Open Anime

Open Core



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Open Anime

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OPEN ANIME

Table of Contents

The Basics....1
Dice....1
The GM....1
Players and Characters....1
Attributes & Skills....1
Attributes....1
Skills....2
Skill Checks....2
Attribute + Skill....2
Difficulty Levels and Target Numbers....2
Making the Roll....2
Attribute Checks....2
Damage....2
What's Anime?....3
"Anime" In "Open Anime"....4
Anime Roleplaying....4
Have a Fun Game....4
Anime Is In Your Mind....4
Own Your Game World....4
Anime Worlds....5
Adaptations....5
Tone....5
Genre....5
Cyberpunk....5
Fighting....5
Gun Action....6
Horror....6
Magical Girls....7
Mecha....7
Modern Powers....8
Pet Monsters....8
Samurai....8
Space Opera....9
Science Fiction....9
Sword and Sorcery....10
Premise....10
Length....10
Format....10
Themes....11
Destiny....11
Family....11
Friendship....11
Honor vs. Results....11
Love....11
Gender....12
Humanity....12
Sacrifice....12
The Value of Life....12
The Fate of Mankind....12
Step 1: Character Concept and Game Discussion....13
Beyond The Numbers: Descriptors....14
Beyond The Numbers: Nature....14
The Numbers: Character Points....14
Maximum Attribute/Skill Scores....15
Campaign Power Level....15
Attribute Values....16
Buying Skills....16
Unspent Character Points....16
Step 2: Attributes....17
Buying Attributes....17
Body Group....17
Basic STR Table....17
Mind Group....18
Presence (PRE)....18
Intellect (INT)....18
Will (WIL)....18
Attribute Scores....18
Soul Attribute Group (Optional)....19
Passion (PSN)....19
Focus (FCS)....19
Heart (HRT)....19
Using Soul Attributes....19
Derived Attributes....20
Defensive Target Number (DEF)....20
Initiative (INI)....20
Toughness (TGH)....21
Life (LIF)....21
Energy Points (EP)....22
Move (MOV)....22
Step 3: Skills....22
Buying Skills....22
Skill Levels Table....23
Skill Groups....24
Skill Group Scores....24
Skill Levels....24
Specialties....25
Types....25

OPEN ANIME

Using Skills 25
When to Roll 25
Target Numbers (Roll needed, or more) ... 26
Difficulty Levels and Target Numbers 26
Target Numbers in Combat 27
Which Attribute to Use? 28
Governing Attribute 28
Skill Group 29
Both Body and Mind 33
Making the Roll 33
Effect Numbers 34
Contested Skill Checks 34
Skill Roll Modifiers 34
Complementary Skills 34
Off-handed 35
Time 35
Repeated Attempts 36
Tools & Equipment 36
Which Skills to Use? 37
Generic Skill List 37
Skill Descriptions 37
Arts & Crafts Skill Group 37
Art (Type) 37
Cooking (Spec) 37
Craft (Type) 37
Jeweler 39
Photography 39
Smith (Spec) 39
Athletics Skill Group 39
Acrobatics 39
Climbing 40
Contortionist 40
Jump 40
Para (Spec) 41
Sport (Type) 41
Swimming 42
Throwing (Spec) 42
Unarmed Combat (Type) 42
Zero-G 42
Communication Skill Group 42
Bluff 42
Instruction 44
Negotiation (Spec) 44
Orate (Spec) 45
Persuasion (Spec) 45
Writing (Spec) 46
Covert Skill Group 46
Disguise 46
Forgery (Spec) 46
Gambling 46
Lockpicking 46
Shadowing 46
Sleight of Hand 47
Stealth 47
Education Skill Group 47
Area Knowledge (Type) 47
Hobby (Spec) 48
Knowledge (Type) 48
Language (Type) 49
Research (Spec) 50
Enterprise Skill Group 50
Accounting 50
Appraisal (Spec) 50
Bureaucracy 50
Business (Spec) 50
Economics (Spec) 51
Profession (Type) 51
Trading 51
Focus Skill Group 51
Awareness (Spec) 51
Concentration 52
Intuition 52
Lip Reading 52
Power Usage (Types) 52
Sense Motive 53
Heavy Weapons Skill Group 53
Artillery (Spec) 53
Machine Guns (Spec) 53
Missile Launchers (Spec) 53
Portable Launchers (Type) 54
Vehicle Weapons (Type) 54
Investigation Skill Group 54
Cryptography 54
Deduction 54
Forensics 55
Gather Information 55
Intel Analysis 56
Interrogation 56
Surveillance (Spec) 56
Medical Skill Group 56
Dentistry 56
First Aid (Type) 57

OPEN ANIME

Physician (Spec) 57
Pharmacology 57
Surgery (Spec) 57
Melee Weapon Skill Group 57
Axes (Spec) 58
Bayonets 58
Flexible Weapons (Spec) 58
Knives 58
Maces/Clubs (Spec) 58
Polearms (Spec) 58
Swords (Spec) 58
Military Science Skill Group 58
Combat Engineering (Spec) 58
Demolitions (Spec) 58
Strategy (Spec) 60
Tactics (Spec) 60
Nature/Outdoor Skill Group 60
Animal Handling (Spec) 60
Fish and Game (Spec) 63
Navigation (Spec) 63
Riding (Type) 63
Survival (Spec) 64
Teamster (Type) 64
Tracking 64
Performance Skill Group 64
Acting 64
Dancing (Spec) 64
Instrument (Type) 65
Juggling 65
Mimicry 65
Singing 65
Ventriloquist 65
Sciences Skill Group 65
Astronomy 66
Biology (Spec) 66
Chemistry (Spec) 66
Chemistry, Analytical 66
Geology 66
Mathematics 66
Physics (Type) 66
Simple Missile Weapon Skill Group 67
Boomerangs 67
Bows (Spec) 67
Crossbows (Spec) 67
Sling Weapons (Spec) 67
Slingshots 67
Small Arms Skill Group 67
Black Powder Weapons (Spec) 67
Gunplay 67
Gunsmith (Type) 68
Pistols 69
Rifles 69
Shotguns 69
Social Skill Group 69
Conversation 70
Intrigue 70
Philosophy 70
Sense Motive 70
Society (Type) 70
Style 71
Symbols (Type) 71
Social Sciences Skill Group 71
Anthropology (Spec) 72
Archaeology (Spec) 72
Geography (Spec) 72
History (Spec) 72
Politics 72
Psychology (Spec) 72
Religion (Type) 73
Technical Skills 73
Astrogation 73
Benchthumping 73
Computers (Spec) 74
Electrician 74
Electronics (Spec) 74
Engineering (Type) 74
Mechanic (Spec) 74
Repair 74
Technological Knowledge 75
Operate Electronics (Spec) 75
Transportation Skill Group 75
Drive (Spec) 76
Piloting (Spec) 76
Sailing (Spec) 76
Starships (Spec) 76
Watercraft (Spec) 76
Step 4: Abilities 77
Associated Skills 77
Effect-Based vs. Power-Based 77
Effects in Open Anime 77
Handling Effects in Campaigns 78
Fatigue and Abilities 78

