

Korean names also go in the order of family name first, given name last.

FAMILY NAMES

Ahn, An, Baik, Bang, Byon, Chang, Cho, Choi, Chol, Chung, Gu, Gwang, Ha, Han, Ho, Hwang, Jang, Jeon, Jeong, Jeung, Jo, Jong, Jung, Kang, Kim, Kwang, Lee, Li, Ma, Moon, Oh, Paek, Park, Ri, Ryom, San, Seo, Shin, Si, Son, Song, Sung, Yang, Yoon, You, Youn, Yu, and Yun.

MALE GIVEN NAMES

Bong-chol, Byeoung-keun, Chang-hee, Chang-sun, Chulsoon, Dae-du, Eui-kon, Eui-tae, Eunkyhung, Gab-do, Gyong-si, Hae-sup, Han-gyong, Ho-bong, Ho-jun, Ho-pyong, Hyang-soon, Hyong-kim, Hyoung-zoo, In-Tak, Jae-yup, Jeaki, Jong-kyu, Joon-ho, Joon-sup, Jung-keun, Jung-mo, Jung-oh, Kyou-chull, Se-hong, Seung-lip, Shin-cho, Soo-ann, Soon-chun, Weon-kee, Yong-chul, Yong-ik, Yong-jo, Young-su, and Youngchul.

FEMALE GIVEN NAMES

Aei-young, Byung-soon, Chan-sook, Choon-yei, Chun-ja, Chun-ok, Eun-sook, He-suk, Hea-jung, Heesok, Hwa-soo, Hwa-soon, Hyang-soon, Hyoi-soon, Hyung-sook, Jin-ho, Jung-a, Jung-hye, Kum-ja, Kyung-hee, Kyung-hwa, Kyung-ja, Mi-ja, Mi-kum, Mi-na, Mi-sook, Myong-suk, Myung-hee, Myung-sun, Ok-hwa, Ok-jim, Ok-rim, Ok-sun, Soo-kyung, Soon-bok, Soon-ei, Soon-ok, Su-dae, Syung-soon, Yang-gae, Yeun-ja, Young-hee, Young-ja, Young-nae, and Zung-bok.



BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY

The following books and (especially) movies, ranging in content and execution from the sublime to the ridiculous, were helpful in establishing the tone of *Ninja Hero*.

The entries marked with an asterisk ("*"), especially, are worth a look.

BOOKS

Chow, David, and Spangler, Richard, *Kung Fu: History, Philosophy, and Techniques*, Unique Publications Inc., Burbank, CA 1982.

Corcoran, John, and Farkas, Emil, *Martial Arts Traditions, History, People*, Gallery Books, New York, 1983.

* Draeger, Donn F., and Smith, Robert W., *Comprehensive Asian Fighting Arts*, Kodanasha International Ltd., Tokyo and New York, 1987.

Dunn, Charles J., *Everyday Life in Imperial Japan*, Dorset Press, NY, 1989.

Gilbey, John F., *Secret Fighting Arts of the World,* Charles E. Tuttle Co., Rutland, VT and Tokyo, Japan, 1989.

* Glaessner, Verina, *Kung Fu: Cinema of Vengeance*, Bounty Books, Great Britain, 1974.

Hatsumi, Dr. Masaaki, *Ninjutsu: History and Traditions*, Unique Publications Inc., Hollywood, CA 1981.

Hayes, Stephen K., *The Mystic Arts of the Ninja,* Contemporary Books Inc., Chicago, 1985.

Leung, Ting, *Kwan-Dao*, Leung Ting Col, San Francisco, CA 1984.

* Meyers, Richard, Harlib, Amy, and Palmer, Bill and Karen, *Martial Arts Movies: From Bruce Lee to the Ninjas*, Citadel Press, New Jersey, 1985.

Miller, Stephen G., *Arete: Ancient Writers, Papyri, and Inscriptions on the History and Ideals of Greek Athletics and Games*, Ares Publishers Inc., Chicago, 1979.

* Mitchell, David, *The Complete Book of Martial Arts*, Gallery Books, New York, 1989.

Reed, Philip and Muggeridge, Richard, Savate: Martial Art of France, Paladin Press, Boulder, CO 1985.

Silver, Alain, *The Samurai Film*, The Overlook Press, Woodstock, NY 1983.

(Unknown), *Chinese Martial Arts*, Zhaohua Publishing House, Beijing (Peoples' Republic of China), 1982.

GAMES

GURPS Japan, Steve Jackson Games, 1988.

GURPS, China, Steve Jackson Games, 1990.

MOVIES

For each of these movies, we've included a note describing what sort of campaign the movie would become under *Ninja Hero* rules, using the campaign guidelines from the Game-Mastering chapter.

Above the Law. Warner Brothers, 1988. Starring Steven Seagal, Pam Grier, Sharon Stone, Daniel Faraldo, Henry Silva. The CIA are the villains and combat aikido is the martial arts; violent and nifty. (In game terms, a Heroic Campaign.)

American Ninja. The Cannon Group Inc., 1985. Starring Michael Dudikoff, Steve James, Judie Aronson, Gjich Koock. Cheesy American film set in the Phillippines; the plot is silly, the fighting inferior. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

Big Brawl, The. Golden Harvest Ltd., 1980. Starring Jackie Chan, Jose Ferrer, Kristine De Bell, Mako, Ron Max, Rosalind Chao. 1930s martial arts film from the crew which did *Enter the Dragon*; interesting for Chan's comic timing and fighting ability. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

**Big Trouble in Little China.* 20th Century-Fox, 1986. Starring Kurt Russell, Kim Cattrall, Dennis Dun, James Hong, Victor Wong, Kate Burton, Donald Li. Director John Carpenter's stab at martial arts movies; preposterous, but a lot of fun. (In game terms, a Wild Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Bloodsport.* Cannon International, 1988. Starring Jean-Claude Van Damme. Plot revolves around an American martial artist entering a Hong Kong competition; many martial arts are represented; definitely worth a look. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

Bushido Blade, The. Trident Films, Ltd. (with Rankin/Bass), 1980. Starring Richard Boone, Toshiro Mifune, Sonny Chiba, Frank Converse, Laura Gemser, James Earl Jones, Mako. Set during Perry's trip to Japan; silly and unconvincing, with good swordplay by Sonny Chiba and an interesting kenjutsu-vs.-fencing duel. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Chinese Ghost Story, A.* Difficult-to-find Hong Kong fantasy film involving the undead, ancient evils, swordplay, reincarnation, and true love; see it if you get a chance; unfortunately, the subtitling is terrible. (In game terms, a Wild Martial Arts Campaign.)

Dragon Fist. Lo Wei Motion Picture Co., 1984. Starring Jacky Chan, Nora Miao, James Tien, Lin Yin-Ju. Standard revenge melodrama, one of Jacky Chan's few serious films. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Enter the Dragon.* Warner Brothers, 1973. Starring Bruce Lee, John Saxon, Angela Mao, Jim Kelly. Archetype of the American martial arts movie, Bruce Lee's most famous film. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

Enter the Ninja. The Cannon Group, 1981. Starring Franco Nero, Susan George, Sho Kosugi, Christopher George. Silliness with Franco Nero as a ninja with a white *igabakama.* (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

Kickboxer. King's Road Entertainment, 1989. Starring Jean-Claude van Damme, Dennis Alexio, Dennis Chan. Belgian-American hero learns *muay Thai* to avenge his brother's crippling at the hands of a Thai kick-boxer. Not bad. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Legend of Eight Samurai.* Toei Company Ltd., 1984. Starring Hiroko Yakushimaru, Henry Sanada, Sue Shihome, Sonny Chiba. Wild, rollicking sword-and-sorcery romp, Japanese-style. (In game terms, a Wild Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires, The.* Hammer Films & Shaw Brothers, 1973. Starring Peter Cushing, David Chiang, Julie Ege, Robin Stewart, Shih Szu. A Hammer horror-film cross-bred with a Shaw Brothers martial arts film; Van Helsing hunts Dracula in China. Definitely worth a look. (In game terms, a Wild Martial Arts Campaign.)

Lightning Swords of Death. Katsu Production Co. Ltd., 1977. Starring Timisaburo Wakayama, Goh Kato, Yuko Hama. One of the *Shogun Assassin/Baby Cart* series; violent and strange. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Master Killer (The Thirty-Sixth Chamber).* Shaw Brothers, Ltd., 1978. Starring Liu Chia Hui, Wang Yue, Lo Lieh, Lily Li, Chen Kuan-tai. Excellent Chinese film concentrating on the Shao-Lin training procedure. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

Red Sun. Warner Brothers, 1971. Starring Charles Bronson, Toshiro Mifune, Ursula Andress, Alain Delon. Unlikely team-up between samurai Toshiro Mifune and bandit Charles Bronson; good clash-of-cultures situation. (In game terms, a Heroic Campaign.)

Return of the Dragon. Golden Harvest Ltd., 1973. Starring Bruce Lee, Nora Miao, Chuck Norris. Also directed and written by Bruce Lee; standard protect-the-threatened-shopkeepers plot; good climactic duel with Chuck Norris. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

Revenge of the Ninja. The Cannon Group Inc., 1983. Starring Sho Kosuge, Keith Vitale, Virgil Frye, Arthur Roberts, Ashley Ferrare, Kane Kosugi. Sho Kosugi as a good-guy ninja; badly acted, directed, and fought, but worth seeing for all the ninja gadgets. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Samurai I: Musashi Miyamoto.* Toho Company Ltd., 1954. Starring Toshiro Mifune, Koji Tsuruta, Kaoru Yachigusa. Oscar-winning first part of the story of Musashi Miyamoto. Light on fighting, great cinematography. (It and its two follow-ups constitute a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Samurai II: Duel at Ichijoji Temple.* Toho Company, 1955. Starring Toshiro Mifune, Koji Tsuruta, Kaoru Yachigusa, Mariko Okada. Wonderful combat sequences, more violent than the first film.

* *Samurai III: Duel at Ganryu Island.* Toho Company, 1955. Starring Toshiro Mifune, Koji Tsuruta, Kaoru Yachigusa. Concluding chapter to the Musashi story.

* *Shaolin Executioner.* Shaw Brothers, Ltd., 1986. Starring Chen Kuan-Tai, Lo Lieh. Revenge melodrama; concentrates on Tiger and Crane styles of kung fu. (In game terms, a Heroic Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back.* 20th Century-Fox, 1980. Starring Mark Hammill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Alec Guiness, Billy Dee Williams. Though this may seem like a strange entry in this filmography, the three Star Wars films have a *lot* in commmon with Japanese swordsman cinema. (In game terms, a Wild Martial Arts Campaign.)

* *Star Wars: A New Hope.* 20th Century-Fox, 1977. Starring Mark Hammill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Peter Cushing, Alec Guiness.

* *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi.* 20th Century-Fox, 1983. Starring Mark Hammill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Alec Guiness, Billy Dee Williams.

Yakuza, The. Warner Brothers, 1974. Produced and Directed by Sidney Pollack, Written by Paul Schrader and Robert Towne. Starring Robert Mitchum, Takakura Ken, James Shigeta, Brian Keith. Violent clash between an American ex-soldier and the Japanese yakuza (gangs); good swordplay. (In game terms, a Heroic Campaign.)

* *You Only Live Twice.* United Artists, 1967. Starring Sean Connery, Mie Hama, Donald Pleasance, Aikiko Wakabayashi. A James Bond film; introduced the ninja to may western audiences who'd never heard of them. (In game terms, a Heroic Campaign.)

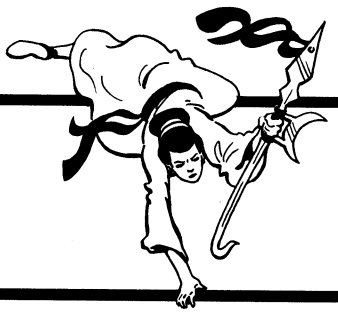


CHAPTER FOUR: GAMEMASTERING

In this section, we're going to put everything together and talk about running martial arts in existing campaigns... and about creating new campaigns based on martial arts adventures.

This section is written for the GM, so the text always addresses the GM. But there's no reason why players shouldn't read it, too; players who are unfamiliar with the martial arts genre definitely should read it.

CAMPAIGNING



You can use *Ninja Hero* both to supplement existing campaigns and to create brand-new martial arts campaigns.

EXISTING CAMPAIGNS

When you use these rules in existing campaigns, you give the campaign's martial arts characters a chance to take on more depth, personality, and individuality.

You should allow the players of such characters to revise their already-bought martial arts with the *Ninja Hero* rules. This supplement has modified several of the martial arts packages from the HERO System Rulesbook; players may wish to take advantage of the new maneuvers and elements (such as Weapons) introduced for some arts.

Whether or not you decide to allow them to take a new Style Disadvantage is up to you; see the *Learning Martial Arts* section from the Character Creation section, paying attention especially to Style Disadvantage, for more on this subject.

Ninja Hero also introduces numerous martial arts styles which are not in the *HERO System Rulesbook*. A player who wanted to play a Thai kick-boxer, but took Karate for his character because there was originally no Thai kick-boxing style may wish to change his character's martial arts style to the new one; as long as this doesn't substantially affect your campaign, you should allow this.

Finally, *Ninja Hero* introduces rules for building new martial arts styles and maneuvers. Whether or not you allow this in your campaign is at your discretion.

MARTIAL ARTS IN PUBLISHED SETTINGS

The Martial Arts presented in *Ninja Hero* are usable with most settings published for the HERO System. Just read the description of each martial art (from the *Martial Arts* section) to see if that art had been developed by the time of your setting.

If it has been, then decide whether it is possible for your characters to have learned it at that time. If they could have, then you can allow them to learn the martial art. If it's not likely that they would ever have encountered it, then don't allow them to take it. (For example, kung fu was certainly in development by the 12th and 13th centuries AD, but your Robin Hood characters are extremely unlikely to have come across it.)

Obviously, in a true fantasy setting, such realism isn't so important. The GM should decide which martial arts are available in this case.

GIANT ROBOTS CAMPAIGNS

A special note: In campaigns set in futures which feature giant robots (usually, campaigns inspired by Japanese *anime* cartoons or by the Robot Warriors game), characters make use of any martial arts style in this book, especially the Japanese styles... and they can use these arts both in hand-to-hand combat and in robot-to-robot combat.

In such a campaign, the GM should allow characters to take the following Weapons Element with their martial arts: "Weapons (+1 pt): Use Art With Anthropomorphic Robots."

That is, if a character is piloting a human-shaped robot, he can use his own martial arts maneuvers with the robot's hand-to-hand attacks.

NEW CAMPAIGNS

Let's talk about creating all-new campaigns based around martial arts characters. This entire section talks about creating new campaigns. If you don't want to create a new campaign, read this section anyway. Not all of it will apply to your existing campaign, but you may find much of it to be useful.

The following guidelines are all based on the elements common in martial arts cinema, fiction, and comic books, especially Japanese *chambara* (historical samurai pictures) and *manga* (comic books), Chinese kung fu cinema, and American martial arts movie efforts.

SETTING AND VIEWPOINT

When you decide to run a martial arts campaign (whether a regular campaign, a mini-series, or even a one-shot adventure set outside your usual campaign), you have to decide what sort of setting and viewpoint the campaign will take. Once you've decided, before characters are ever created for the campaign, you have to let your players know what the setting and viewpoint are.

The setting can be either the modern-day world, a historical period, a futuristic setting, or a fantasy setting. Fantasy settings can be based on historical settings with lots of magic and monsters added, or can be entirely original. *Ninja Hero* is written to be useful in just about any campaign setting, but owing to space constraints, it doesn't include material about historical settings, so (unless you're already familiar with such settings) it will probably be easiest for you to set your campaign in the modern day.

The viewpoint is a gauge of the attitudes and themes which will be prevalent in the campaign. For our purposes, there are only three significant viewpoints, each based on one type of martial arts movie: The Chinese, the Japanese, and the American. For examples of these movies, please see the *Bibliography.*

CHINESE VIEWPOINT

In Chinese Viewpoint adventures, the heroes are generally young characters who are grossly offended and use their arts to avenge themselves, or must use their arts to defend some innocent person or group threatened by an overwhelming enemy.

The hero — around whom the story revolves — is almost always Chinese (though he may be a master of some foreign art, such as ninjutsu). Unless he is going after revenge, he is supposed to "keep the kid gloves on". He never kills unless he absolutely has to, and uses the minimum force necessary to accomplish any task. This lasts until it is evident that his words and non-lethal beatings will not make the villains go away. The hero reveres teachers, and most stories revolve around the acquisition of some martial arts technique vital to the defeat of the principal villain; the relationship between student and master is a very important one.

The villains may be Chinese or foreigners. Because of China's history of invasions, the villains in these stories are very often Mongolian or Japanese; just as western cinema often uses the Nazi or the communist as a default villain, Chinese cinema uses the Mongolian or Japanese.

Combat in these stories tends to start out at a fairly non-lethal level, except in revenge stories where the hero's loved one is murdered right off the bat, and death follows death from the first scene. As it becomes evident that the villain will not go away, and as the villain begins sending in tougher and tougher minions, the heroes must fight in a more and more lethal fashion. The climax of such stories is usually a bloodbath.

There is a wide variance in the settings of these adventures; they can take place anytime from the Shang Dynasty of the 16th century B.C. until modern times. Most stories are set during times of great turbulence, especially invasions; to run an adventure like this, you'd best be familiar with Chinese history.

JAPANESE VIEWPOINT

In Japanese Viewpoint stories, the heroes are usually samurai or ronin placed in a can't-win situation. They may be faced with a crisis of ethics with no clear solution (for example, their code of obedience to their lord demanding one action, and their code of vengeance demanding the opposite). Or, they may be confronted with an impossible task (surviving the attacks of an unbeatable foe or an entire army, for instance).

Almost all heroes in such stories are Japanese. The martial arts are not as central a theme in Japanese viewpoint almost all characters have some fighting ability, and their martial arts abilities (usually kenjutsu swordsmanship, with perhaps some jiu-jitsu thrown in) are simply a means to an end.

When the heroes can confront their enemies, the combat is almost always lethal — indeed, it's usually incredibly violent and bloody. The fact that most characters are swordsmen rather than unarmed combatants makes death very common among PCs and NPCs alike.

The villains in these stories are not usually posturing, evil souls. They have been placed in a bad situation... but one which is opposed to the heroes. There is not usually a clear position on right and wrong: The heroes have one thing to accomplish, the villains have another, and for anything to be accomplished one side will have to die.

Such adventures are usually set in medieval Japan, particularly during the Tokugawa Shogunate (1600-1868). GMs wishing to run such campaigns should become familiar with the history of feudal Japan.

AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

In American martial arts adventures, the heroes are not usually adventurers; they're gainfully-employed people who know a lot about the martial arts. Of course, their precise type of employment easily leads to dramatic situations; they are often policemen, military personnel, criminals with hearts of gold, or martial arts instructors.

The heroes are usually American but can be of any extraction. Movies such as *Enter the Dragon*, *The Big Brawl*, and *Revenge of the Ninja* are all American productions featuring Asian stars as the principal heroes; the Americans present are all supporters, not equals, of the main hero.

As with Japanese Viewpoint adventures, the martial arts used by the heroes are means to an end. The plots of these adventures could be translated to other genres without difficulty, with guns and cars taking the place of the martial arts. But martial arts receive more exposure than in Japanese Viewpoint adventures, for several reasons. Each hero tends to have a very different style of combat; many of the minion villains do not have martial arts, and the very fact that the major villains and the heroes do sets them apart from "ordinary humanity." This is often even more pronounced than in Chinese Viewpoint adventures, where most people seem to know some fighting; in American films, the heroes are extra-special because they've mastered these unusual arts.

In these adventures, the heroes are confronted with a situation they have to resolve, and it's their martial arts abilities that allow them to resolve it. The plot and goals of the adventure may be similar to any other type of story, but are simply accomplished differently. In these adventures, the master/student relationship seldom plays a part (films such as *The Karate Kid* are exceptions); generally, the heroes are a society of equals, more in line with the democratic traditions of the west.

The villains are usually crime lords, using their martial arts and minion martial artists to maintain their crime empires or to hatch some enormous plot. They are usually men and women without honor, and the heroes can be very flawed human beings and still contrast favorably with the villains.

Combat in these adventures may be like that in Chinese adventures: not deadly in the first part of the adventure but always lethal by the end, or it may be lethal all the way through.

The setting is almost always the modern world. Frequently it is a big city in the U.S., but it is often a more exotic foreign city, such as Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai or Manila.

THEME OF THE CAMPAIGN

If you run a campaign, rather than a one-shot adventure, you have something else to settle. In addition to the setting and viewpoint, you must decide what the theme of your campaign will be. In other words, ask yourself what set of goals or adventure elements will commonly be explored in the campaign.

Here are some common themes and approaches:

Heroes are Freelance Do-Gooders: This is apt both in modern-day, fantasy, and historical campaigns. The heroes are wanderers, men and women who travel from place to place and try to make things better. Inevitably, trouble finds them wherever they go.

Heroes are Crack Mercenaries: The heroes could be a special military force, ninja for hire, ronin in a feudal Japanese campaign, etc. Whatever they are, at the beginning of each adventure they are hired to pull off some impossible task, assassination, or rescue.

Heroes are Professional Fighters: The campaign centers around a tour of professional competitions. Wherever the heroes go, they have a tournament to participate in... and, inevitably, some other situation will arise that requires them to use their martial arts abilities for real. Often, old friends and buddies will need their help against the local mob or other troublemakers.

Many other themes are possible, of course. But if you don't settle on one (and it's best to do so with the input of the players, who are stuck with your decision), your campaign may seem random and directionless.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

It's important to note that in most martial arts movies and adventures, women emerge as strong, independent, capable characters. Therefore female PCs should not be limited in any way in the campaign — not even by social customs of a historical setting you've picked. PC women don't have to be bound-footed, obedient supporting characters.

In real-world Chinese and Japanese history, women were usually second-class citizens. But in the martial arts genres, female martial artists go everywhere, do everything, and kill everyone the males do. In Chinese historical settings, female martial artists (especially the daughters of great masters) are prominently featured; many are great masters themselves, who teach new fighting techniques to the male heroes. In Japanese historical settings, female samurai and female ninja (*kunoichi*) abound. No one thinks their presence unusual in any way.

FIVE POWER LEVELS OF CAMPAIGNS

When you're creating your campaign, you have to decide which of the five most common *Ninja Hero* power levels you'll be utilizing. You may instead decide on an entirely different power level, in which case you'll have to adapt all the supplement's advice to that level.

The five power levels most commonly used for martial arts adventures include:

Heroic Campaigns

Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns

Wild Martial Arts Campaigns

Street-Level Superhero Campaigns

Normal Superhero Campaigns

You've seen all these terms before, in the Martial Arts Powers section. Let's talk about them a little more.

HEROIC CAMPAIGNS

A Heroic Campaign is an action-adventure campaign where the characters are human-level heroes. The Heroic Campaign is not specifically oriented toward martial arts adventures. One Heroic Campaign may be an espionage campaign; another may be a pulp-action campaign set in the 1930s; another may be a supernatural-investigators campaign.

For this reason, most GMs will not be creating a new Heroic Campaign just to introduce *Ninja Hero*. But many GMs will want to add elements of *Ninja Hero* into already-existing Heroic Campaigns.

In the Heroic Campaign, the characters are built on the hero level — usually 75 base points, up to 75 points in Disadvantages, no more than 25 points from any one category of Disadvantage.

Characters must take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage, but receive 0 points for it. However, they may also carry weapons normal for the setting without having to spend points on them.

Martial arts styles appropriate for the setting are allowed, but players are usually not allowed to create new maneuvers or new styles. The *Special Martial Arts Design Rules* (from the end of the Designing Martial Arts section) should never be used in a Heroic Campaign.

Only those Powers listed as appropriate for Heroic Campaigns (see the Martial Arts Powers section) are permitted to characters, and even these require GM approval. The Extra DC element is usually not permitted to player-characters. PCs are not usually permitted to buy their OCVs up too high with Combat Skill Levels.

With these limitations in place, martial arts in these campaigns tend to be very realistic; they don't strain the players' willing suspension of disbelief; they don't really substitute for super-powers.

HEROIC MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGNS

A Heroic Martial Arts Campaign is an action-adventure campaign which is primarily oriented toward martial arts adventures. The action is not too wild and unrealistic — it is similar to the type of martial arts adventure you see in most Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris movies. Many GMs wanting to try out *Ninja Hero* without introducing all its rules into their regular campaigns will begin new Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns.

In the Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, the characters are built on the usual heroic points (75 base points, up to 75 points in Disadvantages, no more than 25 points from any one category of Disadvantage). Sometimes they are built on 100 base points, up to 100 pts in Disadvantages, with no more than 50 points from any one category of Disadvantage; this provides for tougher characters with more martial arts abilities.

Characters must take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage, but receive 0 points for it. They may also carry weapons normal for the setting without having to spend points on them.

However, these campaigns usually feature more fantastic martial arts abilities than normal Heroic Campaigns.

Martial arts styles appropriate for the setting are allowed, and players are usually allowed to create new maneuvers and new styles. This helps give each character a lot of individuality. If the Optional Martial Arts Design Rules (from the end of the Combat Rules section) are used, characters can usually buy or build only one maneuver built from these rules.

The Powers listed as appropriate for Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns (see the *Powers* section) are permitted to characters, as are those for Heroic Campaigns. This is a pretty big list of powers and allows the characters to do some pretty amazing things.

The Extra DC element is usually permitted to player-characters, though the GM can always forbid it if he wants to keep the damage down to a reasonable roar. Forbidding the Extra DC element keeps damage from getting up into the superhero ranges, though some powers help characters approach superhuman abilities.

The GM may put some limits on the maximum Combat Values of characters in his campaign, but that CV is still much higher than normal men and women can enjoy.

Martial arts in these campaigns walk a fine line between realism and fantasy. They allow characters to be nearly superhuman but not completely unbelievable. Characters don't leap so high that the onlookers begin hunting for hidden trampolines; they don't hit so hard that NPCs suspect Kryptonian origins; but they are far and away more powerful than ordinary people.

WILD MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGNS

A Wild Martial Arts Campaign is a campaign which is primarily oriented toward martial arts adventures. But here, unlike the Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, the combat, action, and situations are wild and exotic. The characters are superhuman and may find themselves in combat with supernatural enemies. This type of campaign simulates a lot of the wild, frantic Hong Kong and Japanese martial arts movies imported into the U.S. Many GMs who want extreme, chop-socky *Ninja Hero* action but who don't want to introduce the supplement's rules into their regular campaigns will begin new Wild Martial Arts Campaigns.

In the Wild Martial Arts Campaign, the characters are built like superheroes (100 base points, up to 150 points in Disadvantages, no more than 50 points from any one category of Disadvantage).

Characters may take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage if they wish, but do not have to. Whether they do or not, they must buy, with their own points, any weapons or other items they routinely carry with them.

These campaigns feature more remarkable martial arts abilities than normal Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns.

Martial arts styles appropriate for the setting are allowed, and players are encouraged to create new maneuvers and new styles. Often, these characters are masters (i.e., teachers) of their individual styles, with many Followers and DNPCs who are their students. If the Optional Martial Arts Design Rules (from the end of the *Combat Rules* section) are used, characters can usually buy or build more than one of these special maneuvers.

Characters may take the Powers listed as appropriate for Wild Martial Arts Campaigns (see the Powers section); naturally, they may also take the Powers appropriate to Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns. Though these powers are more limited than unfettered superhero abilities, they allow the characters to be greatly superior to normal humans.

The Extra DC element is usually permitted to player-characters, and is almost always a necessity. The GM usually allows characters to buy their damage up into medium superhero levels (8 to 12 DC of attacks, for instance).

The GM may either put some limit on the maximum Combat Values of characters in his campaign, or allow the PCs to take whatever OCVs they can afford... but declare that the major NPCs will have combat values equivalent to the best of the heroes.

Martial arts in these campaigns are mostly fantastic abilities. Characters can kill with a touch, destroy huge boulders, leap to the horizon, and do other truly incredible things. The characters are superheroes, in everything but name and costume.

Incidentally, there's something you can do to make a campaign strange and interesting. Have your players create their characters on the Heroic Martial Arts Campaign guidelines, but create the societies of NPC villains on the Wild Martial Arts Campaign guidelines (on the same number of points).

With this approach, comparatively ordinary martial arts heroes will find themselves confronting powers they consider weird and supernatural. They may want to learn these magical powers, or may feel that the wielders of such powers are alien beings which need to be destroyed; whatever sentiment they feel, the division of the campaign of "us-the-human-heroes vs. them-the-supernatural-freaks" will make things more interesting.

STREET-LEVEL SUPERHERO CAMPAIGNS

A Street-Level Superhero Campaign is a gritty, dark-natured campaign where the heroes are low-powered superheroes in a dangerous environment. The Street-Level Superhero Campaign is not usually specifically oriented toward martial arts adventures, but many of the characters will be martial artists.

Most GMs will not be creating a new Street-Level Superhero Campaign just to introduce *Ninja Hero*. But many GMs will want to add elements of *Ninja Hero* into already-existing Street-Level Superhero Campaigns.

In the Street-Level Superhero Campaign, the characters are indeed superheroes, built on 100 base points, up to 150 points in Disadvantages, with no more than 50 points from any one category of Disadvantage.

Such campaigns are usually set up so that characters must take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage, but they do receive full points for it. They must buy, with their own points, any weapons or other items they routinely carry with them.

Since characters have Characteristic Maxima, martial arts and combat skill levels are important to them; it no longer pays to buy your STR up high enough to hurl a tank.

Martial arts styles appropriate for the setting are allowed, and players are encouraged to create new maneuvers and new styles. If the Optional Martial Arts Design Rules (from the end of the *Combat Rules* section) are used, characters can usually buy or build only one of these special maneuvers.

Characters may take the Powers listed as appropriate for Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns and Heroic Campaigns (see the Powers section). They may also take any other powers the GM chooses to permit. Often, in street-level superhero campaigns, "superpowers" are mostly gadget-based, or such things as psychic powers, rather than traditional energy blasts and mega-strength.

The Extra DC element is usually permitted to player-characters. The GM usually allows characters to buy their damage up into low superhero levels (6 to 10 DC of attacks, for instance).

The GM usually does not put a limit on the maximum Combat Values of characters in his campaign.

Martial arts are not the principal theme of such campaigns; they're abilities that most characters will tend to have. Therefore a lot of the martial arts adventure conventions and ideas from this section don't have any bearing on such campaigns.

NORMAL SUPERHERO CAMPAIGNS

A Normal Superhero Campaign (also sometimes called a Four-Color Comic-Book Campaign) is a campaign which simulates the action of four-color comic books. The *Champions* game is specifically set up to create such a campaign. The Normal Superhero Campaign is not usually specifically oriented toward martial arts adventures, but many of the characters will be martial artists.

Most GMs will not be creating a new Normal Superhero Campaign just to introduce *Ninja Hero*. But many GMs will want to add elements of *Ninja Hero* into already-existing Normal Superhero Campaigns.

In the Normal Superhero Campaign, the characters are superheroes, built on 100 base points, up to 150 points in Disadvantages, with no more than 50 points from any one category of Disadvantage.

Characters in such campaigns may (but do not normally have to) take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage. They must buy, with their own points, any weapons or other items they routinely carry with them.

In these campaigns, players will often find it more cost-efficient to buy only the occasional, odd martial maneuver and concentrate instead on buying Combat Skill Levels, Hand-to-Hand Attack powers, and multipower frameworks featuring lots of powers simulating fantastic martial arts abilities.

The Optional Martial Arts Design Rules (from the end of the *Combat Rules* section) should *never* be used in a normal superhero campaign.

Characters may buy any Powers the GM would customarily allow them. The Extra DC element is usually permitted to player-characters. The GM usually allows characters to buy their damage up into normal superhero levels (8 to 12 DC of attacks, or more in experienced or high-powered campaigns).

The GM usually does not put a limit on the maximum Combat Values of characters in his campaign.

CHOOSING BETWEEN THE FIVE

Now that you're familiar with the normal five types of campaigns featuring martial arts, you can choose whichever one most appeals to you. Refer back to the text you just read when you fill in your *Ninja Hero Campaign Design Sheet*, which is located at the end of this section.

CONTINUITY

You have to decide whether you're running a one-shot or a campaign; and if it's a campaign, what sort of continuity it enjoys.

ONE-SHOTS

A one-shot is a single complete story. It may take several play sessions to resolve or just one, but in either case it is a distinct story with beginning, middle, and end.

One-shots have certain advantages. You don't have to abandon your regular campaign in order to play some *Ninja Hero*; you just create new characters for a single storyline, play it until it's done, and return to your regular campaign. Also, since the characters are one-shot characters, they are more appropriate for revenge-laden stories where PCs are more prepared to die in the accomplishment of their missions — or even to kill themselves once their mission is done, a popular theme in samurai adventures. Such characters will risk more, and may achieve even more dramatic successes because of it... or may die in the attempt.

