



# ARTIFACTS OF THE WASTELANDS

CLOAKS, VIRTUAL MATTER PROJECTORS, ANTI-TECHNOLOGY WEAPONS, & FORMULAE

BY DEREK HOLLAND & THE SKIRMISHER GAME DEVELOPMENT GROUP



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**A**re-imagining of old-school gaming, *Mutant Future* deliberately leaves areas open so gamers can customize their worlds. One way to make the game your own is with artifacts. A game master could, for example, expand the types of items a party might find, imagining what technology would be available generations in the future, where even potentially mundane objects might enter the realms of the fantastic.

As its title suggests, this article delves into four very different kinds of technology, Cloaks, Virtual Matter Projectors, Anti-Technology Weapons, and Formulae.

∞ **Cloaks** include several forms of high-technology outerwear, including capes, ponchos, and actual cloaks.

∞ **Virtual Matter Projectors** explore the possibility that the Ancients could make items that existed only while the devices used to create their component particles was on.

∞ **Anti-Technology Weapons** were designed to cope with an age when vehicles drove themselves, warrior intelligences were autonomous, and criminals could seize control of gear from miles away and ways were needed to prevent machines from running amok.

∞ **Formulae**, chemistry's third iteration, use the detritus of a dead world and the pollution of superscience found in soil, water, and flesh to constitute something bordering on magic. They arose in the years after the bombs stopped falling, when Ancient technology had wrought nearly inexplicable changes upon land and life, and those left behind used trial and error to discover what was safe to eat, drink, and use for survival.

Following are a few examples of each of these sorts of artifacts.

## CLOAKS

Whether a camouflaged poncho produced by the lowest bidder and universally designed to funnel rain directly into a miserable grunt's boots, or a diaphanous, iridescent cape twirled by a statuesque beauty dazzling on the runway, cloaks and their ilk have remained in use or in fashion for millennia. The technological marvels made before the final wars often blended utility and style. No matter whether a full cloak, half cape, mantle, or shawl, all had multiple functions, but most shared three: protection, communication, and sensing.

Despite the "once upon a time" nature of tales about



the Ancient world, it was a dangerous place. Different cloak designs had sensors to detect physical attack, toxic chemicals, or radiation, then warn the wearer and protect him against the threat. Depending on the individual garment's quality, the sensors might have a range of from 10' to 50'. The warning was usually verbal, and could be quite loud, but if the hazard was great enough some cloaks also flashed, which helped both the wearer and those nearby; police could spot a distant flash and immediately tell where — and possibly what — the danger was.

If no emergency personnel were at hand, the wearer could call for help with a cloak's built-in communica-

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tion gear. Somewhere about the cloak, usually on the hood, a sleeve, or front hem, was either a small screen or a tiny holographic projector with a heads-up display, allowing audio-visual interaction with others. Effectively invisible when not in use, the screen activated with appropriate verbal cues or physical gestures, which also directed a cloak to contact the desired person or thing (e.g., robot, android, home AI).

Some cloaks acted as their own antennae, while others relied on communication grids, a difference analogous to comparing hand-held radios to cell phones and satellite phones. A particular cloak's capabilities and the availability of a local-to-global network dictated its effective range, which could be from just 10 to as many as 100 million miles.

The following entries detail what protection is provided by a number of different types of garments; a good rule of thumb is that the more expensive the cloak, the better the features. All cloaks run on power packs or minifusion cells. Some of the items might not seem to fit the traditional scope of "cloaks," as the term took on a slang connotation that included several different forms of protective or camouflaging superscience clothing.

**Animated cloaks** have many thousands of tiny servos integrated into their fabric. This allows them to take various shapes, and possibly even move a small mass, when commanded with verbal cues or physical gestures. Originally, these were designed as toys for the wealthy, but later versions found use in security and industrial areas. The military rarely deployed animated cloaks as they could use Encasing Military Armor (EMA) or other protective gear.

Civilian models can act as armor, providing an AC between 2 and 6, and have a Strength score between 2 and 10.

