JAGS BASIC CONCEPT AND CHARACTER CREATION

Basic Concepts

Hi! Welcome to JAGS (we're glad you're here)! JAGS (which stands for Just Another Gaming System) is a multi-genre, universal roleplaying game. It's been a long time in coming and just as the game system has gone through many major upgrades, even this section has been re-written numerous times. We think JAGS is the perfect thing for gamers who want a flexible system that can simulate everything from high-school students to earth-shattering super heroes. There's a lot of rules here but that's because we've tried to be thorough. Bear with us, write us if you have questions, and check it out. We think you'll be blown away.

JAGS uses a point based character creation system. In such a system, instead of rolling dice for character statistics, the players are given an allotment of 'character creation points' or character points. These are used to buy attributes. This is designed to make all characters nominally equivalent in ability. In JAGS there are some optional safeguards to help insure balanced character design—if you do not like these or they do not suit the Game Master's style—feel free to ignore them. Be aware, though, that even with the rules, unbalanced characters are possible and without them they are even easier to create.

Sections are laid out in two sections BASIC CONCEPTS and MECHANICS. The basic concepts may be read for an overview and the mechanics section contains the rules. Some rules are repeated as they are useful in explaining the concept but are included in the mechanics section for completeness.

Notation

In the JAGS 3.1 document, the following notations will be used:

> Ex#. Example of the above numbers 1 through however many.
> O#. Optional rule to amend the above numbers 1 through however many.
> ExO#. Example of the above optional rule.
> DN. Designer's Notes on the above (section or paragraph).
> JAGS Worlds

JAGS is a universal system in that it can be used to create characters for scenarios from fantasy worlds to far-future science fiction or superheroes. Each different world will have its own special rules and regulations for character creation and the GM is invited to be creative in inventing his own universes.

Hints, Examples, War Stories, Etc.

Side bar sections will include commentary on rules, notes on exotic special cases, actual playtest war stories, and hints on usage. In some cases, they will provide fictionalized accounts of the rules or diagrams.

See the Chart

In cases where it is necessary for explanation we have included the charts used for game play—but in other cases (such as lists of weapons) we have gathered the charts in the back of the book. When you see the

symbol it means there's a section in the back of the book that contains the data discussed.

Key Rules

Key rules are those rules that are of such importance that they cannot be missed. Any rule which is deemed easy to miss, yet vital, will be marked with a:

symbol. If you are browsing a section, take the time to read the key rules—they're vital to understanding or balancing the material in ways that may not be immediately obvious.

Character Creation

Statistics (STATs)

JAGS characters have three types of statistics. These are primary, secondary, and tertiary statistics. Primary statistics are bought and then secondary statistics are derived from these. Tertiary statistics are of lesser importance and usually aren't bought directly. Primary statistics are a higher level of abstraction than secondary ones—that is, by looking at a character's primary statistics alone you can have an overview of the physical and mental characteristics of the character. The secondary statistics customize these making fine adjustments and the tertiary statistics are important game attributes which are not statistics per se (like how far the character can run in a second, how much a character can lift—figured from strength, etc.) The primary statistics in JAGS are listed below.

> **PHYSIQUE** (PHY) A measure of physical strength, size, and health.
> **REFLEX**   (REF) A measure of manual dexterity, speed, and agility.
> **INTELLECT** (INT)   A measure of reasoning ability, memory, and will.

Enhancements, Defects and Traits

Using character points JAGS players have the option of buying special abilities for their characters and gaining more points by taking negative attributes. Things like speed-reading, a limp, blindness, or a winning personality are all available.   In JAGS, these are considered to be Enhancements to statistics (a perfect photographic memory is an Enhancement of the Intellect stat, an unusual resistance to poison is an Enhancement of the Physique stat, a limp is a defect of the Physique Stat).   A Trait is an Enhancement with special rules concerning its purchase (these are explained under the Traits section).

Skills

In JAGS characters define their training by buying skills. These skills determine if the character has been trained to, say, fight with a sword, shoot a rifle, fly a space ship, or perform neurosurgery.   Some characters will have many skills representing a wide range of training, some will have few skills. A fully amnesiac character might have no skills.

Rolls in JAGS

In JAGS dice rolls are used to determine the outcome of many attempted actions. All rolls in the game are made on 4d6 -4 where the totals on the dice are added together and 4 is subtracted to yield a score of 0 through 20. If the sum is equal to or less than the success number the roll is a success if it is higher it is a failure. What is being attempted will determine what the roll is against.

$15 + 5$ PHY12 STR12 BLD12 CON13
$15 + 5$ REF12 COR12 REA12 AGI13
5 INT 11 RES11 MEM11 WIL11

Basic Character Design
When you're trying to figure out what kind of statistics to give your character remember that the primary statistics are a broad overview. Character customization can come later.

Examples:
"Mr. Physique" – Arnold Schwartznegger (Ah-nold!)

"Mr. Reflex" – Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan

"Mr. Intellect" – Albert Einstein, Nikola Tesla

Skills have a lot of data associated with them. Here's a condensed piece of the character sheet skills section:

Roll Cost	Level Cost	Skill	Type	Stat	Level	Roll
3.5	4	Battle Axe	D	AGI	Expert	14-
2.25	0	Stealth	N	AGI	Average	14-
2.0	0	Locksmith	N	COR	Average	12-

Ex1: Eric declares that his character will try to walk across a fairly thin board between two buildings. The GM calls for an agility roll (agility is the character's bodily coordination and balance). Eric's character's agility (AGI) is 13 and he rolls the dice. The dice results are a 4, a 6, a 6, and a 2, the total being 18. Four is subtracted for a final result of a 14. As this is higher than his character's AGI the roll has failed and the hapless character plummets into the alley below.

Ex2: A character is trying to fix a computer program that has crashed. The character has Computer Programming Skill on a 14. The GM tells the player to make a roll against the character's computer skill (the higher the skill the better the character is since the chance of solving the problem is greater). The player rolls a 3, a 5, a 2, and a 3 for a total of 13. Four is subtracted for a final result of a 9. As this is below the character's computer skill, the roll is successful and the character fixes the bug.

The amount a roll is made by is the difference between what was needed and the number rolled. This can be negative if the roll was missed. The more a roll is made by the greater the magnitude of the success. The more it was missed by the worse the failure. The GM makes the final decision about exactly what happens but the rule is a general guideline (and is important in combat—see the combat rules).

Modifiers

The GM may assign a negative or positive modifier to any roll due to external conditions (high winds during a high wire act, for instance.)

Ex1: Eric's character above only failed the roll by 1 so the GM rules that the character teeters and suddenly loses his balance. As the roll wasn't badly failed (a failure by 1 is almost a success) the GM decides that the character can make a grab for the ledge with another AGI roll but this time at a -2. The -2 modifier makes it harder for the character to make the roll (after all, he's falling). Eric rolls the dice again and gets a 1, a 2, a 5 and a 2 for a total of 10. Four is subtracted, leaving a 6. This makes the roll by 5 (an AGI of 13 - 2 makes the success chance an 11. The roll of 6 succeeds by 5). As this is a pretty good success, the GM decides the character has both arms wrapped around the wooden beam and can pull himself up.

Odds:

Using 4 dice minus 4 gives a very nice bell curve. The chances of rolling either a 20 or a 0 are roughly one in 1300. The table below gives the exact chances.

Roll 'X or Less'	Percent
0	%0.063
1	%0.359
2	%1.156
3	%2.719
4	%5.393
5	%9.752
6	%15.855
7	%23.939
8	%33.624
9	%44.428
10	%55.701
11	%66.505
12	%76.100
13	%83.963
14	%90.208
15	%94.563
16	%97.326
17	%98.878
18	%99.642
19	%99.931
20	%100.00

* * *

Willis aimed—the view down the rifle sight shuddered wildly as the airplane neared the inner wall of the hurricane. Using a meteorological research aircraft as a gunnery platform wasn't the best idea in the world.

Beneath him, racing with the storm was the hydrofoil, cutting through the relatively calm waters of the eye. An impossible shot—but the storm was nearing the coast and the boat below him carried its deadly nuclear cargo ever closer to the shoreline. One bullet left . . .

* * *

Resisted Rolls

In some cases characters will make rolls against other character's statistics (as above) or against things other characters have done (trying to pick a lock another character made). In these cases, the negative modifier applied is the resisting character's STAT - 10. Alternatively, the GM may decide to roll against the resisting statistic and apply the amount the roll was made by against the other character's attempt. Whichever way is faster and feels better should be employed.

> Ex1: Two characters are arm-wrestling. The GM rules that to win a character must beat the other's Strength (STR) roll by 5 or more. Each character makes a STR roll and subtracts what the other made it by. If the result is 5 or more that character wins. In this example, the GM rules that the character making the roll by more moves his opponent's hand closer to the ground and reduces the amount he must win subsequent rolls by.

> Ex2: A character with a hand-to-hand weapon skill (sword) of 16 is trying to hit a fast character with a 14 AGI who is dodging and weaving in combat. As combat is complex and slow enough without everyone making resistance rolls, the game rules call for a Weapon Skill roll against the AGI score of the target. The attacker has a 12- (12 or less) chance to hit the target (16 - 4 = 12). The player rolls a 14—a miss.

Resistance Roll

In some cases, a roll can be used to resolve the resistance between two opposing forces that are not represented by statistics. An example is a weapon's chance of cleaving through armor. In this case the weapon may do hundreds, even thousands of points of damage and the armor may have the same magnitude of defense. While a roll is still made to determine success or failure, it is not made against the numbers involved (you don't roll against a score of 2000 on 4 dice minus 4).

Instead you make a Resistance Roll. This is a roll against a Base 10 (50%) with a +/- 1 for each point of difference in the compared scores. But, if the scores are very high, then the GM assigns a factor to bring the scores down to a similar magnitude.

> Ex1: Two exceptionally strong characters are arm-wrestling one has a 15 Strength (STR) and the other has a 16 Strength. The GM could have them both roll and see who makes it by the most (this is legal, and even encouraged) but he does it the quick way and has the stronger character roll on an 11-. The weaker character would have a 9- roll to win.

> Ex2: Two superhumanly strong characters are arm-wrestling. One has a 50 STR and the other has a 55 STR. The GM assigns a division factor of 5 making the contest a 10 vs. an 11. The stronger character has an 11- chance of success and the weaker has a 9-.

> Ex3: The guy from above with a 15 STR is wrestling the superhero with the 50 STR. The GM decides on the factor of 5 and it's a 3 vs. a 10. The stronger character has a 17- chance of success while the weaker character would have to roll a 3-!

Choosing a Division Factor: For most Resistance rolls the numbers will be pretty simple: a barbarian with a sword swinging against a man in chain mail is usually a comparison of numbers like 8 vs. 10 (the barbarian does 8 damage and the armor has a 10 defense so the armor has a 12- save). Other times it may be a harder call. These guidelines will help for the rare cases (usually in super-hero games) where it's tricky.

- Try to pick a round value (1, 5, 10, 100, etc.) that you can divide both numbers by and get results between 1 and 20. If you have a tank round that does 2000 points of damage against 700 armor, compare the numbers as 20 vs. 7 rather than 200 vs. 70.
- If the difference is so great that using the same factor to divide both numbers will make one of the values less than one, just go with the huge miss-match. If the tank round (2000 points of damage) strikes 70 points of armor, compare them as 200 vs. 7.
- Usually a division by 10 is good for superhero games. "Normal characters," even extreme ones shouldn't be modified (a massive Viking with a Strength of 18 against a normal man with a Strength of 10 really does enjoy an 18-success roll).
- For values within a factor of 10 of each other, a natural roll of a 19 or 20 will always fail. For almost any numbers a roll of a 20 will fail.

Ex1: A big game hunter is wrestling with a tiger. The man is a big strong guy and has Grappling (a measure of wrestling prowess) Score of 9. The Tiger is 450 pounds of angry cat and has a Grapple Score of 14. To succeed in "grabbing the tiger by the tail" the man has to roll a 5- (the difference in scores minus 10). For the Tiger to pin him, it only needs roll a 15 or less (much better odds).

Buying Primary Characteristics (Statistics)

All animate JAGS beings have three primary statistics or characteristics. These are (as listed earlier) Physique, Reflexes, and Intellect. These give the basic description of the character. All secondary characteristics are initially equal to the primary characteristic they are listed below (although they can later be tinkered with to customize the character).