CAMPAIGNS

With an ongoing campaign, you have to decide what sort of continuity the campaign will enjoy. Here are the five normal types of campaign continuity.

Episodic: Every play-session constitutes a single, short adventure. Days or years can pass between play-sessions; the same characters or different ones can be used.

Mostly Episodic: Most play-sessions constitute whole stories, though some stories will span several play-sessions. Some of the PCs will probably be the same from story to story.

Mostly Long Stories: Most stories take place over several play-sessions, though some play-sessions will be complete adventures. Most of the PCs will be the same from story to story.

Mostly Serial: Each story takes place across several play-sessions, and the campaign places a high premium on campaign continuity. All loose ends are eventually tied up; all mysteries are eventually resolved; characters are fine-tuned to fit into the existing campaign structure.

Entirely Serial: It's difficult to distinguish a break between individual storylines; the campaign's subplots and themes continue throughout the campaign's history; on the whole, the campaign resembles a martial arts soap opera.

THE GROUND RULES

Before you play a martial arts campaign, before you even let the players create their characters, you have to establish some ground rules. These rules determine how powerful you'll allow PCs to be, what sort of special combat rules are used in the campaign, etc.

LIMITS ON DAMAGE

You should establish limits on the amount of damage you'll permit a character to do in unarmed combat. A limit of 8 DC is usually right for Heroic Campaigns; 10 DC is a good limit for Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns; 12 DC is appropriate for Wild Martial Arts Campaigns; and whatever you use normally for superhero campaigns is fine (we recommend 12 DC there, too).

(This limit doesn't include extra damage from Pushing STR or from throwing Haymaker maneuvers; don't include these situations. If you establish a limit of 8 DC for your characters, this means they can do only 8d6 with a normal punch, or 10d6 when pushing their STR.)

If you don't establish — and then strictly enforce — such a limit, players tend to buy a reasonable level of damage when they are first created but gradually buy a lot of that low-cost Extra DC, swiftly moving their character damage up into the high-superhero range. When this happens, you have to build your NPCs up at a similar rate for them to compete, and you end up with an arms race instead of a campaign.

LIMITS ON DEFENSES

Likewise, you should establish limits on the amount of damage your characters can soak up. A limit of 8 PD is good for most Heroic Campaigns; 10 PD is fine for most Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns; 12 PD is good for most Wild Martial Arts Campaigns; and only you know what works best within your superhero campaigns (there are guidelines in *Champions*).

Energy Defense is not usually much of a consideration in martial arts campaign; you can have the limit be the same as for PD, but recommend that characters only take half as much ED as PD.

LIMITS ON SKILL ROLLS

If there are no limits on skill rolls in your campaign, characters will be capable of some performances that poke holes in your plot. If a character has bought his Hearing Perception Roll up to an 18- (which doesn't cost much), your ninja NPCs will almost never be able to sneak up on him, for instance.

For most campaigns where the characters are supposed to be human, we recommend limits on skill rolls and perception rolls of 16-, with a preferred range of 13- to 14-.

LIMITS ON OFFENSIVE COMBAT VALUES

It's also dangerous to let characters buy all the skill levels they can afford. At a certain level of OCV ability, the PCs can wipe out all minion-level opponents without feeling any danger from them, and will have little trouble with your master villains. You, as GM, will then have to increase the combat abilities of your villains. Your players will then up their own combat abilities... and your campaign has disintegrated into an arms race.

Set a maximum limit for the OCV scores your characters can achieve through DEX, skill levels, and maneuver OCV bonuses. Don't let your characters buy OCVs higher than your limit. Now, they can sometimes exceed those limits through clever tactics or surprise maneuvers — but that's all at the GM's discretion and under the GM's direct control.

We recommend limits of OCV 10 for Heroic Campaigns, OCV 13 for Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns, and OCV 16 for Wild Martial Arts campaigns.

LIMITS ON DEX AND SPD

You also have to decide if you wish to impose limits on the DEX and SPD scores characters can take. In campaigns which require the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage, exceeding scores of 20 in DEX and 4 in SPD is a self-balancing situation (it costs a lot), but (a) if you have players who want the boosted characteristics in spite of the cost, and (b) you don't want them to have those characteristics at those levels, you should impose limits.

RECOMMENDED PREFERRED RANGES AND LIMITS

Ability	Heroic Campaigns Range	Heroic Campaigns Limit	Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns Range	Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns Limit	Wild Martial Arts Campaigns Range	Wild Martial Arts Campaigns Limit
Damage (DC)	5-7	8	6-8	10	8-10	12
Defense (PD)	5-7	8	6-8	10	8-10	12
Skill Rolls	13-14	16-	13-14	16-	13-14	16-
OCV	7-9	10	9-12	13	10-14	16
DEX	15-18	20	15-20	23	18-23	28
SPD	3-4	4	3-4	5	3-5	5

PREFERRED RANGES

Having decided on your limits, you should now decide what power level you wish the character's abilities normally to be. For instance, if your limit on Damage is 10 DC, you probably don't want every PC to be at 10 DC; they'll all seem very similar. But in some campaigns, all players will want to buy all their abilities right up to the limit.

Therefore, decide what ranges of power levels you want the characters to take, and tell the players that each character may buy only one ability up to the limit, and all other abilities must fall within your preferred range. For instance, if your preferred range on damage is 6-8 DC and your limit on damage is 10 DC, then a character can take 10 DC... but he cannot also exceed the preferred range on defenses, skill rolls, or combat values.

Below are some sample ranged and limits; you can use these, discard them, or modify them to suit your campaign.

Lots of special cases arise wherein a character will temporarily be able to exceed your campaign's damage limits.

For example, a character may have bought his normal damage up to the damage limits, and in some special case he could push his STR or his power, momentarily exceeding campaign limits.

A character could get a surprise bonus for a maneuver which allows him to exceed the campaign's OCV limit.

These situations are all fine; either they are uncommon, or their implementation is in the GM's control. Either way, they should not substantially affect the campaign.

MARTIAL ARTS DESIGN RULES

Do you wish your players to make use of Martial Arts Design Rules from the *Character Creation* chapter?

The advantages and disadvantages of those rules are discussed in that section; you should make your decision based on that discussion and on your own gut feeling. If those rules give you any qualms at all, disallow them, and enforce that prohibition religiously in your campaign.

You have to decide: (1) Whether to let them design individualized maneuvers; and further, (2) Whether or not to let them use the Optional Martial Arts Design Rules from the Combat Rules chapter.

If you'd like to allow the Optional Martial Arts Design rules, but are just a little leery of them, think about this option: Allow the rules... but permit each character to take or create only one maneuver designed with those rules. The character may never take a second maneuver based on those rules.

CAMPAIGN RULES

You have to decide which campaign combat rules from the *HERO System Rulesbook*, and which Optional Rules from *Ninja Hero*, you want to use in your campaign.

CAMPAIGN DESIGN SHEET

The *Ninja Hero Campaign Design Sheet*, which you'll find at the end of this section, is a handy way for you to decide on the ground rules for your campaign. Photocopy this sheet, fill it in, and then photocopy the filled-in form to give to your players. This will help both you and them keep your ground rules straight.

The first line is *General Description*. There, you want to describe the campaign's setting (time period and physical setting), viewpoint (Chinese, Japanese, or American), and power level (Heroic Campaign, Heroic Martial Arts Campaign, Wild Martial Arts Campaign, Street-Level Superhero Campaign, Normal Superhero Campaign).

The other lines on the sheet are self-explanatory, and many refer to areas of discussion from this section.

THE SETTING

Ninja Hero is useful to all sorts of campaigns in all sorts of settings, from the far future to the ancient past, in genres varying from dragon-fighting fantasy to sneering cyberpunk.

However, this supplement isn't a sourcebook for the more exotic sorts of campaigns. While some of you will want to set your *Ninja Hero* campaigns in such periods as historical Japan or historical China, we just don't have the room to give you fully-featured sourcebooks on those settings.

Therefore, if you're not already a student of those time periods, and you do want to set a campaign in them, we recommend you do some research (See Bibliography and Filmography section).

Likewise, you may not like the fact that *Ninja Hero* doesn't describe every variant you know of for every martial art. Again, space considerations prohibit it; there are literally thousands of different styles and schools for some martial arts. Sometimes the differences between them are too small to represent in HERO System game mechanics; sometimes the schools are so obscure that only its practitioners will have heard of it. Putting that amount of detail in *Ninja Hero* wouldn't necessarily be appreciated by all players.

So if you want to learn more about real-world martial arts, do some reading and investigation on your own. There are many fine books and magazines (and many rotten ones) which deal with the martial arts; a sufficiently well-written article may be all you need to design an entire martial arts style with the guidelines in the *Designing Martial Arts* section. In the meantime, use the more generic styles as they're written up here.

CHARACTER CREATION (THE GM PERSPECTIVE)

Once you know the ground rules for the campaign you want to run, you can let your players create their characters.

CHARACTER POINTS

By now, you should already have decided how many points you want the PCs to be built on; advice for that was given earlier in this section.

CHARACTER STEREOTYPES AND CAMPAIGN VIEWPOINTS

Not all of the Character Stereotypes from the Character Creation section are equally applicable to Chinese Viewpoint, Japanese Viewpoint, and American Viewpoint adventures. Some of them feel a little out of place when played in campaigns with the "wrong" viewpoints.

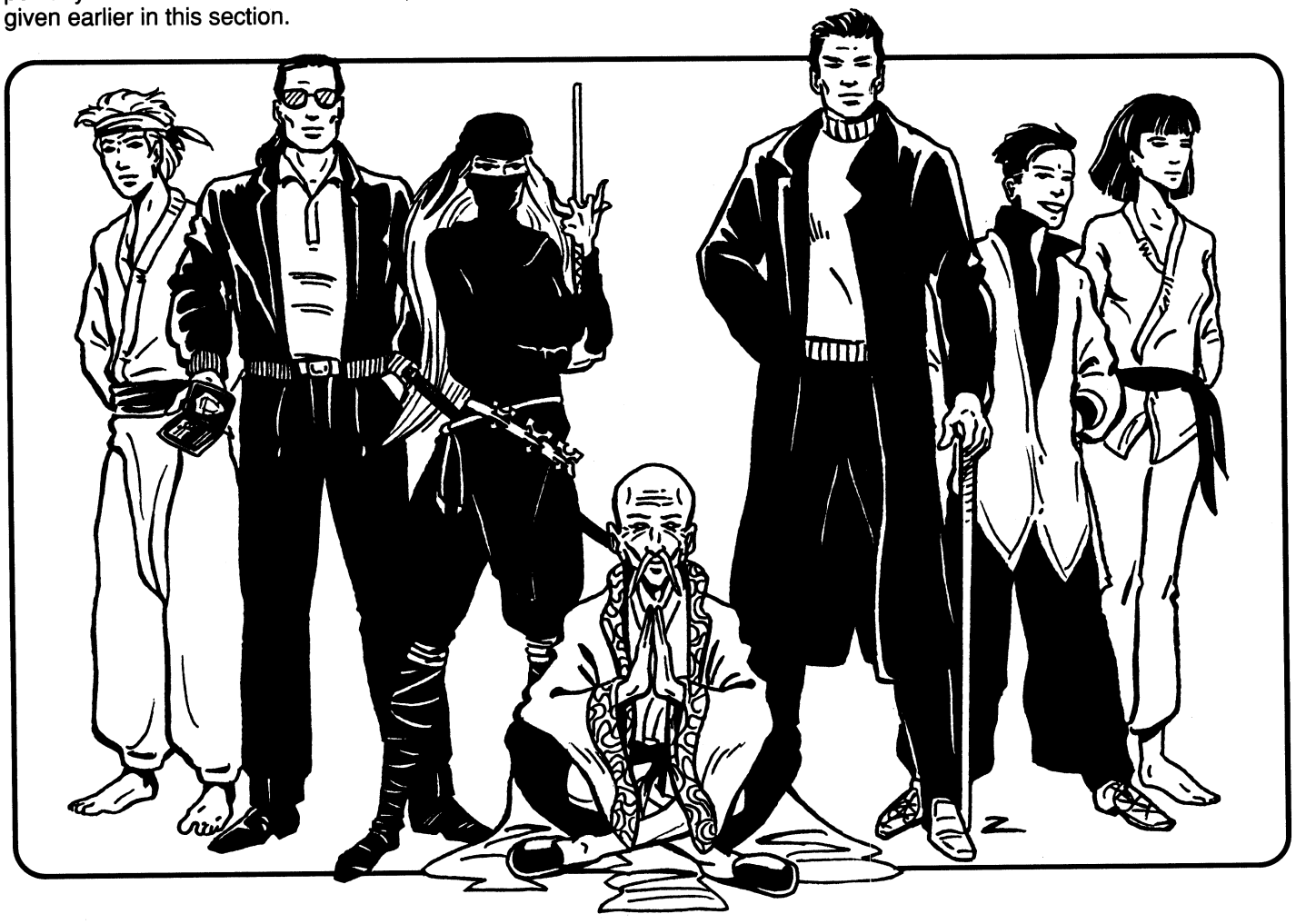
Below are some recommendations for which stereotypes go and don't go with which viewpoints. This doesn't mean that you should refuse to allow characters built with a specific stereotype in a specific type of campaign... only that you should pay special attention to the character as he's being played to make sure that he's fitting in.

The Avenger: The Avenger is equally common in Chinese Viewpoint, Japanese Viewpoint, and American Viewpoint adventures.

The Honorable Ninja: The Honorable Ninja is common in both Japanese Viewpoint and American Viewpoint adventures, and is not even unknown in Chinese Viewpoint adventures (though in this last case the character is probably Chinese; he was either trained by the Japanese, many of whom oppose him, or is a student of the legendary Chinese art which was the "forefather" of ninjutsu).

The Irritable Student: The Irritable Student role is most common in Chinese Viewpoint adventures, but is not unknown in American Viewpoint stories.

The Kickboxing Champion: This character is most common in American Viewpoint adventures.



The Kickboxing Cop: This character is most common in American Viewpoint adventures.

The Knight-Errant: This character type is equally common in Chinese Viewpoint adventures (where he may have the Chinese Knight package deal), Japanese Viewpoint adventures (where he may have the Samurai package deal, usually as a Ronin), and American Viewpoint adventures.

The Master: This character is most common in Chinese Viewpoint adventures, and is rarer (but not unknown) in American or Japanese Viewpoint stories (if he's a kendo or kenjutsu teacher, he may take the Kenshi package deal).

The Naive Hero/Heroine: This character is most common in Chinese Viewpoint adventures.

The Ronin: This character appears most commonly in Japanese Viewpoint adventures set in feudal Japan.

The Samurai: This character appears most commonly in Japanese Viewpoint adventures set in feudal Japan, though modern samurai can appear in such adventures.

The Serious Student: As with the other student character, the Serious Student role is most common in Chinese Viewpoint adventures.

The Sidekick: Sidekicks are equally common in Chinese, Japanese, and American Viewpoint adventures.

The Unwilling Fighter: This character is most common in Chinese and American Viewpoint adventures, but is not unknown in Japanese Viewpoint stories.

The Warrior-Monk: The Warrior-Monk appears in Chinese, Japanese, and American Viewpoint adventures.

CHARACTER INDIVIDUALITY

As GM, you want to make sure that all PCs are quite individual. The best way to do this is to make sure that not all characters choose the same role, and that not all characters choose the same combat style.

In campaigns where characters come from many different places, you want to make sure that no two characters have the same martial arts style. Even if two take, say, karate, make sure that they don't both have all the same maneuvers and that there is some strong visual difference in the way they fight. Perhaps one is a normal karateka, usually fighting barehanded, while another is a practitioner of Okinawan kobu-jutsu and always fights with karate weapons. If you take this approach, every character will have a unique style and combat flavor.

In campaigns where characters are members of the same school, tell each one to settle on a different sub-style or weapons specialization. For instance, in a campaign where all characters are kung fu stylists, you should insist that each choose a different sub-style (Shao-Lin Tiger, Monkey, White Crane, etc.) so that each will be very different visually. If the art allows use of weapons, insist that each character be best at one particular weapon; one character may gravitate to sai, one to staff, one to hook sword, etc. This way, no matter how equal the characters are as martial artists, each is also going to be the campaign's master of his own style of choice.

CHARACTER PARTIES

You must also decide how the characters are going to get together (and, if it's to be an ongoing campaign, why they stay together).

In martial arts adventures, player-character parties usually form one of the following types of groups:

The Hired Guns

Someone in need of help has gone to a bunch of individuals and begged their help or hired them, usually to protect him. The characters are brought together to defeat whatever is menacing the employer/supplicant. In working together on this most difficult assignment, they become friends and allies.

The Network of Friends

The characters were all friends in the past, before the campaign began. Not all will have been friends with one another: One character might know two of the others, and each of them knows two of the others, so that everyone in the party can rely on someone else's endorsement of a third character. The GM decides who knew whom in the past and informs each player of the names of some of his "old friends" before play begins. The characters all come together accidentally or coincidentally (for example, to attend a martial arts tournament); something happens that plunges them all into an adventure (for instance, one of them sees a martial arts murder and now the murderers wish to silence him, prompting the others to leap to his defense).

The Offended Collective

The characters may or may not have known one another in the past; it doesn't matter. What does matter is that at some event, a villain mortally offends them all. For example, each player-character may have had some relative attending a particular wedding which the PC was unable to attend (or was not invited to). Villains desiring to kill one person at that event kill everyone there. The PCs meet one another at the funeral, at the inquest, or at the morgue where they have to identify the bodies, and find common ground in their need for revenge and their martial arts training.

The Reunited Friends

The characters were all friends once upon a time and have gone their separate ways; the GM needs to write each character a note on his background to detail this. One classic approach for this is for all the characters to have been in the armed forces together; often, they were special forces who trained in the martial arts together. Now, years later, something happens to bring them together. For example, one of them has been murdered by a common enemy they thought dead years ago. They reunite when the first of them is murdered and take the war back to their old enemy.

The School

The characters are all members of the same martial arts school. This school may have a heated, nasty rivalry with another school which serves as the focus for the story and the campaign. Just as often, the master of their school will be insulted (for example, unfairly defeated in a rigged contest, or just beaten like a dog in the streets) by a rival or killed by a criminal, and the students decide to seek revenge.

The Seven Siblings

The characters are all brothers and sisters. The most common number of characters in a group like this is seven, though you could have a larger or smaller group if you choose. Frequently, there is another family (with its own seven star siblings, plus minions) which has basely harmed or insulted the PCs' family and must now be destroyed.

By choosing one of these approaches to structure the player-characters' group, you put the PCs in a position where they are much more likely to trust one another, not wasting time on mutual paranoia; they'll be able to get to the action and to their real goals much faster.

ELEMENTS OF MARTIAL ARTS ADVENTURES

(OR, "CLASSIC BITS")

A martial arts adventure is an adventure in which martial arts is a major element of the adventure — usually the characters' martial arts training, rather than modern weapons, subterfuge, or political infighting is what allows the characters to achieve their goals.

Except for that definition, a martial arts adventure can be like any other HERO System adventure. It can be a police thriller, a search-and-destroy mission, an encounter with the supernatural, or even a comedy romp.

Before telling you how to design a martial arts adventure, we're going to talk about the things which go into such an adventure — its elements or ingredients.

VILLAINS

These are the types of villains most commonly found in martial arts adventures.

VILLAIN POWER LEVELS

Each villain is normally built at one of five specific power levels:

Thugs: These are normals with a little combat ability; they are usually in the DEX 10-12 range, with a SPD of 2 or 3 (probably 2); they have a few weapon familiarities and may even know a martial arts maneuver. They are popcorn for the heroes to consume in big, wild fights; they are forgettable extras and need to have no distinguishing features.

Minions: These hoods are superior to normals and to thugs. They are usually in the DEX 12-14 range, averaging 13, with a SPD of 2 or 3, usually 3. They have weapon familiarities, often have one or two skill levels, and may know several martial arts maneuvers. If they work in concert and are clever, or just get some lucky rolls, they can endanger superior fighters like player-characters. They are almost all identical; they are also extras.

Students: These subordinates are good fighters, nearly as good as the player-characters. They are usually in the DEX 13-17 range, averaging 15, with a SPD of 3 or 4, usually 3. They have weapon familiarities, two or three skill levels, and fully-featured martial arts styles. One of them rolling well, or two or more acting in concert, can be dangerous to player-character fighters. They can be distinctive in their appearance and choice of styles and weapons.

Equals: Both Big Bosses and their chief bodyguards and lieutenants, and most Evil Masters, can be equal in combat ability to the player-characters. They should all be individualized characters with names, personalities, distinctive styles and distinctive weapons. They should be built on approximately the same number of points as the heroes.

Grand-Masters: Some villain fighters are so good that a single hero can't expect to defeat them; such villains must be confronted by the entire group of heroes if they're to be defeated. They should be built with many more points than the heroes, but should have exploitable weaknesses which the heroes may discover only during combat.

VILLAIN ROLES

These are the roles the villains tend to take in martial arts adventures:

The Big Boss

This character is a crime lord with a lot of personal power. He may be the enemy of the hero or the hero's teacher; he may be moving into a new territory which the hero wishes to protect. Usually, he is a good martial-arts fighter, a match for any one of the heroes, built as an *Equal*.

The Brother or Rival From the Same School

Often, one of the heroes has a rival in the same school (or a full brother taught in the same style) who grew jealous of the hero's skill, or of what he thought of as their teacher's preference for the hero, and disgraced himself (usually by unfairly attacking the hero). He was outcast, and now he's the hero's greatest enemy. Eventually, the Big Boss or the Master villain will hire this brother/rival for the final confrontation with the heroes. He is his brother/rival's dark twin, with similar fighting abilities but different drives and goals; he is built as an *Equal*.

The Brute

Each Big Boss has at least one hulking brute of a subordinate; this fellow may be in charge of gathering protection money or brutalizing people the Big Boss wants to teach a lesson to. He encounters the heroes early in the adventure. He's usually low-DEX but a high OCV (from 2-pt skill levels) in his preferred maneuver, and built with considerable physical characteristics; the hero can outshine him in pure style and will inevitably defeat him, though a single blow from this villain can do a lot of harm to the hero. He is bult as a *Student*.

The Clan Advisor

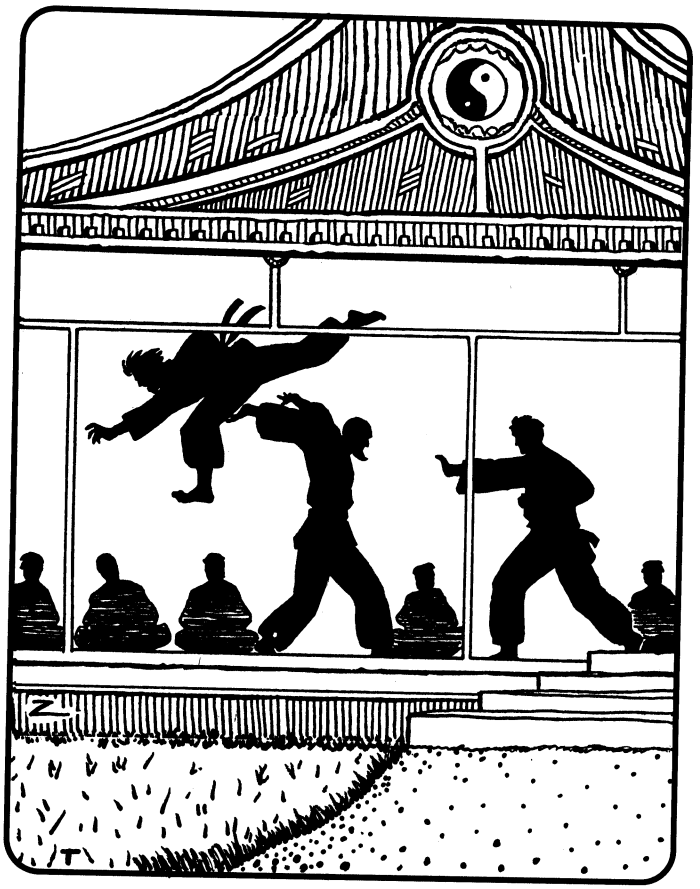
If the adventure involves a heroic clan (either the one to which heroes belong, or a friendly family), then the advisor of the clan could be a traitor. He advises the clan lord to harmful actions or even more harmful inaction; he tells the Big Boss or the evil Master of the heroes' plans. He's usually not much of a fighter when the heroes finally figure out what he's been doing; he's normally built as a *Thug,* but with a personality.

The Go-Between

This character takes orders from the Big Boss to the various cells of his criminal organization; it is also he who takes messages from the Big Boss to the heroes (assuming the Boss doesn't want to do it himself). The Go-Between may be a snivelling wretch, or as dangerous a fighter as the player-characters. Because his role is a "peaceful" one, the heroes don't usually end up fighting him until the climax, when the Big Boss needs all his good fighters (and even the rotten ones) defending him. The Go-Between is usually built as a *Minion.*

The Lieutenant/Senior Student

Big Bosses have at least one superbly-trained lieutenant — sub-bosses who help run the crime family and who themselves are a match for player-characters. Evil Masters have Senior Students with the same abilities. Each Lieutenant or Senior Student should be as individual as the player-characters, each with his own style, his own weapon specialization, his own code of honor, etc. The Lieutenant sometimes masquerades as the big boss, meaning that when the PCs take him out, only then do they discover that they haven't yet come to the really tough enemy.



One variant on the Lieutenant is the Muscleman, who is like the Brute (above)... except that he really knows how to fight. He has all the Brute's physical characteristics but is more dexterous, and is a match, or nearly a match, for the player-characters. Usually, he's not as good a fighter, and a PC can eventually defeat him... but the way he shrugs off damage in the early part of the fight tends to scare the PC. The Lieutenant/Senior Student is usually built as an *Equal.*

The Master

The Master — more specifically, the evil Master — is a martial arts teacher who does more harm than good. He is usually the master of the school which is the PCs' rival; he may be the Brother/Rival of the PCs' master. He is usually a tremendous fighter, capable of beating the entire group of PCs... at least at the start of the story. Once the heroes have been thrashed by him and retrained with the master of an art which can cope with the evil Master's style, they will be on a par with the evil Master.

The evil Master's goals usually involve destruction of the PCs' school, creation of a legion of martial arts assassins, conquest of the PCs' nation, or something equally nefarious. The Master is usually built as a *Grand Master.*

The Master's Daughter

The daughter of the evil Master is likely to be a fierce martial artist in her own right. She may be devoted both to him and to his goals; or she may be torn with indecision, willing to die to defend him but tortured by the fact that he has turned out to be evil. This character is usually built as an *Equal.*

The Survivor Seeking Revenge

Eventually, PCs defeat and usually kill their enemies. Inevitably, those enemies have brothers, sisters, widow(er)s, sons and daughters who will seek revenge. You can make this a simple situation, where an evil son comes to avenge his evil father, or you can make it excruciating to the PCs when a noble child or sibling must satisfy family honor by killing the PC responsible... regardless of how evil the villain might have been. The PCs will have to defend themselves from and probably kill this honorable opponent if they're to survive, which gives the incident a haunting air of tragedy. Sometimes the situation can be resolved without this noble avenger having to die or having to kill a PC, but it would take an incredible effort on the PCs' part to figure out how to satisfy the avenger's obligations without taking the PC's life. This character is usually built as an *Equal.*

INNOCENTS

These characters are usually menaced at the start of an adventure and provide some motivation for the player-characters to become involved in what promises to be a bad situation.

The Shop-Keeper and Family: If the plot involves a crime-lord moving in on a new area or neighborhood, inevitably it is the shop-keeper (whether it's a humble fish-seller, a prosperous restauranteur, or the millionaire owner of a series of department stores) who suffers for it. The shop-keeper and his family are the criminals' targets; they are also acquaintances, friends, or employers of the player-characters.

ALLIES OF THE HEROES

These characters are friends and allies of the player-characters. They should not be as important to the adventure story as the PCs, of course, but can provide help to the PCs in critical situations.

The Clan Advisor

Naturally, not all clan advisors have to be traitors; some will be virtuous supporters of their clans. But note that they shouldn't look or act any different from their treacherous counterparts; they're just as sly, and the PCs will have to determine from the advisor's deeds, not his looks, whether he is loyal or not.

The Master

Some campaigns make use of NPC masters, rather than PCs. The NPC master is usually a much better fighter than his students... but, to keep things in balance, the NPC master won't have the youthful strength and stamina of his students. (The PC master can, of course.) The NPC master can, therefore, whip any of his students in sparring, where the fighting does little damage (everyone is holding his damage down to 3-4 dice of normal damage)... but in a confrontation with the evil Master and his students, the good Master can't soak up the damage his students do and will probably fall. (This is one reason the good NPC master trains a student to take out the evil Master rather than doing the job himself. He can thrash his students in practice, he can whip loads of minions... but he can't take the full-contact damage his most capable opponents dish out. Another reason: The Master may have some crucial Vulnerability which the villain knows about.)

The Master's Daughter

The Master often has a daughter who is also an accomplished martial artist; if the storyline involves a master and the martial artists need a little extra muscle among them, bring the Master's Daughter character into the story.

The Survivor Seeking Revenge

Likewise, dead Masters have relatives anxious to seek revenge. Some will be inadequate to the task, and the heroes might feel a need to train them. Some will be adequate to the task and will accompany and help the PCs... or will strike out on their own and be killed by the villain.

THE SPECIAL TECHNIQUE

At the heart of many martial arts adventures is the *Special Technique*. Usually, it goes something like this: The big villain of the adventure knows a special martial arts technique which is unbeatable. The heroes run into him, oppose him, and are thrashed (and spared; the villain thinks so little of them that he doesn't even bother to kill them).

The heroes must now figure out what to do if they're to defeat this overpowering villain. Usually, they must seek out and train with a teacher who knows the villain's technique... or who knows another special technique which will allow the heroes an even chance against the villain.

Once retrained, the heroes can again confront the villain, this time on equal terms.

Guidelines for incorporating the Special Technique in a story are given in the section titled *Retraining*.

THE SPECIAL ITEM/WEAPON

Instead of the Special Technique, some adventures use the Special Item or Special Weapon. This is a magical or mystical gizmo which, like the Special Technique, will allow the character to cope with the villain's Special Technique or Special Item/Weapon. Generally, the GM will build the Special Item/Weapon and the hero won't have a precise idea as to its power level or functions; but if he, in the adventure, can find it and learn to use it, he can return to confront the villain on his own terms.

See the Gadgets and Weapons section for rules on building such items.

RIVAL SCHOOLS

Many martial arts adventures revolve around disputes between rival schools. Basically, the campaign features two or more martial arts schools, one of which the PCs belong to; the rest are NPC schools. For some reason, there is enmity between the schools. The reason can be as simple as the fact that each student thinks his school is best, and insults or slanders the other schools whenever he gets a chance. It may be more personal than that: The master or students of one school might have attacked (even murdered) the master or students of another school.

The NPC schools might be honorable ones; or, they might be little more than gangs of bandits, training in the martial arts and then terrorizing and robbing their communities.

SACRIFICE

Personal sacrifice is a recurrent theme in martial arts adventures. Even if the PCs aren't inclined to sacrifice themselves for a goal, their allies and DNPCs often are.

In historical-era campaigns, the heroes' loyal retainers sacrifice themselves to save their PC lords or to get crucial messages to them. In modern-day campaigns, the PCs' friends do the same thing.

This sort of event shouldn't occur too frequently in your campaign, or it will become boring and ineffective. But if it is rare, it will add a poignant feel to the campaign.

On a much more manipulative level, the NPC Sacrifice is a good way to motivate your heroes. When the NPC sacrifices himself to save the hero's son or daughter from kidnappers, that's nice, in and of itself... but it also gives the PC extra motivation to go after those kidnappers.

DESIGNING THE ADVENTURE

With an idea of what sort of elements go into a martial arts adventure, you can now design the adventure you want to run.

CHOOSE THE TONE

The first thing you want to do is choose the adventure's tone. In a regular campaign, the adventure's tone can be the same as the campaign's usual tone, or can be an exception (an action-adventure series can have the occasional comedy or revenge story, for instance).

The usual tones for martial arts adventures include:

Pure Comedy: The characters and action are thoroughly tongue-in-cheek, the situations are comic, and nobody really dies... unless it can be done humorously.

Comedy With Some Serious: The characters are not grim avengers (in fact, the Naive Hero is an especially good choice), and most of the combats are light-hearted... at the beginning of the film. The villains will eventually get more serious; eventually someone dear to the hero will be hurt or killed, and at that point the kid gloves come off. It's not unknown to have an adventure start off as comedy and end up with a bloodbath.

Action-Adventure: The action is serious from the start, and the heroes may find themselves having to exact revenge on their enemies, but that's not how the story necessarily starts. Not all the threats faced in the story need to be martial arts attacks: The heroes could face dangerous travels in distant lands, shoot-'em-ups in the streets, or other situations appropriate to the setting and the plot.