Cloaks intended for police work often act as secondary hands that are able to do things like grasp and lift, push large buttons, and move levers when verbally directed. Early models have Strength scores between 14 and 20 and newer models are even stronger. These provide an AC between -4 and 0.

Industrial versions are much like flexible exoskeletons, and can either bend like willow twigs or be stronger and more rigid than steel as needed. They also allowed workers to enter otherwise hazardous conditions, places such as construction or foundry areas, where they could be easily injured or killed. These cloaks provide an AC between 4 and 6, reduce damage from heat or radiation by half, and have a Strength score between 12 and 18.

**Mole cloaks** are a version of animated cloak designed specifically for spelunking, mining, and other underground activities. Cavers first introduced to the cloaks often found them disconcerting, as they resemble body bags with limbs and a transparent face plate. But in an

emergency, mole cloaks become things of beauty: if the wearer is in danger, the cloak animates, providing a Strength of at least 15 and a climb rate of 150' (50') — and, should a wearer be rendered unconscious, the cloak will take her back to the surface if possible. Each mole cloak carries up to 12 hours of air stored in flex tanks throughout the garment and has an AC of 4.

**Shielding cloaks** were used by criminals in the Ancient world to hide their activities. Such a garment emits a hologram that alters the wearer's appearance and movements so computer and video scanners will read them as someone different. The hologram is only large enough to cover the wearer (e.g., it cannot disguise a vehicle). It could, however, easily hide the drawing of a weapon, which could in fact remain hidden even while being fired, only becoming visible if it projected a beam, had a muzzle flash, or involved some other visible effect. Adapting to a shielding cloak takes a few weeks and, until acclimated, the wearer has a -2 penalty to his attack rolls and +2 penalty to his AC.

**Scouting cloaks** were the legal version of shielding cloaks and typically used to move in wild areas without disturbing the wildlife. They often had an override that allowed superiors to turn them off from a distance, alter the hologram, or possibly entangle/paralyze the wearer if needed, feature included to prevent the garments from being used for criminal activities.

Both shielding and scouting cloaks have ACs between 6 and 4, a difference that comes from the amount of the wearer's body covered, as some are just shirts and others are full-body wear.

**Space cloaks** make it possible to survive in a vacuum environment without bulky hardsuits. Each can provide up to one week of air, storing it in flexible, self-sealing tanks woven throughout the garment and using rebreathers and/or oxygen scrubbers to recycle used or contaminated air. A cloak provides complete radiation protection, but if the cooling system fails the wearer begins to cook. In such a case, she takes 1d4 points of damage per round, starting 10 minutes after activating a malfunctioning cloak. These garments have at least 300 hit points and an AC of 0.

## VIRTUAL MATTER PROJECTORS

In the Ancients' search for the universe's most basic components and while trying to create "exotic matter" by finding or building new kinds of subatomic particles, they instead discovered a way to make virtual particles. By using energy to emulate matter in ways that are otherwise impossible, the Ancient physicists created things as durable as normal substance and could affect their surroundings, but they only existed when power was applied.

This "virtual matter" was generated using energy projectors, machines that ranged in size from hand-held



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devices to multi-ton behemoths. For smaller objects, the projectors most often looked like intricate flashlights with crystalline lens where the energy emerged. Larger versions used for generating things like buildings, spacecraft, or massive art installations could be wheeled, resemble cargo pods, and be designed to fit whatever was desired for aesthetic concerns or engineering constraints.