All primary statistics start at 10 and can be raised as high as points allow (they can be sold too). As the highest roll which can be made without modification is a 20, if a primary statistic is 20 or above the character will never fail under normal circumstances (excepting 'critical failures). The numerical value of the statistic is the roll that is made against it.

Armor Saves:

Let's do an example: a .44 Auto-mag against plate-mail armor. If you're just picking up the game (or have played it but haven't used the Advanced Combat Rules yet) some of this won't be fully explained. Bear with us—it's not too complicated and illustrates a point.

The gun, fired by our intrepid, temporally displaced hero does 15 points of damage. Don't worry—just accept it: it's a big bullet and it does 15 points of damage.

The charging knight's black plate mail armor has a 12 Penetration Defense. Got that? A 12. It's the ultimate medieval life insurance policy and it's 12 defense says that bullet won't penetrate.

Now, you might not have any idea how combat works but when our man with the gun takes a shot at the knight (and hits) the armor gets what's called an *Armor Save*. That's a roll the defender makes to keep himself from being perforated.

What's his roll? Well the bullet's value is a 15 and his armor is a 12 so there's a 3 point difference. Also, the guy with the armor is rolling and *he's the one at the disadvantage in this situation!* That means, starting at a 10- roll, and subtracting the 3 point difference, we see that he has to roll a 7 or less.

He rolls an 8 and the armor gets punctured.

Why did the Knight roll? Because in the case of an attacker striking armor, the defender is the one who gets to roll. That's what the rules say. If it had been the other way around (which it was in an earlier form of the game) the gunman would have rolled the dice. He would have gotten a 13- roll to *penetrate* the armor . . . as opposed to a 7- roll to *prevent penetration*.

Physique (PHY) contains the following secondary statistics: Strength (STR), Build (BLD), and Constitution (CON). Strength is a raw measure of physical muscle. It is used to do damage in hand-to-hand combat (HTH combat) and to determine how much a character can lift, whether he can bend bars with his bare hands, etc. Build is a measure of the weight and size of the character. Each point of BLD is equivalent to between 15 and 25 pounds. Constitution is a measure of health. CON rolls are made to shake off the effects of disease and poison. In combat, CON is the number of Damage Points the character can take. It is very important to survival in combat situations.

Reflexes (REF) contains the following secondary statistics: Hand-Eye Coordination (COR), Reaction Speed (REA), and Agility (AGI). Hand-Eye Coordination is a measure of the character's ability to hit moving targets at range accurately, play video games well, and perform *fine motor* tasks (jewel cutting, picking locks, surgery). Reaction Speed determines how fast the 'reaction clock' in the character's nervous system works. Characters with high REA's tend to go first in combat and can take more actions than slower characters. Agility is a measure of the gross motor or large muscle group control the character has. AGI represents balance, large body motions, etc. It is used to hit in hand-to-hand (HTH) combat, perform dance steps, execute acrobatic exercises, etc.

Intellect (INT) contains the following secondary statistics: Reason (RES), Memory (MEM), and Willpower (WIL). Reason is a measure of problem solving ability. It is used to solve logic puzzles, deduce that someone is lying from subtle contradicting facts, and make common sense judgments about the environment. It also determines the character's ability with sciences. Memory is used to remember events, trivia, license plate numbers of getaway cars, etc. It is also useful in learning skills that require a great deal of facts be remembered (like History). Willpower is a measure of determination, spirit, etc. WIL rolls are made if a character wants to thrust his hand into boiling water or watch 72 straight hours of *Gilligan's Island* (or *Barney*—for the true masochists).

Character Design

When the GM makes a campaign, the players will be told how many points they get and what type of characters they are supposed to design for the game. The number of points the GM assigns will be determined by what role the characters are supposed to play.

If the characters are supposed to be highly competent, cinematic types, then they will be given more points than if they are supposed to be low key, "normal" persons. Additionally, special character creation rules can be employed to further customize character design. Most of these types are described in other books (the paranormal ability book contains rules for making cyborgs, psionic characters, etc.) but one universal type is detailed here—the Heroic Character type.

Special Character Types

JAGS contains rules for several "special" types of characters. The rules here are for Normal Characters—that is, all the abilities, skills, statistics, etc. in these chapters are used to make normal human characters from any background and any age. The "Paranormal" rules that follow these cover the creation of special character types. These are:

Paranormals: Superheroic characters with exotic abilities. They may be crime fighters, villains, or simply products of some bizarre twist of fate.

Psionics: Characters with extraordinary psychic abilities. They may be able to read minds, move objects by force of will, or perform other such feats.

Cyborgs: Part organic, part machine, cyborgs are outfitted with special weapons and implants which make them powerful, versatile, and resistant.

Chi Martial Artist: Trained in the secrets of the martial arts, Chi characters are world class, highly trained combatants who have go beyond the "normal" limits of the human body and mind.

The rules allow for overlap and cross-characters so any 'fantastic' character type can borrow from any other to produce maximum versatility.

Character Points

The amount of points the players get to construct their characters depends a great deal on the scenario or campaign. Below is a generalized listing although campaign parameters can be much more complex (as explained later).

Character Type	Point Totals
Average Joe	10 - 20 + 10pts defects
Average Competent	50pts + 10pts defects
Heroic Character	75pts + 10pts defects
Greater Hero	150pts +10pts defects

Unless the players are using the paranormal rules most campaigns will use either 50 or 75 point characters.

Base Cost for Primary Characteristics

The cost for primary statistics is as follows: statistics may be sold no lower than 7 as any statistic below this indicates that the character would be nonfunctional as a PC.

Primary Statistic Cost

Stat	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Cost	-20	-10	-5	0	5	15	30	50	75	105	140	180	225	275

Secondary Statistics

Listed below are the nine secondary characteristics and the primary characteristics they fall under. These are all automatically equal to the primary characteristic they are associated with unless specifically modified. If the player does not wish to modify them then they may not even need to be recorded on the character sheet.

PHYSIQUE

Strength (STR): A strength of 10 can bench press 130 lbs. Each point of STR above 10 adds 75 lbs to that weight. A barehanded blow from a 10 STR does exactly 0 damage. Each point of STR above 10 does an additional point of damage. This damage is added to the damage of melee weapons (like swords).

Defects

Defects (in general) are things that are *wrong* with your character. You get points for taking them. Under normal conditions you can't get more than 10 points for them but they help flesh out the character and make him distinctive.

Some defects are worth a whole lot more than 10 points but the GM should always be consulted before making a blind or crippled character as he may not fit well into the campaign.

*   *   *

"Madam, the TS-809 series bio-morph is our primer model, more than enough for your purposes."

"You don't know what my purposes are."

"I assure you, the physical excellence demonstrated by the 809 with its Olympian™ Muscle Structure is matchless in this price range. There is no finer specimen available."

"Muscles aren't everything. This isn't going to be a pleasure toy. What about endurance?"

"The 809's weight to drive ratio—all biological of course—no metal—allows it extended . . . endurance."

"What I meant was: how much damage can it take?"

"Oh . . .my . . ."

*   *   *

Build (BLD): Build is a measure of the physical structure (weight, density, etc.) of the character. Each point of BLD represents about 15 pounds. A character's basic Build gives him extra Damage Points due to physical size and mass. It should be noted that some abilities and Enhancements allow characters to purchase or sell BLD at a reduced cost—these do *not* affect Damage Points but will act as normal BLD in all other fashions (see Big and Small under the Enhancements section).

Natural BLD	Damage Points
7	-3
8	-2
9	-1
10	+0
11	+1
12	+2
13	+4
14	+7
15	+11
16	+18
17	+23
18	+30
19	+38

Size (SIZ) is a measure of how tall or large a character is. It is equal to BLD except in exotic cases where a character has an unusual composition (being made of an extremely dense material, for example). These are generalizations and should only be taken as guidelines.

NOTE: SIZ is **NOT** listed on the character sheet. It should only be noted when there is some odd variation (a character is paranormally big, for example).

SIZ	Average Human Height Male
7 - 9	under 5'2" to 5' 5"
10 - 12	5'6" to 5'11"
13 - 15	6'0" to 6'3"
16 - 18	6'4" to 6'7"
19 - 21	6'8" to 6'11"
25	About 7-8 feet

Constitution (CON): Constitution rolls are made to determine how healthy a character is. A roll might be made to resist disease, shrug off damage, or recover from a gunshot wound. A high CON is very important for determining how a character sustains damage taken.

Build Modification:

Build modification is one of the finer points of the game. Characters with a 13 BLD are considered "large" without being all that heavy. While there are game balance reasons for this, more realistic weights can be achieved with the Enhancement Big or Small to help get a character of the weight you want.

A football player would be likely to have a few points spent on the Big Enhancement as well as points spent on Physique. On the other hand, you can treat someone with a 13+ Physique as a really big character for gaming purposes and assume that the proportions work out.

* * *

"Lightweight for its size, the infrastructure is reinforced with enhanced calcium-chromium bonding to—"

"Save the double talk. Is there a smaller one of this model?"

"Of course, and they come in custom skin colors as well. While the size can be custom ordered within limits, the bone structure is designed for a six foot plus—"

"Fine. I can play with the size until I get it right then?"

"Limited only by what we have in stock—of course we do ship over night."

"Forget it. Can it take a slug?"

"A punch? Certainly, the 809—"

"No, no—a slug. A bullet, a round, a shot. Can it take one?"

"Madam, if you want a bodyguard model—"

"I want one of these. There's no licensing on the sale of pleasure morphs. I need it tonight. "

"Ummmm . . ."

"Never mind."

* * *

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Damage Points (DP): These are normally equal to CON (that is, a man with a 10 CON has 10 Damage Points). In some cases (especially in cases of large animals who still have a CON roll between 0 and 20 but can sustain damage which would pulverize a normal man) Damage Points can be much higher than the character's CON. In these cases, whenever a roll is called for the character makes the CON roll but damage taken is subtracted from the DP listing.

REFLEXES

Eye-Hand Coordination (COR): Also called coordination (although AGI is coordination for large muscle groups), COR is used for all ranged weapons. Some skills involving manual dexterity are based on it as well.

Reaction Speed (REA): Reaction Speed is used to 'buy' actions in combat. Blocks cost 3 points, strikes cost 5, longer actions cost 8. REA also determines who goes first in combat, what a character's ground speed is, whether or not a character can perform a critical action in time, etc.

Agility (AGI): Agility is the roll to hit with an unarmed attack and all weapon skills are derived from AGI. AGI - 10 is deducted from attacker's attempts to hit the character in HTH combat. The majority of physical skills are derived from AGI (the skill roll will be around or above AGI).

INTELLECT

Reason (RES): If a character's ability to solve a problem is called into question, a RES roll is used (this is not substituted for roleplaying but can be used for things like jigsaw puzzles or other 'non-roleplaying' mental tasks). Most of the scientific skills are based on RES. Some magical and psionic abilities use RES to hit the target.

Memory (MEM): Any time a roll is made to remember something, this STAT is used. A good memory is also helpful in studying sciences and other technical skills.

Willpower (WIL): Any time the character's ability to do something unpleasant is called into question a WIL roll may be made. WIL is also used to resist undesirable effects of things like psionic attacks, torture, etc. In combat a high WIL may keep a character active and awake even though gross damage has been sustained.

Increasing and Decreasing Secondary Characteristics

The cost for increasing or selling secondary statistics is listed below. Each point of increase pays the listed cost and each point of decrease reduces it. Under a given primary statistic, only one secondary statistic may be modified when a character is first created. It may be decreased (sold) by 1 *or* it may be increased (bought) by 1 or 2. The cost is listed on the chart below:

* * *

"Well . . . some of the, ahem, abuse models are reinforced—still, they aren't designed for—"

"I'll take one—the toughest you've got."

"Oh my."

* * *

"And I need it fast, too. Wired, y'know? Primarily I need speed.

"Ma'am," these aren't designed for—really there are other shops . . . this is a reputable—"

"Stuff it. I need one quick. Do you distinguish?"

"They're all about normal I presume."

"Great . . ."

* * *

"Okay, now this model—how bright is it?"

"Bright?"

"Learning capacity, reasoning, knowledge base—I surely don't have to train it."