Revenge Melodrama: The whole adventure revolves around revenge and is mostly pretty grim. In the early scenes, the heroes are grossly insulted in some fashion and there's no question that one side or the other must die before the adventure is done.

Bleak, Grim Drama: The heroes are placed in a no-win situation; they face overwhelming odds or a dilemma which cannot be resolved satisfactorily. They know that some or all of them will die before adventure's end... and it's true.

CHOOSE THE PLOT

Once you know the adventure's theme, you can work up its plot. Here are some standard martial arts adventure plots:

THE CATASTROPHE THEORY

How the Heroes Get Involved: The heroes are all attacked or insulted until they cannot take it any longer and the only possible response is vengeance. With some groups, this might take only one insult; with others, it might take a series of affronts which put more and more pressure on the normally-peaceful heroes until they cannot stand it any longer.

The Early Part of the Adventure: The heroes are just living their lives when someone decides to do them harm: annoying their families, methodically killing everyone in their families, humiliating or murdering their master, etc. Several combats should result from this sequence in events, each one nastier and more serious than the one before.

The Middle Part of the Adventure: The heroes realize that things can't be set right without bloodshed and decide to take the war to their enemy. More deadly combat between the two groups results.

The Climax of the Adventure: The heroes make their way to their enemy and confront him for a climactic battle.

THE COMPETITION

How the Heroes Get Involved: The heroes are invited or challenged to participate in a competition. It should be a fairly normal competition, if not for the complications brought on by crooks and double-dealers...

The Early Part of the Adventure: The heroes fight rounds with minor opponents, rising in the standings. They should get to know various NPCs at the event, some of whom are friendly enough and some of whom promise to be bitter opponents in the ring. The PCs should also realize that there is a gangster presence at the event, a gang which backs or manages a particular fighter (or stable of fighters) and doesn't appreciate the sudden rise of the PCs through the ranks.

The Middle Part of the Adventure: The villains try to get the heroes out of the picture. They start off slow, first trying mild threats, bribery, and seduction, and then working up to direct attacks from hoods of various quality. During all this, more rounds of the event are still being played out.

The Climax of the Adventure: The villains do something which is intended to keep the chief PC contenders away from the competition so that they will lose by default. Frequently, this involves kidnapping the PC, or kidnapping one of his DNPCs so that he has to follow the kidnappers and miss his final bout. The PCs' job here is to break out of their captivity, or to have most of the PCs rescue the kidnapee while the other PC is showing up for and fighting his appointed round.

INFILTRATE AND RESCUE/DESTROY

How the Heroes Get Involved: They are asked by the involved parties, or by the government, to undertake a mission: To break into a fortified or defended place (usually a camp, castle, or fortress guarded by hordes of martial artists or terrorists) and either rescue the kidnapped victims, defeat or kill the chief villain, or just blow the place up.

The Early Part of the Adventure: The heroes are brought together and asked to undertake the adventure. (If they refuse, the parties making the request could turn out to be villainous themselves, using unfair advantages — such as kidnapped DNPCs — to force the heroes to do their bidding.) The heroes are given the plans of the site and all the information the organizers admit to having, and must make their own plans for infiltration. They may have to sneak in under cover of night, or may be permitted to enter under false papers and credentials.

The Middle Part of the Adventure: The heroes begin their infiltration and achieve the first part of their plan — defeating minor opposition and reaching their objectives. Then, inevitably, something goes wrong: The rescuee turns out to be a traitor working for his/her captor and betrays them, or the captor was a good guy all along and as soon as he's dead the true villains (the operation organizers) come in to kill everyone, or the heroes didn't plan for all the traps in the site and are exposed.

The Climax of the Adventure: The heroes must adapt to the new condition (break out from being captured, or battle their way through the new hordes of enemies now attacking) if they're to make their way to safety.

LOSS, RETRAINING, AND CONFRONTATION

How the Heroes Get Involved: This adventure can start off like any of the others described under *Choose the Plot.* But there's a difference...

The Early Part of the Adventure: The heroes get a crack at the main villain very early in the plot. (They may have had to go through some minions first, but they soon confront the bad guy.) He thrashes them thoroughly, leaving them injured and humiliated. He probably doesn't kill any of them, not deeming them worth his while.

The Middle Part of the Adventure: An NPC tells the battered heroes what special style the villain used to defeat them, and knows of another master who knows that style, or its rival (and equal) style. The heroes must go to that master and be accepted as his students. He puts them through confusing and grueling training. They may have other, minor, combat encounters to pursue, such as attacks by the bad guy's minions, who have tracked them down to this place. Optionally, at the time the heroes are through with their training, the bad guy's minions could manage to kill the master, giving the heroes even greater motivation to succeed. Note: Instead of a Special Technique, the thing which allows the heroes another crack at the villain could be a Special Item or Special Weapon.

The Climax of the Adventure: The heroes once again confront the master villain and his hand-picked, hand-trained subordinates. Now, the battle is an equal one. The villain takes off the kid gloves, through with underestimating his opponents, and the battle is to the death.

PROTECT THE DEFENSELESS

How the Heroes Get Involved: While travelling, the heroes come across a village, area, neighborhood or small business which is being terrorized by bandits, by a villainous martial arts school, by supernatural beings or by organized crime. Alternately, the people of that village, area or neighborhood could seek out the PCs to ask them to help. The place might have been under the villain's thumb so long that it is thoroughly isolated, remembered only in legends.

The Early Part of the Adventure: The heroes go to the endangered place, set themselves up, and crush the bad guy enforcers who come in to do their usual marauding or terrorizing. One or two martial arts encounters with minion-level hoods take place here.

The Middle Part of the Adventure: The leaders of the villains decide to stop wasting minions and to test the intruders. They send out higher-powered hoods and make sure that observers survive to come back with descriptions of the PCs. They also investigate the PCs and may decide to kidnap or kill DNPCs as a warning to the heroes.

The Climax of the Adventure: The heroes realize that the villains won't be driven off by normal defensive tactics. Additionally, the villains may have kidnapped or killed one or more DNPCs. It's time for the heroes to saddle up and confront the villains directly. Part of this phase of the adventure may involve finding out where the villains are set up (it may be in a secret base, or a base where the main entrance is impenetrable but where there may be secret entrances). The heroes go there, confront and (hopefully) defeat them.

THE SEARCH FOR PERFECTION

How the Heroes Get Involved: One or more heroes decides to travel in order to learn more, to perfect his art or to cope with what he sees as faults in his own character (i.e., psychological limitations). (This results in a very personal, very episodic sort of campaign which may not appeal to most players; it is eminently suited to a historical-era campaign where characters like to do a lot of travelling.)

The Early Part of the Adventure: The character recognizes (or has his face rubbed in) his deficiency; in some important situation or combat, he is beaten by a superior fighter or is defeated by his own personality problems. Wiser heads recommend that he travel and experience in order to learn enough to overcome his problem. He and his friends set out on their travels.

The Middle Part of the Adventure: The characters travel and have many mini-adventures. A lot of these mini-adventures are designed to expose the characters to new enemies, new forms of the art, and situations which force the main character to confront his own psychological limitations. The characters should be using accumulated experience to improve their arts, and the chief character should also be using it to buy down his crippling psychological limitation. During this phase of the campaign, the characters may acquire regular enemies, particularly gunslinger-mentality duelists who want to defeat them.

The Climax of the Adventure: Once the hero has improved his art and his mind to the point that he is a match for the enemy who defeated him originally, he and his friends should be maneuvered into a confrontation with that enemy. By this time, that enemy will probably have hired several of the recurring villains who have been dogging the heels of the heroes. (Others of those regular villains, honorable ones, might even join the heroes against the major villain, dying in the attempt or resolving their problems with the PCs.)

CREATE THE VILLAINS

Once you've chosen your plot, you can now create the villains appropriate to that plot. The usual roles and levels of ability which the villains take were described above, in the discussion of The Villains.

HOOKS

Once you have the other elements decided, you must choose how you're going to get the player-characters into the storyline. Each means by which you bring a PC into a story is called a "hook"; below are descriptions of several such hooks. When you're starting a story with several unrelated PCs, some of these hooks can be used to introduce the heroes to one another.

Crime In Progress

In his ordinary doings, the hero stumbles across a crime in progress and sees something the villains can't afford for him to see. They begin sending out hired killers to silence him. He can't just ignore the adventure situation; he must cope with it or die.

Graduation Day

One or more heroes has just completed studies with a master; now it's time for the graduation exercise. (This is used often with ninja characters.) The heroes must run a bizarre gauntlet or obstacle course of situations appropriate to the use of their martial art; if they reach the end of the course, they have succeeded. The master of the school will declare the characters ready to return to the outer world to continue their studies (or, if a character missed, that character will be banished to the outer world for a year or two in order to improve himself; he may return at the end of the time and try once more to accomplish the exercise.) The master may ask the graduating characters to perform a favor, such as delivering a letter to a friend; when the heroes do this, they find the friend dead or menaced, and they are launched into the story.

Injured Victim

In his ordinary doings, the hero comes across an injured person who is cornered by attackers and needs help... or else he'll be killed. The true hero will try to rescue the victim. He may be in time to save the victim; or the victim may already be mortally wounded, with the hero putting down the attackers in time only to hear his dying request. This request throws the PC into the adventure.

Mistaken Identity

The hero happens to look just like one of the villain's minions or hirelings, or accidentally says something at the wrong time (i.e., he accidentally says a code-word recognition signal) which convinces the villain that he's someone else. He might be given a lot of money to kill someone, the villains thinking him an assassin; imagine their irritation if he fails to complete the hit. The police might hear that this assassin is in town and begin a manhunt for the PC, remaining unconvinced of his claims of innocence.

Outnumbered Hero

One hero is attacked for no particular reason by drunk or aggressive street-fighters. He's badly outnumbered... and several other unrelated PCs just happen to be in the vicinity. If they have any spirit of fair play, they'll wade into the fight to help the outnumbered hero. Clues dropped by the defeated streetfighters can then lead them into the main course of the story.

Revenge

We've already discussed the many useful applications of the revenge motivation in a martial arts story. Revenge is just as useful for getting characters into a story in the first place.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Once you've created your adventure, it's time to run it. Here are some things to remember:

SLAM-BANG ACTION

Martial arts adventures should be full of action. If the adventure is dragging, throw in a gratuitous combat. Don't make it an unlikely or stupid fight; relate it to the setting and make it logical. But throw it in anyway.



For example, if the heroes are travelling around a busy city looking for clues as to the identity of their enemy, they could run into a big group of tough, drunken thugs who just want to beat something up.

Likewise, if the characters are visiting someone and are in peaceful surroundings, they could be invited to test their skills against the children of their host; or, they could have one of their old hunters catch up to them and issue a challenge.

In both cases, the result is that an adventure which is losing its pace is invigorated by a totally irrelevant combat which is logical and appropriate to the setting.

CONFRONTATIONS

Don't forget, too, that some combats ought to be wild melees with many people attacking each hero at once, while others should be quieter, deadlier one-on-one confrontations between individual heroes and individual, skilled villains. The contrast between types of combat is good for an adventure.

COMBAT SETTINGS

It's important to make sure that all combats in an adventure take place in very different settings. If every fight in an adventure takes place in a featureless parking lot, or in a dojo, or in some other flat, disinteresting terrain, you might end up with flat, disinteresting combats.

Vary the setting. Make sure the heroes catch up to their enemies (and vice versa) in interesting locations full of obstacles which can help or hinder the characters. Some examples:

Amusement Park/Playground
Bamboo Stand
Bridge
Church or Temple
Docks, Piers, or Seafront
Factory/Plant (Manned or Automated)
Forest
Garden or Greenhouse
Gymnasium (Different Types of Sporting Equipment)
Highway, Middle of the Road
Ice-Skating Rink
Kitchen
Mountainside, Sloping
Museum or Weapons Collection
Ocean Park (Huge Pools, Aquariums, Tours)
Offices
Parking Garage
River, Fast-Moving
Rooftop, Flat, Crowded with Equipment
Rooftop, Slanted
Shopping Mall and Stores
Swamp or Rice Paddy
Swimming Pool (and Surrounding Area)
Toboggan Run
Vehicle, Moving (Inside or On Top; Car, Train, Bus)
Warehouse

DESCRIPTION

You need to encourage your players to describe, concisely but vividly, the martial maneuvers of their characters. Don't let them get away with "I punch him." Convince the player to become more descriptive: "I feint with my left and then spin into a forearm smash into his face."

But you should lead by example: Be just as descriptive when running the NPCs.

Not even the NPCs who can't yet get into the fight need to be boring. If your heroes are being attacked by twenty ninja and only ten can attack right now, you can always say "And the other ten ninja change positions in the background, waiting for the chance to dart in and replace their fallen allies..."

In martial arts combats, most misses — where the attacker fails to roll what he needs to hit his target — look like blocks rather than misses. In a normal campaign, the attacker swings, misses his roll, and his swing goes wild. In a martial arts campaign, the same thing happens, but the special effect of this is that the defender blocks his attack. Mechanically, it's the same thing. (However, if the attacker has a Damage Shield which a Block would set off, in the special effects of the fight the defender is probably dodging rather than blocking.)

CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

In this section, we'll talk about the elements which often show up in ongoing martial arts campaigns; you can use these elements in your own campaign to provide more flavor.

THE MARTIAL WORLD

In modern-day martial arts campaign settings, the Martial World is a world-wide subculture. People belonging to the Martial World (including most player-characters), regardless of country, tend to have one important trait in common:

They don't go to the authorities to settle scores or ask for help.

Martial artist characters settle their own scores; when they need help, they rely on friends or whole families also belonging to the Martial World. You can consider most adventuring martial artists, any ninja clan, any traditional samurai family, Japanese *yakuza* and Chinese *tongs* to belong to the Martial World.

Characters in the Martial World tend to interact primarily in the Martial World. When performing investigations on the street, they ask most of their questions of people also in the Martial World, whether these people be teachers, hoods, informers, or students.

The Martial World has its own grapevine and gossip, which partially overlap those of the world of crime.

KS: Martial World, from the Skills section, is a useful skill for martial arts characters to have; read the description of the skill from that section.

THE COMPETITION AND THE DUEL

Many martial arts adventures feature organized competitions and duels of all varieties. These can range from big, splashy sports events to private duels to the death, from purely normal competitions to struggles from beyond the grave.

When you want to feature a competition in your adventure, you need to decide what kind it is. These are some of the decisions you have to make:

Public vs. Private: Is the competition a public affair, like a widely-publicized contest or sporting event, or is it private — by invitation only?

Competition vs. Duel: Is the event a competition (where numerous competitors go through several rounds of the contest until only one is the winner) or a duel (where only two contestants fight, either to settle a score, to fight a title bout, or just to decide which is the best fighter)? Remember that duels do not have to be fatal; even weapon-masters can use wooden weapons to limit the damage they do to their opponents.

Regulated vs. No Holds Barred: Does the competition have rules (for example, requiring the wearing of gloves or armor, disallowing certain types of attacks, etc.) or not? (Certain types of brutal competition, and duels of honor, especially to the death, fall into the latter category.) Naturally, a regulated match could still be very brutal, while a duel with no official rules could still be conducted by two fighters who observe common rules of honorable combat.

Cash vs. Excellence: Are the competitors fighting for a cash prize or just to demonstrate their excellence?

Modern vs. Traditional: Is this a modern competition or do its roots go back generations, centuries, even millennia?

An interesting legend involves The Ghost Festival, a Chinese myth describing how famous martial artists appear from the ghost world and hold competitions where they demonstrate the forms for which they were most famous in life. A supernatural adventure could be spiced up considerably with such an event... especially if the heroes stumble on to it and are allowed to compete without realizing that they are fighting spectres from the distant past.

THE SEQUENCE OF ENEMIES

This is something you can do to spice up one of the other plots.

Often, the heroes will have to face a sequence of enemies in order to get to their main objective. For example, they have only one clue that points to the location of Mr. Big, and that clue leads them to a martial arts school; once they've confronted and defeated the school's master and chief students, the clue they find there leads them on to another combat encounter, and another, until they trace their way from combat to combat to reach the major villain.

Also, the sequence of enemies can be dictated by geography. The villain might be at the end of a long tunnel; there are encounters on the way which the heroes cannot avoid. The main enemy could be on the top floor of a building, with each intervening floor containing an encounter; it could be at the end of a long travelling distance, with encounters set up along the way.

Naturally, in the sequence of enemies, each new encounter is more skillful than the last.

FIREARMS, ARMOR, AND OTHER EQUIPMENT

In most martial arts adventures, you don't want characters using guns to settle their disputes: Guns are for bad-guy minions, not for the heroes or well-trained villains. However, some American Viewpoint movies feature heroes who use guns, knives, martial arts, cars and construction equipment to achieve their purposes — whatever works.

FIREARMS AND ARMOR

You have to decide whether your adventure will be of the "firearms forbidden" or "firearms allowed" type.

If you want to forbid firearms, mention that to the players before the game starts and in the *Ninja Hero Campaign Design Sheet*. Then, enforce it. If the characters take guns anyway, take the guns away from them. (Have the characters captured and stripped of weapons; send them into high-security areas where they cannot bring guns along.) One good way to take guns away from characters is to set the adventure in another country; the characters won't be able to take their weapons on the plane (make sure even their checked luggage is examined) and will have to rely on their own martial arts and weapons which can be imported (whether it's realistic or not, you can decide that foreign nations will allow characters to bring in martial arts weapons used in competitions and for demonstrations).

Likewise, if you want to allow firearms, make that announcement before the game starts. You'll still want to set up plenty of situations where the characters won't have guns on hand (ammo runs out, firing pin breaks, an enemy martial artist has Disarm, etc.) so that they will have to use their martial arts prowess to survive.

The same goes for armor. If you don't want to have armor in your campaign, use similar tactics to take it away from the characters. If you want it in your campaign, allow it.

DEALING WITH TOO MUCH EQUIPMENT

The same is also true of weapons and other equipment in general. In heroic campaigns, where PCs don't have to spend their own points on normal weapons, many players are tempted to load their characters down with gadgets of all sorts.

When this happens, first discuss it with the players, saying something simple such as "You don't need to carry all that hardware in order to be competitive in this campaign."

If players ignore that, try something equally subtle, such as "I *really* think your characters are carrying around too many weapons. I don't like it."

If that doesn't work, single out the worst offender. At some point in the story, have the police or local authorities spot the too-heavily-laden character and bust him. If he's the sort of character who is inclined to resist, and able to take apart a squad of police, he may not be capable of doing so when hosed down by cans of tear gas or shot in the leg by a marksman officer ("What's this? Officer #6 has just rolled a 3 to hit...").

Then, let him rot in jail for the remainder of the play-session... assuming he didn't kill any policemen. The others can post bail for him at the end of the play-session and he can return to the action next time. At the beginning of the next session, repeat your warning about carrying too much equipment. (Of course, if he did kill an officer, tell him to create a new character. His old character's next exciting adventure is called Months of Pre-Trial Maneuvers.)

THE NINJA HERO CAMPAIGN DESIGN SHEET

GENERAL DESCRIPTION _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Campaign or One-Shot? _____

IMPORTANCE OF THE PCs _____

_____

CAMPAIGN TONE

Morality: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

(1) Good vs. Bad is black & white; (2) Good vs. Bad is mostly clear-cut;
(3) Some cross-over between Good vs. Bad; (4) There is little distinction between good and bad;
(5) Morality is always in shades of gray

Realism: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

(1) Very Romantic; (2) Romantic;
(3) Neutral; (4) Realistic; (5) Extremely Realistic

Usual Tone: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

(1)Pure Comedy; (2) Comedy With Some Serious;
(3) Action-Adventure; (4) Revenge Melodrama; (5) Bleak, Grim Drama

Continuity: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

(1) Episodic — No effort is made to tie the adventures together; (2) Mostly episodic, with some continuing stories;
(3) Some long stories and some episodic ones; (4) Mostly serial, some enforcement of campaign coninuity;
(5) Entirely serial — everything must fit into the storyline

PHYSICAL WORLD (DESCRIPTION) _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

CHARACTER BUILDING GUIDELINES

Starting Points for PCs: _____

Max points from one Disadvantage Category: _____

Maximum Disadvantage Points for PCs: _____

Characters automatically have Characteristic Maxima disadvantage at no point value: YES / NO

Characters can carry normal technology (weapons, etc.) at no point cost: YES / NO

Power Levels	Beginning Range	Maximum
Attack Damage	_____	_____
Defense PD/ED	_____	_____
Skill Rolls	_____	_____
Possible OCV	_____	_____
DEX and SPD	_____	_____

Special Martial Arts Design Rules Used? YES / NO

How Many Special Maneuvers Allowed? _____

Which Types of Powers Allowed? 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

(1) Heroic Campaign powers; (2) Heroic Martial Arts Campaign powers;
(3) Wild Martial Arts Campaign powers; (4) Any From Champions;
(5) Other _____

CAMPAIGN RULES

Combat Uses Hit Locations Chart	YES / NO	Long-Term Endurance Rules Used	YES / NO
Knockdown Rules Used	YES / NO	Limited Push	YES / NO

NINJA HERO OPTIONAL RULES AND HOUSE RULES _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

CHARACTER REQUIREMENTS

Skills	Required / Not Recommended / Disallowed?	Requirements / Notes
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____

TALENTS & POWERS

_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____

DISADVANTAGES

_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____
_____	R / N / D	_____



ADVENTURES

This section contains three full-length adventures and some short adventure ideas. Most of them are for Heroic Martial Arts Campaigns; they can easily be adapted to other types of campaigns by increasing the numbers of villain henchmen and giving the more capable villains extra points in maneuvers, skill levels, powers, and physical characteristics.

Important Note: Players intending to play in any of these adventures, rather than GM them, should read no farther in this section!

SHINOBIYAMA (NINJA MOUNTAIN)

(FOR HEROIC MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGNS)

This is an adventure for four to six beginning martial artist characters. It presumes that they are built on 75 points base and up to 75 points in Disadvantages; if your PCs are built on more points than that, you'll have to revise some of this adventure's NPCs to compensate.

GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

This adventure presumes three things:

First, that you can get your player-characters to Japan using any reason appropriate to their backgrounds and professions; second, that at least one character is a ninja or can be friends with a Japanese ninja NPC, named Kibota Hisato; and third, that you can get all the PCs together, also for any reason appropriate to their backgrounds or professions.

At least one character, the hero who is the ninja or has ninja connections, is approached by Kibota Emiko, a *kunoichi* (female ninja) of the Kibota clan. The PC knows she is a ninja, and this PC is a friend, ally, or relative of the Kibotas, especially of Emiko's brother Hisato. Emiko tells the PC that her father, Kibota Takeo, is holding a big Western-style party (very informal, very American) at the family compound near the village of Fuji-Yoshida (near Mt. Fuji). This is a party celebrating some recent business deals that Kibota Takeo and his family have completed; present will be most of the Kibota clan, numerous friends, and employees of the Kibota Chemicals business.

This is the character's invitation to attend, and he's welcome to bring his friends along.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

This adventure presents a complex pre-adventure history which your characters may have to wind their way through. For the GM's convenience, here it is in short form.

In late Tokugawa times, two ninja clans were fierce enemies, the Kibotas and the Yamawakis. Both clans went underground at the end of the Tokugawa era and hostilities ceased, but both clans were drawn on to help the Japanese effort in World War II; after the war, hostilities resumed. The war between the families was bad for both clans and threatened to make extinct two of the most knowledgeable ninja families; eventually, around 30 years ago, the Japanese government, secretly working through yakuza (Japanese crime family) advisors, negotiated a brittle peace between the families.

At about the same time, Takako, daughter of Yamawaki clanlord Yamawaki Shumkichi, married a man named Moto Takezo. The marriage was not a traditional match, and had not been arranged, but Yamawaki Shumkichi was firm in his desire to adapt to new ways and allowed the marriage.

As it turned out, Moto Takezo was a faker. His papers, claiming that he was a flier in the war with the Japanese air force, were as fake as his name. He'd infiltrated the Yamawaki Clan to gain their acceptance and learn their ninja secrets... for reasons Yamawaki Shumkichi never discovered.

His cover blown, Moto Takezo tried to destroy all evidence against him. He killed his wife Takako and tried to kill Yamawaki Shumkichi, but the clan-lord was a more accomplished fighter. Shumkichi put an old-fashioned shuriken into Takezo's stomach and disposed of his body ignominiously — dumping it into a river rather than treating with with any sort of respect.

But Moto Takezo wasn't dead; he held on to life by a thread. He survived his injury and kept that Yamawaki shuriken as a souvenir. He took a new name, that of Matoshuko Toshio, and began a new life, still planning to use, to his own ends, the ninja techniques he'd learned while among the Yamawaki.

He became a successful businessman in the entertainment field. He married again and had three children. He built himself a small, prosperous business... one enriched by the occasional smuggling or assassination operation, which he'd perform in secret. He taught his eldest son and some favored pupils the ninjutsu he'd learned among the Yamawaki. He became quite a collector of Japanese and other oriental weapons and artifacts. And he brooded on ways to establish himself as the most powerful crimelord and ninja clan-lord in Japan, wiping out all competition... including the Yamawakis.

Long before the "ninja craze" hit the U.S. and interest in the traditions of the ninja reached a peak, Matoshuko Toshio saw it coming and had an inspiration. If all those wealthy Westerners wanted to be ninja, he'd teach them how... for an appropriately exalted fee, of course. He'd set up schools in Japan and America, schools which would serve a variety of purposes: Bases of operations for his paid assassination jobs and recruiting posts for especially good students with criminal leanings. From his most loyal students and instructors he'd create an inner circle of assassins and operatives he called his *genin*.

So was born the first "Shinobiyama" ("Ninja Mountain"), the training school Matoshuko opened eight years ago in Chiba Province, Japan. It was a smash success among Japanese and Westerners alike. Matoshuko, his children and hired instructors taught a martial arts style that was mostly karate and partly ninjutsu; they taught stealth and concealment techniques, infiltration tactics, makeup and disguise, acting, foreign languages, and other skills sure to be of use to the "modern ninja."

The real ninja clans looked on Shinobiyama as a joke, an amusing and successful attempt at capitalizing on foreign fads. None paid any attention to the school, except for one or two who signed up to evaluate the school's teachings and came away knowing that Shinobiyama taught reasonably effective commando techniques to reasonably ineffective students; all this seemed to have little or nothing to do with their traditions.

Shinobiyama was a tremendous hit and Matoshuko grew increasingly wealthy. As his power base grew, he was able to offer more and more assassination services to foreign powers. Most of his students and even tutors never realized that the organization was involved in modern-day terrorism and crime; they entertained only romantic notions about costumed ninja battling for truth and goodness everywhere.

A couple of months ago, a threat appeared to Matoshuko Toshio's plans. One of his *genin*, a man with little self-control even after years of martial arts training, took offense when a young businessman bumped into him on the street. Refusing to accept an apology, the genin attacked the young man, who killed him with little effort. The young man was Kibota Takuji, a true ninja of the Kibota clan, and he recognized his attacker's technique as being related to actual ninja *taijutsu* fighting styles. Going through the genin's personal effects, he found references to Shinobiyama and decided to investigate further. Taking on a cover identity, he paid for enrollment at Shinobiyama and began prowling around. He discovered that something out of the ordinary was taking place at the school, but not what.

Meanwhile, he was spotted on one of his nocturnal spy missions by Matoshuko Inoshiro, the "grey ninja" son of Matoshuko Toshio. Inoshiro reported this to Toshio, and their investigation of Takuji revealed that he was a member of the Kibota ninja clan.

Toshio panicked, believing that the Kibota family had discovered his plans and had infiltrated his organization. He gathered all his *genin* and ordered a massive strike on the Kibota compound. His orders: "Kill everyone; bring me the head of Takuji Kibota."

And to throw the blame on someone else, just in case some Kibota ninja survived the attack, he took his entire collection of Yamawaki-clan shuriken and gave them to his chief assassins, instructing them to attack Kibota family leaders with these... and to leave them in and on the bodies. That way, survivors would think the Yamawaki clan had renewed their old feud with the Kibotas.

THE MASSACRE

No map is shown (or really required) for the Kibota family compound. It's an estate near the village of Fuji-Yoshida, north-east of Mt. Fuji. It consists of several dozen acres of land, densely wooded around the edges. The road leads to a large parking lot at the edge of the property; a foot-path leads from there through the woods and into the estate. Inside the grounds are the main family home, a couple of smaller residences, and a large *dojo* (training hall) building; a small stream runs through the property. The buildings are all modern. It is all beautifully tended.

When the heroes arrive, they can park or be dropped off at the parking lot and take the walk up the path into the compound. The PC who knows the family shouldn't be suspicious that there are no guards to be seen; if he asks, tell him that the Kibota guards stay unseen unless they're needed.

But all of a sudden, ninja come raining out of the trees (give each character a Perception Roll to get an attack on one ninja as the ninja drops from the branches above). There are two ninja present for every PC, and they are attacking to kill. Once the heroes get into the fight, they can hear more clanging of steel and shouts from further in the compound.

The heroes will probably make swift work of their attackers. It's just as likely that they'll want to get into the compound as soon as possible. When they emerge from the trees, they'll see a gruesome sight: The grounds of the Kibota compound littered with bodies. Actually, there are more attacking-ninja bodies than Kibota bodies, but it should be obvious to the PC that knows the family that most of the Kibotas and their retainers are dead.

In the center of the compound, in open ground, are the last three Kibotas surrounded by ninja — three ninja for every PC in the party. The three survivors are Takeo, the clanlord, and his children Hisato and Emiko. Takeo and Hisato are faced to either side, each armed with a katana; Emiko is in the middle, armed with a naginata, striking first at an opponent on Hisato's side, then on Takeo's, back and forth. It should be obvious to the heroes that they can't hold out long; Takeo and Hisato are both already wounded.

The heroes will probably want to intervene — to attack the ninja. Of those attacking the surviving Kibotas, roughly half will turn to confront the PCs.

By the time that fight is done, several of the ninja attacking the Kibotas will also be down. Spurred on by the arrival of allies, the Kibotas have managed to down roughly half of their attackers. The remainder of the attacking ninja flee under cover of smoke grenades; they have fellow-survivors at the edge of the woods who will also throw smoke grenades in order to facilitate their escape.

Kibota Hisato collapses from his injuries. If the heroes were swift and efficient in dispatching their opponents, he is just badly injured. If they were not so swift, he is mortally wounded; he will die unless one of the PCs can make a Paramedic skill roll at a -3 penalty.

AFTERMATH

The Kibota compound is a gruesome mess, with family members, family retainers, guests and ninja dead all over the place. In all, probably 20 Kibotas and friends are dead, and close to 40 of the attacking ninja also lie dead.

Kibota Takeo forbids the characters to call the authorities: This is a personal matter. He will call up old favors to protect his remaining family for the remainder of the night. He leaves the heroes to get to his telephone. On the way, he lingers, stone-faced and tragic, by the bodies of members of his family slain in the attack — especially those of his wife Yuriko and his brother Yabu.

That gives the characters some time to look at the bodies of their attackers... if they want to. If they do, they'll note the following details:

(1) The ninja night-suits worn by the attackers are black cotton (imported), machine-stitched, bearing no *mon* (distinctive clan markings) or other clues as to their origin.

(2) The weapons they used were mostly serviceable steel implements bearing no maker's marks. The exception: Occasional shuriken carried or used by these ninja, including the big one used to kill Kibota Yuriko, are distinctly those of the Yamawaki clan. They're all old shuriken, none newer than 30 years old. If none of the PCs has KS: Ninjutsu, he won't be able to identify the clan to whom the shuriken belong, but Emiko will, and will offer up the information.

(3) Most of the attacking ninja had sharpened, rather than traditionally blunt, sai. These sai were designed sharp, not sharpened down from truncheon-style sai.

(4) The attacking ninja aren't all Japanese! Some look more Chinese or Korean, and there are even a couple of Occidentals and Filipinos among them. All of them were men; there were no kunoichi (women ninja) among them.

None of the ninja left behind still live. Even ones whom the PCs left wounded but unconscious have had their throats slit by their departing comrades.

Eventually, many cars filled with tattooed and gun-toting men arrive at the compound: Kibota Takeo has called in some favors from a yakuza (Japanese gangster) family that owes him a debt. The yakuza men move into position all over the compound to provide it with at least nominal protection, and deal with the bodies — piling the ninja bodies up where they can be carted off for disposal, treating the family, retainer and guest bodies a bit more reverently.

These yakuza will come across one other detail, which they will mention to both Takeo and the PCs: They have found the body of Kibota Takuji, Yabu's son... and that body, unlike any other corpse left behind, is headless.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

Kibota Takeo lets the PCs know that he will have his vengeance on the Yamawaki Clan for their murderous attack. He and his Yakuza allies will move on the Yamawaki compound soon, probably tomorrow night, and annihilate that family.