OPEN ANIME

Ability Checks....78
Ability List....78
Tapping Disabilities....148
Disabilities List....149
Anime Templates....155
Android Girl....155
Notes....155
Catgirl....156
Notes....156
Delinquent....156
Notes....157
Magical Girl....157
Notes....157
Martial Artist....158
Notes....158
Mecha Jock....159
Notes....159
Miko....160
Notes....160
Monster Trainer....160
Notes....160
Ninja (Mystical)....161
Notes....162
Ninja (Kunoichi)....162
Notes....163
Samurai....164
Notes....164
Sorcerer/Sorceress....164
Notes....165
Space Bounty Hunter....165
Notes....166
General Character Advice....166
About the Campaign....166
Power Level....167
Love Your Character....167
Those Last Few Points....167
"Equal" Characters....167
Gender Bending....167
Young Characters....168
Quirks....168
Easily Distracted....168
Nemesis....169
Psychological Impairment....170
Other Disabilities....170
Powers....171
Androids and Cyborgs....171
Creating Android/Cyborg Capabilities....171
Esper Powers....172
Creating Esper Powers....172
Example Esper Powers....172
Magical Abilities....173
Creating Magical Abilities....173
Martial Arts and Ki Powers....174
Creating Martial Arts Powers....174
Example Powers....174
Sorcery....175
Chinese/Japanese Sorcery....175
High Fantasy Sorcery....175
Religious Powers....175
Creating Sorcery Powers....176
Talents....177
Creating Talents....177
Other Powers....178
Avatar Power....178
Elemental Powers....178
Pet Monsters....179
Untapped Potential....179
The Role of Powers....179
Everyday....179
Hated/Feared....180
Necessary Evil....180
Prohibited....180
Regulated....180
Respected....180
Secret....181
Gear and Technology....181
Equipment as Abilities....181
Taking Actions....182
What Can I Do?....182
What Is An Action?....182
Limitations on Taking Actions....182
Declaring Actions....182
Available Actions....183
Defensive Actions....183
Block Melee Attack....183
Dodge....184
Roll With the Blow....184
Soft Fall from Mount....184
Movement Actions....184
Crawl....184
Climb....184
Dive....185

OPEN ANIME

Roll 185
Run 185
Sprint 185
Walk 185
Offensive Actions 185
Aim 185
Bind Weapon 186
Disarm 186
Drag 186
Drop 186
Fire Multiple Shots 186
Grab 187
Restrain 187
Shooting Gun Out of Enemy's Hand 187
Take-away 188
Throw 188
Unarmed Strike 188
Weapon Strike 189
Special Actions 189
Border Shift 189
Fast Draw 189
Free Holster 189
Load Weapon 189
Rifle Spin 189
Road Agent Spin 189
Trick Shot 189
Wait 190
Riding Actions 190
Advanced Riding 190
Control Mount in Battle 190
Cover Riding 190
Fast Mount or Dismount 190
Fight with trained horse 191
Guide with Knees 191
Leap 191
Mount/Dismount 191
Stay in Saddle 191
Combat 192
Combat Turns 192
Initiative 192
Modifying Target Numbers 192
DEF Modifiers 192
Combat Modifiers 192
Action Modifiers 194
Autofire 194
Burst 195
Stream 195
Spray 196
Explosions 196
Targeting Explosive Attacks 196
Direction Missed Attack Lands 197
Average Blast Radius 197
Damage 198
Types of Damage 198
Blunt 198
Penetrating 198
Special 198
Forms of Damage 198
Stunning Damage 198
Lethal Damage 198
Special Damage 199
Wounds and Effects of Damage 199
Superficial Wounds 199
Light Wounds 199
Serious Wounds 199
Critical Wounds 200
Fatal Wounds 200
Wound Effects Table 200
Recording Damage 200
Poison and Drugs 200
Adventures 253
Letting Go 253
The Value of Denial 253
Creating Drama 253
The *Other* Kind of Drama 255
Villains 255
Dangerous Friend 256
Desperate Rival 256
Inhuman Menace 256
Misguided Visionary 256
Evil Visionary 256
Power-Hungry Fiend 256
Destroyer 256
Reluctant Foe 256
Bringer of Vengeance 256
The Power Behind The Power 256
Roleplaying the Villains 256
Building Them Up 256
Fiendish Plans (Villainous Clichés) 257
Supporting Characters 257
Anime Combat 258
Ending Combat 258

OPEN ANIME

Symbolism and Sight Gags 259
The Toy Box 260
Acting 260
Music 260
Props and Visual Aids 261
Yum-Yums 261
Campaign Seeds 261
Ani-Rangers 261
Centurion 262
Death Walks 263
Kuchiyose Masters 263
Magical Angels 264
Magic Shop 265
Matsuri 265
Rune Gear 265
Variable Galaxy Task Force Lovely Delta 266
Wonderland Outlaws 267
Coven 268
Tone and Themes 268
Setting 268
Witches and Witchcraft 269
The Hidden World 270
Player Characters 270
Non-Player Characters 274
Hidden World Creatures 275
Episode Ideas 275
Tokyo Peacekeepers 277
Tokyo 277
Technology 278
Building Materials 278
Computers 278
Cybernetics 279
Androids 279
Transportation 279
Weapons 280
Armor 281
Player Characters 281
Adventure Seeds 286
UFO Fist 287
Soundtrack 287
Street Fighters 287
Player Characters 289
Adventure Seeds 298
LEGAL INFORMATION 299
Open Content 299
Product identity 299

Introducion

Open Anime is a universal RPG intended to let you run games inspired by your favorite anime. For whatever reason, far too many people attach this ridiculously high standard of authenticity to anime, as though it's somehow a special medium that we can't just draw inspiration from, however much it might inspire us. There are those who are quick to proclaim that *Avatar: The Last Airbender* isn't anime, and somehow manage to miss the fact that it's a good show that appeals to most anime fans. The philosophy behind *Open Anime* is that anime is not "special" in the sense that the things that make it awesome are not beyond our ability to understand and play with. There's nothing magical in these pages. What makes us feel justified in putting the word "anime" in the title is that we've made every effort to provide you with all the tools and advice you'll need to use elements from most any typical anime in your campaign.

Aside from this book, you'll need some pencils and paper, and some run of the mill six-sided dice, plus some friends to play with.

THE BASICS

In this section we present a quick overview of the most basic rules of the game.

Dice

The game rules use three six-sided dice. It's traditional to abbreviate "three six-sided dice" by writing "3d6." In this custom, the first number is the number of dice being used (in this case 3) and the second number represents the type of dice being used (specifically, number of sides they possess), so "d6" means "six-sided dice."

Six-sided dice are the common, square-shaped dice that can be found in many board games. They can also be purchased in many general department stores, but chances are you have at least three of these dice somewhere in your house, in other games.

There are options to use other numbers and kinds of dice, which are discussed later and in other optional rules. For now all you need to play the game are 3d6—three six-sided dice.

The GM

One member of the group assumes the role of moderator and controls the Non-Player Characters ("NPCs" for short). This player is known as the Game Master, or GM.

In situations when the rules are unclear or need to be applied in a new or unique way, the GM uses his or her best judgment. The GM also constructs the basics of the game. Basics include the setting, theme, NPCs and some goals for the players' group, normally called a Party, but also referred to as a Team, Troupe, Group, or Cabal. We'll talk more about what makes a good Game Master later in this book.

Players and Characters

Each player has a fictional character, called a Player Character (or "PC"), a made-up person that the player will use during the game. The player chooses what his character does and says during the game.

Players are in no way assumed to actually *be* their characters. Players are real people. Characters are pretend. Think of the player as an actor, and the PC as a role that the actor is playing in a movie or play, and you'll begin to get the idea.

Attributes & Skills

Each character has attributes and skills that represent the character's personal ability or aptitude in various areas or for performing certain tasks.

Each attribute and skill has a numerical score. This score tells you how strong or proficient the character is in that area. Most characters will have scores from 1 to 10, which represents the normal human range of ability.

Attributes

There are six attributes, which are arranged in two groups: Body and Mind.

OPEN ANIME

Each group contains a Power Attribute, an Aptitude Attribute and a Resistance Attribute.

New attribute groups can be added, providing more variety and additional attributes for characters, but the core rules use only these two.

Skills

Each character also has skills, which represent the character's general ability or aptitude in various tasks. There are skills for arts and crafts, using weapons, and even diplomacy. Skills reflect how good your character is at what he knows.

Skills are also arranged into groups. Each group contains from 5 to 8 related skills.

Each skill is associated with a specific Attribute Group. Persuasion, for example, is associated with the Mind Group, whereas the Swords skill is associated with the Body Group.

When a character attempts a simple task, such as walking or opening an unlocked door, the player doesn't need to roll dice. When a character attempts an action that has a chance of failure, however, such as attacking an opponent or maneuvering a car through an obstacle course, the player must make a skill roll.