"Oh, no ma'am. It come with a categorical list of all fine dining establishments, a seven gigabyte database of, well, intimate data, and is trained as a cook, a masseur, and has rudimentary paramedics. What was that?"

"I said the last one might come in handy."

* * *

Secondary Statistic Cost

Stat	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Cost	--	1	2	2	2	3	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Ex1: A character with a 12 WIL wishes to increase it to 13. This cost 5 points and is allowed as WIL may be increased by up to 2.

Ex2: Jim wants his character to have a 10 STR and BLD, but a 12 CON. This is legal. His total cost for PHY is 0 (for the 10 PHY) +2 + 3 = 5 (for the 12 CON).

Ex3: A character is quick and good with her hands but a poor hand to hand combatant and not especially well balanced for her REF. Her REF is 12 (costing 15 points) and she sells her AGI down to 11 (the maximum it can be sold and only one secondary stat under REF can be sold). As it would cost her 3 points to buy a 12 Stat (up from 11 -- checking on the chart above) she gets 3 points for selling it so the 12 REF only cost her 12 points (15 -3 = 12).

Tertiary Statistics

These are figured from secondary characteristics and should be listed on the character sheet for convenience. They deal with physical ability and combat. These cannot be bought with points the way that secondary characteristics can be although they can be modified with Enhancements or Defects.

Wound Levels

When a character gets hurt (shot, stabbed, falls off a roof, etc.) in JAGS, he takes a certain number of "Points of Damage." The more of these in proportion to his "normal" Damage Points, the worse he's hurt. A scrape might do one Damage Point while a direct hit from an anti-tank rocket would do hundreds or thousands. A character's Wound Level determines how bad the immediate injury is and what the effects of it are (whether the character shrugs it off, falls down, dies instantly, etc.) The complexities are explained in the combat section but for character generation purposes, use the chart below.

*   *   *

"Mistress," the 809 bio-morph said, with a deep, suggestive tenor. "How may I be of service?" It's slight smile and gleaming eyes bespoke its genetic manufacture. It moved from the resurrection bed with an easy, cat-like grace.

"Here's a Mark 3 assault rifle," the woman said, stripping out of the expensive clothes to reveal a black armored body suit. "You've got a reprogrammer virus in you that should be turning your world upside down in about thirty minutes. After that—we're going out."

"I have a categorical list of dining establishments available to me," it said stepping across the room to her.

She smiled wanly, and looked out the window of the tiny apartment at the neon-lit night beyond.

*   *   *

Wound Level Hints:
A Sub-Minor Wound is a scrape. It doesn't have any effect on the character unless he's already hurt. It could be a jab that glances off.

A Minor Wound is like what happens when a boxer takes a good punch—if he's fresh, he might be stunned for a second but he's probably not going down.

Wound Type	Number	Likely Effect
Sub-Minor	Under Damage Points / 3	No effect
Minor Wound	Damage Points / 3	May stun or daze
Major Wound	Damage Points	Unconsciousness
Critical Wound	Damage Points x 2	Internal damage / death

NOTE: Fractions round normally so a CON of 11 gives a 4 Minor Wound score (3.66 rounds to 4).

Ex1: A character with a CON of 10 takes 2 points of damage in a single hit. This is a Sub-Minor Wound as Minor Wound = CON / 3 = 3.

Ex2: A character with a CON of 10 takes 11 points of damage in a single hit. This is a Major Wound as Major Wound = CON = 10.

Ex3: A dinosaur with a CON of 10 and 210 Damage Points takes 30 points of damage. This is a Sub-Minor Wound as the dinosaur's Minor Wound score is 70. The hit (which would probably kill any normal man) has no effect.

Condition Levels

Even small wounds add up and large wounds add up faster. The Condition levels make the character more susceptible to injury. If the total damage a character has taken equals or exceeds the Condition level the effects of that Condition are applied as listed in the Condition table in the combat section. As with Wound level, if Damage Points are greater—figure from them and not the CON stat which is used for the roll.

Condition Level	Number	Notes
Normal	Under Damage Points / 3	Character is fine
Hurt	Damage Points / 3	Slight effects
Injured	Damage Points	Character is slowed
Serious	Damage Points x 2	Barely mobile
Dead	Damage Points x 5	Dead

A Major Wound is like a standard shot from a handgun. It has a good chance of instantly stopping or dropping the character.

A Critical Wound is like getting a two-handed sword through the chest. It's usually all over for you.

Remember, though, that Wound levels are based on Damage Point totals so a Critical Wound for a man is a Sub-Minor Wound for a Tyrannosaurus Rex!

Also remember: the effects of a given Wound type are dependent on how well the character is doing when he gets hit. A nearly dead character who takes a "Minor Wounds" worth of Damage Points may be pushed over the edge into death. This brings us to Condition Level.

Condition vs. Wound:
Hey! These are all the same numbers. Looking at the two tables, it should be clear that if a character takes a Minor Wound, he'd be at Hurt Condition. If he takes a Critical Wound he's automatically at Serious Condition (the names are just to give you an idea of what we're talking about).

On the other hand, a character who takes 5x his Damage Points in 1 point increments will die even though he never takes a "Critical Wound" per se. That's what distinguishes Condition from Wound Level: Condition is the *cumulative* effect of all the damage the character has suffered.

Ground Speed

The speed at which a character runs is determined by the character's REA (Reaction Speed). This can be modified by Enhancements or Defects. Your Walk speed is α of your Sprint and your Run speed is β of your Sprint.

Ground Speed Table (in yards / second)

REA	Walking	Running	Sprinting
7	2.20	4.40	6.60
8	2.30	4.60	6.90
9	2.40	4.80	7.20
10	2.50	5.00	7.50
11	2.60	5.20	7.80
12	2.70	5.40	8.10
13	2.80	5.60	8.40
14	2.90	5.80	8.70
15	3.00	6.00	9.00
16	3.10	6.20	9.30
17	3.20	6.40	9.60
18	3.30	6.60	9.90

O1: Minor Modifications. The GM may require that all characters make a REF roll. For each point that the roll is missed by the ground speed is decreased by .20 yards / second. For each point the roll is made by, it is increased by .20 yards per second. The maximum increase or decrease is 1.6 yards in either direction. This represents the body type modification to ground speed. If this is not required but allowed and the character's PHY is 11 or below making the roll is a -1 point defect whether or not the effects are good or bad.

O2: Chases. Under the standard rules a slightly slower character will never catch a faster one. In reality things like bursts of speed, taking a corner badly, etc. can all allow faster characters to perform relatively worse than a slightly slower one. For running foot races the GM can have the involved characters make REA rolls. The slower characters make theirs against the faster characters (at -1 for each point of difference between the characters). Each point they make the roll by will close the distance by .10 yards that second.

Perception Roll

This is a roll made to notice things. It is based on Intellect (INT)—the only tertiary stat to be based directly on a primary. Assuming normal senses, the roll is made to determine if the character is alert enough to sense whatever is relevant. Sensory input can be improved with Traits.

Running, Walking, and Sprinting:

Although this is also explained in the combat section, a character who is totally stationary and unprepared must usually start moving by declaring a Walking Move.

If a character is already Walking or Running then the character may upgrade to Sprinting. Our research indicates that athletes run the first 10 yards of the hundred-yard dash slower than they run the last 90 yards.

* * *

The town guard were back there, somewhere behind him. Wind whistled past Leyland's ears as he ran—his feet glided over the cobble stones and led him down alleys where he had to duck to avoid collision with the low hanging buttresses for the walls of the buildings.

When he reached a plaza made by the back lots of several buildings, he stopped, leaning back to open his lungs and taking a huge gulp of air before exhaling everything within him. In the silence that followed, he listened.

Nothing—no scrape of the guard's leather armor. No clink of a captain's chain mail. All he heard were the sounds of the street and constant, steady, background roar of the city.

Then he heard something else.

Drawing, he spun, winding himself down into a crouch, the small sword out before him.

"You're a hard man to keep up with, Leyland," a soft mocking voice said from the shadows down the way he'd come.

"And a harder man to kill," he snarled.

* * *

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Enhancements and Defects

The following are ways to customize characters. Enhancements are advantageous, Defects are disabilities, and Traits are Enhancements with special limitations on their purchase. These apply to the body or mind of the character; the section following applies to the background and personality of the character.

Enhancements

These are good things to buy and cost points. They are listed under headings of primary statistics for convenience (Physique deals with the physical body, Reflexes deal with trained responses, and Intellect deals with mental abilities and the basic personality of the character).

Any Enhancement that costs 2 points or less is fairly common in average populations. Enhancements that cost three points are rare but still not very unusual. Enhancements that cost 4 points are usually not available to most characters and are highly rare outside of 50 point and above characters. Enhancements that cost more than 4 points are usually not found outside of 75 or higher point characters.

In general, players can take any Enhancement they want no matter what the points. However, if they are playing characters below the suggested points, their abilities will just be more unusual (the appearance of the trait in the party does not represent an accurate sample of the population). The converse to this is that organizations looking for certain types (thieves' guilds, boxing associations, etc.) will have a higher percentage of Enhancements, as they will attract those individuals who have them.

> DN: The question was raised as to whether every artist has Artistic Genius (an Enhancement) and at what level. The argument that if you didn't have artistic genius you wouldn't become an artist is valid if every NPC gets to design themselves just as PC's get to 'design themselves.' They don't. The Enhancement is cheap because of game balance but that does not mean it is common. Most PC artists who their players wish to be good will take the 'more efficient' design option using Enhancements. Most NPC's will simply buy higher art skills. Of course, the really great people in history were high point characters efficiently designed!

PHYSIQUE

Appearance [Cost Varies]

The character has an unusually good appearance. There are several different kinds of appearance available and the player can define any of the below types more specifically if desired. A character can only choose to be Attractive *or* Exotic *or* Statuesque; he cannot be more than one at a time. Rugged may be purchased separately or in conjunction with any of the other Appearance Enhancements.

Enhancement Tips:

Enhancements help define characters in ways statistics don't. Often two very similar characters can be made quite different by buying them different Enhancements.

Any Enhancement (this is reiterated later) which has a cost of 8 points or higher (16 points for non-Heroic characters) must be cleared with the GM before purchase. Such abilities can greatly unbalance a scenario if the Game Master is not prepared for them.

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Physical Appearance Chart

Appearance	Cost	Effect
Attractive	2,4,8,12	At Level 1 the character is good-looking. At Level 2 (8 pts) the character is extremely attractive. Level 3 is movie star level good looks. Level 4 is supermodel
Statuesque	2,4,8,12	The character's proportions are 'striking' and the character is cut in a perfect mold. To take this, your character must be free of physical imperfections and defects that affect appearance.
Exotic	2,4,8,12	The character is attractive in an unusual or memorable fashion. This makes the character easier to identify and remember (which may not be a good thing).
Rugged	3	The character is 'tough' looking. While not ugly, this may be frightening in appearance.

Big [2.25+]

A character wishing to be larger than normal for his Physique has two options: to buy BLD or to take the Big Enhancement. A character may buy BLD directly as any other secondary statistic—this will have the listed effect on his Damage Points—or the character may take the Big Enhancement for a greater size-to-damage-point ratio. Each point of Big adds +1 BLD and +1 Damage Point.

Conditioning [½, 1, 2, 4]

The character has more Endurance than normal for his listed CON score. For ½ point the character has +1 Endurance. For 1 point the character has +2 Endurance. For 2 points the character has +4 Endurance. For 4 points the character has +8 Endurance.

Enhanced Immune System [1, 2, 4]

The character is better at fighting disease than normal. For 1 points the character gets +2 to CON rolls against disease. For 2 points the character gets +4 to CON rolls against disease. For 4 points the character gets + 8 to CON rolls against disease.

Iron Jaw [2, 4, 8, 16]

Whether through special training where the nerves have been deadened by repeated strikes or just natural cussedness, the character is exceptionally resistant to pain and can weather blows that would flatten a normal man. When the character suffers a wound for damage equal to or less than his Threshold, the damage will not force a CON roll no matter what Condition Level the character is at. The

* * *

"I'm looking for a woman—six foot five, high cheek bones, bluish hair. Seems to be about thirty. You seen her?"

"Blue hair? She some kind of punk-rocker mister?"

"No."