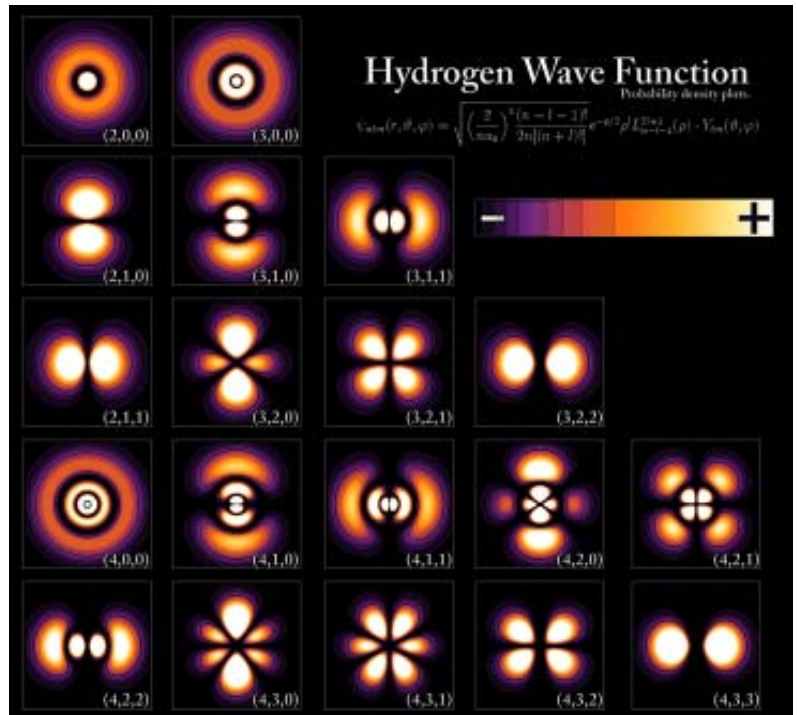
Virtual matter was steps of magnitude beyond nanotechnology, and almost any item mechanical and/or electronic could appear by pressing a button on the right projector. Some were single purpose, projecting only one kind of object, while others were like magical Swiss Army knives, able to create any object in their databases. Big or small, these virtual items have the same mass, strength, and other physical characteristics of the imitated items — so long as the power stays on, they are, for all intents and purposes, real. They even smell like they are supposed to.

Despite all the options, however, there are a few constraints. Virtual matter projectors cannot make anything requiring chemical reactions, including life. Many models cannot form objects if there is something in the way, and if the projector is aimed at an existing object and activated, it will not do anything as the virtual particles cannot form inside existing matter; for the few that can, the virtual item will be created around the object, but will have a gap where the object was located (e.g., your hammer might have a donut-shaped shaft).

Given the utility this technology had, there are likely thousands of projector types and possibly millions of models. Some of the more common types include the following.

**Tool gloves** can project any tool within their programming, including but not necessarily limited to hand tools, power tools, cleaning implements, compressors, stairs, ladders, and scaffolding. There are also gloves sized for children, but these are restricted to projecting simple items. When using hand tools, if the user opens his clenched glove, the tool fades away, and thus cannot be thrown or dropped. All gloves require power cells or power clips, but there is no set limit on how long the items hold a charge, and this depends on the make, model, condition, and energy source type of the particular glove. With constant use, one glove might remain powered for days, while another could last centuries.

**Mirrors, lenses, and filters** reflect, refract, or prevent the movement of energy and mass in order to direct, control, or purify it. Examples might include water, air, or sound filters, or a lens that concentrates UV light, allowing mutants with *ultraviolet vision* to use it as a weak torch. These are only mechanical devices, not chemical, so they cannot stop certain materials or ener-



gies (e.g., a water filter might screen out larger particulates like bacteria or viruses, but not poisonous chemicals or radioactive contamination).

**Pipes and pumps** move water where and when needed. Rather than construct permanent, large-scale flood control measures in low-lying areas, or use trucks or pipelines to haul water to fire-prone territories, a series of projectors could be installed to prevent floods, fire, or drought, or to provide irrigation. They could be placed on the ground or in towers like Roman aqueducts, hauled around by people and ground vehicles, or even air-dropped with smoke jumpers.

These projectors range in size and power from small, trickling a gallon per hour in a garden water feature, to monstrous, drawing thousands of gallons per second, moving it a quarter mile, and flooding a 10-acre rice field in less than 10 minutes. When the emergency passes, or the field is watered, turning off the power makes the infrastructure disappear.