Skill Checks

Skill rolls are used to determine if a character is successful at some attempted action or task.

Players decide if they want their character to perform an action. An action can be as simple as walking through a door, which would not require a skill roll. Sometimes there is a level of skill involved in performing the action, however, so the player may need to make a skill roll for his character. The GM decides whether or not an action requires a skill roll.

Attribute + Skill

If the GM determines that a player's chosen action requires a skill roll, the GM determines which Skill and which Attribute (from the Attribute Group associated with the skill) apply to the task.

If a character attempts to shoot an opponent with a revolver, the player must make a Pistols skill roll. Because the Pistols skill is associated with the Body Group, the GM must choose Strength, Reflexes, or Health as the attribute that the player uses with the Pistols skill. The logical choice is Reflexes, the Aptitude Attribute for the Body Group.

Difficulty Levels and Target Numbers

The GM then determines the Difficulty Level (or "DL") of the action being attempted. Each Difficulty Level has an associated Target Number (abbreviated as "TN"; see the *Difficulty and Target Number Chart*). The more difficult the action being attempted is, the greater the Difficulty Level and the higher the Target Number.

The Target Number is the number that the player must meet or beat when making a dice roll in order for the task to be successful. A Target Number of 18 would be shown as "(TN 18)."

Making the Roll

To make a skill roll, a player rolls 3d6 and adds his character's attribute and skill scores to the number rolled on the dice. If this new total is equal to or more than the Target Number, the attempted action is successful. If the total is lower than the Target Number, the attempt fails.

Attribute Checks

Attribute rolls are made much the same as skill rolls, with the GM determining a Difficulty Level and assigning a Target Number. The difference is that instead of adding an attribute score to a skill score, the player simply rolls against the character's attribute score without any modifiers from skills.

John's character has a Reflexes score of 8. The GM tells John to make an Difficult attribute roll (TN 21) using his character's Reflexes. He then rolls 3d6, and gets 13. Because 13 plus 8 equals 21, John's character's attribute roll is successful.

Damage

If a character suffers injury, such as from being hit by a weapon or falling into a pit, the injury is represented by *damage points*. Damage points are subtracted from the character's Life Points. When a character's Life Points are reduced to 0, the character is dying.

ELECTRONIC EDITION

Attributes are scores that reflect the character's basic physical and mental abilities. In short, the core attributes define the character's "body and mind."

WHAT'S ANIME?

Anime is one of the many loanwords in the Japanese language, in this case derived from the French word for animation. While in Japan (and France) the word can be used to refer to any animation from any country, fans in the U.S. and elsewhere typically use it to refer specifically to Japanese animation.

Anime is huge. It's become a worldwide phenomenon, to the point that the fandom in the U.S. and elsewhere is threatening to exceed that of Japan. While the video store at the mall used to possibly have a couple tapes of *Robotech* and *Warriors of the Wind* (you know, the really butchered dub of *Nausicaa*) in the back, the Anime section now takes up an entire wall, and sells well.

What makes it appealing is kind of hard to pin down. American commentators often cite anime's penchant for deeper, more mature storylines and more developed characters than the cartoons they grew up with, and some people just like the big googly eyes. In Japan anime is a big business, one that has largely eclipsed domestic live-action at the box office, whether with the latest Miyazaki film or this year's *Pokémon* movie. On the other hand, to a large extent it's intended to be pop culture entertainment; while something that can rightly be called "art" comes along and even becomes successful now and then, for the most part the purpose of anime is simply to entertain.

Anime is produced by countless different animation studios, and broadcast on regular TV, cable, satellite, Pay-Per-View, and even via the internet, and also sold direct-to-video. It tends to be targeted to children and teenagers, with some titles reaching for the young adult crowd and a very few finding success in other demographics. Some take after manga and go after one gender or the other, but it's common for anime to try to steer more of a middle course to maximize the audience.

American fans can enjoy more anime than ever before. At this point the majority of the anime that is imported shows up in direct-to-video releases, but anime is showing up on American television more and more every day and the 24-hour anime cable channel that always sounded like a stupid pipe dream is a reality. Where it once seemed like Japan was going to take over the world by selling Japanese cars and electronics, Japanese entertainment in the form of anime and manga is becoming a major export. Some journalists have taken to calling this Japan's "gross national cool."

While most anime are still produced with little or no regard to the growing overseas audiences, things are slowly changing. Foreign companies are becoming involved in the production of anime. Where it will go from here is anyone's guess, but in the midst of the cur-



rent meteoric worldwide rise it's a very exciting time to be an anime fan.

"Anime" In "Open Anime"

For the purposes of this book we're going by a certain definition of the word "anime," in order to give it the proper scope. There are plenty of anime that, however good they might be, wouldn't be of interest for a typical RPG campaign, and there's plenty of stuff in the form of manga and other media that would. For that reason, the word "anime" in the title "Open Anime" really means "anime, manga, and other cool stuff in the same vein that could make for cool ideas for roleplaying." So although they're not given they same emphasis, American manga-style comics, Korean manhwa (comics), and Japanese video games (amongst other things) are all fair game. And yet you won't find much in here aimed at the likes of *Grave of the Fireflies*; even though it's a masterpiece, it's definitely not the kind of thing most people think of when they want to run an "anime-style" RPG campaign.

Conversely, even the Japanese creators don't limit themselves to anime and manga for inspiration. In fact, some have a remarkable ability to take something far-flung and unlikely and wrap it nicely in whatever genre of anime or manga they're working with. When looking for inspiration, use what you know and what you like, and don't limit yourself to fictional materials, much less "authentic" ones.

Anime Roleplaying

This book puts a lot of stress on "anime" roleplaying. It's in the title, after all. It's a bit difficult to talk about the subject at all without making some broad generalizations, but since the alternative is to not say anything we're prepared to take the risk. A lot of the advice you'll find between these two covers could be applied to pretty much any campaign, anime or otherwise; we don't consider this to be a bad thing. On the other hand it goes without saying that everything should be taken with a grain of salt.

Below are three fundamental things to keep in mind when trying to add more anime into a campaign. The first one is the most important.

Have a Fun Game

First and foremost, the best way to have a good anime-style RPG campaign is to have a good RPG campaign in general. This "genre emulation" stuff is great and all, but if you ever have to choose between making the game more fun and making it more "anime-like," the fun part wins every time.

Anime Is In Your Mind

When it comes to setting the tone of the game, no amount of campaign advice or tweaked rules can substitute for having a group that's all on the same page. The best way to prepare is to just watch lots of anime. Although many, many titles are listed in this book it'd be futile for us to try to write a list of recommendations since new titles are getting released on a weekly basis. Watch as much as you want, and don't sweat the rest. No one's going to penalize you for a lack of "authenticity" (whatever that is). We swear.

Conversely, to a large extent it's up to the participants to provide that feel. Game rules, whether simplistic or detailed, realistic or cinematic, are ultimately just a basic framework around which to hang a group story. If everyone narrates a good anime story, the rest will follow.

Own Your Game World

Sometimes RPGs have a way of taking place is a really big world where the player characters are small to medium heroes who get to save one town now and then, but people changing the world is something that takes place in new sourcebooks. Anime characters on the other hand frequently find themselves the most important characters in the world. If this sounds absurd, keep in mind that most important isn't the same thing as being the most powerful, and "world" shouldn't be taken to mean "planet." The "world" of the game could range in size anywhere from one neighborhood to multiple galaxies or universes, and isn't necessarily the same size as the setting. Giving the players the power to change the world draws them into it.

ANIME WORLDS

Adaptations

There's nothing wrong with basing your campaign directly off of a favorite anime series. Seriously. The purpose of the game is to have fun, and if that's what you find fun then go for it. You're not obligated to produce art; whether or not someone observing your game would describe it as an RPG equivalent of bad fanfiction is immaterial.