"Well we get all kinds in here, but I'd remember someone like that."

"Well, if you see her, call me immediately—here's a card. There's a reward. Understood?"

"Yes sir. She wanted or something?"

"Not on this planet . . . not yet."

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threshold is 1 point (cost of 2pts), 2 points (cost of 4pts) and 3 points (cost of 8pts), and 4 points (cost of 16pts!).

At 8 points the Iron Jawed character has 1 point of armor. This confers no Penetration Resistance; it simply reduces all damage the character takes by 1. At the 16-point level the character has 2 points of armor.

Resilient [2,4]

The character heals faster than normal. For 2 points the character gets an effective +2 to CON for recovery of damage points. For 4 points the character gets +4 to CON and the healing rate of the character is doubled.

Shock Resistant [4]

You have a high threshold for pain and damage. The character gets +1 to his Minor Wound and +2 to his Hurt Condition (the difference is subtle: Minor Wound is the amount of damage necessary to force a Minor Wound Roll, Hurt Condition is the amount of *total* damage which makes even 'sub-minor wounds' force a Minor Wound roll.

Small / Light / Skinny [none]

A character may, at his option drop up to 3 points of BLD or up to 20% total BLD (whichever is better for the character) at no cost. This is not the same as selling BLD (which effects Damage Points and nets the character more character points) but simply makes the character smaller for his/her Physique. While Damage Points are not effected, the character will make any rolls on the reduced BLD. This may not be combined with BIG or with the buying of more BLD (although it may be combined with the selling BLD). In no case should the GM allow a character's BLD to drop below 7.

Tough [4, 6, 8, 10,12,14, 16]

The character gets extra Damage Points (DP). This does NOT increase the CON roll in any way. It *does* affect Wound and Condition level. For 4pts you get +4 DP. Each 2pts after that gives +1.

REFLEXES

Ambidextrous [2, 4, 12]

The character can use both hands with equal (or almost equal ease). For 2 points the character can use his off-hand at a -2 penalty (instead of at -4) and receives a COR bonus for skills even if his COR is only 11 or 12. For 4 points, the character has no off-hand penalty and can draw two weapons at once for the same REA (or Fast Draw two weapons at once with the same roll). For 12 points, the character has "Combat Ambidexterity" and can strike or fire twice (with a one-handed weapon in each hand) for the same REA. This can only be done once a turn.

* * *
Ah—just a flesh wound! I'll be back in action in no time!

* * *

I felt that, punk. Too bad for you …

* * *

"I'm stuck!"

"What? I told you not to try this wearing plate mail! You'll get us all killed—and keep your voice down."

"It isn't my plate mail! Get back here—bring the light!"

"What's stuck? Your sword? Can you un-wedge it?"

"Bring the light you fool! It's my head!"
* * *

* * *
I heard this guy uses two guns …

Ah—don't sweat it … I tried it once, you know how hard it is to actually hit anything with two guns?

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Fast Runner [1, 2, 4]

The character is a naturally fast runner. Each level acts as an extra 2 points of REA *for purposes of ground speed and rolls made to run only*.

Instinctive Reflexes [3,6]

The character's natural reflexes protect him from danger. At Level 1 he gets his full AGI bonus if attacked from behind, +1 to any AGI rolls the GM calls for to avoid danger (from traps), and can perform a Desperation Block maneuver by up to 3 instead of the normal 2 (so he's at -9 to all rolls for the first turn and –6 to all rolls on the second). At Level 2 he gets +2 to AGI rolls to avoid danger, makes all Dodge rolls at +1, and, in the event of a Desperation Block is only at -2x on the first turn and -1x on the second turn (so if he Desperation Blocked by 3 he'd be at -6, -3 instead of -9, -6). See the Advanced Combat Section for Desperation Block.

Light Sleeper [½, 1]

The character is hard to surprise when sleeping. For ½ point the character gets a normal perception roll to notice people in the room and become instantly awake. For 1 point the character gets +3 to that roll. Normally a sleeping character is at -6 to perception rolls to awake with someone in the room if they are quiet and -3 to awaken if lightly touched.

Natural Fighter [3]

The character gets +1 to *Initiative* rolls *or* an Initiative roll of 12 . . . whichever is better. This is not the same thing as getting +1 REA (the +1 only applies to rolls to determine when the character gets to act in combat).

Quiet [2, 4]

The character naturally moves with out making any noise. For 2 points the   character gets +1 to any Stealth rolls and is at -2 to be heard. For 4 points the character gets +2 to any stealth rolls and is at -4 to be heard.

Sure Footed [1, 2, 4]

The character has naturally stable balance. For 1 point the character gets +2 to any AGI roll to maintain balance. For 2 points the character gets +4 to any AGI roll to maintain balance. For 4 points the character gets +8 to any AGI roll to maintain balance.

INTELLECT

Artistic Genius [2, 4, 8]

Artistic Genius adds to the character's RES for purposes of buying Visual Art, Musical Instrument, and any other "artistic skill" as defined by the GM. The 2-point version adds +1. The 4 point version adds +2, and the 8 point level adds +4. To be a world class painter a Level 3 skill at 19+ is usually

"Who taught you to run like that, Leyland?"

"The town guard—who else?"

* * *

Almost got me that time!

Hold still for a second! Fight fair …

* * *

We vampire-hunters tend to be light sleepers …

* * *

He's quicker than he looks …

* * *

Leyland's feet made no noise as he fled down the stone hall … 'don't look behind you' …he paused. He heard nothing. After two heartbeats, he started sprinting again.

* * *

Ahead of Leyland was a chasm. Without altering his stride he took a grappling hook from his belt. 'Follow me now you unnatural beast', he thought, letting it fly from his hand.
* * *

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required. To be one of the greatest artisans of all time a Level 4 skill and a 21+ roll is necessary.

Creative Genius [2, 4, 6]

The character is highly creative. This applies to any construction skill, art skill, or writing skill. Architects will built innovative structures, writers will invent new ideas, and painters will develop new techniques. This does not effect the integrity of the design or even (outside of writing) the objective quality of it. The GM applies the bonus to the roll on people who like creative work (e.g. the customer hates the architect's design but the designer becomes a cult hero with other architects). This can be a fickle advantage but it can also (if the character gets lucky) make the character great before his/her time. Any observer of a creative work makes a random roll. This roll is an 8-, 10-, or 12- depending on the level. If the roll is successful, the observer is amongst the people who like the work for its flair rather than its technical merit. Creative geniuses will tend to have small cores of die-hard fans (the higher the plus, the larger the population that falls in the "appreciation zone.")

Fearless [1, 2, 4]

The character has mastery over fear of bodily harm or death. For 1 point the character gets +1 to WIL rolls that involve doing something unpleasant but not damaging and gets +2 to WIL against terror or personality based fear. For 2 points the pluses are doubled and for 4 points quadrupled.

Flair [1, 2, 4]

The character's personality gets him noticed often. This is not due to flashy clothes or loud talking but a sense of style, timing, and fashion which makes the character stand out. For 1 point the character gets +1 to social skills and can attract a small crowd's attention with a WIL roll simply by interacting. For 2 points this WIL roll is at +2 and the character will often find himself the center of attention. For 4 points the character will stand out nationwide—some movie stars try to affect this by using bizarre fashions and unlikely press releases. A character who actually has it will need none of that—his own fashion sense, personality, and public life will be news enough without inventing anything. A character with 8 points who is not in the public spot light will simply be in the highest demand at parties in his social circle (whatever that is) and others will try to emulate him, always falling slightly behind. The WIL roll is at +4 and the character gets +2 to social skills.

Indomitable [2, 4, 8]

The character's will to win and refusal to be dominated is very strong. For 2 points the character gets +1 to resist any sort of mind control (whether it be a telepathic ability or just good old-fashioned brainwashing). For 4 points the character gets +2 to resist and for 8 points he gets +4 to resist. This does not add to any other WIL roll. Depending

on the nature of the campaign, the GM may either increase the cost of this Enhancement or disallow it all together.

Internal Compass/Clock [1,2,4]

The character has a mental clock and compass that tells direction and time. For 1 point the clock is accurate within 10 minutes and the compass will tell direction within 60 degrees (general direction). This gives +2 to any attempt to find ones way. For 2 points the character's clock is accurate within 1 minute and the compass is accurate within 5 degrees. This gives +4 to any attempt to find ones way. For 4 points both are totally accurate and the character has a spatial sense which will work in other dimensions, galaxies, through hyperspace, etc. This gives +8 to attempts to find one's way. The cost is half if a character has just the internal compass or just the clock.

Keen Senses [1 - 32]

Pick one of the categories and buy the senses for that category. The character has better senses than normal. Vision is the most common perception roll type made in most roleplaying games so its cost is higher than that of other senses.

Keen Senses Cost Chart

Cost	Hearing/Smell-Taste/Touch	Vision	All
1	+1	--	--
2	+2	+1	--
4	+4	+2	+1
8	+8	+4	+2
16	--	+8	+4
32	--	--	+8

Leader [4,8,12,16]

The character is a natural leader (see rules under Interaction). At Level 1 the character is a respectable figure some will look to. At Level 2 the character is one many will happily follow and work for. At Level 3 the character is a born leader of men and will attract followers. At Level 4 the character is a great leader and many will flock to him.

Lie Catcher [1,2,4]

The character can detect other's lies. This mainly consists of seeing through Con Artist, Acting, or similar rolls but at higher levels it can simply detect a well told lie due to changes in inflection, speech patterns, and body language. For 1 point the character gets +2 to any RES rolls against deceptive skills or Interaction attempts. For 2 points the

character gets +4 to such rolls. For 4 points the character gets a RES roll against the liar's RES score to detect lies and the character also gets +8 against deceptive skills or Interaction attempts.

Likeable [4,8,12,16]

The character's innate personality makes others like him. NPCs will make rolls to see how they react to the character (see the Interaction rules).

Linguist [2]

The character has a talent for learning foreign languages and dialects and acquires them in one-tenth the normal time. The character purchases languages as if his MEM were 2 points higher.

Mathematical Genius [5]

The character is especially adept at mathematics. The character's RES is increased by +2 for the purposes of buying Mathematics and Physics. It is increased by +1 for purposes of buying Level 3 and 4 Computer Skill and Level 3 and 4 Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. Furthermore, the character can ignore 2 points of negative modifier (so a -4 problem is only -2 for the Math Genius).

Mechanical Genius [4]

The character is inherently adept in dealing with mechanics. The character gets +2 to his effective RES for purposes of buying Mechanics. The character gets +1 for purposes of buying Material Science, and Locksmith if the level is 2 or higher.

Photographic Memory [8]

The character has an excellent memory. The character gets +4 to the MEM score that applies for all purposes (this is essentially a cheaper way to buy memory). If the character's adjusted memory is 16 or greater the character will have perfect recall of everything sensed.

Presence [4,8,12,16]

The character has a brooding, foreboding presence. People will not want to upset the character and will, perhaps subconsciously, believe the character is capable of or prone to violence. Such a character has a better chance of walking unmolested through a slum at midnight. The Interaction rules cover the effects in detail.

Speed Reading [1,2,4]

The character can read text at a very fast rate and still maintain high comprehension. For 1 point the character can read 100 pages an hour. For 2 points the character can read 400 pages an hour. For 4 points the character can read 800 pages an hour.

Weird Traits

These are different from Enhancements. Weird Traits are things about your character that are unusual or even supernatural. While these aren't in the same league as super-powers, psionic abilities, or magic, they're still unusual enough to have some special rules associated with them.

- Weird Traits are <u>NOT</u> bought with 'normal character points.' If the GM wants to let them in, he may assign a 'Weird Points' pool (say 8pts) *in addition* to your normal character points. This pool is used to buy Weird Traits.
- Even with the point pool, *any trait <u>must</u> get GM permission.* You've got to clear all of these with the GM and the GM shouldn't let in any he doesn't like. Many of these can single-handedly ruin some types of games. The GM has the absolute right to either deny these or modify them during play so they don't work in a way that wrecks the game.

Suggested Usage: We suggest that if the GM wants to allow these (or some of them) he allow players to choose one of two modes: Normal characters of a higher point value, or characters with lower 'normal' points and a point pool. Examples:

- Characters are either 50pt beginning 'Fantasy Adventurers' or 30pt Fantasy Adventurers with a 16pt Point Pool for these enhancements.
- Characters in a near-future campaign may be: 75pt Cyborgs (using the Cyborg rules), 125pt 'normal' characters, or 100pt characters with a 12pt Point Pool.