But the clues and strange details mentioned above are there to make the PCs suspicious... suspicious that it might not have been the Yamawakis behind the attack.

In addition, the PC who is friends with the Kibotas knows some other details about the Yamawakis, including:

(1) The Yamawaki have a reputation for adapting to new times in their ninja tactics and equipment... but they are still a ninja family, and there would not be any non-Japanese among the ranks of their ninja.

(2) A sudden loss of 40 of their ninja would seriously weaken the Yamawaki; they would probably not have more than 20 or 30 ninja left to them. It seems unlikely that they would dispatch so many of their ninja for a raid of this sort, as it would result in the catastrophic loss of many of the clan's warriors.

Mention these facts to the player if he asks; if he doesn't, have the character make an INT roll with a bonus (+2 to +3). If he makes the roll, give him those facts.

If the PCs tell Takeo of their suspicions (or if they have Emiko do it), he'll agree to delay his punitive strike against the Yamawaki... if they, the PCs, are willing to go out and find out what the situation is with the Yamawaki (i.e., whether they're weakened in numbers from this attack).

Also, there is the question of why Takuji's head was taken. Emiko will mention that Takuji doesn't live at the compound; he has an apartment in Tokyo.

This leaves the PCs with two clues they can investigate: The Yamawaki clan compound and Takuji's apartment.

THE YAMAWAKI COMPOUND

If the heroes decide to go to investigate the Yamawaki compound, it will be helpful if they remember to take one or more of the Yamawaki shuriken which have implicated that family. If the PCs don't remember, don't worry about it: it's not crucial.

The Yamawaki clan compound is about a dozen miles from the Kibota's, to the northwest of Mt. Fuji. It is somewhat larger than the Kibota's, with thick bamboo stands all around, and fewer trees within the compound.

If the PCs decide to talk to the Yamawakis, proceed directly to *Yamawaki Shumkichi,* below.

If the PCs decide that they want to investigate the Yamawakis, you should recommend to the PC who is friends to the Kibota that the PCs go in without any lethal (killing damage) weapons. If they are discovered by the Yamawakis, it will be a sign, if only a small one, that they were not infiltrating for purposes of assassination... just reconnaissance. If they go in with killing damage weapons, then the Yamawakis are much more likely to believe them assassins.

The Yamawaki compound is a little larger than the Kibota compound. Its main building is an ancient pagoda-style structure; it, too, has several outlying buildings and a *dojo* for the training of its ninja warriors. Let the heroes plan their own infiltration of the compound. To remain unseen for the longest possible time, they'll probably have to sneak in through the bamboo stands; that will bring them within sight of the Yamawaki buildings.

As they sneak in through the bamboo, have each character make his Stealth roll once. Find out by how much each character made or missed his roll. Take the worst of those results; that determines how long it is before Yamawaki sentries discover their presence.

Worst Result	Yamawaki Sentries First Encounter Them
Miss by 3+	Just outside the property line
Miss by 1-2	Just inside property line
Make Exactly	About 50 yards inside property line
Make by 1-2	About 100 yards inside property line
Make by 3-5	Where the bamboo stand becomes open ground
Make by 6+	Not at All, unless the PCs decide to sneak into the open ground and investigate the buildings

Unless the PCs all make their Stealth rolls by 6 or better, they'll eventually run into Yamawaki ninja sentries. Even if they do all make it by 6 or more, once they reach the edge of the bamboo stand and can look out over the compound buildings, they might decide to sneak further in... meaning they must all roll Stealth again. Anyone failing to make it by 6 or more this time means that they'll encounter sentries on open ground or within the buildings they investigate.

When the PCs do encounter ninja sentries, the ninja move to block their path. At least two carrying *kusari* have already used Concealment skill to cover themselves with dirt and leaves and lie in wait. The remaining, visible ninja number one ninja for every one player-character.

These ninja are wearing linen ninja night-suits (including the igabakama trousers and pants, tabi boots, and headband, but no shinobi-zukin mask) in green-and-brown camouflage patterns. About two in three are men, the others women. All carry non-lethal weapons, especially bokken, staves, kusari and manriki chains, tonfa and truncheon-style sai.

These ninja will attack; the ninja in hiding will wait until PCs have their backs turned and then emerged to wrap up the PCs arms and legs with their kusari weapons. If the PCs protest that they want to talk, one of them will say, "Very well, you may talk... once you have earned the *right* to talk to us." They will then continue the attack.

It should be obvious to the PCs that these ninja are different from the ninja they fought at the Kibota clan. They're all Japanese; there are women among them; they are better-trained, better-conditioned, and better at coordinating attacks than those ninja.

If the PCs lose, they will be taken to clanlord Yamawaki Shumkichi.

If they win, they can leave their unconscious victims behind and continue their reconnaissance or escape. But soon after, Yamawaki Ken, son of Shumkichi, will sneak up on them (give the PCs a Perception Roll at -7 to spot him; he's just made his Stealth roll by an incredible amount) and then sternly announce that Yamawaki Shumkichi wishes to see them. (They can go with him, or escape, or attack him and then escape; if they try to escape and have not killed anybody in the compound, they will not be pursued from this point.)

THE COMPOUND

If the heroes get a chance to observe the compound before being spotted or captured, they'll observe a peaceful home. There is no atmosphere of tension around the place. People are moving about the grounds briskly and calmly. Unless it is very late at night, there is some ninjutsu training taking place over near the dojo. There are family member guards and sentries here and there; they do not look as though they are under-strength.

YAMAWAKI SHUMKICHI

Clanlord Yamawaki Shumkichi is in the dojo, meditating. The heroes, if they are sneaky enough, might creep up on him without being noticed by the family. If they are captured, they will be brought before him. If Yamawaki Ken sneaks up on them, he will invite them to speak with Shumkichi, and if they accept Ken will bring them to the dojo where Shumkichi meditates. It is therefore very likely, although not a sure thing, that the heroes will meet Shumkichi.

Yamawaki Shumkichi is a noble elderly man who prefers to dress in traditional samurai clothing. He will be civil, but not cordial, to the intruding PCs. He sits very stiffly upright and speaks very gruffly and curtly. He wants to know why they have insulted him by breaking into his home in this fashion.

Assuming they tell him about the attack on the Kibota clan, he will deny any involvement. He says the Yamawaki have remained true to the negotiated peace of 30 years ago.

If the heroes show him Yamawaki shuriken, he will look long and hard at them. He will especially look at the one used to kill Kibota Yuriko. He will admit that it is his own, made by his hands about 40 years ago. He says he left it in the body of a man named Moto Takezo, whom he killed 30 years ago. He will tell the heroes an abbreviated version of that story, which was described above in *What Has Gone Before*. He will leave out personal details, such as the fate of his daughter. If the heroes press him about whether he is sure Moto died, he will have to admit that he is not sure.

Some time during the interview, the ninja whom the PCs encountered will enter the dojo and sit in proper fashion alongside the PCs. If these ninja were defeated, they will be dirty and bruised, and some will obviously be concealing expressions of embarrassment or irritation; the others are stoic about it.

Also if the heroes show him the Yamawaki shuriken, or if they merely mention that Yamawaki shuriken were used in the assault, he will give them a little demonstration. He'll take them outside and show them Yamawaki ninjutsu as it is practiced today. He asks his son Ken for "a pocket full of change," in English. Ken hands him several coins, including 100-yen and 500-yen coins. When Shumkichi squeezes the coins, out snap four shuriken blades; he throws the coin-shuriken at targets set up in the dojo, striking those targets with consummate skill. "These," he announces, "are Yamawaki shuriken as they are made today. We have adapted our tactics and equipment to the modern era. The shuriken you have seen are, to us, heirlooms of the past, not for use in combat."

If the heroes want to return those older Yamawaki shuriken to him, he will accept them. If they do not make the offer, he will not ask for them.

If the heroes have other questions for Shumkichi, answer them as best you can from the *What Has Gone Before* story, and as far as you think Shumkichi's patience will stretch. (Basically, it will stretch as far as the PCs continue asking pertinent or intelligent questions. If they start repeating the same questions or digressing into silly conjecture, or if they begin arguing with Shumkichi or among themselves, Shumkichi will consider the interview over.)

When the interview is over, Shumkichi will have his son Ken escort the heroes to the front gate.

It should by now be obvious to the PCs that the Yamawaki were not the ones responsible for the Kibota massacre.

THE YAMAWAKI NINJA

THE YAMAWAKI NINJA

Val	Char	Cost	50+	Disadvantages
15	STR	5	5	Distinctive Features: Ninja Night-Suit (Easily concealable, Is Noticed and Recognizable)
15	DEX	15		
13	CON	6		
10	BODY	0		
13	INT	3	10	Hunted, Yamawaki Family, More Powerful, NCI, 11-, Mildly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
12	EGO	4		
10	PRE	0		
10	COM	0	3	Package Bonus
5	PD	2	20	Code of the Bushi (Absolute Obedience to Yamawaki Shumkichi, common, total)
3	ED	0		
3	SPD	5		
5	REC	0	10	Style Disadvantage (Yamawaki-Ryu Ninjutsu)
26	END	0		
25	STUN	0	17	Bonus (Experience)

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
2	Martial Art: Ninjutsu, usable Barehanded (default), and with Blades, Karate Weapons, Polearms, Staff (from Weapons Elements)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
	4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
	5 Choke Hold	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
	4 Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
	4 Punch or Kick	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
	3 Takedown	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls

Pts	Skills / Perks / Talents / Powers	END
3	Acrobatics, 13-, Breakfall, 13-, Climbing, 13-	
10	Combat Skill Levels, +2 in Hand-to-Hand Combat	
3	Combat Skill Level, +1 with Ninjutsu	
3	Concealment, 12-, Tactics, 12-	
2	KS: Ninjutsu, 11-	
3	Language: Yamawaki-Ryu Codes and Symbols (Literate)	
3	Lockpicking, 13-, Security Systems, 12-, Stealth, 13-	
5	Skill Level, +1 with all DEX-based skills	
9	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Garotte, Blowgun, Fukimi-bari	

OCV: 5+; **DCV:** 5+; **ECV:** 4; **Phases:** 4, 8, 12

COSTS:	Char.		Skills & Powers		Total		Disadv.		Base
	40	+	80	=	120	=	70	+	50

KIBOTA TAKUJI'S APARTMENT

Kibota Takuji's apartment is in Tokyo. Takuji is a vice president in his uncle's chemicals firm; his apartment is very small by American standards (300 square feet total) but is in an expensive, ritzy building not far from the Ginza, the famous Tokyo shopping strip. Kibota Emiko knows where it is and has a key, and will be glad to show the PCs to it.

When they arrive at the apartment, three Shinobiyama ninja are in the process of ransacking it to make sure Takuji didn't leave any clues behind. When they hear the key rattle in the lock they'll conceal themselves (in clothes armoires, behind screens, out on the balcony) and wait in ambush. They'll attack the PCs at an appropriate moment, or one will attack in order to give the others time and opportunity to escape, whichever you prefer. Capturing him alive will do no good to the PCs; he is devoted to his master and will not talk under interrogation, preferring to die rather than talk. If captured, he will commit suicide if given the chance.

The apartment is a mess, with plugs unscrewed from the walls, rugs pulled up, book-spines slit, art destroyed, and every conceivable hiding place opened up. But Emiko can read some meaningless scratches on the top of the big American-style desk (a PC who knows the Ninja Language of the Kibota clan could do so instead of her), and those scratches will instruct her where to press on the desk to make a secret drawer slide open.

Inside the drawer is some money, several thousand yen in bills, a *tanto* knife, and several Kibota shuriken (obviously, this is an emergency funds and weapons drawer). Also in it is the carbon copy of a money order, taken out in the name of "Kono Takuji" (though Emiko can tell that it's Kibota Takuji's handwriting). It's made out for $2,500 in American dollars, and is made out payable to "Shinobiyama" (in English, Ninja Mountain) — whatever that is.

OTHER CLUES

If the PCs do both the Yamawaki compound investigation and the apartment search, they'll suspect that the Yamawaki were not involved and that Takuji was doing something involving something named "Shinobiyama."

EQUIPMENT

Each Yamawaki-clan ninja on sentry duty will have any two of the following weapons (GM chooses for each):

Bo (Staff): 4d6 normal damage (7d6 with STR and Ninjutsu Punch), +1 OCV, STR Min 8, +1" range.

Bokken: 5d6 normal damage (8d6 with STR and Ninjutsu Punch), +1 OCV, STR Min 10, can throw.

Kusari: 4d6 normal damage (5d6 with STR), STR Min 9, can throw, +2" range.

Manriki-Gusari: 3d6 normal damage (4d6 with STR), STR Min 8, can throw.

Sai (normal): 3d6 normal damage (6d6 with STR and Ninjutsu Punch), STR Min 8, +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway maneuvers, can throw.

Tonfa: 3d6 normal damage (6d6 with STR and Ninjutsu Punch), +1 OCV, STR Min 7.

All of these ninja have :
Walkie-Talkie: Radio Listen and Transmit

It's all right if they don't do the Yamawaki compound investigation as long as they get the clues from the apartment; that will steer them on the right course. But if they fail to check out the apartment, there are other ways to cue them to the "Shinobiyama" name.

Moto Takezo

If the PCs did go to the Yamawakis, and did show Shumkichi the shuriken that he had made himself, Shumkichi will soon get in touch with the PCs through his son, Ken. Ken says that Shumkichi was spurred to do a little quiet investigating and has run across something interesting. He found a picture in a magazine of someone who looks just like Moto Takezo. The problem is, Moto Takezo would be about 60 if alive today, while this picture, taken just last year, is of someone 30 years old.

The picture is of a man named Matoshuko Inoshiro, an instructor at the "Shinobiyama" ninja school over in Chiba Province. It was printed in an American martial arts magazine; the article deals with Shinobiyama, which is a silly school designed to cash in on gullible young men and women who want to become ninja.

If the PCs want to know more about what the article says, give them a few details derived from the *What Has Gone Before* description (only the things that would be known publicly — not Matoshuko's past history, criminal leanings, or relationship to the Yamawaki clan), and describe Matoshuko Inoshiro, who had his photograph in the article. You can also mention the garish ninja costumes seen at Shinobiyama, which we'll describe momentarily.

Takuji's Clothes

If the PCs did not talk to Yamawaki Shumkichi or investigate Takuji's apartment, then Takuji's cousin Emiko, going through the dead youth's belongings at the Kibota compound, will come across a Shinobiyama promotional flyer in his suitcase. It will contain many of the same types of photographs found in the article, plus much more hype.

The PCs, if they want to investigate Shinobiyama, will have to do so on their own. There aren't enough Kibota ninja left to do it. Kibota Takeo will gratefully accept their help, though he would never ask for it. If the heroes wish Emiko to come along for their investigation, she will do so willingly; she will not volunteer to.

FEAR AND LOATHING AT SHINOBIYAMA

Shinobiyama is a horrible place... at least to any character who is supposed to know something about genuine ninjutsu.

Shinobiyama is set up in a valley at the foot of Nitoyama, a small twin-spired mountain (a large foothill, rather) in Chiba Province. The three maps included with this adventure show the features of Shinobiyama, and we'll get to the map key momentarily.

Whether the PCs drive up publicly or sneak in, they'll get a good look at Shinobiyama, and may be appalled at what they see and learn.

Shinobiyama accepts students from all over the world; its ninja-in-training can be of any race, either sex, and any age.

The organization uses a student ranking system similar to the belts found in most Japanese martial arts... but with a difference. At Shinobiyama, the color of the night-suit indicates the student's rank. These ranks include:



Grade	Color of Night-Suit
Initiate	White or Pink
6th Kyu	Yellow
5th Kyu	International Orange
4th Kyu	Green
3rd Kyu	Purple
2nd Kyu	Brown
1st Kyu	Red
1st Dan	Black

The night-suits worn by the students are made of rayon or some other artificial material; it is lightweight, slick and a little shiny, not at all like the uniforms worn by the ninja who attacked Kibota compound. It bears the *mon* (heraldic symbol) of the school on the left breast: This is a very stylized non-Japanese phoenix rising from flames. The weapons they train with are made of stainless steel, also different from the ones used to kill the Kibota clan members.

These grossly-colored ninja suits are worn by students training at Shinobiyama and travelling the surrounding countryside. On paths all over the mountain and nearby villages, the PCs can see colorful pseudo-ninja jogging (many wearing color-coordinated Walkman-type cassette players), picnicking, riding bicycles, and having a merry time. In the nearby village are shops catering to ninja-mania, selling night-suits approved for use at the school, videotapes, *manga* (Japanese comic books), books, and magazines all pertaining to ninja fact and fantasy.

INFORMATION ABOUT SHINOBIYAMA

Here are some facts about Shinobiyama the GM may need to know in order to answer PC questions or deal with PC actions:

(1) Most of the students here are not criminals, and most are not black-belt level; they're just martial arts students. Some of them are idiots; some of them are serious students trying to learn something useful. The PCs, whether sneaking in or taking a normal tour, should get the distinct impression that most of the students and instructors have no idea of what's taking place at the school.

(2) Quite a few of the Shinobiyama students have become good at what they do. Any Shinobiyama student with a black night-suit, whether he is of Toshio's *genin* or a civilian unaware of the school's true purpose, will use the Shinobiyama Ninja character sheet (below) and can't necessarily be contemptuously dismissed in combat.

(3) With the number of students at this school, Shinobiyama should need about 60-70 instructors. Toshio has employed an additional 150 or so ex-students and ex-instructors as his on-site personal corps of assassins; about 40 were killed in the Shinobiyama raid, so there are still some 110 *genin* at Shinobiyama. The PCs won't always have an idea of who is who until the fellow in the black night-suit attacks; a ninja who does attack to kill is probably one of the *genin*.

(4) Shinobiyama is active 24 hours out of the day; there's no "dead time" during the night when it is safer for PCs to creep about.

(5) In case one of the PCs is curious, the cost structure for Shinobiyama is this:

Cost	Purchase
$50	Night-Suit (must buy two new suits each color-grade)
$100	U.S. per suit Weapons (optional cost)
$200	for ninja-to
$50	for ninja-to style bokken
$50	U.S. per 9 shuriken. for kusari or paired manriki

Light Program

(10 hours instruction per week): $300 U.S. per month Standard Program (20 hours instruction per week): $600 U.S. per month Accelerated Program (40 hours instruction per week): $1,200 U.S. per month On-Site Housing: Add $1,000 U.S. per month

It's a very high cost for instruction; Shinobiyama is able to charge these fees because it appeals to wealthy young people fascinated with the ninja and who don't know any better. Shinobiyama also offers free training, i.e. scholarships, to certain economically-disadvantaged students it feels are particularly worthy (that is, students whom Toshio believes will be good assassins willing to join his *genin*).

KEY TO MAP #1: SHINOBI VALLEY

Map #1 shows most of the valley in which the Shinobiyama school lies.

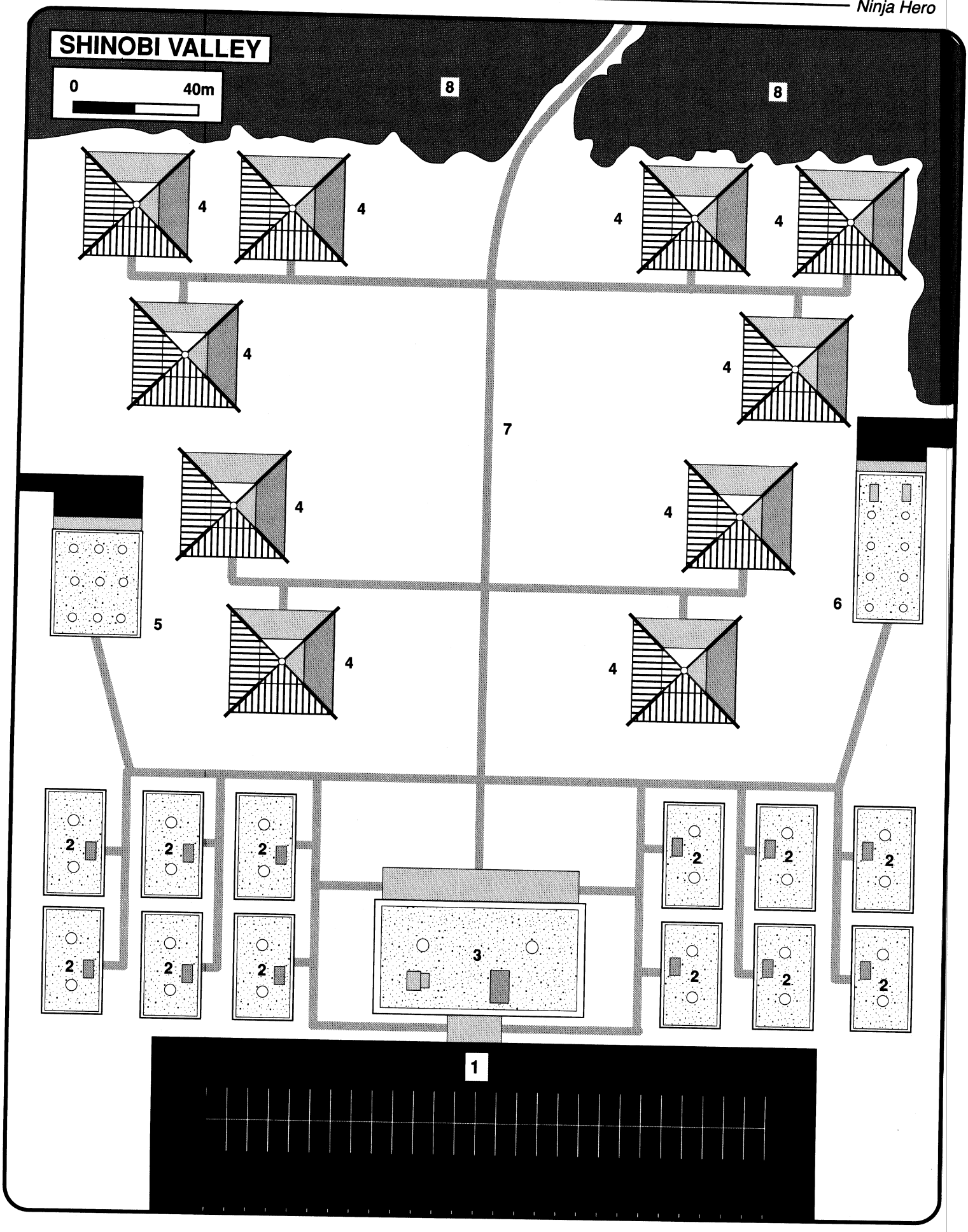
(1) Parking. This is a huge lot, heavily packed (though not completely full) day in and day out.

(2) Apartments. About half of Shinobiyama's students live on-campus in these buildings, which hold about 300 small Japanese-style apartments; some 600 students, half of Shinobiyama's clientele, are housed here. Lights are blaring out of this building all hours of the day and night, and there is always a steady traffic of students between these buildings and the training facilities. (Many of the non-resident students live in Tokyo or in nearby small communities; the closest village does a brisk business in apartment rental to students.)

(3) Administrative Building. This long two-story building houses most of Shinobiyama's business functions. On the first floor is the reception office, where visitors enter; surrounding it are many offices for accountants, PR men, chief instructors, attorneys, etc. On the second floor is the long, sumptuous, Western-style office of founder Matoshuko Toshio; it features air conditioning, thick carpets, a ponderous English hardwood desk, many pieces of traditional Japanese woodcut art on the walls, and a huge (bulletproof) glass window view of the valley. Also on this floor are the offices of Matoshuko's children Inoshiro, Fujiko, and Genji (Inoshiro's is often used; the other two are crisp, clean, and unused) and of Shinobiyama's vice presidents. In all these offices, there is nothing to find which is obviously incriminating. A long, thorough analysis of all the business records would eventually reveal that Matoshuko Toshio and Shinobiyama are spending beyond their means — spending more than their income provides for (but there are no records here of fees received for assassination or espionage missions).

(4) Dojos. All these buildings are basically identical dojos (training halls). They consist of large, traditional training rooms with *tatami* (woven mats) on the floor, plus Western-style locker rooms and shower rooms (each has separate showers for men and women). Each dojo has an armory holding real weapons and wooden training weapons appropriate to the ninja; again, these are not the same varieties used in the raid on the Kibota compound. Each dojo is surrounded by several wide areas marked off by low fences, and most of the training takes place in these outside training fields during good weather. Some of these fields are just open areas; some have targets (for shuriken, blowgun, and thrown-weapon training) at the end; others feature wooden practice dummies, obstacle courses, walls for climbing, and other training devices. At any time the PCs see Shinobiyama, whether day or night, many of these fields will be occupied by ninja-in-training: All the trainees in any specific area will be wearing night-suits of the same color and will be taking instruction from a black-suited ninja. One group will be learning acrobatics, another unarmed combat techniques, another armed combat techniques, another stealth techniques, and so on. Shinobiyama is working at capacity, twenty four hours a day, and roughly 300 students (one-quarter of the school's 1,200 students) will be out in the fields at any time of day or night, usually in 15 groups of 20 students.

(5) Laundry. An operation as large as Shinobiyama has an appropriately large laundry. Each student is expected to have two or three complete night-suits. Each night-suit has the student's name and student number marked on a tag on each garment, and each night-suit comes with a small bag in a matching color, also marked with the student's name and number. Students drop off the suit in the bag; it is washed, folded, placed back in the bag, and hung on a huge pegboard behind the main counter. Students later come in and ask for it by their name and number. PCs infiltrating Shinobiyama will find this place a rich resource of costumes, as they'll be able to find night-suits in any color and any size... and the counter attendants are not ninja-trained fighters.


SHINOBI VALLEY
0
40m
8
8
4
4
4
4
4
4
4
4
4
4
4
4
7
5
6
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
3
1

(6) Cafeteria. This seats and serves 300. It is open 24 hours. It is busiest from 6-8 a.m., 12-2 p.m., 6-8 p.m., and 12-2 a.m., but there are some diners here all the time.

(7) Path. The path runs through the valley from the apartments and administrative building, between the dojos and by the laundry, and to the edge of the woods which mark the end of the main valley area.

(8) Woods. The north and east sides of the valley are heavily wooded. In the eastern woods, students are taught stealth and concealment techniques. (The training can actually be effective, as these students must learn to compensate for bright, garish costumes they won't have to wear in real-life missions.) In the northern woods, advanced students (those wearing brown, red and black costumes) go through more intensive stealth training.

KEY TO MAP #2: THE UPPER VALLEY

The path goes through the woods for fifty yards or so and then opens into the Upper Valley, where advanced students receive their training. Features of the Upper Valley include:

(9) The Lake. Actually, it's an artificial pond. Ninja are trained here in swimming techniques, especially using reeds to breathe while swimming long distances.

(10) The Stream. A natural stream, it flows out of the forest and then northward. Bridges cross it in places.

(11) The Shooting Gallery. This is set up like an American marksman's training gallery. It consists of a path between many building mock-ups. Wooden targets pop up as the character travels between the "buildings." Some are of terrorists and gunmen; others are of innocents and fellow ninja. Each time a target pops up, the trainee must make an instantaneous decision (i.e., a Perception Roll) about whether or not to throw his shuriken at the target (a failed roll means that he perceives an "innocent" to be an "enemy") and then hit the target with his shuriken.

(12) The Pagoda. This is one of the main training areas for advanced students... and it's where PCs can find clues as to the true nature of Shinobiyama. From the outside, it looks like a traditional Japanese pagoda, but this is an illusion. It's a new building; all the windows are false (they cannot be opened, even with superior Lockpicking rolls — they're all fake!). There is only one entrance into the building, the sliding doors in front (west side), which are not locked.

Pagoda First Floor: This consists of a broad 20" (i.e., 40 meters) by 20" floor, which is featureless. At the other (east) end of the room is a ladder-like staircase ascending to the second floor. This is a training room for stealth techniques: The floor is incredibly creaky. To cross it, a character must make a Stealth roll for each combat half-move he makes (in other words, if his move is 6", he must roll every 3"); it is 18" from the door to the stairs up. If a character fails a single roll, he alerts the ninja on the floor above that someone has entered.

Pagoda Second Floor: Between the first and second floors is a hidden floor about 5' high, and there is another just like it between the second and third floors. Access to these false floors is through hidden (Visual Perception Roll at -3 to spot) hatches in the stairwell. In each hidden floor are four Shinobiyama ninja instructors armed with short (5') spears; the spears have padded training heads at one end and live steel heads at the other. The second story itself is an 18" by 18" open area. The floor and ceiling of the second story proper is rough, made with irregular boards leaving plenty of gaps and knotholes. Trainees on the second floor are supposed to enter via the staircase on the east side and cross the 16" to the staircase on the west side — the staircase going up to the third floor. While they are crossing, they are being attacked by the ninja spearmen above and below; each character is attacked four times (two above, two below) each phase until he reaches the stairs. Trainees are attacked by the padded spearheads, while intruders get the pointy ends.

Pagoda Third Floor: This floor is dark, and there are no light-sources; the dim light from the stairwell is not enough to illuminate the room. This is a purely mechanical room, with many traps and contrivances installed all over the place. It is designed to teach trainees techniques for fighting while blinded. It uses pressure sensors in the floor to start the machinery moving. The traps and machines in the room include:

(1) Moving, rotating wooden practice dummies suspended between floor and ceiling (6d6 normal damage attack at a 3d6 location roll, attacking at OCV 7)

(2) Bo-staves sweeping the floor at ankle level (Legsweep maneuver, no damage, attacking at OCV 7)

(3) Bo-staves sweeping at knee level (4d6 damage at a 2d6+7 location roll, attacking at OCV 7)

(4) Bo-staves sweeping at waist level (6d6 damage at a 2d6+4 location roll, attacking at OCV 7)

(5) Bo-staves sweeping at chest level (6d6 damage at Location 10, attacking at OCV 7)

(6) Drop-down nets (entangle 4d6; treat as a hand-to-hand attack, rather than a ranged attack, for calculating DCV from skill levels; they attack at OCV 7)

Each phase a character is in this room, roll 1d6 to see what sort of mechanical trap attacks him, attacking at OCV 7. Since many of these apparati run along tracks in the walls and ceilings, a trap can attack one target one phase and another target the next. A character can make his Hearing Perception roll to detect incoming attacks; if he misses it, he is at 1/2 DCV, while if he makes it, he is only at -1 DCV. (Combat Sense talent is very useful here.)

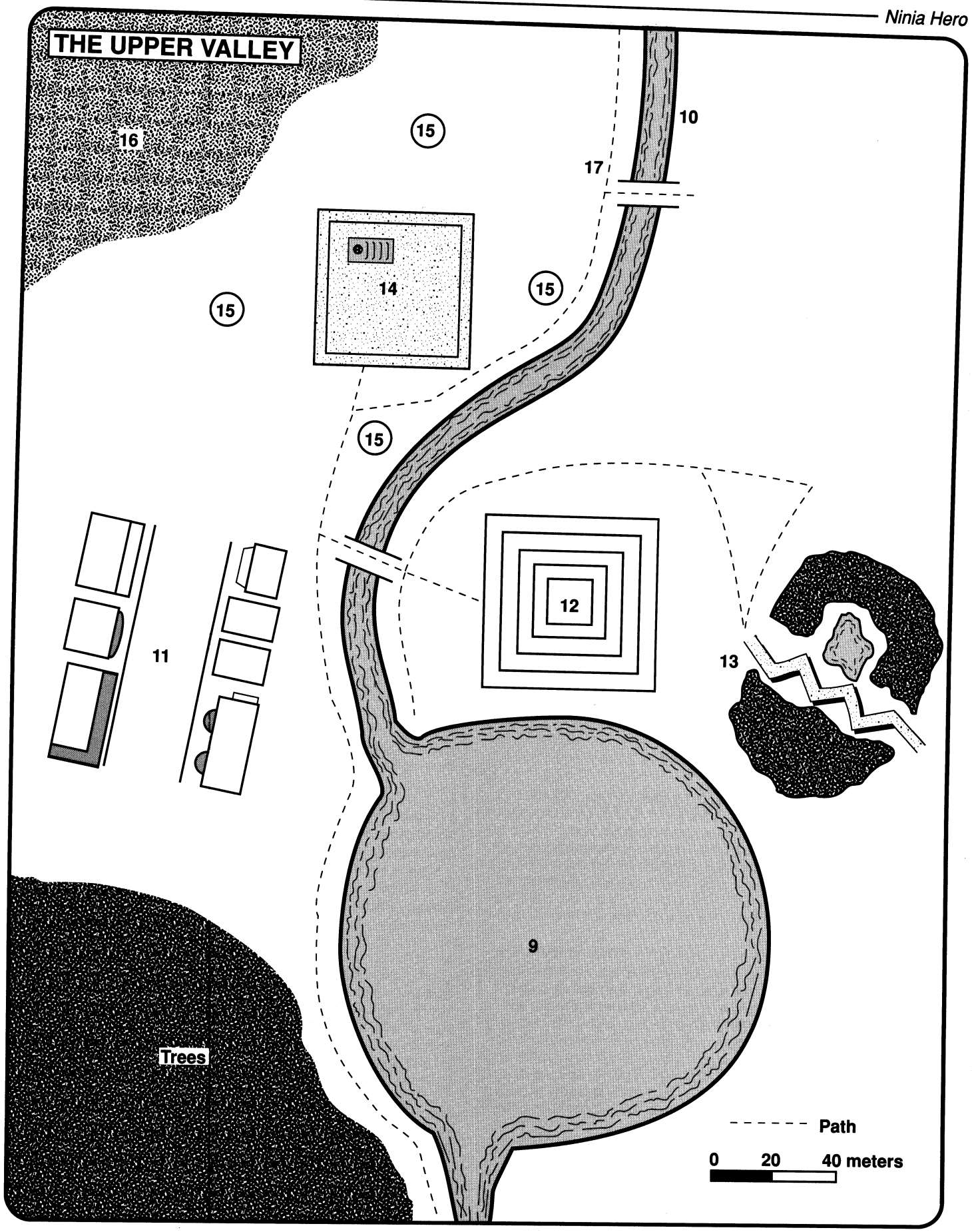
The room also features light-sensors. If a character turns on a flashlight, it sets off a sensor, which sets off a smoke-cloud (Darkness) filling the entire room. The character must traverse this room while blinded; he cannot see and must guess where the other staircase is.