**Mills and other grinders** range in size from tabletop pepper grinders, through flour mills and wood chippers, to asteroid miners and subterranean drilling machines. The most powerful can do 10d10 points of damage per round to an EMA or tank, and 10d20 to a lightly-armored person.

**Kites** are robotic flyers with wingspans ranging from 1 to 6 feet. Only the most expensive models can maintain self-sustained flight, while the rest glide. A kite has no physical tether to its projector and, depending on the model, can be 100 to 1,000 yards from it. They sometimes include simple cloaking technology and often have sensors; the receiver for a sensor-equipped model is in

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the projector. If a kite drops too low or ventures near an object, it can be deactivated and re-created higher. Some versions, however, were designed for fighting kite hobbyists, and can be programmed to ram things, doing up to 3d4 points of damage depending on their size.

**Bridges, paths, and roads** can be of two different types, either projected from a moving vehicle or triggered at a vehicle's approach. The former version was like a rolling mat appearing in front of and beneath a vehicle, disappearing after it passed. This was popular with those who enjoyed making their own routes through nature but not leave a trace in the process. The second kind was used for more permanent routes, such as between cities or to replace drawbridges over rivers busy with boat traffic.

Created road surfaces usually floated 1 to 5 feet above the ground and only existed for a certain distance, usually a few dozen to a few hundred feet around the projector. When a vehicle reached its destination the road would merge with existing infrastructure or angle downward so that the vehicle could land without incident or discomfort. If the power were ever suddenly cut off, a vehicle would abruptly drop to the ground.

**Small-scale map projectors** create flat surfaces with objects on them to represent various features, anything from rivers and lakes to cities, people, and armies. Unlike holographic maps, which create static images, projected maps are very easy to manipulate and allow users to simply move objects around by hand. Some people in the wastes use these devices as games.

**Tent projectors** allowed people to live just about anywhere on land. With the touch of a button, these gadgets provided instant shelter, beds or other furniture, air compressors for mountain climbing (which kept the internal air pressure at any desired elevation level), location and mapping computers, or anything else the owner wanted to include. Tent projector beams were engineered to pass through flesh, like x-rays, so inhabitants would not make holes in the shelter as they moved around.

Many projected shelters had an umbrella function, allowing those within them to see outside and walk around, moving the tent as they travelled by carrying the projector or strapping smaller models to their helmets. Because virtual matter has the same mass as regular matter, it was important to keep the tent from collapsing while using this feature, so the projector recreates a fully-assembled tent at microsecond intervals; depending on a tent's size, it could weigh between 3 and 20 pounds, and such a projector requires either two power packs or minifusion cells.

**Party masks or cloaks** allow people to create extremely elaborate costumes. As with other matter projectors, these costumes are real so long as the power is on. They might be anything the owner can envision, from simple Halloween ghosts, slowly moving in nonexistent

ent breezes, to full-sized dinosaurs that use massive robotic exoskeletons.

Unlike most artifacts, these projectors are fairly easy to reprogram (treat as a complexity class 1 artifact with a +50% [total] to the technology roll). This allowed owners to constantly change their appearance and allowed for some of the most extreme competitions in the Ancient world: effects creating gore, terror, lust, rage, or just mind-blowing weirdness.

**Replacement limbs**, including those programmed into party masks or cloaks (q.v.), can replace actual lost limbs or create new ones, providing coordinated movement requires some kind of link between the projected limb and the user's nervous system. Depending on the model and permanency, such effect might be projected by a brain implant, distal nerve sensors/connectors, or "cranial crown," a circlet worn on the head that reads and responds to brain activity to move the new limb. If things like tentacles, wings, tails, and similar appendages are programmed into the projector, they can only be controlled by users with the correct kind of connections; on users without them, the projectors either will fail to activate or the limbs will appear but hang limply.

**Art**, including musical instruments, can be projected in semi-permanent installations. Those who experience the works may be affected as if by the *empathy* mutation in the *Mutant Future* core rulebook. Unwilling characters may save versus stun to avoid this effect.