Final Note: Not all of these are 'Weird' (some are pretty mundane, really). The reason they're here is because they <u>don't come from normal points</u>. The fact that these are brought with a Weird Point Pool (and that you can't use points from that pool to buy statistics or skills or other Enhancements) means we can do some interesting tricks.

Combat Luck [4,8]

You are lucky in combat: depending on your level, you can substitute your luck score for your AGI *after* a hit as struck you.

Level 1: use an AGI bonus of -3 two times in combat. OR, any hit can be given a -5 Damage Modifier (as one of the times).

Level 2: use an AGI bonus of -6 once and -3 two times. Or give any hit a -5 DM as one of the hits. Or, one dodge or block can be made by 10.

Dreamer [4]

You are, on a subconscious level, plugged into a greater reality. Dreamers have dreams that are strange, prophetic, offer insight, reveal answers and omens, and otherwise serve as a guide. Dreamers understand a little bit more about the shadow-side of the world than most people. The GM can motivate them with dream-images, feelings of overwhelming déjà vu, and other such adventure hooks. A dreamer may make a WIL roll to try to have a dream that pertains to their current situation (this involves a day

of meditation). The GM should be dramatic and obscure in granting information this way.

Extraordinarily Tough [16]

You are extremely tough: you can take massive amounts of abuse and come back.

- You get +8 DP.
- Once in a combat you can make a CON roll at +2
- Once a play session you may "heal" 3/4 of all damage taken (up to a Critical Wound). This takes 2 seconds. It has no visible or medical effect (after being shot, beaten up badly, etc.) you fall down, recover and then seem to be basically okay (wounds leak blood, etc ... but you aren't dying). If you were unconscious, dead, dying, etc. you remain down for 2 seconds and then are fine.

Hard To Kill [4]

The character is hard to kill. Any Dead or Dying result will be ignored (the character will be unconscious for hours). This will not save the character if he is left in a damaging position, takes 5x his DP, is decapitated, etc.

Instinct [2,4,8]

The character has excellent gut-level instincts. For 2 points the character gets +1 to notice people following him, to figure out scams (when dealing with people), and to any other RES or perception roll if someone is trying to take advantage of the character. For 4 points the character gets + 2 to such rolls and gets a standard WIL roll to detect dangerous situations which have no obvious reason to be dangerous ("you have a bad feeling about that alley.") For 8 points the character gets +4 to RES rolls to detect when he is being scammed, followed, or taken advantage of and +4 to his WIL roll to sense danger in innocuous situations.   At this level it may be classified as a paranormal ability. This Enhancement gives +0, +1, and +2 to Streetwise and Survivalist at the respective levels.

Knack [2]

A character that has a knack gets a bonus to whatever skill he chooses to have the knack with (it generally can't be a combat skill). The knack can be used once per game session to give a +2 to the roll. This may be had more than once, but the knacks must be for different skills. It usually represents some special talent in that area.

Lucky [2, 4, 8]

Your character is lucky. When making any roll declare one die (preferably of a different color) to be the 'luck-die.' If the number is in the range listed for your Luck level and you wish to re-roll, you may, substituting your generic Luck roll for your skill or stat roll (or simply roll again if the roll didn't have a success number). Additionally, when rolling for random-chance events, the GM can roll with your Luck die and if it is within the listed range you can choose to re-roll with your luck roll at whatever negatives the GM

wishes. Luck rolls are modified by whatever modifiers modified the original roll and they may only be used once every *thirty minutes* of game play (the player starts timing when his luck is used). *Note: for any given roll, the player may choose to invert his 'range.'*

Luck Level 1	Roll 12-	Range 1-2
Luck Level 2	Roll 14-	Range 1-3
Luck Level 3	Roll 16-	Range 1-4

Malice [4]

The character can strike, once per combat, for +2 or +4 damage (either penetrating or impact based on the attack type). This applies to both HTH and weapon damage. The damage is added before doubling and may be declared *after* a successful hit.

Modern Strength Training [4,8]

You've worked out in the gym! This is usually not available to fantasy characters, even if the rest of these are (when your primary weapon is your muscles, they're worth more than this costs)!

- Level 1: +1 STR, +3 BLD
- Level 2: +2 STR, +5 BLD

Natural Talent [8]

The character is naturally good at some skill. He gets +2 to his skill roll (Difficult) or +4 (Normal). A character may only have this once (only once per character). The bonus applies to every roll.

Nature Friend [4, 8]

You have a special relationship with nature. This has the following effects:

- You have a green thumb. Plants will flourish under your care (a farmer will get 1.5x yield).
- You get +4/+8 Presence vs. natural animals (dependant on level). This can also be a plus to Enchant animals.
- You get +2/+4 to Tracking rolls, MEM rolls (to find your way in the woods), Survival rolls, or any other roll related to getting around in the woods. You get +1/+2 to Stealth and +2/+4 to Camouflage rolls in the woods.
- You get vibrations and sensations from the woods: if something is wrong or damaging you will know (at Level 2, animals may be dispatched to come and get you to assist the local wildlife).

Psychic Link [2,4]

You have a weird "psychic" link to another character (usually a sibling, often a twin). You know when that character is in trouble, where that character is, etc. This is worth 4pts if the other character is a PC, 2pts if the other character is an NPC. You can

"send a distress signal" with a WIL roll. If made by 5+, it may contain information. Otherwise it sends an urgent but vague feeling of distress. Telepathy will detect the presence of the link but it can't block it.

See Inner Person [12]

When you meet someone you can sometimes see through their public persona to the inner self. When meeting someone, the GM may make a secret WIL roll. If this is made by more than their WIL-10 (even more if they have Gambling or Meditation) then the character sees their "inner self." This should be treated as a 'sense' (or even a vision) of what they are like. Often a character may get criminal intent, views of psychosis, etc. From a good person, he may get a warm feeling. This requires close GM scrutiny as it can wreck certain campaign types.

Sensitive [4]

The character is "in tune" with the 'other side.' At the GM's option, this may be treated as acute perception and an over-active imagination. However, in campaigns with ghosts, the paranormal, etc. the character can detect it, feel 'ethereal vibrations,' and see auras. The GM should use the character's WIL (treat roll as a Difficult WIL based skill if the character wishes to buy it up) as a perception roll. Often the GM may wish to make this mysterious and unreliable.

Shadow Friend [8]

The character has a 'special' relationship with darkness (this often goes with gothic character traits). The character has the following effects:
- +2 to Stealth in the darkness.
- Perception rolls must be made at -3 to identify the character if his face is shadowed (for police witnesses, say)
- The character ignores -3 points of darkness modifier.
- The character is in pain and at -2 to perception rolls in bright sunlight unless wearing very dark shades.
- In the dark, shadows seem to cling to the character granting +2 Presence

Storm Friend [8]

You have a weird relationship with the weather: it matches your moods. In addition to being spooky, it has the following advantages:
- Omen: the morning weather will be a portent of the day on a (secret) WIL roll.
- Know Storm Friend: When two such characters are in the same general location, they will feel drawn to each other and know something about each other (as though in a dream).
- Convenient Lightning Strike: if outside in a storm, a storm friend can make a WIL roll at -10 to call down lightning. This gets +1 to +10 based on how agitated the character is, how much the target 'deserves' (in the GM's opinion) to be

destroyed by the storm, etc. A player should NEVER get to demand this

Synchronicity [8]

Synchronicity is when unrelated events come together in a meaningful way for you (like picking up a book (and a keen interest) in Norse Mythology and then seeing an "ODIN" license plate--when you go and talk to the guy, he's a Norse Mythos scholar).

With this advantage the character is aware and in touch with Synchronicity. The universe's inner workings are somewhat available to him. When looking for 'information' (clues, a course of action, etc.) he may get signals from unrelated sources. The GM should make a secret WIL roll and, if made by 4+, the character will get--and recognize--some message.

NOTE: The message may not be completely clear. A character investigating a crime scene might see a bright red truck and know it's a message. When he re-visits the scene, he notices that there's a bright red tile on the floor ... moving the tile he finds a clue...

Twisted Genius [8, 16]

You are a mad scientist. To qualify you must have the following:
Level 1: More points in INT than *either* REF or PHY
Level 2: More points in INT than *both* REF and PHY put together.

You must still have the science skills (at Level 2 or better). The GM should rule that some inventions are at -3 to -10 (depending on how hard and expensive). These modifiers are reduced by Level 3 skills.

You get the following advantages:
Level 1: Weird Science
+1 to RES, your L3 or L4 skills have a strange twist to them. You may invent things that the GM rules are *plausible* but unlikely (usually that means no force fields, psionic technology, etc.) You may make 1 invention per month of game time (the invention may take more than a month and you don't get to save points but you can have more than one project going at a time). Just having this doesn't give you the lab and materials necessary: the campaign may center on getting them.

Level 2: Mad Science
You get +2 to RES. You can make one invention per month per point of RES above 10. Your inventions will be capable of bizarre things (anything the GM agrees to). Often there will be unintended side effects. Furthermore, the Mad Scientist is *driven* to create things.

Warlord [12]

You buy only one Weapons Skill and can use *any* weapon with it. If the weapon hits with COR, the roll is at the difference between your COR and AGI (so if you have a Weapon Skill of L3 15- and

an AGI of 13 and a COR of 12, your roll with ranged weapons is 14- because there's a 1 point difference).

Will to Fight [4]

Your determination makes you last longer in battle than your physique would indicate. On the BLD damage chart, use your WIL (in *addition* to BLD) and add those DP. So a 13 WIL adds +4 DP.

Wisdom [8]

You can 'speak with wisdom' once per play session per point of WIL or RES above 10. Speaking with wisdom means the following: you essentially ask the GM for advice, the GM makes a note and you read it and then speak it as you see fit (theatrics are encouraged). The GM's advice should be decent but not complete. If the question is "what is the enemy doing?" the answer might be "look to where you are blind and weak," not "They're sneaking up behind." Like all of these, the GM should be consulted before taking it.

Defects

Defects represent flaws with the character's body or mind. They may be congenital or acquired after birth. All these assume birth defects but they may be declared to have occurred otherwise for no modification or different cost.

They cost negative points, thereby giving the player more points to build the character with. Normally there is a limit of 10 points which can be gained through defects but in some cases the defects are truly severe and are worth more—at the GM's option they may be taken (it will be a unique roleplaying experience).

> DN: JAGS does not attempt to 'balance' characters with defects since in JAGS, balance correlates directly to game effects (skill rolls, combat, etc.) While the gross physical defects are worth a lot of points, the minor ones are simply there for character customization. If the GM and players feel that a given defect is worth more its cost can be raised. Otherwise, the run-of-the-mill defects are simply taken for flavor and the few extra points they yield.

PHYSIQUE

Age [-1, –5, -10]

The character is very young or very old. The effect of the defect Age is to lower the character's Damage Points (DP) (this can also be accomplished by selling PHY and blaming it on extreme age--in fact, for young children low PHYs are required). For -1 point the character is simply underage and can't get into bars—there is no required physical effect. For -5 points the character's Damage Points drop by 2. For -10 points the character's Damage Points drop by 4. A young teenager usually has an 8 or a 9 physique, very young children have a 6 or a 7. Aged character's may have any PHY they can pay for—there are no age limits.

Defect Compensation:
Paranormal abilities which cancel the effects of the disadvantages when engaged (flight for a character in a wheelchair, enhanced senses for a blind character, etc.) make the disadvantage worth -2 points if the ability is always active but other characters perceive the disadvantage or -1/2 (if it's less) if the ability is not always active or is inconvenient to use.

* * *

"Hey mister, we're having a party—could you buy us some beer?"

"You got the money?"

"Yeah sure, here—hey thanks mister!"

"That's Officer. You're coming down to the station, punk."

"Aww, man! This is entrapment!"

*   *   *

Bad Senses [-1, -3, -5]

The character's senses are worse than normal. For -1 point the character must use corrective gear (glasses, hearing aid, etc.) or take -2 to all perception rolls. For -3 points, even with corrective gear, the character's perception roll for a given sense is at 9- or -2 whichever is lower. For -5 points the character has a 7- in a given sense. This only applies to sight or hearing, having a poor secondary sense is a -1 point defect.