It is 14" from the west-wall staircase from the second floor to the east-wall staircase to the fourth floor. There is a hatch at the top of the stairwell, and it is locked.

Pagoda Fourth Floor: If the characters can pick the lock or break the door (Def 6, BODY 6) to the fourth floor, they will find the Shinobiyama War Room, a place where advanced students do tactical training. The floor is one large 12" by 12" room featuring many long tables. Many of the tables are set up with miniature representations of possible target sites (castles, office buildings, etc.). There are painted styrofoam and clay terrain types, miniature stands of trees, felt-cloth lakes and ponds, metal miniatures representing guards, targets, and vehicles, plastic walls and buildings, and so forth; it's all very detailed.

One of the set-ups is of Kibota Compound, proof positive — to PCs, at least — that Shinobiyama was responsible for that raid.

Pagoda Fifth Floor: This is the armory of Matoshuko's *genin*, or field-mission ninja, those who are his actual assassins. Most of the students at Shinobiyama are unaware of this inner circle. This armory includes featureless black cotton uniforms and featureless, good-quality weapons in profusion, enough to arm hundreds of fighters; present are (100 each) ashiko, garotte, hankyu, kyogetsu shoge, naginata, net, ninja-to, shuko, sai (sharp), smoke grenade, tanto, and (1,000) star shuriken, all weapons identical to the ones used in the Kibota massacre. Also present is a soundproofed room (of the sort used in recording studios, with a control booth just outside); the soundproofed room features a chair with straps, bright lights directed at the chair, tables featuring implements of pain (a whip, pliers, razors, caustic chemicals, etc.), and a medicine chest including several drugs useful for extracting information; in short, this is a modern-day torture chamber.


THE UPPER VALLEY
16
15
10
17
14
15
15
15
11
12
13
9
Trees
Path
0 20 40 meters

(13) The Garden. This Japanese-style garden consists of a zig-zagging walkway elevated some 4' above the ground, artfully-arranged and -pruned trees to either side, and a small pond near the middle. It is not so beautiful as most Japanese gardens, as it is continually used for ambush training. Usually, a student will be told to get from one end of the garden to the other while undergoing ambush attacks from ninja beneath the walkway, in the trees, in the pond, etc.

(14) The Tower. This, like the Pagoda, is an important training area for advanced students. It is a nine-story office building (obviously built at considerable expense) where students are trained to perform missions of infiltration in modern-day settings. There is an observation elevator on the west side, and visitors can view the interior of the building through its glass walls as they ascend. No floor-plans are given for the tower, as it is not crucial to the adventure's plot, but if the PCs go there you can sketch out whatever floorplan you like for it.

Tower First-Second Floors. These are set up like apartments; the first floor has large American-style apartments, while the second has many more small Japanese-style dwellings. Ninja are trained to penetrate into personal dwellings, conceal themselves, and attack the "residents" from surprise.

Tower Third-Sixth Floors. These aren't precisely floors. It's all open space crossed by I-beams and other metal girders; it's open construction, looking like an unfinished building skeleton. Ninja are trained to use their acrobatics skills to get from level to level, to fight on narrow beams, etc. A net at the third-story level will catch falling trainees, but nothing will help a trainee who falls onto a girder from a higher floor.

Tower Seventh Floor. This is a suite of offices, used for the same purposes as the first and second floors.

Tower Eighth Floor. This is a large false restaurant; it is used in training exercises to teach trainees how to make use of available materials when they're in a public place and attacked without their weapons ready.

Tower Ninth Floor. This is, like the seventh floor, an office, but is set up with many high-tech security devices (pressure sensors, motion sensors, infrared beams, etc.); advanced students must make several successful Security Systems and Stealth rolls at various minuses in order to penetrate to the office of their "target," must duel the target's bodyguards (usually armed with paint guns), and so forth.

(15) The Small Towers. These are stout wooden poles with ladders leading up to the top, and small tower rooms at the top. Ninja trainees are situated here to observe one another on stealth training, to see how they themselves look from high vantages when they're sneaking about; they also climb these towers to launch climb-lines over to the Tower for infiltration.

(16) The Bamboo Stand. Like the forest, this area is often used for stealth training.

(17) The Path. The path from the main valley area continues along the lake and stream (branching off to go to the various other sites), then out the north end of this area, continuing on toward the Matoshuko residence.

KEY TO MAP #3: THE MATOSHUKO HOME

This is a large home at the northern end of the valley, built on the slight rise of a low hill. It is a single-story dwelling, featureless and windowless from the outside, with all its sights and treasures inside.

The house was designed by Matoshuko Toshio. It is not built in the Japanese fashion; it's designed much like a western museum, with a succession of gallery-style rooms displaying some of the treasures from Matoshuko's collection of weapons and armor.

(a) Gate. This is the main entrance into the building; it has a hidden camera setup which a Security Systems roll can detect and a subsequent Stealth roll can elude.

(b) Main Hall. This hall bisects the house; the exterior doors and sliding doors shown can all be opened for an unimpeded view through the length of the house.

(c) The Gallery. Each of these small rooms showcases one or more of Matoshuko's treasures. Each room has a glass case displaying some beautiful weapon, suit of armor, or piece of art or furniture — not just Japanese; some are Chinese, others Korean, some Thai, etc. A PC in dire need of a weapon would find one in just about every one of these rooms, but should be made to feel like a heel for endangering precious artifacts from the past.

(d) Genji's Rooms. An outer room and an inner bedroom. The outer room is a small workshop for handcrafted goods — leather-work, wood-carving, and embroidery especially. Genji is quite artistic. The inner bedroom is very bare, very spartan, with a sleeping mat and a small armoire holding clothes and possessions.

(e) Fujiko's Rooms. An outer room and an inner bedroom. The outer room contains several bookshelves containing works, in Japanese and English, on Japanese history and on the role and philosophy of the feudal samurai warrior. The inner room, like Genji's, is fairly spartan, though it features display racks for her katana and wakizashi, and she has a wider variety of clothing in her armoire.

(f) Inoshiro's Rooms. An outer room and an inner bedroom. The outer room includes a big-screen TV and elaborate stereo system. The bedroom has a large western-style four-poster bed, chests of drawers, and a lot of clothes (not all his, some left by female visitors).

(g) Toshio's Rooms. A bedroom and a bathroom. Like his son Inoshiro, Toshio enjoys electronic entertainments, and has an expensive television and quadrophonic stereo setup. His rooms are extensively decorated with standing suits of Japanese armor and weapons hanging on the walls. All are authentic historical pieces.

(h) The Garden. The center of the house is a small garden open to the sky. An artificial spring runs through the garden, which features lichen-covered rocks and numerous exotic flowers; it is quite beautiful. The garden is surrounded by a slightly elevated wooden walkway (a foot and a half off the ground, barely room for crawlspace beneath); most of the family rooms open onto this walkway.

(i) The Bath. This is an old-fashioned formal Japanese bath. The outer chamber includes showers and a dressing and undressing area; the inner chamber has two bathing pools, one somewhat hot and the other very hot.

(j) Bathroom.

(k) Security Room. The security devices protecting the house are monitored from here; several of Matoshuko's *genin* ninja are always here on duty. (There will be two *genin* for every intruding PC over three. Thus, if seven PCs enter the house, there will be eight *genin* here.) The security devices on the house include cameras at the front and back doors and pressure sensors on the roof.

(l) Family Room. This is a plain, open room with a few low tables and no other furniture; the family eats and socializes here.

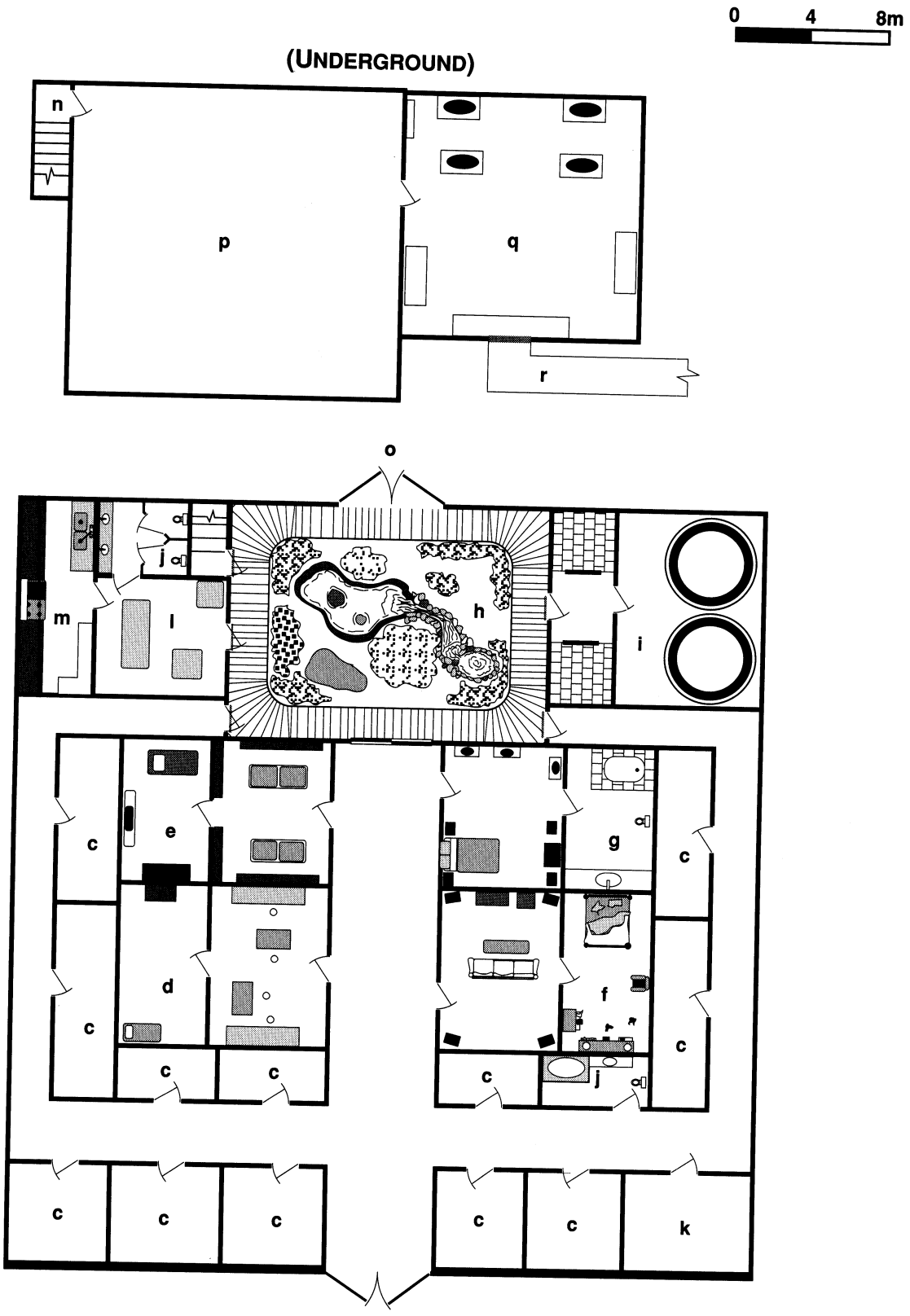
(m) Kitchen. This is a modern-style kitchen with numerous appliances. One of the Shinobiyama cooks does the cooking here, returning to work at the cafeteria between family meals.

(n) Stairwell. This descends to the dojo and museum.

(o) Rear Doors. Like the front gate, these doors are protected by a concealed camera.

(p) Dojo. This is Matoshuko Toshio's training hall; he, Inoshiro and Fujiko train here. The floor is protected by a *tatami* mat; the walls have racks holding wooded training weapons, including *bokken* and *shinai.*

THE MATOSHUKO HOME



(q) Museum. This is Toshio's main collection. It includes many cases and stands of armor and weapons. One of the biggest displays is of ninja-clan shuriken from many of the ninja families; all the brackets for Yamawaki-clan shuriken are now empty (he gave those shuriken to his *genin* for the Kibota-clan raid). Every sort of well-known Japanese and Chinese weapon, especially those utilized in martial arts combat, is to be found here.

(r) Escape Tunnel. This tunnel, accessible from a glass armor case which slides open, emerges deep in the woods east of the house. A character actively searching the museum can spot the catch and open it if he makes a Concealment roll at a -3 or a Visual Perception roll at a -6.

CREEPING AROUND SHINOBIYAMA

The characters can choose any one of several different approaches to get into Shinobiyama and look around.

They can pretend to be interested in joining the school. If they show up at the administrative office with this excuse, Matoshuko Inoshiro will give them a tour of the school, taking them through all its facilities and explaining the price structure and regimen. He will not take them to the fourth or fifth floors of the pagoda. If one or more of the PCs is famous (for example, a widely-known martial arts champion, movie star, etc.), Matoshuko Toshio will escort them instead of his son.

They can sneak in. If it occurs to them, they may realize that if they sneak in while wearing official Shinobiyama ninja night-suits they'll be practically indistinguishable from the regular students. However, anyone sneaking into the pagoda or Matoshuko residence will be considered a hostile intruder and anyone detecting him will attack to kill; in the pagoda, for instance, the ninja between the floors will use their steel spear-heads instead of the padded ones.

If the heroes get either into the top two floors of the pagoda or into Matoshuko Toshio's museum they'll have all the proof they need that Shinobiyama is the source of the attack on the Kibota compound. That leaves them to decide what to do about it.

If they plan to exact revenge on Matoshuko Toshio, they can attempt his assassination. It's most interesting to arrange things so they can only get to him at his house, where he is protected by ninja guards and his children; in the tower, where he will go to the secure top story with his bodyguards; or in the pagoda, where the traps (and perhaps some of his children) will be present to defend him. All three places provide the most interesting terrain for the PCs to have to traverse.

If the PCs want a distraction or cover for their assault, remind them that Kibota Takeo also has a stake in this revenge business... and he has several dozen yakuza gangsters (in addition to one or two surviving and battle-ready ninja) to use as ground forces. They could launch a direct attack on Shinobiyama while the PCs go after Matoshuko Toshio.

However, this adventure can't predict all the various approaches and tactics that your PCs will take; set up the situation for them, let them plan their approach, and then GM the finale of the adventure based on their actions and the abilities of Shinobiyama's defenders.

THE SHINOBIYAMA NINJA

The following character sheet is used for all the black-suited Shinobiyama ninja and a few other characters. Individual notes for those other characters follow the character sheet.

If you want to run any lesser-ranged ninja, just subtract skills and stats from the character sheet appropriate to the student's rank. A student in a white ninja suit will be a normal, SPD 2 human; at each grade above that, the student will gain one ninjutsu maneuver and one skill, gaining SPD 3 at around Green Suit grade.

THE SHINOBIYAMA NINJA (Member of the *Genin*)

Val	Char	Cost	50+	Disadvantages
15	STR	5	5	Distinctive Features: Ninja Night-Suit (Easily concealable, Is Noticed and Recognizable)
13	DEX	9		
13	CON	6		
10	BODY	0	15	Hunted, Matoshuko Family/Shinobiyama Org., More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
13	INT	3		
12	EGO	4		
10	PRE	0		
10	COM	0	3	Package Bonus
5	PD	2	20	Code of the Bushi (Absolute Obedience to Matoshuko Toshio, common, total)
3	ED	0		
3	SPD	7		
5	REC	0	7	Style Disadvantage (Shinobiyama-Ryu Ninjutsu) (would be 10 pts but character already has max. allowable pts)
26	END	0		
24	STUN	-1		

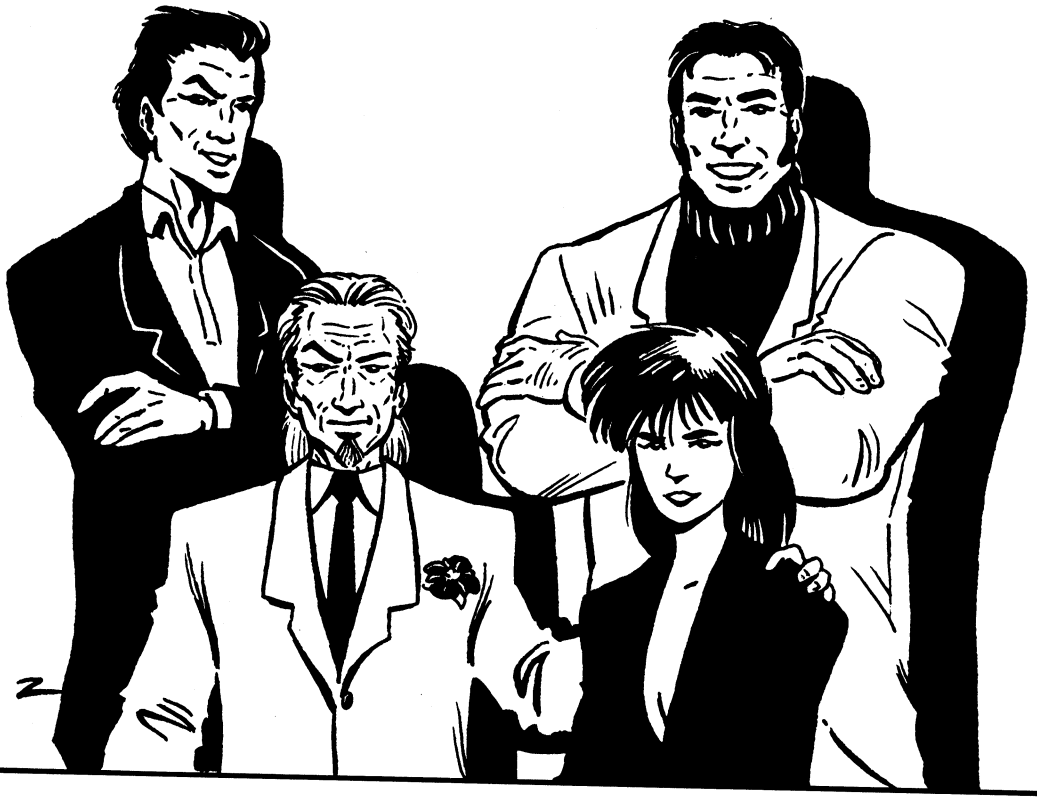
Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
2	Martial Art: Ninjutsu, usable Barehanded (default), and with Blades, Polearms (from Weapons Elements)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
5	Choke Hold	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Punch or Kick	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
3	Takedown	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls

Pts	Skills / Perks / Talents / Powers	END
3	Acrobatics, 12-	
3	Breakfall, 12-	
3	Climbing, 12-	
5	Combat Skill Level, +1 in Hand-to-Hand Combat	
3	Combat Skill Level, +1 with Ninjutsu	
3	Concealment, 12-	
2	KS: Ninjutsu, 11-	
3	Language: Shinobiyama-Ryu Codes and Symbols (Literate)	
3	Lockpicking, 12-	
3	Security Systems, 12-	
3	Stealth, 12-	
9	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Garotte, Blowgun, Fukimi-bari	

OCV: 4+; **DCV:** 4+; **ECV:** 4; **Phases:** 4, 8, 12

COSTS:	Char.		Skills & Powers		Total		Disadv.		Base
	35	+	65	=	100	=	50	+	50

The Matoshuko Family:
(l-r) Toshio, Inoshiro, Fujiko, Genji



Equipment:
The Shinobiyama ninja attacking the Kibota compound and defending the pagoda and Matoshuko home are loaded for bear; each carries all of the following weapons:

Ashiko: 1/2d6K, STR Min 5, +1 to Climbing roll.

Garrotte (strangling): 3d6 normal damage, STR Min 4, must follow Grab and be aimed at head.

Ninja-To: 1 1/2d6K (2d6 with Ninjutsu Punch), +1 STUN, STR Min 15, can throw.

Shuko: 1d6-1K, STR Min 5, +1 to Climbing roll.

Sai (cinema): 1/2d6K, STR Min 8, +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway maneuvers, can throw.

Smoke Grenades: 1" radius Darkness vs. Normal Sight, 9 charges.

Small Star Shuriken: 1d6-1K, can throw up to 5, STR Min 5 (7 if throwing 5), 9 shots.

Tanto: 1/2d6, +1 OCV, STR Min 5, can throw.

Additionally, each carries one of the following weapons:

Hankyu: 1d6K, STR Min 7, 24 shots.

Kyogetsu Shoge: 4d6 normal damage and STR Min 9 using chain, 1d6K and STR Min 11 using hook, can throw, +2" range.

Naginata: 1 1/2d6K (2d6K with Ninja Punch), +1 OCV, and STR Min 15 using blade; 4d6 normal damage (7d6 with STR and Ninja Punch), +1 OCV, and STR Min 8 using shaft; +1" range in either mode.

Small Net: Def 4, BODY 4, takes no damage from attacks vs. target.

This character sheet also serves for two other characters: Ed Millburn and Matoshuko Toshio.

ED MILLBURN

Background: Millburn is a black-belt ninja who is now an instructor at Shinobiyama. He's ridden high for several months on the accomplishment of earning his black belt, so much so that Matoshuko Toshio was convinced that Millburn was fanatically loyal to him and would be a good addition to the *genin*. But when Millburn realized what the *genin* were up to, he realized that Shinobiyama was not the place for him. He smiled and pretended to go along with things, but when the raid on the Kibota compound was launched, he tried to escape. He didn't fool Matoshuko Inoshiro, though, and Inoshiro captured him.

Millburn's role is that of an insider who knows all the facts. If the heroes haven't gotten enough clues or the GM wants them to have a little additional information about the setup, he can have them encounter Millburn. They'll spot him as he's being dragged off to the pagoda by two black-clad ninja. These two ninja are in the cotton uniforms used in the Kibota compound massacre.Millburn is in a black Shinobiyama night-suit but not wearing a mask; his arms are bound behind him and he is gagged.

When rescued, Millburn will assume (unless told otherwise) that the heroes are Japanese secret service or the CIA, and will tell them what he knows. Millburn knows the following:

Shinobiyama has a special inner circle of about 150 black-belts called the *genin*. Millburn was recruited to the *genin* before he realized what they were about. He tried to escape during the raid on Kibota compound but was captured. They intend to torture him until they're sure he's told no one else, and then kill him.

Inoshiro, the "grey ninja," is a very accomplished ninja, a happy killer, a mean fighter.

Fujiko is a modern samurai, one who also has just realized the purpose of the *genin* but who (an obedient daughter) cannot betray her father, though she is desperately unhappy and does not approve of his plans for the *genin*.

Genji is a strange young man with an inventive mind, a natural fighter who has little formal training, one who is indifferent to Toshio's plans.

That the top two floors of the pagoda are where Matoshuko Toshio and his *genin* do their planning and arming for criminal missions.

If he gets out of this alive, Millburn will survive to write a book or three about Shinobiyama, will act as technical director for the movie based on his book, and will return to the U.S. to found his own school of ninjutsu... not that this has any bearing on the adventure at hand.

Personality: Millburn is a bit boyish and overzealous; he's a popular instructor at Shinobiyama, a very patient and supportive one (unlike many of the *genin*).

Identifying Quote: "Hey, I didn't learn all this stuff in order to *kill* people..."

Powers/Tactics: In the dire situation in which he's been placed, Millburn will resort to the ninja tactics he's been taught: Go to ground, silently eliminate anyone who threatens to expose him, and get to a safe place as quickly and quietly as possible.

Appearance: Millburn is a tall, slightly gangly man, clean-shaven with a short military-style haircut; his hair is blond (nearly white, worn as short as it is) and his eyes are blue. When found by the PCs, Millburn is in a black Shinobiyama night-suit but not wearing a mask; his arms are bound behind him and he is gagged.

MATOSHUKO TOSHIO

Background: Toshio's background was described above, in *What Has Gone Before*.

Personality: Matoshuko Toshio is an aging man with big dreams of a criminal empire. He believes he will be succeeded by his children; he has blinded himself to the fact that Inoshiro doesn't have his business sense, that Fujiko doesn't want to have anything to do with his criminal plans, and that Genji has no ambitions whatsoever. Toshio's principal love is for artifacts of the past, and he has a keen appreciation for art.

Identifying Quote: "Do you see this naginata? Tokugawa-era. Note the temper of the steel, the beauty of the construction. A pity I shall have to endanger it by killing you with it."

Powers/Tactics: Matoshuko believes that he has set up a dynasty which will continue without him, and if the compound is attacked he will believe that his time to die has come. So he will fight fearlessly, in an exalted state of mind, not thinking at all of retreat or surrender. He will, however, order Fujiko and Genji to flee; that way he "knows," in case he and Inoshiro are killed, that his legacy will continue.

Appearance: Matoshuko is a middle-aged Japanese man. He is a little overweight and has a heavily-creased face full of character. He smiles reverently when looking at old weapons or pieces of art. He normally wears very expensive business suits; he never dresses in ninja night-suits.

Variations: Toshio has the following skills in addition to those on the Shinobiyama Ninja character sheet:

Pts	Addition
+2	KS: Organized Crime, 11-
+3	Language: English, Fluent Conversation, Literate
+3	Language: Yamawaki Clan Codes and Symbols
+4	PS: Business Management, 13-
+3	PS: Sensei (Teacher) 12-

His Psychological Limitation is not "Code of the Bushi," but rather "Overconfidence."

He was once a much better fighter than his children and his students, but age has taken its toll on him.

Equipment: Toshio carries around no weapons most of the time, but in his office and home he is surrounded by them. Given his choice, he will fight with a naginata.

MATOSHUKO INOSHIRO

Val	Char	Cost	75+	Disadvantages
18	STR	8	5	Distinctive Features: Ninja Night-Suit (Easily concealable, Is Noticed and Recognizable)
18	DEX	24		
15	CON	10		
10	BODY	0	15	Hunted, Matoshuko Family, More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
13	INT	3		
13	EGO	6		
15	PRE	5	3	Package Bonus
14	COM	2	10	Psych Lim: Cruel, Heartless, and Unfeeling (Common)
8	PD	4		
4	ED	1	15	Psych Lim: Overconfident Within Darkness (Very Common)
4	SPD	12		
7	REC	0	10	Style Disadvantage: Shino-biyama-Ryu Ninjutsu
30	END	0		
27	STUN	0	42	Villain Bonus

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
3	Martial Art: Ninjutsu, usable Barehanded (default), and with Blades, Polearms, Staff (from Weapons Elements)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
5	Choke Hold	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
4	Punch or Kick	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
4	Spear Hand	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
5	Takeaway	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, +10 STR to Take Weapon Away
3	Takedown	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls

Cost	Powers	End
17	Darkness, 1" Radius, Impervious to Sight Group (20 pts), Personal Immunity (+1/4), 0 END (+1/2), No Range (-1/2), IAF censer and mirror (-1/2)	0
3	Breakfall, 13-	
3	Acrobatics, 13-	
3	Climbing, 13-	
20	Combat Skill Levels, +4 in Hand-to-Hand Combat	
3	Concealment, 12-	
3	Fast-Draw Talent, 13-	
2	KS: Ninjutsu, 11-	
3	Language: Shinobiyama Codes and Symbols	
3	Language: English, Fluent Conversation, Literate	
3	Lockpicking, 13-	
3	Security Systems, 13-	
3	Seduction, 12-	
3	Sleight of Hand, 13-	
3	Stealth, 13-	
9	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Garotte, Blowgun, Fukimi-bari	

OCV: 6+; **DCV:** 6+; **ECV:** 4; **Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	75	+	120	=	195	=	120	+	75

EQUIPMENT

Inoshiro carries the following gear (in addition to his censer and mirror):

Ashiko: 1/2d6K, STR Min 5, +1 to Climbing roll.

Katana: 1 1/2d6 K, +1 OCV, STR Min 12, can throw.

Large Star Shuriken: 1d6+1K, STR Min 10, 9 shots. Shuko: 1d6-1K, STR Min 5, +1 to Climbing roll.

Tanto: 1/2d6, +1 OCV, STR Min 5, can throw.

Tetsu Bishi: 1d6K to feet when stepped on, one hex area, activates 14-, 2 handfuls (charges).

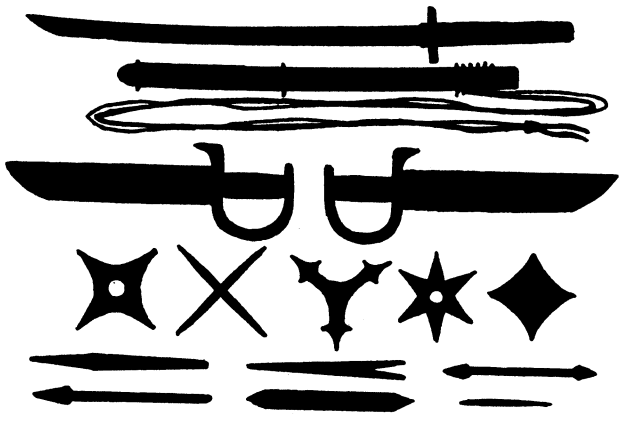
Background: Inoshiro grew up every inch his father's son, anxious to further his father's ambition of a worldwide mercenary-ninja organization. All his life has revolved around the Shinobiyama organization.

Personality: He doesn't have his father's business sense, and really has no compassion, sense of duty, or any other gentle trait to his personality. The closest he has to an admirable quality is his appreciation of skill; he is openly admiring of ability, and will compliment any skilled opponent he fights. Otherwise, he is a cold, efficient assassin, a skilled ninja, and a lecher.

Identifying Quote: "Your skills are remarkable. I wish I had time to learn from you. Unfortunately, there is no time. Prepare yourself for death."

Powers/Tactics: Matoshuko has a special trick which makes him very dangerous in combat. He has a couple of special pieces of equipment. One is a small mirror on a rod about three feet long; the other is a censer (a small porous ball) on a chain about two feet long. When duelling an opponent, he swings that censer around him and out pours a great quantity of white-grey smoke which blends perfectly with his costume, making him effectively invisible within it. Once he's surrounded by smoke, he holds up the mirror to near the top of the smoke-cloud and sights using it; he has trained himself until he can attack objects he sees in his mirror with consummate skill (i.e., his full OCV). The mirror is an IAF, and thus is hard to see; a character must make his Perception Roll vs. the mirror's 13- Concealment Roll in order to spot it at all. Once a PC does spot it, its purpose is obvious.

Appearance: Toshio's oldest son is a tall, lean Japanese man (nearly 6', 150 lbs). He looks a lot like his father did 30 years ago. When in ninja gear, he wears a special ninja night-suit: It is grey instead of black, the better to blend into his smoke-cloud. In any fight with Shinobiyama ninja, he will stand out because of his individual suit.



MATOSHUKO FUJIKO

Val	Char	Cost	75+	Disadvantages
13	STR	3	3	Package Bonus (Kenshi)
17	DEX	21	3	Package Bonus (Samurai)
15	CON	10	15	Hunted, Matoshuko Family, More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
12	BODY	4		
13	INT	3		
13	EGO	6	20	Code of Vengeance: Must Avenge All Insults to Self and Matoshuko Toshio (Common, Total)
13	PRE	3		
16	COM	3		
7	PD	4		
3	ED	0	5	Code of the Bushi: Obedience to Matoshuko Toshio, (Common, Total, would be 20 pts except she's at her, limit for Psychological Limitations)
4	SPD	13		
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
27	STUN	0	0	Torn Between Ethics and Samurai Codes (common, would be, 10 pts except she's at her limit for Psychological Limitations)
			10	Style Disadvantage: Nito-Ryu Kenjutsu
			29	NPC Bonus

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
	Martial Art: Kenjutsu, usable with Blades			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
4	Evade	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Lightning Stroke	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
5	Running Stroke	+1	+0	Weapon +v/5; FMove
	Martial Art: Karate, usable Barehanded			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
5	Side or Spin Kick	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
8	Analyze Style Aid (see the Powers section for a description of this ability)	4
3	Ambidexterity Talent	
7	Analyze Style, 14-	
3	Breakfall, 12-	
10	Combat Skill Levels, +2 with Hand-to-Hand	
4	Combat Skill Levels, +2 OCV with Katana	
5	Fast-Draw Talent, 13-	
3	KS: Classical Japanese Literature, 12-	
2	KS: Kenjutsu, 11-	
3	KS: Sensei (Teacher), 12-	
2	Language: Cantonese Chinese, Fluent Conversation	
3	Language: English, Fluent Conversation, Literate	
3	Language: Shinobiyama-Ryu Codes and Symbols	
7	WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common, Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Thrown, Sword	
1	WF: Off-Hand (+1 DCV with weapon in each hand)	

OCV: 6+; **DCV:** 6+; **ECV:** 4; **Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	70	+	90	=	160	=	85	+	75

EQUIPMENT

Whenever possible, and always when at Shinobiyama, Fujiko carries the following equipment:

Katana: 1 1/2d6 K (2d6K with Lightning Stroke), +1 OCV, STR Min 12, can throw.