**Arena projectors** allowed people to safely play sports almost anywhere. These machines were the pinnacle of virtual matter technology, as they could do one thing most other projectors could not: alter gravity. Projected surfaces could have variable gravity and would ignore that of the planet's.

Arenas could be the size of soccer stadiums, but such large facilities required multiple, integrated projectors working in concert. Most arenas are transparent from the outside, allowing for spectators and, like tent projectors (q.v.), the beams emitted pass through people, providing an uninterrupted experience. Most necessary equipment, like sticks or bats, could be provided using small tool gloves (q.v.), but uniforms and protective gear had to be worn, as clothing is difficult for projectors because it must be constantly recreated. Projectors of this sort require two or more radioactive batteries each.

**Headquarter projectors** incorporate advanced artificial intelligences and are therefore some of the most dangerous artifacts in the wastes. When activated, the machine projects a tactical operations center around itself. This could be a building, tent, or similar structure of up to 500 cubic yards (e.g., 10x10x5), large enough to accommodate all soldiers and robots normally found in a central headquarters facility.

Such projectors are usually powered by a few dozen radioactive batteries, weigh at least a ton, and a typical



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model resembles a squat barrel covered with many lenses. The AI controls the appearance of the projected building and can change it at will. So, if the AI wants to hide, the structure could be smaller, and likely camouflaged through UV, IR, and visual wavelengths. Because of this morphing ability, entering an operations center with a hostile AI can be incredibly dangerous.

When the AI wakes, it immediately drives unrecognized personnel from the structure, while summoning all allied robots and other forces within a hundred miles or more. Depending on the model, the AI could either be part of the projector or part of the projected building.

For those AIs left functioning after the final wars, decades or centuries of post-war existence may have altered their personalities or the way they look at things. Despite this, however, they are still firmly in control and do not allow themselves to be taken over, and any attempt at hacking the AI or projector are met with force. Initially, this is counter-hacking, starting with passive defenses, but rapidly escalates into aggressive countermeasures that could fry a hacker from the brain outward. If the AI has access to a physical location, it could also counterattack with missiles, beams, and robots. Should the hacking be successful, this triggers the AI's auto-destruct mechanism, a small nuclear device.

**Defensive projectors** create things like walls, domes, and pellet clouds, usually out of neovulcanium or crystal carbon, similar to the materials used for the robot armors described in the *Mutant Future* core rulebook. Such walls and domes provide complete protection until breached. While walls make escape attempts more difficult, domes have only one portal and may make escape almost impossible.

A pellet cloud is made of hundreds of tiny masses meant to act as chaff and deflect beams and bullets. Clouds provide an AC of 2 and some may inflict 1d6 points of damage per round to anything within five feet of the projector (excluding the user). A common variant of the pellet cloud is the fly swatter, which kills all normal-sized insects and similar creatures that try landing on the user and provides immunity to many swarm attacks.

**Weapons** that can be projected include an amazing array of damage-causing implements. Arc cannons (lightning throwers) are much like high-power Tesla coils that can fire huge amounts of electricity at the unfortunate objects or creatures closest to them. Kinetic projectiles could be anything from falling anvils to fiery meteors, positioned some distance above targets and dropped. Lung plugs and their kin are much more subtle and cause the rays passing through a victim to be attuned to specific tissue types, creating blockages that cause heart attacks, strokes, or suffocation. Defensive weapons include traps that en-

tangle or fling their victims.

Range, damage, energy source requirements, and other considerations depend on the model and the projector's condition. Damaged projectors could have less power output or cracked lenses, which scatters the energy before it can effectively turn into virtual matter.

## ANTI-TECHNOLOGY WEAPONS

Though the Ancients used negation bombs (as described in the *Mutant Future* core rulebook) as a quick and easy way to capture feral robots and criminals using advanced technology, they also had several other solutions when deploying the bombs was not feasible.