Missing Eyes [-5, -30]

If the character is missing half the usual number of eyes (one for human!) then all COR rolls to hit with ranged weapons are at -2. This is worth -5 points. For non-Heroic character's perception rolls will be at -2 as well (-4 from the side where the eye is missing). Attacks from that side will be at -1 to be blocked until the character turns to face them (non-Heroic characters only). If the character is blind then this is worth -30 points.

Missing Limb [-10, -15, -25]

If a character is missing a single, non-major arm this gives -5 points. If the character is missing a major arm (obviously a recent development) and all uses are at -3 this gives the character -10 points. If the character is missing both arms this gives -25 points (if the character has prosthetics: -5 COR, -3 AGI this gives -15). If the character is missing 1 leg, the character is limited to base starting movement (1/3 Ground move) even with a peg. This cost -10. If the character is missing both legs and is confined to a wheel chair the character gets -15 points and is at -5 AGI.

Out of Shape [-2, -4, -8]

The character is seriously lacking endurance. This can be due to age, asthma, etc. (in which case it may have a different name). The character loses Endurance equal to the points gained (-2, -4, and –8). The character will also appear out of shape, over weight, skrawny, etc.

Ugly [-2, -6]

If a character is simply unpleasant to look at, this is worth -2 points. If the character is truly revolting this is worth -6 points. For 2 points -1 is subtracted from all Interaction rolls (Enchant is at -2) except those to Intimidate which are at +1. For -6 points -3 is subtracted from all Interaction rolls (Enchant is at -6) except those to Intimidate, which get +2.

Shock Prone [-8]

The character is likely to go into shock. He will fall automatically unconscious if the aggregate damage taken is equal to or greater than his total Damage Points (Injured Condition).

* * *

"Last time we did this a monster sneaked up right behind us."

"You're kidding?"

"No, really."

``Really?''

* * *

Dagan lost one eye to a bad retinal tattoo. He almost lost the second to a flechette in a gun battle near the Denning Underpass. His homemade lexan glasses were covered with scratches and worn spots but he decided long ago not to take any more chances.

* * *

"Fortunately the suit clamped down after the limb was gone—kept me from bleeding to death. Unfortunately the ion burns destroyed the neural tissue."

* * *

"If I get away I swear I'll give up smoking . . ."

* * *

"She has a nice personality? What are you trying to say exactly?"

* * *

The last thing Howard saw as he looked down was the fist imprint in his pocket protector . . .

* * *

28

Sickly [-6]

You are more prone to catching disease. While your CON remains the same for purposes of combat rolls, in any situation where the GM feels you are likely to catch a disease you must make a CON roll at –2. This even applies to situations where normal characters might not make rolls at all (caught in a cold rain). If the roll is failed, you get a cold. If failed by 5 you are laid up for 3 days (roll at –2 to recover each day). If failed by 10+ you have a life threatening disease (GM determines specifics). Additionally, rolls to heal and rolls against poison are at –2.

Weak [varies]

The character has a vastly reduced STR. The character's STR is sold down to a score of 8 (this defect supersedes the normal rules governing the selling of secondary statistics). The character gets 3 points in addition to those for selling the STR. A weak character must make STR rolls much more often then a normal character. Anytime the GM thinks that the character is exerting himself, the GM can ask for a roll. If the roll is missed by up to –0 to -3, the character performs the action but gains and Endurance point. If the character misses the roll by 5 or more the character fails to perform the action. Actions that would NORMALLY require a STR roll do not get the -3 point grace--if the character fails a STR roll the action fails. The additional rolls represent exceptional weakness.

REFLEXES

Clumsy [-7]

The character has a difficulty with coordination. The GM can call for COR or AGI rolls whenever the character is in a tight spot or handling items. If the roll is failed by 3 or more, the item will be dropped or the character will bump into things. Mostly the character just seems oafish but this can lead to fumbled hand grenades, broken dishes, etc. Clumsy gives a -4 to Stealth, Sleight of Hand, Locksmith, or similar non-combat skills.

Crippled Hands [-12, -15]

The character's COR is unnaturally low. For -12 points the character's COR is 7. For - 18 points the character's COR is 5 and the character essentially cannot use the hands. If one hand is crippled, use missing limb defect.

Slow [-4]

The character is very slow. The character's Initiative rolls are at -2. The character does not get fewer actions per turn (the character's REA is not reduced) but the character simply does not react quickly. This may be for psychological reasons but it is covered here.

*   *   *

Most of the survivors were never healthy again. When the dark armies came, they used a fluid fired under pressure from wooden drums to wash the battlefields down in filth and plague.

*   *   *

"Back to town, Kelth, this is a man's voyage—you're far to sickly and scrawny to join the war host."

"Without me you'll never find the shore you seek—see the glass tube? It means there's a storm coming. Listen to me, Hrothgar, if my brother's aboard that ship, I'm going too."

*   *   *

"Aragan's a good man to have along—saner than most mages and certainly no coward. Just one thing: when he mixes the Phoenix Blood potions—hide boy. I mean stand way *back!"*

*   *   *

"See this one? Got it mixing Phoenix Blood. Those vials are dang slippery!"

*   *   *

The Sauroids, while far from a gentle people, are not the most dangerous life forms to face on the Sarvahagehetti Subcontinent.

*   *   *

29

INTELLECT

Absent Minded [-3]

The character has an extremely bad short-term memory. An absent minded character must make MEM rolls to remember simple things (where he put his keys, that the experiment was left running, etc.) If the *player* remembers to do something after the fact, his roll is unmodified. If the GM remembers it first the roll is at -2. If the character has many notes and signs and reminders, he can function more or less normally in his own home.

Addictive [-2, -5]

The character has an addictive personality. The character should choose an addiction. This can be to food, casino gambling, etc. The character will be under the GM's control in the presence of his addictive habit (or will be compelled to do whatever it is he does). This is -2 points if the addiction is not particularly harmful or not particularly severe. The five-point version is one that periodically incapacitates the character. The GM may allow WIL roles to avoid temptation but they are at -1 per consecutive hour of prolonged exposure (GM's decision as to whether this always applies).

Delusion [-1, -3, -10]

The character believes something that ain't so. The one point version would be a minor belief that is common but would color the character's conversation and action. An example would be the New Age belief in UFO's. The three point version is one where the character will do things which others find strange on short contact. An example might be Paranoia. The character may still function (somewhat) but he will be super-cautious. When the GM rules that the delusion is in effect, the character will trust no one. A -10 point Delusion could be severe Paranoia or a Messiah complex.

Neurosis [-1, -3]

The character has relatively minor quirks that activate from time to time. For -1 point, the character is rarely or mildly affected. An example might be compulsive cleanliness. The character MUST take time to clean things around him. A more severe form might be an obsessive behavior that the character MUST perform an elaborate security check before leaving his house.

* * *

I think Professor Dunningham has left the experiment running . . . again.

* * *

"*I can quit any time I feel like it!*"

* * *

"*Okay, so the government discovered us and that's when that TV show started—you know, the one with the FBI agents? It's an ingenious cover-up. I wish I'd thought of it first!*"

* * *

"*Wait! I need to make sure I locked the door!*"

* * *

30

Phobic [-1, -3, -10]

The character is afraid of something normal people are not (at least not very) afraid of. For -1 point the phobia is an inconvenience, a superstition. If the need is very real, the character will overcome it. The -3 point version represents either a battery of phobias (classic superstition) or one fairly severe one (fear of flying). The character will be at -2 to all rolls when confronted with the phobia and will require a WIL roll at -2 to confront it (get on an airplane) if the roll is missed the character will have to be forced. For -10 points the character has a common crippling phobia. The character must make a WIL roll at -8 or be paralyzed with fear. An example would be agoraphobia where the character cannot leave the house.

Psychosis [-10, -20]

The character is insane and will often do things entirely under the control of the GM. For the most part, these characters spend their time trying to avoid being caught by the authorities or they do things to satisfy their inner needs. Examples are schizophrenia (character is totally out of touch with reality), psychopathic (character kills for indecipherable reasons), or Multiple Personality Disorder. If the character is in control more than half the time, this is worth -10 points. If not, it is worth -20.

Stupid [-16]

The character is particularly dense. The character may know a reasonable amount but is absolutely terrible at solving problems and predicting results of things. Any RES roll is at -4 as is any skill roll based on RES. The GM should roll 1d in secret at the start of each play session, during the play session, that many times the character will do something 'stupid.' The player gets a RES roll at the -4 and if it is failed, does something mildly dumb (the player's choice). If it is critically failed (missed by 10 or a 19 or 20 is rolled) the character is played as an NPC and does something catastrophically idiotic. This could be social faux pas, acting on impulse, or otherwise just making a really bad call. Mostly, this is should be humorous (and the negative applies to RES skill rolls) but it can be very dangerous if the character is alone when a critical call needs to be made. This is worth -16 points.

Underconfident [-3]

The character is overly cautious and believes his abilities to be less than they actually are. The character will be hesitant, unwilling to take risks, and generally somewhat cowardly.

* * *

"Mice! Why did it have to be mice?"

* * *

"Mother? Delivery for Mrs. Bates."

* * *

"The taunt-the-dragon idea was probably the worst of it. But propositioning the princess was up on the list too."

"Yeah and how about 'We're not with the Thieves' Guild?' Almost got us all bloody killed."

"No, no: smash the glass case over the mega-jewel: that nearly got us killed. Man, I'm staying further back if he's going along again."

"Shh! Here he comes."

* * *

"You're seven foot two—get out there and fight you big wuss! Go on! What's the matter with you?"

* * *

31

Background

These represent things outside the character's physical and mental attributes. These are also worth points although they may be acquired in the course of the campaign for 'free.' As with physical traits, some are Enhancements and some are Defects.

Class

In cultures where there is a class distinction, the character may be from a high or low class background. In some societies, simply having money may be enough. If a character wishes to be high class and enjoy whatever privileges are available, the character must pay the listed cost:

Low Class [-1, -3, -5]

The character is lower than average class and will have fewer rights than the norm. The character may be restricted from travel, speaking, holding certain jobs, voting, etc. This is worth from -1, -3 or -5 (possibly more) depending on how bad it is in the society. A -1 would be women in the 1800's, a -3 would be beggars in the Middle Ages, and a -5 would be the untouchable caste in India.

Educated [1.5]

The character is one of the educated in a society where few are. The character has access to any skills available and is able to read and write. Cost is usually 1.5 points but may be as much as 2.5. This can also be used to make the character 'middle class' in societies where there is such a distinction.

Prestige [2]

The character enjoys no special rights but gets respect from people of a lower class (unlanded knight). If literacy is not common, the character will be literate if he is of this class or above. This also can be used for special police powers.

Special Rights [3]

The character is above some laws but not all of them. The character is low to mid level in the class hierarchy (Knight, Samurai, etc). This may represent advanced police powers if they exist in the game world.

High Class [6]

The character is above many of the laws and has special privileges. This may include different courts, immunity to many laws, etc. At this level, with the GM's permission, a character may have diplomatic immunity (although in some games it won't be allowed and in others it may be 'free' if all the characters must have it.)

Ruling Class [10]

The character is of the class that makes the laws. This may not be available in many campaigns. If it is available, the character may still not actually be making the laws but may be in line to inherit or be promoted to the position.

Non-Heroic Background Cost:

Non-Heroic characters pay double cost for the backgrounds below unless stated otherwise. Thus, Heroic characters will stand a greater chance of being wealthy or well connected their non-Heroic counterparts.

* * *

It was not until the Uriside Orbital Processing revolts that bio-morphs gained their freedom. After the first of 3000 ton rigs decayed out of orbit over Neo York the bargaining became much tougher.

* * *

"You must learn your numbers, boy, fences are the worst thieves there are and they'll take your hard gotten haul blind if you're not a swift counter!"

* * *

"A minor official—but not one to be trifled with."

* * *

"Bow, fool—don't gawk. The lord's guard will have your head!"

* * *

"We can do whatever we want. We're from the government . . . and we're here to help you."

* * *

Being Galactic Overlord wasn't easy—still, it wasn't all bad either. . .