That said, there are a couple of caveats to keep in mind. First, make sure everyone who's playing is familiar with and likes the series. This is outright vital. If not everyone knows the series, lend them the DVDs or manga or whatever it takes, and if not everyone cares for the show in question, consider something else. Second, be careful and thorough about writing up stats for the characters. It's not unusual for someone to say, "But Kyosuke should be able to do that!" when a skill the character in the anime should theoretically have turns up missing on the character sheet.

Finally, an anime's setting and characters don't have to be used as-is. Fanfic writers love to come up with **crossovers** (where characters from two or more different series meet), **fusions** (where elements from two or more series are combined into one setting), and alternate-reality versions of their favorite anime series.

Tone

Tone can be a useful consideration for any RPG campaign, but anime in particular has such a wide range of possible tones that it can potentially be vital. An average anime has a serious storyline going, but isn't afraid to dip into comedy now and then, but there are also series that are deadly serious, and those that consist mostly of abject silliness. Characters that are ideal for one extreme are likely to be toxic to the tone of the other.

Genre

It's become a tired cliché on the internet that "anime is a medium, not a genre," but it's still true. Anime covers a vast range of different genres; virtually any setting or topic can be made into an anime. One of the hottest recent series, Hikaru no Go, was about a boy learning to play go (the board game). This section is an overview of some of the major genres of anime, or at least the major ones that make for good RPG campaigns.

Cyberpunk

Examples: AD Police, Akira, Armitage III, Battle Angel Alita, Bubblegum Crisis, Burst Angel, Dominion Tank Police, Genocyber, Ghost In The Shell, Serial Experiments Lain

The cyberpunk genre proper originated from the works of William Gibson such as Neuromancer and Burning Chrome, and in its own way anime has picked up on the notion of a dark near-future world of high technology and low morals. "Dark" anime, at least in terms of visual style, is kind of out of style at the moment, so the current generation of anime cyberpunk titles – such as *Burst Angel* and *Ghost In The Shell: Stand Alone Complex* – tend to emphasize the "cyber" over the "punk," going in for a sleek, crisp look.

There are relatively few anime series that concern themselves too much with cyberspace, instead taking the basic cyberpunk milieu and using it as a frame for high-tech action. From an RPG standpoint this is handy in that hacking tends to be something that one specialist player character does, requiring the GM to take time away from the entire group to handle that character jacking in.

Mecha are common in cyberpunk anime, but they tend to be relatively small compared to the 50-foot behemoths seen in full-on mecha series. They can be large humanoid robots or compact power armor or anything in between, but quadrupedal walking tanks are probably the most common – and the most realistic.

Fighting

Examples: Air Master, Bleach, Dragonball, Fatal Fury, Fist of the North Star, Flame of Recca, Fullmetal Alchemist, Hajime no Ippo, Ikkitousen, JoJo's Bizarre Adventure, Jubei-chan, Metal Fighter Miku, Naruto, Ranma ½, Rurouni Kenshin

Anime has a long tradition of titles that concentrate primarily on fighting, ranging from a relatively realistic series about boxing like *Hajime no Ippo*, all the way to the infamous intergalactic craziness of *Dragonball Z*. What defines a "fighting anime" isn't necessarily martial arts so much as the emphasis on intense small-scale battles, especially one-on-one matches. A good battle tests a combatant's mind and spirit every bit as much as it does his or her body. Whether they become partly an argument, a puzzle, or simply a battle of wills, a fight needs to be more than an attempt to whittle down the opponent's life points.

Special powers are extremely common, and even fighting characters without "powers" per se will often have superhuman abilities; see p. 162 for some details on Abilities to represent the capabilities of martial artists. Fighting also goes well with the "modern powers" genre described below.

Fighting anime routinely feature tournaments, giving the heroes an opportunity to face numerous opponents in a relatively short amount of time. Even in the context of an anime, much less that of a roleplaying game, it can be difficult to keep a tournament sufficiently engaging. Battles need to be kept exciting, and there's immense room for funny business going on behind the scenes, giving the players something to do beside fight.

Gun Action

Examples: Cowboy Bebop, Gunslinger Girl, Gunsmith Cats, Hellsing, Kurohime, Noir, Riding Bean, Trigun

Japan is unusual among industrialized nations in that it's one of those few that has succeeded in making it virtually impossible for a private citizen to own firearms, but that doesn't deter some hobbyists from acquiring a fascination with guns to rival their American counterparts. Some of these hobbyists become "military otaku," with a penchant for combat fatigues and replica guns, but a few become manga artists. So while anime and manga have their share of action movie style titles with lots of gunplay going on, there is often an obsessive amount of detail going into the firearms and other toys.

As examples above suggest, it's become common for anime to mix gun action with other genres, sending space cowboys, prepubescent cyborgs, vampires, and other unlikely characters into battle with Desert Eagles, P90s, and other modern goodies in hand to vanquish their foes. Firearms can even persist into futuristic settings; in real life there's still no sign of "slugthrowers" being replaced by laser guns. Conversely, guns can be made magical, or contain secret super-technology, or whatever else the imagination can conjure.

Horror

Examples: 3x3 Eyes, Asagiri no Miko, Blood: The Last Vampire, Boogiepop Phantom, Hellsing, Phantom Quest Corp, Silent Möbius, Witch Hunter Robin, Vampire Princess Miyu



"Horror" in anime is more often than not a genre about heroes with some kind of potent mystical powers that let them do battle with supernatural monstrosities. There are a few exceptions (such as in Rumiko Takahashi's Rumic World series), where the protagonists are more average people trying to survive through terror, but this approach, more in line with the Western notion of horror, is more common in manga and live-action movies in Japan.

Thus the typical horror anime is more like a darker variant of the Modern Powers genre (see below). Whether they take the form of magic, esper abilities, or something more exotic, special powers are more likely to have dangerous side-effects, especially for those who misuse them. The heroes don't have to be tragic though; they could be using "good" magic of some kind, or be heroes by virtue of some kind of special immunity, such as a heroic vampire who has somehow managed to overcome his kind's thirst for blood.

Magical Girls

Examples: Cardcaptor Sakura, Nurse Witch Komugi-chan, Pretear, Pretty Cure, Pretty Sammy, Sailor Moon, Saint Tail, Tokyo Mew Mew, Wedding Peach

The Mahou Shoujo (Magical Girl) genre is largely unique to anime, and although there are male-oriented titles that draw on this genre, it's mainly aimed at girls. The heroines of magical girl anime and manga are young girls (usually elementary or middle school age) who wield some kind of magical powers.

Fans are likely to think of Sailor Moon as the quintessential magical girl anime, but this isn't necessarily accurate. Magical girl anime tends to be more about a single heroine who uses her magical powers to help people and deal with everyday problems; those who had monsters to fight were the exception to the rule. Sailor Moon combined magical girls with sentai ("fighting team"), a genre of Japanese live-action TV seen in the US in the form of Power Rangers. However Sailor Moon was such a breakaway hit that it influenced many of the magical girl titles that followed, and made "love fighters" a major part of the genre.

Regardless, magical girl series have certain common themes. They're coming of age stories, and present the audience with a view of the value of friendship, femininity, and love, hopefully without being too blatant or forced.

Mecha

Examples: The Big O, Dual! Parallel Trouble Adventure, Escaflowne, Evangelion, Full Metal Panic!, Gasaraki, Gunbuster, Gundam, Macross, RahXephon

It's a little bit of a misnomer to call mecha a genre per se; giant robots are themselves a prop that can be dropped into many different settings. The most common would be space opera (see below), and many science fiction anime include a mecha or two even if they're not the main focus of the series. They can also figure into modern-day or near-future military stories, amount to a super-power for an intrepid modern-day hero, or simply be thrown in as a parody of all things anime. Virtually any genre can have giant robots if you really want them, though they'll fit better with some than others.

"Mecha" is, strictly speaking, a technical term for mechanical objects represented in anime; its usage to denote large, piloted, humanoid war machines is mostly an appropriation by English-speakers. "Giant robot" is the closest thing to a general term used in Japanese. Mecha are referred to by a different name in nearly every series, ranging from quasi-military terminology to whimsical personal names.