Wakizashi: 1d6K (1 1/2d6K with STR and Lightning Stroke), +1 OCV, STR Min 8, can throw.

In addition, she always carries these items:

Smoke Grenades: 1" radius Darkness vs. Normal Sight, 9 charges.

Tanto: 1/2d6 (1d6+1 with STR and Lightning Stroke), +1 OCV, STR Min 5, can throw.

In her room at the Matoshuko residence, she also has:

Bokken: 5d6 normal damage (7d6 with Lightning Stroke), +1 OCV, STR Min 10, can throw.

Background: Toshio's second child, his only daughter, is Fujiko. She grew up blind to her father's ambitions, doing as he said and not as he did; in her efforts to please him, she dedicated herself to becoming a samurai warrior in the feudal tradition. She began learning kenjutsu long before Toshio conceived or opened Shinobiyama; there was never any pressure on her to learn the family ninjutsu style.

Recently, the unfeeling Inoshiro spilled the family secrets to Fujiko, just out of spite; for the first time, she learned that her father was indeed a criminal mastermind and that the inner circle of Shinobiyama *genin* were hired out for purposes of assassination. Crushed by the realization but bound by the vows of duty and obedience she had long ago adopted, she is trapped into aiding her father's aims, unable to leave or expose his operation.

Personality: Fujiko has long considered herself a samurai in the ancient tradition. However, the facts that she has grown up in the modern era, and that she now realizes that her father has deceived her all her life and is engaged in very criminal activities, are forcing her to reevaluate her role as his retainer. Because of this, she is under a lot of pressure from within, and usually seems to be tense and regretful.

Identifying Quote: "I wish you would just leave. If you do not, I will regret what I have to do to you."

Powers/Tactics: If and when PCs intrude into Shinobiyama for the purposes of killing Toshio, Fujiko will be faced by a dilemma. She cannot allow her father to be killed and so will fight to the best of her abilities to protect him. But she is also keenly aware that missions of vengeance against Toshio are justly-deserved, and so she will be reluctant to kill the intruders. She will use her blade skills to counter and disarm intruders, relying on her karate side-kick to down them; she will even try to hide their unconscious forms so that Shinobiyama ninja do not murder them.

If, despite her efforts, the intruders get by her and kill her father, she will be just as bound by tradition to find them, challenge them, and kill them, though her heart may not be in it.

Of course, it's possible that PCs will defeat and even kill her, either in the assault on Shinobiyama or her subsequent pursuit of them, without ever realizing her dilemma... but tragedy is a part of the martial arts genre, after all.

Fujiko is a practitioner of Nito-Ryu Kenjutsu, meaning that she is equally adept using her sword in either hand and can use one sword in each hand.

Appearance: Fujiko is a young, good-looking Japanese woman. Outside Shinobiyama, she dresses in modern Western clothing. In Shinobiyama, she dresses in hakama and other training clothes when teaching her kenjutsu classes, and often in feudal Japanese dress at other times.

MATOSHUKO GENJI

Val	Char	Cost	75+	Disadvantages
20	STR	10	15	Hunted, Matoshuko Family, More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
15	DEX	15		
18	CON	16		
15	BODY	10	15	Psych Lim: Interested Only in Handicrafts (very common)
8	INT	-2		
10	EGO	0	10	Psych Lim: Hates brother, father (common)
10	PRE	0		
10	COM	0	30	Villain Bonus
8	PD	4		
4	ED	0		
3	SPD	5		
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
31	STUN	-3		

Cost	Powers	End
20	Balls of Wool: Entangle 5d6, IAF, Two Recoverable Charges	0
15	Knitting Needles: HKA 1d6 (2d6 w/STR), AP, Can Throw (Use at Range), Cost END, IAF, Eight Recoverable Charges	3
10	Blinding Button-Powder: Flash 2d6, Eight Charges, IAF	0
8	Running +4"	2
15	Combat Skill Levels, +3 with Ranged Combat	
2	Language: English, Fluent Conversation	
4	PS: Embroidery, 13-	
4	PS: Knitting, 13-	
5	PS: Leatherworking, 14-	
7	Weaponsmith, Muscle-Powered Weapons, 13-	

OCV: 5+; **DCV:** 5; **ECV:** 3; **Phases:** 4, 8, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total	Disadv		Base
	55	+	90	=	145	70	+	75

Background: Genji grew up in the shadow of Inoshiro, who was cruel and malicious to him all through their childhood (and still is today). Genji grew up distant from his brother and his father, who always praised Inoshiro and ignored Genji. A quiet rebel, he refused to learn the family's martial arts and concentrated on learning hand-crafts which he knew his father despised. He has never had a part in the Shinobiyama organization.

Personality: Genji is a strange one. He is silent, sullen, not interested in ninjutsu or his father's criminal plans; he just wants to be left alone to make things. He loves hand-crafts. He will defend his home against intruders, but (given the chance) he will flee it, abandoning his father and brother. He has more affection for Fujiko and would risk himself to save or rescue her. He has no interest in and barely any knowledge of the family business.

Identifying Quote: "Leave me alone. Just leave me alone. You'll make me do something bad if you don't leave me alone."

Powers/Tactics: In order to protect himself from his brother Inoshiro, he has created several objects out of ordinary household items, objects which are effective weapons in combat.

Genji has balls of flexible leather cord which look like balls of brown wool; he throws them, holding on to one trailing length of cord, to wrap around foes (an Entangle). His favorite tactic, though this isn't necessary for the power to work, is to throw the ball to bounce off several walls or trees to wrap around his victim.

He has false knitting-needles which he can stab with or throw with great skill.

He has buttons which he can crush in his fingers to fling into opponents' eyes, blinding them.

Other than his special weapons, he has little in the way of combat ability.

Appearance: Like his brother Inoshiro, Genji is tall, but is also built big, weighing in around 200 lbs. He wears rumpled-looking Western dress and always has some of his hand-crafts with him... usually his innocuous-looking knitting.

THE SCORECARD

If you're having trouble keeping track of which NPCs are which, here are their names and roles again:

Kibota Takeo: Leader of the Kibota ninja clan. Counterpart and former enemy of Yamawaki Shumkichi. Age 60.

Kibota Yuriko: Takeo's wife, mother of Hisato and Emiko. Slain in the massacre. Age 60.

Kibota Hisato: Takeo's son, an accomplished ninja warrior. Probably a friend of one of the PCs. Seriously injured or killed during Kobita Clan massacre. Age 30.

Kibota Emiko: Takeo's daughter, a kunoichi (female ninja). A friend of one of the PCs who invited him to the party at the Kibota compound. Age 25.

Kibota Yabu: Takeo's brother and chief advisor. Slain in the massacre. Age 55.

Kibota Takuji: Yabu's son, Takeo's nephew. Infiltrated Shinobiyama; action led to counterattack on Kibota compound; killed in attack. Age 25.

Matoshuko Toshi: Con man and swindler with aspirations of worldwide domination of crime. As Moto Takezo, trained in Yamawaki-Ryu ninjutsu. Married and later murdered Yamawaki Takako. Believed dead 30 years ago and hands of Yamawaki Shumkichi. Age 60.

Matoshuko Inoshiro: Matoshuko Toshi's eldest child, the "Grey Ninja." Appreciates only beauty; has absolutely no conscience or understanding of pain. Age 30.

Matoshuko Fujiko: Matoshuko Toshi's second child, trained in kenjutsu; considers herself a modern-day samurai. Recently discovered full extent of father's criminal dealings. Does not like those dealings but is bound by honor to support and protect him, so is torn. Age 25.

Matoshuko Genji: Matoshuko Toshi's third child, very sullen and distant. Big for a Japanese youth. Creates inventive weapons and techniques based on everyday household goods. Age 20.

Millburn, Ed: American student, black belt in Shinobiyama-Ryu ninjutsu, an instructor at the Chiba Province school; Shinobiyama patriot until he was recruited to the secret side of the business and rebelled.

Moto Takezo: Previous alias of Matoshuko Toshi; pretended to be World War II ace for Japanese air force.

Yamawaki Shumkichi: Aged clanlord of Yamawaki ninja clan. Very modern and progressive. Age 70.

Yamawaki Takako: Yamawaki Shumkichi's oldest daughter; 30 years ago, married and was later killed by Moto Takezo.

Yamawaki Ken: Yamawaki Shumkichi's oldest surviving son; is effectively the leader of the Yamawaki clan; accomplished ninja warrior. Age 45.

FISTS OF THE WARLORD

(FOR NORMAL SUPERHERO CAMPAIGNS)

This is a simple adventure designed for standard superhero characters. It can be used with a campaign's normal superhero team, or with a collection of martial-arts superheroes drawn from several campaigns and unassociated groups.

GETTING THE HEROES TOGETHER

The heroes, whether a team or a group of unassociated martial arts supers, are each individually contacted by a powerful mental presence.

The PCs hear that mind as a feeble, tired voice saying, telepathically, "Hero... I have great need of one such as you... Prepare yourself for a great voyage."

The PC will feel a tingling sensation and realize that he is becoming transparent; he can see through his own hand. A phase or two later, he vanishes utterly.

(Note: You can make these supers pay for their Secret ID disadvantages by having this contact take place at work, in some public place, etc.; the others cannot hear the voice, but may overhear the super conversing with it, and the super may have to run off and hide before he's spirited away by Lo's magic.)

Moments later, the character reappears, in costume, either with his team or with several other known superheroes, inside a large room with corroded bronze walls, illuminated by light streaming in through a hole in the top of the room.

In the room with them, seated cross-legged at its center, is an old man — barely a man, more of a skeleton with a bit of flesh on it. He looks 150 years old, and is wearing faded green silk robes, bearing vaguely Chinese designs and patterns.

"I am Lo," the figure says telepathically, unmoving. "You must know my story while I still have strength to tell it." Then he shows them the story recounted below, under *What Has Gone Before*.

Don't worry about characters with strong telepathic defenses; presume that Lo has enough power to communicate regardless of their defenses.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Thousands of years in China's past, during the time of the Shang Dynasty (ca. 1600 B.C., before the land was unified into one China), there lived two great sorcerers named Lo and Kien. As youths, they were friends and fellow students. As adults, they corresponded and traded secrets. As mature men, they turned down different paths, as Kien decided to use his arts to forge this area of the world into one dictatorship under his rule. Lo opposed him. The two fought a magical duel, which Kien won — or thought he'd won.

For Lo had put all his power into creating a magical trap. He enchanted a bronze bowl into becoming a magic-proof receptacle, and, using Kien's energies, the very energies Kien was using to kill him, Lo shrank both of them to minuscule size and trapped them forever in this bowl. They died there, though their minds and magical knowledge were trapped, unable to move on to the land of ghosts.

Recently, a man named Ba Yuejiu, an archaeologist from the Peoples' Republic of China, found the cave where the bowl was hidden; the cave was, all these millennia later, within the borders of the modern Peoples' Republic. Ba, a young, ambitious man, a skilled practitioner of *wu shu* (kung fu), discovered the cache of Shang Dynasty bronze bowls... and was attacked by the nearly mindless remnants of what had been the sorcerer Kien. The PCs can see this struggle as it is narrated by Lo: They see a young, modern man with glasses prowling excitedly through a cave, his flashlight glinting off green corrosion from ancient bowls and relics of bronze; then he stoops and touches one. That bowl spills forth a green ghostly cloud which invades him, wrestles with him, absorbs him...

Lo says that Kien and Ba merged, neither one entirely in control of the other. Ba gained Kien's remaining magical knowledge and ambitions. But he retained his own skills (and how they were enhanced by the magic now energizing him!) and mentality. This new being, calling itself The Warlord Ba Kien, used Kien's magical power to alter and animate many of the bronze vessels in this cave, to garb himself in glorious, traditional Chinese robes (though not robes dating to the Shang Dynasty), and to fly forth with his newly-created bronze followers.

Lo says that The Warlord, driven by Kien's ambitions, will wish to forge the world into a dictatorship under his own control. Ba Yuejiu, a historian and archaeologist, is also an enemy of the Japan and the West because of their role in dominating and weakening China for the last 200 years or so; he will doubtless seek to oppress all these nations. He is weak now, but as he regains more of Kien's skill and intelligence he will grow ever-stronger.

Lo says he gathered unto himself the last of his strength to summon champions who could confront Ba Kien and defeat him. He thinks he can aid them no further than to say Ba Yuejiu can be separated from Kien if he and all his bronze followers are defeated and if the combined Ba Kien can be placed in a bronze vessel. This can be any bronze vessel, not necessarily an ancient Chinese bronze vessel.

Lo falls silent, and the heroes will soon discover that he has ceased to be. In fact, this body has not been alive in 3,500 years; it now crumbles to dust.

The heroes have an easy exit from this bronze bowl in the opening above. When they climb or fly out of that hole, they grow back to their full size: They've been about 1" tall, conversing with Lo in the very bowl in which he'd been imprisoned for more than 3,000 years.

The bowl is no longer in the Peoples' Republic of China. Ba Kien, the Warlord, took it with him when he flew off to start his mission of conquest. It is now in a museum in any city where you wish the adventure to take place. Ba Kien donated it there, an insult to Lo: He thought it would shame Lo's spirit to know that, daily, visitors would walk by and stare uncaring on the vessel that held his bones.

THE HEROES' PLANS

Unless the heroes have some high-powered Detects, Mind Scanning, of large-area Danger Sense powers, they're without many leads to go on until they begin hearing about Ba Kien's activities.

In the meantime, they ought to be thinking about what Lo said about ultimately defeating Ba Kien. How do they plan to get him into a bronze vessel? If they have some odd powers (such as Shrinking, Usable Against Others), they could carry around a small bronze object all the time. If they don't, they may have to construct a large bronze box in which to hold the full-sized Ba Kien. Let them figure out just what they want to do and how they want to implement it.

BA KIEN'S STEPS TO POWER

Ba Kien's powers include amazing transformation abilities. He can transform any person of Chinese descent (they don't have to be full-blooded Chinese) into powerful *wu shu* fighters devoted to him. These fighters are not necessarily powerful by superhero standards, but more powerful than any army or police force can handle.

The PCs will hear reports that the green-garbed Chinese wizard has appeared in several neighborhoods with large Asian populations and begun speaking to the people as he floated through the neighborhoods... and soon, the local residents poured out of their homes, made more youthful and vigorous and powerful, wearing the colorful *wu shu* clothes (tunics, sashes, lantern-style pants, etc.). They chanted his name, swore faith to him, and split up into group of four to ten fighters and began attacking seats of local government, police cars and police stations, telephone company buildings, mass transit companies, and other vital elements of government, communication, and transportation.

Ba Kien's obvious plan is this: To go from city to city, transforming each community's citizens of Chinese descent into invulnerable warriors, causing chaos and confusion wherever he goes. Note that this is an especially scary proposition in any city which has a large Chinatown. Setting these events in San Francisco, for instance, will make the threat all the more immediate.

When Ba Kien's speeches have been caught on film, he has been passionately vowing vengeance on all the world powers which have humbled China in centuries past. He swears that once he has set Japan, Russia, Germany, England, America and other mongrel nations on their inevitable slide to ruin, once his modern-day Super-Boxers are well on his path to destroying these civilizations, he will return to China and begin forging that nation into a land of invulnerable conquerors.

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE SUPER-BOXERS

The heroes must deal first with hordes of rampaging kung fu warriors while trying to figure out where Ba Kien will strike next. If the adventure is set in a city with a large Chinese population, he'll stay in town for several days, hitting that area on successive days until all its population is transformed. If the adventure is set in a city with a smaller Asian population, he'll need only one day to do all his transformation. In either case, once one city is done, he'll move on to another city. Once the heroes have figured out his scheme, they can begin calculating where he'll strike next in the hopes of confronting him during one of his transformations.

In the meantime, they'll encounter Super-Boxer assaults on all the types of targets mentioned above. These invincible, fight-crazy warriors will try to demolish and destroy anything to cause confusion; they will fight superhero intruders with skill and determination. Once defeated they remain Super-Boxers; they will remain transformed for several weeks or until Ba Kien is defeated.

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE WARLORD

The first time the heroes encounter Ba Kien, he'll just be completing the transformation process on a group of citizens. They'll take a phase or two to adjust to their new minds and powers and then will attack to protect their new Warlord.

Most heroes, because of their higher EGO scores and non-Chinese ethnic backgrounds, will be immune to Ba Kien's Transform attack. If one PC is vulnerable to it, and Ba Kien is aware of it, he will naturally try to transform that hero. Check your campaign's NPC supers, both heroes and villains; if any are Chinese, he could have gotten to some of those characters already and have a super-class bodyguard aiding him. They won't have the characteristics of Super-Boxers; they'll have their own superpowers.

If the fight goes badly for Ba Kien, he will summon forth his Bronze Dragons to give him time to prepare his spell of escape. When he disappears to safety, his Bronze Dragons will escape with him, though his Super-Boxers won't.

OTHER ENCOUNTERS WITH THE WARLORD

Ba Kien, unfortunately, is not very inventive. He has a plan he thinks will work; therefore, he will not vary from it. After the initial encounter, the heroes will still be able to plot his movements and anticipate his next arrival point.

How do they do this?

Well, knowing that he always strikes at Chinatowns and other Asian neighborhoods, they can stake out such neighborhoods, knowing that he will inevitably show up.

If they have access to sophisticated detection equipment, they could analyze a captured Super-Boxer and determine that he emits a distinctive electromagnetic wave based on the magical energies coursing through him. By setting up their detection equipment to scan for that EM wave over a wide area, they could pinpoint his next appearance site when he first begins Transforming the population, and get there before he escapes.

And eventually they'll figure out how to prevent him from escaping with his Bronze Dragons; his Teleport power, his chief escape ability, depends on Gestures and Incantations, and so if the characters can bind his hands or use Darkness fields vs. the Sound Sense Group on him, he will be unable to elude them.

Once they've learned all these things, they'll be able to get to him before he leaves a new attack site and to hold him there; finally, they'll be able to place him in their bronze container. When they do, they'll see the Warlord transform into two beings: A confused, nearsighted archaeologist awakening from a bad dream, and a green ghostlike being which screams and then is ripped by the wind into little wisps of nothingness, destroyed at long last.

BA KIEN, THE WARLORD

Val	Char	Cost
40*	STR	24
28*	DEX	43
23*	CON	21
10	BODY	0
18	INT	8
23*	EGO	21
30*	PRE	16
12	COM	1
15*	PD	6
15*	ED	8
6*	SPD	18
13*	REC	0
50*	END	2
42*	STUN	0

*: Villain ID Only (-1/4)

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
1	Martial Art: Kung Fu, Usable Barehanded (Default) and with Polearms (from Weapon Element)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
5	Kick	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
72*	Flight 30", 0 END	0
56*	Force Field (Green Nimbus), 20 PD/20 ED, Hardened, 0 END (+1/2)	0
8*	Instant Change (Ba Kien/Ba Yuejiu)	0
16*	Mental Defense (Green Nimbus), 20 +5 from Ego	0
21*	Multipower (Kwan Dao polearm), 47 Active, OAF Kwan Dao (-1)	
1 u	Stretching, 1" 0 END (+1/2), Persistent (+1/2) (for extra range with weapon)	0
1 u	H-to-H Attack +8d6, 0 END (18d6 w/Punch)	0
1 u	H-to-H Kill 1 1/2d6K, 0 END (3d6+1K w/STR)	0
38*	Transform People into Super-Boxers, Major, 6d6, Cumulative (+1/2), Area Effect Radius (+1), 16x Area (+1), (240" Radius), 6 Charges/Day (-3/4), Persons of Chinese Ancestry Only (-2), Persons of EGO 10 or Lower Only (-1), Concentrate 0 DCV (-1/2)	0
28*	Teleport 10", x256 Distance, Two Floating Locations, Area Effect Radius (+1), Selective (+1/4), Minions and Followers Only (-1), Two Charges/Day (-1 1/2), Extra Time Full Phase (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Incantations (-1/4)	0
5	Acrobatics, 16-	
3	Breakfall, 15-	
25	Combat Skill Levels: +5 in Hand-to-Hand Combat	
5	KS: Archaeology, 14-	
5	KS: History, 14-	
2	KS: Kung Fu, 11-	
3	Language: Ancient Chinese, Complete, w/Accent, Literate	

Cost	Powers	End
3	Language: Cantonese Chinese, Complete, w/ Accent, Literate	
3	Language: English, Complete, w/Accent, Literate	
3	Language: Hakka Chinese, Complete, w/Accent, Literate	
3	Linguist (Mandarin Chinese is Native)	
5	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Three-Section Staff	
100+	**Disadvantages**	
12	Enraged When Chinese Culture, History, or People Insulted (uncommon, 14-, 8- recovery, Enraged x1/2)	
20	Distinctive Features: Mad Eyes, Maniac's Mannerisms (not concealable, causes major reaction)	
25	Hunted, PCs (More Powerful, 14-)	
15	Phys: Loses All Powers When Knocked Out and Placed in Bronze Vessel (infrequent, fully)	
15	Psych: World-Conquering Megalomaniac (common, total)	
20	Psych: Hates Japanese and Western Powers (very common, total)	
10	Style Disadvantage (Kung Fu)	
10	Unluck, 2d6	
273	Villain Bonus	

OCV: 9+; **DCV:** 9+; **ECV:** 8; **Phases:** 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	168	+	332	=	500	=	400	+	100



Background: The background of the wizard Kien was given above, under *What Has Gone Before*. Ba Yuejiu, the young man whom Kien has inhabited, was born 30 years ago, and raised as a loyal citizen of the People's Republic of China.

Personality: Kien exists only for his ambition to live again and to rule the world. Ba Yuejiu's ambitions are a little less vainglorious: He wants to discover many important artifacts of ancient Chinese culture and become well-known. He would like to live like a Westerner; if Ba Kien turns back into Ba Yuejiu outside Chinese soil, Yuejiu will be very tempted to defect to the West. He is unmarried.

Identifying Quote: "What a pity that you are not worthy to be my follower. It is time for those who are so worthy to eliminate your irritating presence."

Powers/Tactics: Ba Kien has great physical abilities and will be a match for several beginning heroes. This character sheet is built presuming that you run a rather new campaign, with characters who have little experience; if your characters are more experienced, beef up these character sheets to suit your campaign's power levels. You probably will not need to change the Bronze Dragons or the Super-Boxers; just add more Super-Boxers to a fight you want to protract. In combat, Ba Kien will have his followers engage his enemies first, and will only come into the fight if they appear to be incompetent to do the job; but he is not fight-crazy and will teleport to safety if the fight obviously goes against him and his followers.

Appearance: Ba Yuejiu is a small man in excellent shape; he wears wire-rimmed glasses, and his close-cut hair features a cowlick which will just not come down. As Ba Kien, he seems to be a lot larger, but it's mostly strength of presence. He wears green Chinese robes and carries a kwan dao, or Chinese polearm. He does not need to wear glasses, and his cowlick bows before his imperial might.

THE BRONZE DRAGONS

Ba Kien transformed four bronze bowls and vessels (which had been interred with his prison-bowl) into giant bronze dragons to serve him. He used up the last of his power of transformation in doing so; he will regain that power as he begins to regain his strength.

These four metal beings are Chinese dragons: Sinuous, noble and intelligent of appearance, with no wings. They are a dark bronze in color, often coated with a thick layer of blue-green corrosion.

The Dragon, in Chinese myth, is a noble and powerful being, and it is inappropriate for such a noble beast to be represented as the puppet of a mad dictator; any Chinese PCs will keenly feel this to be insulting.

These dragons can become very big or very small. Most of the time, they are small, and ride in a little pouch at The Warlord's belt. When he is in danger or wishes to make an impression, he draws them forth and lets them grow. Whenever they appear full-size, it immediately begins raining in the vicinity; Chinese dragons are the masters of rain.

Ba Kien has no trouble controlling his dragons; it does not occur to him that someone else (i.e., a character with Mind Control) will be able to do it almost as easily as he.

If Ba Kien is separated into his component beings, these dragons will again become priceless Shang Dynasty bronze bowls.

THE BRONZE DRAGONS				
Val	**Char**	**Cost**	**100+**	**Disadvantages**
30	STR	20	15	Accidental Change to full-sized form when hit with magical Detect powers (uncommon, 14-)
15	DEX	15		
30	CON	40		
15	BODY	10	15	Distinctive Features (Huge Chinese Dragon), easily concealable (through Shrinking), cause great fear
5	INT	-5		
10	EGO	0		
30	PRE	20		
14	COM	2	5	Mute (infrequently, slightly)
20	PD	14	10	No Fine Manipulation (infrequent, greatly)
10	ED	4		
4	SPD	15	25	Obey The Warlord (very common, total)
12	REC	0		
60	END	0	20	2x STUN from Heat & Fire Attacks
45	STUN	0	20	2x BODY from Heat & Fire Attacks
			255	Artifact Bonus

Characteristics (When Grown)	
90*	STR
27*	BODY
57*	STUN

*Includes Bonuses from Growth

Cost	Powers	End
120	Multipower: Size Change	
	12 u Shrinking, 60 pts, Persistent 0 END: x1/64 height, 1/262144 mass, +12 DCV, +18" Knockback	0
	12 u Growth, 60 pts, Persistent 0 END: Length 32m, Mass 400,000 kg, +12 BODY & STUN, -8 DCV, +8" Reach, +60 STR, -12" Knockback	0
45	Armor, 15 PD/15 ED	0
55	Change Environment (Rainy) x1024 Radius (1 1/4-Mile Radius), 0 END (+1/2), No Range (-1/2)	0
30	Life Support, Full	0
32	Running +16"	4
10	Superleap +10"	2
10	Combat Skill Levels, +2 in Hand-to-Hand	
4	Combat Skill Levels, +2 with "Bite" (Punch)	

OCV: 5+; **DCV:** 5-; **ECV:** 3; **Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	135	+	330	=	465	=	365	+	465

THE SUPER-BOXERS

Ba Kien is calling his mind-controlled hordes Super-Boxers, after the Chinese patriots of the Boxer Rebellion. Those martial artists of the turn of the 20th century had convinced themselves that their fighting mastery would enable them to survive everything the enemy had to throw at them. Unfortunately, it turned out not to be true when it came to Western bullets, and the Boxers were defeated.

But Ba Kein's Super-Boxers are not so fragile. They really do bounce bullets. These Transformed minions have bullet-proof skin, unquenchable hate for the enemies of the Warlord, and incredible reserves of energy. They run about in packs destroying public buildings, thoroughfares, communications lines, and anything that gets in their way. They don't remember their previous lives as ordinary citizens... but the PCs should be uncomfortably aware that these fierce fighters are, deep down, ordinary folk who don't deserve to be killed. (If PCs are bloodthirsty, you can have them encounter Super-Boxers who are recognizably friends of theirs.)

The Super-Boxers have knowledge of Kung Fu very similar to Ba Kien's, because he has granted them just about all he knows... and can grant them no more than that.

The Super-Boxers all appear to be young, vital Chinese people wearing the traditional kung fu costume (tunic, lantern-style pants and colorful belt sash); each carries a weapon of some sort. When restored to normal, they return to their previous ages, degrees of vitality, and clothes.

Note: A super-powered being Transformed by Ba Kien's transform attack will not take the form of a Super-Boxer if his own, original form is more powerful. He'll still be a minion of the Warlord, though.

THE SUPER-BOXERS				
Val	**Char**	**Cost**	**100+**	**Disadvantages**
30	STR	20	15	Enraged When Opposed by Non-Chinese (very common, 14-, 11- to recover, enraged only x1/2)
18	DEX	24		
23	CON	26		
15	BODY	10		
8	INT	-2	5	Distinctive Features: Wu Shu Costumes and Chinese Ancestry (easily concealable)
10	EGO	0		
18	PRE	8		
10	COM	0	10	Style Disadvantage, Kung Fu
10	PD	4	25	Hunted: Police and Authorities (As Powerful, NCI, 14-)
10	ED	5		
4	SPD	12	25	Fanatic Followers of the Warlord (very common, total)
11	REC	0		
46	END	0	25	Can Think of Nothing but Fighting and Destroying (very common, total)
45	STUN	3		
			10	2x Effect from Transformation Attacks (uncommon)
			5	Unluck
			35	Villain Bonus

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
10	Martial Art: Kung Fu, Usable Barehanded (default) and with Axes/Maces/Picks, Blades, Chain Weapons, Clubs, Hook Sword, Polearms, Staff, Three-Section Staff, Whip, and Wind and Fire Wheels (from Weapon Elements)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
5	Kick	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
27	Armor, 9 PD/9 ED	0
10	Missile Deflection, Thrown & Projectiles	0
13	Superleap, +13"	2
45	Weapons: Value up to 45 pts. (see below)	
12	Combat Skill Levels, +4 with Kung Fu	
0	Mandarin Chinese, Native Accent, Literate	
2	Cantonese Chinese, Fluent Conversation	
2	English, Fluent Conversation	

OCV: 6+; **DCV:** 6+; **ECV:** 3; **Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	110	+	145	=	255	=	155	+	100

EQUIPMENT

Most of the Super-Boxers carry around one or two weapons. For each, choose a weapon or two from the following list:

Butterfly Knife: 1d6+1K: 20 pts. (the super-boxer carries two).

Chai-Dao: 1d6+1K and +1 OCV using blade, +3d6 normal damage and +1 OCV using shaft, +1" range: 23 pts.

Chain Whip: 1d6K, +1" range: 14 pts.

Chinese Axe: 1d6K, Usable at Range: 15 pts. (the super-boxer carries two).

Darn Do (broadword): 1d6+1K, +1 OCV: 17 pts. (the super-boxer carries two).

Flying Claw: 1d6K using Claw, +4d6 normal damage using chain, 2" range, can be thrown: 18 pts.

Hook Sword: 1d6+1K, +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway maneuvers, +6 Def on Hand activates 11-: 22 pts. (the super-boxer carries two).

Jien (straight sword): 1d6K, +1 OCV: 14 pts. (the super-boxer carries two).

Nine-Dragon Trident: 1d6+1K and +1 OCV using blade, +4d6 normal damage and +1 OCV using shaft, +1" range, +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway maneuvers: 26 pts.

Tai-Dao: 1 1/2d6K, +1 STUN, and +1 OCV using blade, +4d6 normal damage using shaft, +1" range: 33 pts.

Three-Section Staff: +4d6 normal damage, +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway, +1" range: 15 pts.

Wind/Fire Wheels (traditional): +3d6 normal damage, usable at range, +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway: 12 pts. (the super-boxer carries two).

WARRIORS IN VALHALLA

(FOR HEROIC MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGNS)

This adventure revolves around the heroes' participation in a martial-arts competition. Of course, the competition itself isn't all that's taking place; there are some decidedly shady doings going on behind the scenes...

THE VALHALLA INTERNATIONAL

The player-characters are invited to the Third Annual Valhalla International. They've heard of the competition, and may have actually gone to see it before, but this is the first time any of them has been invited to participate.

They know of the competition and that it takes place every year in the Valhalla Hotel. (Locate the Valhalla in any city where you'd like to set the adventure; big gambling cities such as Las Vegas, or exotic cities such as Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Bankok are good choices.)

Each year, sixteen competitors representing a wide variety of styles are invited to compete. In the ring, sumo wrestlers fight with savateurs, boxers and judoka go at it, Thai kick-boxers and kung fu stylists vie for the prize. The rules accommodate a wide variety of styles, and the novelty of the event is watching opponents of different styles competing against one another professionally.

The event is open to the public, with tickets sold, and is taped for broadcast on a U.S. cable sports network.

GETTING THE CHARACTERS THERE

This is a good adventure to start off a heroic campaign with because the heroes do not all have to know one another before play begins. However, it works best if you establish, before play begins, that each player-character knows at least one other player-character, so that the PCs constitute a loose group of associates: Each one can vouch for one of the others, so there's little reason for them not to trust one another.