* * *

32

Enemies

The character has a group of people who wish him ill. This must be okayed by the game master as it may not be applicable or appropriate to the campaign. How the enemy is handled if the character is removed from the starting environment (kidnapped by aliens and taken to Alpha Centauri) is up to the GM but it is suggested that unless experience points are used to buy the disadvantage back a new enemy appears.

Annoyance [-1]

The character has rival, unpleasant in-laws, etc. which causes the player to spend campaign time dealing with them.

Hatred [-1, -3, -5]

The character is not actively attacked but is reviled by some group. For -1, the group is small, not very influential, or reserved in its tactics. For -3, the group does not include the general public but may include the press, large groups at the character's place of employment or schooling, etc. For -5 points, the general public hates the character. If this is simply an image problem, it may be corrected with experience points, thus reducing the size of the group that hates him. NOTE: If the group simply 'dislikes' the character this may be handled as an Annoyance.

Harassment [-3]

There is a serious impediment to the character (the police don't like him and he's constantly wanted, etc.). This can also deal with low-grade threats from criminal organizations, a reporter who maliciously follows the character around, etc . . .

Dangerous [-5]

The character is constantly in danger of physical harm from someone. It should be noted that, while this is not necessarily deadly, it could be if the enemy goes too far. This is also applicable if the enemy wants to kill the character but employs tactics which are relatively unlikely to do so in any given appearance (in a paranormal campaign, the enemy may lack the power to kill the character outright but might be able to if they get lucky). Also, if a local cycle gang wants to beat the character up, and they do the character will then have to buy off the disadvantage (unless the character gives them another reason to thrash him).

Deadly [-20]

The enemy is trying to kill the character. They will use means that are capable of doing so (if the described enemy wishes the character dead but can't hurt him the enemy is more of an annoyance or harassment). NOTE: A deadly enemy means that there is a fair chance the character will meet his end at their hands. A deadly enemy is one that the

* * *

"If you arrest me one more time without proof I'll have several thousand lawyers in your face so fast you'll think it's the Alien!"

* * *

"The Society of Concerned Citizens Against Vigilantism has issued a statement that you will cease and desist all paranormal crime fighting activities."

"Or what?"

"The photo shows a shoulder launched Anti-Aircraft missile . . ."

* * *

"Hey, bro? Liked my manifesto, huh? Got a present for ya."

character fights constantly because they are a constant and mortal threat. This may not be allowed in the campaign as it tends to focus the campaign around the character and the enemy.

Frequency [varies]

How often this happens will also have an impact on the points the character gets. An average enemy shows up half the time with a roll of a 10- (if the GM desires). A frequent enemy shows up on a 15- roll (-3 points additionally), and a infrequently appearing enemy shows up on a 6- (+2 points, minimum of -1).

Friends

A character may have friends as well as enemies. These may interact with the character in different ways.

Contacts [varies]

The character has sources of information that are unusual. A contact will give the character information and may help the character if it is not too dangerous or is in the contact's best interest. Contacts may be unfriendly but owe the character, be friends, or otherwise want to help the character. It is perfectly allowable for the GM to create adventures where the player acts to aid his contact, assuming the character would do so. Although points are paid for contacts, they are treated as normal NPCs and can get fed up with the character if badly treated. A contact cost ½ point for a common position (police, contact works in a lab, etc.), 1.5 points for job where the contact has access to unusual information (classified documents, FBI, etc.). It cost 2.5 points for contacts with very unusual resources (CIA, inside the White House, etc.).

*   *   *

"The Westville P.T.A. up in Showholk, Nebraska? No problem: I've got an inside contact . . ."

Allies [varies]

Allies are persons or organizations that will essentially fight on the character's side. This may be in the form of fire support, legal assistance, financial assistance, etc. The availability and power of the ally will determine the cost. This is, as always, subject to approval by the GM. Characters should be prevented from buying personal armies unless the campaign is designed for it. It should also be noted that allies, as described here are generally non-replaceable and should *always* be designed and run by the GM. The player can request the type of ally wanted but the GM has the final say and may keep secrets from the character about the ally.

*   *   *

"One last day on the force before retirement and I get partnered up with you!?"

"It—it's like a recurring nightmare or a bad cliché or something, huh old timer?"

*   *   *

Ally Type	Cost	Notes
Less powerful than character	1	If the character is non-Heroic and built on 50 points or less the ally may be of equal power.
Equal to the character	2	Generally a 75pt character.
Slightly greater power	4	The ally may be up to 1.5x the character's cost.
Much greater power	8	The ally may be up to 2x the character's cost.
Ally has great resources	Varies	Allies whose aid is in the form of access to great wealth may be bought as wealth at half (ally determines nature of help—won't act on the character's whim) or 1/4th cost (ally is very reluctant to help)
Ally makes up for a character's Weakness	2x cost	The GM should frown on allies who do either all the fighting or all the thinking.
Ally is under character's control	2x cost	If the ally will do literally anything the character wants the cost is double.

Wards [-2]

Some friends of the character may be worth points as they get into danger, need rescuing, etc. A ward must be built on as many points or less than the character and may not be a combatant under normal circumstances. The ward is a plot device to get the character involved in adventures. A ward will require the character's attention about 1/4th of the time [8- roll]. The GM may involve other relations of the character in adventures but a ward NPC is one who the character cares about and is danger prone.

* * *

"Well, let's see—the terrorists have my daughter, the cops want my brother for a crime he didn't commit, my army buddy sent me a cryptic emergency message from South America and the old karate master who saved my life back in '82 just went missing."

"Any thoughts?"

"Yeah—time to get reincarnated!"

* * *

Reputation

Usually characters are just starting out when they're first constructed—but that isn't always the case. A character can come with a background and, if the GM okays it, a reputation. This can, of course, be a good thing or a bad thing.

Two things affect how many points a reputation is worth (or how many points the character gets): the degree of the reputation and how easily/often the character is recognized.

Normally, a character will be recognized if someone who meets him makes a MEM roll at -2. However, characters can choose to be more famous or infamous:

- **Cult Figure:** Character is well known to a specific segment of the population but little recognized outside it (a second string quarterback, a star in academia, an underworld figure, etc.): +/- 1 point. People in the group get a straight MEM roll to recognize the character.
- **Local Hero/Villain:** Character's reputation is purely local:0pt base cost. The character might be a local hero—or have a bad reputation at several nearby bars. Locals recognize on a MEM+1 roll—but no one else will.
- **One Hit Wonder:** Character was temporarily famous. Something the character did got heavy press coverage. Most people recognize on a MEM-1 roll. +/- .5 points.
- **National Figure:** Character is a moderate political/TV personality or was involved in an extremely high profile situation. The character is recognized on a MEM roll. +/-1 point.
- **Popular Star:** Character is a major TV or political personality. The character might be a movie star or otherwise well known. People recognize the character on a MEM+1 roll. +/- 1.5 points.
- **Popular Icon:** Character is recognized by almost everyone. The roll is MEM +4. +/- 2 points.

Bad Reputation [-1 or –2]

Word is out about the character—and it isn't good. A bad reputation means that those who recognize the character will have some negative preconceptions about him. This isn't exactly the same as being actively hated by the public. He might be known for lying during a highly publicized trial or the character might be a public official who was exposed in a scandal. In any event, characters making the roll will recognize and mistrust the character. If the public has reason to actively hate the character—take an enemy. This affects Interaction rolls.

Good Reputation [+1, +2, +4, +8]

The character is well liked by the segment that recognizes him. People will assume the character has integrity, honor, bravery, or some other trait that makes him liked. See the Interaction section for effects.

Baaad Reputation [+2]

The character's reputation is as a tough guy. The character is known as dangerous or mean—or maybe it means the character has had ample chance to prove he's bad. Usually this results in a mixed reaction (some people like the character—others don't).

Just Being Famous Isn't Enough

It's quite possible that a player could make a character who's a famous rock-star but not take the Reputation Enhancement. What then? Is the character famous or not?

The character is famous. The Reputation Enhancement doesn't just apply to being well known—it usually means people feel one way or the other about you.

An incredibly attractive, talented movie star (Level 3 Acting skill) will be famous without having to buy Reputation.

If the movie star did take a really good reputation though, it would mean that the character was seen in a good light beyond the mere celebrity.

Examples:

Bad Reputations

Mayor Marrion Barry (outside of D.C. where he was reelected)

Disgraced Sports Heroes (some former Dallas Cowboys might qualify)

Newt Gingrich

Good Reputations

Jimmy Carter (known for humanitarian works)

Ferris Bueler (most popular kid in high school)

Baaad Reputaion

Bruce Lee (the best martial artist ever)

Dirty Harry (the cop you don't wanna mess with)

John Shaft
("You see this cat Shaft is a bad mother –"
"Shut your mouth!"
"But I'm talking about Shaft."
"Then we can dig it!")

Personality

These will define the way a player plays his character. They can be used to add customization to a character's personality and as guidelines on how different character types may be played.

> DN: Personality traits should be 'fun' in that they put meat on the character's persona. If someone is loading up on traits that they aren't playing, the GM should step in.

NOTE: A character may not take more than two personality types for a character for points (more may be taken but they do not get the character extra points).

Character Definition [-2]

The player must write a page or two which includes a general description of the character, the character's beliefs and goals, the characters name, notes about the characters family, etc. These facts will make it easier for the GM to deal with the character. This may be done after the character has been played for a while but only with GM approval. *Note: This does* not *count against the two personality type limit.*

Bad Liar [-3]

The character is a terrible liar. Any time the character tries to tell a lie the player must make a WIL roll at -2 or the character stumbles, contradicts, or otherwise blows the story. The character need not tell the truth but simply isn't a very effective liar.

Careless [-3]

The character often forgets things. The GM may require an RES roll to see if the character took some normal action the player did not specifically declare. Rolls to see if the character is carrying something he though he might need but the player did not actually say he brought or wrote down are at -3. The character can never find his car keys, etc.

Cocky [-1]

The character believes he can handle situations that he probably isn't capable of taking on. This isn't the same thing a suicidal but it does mean that a character with this trait won't back down from a challenge he has a prayer of surviving ("So the governments after us. So they're tracing our credit cards and monitoring us with satellites. So a Special Forces hit team just flew in from Washington. So what—we can take 'em.")

Beneficial Personality Types:

Most of the personality types listed here have some negative effect on the character—it is possible, however for a character to have a type that isn't negative—just strongly defining.

In this case the GM may allow *one* personality trait for -1 points of any type so long as it distinguishes the character.

If a player invents a new type that is potentially harmful, it should be between -1 and -3 points as determined by the GM.

* * *

"When I was eight years old I saw a man kill another with his hands. It frightened me but it haunted me as well—like a wound that still exists after the scab has healed and the flesh appears whole. That was when I began training . . ."

* * *

"Um, yes, well I didn't mean to say we saw *aliens, you understand, just that if we had seen anything it would have made an alien like impression . . . or . . . um . . . can we start over officer?"*

* * *

"Jackson left the compass back in the barracks again, Sir."

* * *

"If you were half as good as you think you are you'd be twice as good as good as you really are."

"Oh yeah? But if I was half as good as you said I am I'd be twice as good as you wish you were."

* * *

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Code of Ethics [-1, -3, -5]

The character has some code he believes in and will protect. The one point version is a very loose, but still existent code. Examples might be never stealing from someone poorer than himself or acting in a polite and chivalrous manner. A three point code of ethics is one which, while severe is relatively normal in his society. A law-abiding citizen could have a three point Code of Ethics. Only fighting in self defense or defense of loved ones could be a three-point code. Five point codes represent severe and unusual oaths. Monks in a celibate order that always kept silent might have a 5 point code of ethics. Always assisting and fighting for innocents could be a five-point code of ethics.

Curious [-2]

The character will want to investigate everything he hears about. He will try to find out what the nature of an unusual situation is. Things that might seem uninteresting to normal characters will fascinate a curious one.

Fanatic [-4]

The character has dedicated his/her life to some cause and is willing to die for it. The character will be very difficult to involve in adventures that do not further the cause and will have to make extreme sacrifices for it. The GM may control the character where the cause is concerned. Such characters get +2 to WIL rolls in pursuit of their cause. The GM must okay every instance of this, as it can be disruptive.

Grim [-1]

The character is constantly serious and semi-depressed. While this does not impede his effectiveness, it will make him unpleasant to be around.