The most important thing about a mecha is that it's not a big walking tank or otherwise a mere machine, but rather an extension of the pilot. This is often the biggest distinguishing factor between fictional giant robots created in Japan and the West. Mecha are generally going to lack a certain amount of realism simply because at larger scales a humanoid form that wouldn't crush its own feet isn't really possible. But aside from that, mecha can be injected with quite a bit of realism if desired – or it can go completely out the window in favor of heroic super robots. Some robots can transform into different configurations, whether a carefully conceived transition from robot to jet fighter, or a flashy magical transformation from robo-knight to super robo-knight. A few even combine, allowing a number of smaller robots or vehicles to form one big one.

Power armor is a type of mecha that's more of a suit than a vehicle, typically with mechanisms that enhance the wearer's strength and speed. Power armors can range from big and clunky to sleep and lightning-

fast, though they usually don't appear in the same series as full-size mecha, but there are exceptions.

Modern Powers

Examples: Aquarian Age, Blue Seed, Gatekeepers, JoJo's Bizarre Adventure, Maburaho, Magic User's Club, Mahou Tsukai ni Taisetsu na Koto, Mai-HiME, Read Or Die, S-Cry-Ed, Tokyo Underground

"Modern powers" is what we'll call a genre of anime that involves characters gaining special powers and trying to cope with them and live normal lives in spite of being confronted with whatever dangers those powers bring to them. In effect, it's superheroes without the spandex or secret identities – though not a few heroes in this genre find it preferable to keep their powers secret from the world at large. The antagonists these heroes face might be some kind of monsters only they can deal with, fellow power-users, or perhaps a shadowy organization that's putting one or both of those to use for some nefarious purpose. Or the special powers could just be another part of their everyday lives.

Modern powers settings usually involve one specific kind of special power, which is expressed in different ways by different characters. If the campaign concerns characters with elemental powers for example, each character would have control over a specific element, and each would further develop his or her own ways of using that power to do different things. Just because two characters use water-elemental powers doesn't mean their abilities will be all that similar; one might rely on big blasts of water to attack, another might use piercing attacks with tiny droplets, and a third might not attack at all, but use water to defend or heal. The GM should define the nature of the power and in general terms what kinds of Abilities can be used to represent it. Magic and Sorcery are obvious possibilities, but nearly anything is possible.

Pet Monsters

Examples: Beyblade, Digimon, Dragon Drive, Medabots, Monster Rancher, Pokémon

Pokémon's success, in Japan, the U.S., and elsewhere, is undeniable. The video game spawned a long-running anime, a manga, a card game, and an endless array of merchandise. It also led to others to try their hand at what would become a genre of its own, featuring youngsters training and caring for exotic creatures (or in some cases machines) that would be pitted against each other in combat. The monsters are usually smart but not sentient, and have not only special powers, but the ability to grow in strength and eventually "evolve" into a more powerful form with proper care.

We won't even get into the possible implications of this being a genre that involves cute anime critters in cockfights.

Anyway, pet monster anime is a close relative of sports manga. Training monsters and having them fight is treated as a sport of sorts, and much like a typical sports manga (such as *Hikaru no Go* or *Prince of Tennis*) pet monster anime often revolve around a young boy starting out as a novice and becoming a master, growing and learning along the way.

Samurai

Examples: Dagger of Kamui, Peacemaker Kurogane, Rurouni Kenshin, Samurai Champloo, Samurai Deeper Kyo, Samurai Shodown

Japan's feudal era can be compared to the Wild West, insofar as both have been highly romanticized in films and other media to the point where the fictional image of the setting has taken on a life of its own. Live-action samurai titles range from Akira Kurosawa's masterpieces to feudal soap operas to gory sword action, and anime has put its own unique spin on Japan's fun-house mirror image of its history.

Some samurai anime play up deadly sword fighting, similar to live-action movies like *Zatoichi: The Blind Swordsman*, presenting fights with razor-sharp swords, where human lives are cut down like so many blades of grass. The heroes of this kind of story tend towards extremes of either being mostly non-combat characters, or being so skilled that most opponents simply don't have a chance against them. Others opt for more drawn-out fights, whether with ki powers becoming involved, or simply through over-the-top superhuman characters, allowing for battles to be more along the lines of Fighting anime (see above).

The feudal Japan of samurai anime and movies is often about as indeterminate as "Medieval Times" or "The Old West" is in the movies we have here. That is, they're set not in what we believe was the reality of history, but rather a mythical setting that grew out of that history. That said, "samurai" as a genre has lots of room

for the different eras of Japanese history. The Sengoku (Warring States) period is an obvious choice since it has many opportunities for conflict, but even the stable times of the Tokugawa Shogunate have room for swinging swords around. As Rurouni Kenshin aptly demonstrates, the Meiji Era, which brought about the end of the feudal system and unprecedented contact with the West, can make for a fascinating setting – while substantially reducing the need to deal with the complexities of feudal society. It's up to you to decide how much you want to invest into using historical details in creating your own campaign setting.

Science Fiction

One thing that's sometimes overlooked is that while the storytelling style remains distinctly anime, many sci-fi anime series are based in a premise that seems like it came out of the tradition of "hard" science fiction literature. If you're thinking about having a science fiction campaign, consider looking to the likes of Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke, and Phillip K. Dick for inspiration, and then adding a bit of anime flair to spice things up.

Space Opera

Examples: Black Heaven, Crest of the Stars, Dirty Pair, Divergence Eve, Galaxy Angel, Galaxy Fraulein Yuna, GeneShaft, Infinite Ryvius, Irresponsible Captain Tylor, Kiddy Grade, Lost Universe, Martian Successor Nadesico, MeltyLancer, Outlaw Star, Sol Bianca, Star Blazers, Stellvia, Tenchi Muyo!, Vandread, Xenosaga

Anime has a long tradition of space opera, over-the-top sci-fi with lots of spaceships firing laser beams at each other. It goes without saying that space opera anime owes a lot to sci-fi TV shows, but the style of storytelling – which heavily emphasizes human relationships, even in the midst of a war – is distinctly anime.

If the campaign is action-oriented, it pays to take pains to pay attention to the balance of the different types of action. Space opera can potentially involve ship-to-ship battles, dogfights between space fighters and/or mecha, human-scale skirmishes, and the occasional brawl. Each of these requires different skills, and player characters that specialize in one stands a good chance of being bored if the others dominate the game too much.

The genre lends itself to many different types of stories and formats. War stories are probably the most common, but freewheeling bounty hunters, spacefaring "super-heroes," and academy students have all had their place in space opera anime. Likewise, while space opera provides options for stuff like cool space battles, there are plenty of possibilities for just about any type of adventure imaginable. This is doubly true when the player characters are traveling around in a spaceship; different planets, space stations, etc. allow for massive changes of scenery on a regular basis, and with them the chance to meet new NPCs and encounter new problems to solve.

In terms of "cool stuff," vanilla space opera includes space ships, space fighters, and other types of high technology. How of a tech level really varies, but there's no upper limit per se. Of course, space opera anime tend to gloss over details like radio transmissions taking time to travel or how spaceships create artificial gravity, even as they have an eminently recognizable modern ramen shop using the same methods as today out in space. Mecha also appear in anime space operas all the time; some series are wholly based around fighting in big mecha, while others include them as yet another type of war machine.

Aliens are a distinct possibility, but in no way a necessity since nations with nothing but humans are quite capable of getting into conflicts. When aliens do appear, they tend towards extremes of appearing mostly human or oddly inhuman – though most aliens in anime are still humanoid in their general shape. Human-looking alien races open up the possibility of cute alien girls, and even some inhuman races might sometimes turn out a mostly human-looking alien princess as some kind of ambassador or spy. Naturally there's also the possibility of highly advanced and ineffable aliens running around, not to mention extinct ones who've left behind artifacts of their "sufficiently ad-

vanced technology" that could have a drastic effect on the relatively primitive lives of us spacefaring humans.