Let them get to the Valhalla by their individual means. Don't concentrate too heavily on this part of the plot, but you can have old friends bump into one another at the airport and the hotel bar in order to set up some role-playing interaction between the PCs.

Most of the heroes will be arriving the day before the competition's events are due to begin. This means that you can, if you wish, run the heroes in some on-the-town activities: Going out to bars (there will be a barfight, of course), sightseeing (and seeing the gang of toughs going after the elderly man), etc.

THE INITIAL BRIEFING

The first event, for competitors, trainers, and press only, is the initial briefing where the tournament organizers lay out the ground rules of the Invitational.

The briefing is conducted by Scott Morris, the originator of the Valhalla Invitational.

The official name for this tournament is the Valhalla Hotel Invitational Freestyle Unarmed Combat Tournament. Naturally, everyone calls it the Valhalla Invitational, or That Dust-Up in (name of city).

TOURNAMENT FORMAT

Each year, the tournament organizers choose sixteen combatants from various of the martial arts: Oriental unarmed combat, eccentric combat styles from the world over, wrestling, Savate, boxing, etc. to compete for the trophy.

Typically, divisional champions for well-known martial arts are not chosen to represent their sports in the Valhalla Invitational. Scott Morris and the tournament board of directors choose up-and-comers, individuals with distinctive styles, or media favorites.

Also occurring at the event are combat seminars and demonstrations from an even greater variety of disciplines, including armed combat.

HISTORY

The tournament was created three years ago by Scott Morris. Morris, an American born in 1945, is a practitioner and teacher of karate. He was middleweight karate champion from 1969-1971, retiring undefeated in 1971. In the nearly twenty years since, he has instructed and acted as a police liaison for peculiar cases involving the martial arts.

PURSE

The first-place prize is $100,000. Second place is $50,000. Third and fourth places are $25,000. (These purses are a bit low by many professional-sports standards, but are not by professional martial arts standards.)

Since the third and fourth place purse is identical, no fight-off between the two defeated opponents of Round 3 is required. Often, however, the contestants volunteer for such a match. Such a match, though not required, is considered official if conducted on the Valhalla site with official judges and referees in residence.

RULES: PROHIBITIONS

Fighting is full-contact. All targets are fair, including the groin.

The referee may stop the fight at any time if excessive damage is being done to an opponent — but generally the damager is the winner in such cases.

EQUIPMENT

Fighters may take their choice of dress, but generally choose to wear the distinctive dress of the martial art in question. Smooth-surface gloves of some sort must be worn; they may not be weighted and must have some padding over the knuckles. Competitors are not required to wear athletic cups, but should.

The contests are theoretically unarmed. However, two opponents, if they both wish to and can agree on choice, may use normal damage weapons and fight armed. The conclusion to last year's Valhalla was a bo-staff match.

No contestant may insist upon an armed match against an opponent who wishes to fight unarmed; to do so constitutes forfeiture of the bout.

TOURNAMENT LENGTH

The Valhalla occurs over a three-day period. The contest is divided into four rounds. Each round is single-elimination. Round 1 takes place on the first day, Rounds 2 and 3 on the second, and the final round on the third.

Round 1 consists of sixteen fighters (fighting in eight bouts, naturally), Round 2 of the eight victors from the previous round, Round 3 of the four victors from the previous round, and Round 4 of the two finalists.

Each match is broken down into three-minute periods. A match is fought to five periods or until one of the victory conditions for victory is met.

CONDITIONS FOR VICTORY

In the course of a match, an contestant is considered defeated if:

(a) He is knocked out — unable to raise himself off the mat in the course of a 10-count. (The 10-count constitutes 5 segments.)

(b) He is pinned with shoulders to the mat — unable to free himself in the course of a 10-count (5 segments).

(c) He is bodily removed from the ring three times by his opponent (usually thrown out).

(d) He is knocked down three times.

(e) He surrenders.

(f) The referee disqualifies him or declares him unable to continue.

If no clear victory occurs in the course of the five three-minute periods, the judges' point-values will determine the winner. Points are gained for blows or maneuvers of remarkable effectiveness or ingenuity, good form, grace, and speed. Points are lost for striking a downed opponent, inability to adapt to an opponent's style, erroneous choice of tactics, etc.

In game terms, the GM gets to decide who won the match based on how he felt the two competitors did.

RIGHT OF REFUSAL

All pairings for a round are announced to the fighters before the round commences. A fighter may refuse to fight a particular opponent in the three preliminary rounds; if this happens, the organizers rearrange matches around to give him a different foe. Each fighter gets only two refusals to use across the competition; once he has refused two opponents, he can refuse no more. When objections are satisfied, the match's pairings are announced to the crowd and the press.

However, refusals are rare, and no serious injury has ever occurred at a Valhalla because of mismatched opponents.

Should a fighter making it to the last round refuse to fight his opponent, he forfeits his victory.

THE FIELD

The fighting occurs on a very large rectangular field, roped like a boxing ring. The non-standard choice of field size advantages no particular sport, although wrestlers and boxers don't care for it.

The field is about 30' by 30' (it's 5" by 5" in game-scale).

BEFORE THE COMPETITION

Before the competition begins, before the opponents' names for the first round have been drawn, the characters will meet Philip Liang.

You can have this encounter take place in the hotel lobby, in a hotel hall, or in one of the auditoriums where lesser demonstrations take place.

Philip Liang, followed by a flock of autograph-hungry fans, comes breezing through the area. One or more of his followers bumps into a player-character and, snarling, insists that the PC apologize. Even if the PC does, the oaf decides to punish him for his clumsiness and attacks. If the PC beats him, the oaf's friends will join in.

Philip Liang doesn't; he's amused by all this and hangs back, picking up pointers on the fighting abilities of his future opponents.

Once the fight is done, with the PCs doubtless victorious (and hotel security on its way), Liang will introduce himself, showing no consideration for the injuries sustained by his erstwhile fans. He will make some faintly disparaging remarks about the PCs' fighting abilities, and will promise to show the PCs "a real good time" when he meets them in the ring. Then he'll depart.

ROUND ONE

In the first round of the competition, face each player-character with an NPC. From the NPCs provided at the end of this adventure, choose an opponent who will be an interesting fighter for the player-character to face. Don't match a wrestler with a wrestler: Match him with a boxer or a kung fu artist.

Even though the fights are supposed to be taking place one after another, you should conduct all these matches simultaneously — this way, no player is just sitting around bored while the others are fighting. Just presume that they're taking place sequentially.

Match Philip Liang up against an NPC opponent. Don't have him fight a player-character yet. In his match, Liang trashes his opponent with little difficulty, even if you match him against an opponent whom the PCs thought a worthy competitor. When he's done, he'll dance around the body of his unconscious foe, taking in the adulation of the crowd.

It's just an incident, but it's the first of several leading to this adventure's conclusion.

BETWEEN THE ROUNDS

Round One takes up all the first day of the competition. When it's done, the heroes are left to their own devices. If they didn't get into trouble bar-hopping or sight'seeing the previous night, you can have them do so now.

One disquieting note takes place during the night. One of the PCs will bump into one of the NPC fighters, who says that Philip Liang's opponent has still not really recovered; he claims of being groggy and he's under a doctor's care.

ROUND TWO

The next day, conduct Round Two. This takes place in the morning. Eight fighters remain in the competition.

This time, confront Philip Liang with a player-character. Let the other six characters randomly draw their opponents (but, again, change the results if the two opponents would not be interesting when facing one another).

Again, run all the competitions simultaneously.

The PC will find Liang to be a tough competitor. At the beginning, Liang will fight defensively, analytically, watching his opponent like a hawk.

Then, something happens. The PC feels a sting in his calf.

If he looks to see what it is, the PC will see a thin, almost invisible needle sticking out of his leg. But at that exact moment, Liang will make a perfectly-timed attack with his most powerful maneuver; he gets a +3 OCV surprise bonus for his timing.

If the PC doesn't look, he doesn't get to see the needle.

In either case, the needle quickly drops out of his leg and is lost.

The PC will swiftly begin growing weak and tired. He's been hit by a chemical attack, a Drain which drains 1d6 Character Points of STR and 1d6 Character Points of END twice a turn. His blows will become weaker and he will soon be reduced to 0 STR and 0 END. It's almost inevitable that he will lose this match.

He can cry foul, and this will cause a lot of controversy in the competition; but how can he prove it? He has a little mark in his leg, but the needle is gone. (A Perception Roll made by half will turn it up, lying inconspicuously at the edge of the ring.) He can claim to be drugged, but it will take some very sophisticated blood analysis to detect this poison; the results won't be back until after the competition. Doubtless he will be very bitter about the event and will want revenge on Liang.

BETWEEN THE ROUNDS

For the rest of the day, Liang stays in the company of one or more of the panel of judges of the event, making it difficult for PCs to attack him without important consequences. The PCs will probably want to do some personal investigations to find out who fired the needle into the PC's leg and why.

Questioning members of the crowd will turn up one interesting fact: One of the other competitors, who was in the crowd at the time, remembers seeing a fellow in the audience; the fellow was practicing spitting ice through his straw at people in the crowd. He was very accurate with it. The fighter describes this fighter as being caucasian, dark-haired, tall, with a flattened nose; he was wearing jeans and a jeans jacket.

Other queries about this fellow turn up several people who've seen him: He seems to be everywhere. But no one knows where he is now or what his name is.

Incidentally, the effects of the poison wear off after about six hours.

ROUND THREE

Round Three takes place in the evening of the same day as Round Two.

In Round Three, if at all possible, set up Philip Liang against another NPC... preferably one whom the PCs like. Especially good would be a DNPC or Follower of one of the player-characters. If no other NPCs remain in the competition, set him up against a PC.

The other player-characters will be fighting the best of the NPC opponents or each other, which should make the third round the most interesting yet.

There are only four competitors in this round, so there are only two matches. You can run them simultaneously or back-to-back, whichever you prefer.

If Liang is facing an NPC, he will have had his confederate drug the NPC. Liang will devastate his opponent, putting him on the rings to keep him upright and raining lethal blows on him while the opponent is semi-conscious. He especially uses his Kick and Tiger Claw.

With his final blow, an unnecessary blow thrown after it's obvious that his foe is defeated, he seriously injures his opponent — breaking his neck or back. This gives the other PCs even more motivation to hate him and plan revenge on him.

If Liang is facing a PC, the PC will have the same thing happen to him as Liang's earlier opponent: He'll be drugged and become sluggish and ineffective in the ring.

If other PCs were on the lookout for Liang's confederate, they will spot him as he's leaving the arena complex. They may go chasing after him; he'll run for it. And the heroes will run into a bunch of ordinary thugs, muscle loaned to Liang by the local organized crime family, enabling the confederate to get away. The thugs won't talk; they're close-mouthed professional criminals with good lawyers. (And if the PCs are inclined to threaten the thugs with torture or death, the police or hotel security will come upon them before they can implement these plans.)

BETWEEN THE ROUNDS

The PCs have one last night to do some investigating before the final round.

The PCs will eventually be able to track down Liang's confederate. His name is Ray Peters. He's employed as Liang's driver. (This is what makes him hard to find; he spends almost all his time in his boss' stretch limosine, sitting behind smoked glass, listening to the Valhalla broadcast on the radio.)

How do they find him? There are several ways, based on their abilities.

A character with Deduction skill can ask enough people that one — a bartender attending the event — will remember Peters. He knows Peters is the driver of that "fancy-pants Liang" and says he's always hanging around Liang's limosine. A detective will have little trouble (i.e., a Deduction skill roll) to figure out that the limo is probably in the hotel's underground parking garage.

The competitor who first spotted Peters in the crowd could track down the PCs and tell them that he's seen Peters again — in the parking garage, in that car.

If a character has a contact with the police, he could take along the competitor who first spotted Peters and the two of them could look through mug books; they'll eventually spot him in the books (he has a history of petty crimes), track him down, and learn of his employment.

Either way, if they're interested in tracking Peters down, some time that night they'll figure out where Peters is and be able to confront him.

He's no match for the characters. There's no question about that. The only question is this: What do they want to do with him?

They can beat a confession out of him and turn him over to the police or tournament organizers. In this case, Liang will be disqualified from the competition (and criminal charges will be sought against him).

They can plot to use Peters against Liang. They might instruct Peters to show up as planned to drug Liang's fourth-round competitor, and then not drug the fighter... or they might instruct Peters to drug Liang instead. Either way, Liang will comply.

Or, they might decide to track Liang down right now and confront him. Peters can tell them Liang's hotel room, which was rented in an assumed name.

ROUND FOUR

If the PC decides to meet Liang in the final round, that may well be the climax of the adventure. The adventure could end with the PC meeting Liang in a fair, brutal, fight-to-the-finish match.

If the PCs haven't tracked down Peters, then that unworthy is in the crowd somewhere, ready to drug the PC. Let the other PCs spot him in the crowd just as the match is beginning; they will be able to stop him from drugging the PC.

If the PCs have already found Peters, of course, then he won't be drugging the player-character still in the match.

In this final round, if the PC wins, he'll win by beating Liang senseless. That's the end of the adventure; when the big bad guy is beaten at the finale, there's nothign left for him to do.

But if Liang still wins, after the competition is done, he and a group of thugs (Typical Martial Arts Thugs, from the end of this chapter, two for each PC) will track down the PCs and try to kill them. Liang knows that the PCs are on to him, and he wants to wipe them out before they can alert anyone. This final confrontation will be the adventure's end.

OTHER FINALES

If the PCs decide to track Liang down the night before Round Four, they'll find him in the company of the same Typical Martial Arts Thugs described above, and the adventure's finale will be the big fight in his hotel room. Peters will still testify against him, so that Liang will be disqualified and the player-character who reached the final round will be named the winner.

OTHER THINGS GOING ON

The Valhalla Invitational isn't just a competition; other things are going on, during the fights and between the fights.

In a lesser auditorium, demonstrations are constantly being given; masters of various interesting arts demonstrate their abilities, exchanging techniques with one another, etc.

In a series of panel rooms, panel discussions take place, the panels consisting of well-known martial artists. One will be a panel of movie actors talking about upcoming films; another will be a debate over "Which is Better: Karate or Tae Kwon Do" (a spirited debate, that, with the crowd getting into it); another will be a discussion of lost and forgotten techniques from well-known arts; and so on.

Player-characters who aren't inclined to be competitors could be invited to sit on these panel discussions.

THE VALHALLA

We don't have room for maps of the Valhalla. Suffice it to say that it's the sort of large, entertainment-oriented hotel complex seen in Las Vegas. It consists of a high-rise hotel (about 30 floors) and an entertainment complex including a large arena (where boxing matches are usually held), restaurants, dinner clubs, an auditorium where singers and comedians entertain, and (if local laws allow, based on where you set the adventure) an extensive casino.

CONTESTANTS

These are the NPC contestants competing for the prize. They, plus the PCs, should add up to 16 competitors. If there are too many, remove some of the NPCs from the roster. If there are too few, add some more NPCs.

PHILIP LIANG

Val	Char	Cost	75+	Disadvantages
18	STR	8	10	Berserk (Enraged) When Made
20	DEX	30		to Look Bad, uncommon, 14-,
18	CON	16		11- recovery, enraged only (x1/2)
12	BODY	4	10	Style Disadvantage: Liang Gar
13	INT	3		Kung Fu
18	EGO	16	5	Distinctive Features: Annoying,
15	PRE	5		cocaine-generation mannerisms,
16	COM	3		loud clothes (easily, noticed)
8	PD	4	15	Hunted (Watched), organized
4	ED	0		crime faily (more powerful, NCI,
4	SPD	10		14-, Watching x1/2)
8	REC	0	15	Must Be the Center of Attention
38	END	1		(very common)
30	STUN	0	10	Casual Killer (common)
			15	Reputation (Vicious Fighter, 11-, extreme
			45	Vilain Bonus

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
6	Martial Art: Kung Fu; Usable Barehanded (Default) and with Blades, Chain Weapons, Hook Sword, Polearms, Staff, Three-Section Staff (from Weapons Elements)			
8	Extra DC with Martial Arts (2 levels)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
3	Joint Lock/Grab	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
5	Kick	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
4	Tiger/Dragon Claw	+0	+0	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab

Cost	Powers	End
3	Acrobatics, 13-	
3	Breakfall, 13-	
30	Combat Skill Levels, +6 in hand-to-hand	
1	KS: Kung Fu, 8-	
3	Sleight of Hand, 13-	
11	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Hook Sword, Three-Section Staff, Wind and Fire Wheels, Common Missile Weapons, Common Martial Arts Missile Weapons	

OCV: 7+; **DCV:** 7+; **ECV:** 6; **Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	100	+	100	=	200	=	125	+	75

Background: Philip Liang is a Chinese-American martial artist from Las Vegas. He has won a lot of attention in Las Vegas by teaching his art to the rich and famous — and to the better-qualified bodyguards of organized crime families. His personal style of kung fu style is called Liang Gar, and it currently is all the rage in Las Vegas. It's a very punishing style involving damaging techniques and a lot of weapons use.

Personality: Liang is a slick schemer. He likes to live high and fast, and has no scruples about hurting other people to get what he wants. He accepts the occasional hit from his organized crime contacts for the extra money it brings, for human life has little meaning to him. He doesn't hold back in the ring and has been known to cripple opponents, even killing a competitor on one occasion. Not surprisingly, Philip Liang is the major villain of this adventure...

Appearance: Liang is rail-thin, about 5'10, with black hair and brown eyes. He dresses in colorful shirts and slacks, mirrored sunglasses, gold chains and expensive shoes, the national costume of the suddenly-wealthy-but-always-tasteless.

EQUIPMENT

In the ring, of course, Liang carries no equipment, but if encountered outside the ring he can have any of the following items:

Bo Shuriken: 1d6-1K, can throw up to 5, STR Min 5 (7 if throwing 5), 15 shots.

Butterfly Knife: 1d6+1K, STR Min 10 (Liang carries two).

Knuck-Knife: 1/2d6, +1 OCV, STR Min 7, +6 Def on hand on 11- activation.

Tanto: 1/2d6, +1 OCV, STR Min 5, can throw.

THE OTHER VALHALLA COMPETITORS

This is the basic character sheet for other competitors in the Valhalla International. Each character is individualized further below. Because each is built with personal skills and maneuvers, not all the characters balance point-wise; presume an NPC bonus for all characters to whom this occurs.

VALHALLA COMPETITORS

Val	Char	Cost	75+	Disadvantages
15	STR	5	10	Hunted, Philip Liang, 8-, More
15	DEX	15		Powerful, Mildly Punish(i.e.,
16	CON	12		Liang only becomes a Hunter
10	BODY	0		when he is to face the character
13	INT	3		in competition; at that point he
13	EGO	6		will use subterfuge against the
13	PRE	3		character both in and out of the
10	COM	0		ring in order to win)
8	PD	5	10	Reputation: Famous Fighter, 11-
4	ED	1	10	Style Disadvantage
4	SPD	15	5	Unluck
6	REC	0		
32	END	0		
26	STUN	0		

Cost	Powers	End
12	Combat Skill Levels, +4 with Martial Art	
1	KS: The Martial World, 8-	
1	KS: Specific Martial Arts Style, 8-	
26+	Personal Skills and Martial Arts (individual amounts paid for skills and maneuvers vary)	

OCV: 5+; **DCV:** 5+; **ECV:** 4; **Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	65	+	40	=	105	=	30	+	75

CHIANG XILAN (SHARON CHIANG)

Background: Sharon Chiang is a martial arts instructor in Hong Kong, a practitioner of Hung Gar Kung Fu.

Personality: Sharon is very flashy and personable, fond of fun and the night-life. However, she's all grim business in the ring.

Appearance: Sharon is small, barely over 5', and lean. On the street, it's easy to underestimate her. In the ring, most opponents know her reputation, but may become overconfident anyway because of her size. She wears the traditional kung fu tunic and lantern-style pants in gold, the sash at her waist in red.

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
4	Martial Art: Kung Fu, usable Barehanded (default), and with Blades, Chain Weapons, Polearms, Staff (from Weapons Elements)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
5	Kick	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
4	Knife Hand	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
3	Throw	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls
4	Tiger Claw	+0	+0	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab

Cost	Powers	End
5	Acrobatics, 13-	
3	Breakfall, 12-	
3	Contortionist, 12-	
2	English, fluent conversation	
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons	

SHERMAN NG

Background: Sherman was born in Thailand, but his family emigrated to the U.S. (San Diego) when he was young. His father, a famous kick-boxer in his day, trained Sherman in the art of *muay Thai*, or Thai kick-boxing. Sherman spends about half his time in the U.S., and the other half in Hong Kong, where he makes martial-arts films exploiting his accidental resemblance to Bruce Lee.

Personality: Sherman is very hung up on himself. He practices scowls and moves in the mirror to see how they look; he continually checks mirrors to see whether his hair is straight. He's not a bad person, but has a lot of "attitude" which annoys others.

Appearance: Sherman is about 5'5", with a very sculpted physique. His black hair is worn very short, in a Bruce Lee hairstyle. In the ring, he wears traditional Thai kickboxing shorts and gloves.

Pts	Additional Characteristics
+2	PRE 15
+4	COM 18

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
	Martial Art: Thai Kick-Boxing, used Barehanded			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Low Kick	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
4	Punch /Elbow Strike	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
5	Roundhouse Kick/ Knee Strike	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
1	Acting, 8-	
2	Language: English, Fluent Conversation	
3	Language: Cantonese Chinese, Complete Fluency	

CHOL MI-NA (MINA CHOL)

Background: Mi-na (who is called Mina in the U.S.) is a Korean medical student living in the U.S. A practitioner of Hwarang-do, her main interest in life is learning as much as possible about both Western and Eastern medicine in order to exchange knowledge between the two medical arts.

Personality: Mina is a very studious, serious sort. She feels out of place in every situation except medical studies and the ring, so she's decidedly fidgety around people in other situations. She greatly wishes she were an amusing speaker and could fit in with other people.

Appearance: Mina is about 5'4", with brown hair and eyes and very pretty but non-distinctive features. In the ring, she wears a tae kwon do-style *dobok* (similar to a karate *gi*) in black.

Pts	Additional Characteristics
+3	COM 16

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
1	Martial Art: Hwarang-do, usable Barehanded (default), and with Blades (from Weapons Element)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Finger Strike	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
4	Hand Strike	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
4	Joint Break	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
5	Kick	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
5	Breakfall, 13-	
2	KS: Korean Healing, 11-	
1	KS: Medicine (Western), 8-	
4	English, completely fluent, literate	
3	Paramedic, 12-	

JOE HALL, THE WRECKING BALL

Background: Joe Hall, the Wrecking Ball, is a professional wrestler from Philadelphia. He's been in the pro wrestling business for ten years, and usually takes the "bad guy" role in wrestling competitions.

Personality: Joe Hall lives his professional image. He's loud and crude, confrontational and vulgar. But he's not stupid; he has a quick wit and is capable of snappy comebacks and intelligent analysis. Out of the ring, he'll pester other competitors with his crude image until they belt him or cut him up with even quicker wit; at that time, he'll become friendly and a lot more lower-key. Once in the ring, though, he reverts to Neanderthal mannerism.

Appearance: Hall is huge: 6'8" tall, a Viking superman. He is blond and balding, his hair worn long. His eyes are blue, his features craggy; his nose has been broken. He pumps iron and his physique is that of a bodybuilder. In the ring, he's likely to wear anything, but usually wears leopard-spotted shorts and vests.

Pts	Additional Characteristics
+11	STR 23 (PD now 9, REC now 8, STUN now 30)
+5	INT 18
+5	PRE 18

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
1	Martial Art: Pro Wrestling, usable Barehanded (default), and with Clubs (from Weapons Element)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
3	Body Slam	+2	+1	STR Strike; You Fall, Target Falls
4	Crush	+0	+0	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
4	Duck	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Fist Smash / Forearm Smash	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
3	Grab	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on

Cost	Powers	End
3	Acrobatics, 12-	
3	Acting, 13-	
3	Breakfall, 12-	
3	KS: Snappy Patter, 12-	

ANTONIO MANDELINO

Background: Mandelino is a boxer from Sicily. He grew up poor in a poverty-stricken region, and has fought his way out, now making a good living in WBA.

Personality: Money means a lot to Mandelino: Not that he's greedy, but he plans to make enough to set up his entire family in style. So he's very, very motivated to win this competition: He's fighting for his family as well as himself. Outside the ring (at this competition, anyway), he religiously stays away from drink or women; in the ring, he's the most serious fighter around.

Appearance: Mandelino is about 5'10" and 165 lbs. His hair is light brown, his eyes dark brown. In the ring, he wears boxing trunks.

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
	Martial Art: Modern Boxing, usable Barehanded			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
3	Clinch	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
4	Cross	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
5	Hook	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
5	Jab	+1	+3	STR Strike

Cost	Powers	End
2	English, Fluent Conversation	

MIGUEL DOMINGUEZ

Background: Miguel Dominguez is a college wrestler in Mexico City; he comes from Nuevo Laredo. He is age 24 and a senior in college. He competed in the 1988 Olympic Games, but does not plan to compete in '92, and so is willing to compete for money in the Valhalla.

Personality: Dominguez is a very laid-back, fun-loving sort, a hard drinker and carouser. In the ring, he's a grinning, taunting opponent, always trying to provoke his opponent into a mistake through insult and innuendo.

Appearance: Dominguez is 5'11 and 170 lbs. His hair is black, his eyes brown. In the ring, he wears shorts and a tank-top T-shirt with the insignia of the University of Mexico City.

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
	Martial Art: Wrestling, usable Barehanded			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
3	Hold	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
4	Reversal	-1	-2	STR +15 to Escape; Grab
3	Take Down	+2	+1	STR Strike; You Fall, Target Falls

Cost	Powers	End
3	Breakfall, 12-	
2	English, fluent conversation	

SGT. DAVE BEERY, USMC

Background: Beery considers himself a career Marine; he's been in for ten years and plans to go on for at least the next ten. Stationed in California, he's a Marine instructor in commando training.

Personality: Beery is gung-ho and ambitious. He's a superpatriot who feels sorry he was too young to serve in Vietnam; he dearly wants to kill for his country. He has no compunction against killing for himself, so long as the money is right and it doesn't conflict with American interests.

Appearance: Beery is 6'3" and 210 lbs. He's definitely in fighting trim. His hair is red and cut short, Marine-style; his eyes are blue. In the ring, he wears a karate *gi* decorated with green camouflage patterns.

Pts	Additional Characteristics
-1	COM 8

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
2	Martial Art: Commando Training, usable Barehanded (Default), with Knives and Clubs (from Weapons Elements)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
5	Choke	-2	+0	Grab, 2d6 NND(2)
4	Jiu-Jitsu Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
4	Karate "Chop"	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

Cost	Powers	End
3	Breakfall, 12-	
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms	

GEORGES D'ORLEANS

Background: Georges d'Orleans is actually from Nice, in France. He's a savateur, a practitioner of savate. He's about 40, and has been touring nearly constantly for the last 15 years, demonstrating and teaching his art in France, England, the U.S., Japan and Hong Kong. He's a family man with grown children, many of whom are also savate practitioners.

Personality: Georges likes the good life: Good wine, good food, good company. He's really not interested in how successful he is as a competitor: He is first and foremost a teacher. In the Valhalla, he hopes to last in the ring long enough to interest many viewers of the cable-sports crowd in his art.

Appearance: George is a very handsome man entering middle age. He has thinning black hair and a natty black mustache. He's about 6' and slender. In the ring, he wears the typical savate outfit, with his pants in black and the striped shirt in black-and-gold stripes.

Pts	Additional Characteristics
3	COM 16

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
	Martial Art: Savate, usable Barehanded			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Coup de pied bas (low kick)	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
5	Coup de pied chasse (side kick)	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
3	Footsweep	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls

Cost	Powers	End
4	Language: English, Complete Fluency, Literate	
2	Language: Cantonese Chinese, fluent conversation	
2	Language: Japanese, fluent conversation	
3	PS: Teacher 12-	

TANAKA TAKASHI

Background: In his day, Tanaka Takashi was one of the most famous sumo wrestlers. Now retired from the ring, he has been lured out of retirement for one last event, the Valhalla. Takashi is 35, a married man with two young children; his wife is in the crowd.

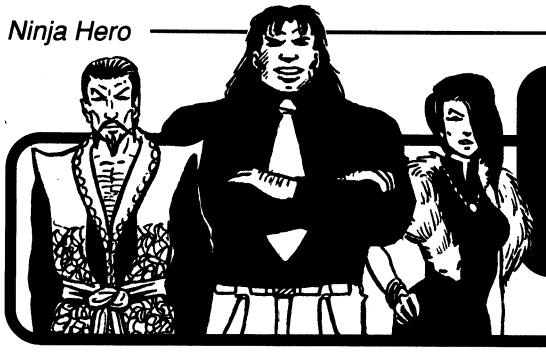
Personality: Takashi is a very pleasant, philosophical man who feels very lucky that he was able to turn his physical ability and determination into success and wealth for his family. In the ring, he is all business, but outside the ring he is quiet and diffident. His English is not good, so he struggles to keep up with conversations around him, but he is determined to fit in among and be accepted by the other competitors.

Appearance: Takashi has lost a lot of weight since his glory days as a competitor: He is 6'2" and 300 lbs. In the ring, he wears his sumo loincloth. Outside the ring, he wears nice suits tailored to his build.

Pts	Additional Characteristics
+11	STR 23 (PD now 9, REC now 8, STUN now 30)
-1	COM 8

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
	Martial Art: Sumo Wrestling, usable Barehanded			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
3	Grab	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
3	Grappling Throw	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike; Target Falls; Must Follow Grab
4	Root	+0	+0	STR +15 to resis Shove; Block, Abort
4	Shove	+0	+0	+15 STR to Shove
4	Slap	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
1	English, basic conversation	



NON-PLAYER CHARATERS

In this section, we're providing a variety of useful non-player characters for your *Ninja Hero* campaign (and other campaigns featuring martial arts).

YOOSO (THE ELEMENTS)

MARTIAL-ARTS VILLAINS FOR SUPERHERO CAMPAIGNS

Yooso is a supervillain group oriented around the martial arts; it can be used whole, or the individual characters can be used separately, in most superhero campaigns.

These characters are built for somewhat experienced campaigns. If you plan to use them against new heroes, use only one Yooso villain at a time, or lower their characteristics and powers to suit your campaign.

HISTORY

In feudal Japan, the Takaras were a wealthy samurai clan jockeying with every other ambitious clan for control of the land of the rising sun.

The Takaras were secretly allied with another powerful family, the Kage clan. This relationship was more than one of family ties and family traditions. For while the Takaras were samurai and widely respected, the Kages were a ninja clan.

At that time, late in the Tokugawa Shogunate, samurai considered ninja to be base, dishonorable, and contemptible, so the Kage family's true traditions were not widely known. The Kage clan's samurai, counselors, petty officials, and lower-class workers served the Takaras openly... but the Kage ninja served them secretly. Officially, the Takara clan-lord knew nothing of the deeds of the Kage ninja. But he could say, in passing, to one of his administrators that it would be propitious if a particular lord were to cease interfering in his plans, or if a particular youth never grew to manhood, and as if by magic one of the Kage ninja would make it so.

The Takaras never gained ultimate power in Japan. By the later years of the Tokugawa Shogunate, there was little need for the services of the Kages, and the repressive laws of the Shogun concerning ninja forced the Kages to go underground. Many of the Kage families retreated into the mountains; those that remained appeared to be completely devoid of ninja tradition. When the Tokugawa Shogunate fell in the 1860s, and subsequently the samurai lost most of their power, the Takaras and Kages became just two more small clans with long and honorable tradition.

After World War II, one branch of the Takaras prospered in the field of electronics manufacture. Today, in the 1990s, Takara Electronics (and subsidiaries Takara Aerospace and Takara Entertainments) is one of the largest and most powerful industrial concerns in Japan.

While some branches of the Kage family maintained their family traditions, teaching and using their ninja arts for the sake of the clan, one branch, the Iga Kage clan, took another course. In the years after the World War, these Iga Kages sold their ninja services to the highest bidders in the international arena of espionage and terrorism, with little regard for the effects on Japan or the world at large.

Some of these Iga Kages had positions of power and influence in Takara Electronics and other major firms. Realizing the importance on their profession of the appearance of super-powered beings in the world, they began diverting massive amounts of money into a secret project to create their own Kage superbeings. To facilitate this, in the early 1970s they also began an all-out, behind-the-scenes war to replace Takara Electronics head (and family leader) Takara Shintaro with their own clan leader, Kage Hiroshi.

The plan failed. Ironically, Takara Shintaro was tipped off and aided by superheroes, and drew on the resources of both his own modern-day samurai and the Kage ninja clans still friendly with the Takaras. At this time, the Iga Kages were usually called "The Shadow Clan" to distinguish them from the Takaras and loyal Kages. The war was swift and bloody; Kage Hiroshi and his children all died. All the known Iga Kages were purged from the Takara Electronics empire. But the missing money was never recovered.