Hangup [-1, -3]

The character has a specific psychological problem that he cannot overcome. This may be something like always missing an exit (1 point) or never remembering to load the only weapon he carries (3 points). The three-point hangup should be something that occurs daily in the character's life.

Honorable [-2]

The character will always keep his word and will treat others (even opponents) with the respect that they treat him.

Lecherous [-2]

The character chases members of the opposite sex. It is very easy to set traps for characters with this vice.

Codes of Honor:

A code of ethics can also be a code of honor in which the character essentially vows to avenge some class of wrongs (insults, for example). While a Code of Ethics is internal, a Code of Honor may be external in which case the character will lose the respect of others if he does not support it. Such external codes are usually worth an additional -1 point.

* * *

"Sticking my nose where it's not my business is *my business— well, really it's more like a hobby per se . . ."*

* * *

"Once the Trasatori were mobilized the transition was immense and immediate. Almost overnight their cities were converted into a vast fleet of warships."

* * *

"He's not a guy you want to make fun of . . ."

* * *

"Dang-it! I never remember those keys."

* * *

"Bow, but never take your eyes off your opponent . . ."

* * *

"Hey babe! Buy me a drink?"

* * *

Naive [-2]

The character is callow and inexperienced. The character may be extremely gullible or ignorant about the 'real world.'

Obnoxious [-1 to -3]

The character is crass, arrogant, or otherwise unpleasant.

Shy [-2]

The character does not feel comfortable in large crowds or with new people. The character may be at -1 to various skill rolls dealing with personal interaction. Given a choice, the character will not greet new persons.

Slick [-2]

The character thinks he is smooth. Others are not convinced. The character will be seen as a punk, potential criminal, jerk, etc. This is similar to obnoxious except that the character does not have to do anything really inflammatory.

Swashbuckler [-2]

The character is a romantic thrillseeker. In combat the character will be flamboyant if at all possible and out of combat the character will play like any number of romantic heroes. If this is taken, and the character is not played with enthusiasm and style the GM may take the points back (the character must pay 2 points of experience).

Quick Tempered [-2]

The character is quick to anger, can't take a joke, etc. While the player should handle it, the GM can enforce the character's chip on his shoulder.

Wealth

Characters may be wealthy because of their jobs (skills), inheritance, or due to luck (the lottery). The GM should be consulted before buying wealth.

*   *   *

"Gee, are you really from another planet?"

*   *   *

"Outta my way!"

*   *   *

"Karl—get up there and tell the mages' guild how you slew that dragon! Karl? Karl come back!"

*   *   *

"Hey, baby! Smile if you wanna have sex with me!"

*   *   *

"Here's where I put away the gun, jump up on the table, and challenge you to a sword fight with the ceremonial blades over the mantle—God I love this job!"

*   *   *

"Oh yeah, punk?"

Natural Wealth

Characters with Level 2 (Average skills) get about 30,000 per year. Level 3 (Expert) characters get 60,000 and Level 4 (Master) characters get 500,000 in annual income.

Amount	Cost	Effect
Comfortable	1	The character makes the equivalent of $60,000 per year. This level is free if the character has a Level 3 (Expert level) skill.
Well To Do	2	The character makes the equivalent of $100,000 per year (+60,000 if the character has a Level 3 skill). The character has $50,000 in fluid reserves and nets 66,000 per year.
Wealthy	4	The character makes about $500,000 per year (much of this is investment). If the character does not work at all this may be reduced to as little as $300,000. The character has 2/3rds of his yearly income in reserve and nets that amount per year.
Rich	8	The character is a millionaire: 10 million in liquid assets and net 1 million per year.
Multimillionaire	16	The character's worth is in the 10's of millions. He has 50 million in reserve and nets 10 million per year.
Filthy Rich	32	The character is worth 100's of millions. Assume 100 million in reserve and 20 million net per year
Billionaire	64	The character can do things like launch his own presidential campaign without bankrupting himself. His buying capability is virtually limitless: shopping malls, skyscrapers, vast estates, islands, etc. can all be bought on whims.

Poor [-3, -5, -8]

If the character has no job and no skills or some other reason (blacklisted, physiologically unable to hold a job, etc.) the character gets points. If the character lives at the poverty line (drives a beat up car, lives in an apartment or trailer, etc.) this is worth -3 points. If the character is dead broke and must beg for food this is worth -5 (if the circumstances of the campaign are such that the other PC's can't provide for the character and the broke status doesn't change rapidly due to accumulating money by doing jobs or adventuring this may be worth -8).

Uneducated

The character has less education than is the norm in the culture. This can be due to age, inexperience, coming from another culture, etc. The point totals listed here are for most modern cultures—if the character is missing something vital it will be worth more points. If the listed skill is generally NOT known in the culture then it is not a defect to be commonly ignorant. Usually it is only legal to take 1 of these but the GM may make allowances.

Can't Drive [-1]

The character does not know how to drive a vehicle and is totally oblivious of traffic laws. Simple vehicles may be started and driven hazardously (automatic transmissions) but manual transmissions may not be driven at all.

Illiterate [-5]

The characters can only read basic street signs. Anything more is beyond his ability. If the character tries to learn to read, each point spent to buy off the defect allows a RES roll to make out a sentence at -8, +2 per point invested. When 4 points have been spent the character can read without a roll.

Unschooled [-3]

The character doesn't know any history, can't find his country on a map, has never read any of the culture's literature. The character may suffer serious embarrassment, not follow conversations, etc. Complete ignorance in one area may be worth -1 points at the GM's discretion.

Unable to do Math [-3]

The character can't do anything more than simple (two digit) addition and subtraction. Checkbooks will be impossible to balance, the character won't know if paychecks are correct, etc.

Technologically Illiterate [-1 to -5]

The character is unskilled with technology. This can be simple computer illiteracy to not knowing how to use a microwave, VCR, etc. The -5 version is for a postmodern society where everything is done with technology and none of it is user friendly. Even if shown how to do something the Tech Illiterate will forget and have to be shown again and again. It is worth -1

---

*   *   *

Malcolm McCloud pulled the trench coat around him against the coming storm. It was a bad one and the East Street church was full. He turned over the sparkling token in his hand—"Shelter," the woman had told him pressing it into his hand and looking furtively around. "Meet me down by the tracks." Malcolm knew she was strange—bad news his instincts screamed . . . but he didn't have any choice.

*   *   *

Valerie screamed in frustration as her mother's car punched through the garage door and into the boxes that held the Christmas ornaments. Now she'd be how *late for school?*

*   *   *

"It's a message!"

"What's it say?"

"Dunno . . . you read it."

"We're in trouble."

*   *   *

"Don't know much about history . . ."

*   *   *

"Dammit! I've got a degree in computer science and I can't compute four dice minus four!"

*   *   *

12:00 >Blink<
12:00 >Blink<
12:00 >Blink<

*   *   *

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for mild cases, -3 for fairly severe cases in modern society, and -5 for any case in the described society.

Can't Swim [-1]

For whatever reason, the character never learned how to swim. At best, he can tread water and dog paddle (both badly and not for very long). If the GM rules that this disadvantage would come up rarely (if ever), he may rule that it is worth no points.

*   *   *

"God Himself could not sink this ship!"

*   *   *

Other Character Notes

Frankenstein Rule

If a player creates a character that the rest of the players find offensive they may vote it out of the campaign. If the GM finds any character abusive the player must modify the character until the GM accepts it. This is designed to solve more problems than it creates—if it has the opposite effect the rule may be ignored.

> Ex1: "No, you may not bring a sheep-pimp into the campaign!"

> Ex2: "Congratulations, you've found the loop-hole. We'll mount the character sheet on the wall as a testament to your creation skills! Go make another one."

It's hard to Frankenstein someone without them getting personally offended and feeling like everyone's ganging up on them.

On the other hand, it's the kind of rule that indemnifies game designers when players complain.

Traveling Characters

If the players know the characters are going to be traveling far and wide then some defects should not be taken (enemies and stationary friends are an example). A solution is to have an 'enemy-friend pool.' This is a certain number of points which can/will be applied to the character wherever the character goes. The character will always find powerful patrons if he stays in a town for any length of time or the character will magically seem to make enemies in any place. This isn't very realistic but if the players and GM agree it can be viable.

Usually you don't know your characters are going to be transported back to the 12th century (oh, you might have a clue: "Make members of the Society For Creative Anachronisms.") so the rule may be applied even when you didn't envision it being used.

Sample Character: Hammerhead McLear

The player decides to create the character Hammerhead McLear—a streetwise thug who, while not completely immoral is somewhat slimy and involved in shady deals. The GM assigns the players 75 points with the option of 10 points of defects. The campaign is set in a somewhat futuristic New York and there are no restrictions on Enhancements or Defects. Paranormal abilities are not allowed and there are no power scale restrictions. However, the GM declares that the campaign is more realistic than cinematic and thus the characters non-Heroic (and pay non-Heroic costs).

The original Hammerhead McLear was played by the game designer in another system. He was killed horribly by a cop with a submachine gun. He has always felt that this was unfair (since when do cops—even cops in 2040—carry submachine guns?)

Step 1: Primary Characteristics.

All the character's statistics begin at 10. The player wants the character to be really, really tough, somewhat fast and smart. The player designs the character's Primary Characteristics like this:

Characteristic	Cost	Score	Notes
PHYSIQUE	15pts	12	Quite strong
REFLEX	15pts	12	Quick, but not super fast.
INTELLECT	5pts	11	A little above average

The total cost so far is 35 points. He has 40 left to spend.

Step 2: Secondary Characteristics.

The character decides to increase Hammerhead McLear's CON (to help make him tough) and his AGI to help him in a fight. Going from 12 to 13 costs 5 points so this costs an additional 10 (5 for CON and 5 for AGI). It is recorded on the character sheet as Primary Stat Cost + Secondary Stat Cost. The player has 30 points left.

Step 3: Tertiary Characteristics.

Figuring these is just a matter of looking at the charts above.

Perception roll is		11-	
Ground Move:	Walk 2.7	Run 5.4	Sprint 8.1
Damage Points:	15 (13 for CON, +2 for BLD)		
Minor Wound (and Hurt Condition)	5		
Major Wound (and Injured Condition)	15		
Critical Wound (and Serious Condition)	30		

Step 4: Enhancements

The player looks at the Enhancements and Traits lists and wants Tough, Resilient, and Iron Jaw:

Enhancement	Cost	Notes
Tough	4pts	+4 Damage Points. This changes Wound levels.
Resilient	8pts	2x normal healing rate.
Iron Jaw	8pts	1pt of armor

This is a total of 20 points so the character has 10 points left with which to buy skills.

Beep . . . "Good morning, it's the beginning of a new and wonderful day. A smile at dawn lasts all day long—"

McLear pounded the off button on the clock radio. It didn't work even after he hit it several times because the building had decided he really needed to get up that morning. Finally he took it and threw it hard against the far wall. The unbreakable plastic casing left a small dent in the plaster.

"You have been downsized. Please report to the Bureau of Vocational Reassignment so you can find gainful employment and get back on your feet as soon as possible."

Hammerhead finally silenced the soft, perfect female voice by putting the unit in the sink and covering it with water.

By noon they'll have it shut off, he thought grimly. It hadn't really hit him yet. If they didn't reassign him he'd go on public assistance—and that meant having a case officer and everything.

He stared out the window, his body seemed to ache from years of abuse. Finally, it hit him.

Hammerhead took the radio from the sink, battered through the window with it, and hurled it out at the city below.

Step 5: Background and Defects

Hammerhead has some serious personality flaws and a really bad relationship with authority—so the player gives him the following defects:

Harassment: Department of Social Harmony	-3
Slick	-2
"Angry" (Obnoxious)	-2
Character Write-Up	-2

With these defects coming to a total of 9 *extra* points, Hammerhead McLear has a total of 19 points with which to buy skills: a reasonable amount.

"Welcome to the Plaza of Harmony—feel free to enjoy our sparkling fountains, spacious parks, and electronic malls.

"Here at the Bureau of Vocational Reassignment we advance your future today. Our friendly professionals match your skills to the right job—satisfaction, as always is guaranteed—so cheer up and—Mr. McLear, please do not exit the moving vehicle—Mr. McLear! . . .

Next Section: Skills