Sword and Sorcery

Examples: Arc The Lad, Berserk, Dragon Half, King of Bandits Jing, Maze, Record of the Lodoss War, Ruin Explorers, Rune Soldier, Scrapped Princess, Slayers

Traditional sword and sorcery type fantasy definitely has a place in anime, cemented by *Record of the Lodoss War*, which was in fact loosely based on an RPG campaign. The differences between anime-style sword and sorcery and the kind that comes in novels at your local book store can be subtle. Magic is flashier, swords can be ridiculously big, elf ears can be ridiculously long, and even less thought is given to depicting a "realistic" medieval society.

Lord of the Rings is well-known in Japan, but console RPGs – especially the *Dragon Quest* series – are far more influential as far as anime is concerned. Magic has a way of consisting mostly of discrete spells whose names are shouted out, heroes tend to fall into distinct "classes," and societies are based on a very vague image of what medieval societies were like, usually rendered a lot nicer than in real life unless they happen to be run by a villain. Anime fantasy also often has some comedy mixed in, whether as a relief to a serious story (as in *Scrapped Princess*) or the whole point of the entire series (like with *Dragon Half*).

Magic is one of the major distinguishing features of fantasy as a genre, and in fantasy novels authors often try to come up with new and innovative ways for magic to work in the worlds they create. There can even be distinct types of magic in the world that operate under different principles and thus have different properties and limitations. Anime can delve into this realm, or just gloss over the details and have generic console RPG style magic.

Premise

The genre provides a general milieu, but that's ultimately just a skeleton of clichés waiting to be clothed in flesh. Just like an anime series, a campaign needs a premise. For the purposes of an RPG campaign, a good way to work out the premise is to answer the question, "What do the player characters do?" This question works on two different levels: the overall goal of the campaign, and what the player characters will be doing over the course of each session that draws them close to that goal. Ideally, you should be able to answer both facets of this question in one sentence.

For example, in the cliché fantasy RPG campaign the heroes are heading out to find their fortune in the world, and while they don't know it at the start, they'll probably end up saving the world by taking out the Dark Lord. On the game session level the player characters are a team of adventurers, each with a different specialty, and they use their skills in fighting, magic, being sneaky, etc. to do things like kill monsters, raid dungeons, protect villagers, etc., making gains in power along the way so that when the time comes they'll be ready for the Dark Lord. "Use swords and magic and stuff to kill monsters, get more powerful, and eventually save the world." It's important to think about this stuff because in reality a fantasy campaign could as easily concern soldiers in a war story, or clerks as a shop selling magic items, and the types of player characters, their goals, and the focus of each game session would be radically different.

Length

Although many gamers are in the habit of keeping a campaign going for as long as possible, it can be useful and rewarding to think in terms of telling an overall story with a definite beginning, middle, and end. Think of it in terms of an anime series; there are single movies, OAV series with only 2-6 episodes, short TV series with 12-13 episodes, average TV series with 26 episodes, and long TV series with 40+ episodes. Similarly, your game can be a one-shot, a "mini-campaign" of only a few sessions, or a regular campaign of whatever length you find appropriate. And like an anime series, if it goes over well enough it can be renewed later for a "second season."

Format

Another question to consider is that of format; what kind of situation are the characters in, and how does it lead them to have interesting things happen? They could be friends who have strangeness happen in their everyday lives, they could be on a journey that will take them through danger, or there might even be a war

going on. A campaign needn't follow the same format all the way through; it's not at all unusual for anime characters to have their normal lives disrupted and an epic quest begin over the course of a series.

Agency: The PCs are part of an organization that hires its services out to various clients.

Duty: The PCs have a job or similar obligation that leads them to adventures.

Everyday Life: The PCs have a relatively normal lifestyle of some kind, which happens to include the odd adventure here and there. School is the most obvious place for this kind of campaign.

Quest: The characters are out on an adventure. This may be a real quest for something, evasion of a pursuing danger, or even aimless wandering.

War: There is a war going on, and the PCs have been caught up in it somehow, whether as soldiers, mercenaries, or simply victims trying to survive.

Themes

Like any other form of story telling, anime usually involves certain themes – underlying ideas that the story is intended to convey to the audience. Deciding on one or more themes for a campaign can help guide the GM in determining what kinds of adventures/episodes are appropriate. Below are some of the more common themes found in anime.

Destiny

Are our lives played out as written in the stars above, or is destiny the sum of a person's own choices? Changing the destiny of one's birth is never impossible, but takes a kind of deep motivation to do so. A character that believes that destiny cannot be changed may have some powerful and tragic personal reason to think that way.

One way in which the theme of destiny comes into play is with the notion of "breeding." Anime often features characters that come from respected families and come off as being "refined" human beings. Sometimes this idea is celebrated, but frequently it's contrasted with the opposite extreme in the form of a character who's a "nobody," but who has the ability to strive as an individual and persevere against trials that a seemingly more qualified character of good breeding would fail at or not even attempt.

Family

Human beings are defined in part by their experiences as part of a family – or sometimes their lack thereof. Themes of family often come through in anime in the form of strong contrasts between characters who have a loving family and those who have too long been alone.

Friendship

Friendship is an important and powerful theme in anime – and often in real life for that matter. Often a character that has never really known friendship is shown some unconditional kindness and affection and it changes the way she looks at the world. On the other hand a character to whom friendships are a basic and natural thing is at least as tormented when torn away from her friends by circumstances.

Honor vs. Results

When the competitive spirit is aroused, there are often two types of competitors; those who engage in the competition for its own sake, and those who do whatever it takes to win. The "weakness" of sentimentality and fair play is contrasted with the effectiveness of a "victory machine." Anime being the way it is, however, in the end those who act purely for victory find themselves falling behind those who act by following their hearts.

Love

Love – romantic and otherwise – is an extremely common theme in anime. It is a source of both strength and weakness, and every worthwhile love in anime is one that is hard to come by.

Unrequited love is also a very common theme in anime. Not everyone who falls in love has the good fortune to have that person return his or her feelings. Tales of unrequited love are often portrayed tragically and/or nobly; the lover may be lost in despair or even driven to do something terrible, or could turn those feelings into something honorable, however unfulfilling.



Gender

What does it mean to be a boy or a girl? In anime more often than not we are shown that neither is better than the other – they are two different roles, and stepping outside of them means stepping outside of normal society.

Humanity

When non-human characters come into play, whether because of supernatural or technological origins, the question of what it means to be human arises. If someone isn't human, does it mean they cannot love a person who is, or is love something above such trivial concerns?

Sacrifice

On both sides of the Pacific we love tales of self-sacrifice. Heroes are often forced to give up what they want in favor of what their duty demands. Not only mere material comforts, but love, happiness, and even their very lives can all wind up on the chopping block of righteousness. Anime calls us to appreciate the honor of sacrifice, even as it shows us just how hard it can be.

The Value of Life

Surprising at it may seem, in anime mercy is often held up as one of the virtues of true heroes. Life is inherently valuable, because as long as someone is still alive they can aspire to something better. For that reason many heroes avoid killing even enemies unnecessarily. At the farthest extreme is a hero who, in spite of being incredibly powerful, refuses to kill except in the direst need. This road is not an easy one, but in the long run it is not wholly thankless. *Rurouni Kenshin*, *Trigun*, and *Galaxy Fraulein Yuna* all feature this type of main hero, someone who would rather make friends out of his or her enemies than corpses, no matter what the cost. Characters like this will often have the Attack Restriction Disability.

On the other hand anime often reminds us of the preciousness of life the hard way. We are made to witness good people, innocent lives, being cruelly, unjustly destroyed. People of abject innocence, people of amazing potential, and people who, in their own way, are struggling just as bravely as any hero, can all be snuffed out by cruel fate. In part this is just a good way to make a villain become truly villainous in the eyes of the audience, but it also brings this theme home.

The Fate of Mankind

A number of anime series have at their core a sort of philosophical dialogue. One side says that humanity is flawed and must be either corrected or destroyed, and the other says that humanity may be flawed, but is also a thing of limitless potential that should exist unconstrained. Someone who questions the validity of human existence and has the means to enforce his or her twisted will is likely a natural enemy of the heroes, whether a well-meaning alien force, someone bend on revenge, or simply a madman.