It ended up in the hands of Kage Masao, a member of the loyal Kage clans, and a lifelong friend of his cousin Kage Hiroshi. Masao was strong enough to keep the Iga Kages from scattering and return them to their original path, and has since pursued Hiroshi's dreams of a powerful Shadow Clan supported by the financial resources of Takara Electronics and backed by the power of superbeings. Though he has not been able to throw down Takara Shintaro, a canny man who is friends with several Japanese superheroes, he has been able to create his own stable of supers. Kage Masao's superteam, the spearhead of the Shadow Clan fighting force, is called *Yooso*, or the Elements, because each corresponds to one of the Oriental elements of the universe: Metal, Water, Fire, Earth, and Wood.

GROUP TACTICS

In Yooso, Tsuchi and Hi are front-line fighters. Oni no Mizu hangs back behind the "screen" of those two villains, wielding his magic powers to greatest effect; he prefers not to engage in hand-to-hand combat.

Iron Ronin prefers to seek out and attack the enemy of the leader group, presuming that a leaderless group will be easier to defeat. And Kami no Hayashi takes no action against enemies except on the orders of Iron Ronin or Oni no Mizu. They tend to order her to perform rescues, to hang around the edges of a combat stealthily and capture stray heroes, or to steal foci important to the heroes; she only comes into the main fight when it goes badly for the rest of the Yooso team.

GROUP POLITICS

Iron Ronin is the team leader, but Oni no Mizu intends to take that role eventually. However, he knows that Iron Ronin is the son of the head of the Kage clan, so he has to find some way to eliminate Iron Ronin without arousing the Kages' suspicions... not an easy thing, when a ninja clan is involved. In the meantime, Oni no Mizu contents himself with bickering over all of Iron Ronin's orders and "modifying" Iron Ronin's plans whenever it suits him.

Hi is loyal to Iron Ronin and despises Oni no Mizu. He has no interest in Tsuchi. He has a slight superstitious dread of Kami no Hayashi and steers well clear of her.

Tsuchi grudgingly obeys Iron Ronin and Oni no Mizu. He would disobey them in order to save Kami no Hayashi from harm, however.

Kami no Hayashi hates Oni no Mizu and dislikes Iron Ronin, simply because he leads the group. She is amused by Hi's dread of her and will sometimes sneak up behind him to startle him. She is unaware of Tsuchi's love of her.



RELATIONS WITH OTHER GROUPS

Yooso is chiefly opposed by a Japanese hero-group called Asahi. Yooso is well-known in Japan as a villainous super-group, though; any outside hero group who contacts the Japanese authorities about Yooso will learn that they are criminals.

IRON RONIN (TETSURONIN)

Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages
30*	STR	17	20	Hunted, Japanese Super Team, As Powerful, NCI, 11-
26*	DEX	40		
30*	CON	33	15	Hunted, Japanese Authorities, Less, NCI, Limited to Certain Area, 14-
15	BODY	10		
18	INT	8		
18	EGO	16	20	Code of the Bushi: Serves Kage Masao (vc, strong)
20	PRE	10		
12	COM	1	15	Wants to Be Shadow Clan Leader (vc)
12*	PD	5		
12*	ED	5	10	Style Disadvantage: Karate
6*	SPD	20	15	Secret ID, Kage Jiro
12*	REC	0	175	Villain Bonus
60*	END	0		
45*	STUN	0		

*:Half the stat is bought normally (-0) and is usable in his secret ID, while half is based on his OIF Power Suit (-1/2). Kage Jiro's normal stats: STR 20, DEX 18, CON 20, PD 7, ED 7, SPD 4, REC 8, END 40, STUN 35.
#:OIF Power Suit (-1/2)

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
2	Martial Art: Karate, usable Barehanded (Default) and with Karate Weapons and Staff (from Weapons Elements)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Punch, Snap Kick	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
4	Knifehand Strike	-2	+0	1/2d6 HKA (2 DC)
5	Side or Spin Kick	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
52#	Armor, 21 PD/21 ED, Hardened	0
30	Kama (Sickle), HKA 2d6K (4d6K w/Punch + STR), 0 END (+1/2), Usable at Range (+1/2),	
	OAF Kama (-1)	0
10#	0 END with STR	0
27#	Armor Multipower, 40 Active	
3 u	Flight 20"	4
3 u	Teleport 15" x2 Distance x2 Mass	4
3 u	+13" Running at 0 END	0
5	Mental Defense, 9 pts	0
4	+2, Sight Perception	0
32	Combat Skill Levels, +4 in Combat	
2	KS: Karate, 11-	
5	Language: English, Native, Literate	
2	WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons	

OCV: 9+; **DCV:** 9+; **ECV:** 6; **Phases:** 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	165	+	205	=	370	=	270	+	100

Real Name: Kage Jiro, son of Kage Masao. Age: 35. 5'9", 150 lbs., black hair and eyes.

Costume: Shiny skintight steel-blue power suit with Japanese demon mask helmet, traditional samurai clothing worn over armor, sai carried in belt.

Background: Jiro is a cybernetics expert for Takara Aerospace and, secretly, is the inventor of the Iron Ronin power armor. Ambitious and intelligent, he decided at an early age that he would head the Shadow Clan's superbeing project. He trained in karate and became a leading robotics and cybernetics expert; his greatest invention, the Iron Ronin armor, is a super-alloy suit which gives him great defenses and many unusual powers.

For Yooso, Iron Ronin represents the element of Metal. He serves as the team's leader and is the only team member who communicates with Kage Masao.



ONI NO MIZA (WATER-DEMON)

Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages
18	STR	8	20	Hunted, Japanese Super Team, As Powerful, NCI, 11-
23	DEX	39		
18	CON	16	15	Hunted, Japanese Authorities, Less, NCI, Limited to Certain Area, 14-
15	BODY	10		
28	INT	18		
17	EGO	14	15	Hunted, The Shadow Clan, More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
18	PRE	8		
10	COM	0		
10	PD	6	20	Cruel and Sadistic (very common, strong)
9	ED	5		
6	SPD	27	15	Hates/Hunts Enemy Japanese Sorcerer (common, strong)
10	REC	4		
46	END	5	10	Style Disadvantage, Shorinji Kempo
33	STUN	0		
			15	2x STUN, Physical H-to-H Killing Attacks

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements

2 Martial Art: Shorinji Kempo, used Barehanded (default) and with Staff and Polearms (from Weapon Elements)

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
35	Variable Power Pool Control Cost	0
70	Variable Power Pool (Magic, Water Spec. Effects)	var
45	Armor, 15 PD/15 ED	0
14	Bo Staff: +1 OCV, +4d6 normal damage, +1" range (see Superhero Gadgets and Weapons in the Sourcebook section)	0
3	Breakfall, 14-	
15	Combat Skill Levels: +3 with Ranged Combat	
4	KS: Japanese Magic, 13-	
1	KS: Kung Fu (Shorinji Kempo), 8-	
3	Language: English, Fluent Conversation, Literate	
3	Lockpicking, 14-	
31	Magic Skill, 28-	
6	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Small Arms	

OCV: 8+; **DCV:** 8+; **ECV:** 6; **Phases:** 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	160	+	255	=	415	=	315	+	100

Real Name: Kano Kyoji. Age: About 25. 5'9", 150 lbs., brown hair and black eyes.

Costume: Ceremonial Japanese robes and headgear in sea-blue, embroidered with water-patterns and sea-creatures.

Background: Kyoji is the son of a member of the *yakuza*, Japan's caste of gambler/gangsters. His parents both died when Kyoji was young (his father dying violently), and Kyoji was sort of haphazardly reared by his father's yakuza friends. He lived in Osaka, making his way as an urchin and petty thief, running with a small band of boys like himself. Cruel and mean, he was no brute; he found cunning ways to enjoy his passion for inflicting pain. He was also an apt student of the physical and combat side of *shorinji kempo* (a Japanese martial art derived from, and whose name is based on, *shao-lin ch'uan fa* (Shao-lin kung fu), though he never understood the peaceful philosophical elements of the art.

The Shadow Clan had recruited to their ranks an aging sorcerer who had fought for Japan during World War II. This mystic, now too feeble to fight in the superhero arena, was all too willing to be convinced that the Shadow Clan was creating a pro-Japanese super-group that would drive the hated Westerners from the island. He used his own arts to find a young man who would readily take to his magical teachings, and located Kyoji. He instructed Kyoji for the better part of a decade in Japanese magics.

Today, Kyoji is a very versatile magician who prefers water motifs and water attacks. He is called Oni no Mizu in Japan (this roughly translates as "Water-Demon"); in the West, he is usually called Mizu.

In Yooso, he represents the element of Water. After Iron Ronin, he is the senior member.



HI (FIRE)

Val	Char	Cost
23	STR	13
23	DEX	39
28	CON	36
18	BODY	16
13	INT	3
14	EGO	8
18	PRE	8
14	COM	2
10	PD	5
10	ED	4
6	SPD	27
15	REC	8
56	END	0
50	STUN	6

100+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted, Japanese Super Team, As Powerful, NCI, 11-
15	Hunted, Japanese Authorities, Less, NCI, Limited to Certain Area, 14-
15	Hunted, The Shadow Clan, More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
20	Code of the Bushi (Obedience to Kage Masao and Jiro)
20	Code of Vengeance: Avenge all insults to self and Kages
10	Ashamed of Father's Failure (uncommon, strong)
10	Style Disadvantage, Kenjutsu
15	Secret ID, Takara Toshi
30	1 1/2x STUN from Ambush or Treacherous Attacks
95	Villain Bonus

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements

Martial Art: Kenjutsu, usable with Blades

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; +10 STR to Disarm roll
4	Evade	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Lightning Stroke	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
5	Takeaway	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, +10STR to Take Weapon Away

Cost	Powers	End
4	Instant Change, IIF Magical Ring	0
43	Armor, 18 PD/18 ED, IIF Magical Samurai Armor	0
30	Katana, 2d6 HKA (up to 3 1/2d6K with Lightning Stroke and STR), 0 END, IAF	0
20	Katana, 1d6 HKA (up to 2d6K with STR), 0 END, Damage Shield, IAF (twirls katana around self)	0
8	+4" Running	1
3	Acrobatics, 14-	
16	Combat Skill Levels, +2 in Combat	
10	Combat Skill Levels, +2 in Hand-to-Hand	
3	Fast-Draw Talent, 13-	
3	KS: Calligraphy 12-	
2	KS: Japanese History, 11-	
3	KS: Kenjutsu, 12-	
3	High Society, 13-	
2	Language: English, Fluent Conversation, Literate	
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons	

OCV: 8+; **DCV:** 8+; **ECV:** 5; **Phases:** 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	175	+	175	=	350	=	250	+	100

Real Name: Takara Toshi. Age: 26. 5'11", 180 lbs., brown hair and eyes.

Costume: As Hi, Toshi wears the traditional samurai armor and face-mask, all in red with writhing-flames in yellow and orange.

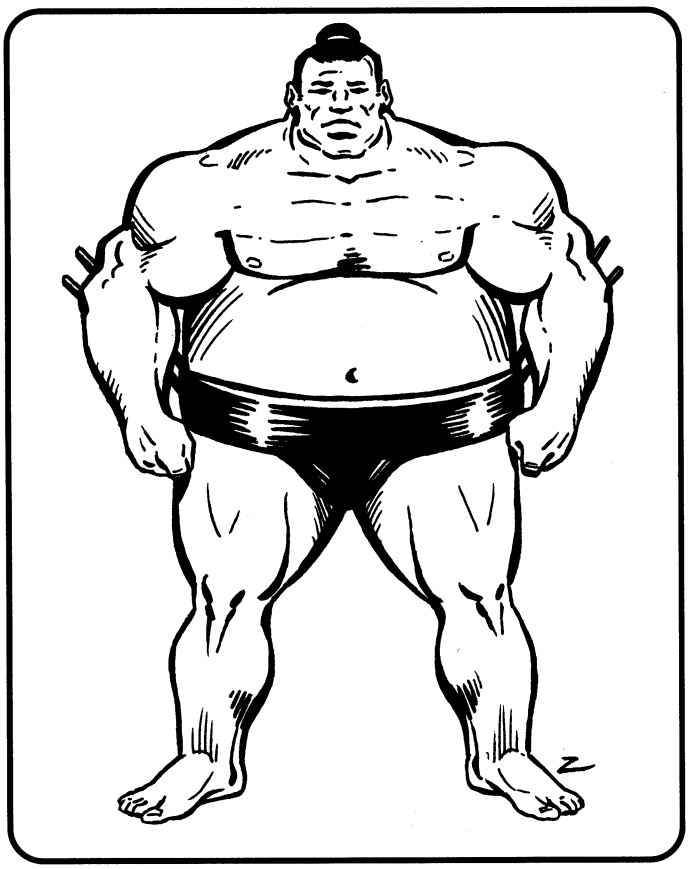
Background: Toshi's father was one of those privileged few who, late in World War II, were chosen to learn how to take off and steer explosives-laden planes into Allied warships. But Toshi's father failed in his objective, crashed into the sea without exploding, and was rescued by the U.S. Navy. After the war, he spent the rest of his life as a quiet, unassuming, sad-faced plant worker.

He died when his youngest son Toshi was 12. Going through his father's papers, Toshi discovered his father's disgrace. Toshi was humiliated. He developed the irrational belief that it was up to him to make up for his father's failure, and he became a fanatical traditionalist.

He decided to make up for his father's failure by becoming the greatest bushi (warrior) ever known to the Japanese. It was an adolescent fantasy... but he had the willpower and physique to bring it close to reality. He spent years training himself in traditional kenjutsu and steeling himself to be a noble embodiment of the samurai code.

Kage Masao, leader of the Shadow Clan, took an interest in Toshi, aiding him throughout his adolescence, encouraging his samurai dreams. He arranged for Toshi to have the best tutors possible. Toshi came to look upon his benefactor with the attitude of a feudal samurai toward his lord; he was willing (even eager) to lay down his life for Kage Masao, and later for Kage Jiro when Masao required him to serve his son.

Iron Ronin brought Toshi into Yooso, where the young samurai was given magical samurai equipment crafted by Oni no Mizu, weapons and armor which would no sooner be Disarmed or removed from him than they would reappear upon him (i.e., they are OIF instead of OAF; but they can only be magically summoned back to him if he is within 15" of them; beyond that range, he cannot summon them). Iron Ronin gave Toshi the code-name of Hi, meaning Fire.



TSUCHI (EARTH)

Val	Char	Cost
70	STR	60
18	DEX	24
30	CON	40
20	BODY	20
10	INT	0
18	EGO	16
23	PRE	13
10	COM	0
30	PD	16
25	ED	19
5	SPD	22
20	REC	0
60	END	0
70	STUN	0

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
	Martial Art: Sumo Wrestling, usable Barehanded			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
3	Grab	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
3	Grappling Throw	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike; Target Falls; Must Follow Grab
4	Root	+0	+0	STR +15 to resist Shove; Block, Abort
4	Shove	+0	+0	+15 STR to Shove
4	Slap	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike

Cost	Powers	End
27	Damage Resistance, Full	0
13	PD and ED Hardened	0
60	Damage Reduction, 50% Phys & Ener, Resistant	0
35	Reduced END on STR	0
30	Knockback Resistance -10", 0 END	0
10	Clinging, 0 END	0
6	Combat Skill Levels: +3 OCV, Grab	
30	Combat Skill Levels: +6, Hand-to-Hand	
4	KS: Sumo Wrestling, 13-	
3	Language: English, Fluent, Literate	

100+	Disadvantages
12	Enraged Whenever Dangerous-Looking Foe/Attack Fails to Hurt Him (very common, 14-, 8- recover, enraged x1/2)
15	Distinctive Features: Exaggerated Sumo Build (not concealable, is noticed)
20	Hunted, Japanese Super Team, As Powerful, NCI, 11-
15	Hunted, Japanese Authorities, Less, NCI, Limited to Certain Area, 14-
15	Hunted, The Shadow Clan, More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
20	Passively Suicidal (attacks mightiest opponents, take greatest risks hoping they will kill him: very common,strong)
15	In love with Kami no Hayashi, refuses to acknowledge it (common, strong)
10	Public ID: Kajita Takeo
10	Style Disadvantage: Sumo
223	Tragic Villain Bonus

OCV: 6+; **DCV:** 6+; **ECV:** 6; **Phases:** 3, 5, 8, 10, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	230	+	240	=	470	=	370	+	100

Real Name: Kajita Takeo. Age: 44. 6'3", 400 lbs., brown hair and amber eyes.

Costume: Traditional sumo loincloth.

Background: Takeo was one of the first mutant children born to Japanese citizens exposed to radiation at Nagasaki. He weighed 14 pounds at birth, and his mother died in childbirth.

He grew fast and hardy, untouched by the minor injuries that plague children. By the time he was 14, he was 5'10" and 200 lbs. At 16, he was a rising sumo wrestling star and the good-natured favorite of the younger generation. But at 18, his mutant physiological abnormalities were discovered and he was barred forever from tournament sumo wrestling.

As his body continued to mutate, he became heavier; his strength became superhuman; his skin and body fat took on a doughy consistency, allowing him to absorb ever-more damage and to climb sheer surfaces (by pressing his malleable flesh tight to surfaces). Because of this and his perceived "failure" in his sport, he was shunned by his family and his nation.

Whereas people despised him, crime saw a use for him. Unable to make a living any other way, or to commit suicide (he tried; knives failed him, and a terminal velocity fall failed to knock him out), he turned to crime. His talents were spotted early by the Shadow Clan, and since then he has been in the employ of Iron Ronin.

He is a brooding, fatalistic man. His one interest now is Kami no Hayashi; he would do anything for her. But he perceives his love as an impossible thing and refuses to declare it to her or anyone; he thinks of it as another cruel punishment life has visited upon him.

In Yooso, Takeo represents the element of Earth. He has taken the code-name of Tsuchi, meaning earth. He is incredibly hard to put down in combat. On the other hand, he's not that difficult to get out of the way in combat; he is most often defeated by being denied the opportunity to fight.



KAMI NO HAYASHI (WOODS-SPIRIT)

Val	Char	Cost
10	STR	0
20	DEX	30
23	CON	26
20	BODY	20
18	INT	8
15	EGO	10
18	PRE	8
24	COM	7
8	PD	6
5	ED	0
5	SPD	20
7	REC	0
46	END	0
37	STUN	0

Pts — Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements

1 Martial Art: Aikido, usable Barehanded (Default) and with Staff/Polearm Shaft (from Weapons Element)

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
3	Hold	-1	-1	Grab, +10 to STR for holding on
5	Strike	+1	+3	STR Strike
3	Takedown	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls

Cost	Powers	End
30	Elemental Control (Kodama Powers)	
a-30	Desolidification, 0 END	0
b-30	Flight, 30"	6
c-30	Telekinesis (Tendrils), STR 40	6
d-30	Entangle 3 Def/3d6, Area Effct Rad. (+1) (Tendrils)	6
60	Damage Reduction, 50% Phys & Ener, Resistant	0
36	Armor, 12 PD/12 ED	0
27	Naginata: Blade is 1 1/2d6K, +1 OCV, +1" range; Shaft is +4d6 normal damage, +1 OCV, +1" range; see Superhero Weapons and Gadgets in the Sourcebook chapter)	0
3	Acrobatics, 13-, Breakfall, 13-	
2	KS: Aikido, 11-	
4	Enhanced Perception, +2 Vision	

100+ — Disadvantages

5	Distinctive Features: Green Eyes & Hair (easily concealable, is noticed)
20	Hunted, Japanese Super Team, As Powerful, NCI, 11-
15	Hunted, Japanese Authorities, Less, NCI, Limited to Certain Area, 14-
15	Hunted, The Shadow Clan, More Powerful, NCI, 14-, Harshly Punish, Watching (x1/2)
10	Unfamiliar with Human Customs (common)
20	Believes She Must Serve Mizu (very common, strong)
5	Susceptible to Flattery (uncommon)
5	Unwilling to Harm Flora (uncommon)
0	Vegetarian, Will Not Eat Meat
10	Style Disadvantage: Aikido
20	2x STUN, Heat & Fire Attacks
20	2x STUN, Gas & Chemical Attacks
5	Unluck
180	Villain Bonus

OCV: 7; **DCV:** 7; **ECV:** 5; **Phases:** 3, 5, 8, 10, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	135	+	305	=	430	=	330	+	100

Real Name: None; nicknamed Kiko. Age: Unknown; 3 years old as a human. 5', 95 lbs., dark green hair and eyes.

Costume: Glossy green robe, belt, and slippers which look like silk but are actually composed of fine, delicate leaves. The naginata she carries has a slightly gnarled shaft and the blade is a thorny substance rather than metal.

Background: Kiko is a tree *kodama*, a Japanese tree spirit which, like the Hamadryad of Greek myth, is magically bound to its tree. The kodama takes the shape of humans when meeting mortals, and sometimes live among humans for a time.

When the kodama now called Kiko observed a striking-looking Japanese man praising her tree, she took on the form of a beautiful human woman and approached him. But the man was Oni no Mizu, and he had long been seeking a tree-spirit to control for Yooso. When his magic revealed Kiko's nature, he encapsulated her tree in an invisible force wall she could not cross. Threatening to destroy her tree (and thereby kill her) if she did not obey him, he ordered her to use her mystic powers for Yooso. Not a devotee of the Japanese custom of honorable suicide, she had no choice but to agree.

Mizu did not tell her that he had put a long-term enchantment on her tree, one that would twist and corrupt it to bind her to him forever. But Mizu was himself not aware that his spell instead slowly killed Kiko's tree.

Over the past three years that she has served Yooso, Kiko has had recurring bouts of illness which recently ceased. She does not know that it meant her tree had slowly died and that her illnesses were the gradual metamorphoses of her human body in its struggle to survive without the tree. Now, although she is not yet aware of it, she is no longer a true kodama, nor is she truly human; she is a mystic life-form somewhere between the two.

Because she still thinks Mizu holds her life in his hands, she continues to work with Yooso. Should she ever find out the truth, she would try to kill Mizu; failing that, she would flee in confusion.

While she has been with Yooso, Kiko has received training in aikido, a martial art more suited to her temperament than those practiced by the rest of the team.

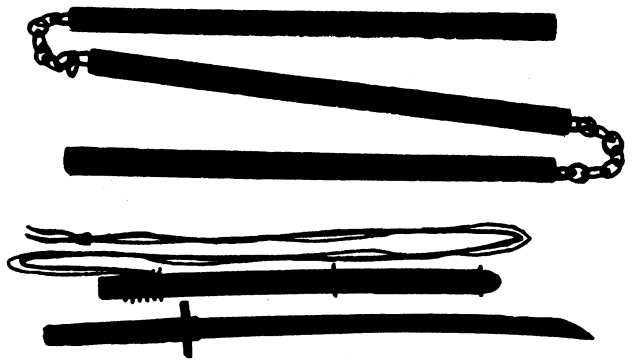
When using her powers, Kiko manifests a cloud of delicate plant-tendrils behind her, usually in back of her, sometimes all around her. She uses them for entangling and telekinesis purposes. When they're grabbed, they just tear free, which doesn't hurt her.

She can also assume her true kodama form, where her tendrils and human body disappear to be replaced by a small eldritch cloud.

In either form, she flies very fast. With Yooso, she acts as a fast courier, transporter of heavy weights, carrier of prisoners, and occasionally as a surprise attacker. She is effective in ambushes, hiding in desolidified form in the center of trees or in the earth, then using her Telekinesis or Entangle on unsuspecting foes.

She serves Yooso unwillingly and is therefore a weak link in that group. But she does not know that Mizu's magic has killed her tree. And she speaks no English, which might make it difficult for player-characters to communicate with her.

In Yooso, she represents the element of Wood.



SIPRISTI

Val	Char	Cost
15	STR	5
18	DEX	24
20	CON	20
10	BODY	0
15	INT	5
13	EGO	6
15	PRE	5
18	COM	4
8	PD	5
6	ED	2
5	SPD	22
8	REC	2
40	END	0
28	STUN	0

Pts	Martial Arts Maneuvers and Elements			
3	Martial Art: Ninjutsu, usable Barehanded (default) and with Blades, Karate Weapons, and Polearms (from Weapons Elements)			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Damage**
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	+15 STR vs. Grabs
4	Nerve Punch	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
4	Punch or Kick	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
5	Takeaway	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, +10 STR to Take Weapon Away
3	Takedown	+1	+1	STR Strike; Target Falls

Cost	Powers	End
25	Missile Deflection & Reflection vs. Thrown	0
6	+3 levels with Missile Deflection; Roll 15-	0
6	+2 to Perception, 14-	0
2	+1 to Sight Perception, 15-	0
4	+2" Running	+1
15	50% Damage Reduction, Resistant, Req. KS: Ninjutsu roll (-1/2), Req. Percept, Roll (-1/2)	0
6	Superleap +10", Req. kuji-kiri Gestures (-1/4), Req. Acrobatics roll (-1/2)	2
17	Aid, 6d6 Character Points to STR, kuji-kiri Gestures (-1/4), Req. KS: Ninjutsu roll (-1/2)	3
60	Variable Power Pool: Ninja Weapons	var
15	VPP Control Cost: OAF (-1)	var
15	Danger Sense, not surprised out of combat, 11-	0
3	Fast Draw, 13-	
5	Perk: Money (Well Off)	
1	Perk: Right to Practice Law	
1	Perk: Passport	
3	Acrobatics, 13-	
3	Climbing, 13-	
3	Concealment, 12-	
5	KS: Ninjutsu, 14-	
3	KS: Ninja Codes & Symbols (Odaka Clan)	
4	Language: English, Completely Fluent, Literate	
2	Language: Italian, Fluent Conversation	
9	Oratory, 14-	
5	PS: Lawyer, 14-	
3	Seduction, 12-	
3	Stealth, 13-	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Berserk (Enraged) when children hurt, uncommon, 14-, 11- recovery, x1/2
5	Distinctive Features: Japanese ancestry with green eyes (easily, noticed)
5	Distinctive Features: Butterfly-mark on left breast (easily, noticed)
20	Hunted, Italian Mafia, more, NCI, 8-
15	Hunted, Enemies of Odaka, more, 11-, mild
20	Never goes without a weapon regardless of situation (very common, strong)
15	Crusader against social injustice (very common)
15	Secret ID, Odaka Saeko/Saeko Odaka
150	Hero Bonus

OCV: 6+; **DCV:** 6+; **ECV:** 4; **Phases:** 3, 5, 8, 10, 12

Costs:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv		Base
	100	+	255	=	355	=	255	+	100

EQUIPMENT

In her Ninja Weapons Power Pool, Sipristi can be carrying any of the following weapons (all of which are at 0 END):

Ashiko: 1/2d6K, +1 to Climbing Roll: 8 pts.

Hankyu (bow): 1d6K RKA, 24 charges: 10 pts.

Line-Thrower: Entangle 6 Def (60 active), Entangle With 1 BODY (-1/2), One Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4), Only Entangles One Limb or Protrusion (-1), OAF (-1) 13 pts.

Ninja-To (ninja sword): 1 1/2d6K, +1 OCV, useable at range: 25 pts.

Sai: +3d6 normal damage, useable at range, +2 OCV with Bind, Block, Disarm, Takeaway maneuvers: 14 pts. (usually carries two).

Shuko: 1d6-1K, +1 to Climbing Roll: 8 pts.

Shuriken, Small Star: 1d6-1 RKA, autofire 5 shots, 9 charges: 9 pts.

Smoke Grenades: Darkness, 1" Radius, vs. Normal Sight, 8 Charges: 5 pts.

Tanto: 1/2d6K, +1 OCV, can be thrown: 12 pts.

Tetsu-To (heavy iron sword): 2 1/2d6K: 30 pts.

Yoroi-Toshi: 1d6-1 armor-piercing, +1 OCV: 12 pts.

Sipristi was mentioned several times in the Hero System Rulesbook. Here she is in full character-sheet form.

Background: Odaka Saeko — born with the name of Saeko Odaka Sipristi — is the only child of Italian businessman Angelo Sipristi and Japanese ninja Odaka Juri.

Her father was sent from Italy to set up business relationships with various Japanese families and firms. In Japan, he met and married Odaka Juri, an independent-minded Japanese woman. Saeko was the first and only child born of that marriage.

Several years after Saeko was born, her father disappeared. Juri used the investigative abilities of her ninja relatives and discovered that Angelo was a member of a major Mafia family. His true objective had been to establish contacts with certain *yakuza* (Japanese gambler/gangster) families. But Angelo, reformed by love for his family, told his superiors that he wanted out of the business. They told him he could quit... but then he disappeared. Juri could not, however, discover whether it was the Mafia, the yakuza, or some third party which killed Angelo, or even if he were truly dead; his body was never found.

But the Mafia did send men to kidnap young Saeko, telling Juri that they would kill Saeko if she didn't produce Angelo. This was a clue that Angelo's family might not have been responsible for the disappearance... not all the family, anyway.

Odaka Juri and her ninja relatives rescued Saeko in a most bloody and punishing manner. The child had been traumatized by the kidnapping, and never again felt particularly safe with strangers.

To give her more confidence, her grandfather, Odaka Isamu, a ninja clan-lord, declared that the child must be trained; she must become a *kunoichi* (female ninja) so that she might defend her honor and that of her family. For ten years, Isamu trained Saeko in the ways of the ninja.

When Saeko was 18, Isamu declared that she was ready to reenter the outer world and take up a profession. He gave her the ninja-to (ninja sword) used in ancient times by kunoichi of the Odaka clan, and charged her to defend her honor and her traditions. And he marked her with the symbol of the Odaka kunoichi: a butterfly-shaped brand, very small, placed on her left breast.

Saeko traveled to the United States took up the study of law. The discipline she'd learned at her grandfather's knee served her very well in that profession, and she has built herself a successful career as a specialist in criminal law. But she has not forgotten her ninja teachings; she continues to train in ninja techniques and weapons.

A year ago, when she had just passed the bar and was acting as a public defender, Saeko successfully defended the defendant in a child-abuse case. The defendant cheerfully went home, a free man, and beat his child to death.

Something snapped in Saeko. Her own traumatic experiences as a child, when she was kidnapped by brutal Mafia henchmen, flooded back over her. Feeling that she had to avenge the child and correct her mistake in defending this man, she donned the ninja night-suit of the Odaka clan, broke into the jail which was again holding her former client, and killed the man.

Soon after, she found another situation, and then another, where she felt her ninja skills could help those whom her attorney's skills would fail. So she took on a new identity. Officially, her name was Odaka Saeko (in the U.S., Saeko Odaka); there were no documents tying her with the name Sipristi, so she took her father's name as that of her alter-ego.

Today, Sipristi haunts the nights of the campaign city. She doesn't often meddle in superhero affairs; her interests lie with social injustices. But because of her special ninja training, she often stumbles over the plots of evil ninja groups acting in the U.S., and opposes them.

Personality: Sipristi is a tense, nervous person. Because of her experiences with the kidnappers, she is suspicious around strangers. She never goes unarmed; even in the bath, she'll carry some sort of weapon (a stainless steel tanto knife in a bubble-bath-resistant sheath, for instance).

But she's a crusader against injustice. Her particular area of interest is that of abused children: As Saeko Odaka the attorney and as Sipristi the ninja, she fights against those who abuse children. She never accepts a case where she would defend someone accused of child abuse; she always refers them to her partners.

She doesn't have much of a social life, and has few friends; she has little respect for people not as determined or dedicated as she is, and that constitutes most of the human race. She would be a good friend to similarly-minded heroes.

But remember that she's a killer. She murders child abusers, rapists she catches in the act, and any killers who come after her; she maims other criminals she comes across. She doesn't adhere to the four-color superhero code of ethics, and this can bring her into conflict with the player-characters.

Identifying Quote: "I think you should apologize. If you do, and you are very sweet, I might not have to spread pieces of you from here to the river."

Powers/Tactics: Sipristi is a ninja, not an up-front fighter. She sneaks around in the shadows, secretly stalking her foes; if she faces a group of opponents, she will pick off stragglers one by one rather than confronting the main body.

She has several powers based on *kuji-kiri*, the finger-sign meditative technique known to the ninja. These abilities of extra strength and leaping ability use the kuji-kiri techniques as a Gestures limitation.

Appearance: Saeko is a 26-year-old Japanese woman. She is quite small (5'4" and a lean 100 lbs.), with black hair, unusual green eyes, and light olive-toned skin. She has a small, butterfly-shaped scar on her left breast, the mark of the Odaka-clan kunoichi. Saeko dresses in high-quality, colorful Western dress both in public and at home.

As Sipristi, she wears a ninja night-suit in a dark red color (it's nearly black). The night-suit includes a headband on which is a lighter-red butterfly, the mark of her clan.

She carries a variety of weapons; she does not always carry the same weapons from encounter to encounter. The only one she has any sentimental attachment to is her ninja-to (ninja sword).

NOTES