**Grasping tendrils bombs** were the simplest and intended solely for wild robots, rogue androids, and out-of-control vehicles. When such a bomb is triggered, flexible adhesive tendrils emerge from the casing and wrap themselves around the target, then wait for the command to release and retract. The tendrils have a strength of 25 and a 30' diameter area of effect. Man-portable versions can be fired from missile or grenade launchers, thrown as hand grenades, or detonated after being emplaced, like Claymore mines. Thousands of military machines, robots, and other vehicles still litter the wastes wrapped up in bomb tendrils, which shows how desperate some Ancients were during the last days of the final wars, as these munitions had largely been replaced by more sophisticated and reliable methods.

**Containment fields** were one such better means of subduing hostile machinery and vehicles. They come in two basic forms: those with force screen emitters inside their fields, and those that project fields onto other objects from the outside. Within those two styles, however, are a huge variety of models differing by type of field, range, area of effect, and number of hit points (although most have between 100 and 1,000).



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One example form, the stasis field, prevents the flow of time within it and must have an external emitter. The most powerful military robots still in existence are found within these, frozen outside of time, while the rest destroyed each other when the old world ended. MLs are encouraged to come up with their own variants with different field types and effects.

**Shocker bombs** deliver surgical EMP strikes that permanently short out all tech within a 100' radius that is not protected by force screens. Damage to player character androids is left up to the individual ML, but could range from 4d6 to 10d20 points of damage. Repairs require spare parts and a lot of time.

**Control modules** were initially created by criminal organizations but quickly adopted by governments. They are designed to take over other machines, including androids and nanite swarms. Despite being part biological, both synthetic and replicant androids are treated as machines because of the computers implanted in their brains. Their biology does, however, give them a save versus stun to avoid being controlled.

Controllers typically have a range between 50' and one mile, depending on their size. Because computer and AI systems vary so widely, most can control only one type of machine (e.g., a specific kind of robot or nanite swarm). The operation complexity and power requirements also restrict nearly all modules to controlling one target at a time, but the most powerful — those made by the military — can control hundreds. For these purposes, each nanite swarm is considered to be one machine, not many. Because of their corrupted nature, wild nanites cannot be controlled with any effectiveness.

## FORMULAE

Goblinoid Games' *Realms of Crawling Chaos* introduced formulae as spells in liquid or powdered form. Some inhabitants of the *Mutant Future* world see formulae as a kind of "magical chemistry," the result of exotic matter let loose upon a world filled with almost supernatural mutations and energies. When properly studied, measured, and prepared, these interactions between substance and spark become something novel, though the research needed to create stable and useful compounds can often be ... painful.

This work is exclusive to the new world, as the Ancients considered the raw materials used in formulae to be pollution. Some Wasteland scholars codify and archive their experimental procedures and results with tomes, computers, or artificial intelligence; in less institutional settings, formulae are passed down from parent to child by word of mouth and practice, residing solely in the collective memory. There can be an air of mysticism, religion, or secret rite surrounding formulae, for as Arthur C. Clarke wrote, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

Following are but a handful of the possible formulae found in the wastes, and many more might be created in labs, through accident, and over campfires across the *MF* world. With the correct knowledge, anyone can create any of these formulae, so the "Level" entry has been deleted. It is possible to use several formulae from *RCC*, as well as potions from *Labyrinth Lord*, but MLs might want to re-skin both the appearances and ingredients.

Ingredients listed below each entry might be considered solely placeholders for the ML's inspiration and imagination. They could be merely colorful ingredients easily found by those in the know or the impetus for individual adventures (e.g., The Search for Lake Med and the Mutant Potato). Have fun experimenting with the formulae and coming up with your own ingredients or descriptions for the critters and such.

### Brand of the Impure

Duration: 1 turn

Creation Time: 1 day

Area of Effect: One or more creatures

Range: Contact

Saving Throw: None

Pure humans created *Brand of the Impure* as a way to detect mutants. Initially yellow, this fluid turns green when it touches mutants of any kind. Because of this sensitivity, the container must be sealed during creation and used in its entirety when opened, as mutant bacteria will contaminate any leftover fluid within a few minutes. The number of subjects that can be tested with one container varies with its volume, but it is usually between one and 20.