Creating Characters

This section of the *Open Anime* rules outlines character creation. This is where you make your character for the campaigns (or stories) created by the GM of the game. Your character is like the main characters in a novel, comic book, television series, or movie. The player characters are the ones around whom the action of the stories told by the GM and you and the other players revolve. Like the main characters in a movie, the player characters should be the ones doing the important actions of the story and not the non-player characters (or NPCs) that are played by the GM. The player characters are always the important part of the story, and at the heart of the action.

Really, the only way to play *Open Anime* incorrectly would be to **not** have the player characters at the center of the action of the campaign. This is not a game just for the GM, it is for everyone at the gaming table – players and GM alike. This is the best way to get the maximum enjoyment out of an *Open Anime* game session.



Step 1: Character Concept and Game Discussion

Open Anime is a very open-ended system in terms of the types of campaigns it can handle, so you and the other players should discuss the nature of the upcoming game with the GM. Before any characters are created, the GM should outline such details as genre, setting, campaign duration, story boundaries, and expected time commitment. As a player, you should listen closely to the GM's descriptions since it will impact directly on the character you wish to create.

Ask for clarification of any rule modifications the GM plans to use as well as any background restrictions on your character. If you have any game preferences involving issues such as combat intensity, maturity level, or drama versus comedy ratio, let the GM know about them. Help the GM create the game that you all want to play.

A character outline is a broad concept that provides you with a frame on which to build your character. It is not fully detailed; there is no need for you to concern yourself with the character's specific skills, powers, or background details at this stage. Use the game boundaries established in your discussion with the GM as the starting point for your character and build your outline on that foundation. Discuss your character ideas with the GM to ensure your character will work with those of the other players and with the overall themes and focus of the campaign.

Beyond The Numbers: Descriptors

Each *Open Anime* character has Descriptors that help to describe them. The Descriptors chosen for a character are an outgrowth of the concept part of character creation. The exact number of Descriptors should be left up to the agreement of the Player and the campaign's GM, although a quick guideline could be that a character only really needs a couple of them.

A Descriptor is a vivid trait of some sort that readily becomes apparent to anyone meeting the character. The list below are only some suggestions, and creating additional Descriptors for your character is encouraged (using these samples as guidelines).

Mentioning or role-playing the character's Descriptors will help to make characters more memorable and lifelike.

Sample Descriptors

Apologetic/Meek
Dreamer/Romantic
Cum/Tobacco Chewing
Chain Smoking
Shifty/Staring Gaze
Repeated Gesture (hand through the air, scratch nose adjust clothing, etc.)
Unusual Laughter
Distinctive Style (punk, big hair, grunge, flashy, "retro," formal, etc.)
Unusual Walk
Depressed/Morose
Angry/Frustrated
Sexy/Flirtatious
Ever-Present Pet/Sidekick/Brother/Sister/Companion
Nervous/Fidgety
Prejudiced
Constant Drinking (coffee, soft drinks, alcohol, etc.)
Affectation (cane, monocle, jacket, fake accent, etc.)
Aloof/Mysterious
Moody/Anxious

And so many others can be possible as well.

Beyond The Numbers: Nature

All intelligent creatures make moral choices, to live according to their better nature or to give in to immoral impulses. Many walk a difficult line between the two. Your character has a particular *nature* which is made up of a virtue and a vice.

During character creation, select a virtue and a vice to decide your character's nature. A list of examples is given below, but you can make up your own virtues and vices with the GM's permission. The key is to give your character one good quality (virtue) and one bad quality (vice).

Virtues: Courageous, Free-Spirited, Bold, Generous, Gregarious, Hopeful, Daring, Thoughtful, Compassionate, Loyal, Industrious, Honest, Fair, Kind, Determined.

Vices: Cowardly, Hidebound, Fearful, Miserly, Cynical, Impulsive, Selfish, Lazy, Capricious, Petty, Arrogant, Stubborn, Manipulative, Insensitive.

While there are no system related benefits to your character's nature, it is another good method (in conjunction with Descriptors above) to get an idea of the personality of your character and to be able to more effectively be able to role-play it. The GM may also decide when an action is against your character's nature, and tell you that you may not be able to take that particular action or allow you and the GM to work together to come up with a course of action that is more in the nature of your character.

The Numbers: Character Points

Conceptual stuff aside, the process of building a character in *Open Anime* is mainly one of spending a pool of Character Points (and Skill Points) on various traits. To determine the number of Character Points each player character gets, the GM selects

OPEN ANIME

a Power Level for the campaign from the table below.

The six core Attributes represent your character's basic abilities, but his or her more specific acquired or innate talents and abilities are known as Character Abilities. Any Character Points remaining after you have purchased your character's Attributes, are available to acquire Abilities. Abilities can represent anything from racial abilities to super-powers. Also Points gained from Disabilities are equal to Character Points. Future Experience gained can be exchanged on an equal basis for Character Points.

Character Points may be used to acquire Abilities, but since some represent exotic powers (such as magical or superhuman powers or abilities innate to non-human races), the GM may choose to place certain restrictions on their availability in his or her particular game setting.

There are many different Character Abilities, each representing a particular talent or special ability. Each Ability is rated with a Rank from 1-6 (or in a few cases, 1-10), but you can extend it beyond Rank 6 with GM permission. Acquiring an Ability or increasing it in Rank requires the expenditure of one or more Character Points (or Experience Points) depending on the Ability's Character Point cost per Rank. The Ability descriptions indicate the Character Point cost, its game effects and limitations, and the Ability most relevant to the Ability's use should a Ability check dice roll be needed.

One the character has been created, if the Player wishes to increase the Ranks of Abilities, or purchase new abilities for the character (with the GM's permission), experience points maybe traded for Character Points on a one to one basis.

The selection of Abilities is one of the most important steps during character creation. Through Abilities, you define your character's unique capabilities compared to other individuals. Think carefully about the balance between a few high-rank Abilities and a large number of low-rank Abilities.

If you find yourself needing more Character Points than you have been assigned, consider burdening your character with one or more Disabilities. Each Disability can provide you with an additional Character Points, which can be used to acquire more Character Abilities or further increase your character's Ability Scores.

Attributes can be improved after character creation by spending Experience Points (see *Experience*, page xx). To increase an attribute by one level costs 5 times the new level in experience points.

Tom wants to increase his character's current STR from 3 to 4. It will cost 4 x 5 = 20 experience points to increase Tom's character's STR to 4.

Maximum Attribute/ Skill Scores

For each Power Level there is a Max Attribute and Max Skill rank. You cannot purchase Attributes or skills above these ranks, unless you take a spe-

CAMPAIGN POWER LEVEL

Power Level	Character Points	Skill Points	Max Att.*	Max Skill.*
Low-powered game	32	16	4	4
Average-powered game	40	20	5	5
High-powered game	64	32	8	8
Very high-powered game	80	40	10	10
Extremely high-powered game	96	48	None	None
Cosmic-powered game	120	60	None	None

OPEN ANIME

cial Ability—Skill Knack for Skills and Enhanced Attribute for Attributes—that allows you to do so. You cannot directly spend Character Points or Skill Points on Attributes or Skills to raise them above the Campaign Maximums.

Jim is creating a character for a Average level game, with a maximum characteristic score of 5. Jim buys a REF score of 5 for his character and also buys the Enhanced Attribute [Reflexes] Ability as providing a +2 to his REF for his character. This makes the character's effective REF score a 7, which is higher than the suggested maximum attribute score for the campaign, but is allowable.

The GM is free to ignore this rule for his or her game.

Buying Skills

You get a number of points to divide up among the character's skills based on the Campaign's Power Level, as shown on the table above (Campaign Power Level). Skill Points are used to buy skills for your character. While Characte Attributes and Skills may be raised above the Campaign Maximums by Abilities (such as Skill Knack for Skills and Enhanced Attribute for Attributes). Character Points and Skill Points can not be spent directly on Attributes or Skills to raise them above the Campaign Maximums.r Points can be exchanged for Skill Points at a ration of 5:1, Skill Points can not be exchanged for Character Points.