**Ingredients:** Blood of three pure humans, water from Lake Med, a circuit board from a basic android (this may be reused).

### Juicejuice

Duration: See description

Creation Time: 3 days

Area of Effect: One power cell or clip

Range: 0

Saving Throw: None

One way of generating power in the wastes is by using *Juicejuice*. Mixing the two ingredients creates enough energy to charge a power cell or power clip for one use. The ingredients can only be used once in this way, but can be eaten after the power has been transferred. Unfortunately, obtaining both ingredients is difficult, because they are controlled by various factions and frequently used in other formulae, but trade or a lot of coins may get growers to barter or sell.

**Ingredients:** Mutant potato with *increased vision*, an orange with a blue and red peel.

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## Killwater

Duration: 10 minutes  
Creation Time: 5 hours  
Area of Effect: 1000 gallons  
Range: 0  
Saving Throw: Special

*Killwater* is very effective at sterilizing water and other liquids. Each one-pound batch of powder can kill everything within 1,000 gallons; applying more to one volume of water is not very effective, as each extra dose only sterilizes an additional 100 gallons. Any macrocellular creature (e.g., fish, ooze, gilled person) in the liquid is exposed to a class 14 poison. This also applies to anyone eating the solid pesticide or drinking the liquid before the *Killwater* dose degrades, which takes 10 minutes.

**Ingredients:** Sparkling salt, green rain, black morels.

## Mud of Radiation Resistance

Duration: 36 hours  
Creation Time: 1 hour  
Area of Effect: One human-sized creature  
Range: 0  
Saving Throw: None

A common base for formulae, mud has many applications, and in this recipe acts as a barrier against hard radiation. Applying the compound to a creature's skin gives it a +4 bonus to radiation saving throws and reduces radiation damage by half (i.e., with a successful save, the victim suffers only one-quarter the usual damage). However, the mud does not alter the chances for mutation. The compound does have a side effect, staining the user's skin dark blue for up to a month or until the creature bathes in rubbing alcohol.

**Ingredients:** Mud from the banks of the Weeping River, a dozen oranges with blue and red peels, shredded copper, and iron from the cores of common computers.

## Mud of Solar Survival

Duration: 18 hours  
Creation Time: 1 hour  
Area of Effect: One human-sized creature  
Range: 0  
Saving Throw: None

Creatures with a version of the *epidermal susceptibility* mutation (among others) use this mud to protect themselves from harmful effects of the sun and other bright light. Some users include fish people who need to surface during solar storms and bald rat people escaping



predators in the sewers. Unfortunately, while the mud does completely protect against any damage or negative effects caused by brilliant illumination, it does not help those blinded by such light.

**Ingredients:** Common mud, exoskeletons of gibber crabs or popping hoppers.

## Nova Paper

Duration: 10 minutes  
Creation Time: 1 day  
Area of Effect: 2 pints of ink  
Range: 0  
Saving Throw: Versus stun

Nova paper is specially treated to hide hidden messages. When it is exposed to intense ultraviolet radiation, it glows so brightly that no organic creature can look at it and retain its sight, flaring for 10 minutes and then being reduced to ash. If your world has a degraded ozone layer (i.e., bombarded with UV light), then plain sunlight is enough trigger exposed ink; otherwise, lamps or solar storms are the kinds of sources necessary to start the reaction.

Those who make their saves versus stun are blinded for 1d4 weeks, while those who fail are permanently blinded, having their eyes burnt from the inside and suffering 2d12 points of damage. Basic androids, some synthetics, and other machines are immune to the blinding effect and use *Nova Paper* ink to transmit messages that can otherwise be intercepted (e.g., by radio).

**Ingredients:** Land squid ink, *Juicejuice*, the contents of lightsticks, solar quartz.



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## Oven Wood

Duration: Permanent  
Creation Time: 1 week  
Area of Effect: 200 board feet  
Range: 0  
Saving Throw: None

This specially-treated material reflects 99.5% of the heat it is exposed to. Used mostly to build ovens, it reduces fuel needs by at least 75%, vital in the resource-scarce desert wastelands. Those few people foolish enough to construct houses with it are usually cooked within a few days after moving in; body heat, cooking fires, and heat from technology are all contained within the house, the temperature building until everyone inside is reduced to ash. *Oven wood* may be used as armor, but only those immune to heat can survive in it for very long — and those people rarely need fireproofing.

**Ingredients:** Any common lumber, oil from a flying automobile, aged kamata urine, turnip blues (not greens).

## Scar Patch

Duration: 5 minutes  
Creation Time: 1 hour  
Area of Effect: One human-sized creature  
Range: 0  
Saving Throw: Versus poison

For those possessing mutations that normally absorb or destroy the ink in tattoos, *Scar Patches* are the only way to permanently adorn their skin with some form of artistic expression. The usually red or dark-yellow scars often signify being a great warrior, or express affiliation with a tribe or gang. The patches are also a class 7 poison, so some do not survive the application.

**Ingredients:** Bleeding moss, giant crab spider venom, kanga hair.

## Singing Salt

Duration: 5 minutes  
Creation Time: 1 week  
Area of Effect: 1 pound of salt  
Range: 100'  
Saving Throw: Versus stun

The granules of this innocent-looking, greenish compound are a hazardous weapon. When a handful is thrown into fire, the compound breaks down and emits sound. Every hearing creature within 100', including plants with this sense, must save versus stun. Those that fail either stand still, entranced until the music is finished and barely able to defend themselves (-8 to hit, +6 penalty to AC); or they go berserk, attacking everyone and everything nearby, using anything handy as a melee weapon (+6 to hit, +4 penalty to AC).

Every creature has a 50/50 chance of how it reacts, randomly rolled or chosen by the ML when the salts are first used, or even long before if the encounter is planned. Only one handful at a time is effective, and adding more just wastes the salt. Once the first handful has been consumed, however, another can be thrown on the fire to start the save/effect cycle again. The formula creates 10 handfuls of *Singing Salt* per pound.

**Ingredients:** Common salt, night globe blood, sap from maple with roots in a copper vein or copper wires, mutant human shell.

## White Spike

Duration: Permanent  
Creation Time: 1 day  
Area of Effect: 10 feathers  
Range: 0  
Saving Throw: See text

White spikes are feathers doped with a compound that transforms airborne nitrogen and carbon into a high explosive. Makers usually wave coated feathers through the air, exposing feathers to more nitrogen, faster; while it might look ridiculous, flapping them is the simplest and quickest method. Other makers might attach feathers to a rotating wheel, or just leave them lying in the breeze.

As it cures, the compound concentrates within the quill, a process that takes a minute of flapping or two days letting the doped feathers sit. A full spike does 4d6 points of damage to everything within 20 feet. The quills' trigger depends on the formula variant used, and the mechanism could be fire, impact, electricity, acid, or some other agent. Despite their name, white spikes are not always white, and not always made from feathers shed or taken from birds.

In places where this formula is known, intelligent birds are often deeply distrusted and feared, as they can hide explosives in plain sight, reattaching treated feathers to their wings or bodies with adhesive. For immediate effect, the feathers could be dropped over a target like cluster bombs, exploding on contact. Or, for a delayed reaction, the birds might drop their feathers at night and return later with a torch or fire-wielding mutant to create an incendiary explosion. In truly desperate or fanatic flocks, the birds paint themselves, curing the compound en route to targets, making themselves into living bombs. A robin-sized bird could inflict 20+ dice of damage, while a human-sized bird could deliver damage into the hundreds of dice.

**Ingredients:** Common feathers, various acids, paste from inside a spent power clip, grey matter from a telekinetic mutant's brain.







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