Unspent Character Points

Any unspent Character Points may be converted to Skill Points at a rate of 10:1. Skill Points are used to buy skills. This means that for every 1 Character Point that a player wishes to spend on something besides his character's Attributes and Abilities, the player can "exchange" the Character Point for 10 Skill Points. Skill Points can't be used to increase a character's attributes, however.

ATTRIBUTE VALUES

Score	Description	PRE	INT	WIL	STR	REF	HLT
0	Null	"Autistic"	Brain dead	Automaton	Paralyzed	Severe palsy	Dead
1	Invalid	"Dull"	"Handicapped"	Indecisive	Infant	Trembling	Infirm
2	Weak	Impressionable	"Slow"	Gullible	Adolescent	Clumsy	Sensitive
3	Average	Average	Average	Normal	Adult	Average	Average
4	Good		Bright	Self-assured	Amateur athlete		Fit
5	Very Good	Personable	Cunning	Confident	Boxer	Nimble	Healthy
6	Impressive	Charismatic	Gifted	Motivated	Football lineman		
7	Great	Charming		Driven			
8	Outstanding	Enticing			Power-lifter	Olympic Gymnast	
9	Amazing	Enthralling	Brilliant			Martial arts star	
10	Legendary	Beyond words	Genius				Peak of health

OPEN ANIME

BASIC STR TABLE

Score	Drag	Dead Lift	Carry	Damage	Example of Dead Lift Weight
0	0	0	0	0	
1	22 lbs	11 lbs	6 lbs	1d6-2	Infant's weight, M1 Garand, shot-put
2	110 lbs	55 lbs	28 lbs	1d6	Child's weight, full suitcase, 27" TV set
3	220 lbs	110 lbs	55 lbs	1d6+2	Adolescent's weight
4	440 lbs	220 lbs	110 lbs	2d6	Average man's weight
5	660 lbs	330 lbs	165 lbs	2d6+2	Football lineman's weight
6	880 lbs	440 lbs	220 lbs	3d6	Sumo wrestler's weight, small piano, GBU-12 500-lb bomb)
7	1100 lbs	550 lbs	275 lbs	3d6+2	Large black bear, seal, large stag, small boulder
8	1320 lbs	660 lbs	330 lbs	4d6	Grand piano, small nuclear warhead
9	1540 lbs	770 lbs	385 lbs	4d6+2	120mm mortar, large wooden canoe
10	1760 lbs	880 lbs	440 lbs	5d6	Motorcycle, sailboat, female polar bear

STEP 2: ATTRIBUTES

Buying Attributes

Characters have numerical scores that define their basic capabilities, called Attributes. Each character can also have traits, benefits, and skills. These are described in detail later in their own sections.

Attributes cost 1 Character Point for each level in an attribute. Buying a STR of 5 for a starting character, for instance, has a cost of 5 Attribute Points.

Each player gets a number of points to divide among the character's Attributes and Abilities. Another pool of points, called Skill Points, is used to purchase a character's Skills. The separate point pools are a method to allow the GM to help prevent the abuses of power gamers. (See the table below.)

Body Group

The three attributes that define a character's "body" or physical being are Health, Strength, and Reflexes.

Strength (STR)

Strength (abbreviated STR) is the "Power" attribute for the Body Group. STR represents raw physical prowess, including the ability to lift, push and otherwise exert force.

The total weight that a character can lift to waist level without moving (i.e., dead lift) is shown on the *Basic STR Table*. A character is able to carry (lift and move) weight equal to half his lift capacity. A character can drag or pull twice his lift capacity.

Tom's character has a STR of 7. He can dead lift about 550 pounds, he can carry 275 pounds, and he can drag or pull up to 1,100 pounds.

Reflexes (REF)

Reflexes (abbreviated REF) is the "Aptitude" attribute for the Body Group. REF covers the character's agility, coordination, reaction, and overall speed. The higher a character's REF, the more dexterous and agile he is, and the better his sense of balance is. A REF of 0 represents total lack of control over one's muscles and movement (e.g., severe palsy or total paralysis).

Health (HLT)

Health (abbreviated HLT) is the "Resistance" attribute for the Body Group. HLT reflects the character's overall constitution, general health, resistance to disease, and overall fitness. The higher a character's health, the more resistant he is to illness and physiological degradation and injury. A HLT of 0 represents an absence of life (i.e., death).

Mind Group

The three attributes that define the character's "mind" or mental and emotional being are Presence, Intellect, and Will.

Presence (PRE)

Presence (abbreviated PRE) is the "Power" attribute for the Mind Group. PRE represents the character's general personality, charm, charisma, and innate persuasiveness. The higher a character's PRE, the more influential he can be. A PRE of 0 represents a total lack of personality, charisma, and emotion (e.g., a brick or a wall).

Intellect (INT)

Intellect (abbreviated INT) is the "Aptitude" attribute for the Mind Group. INT represents the sharpness of the character's mind, clarity of thought and overall alertness. The higher a character's INT, the brighter and more perceptive he is. An INT of 0 represents a complete lack of intelligence and thought (e.g., brain death or an inanimate object).

Will (WIL)

Will (abbreviated WIL) is the "Resistance" attribute for the Mind Group. WIL reflects the character's mental strength, ego, and force of conviction. The higher a character's Will, the greater his resolve, focus, and level of concentration. A WIL of 0 represents no resistance to emotional influence and/or a complete lack of self-awareness (e.g., an automaton, robot or zombie).

Attribute Scores

All attributes are based on a scale of one to ten (1-10), denoting the normal human levels of possibility. Characters in certain types of games may have attributes with scores higher or lower than humanly possible.

The higher an attribute score the better the character is in that area. For example, a character with a Strength of 3 is average, whereas a character with a Strength of 1 is roughly equivalent to an infant or small animal.

A score of 9 or 10 represents the pinnacle of human achievement. It should be rare to encounter someone with an attribute or skill at this level (at least among NPCs), and such a person may be well-known for his ability.

For example, a strength score of 9 could represent the strength of an Olympic weight-lifter and an Intellect of 10 could represent Hawking-like genius.

Scores higher than 10 are superhuman and are only possible through some unusual or supernatural means, such as drugs, magic, or paranormal power. Creatures, legendary beings, superheroes, and otherwise extraordinary beings are not subject to the maximum score of 10 rule.

A score of 0 means the character has absolutely no capability in that area. Generally, if a character's attribute drops to 0 for any reason, the character is completely impotent in that area.

Creating New Groups

The core rules use only two attribute groups: Body and Mind. Some GMs will want to add their own attributes to characters for their games. Adding attributes and keeping them compatible with the core rules is easy.

If your game uses additional Attribute Groups, make sure to increase the number of Character Points given to players when creating characters (see ***Buying Attributes***). When creating new Attribute Groups, it is recommended that the number of Starting Character Points should be increased by at each Power Level, according to how the GM may wish to change this to better fit his campaign.

What To Call It

First you need to decide what the "realm" or "effect" of the group is. Is it for psionic abilities? Maybe you could call it the Psi Group. Does it deal with faith, religious conviction, or karma? Maybe you could call it the Spiritual Group. Do you want to expand on social traits and skills? Create a Social Group.

Next, you need to create three attributes for your new group. Each group has an attribute for "power," one for "aptitude," and one for "resistance."

For example, let's say you're adding a Psi Group. You could create the new attributes Prowess (PRW), Control (CON) and Mental Defense (MEN).

Do I Need Three Attributes?

If you don't want to create three new attributes, you could use one attribute for all three aspects of that group, but we recommend that you use three attributes. The game system was designed with three attributes in each group.

More Examples

You will no doubt see new Attribute Groups in various products. These are optional. They add "flavor" and atmosphere to these games, but you are free to ignore than and use only the Body and Mind Groups in the core rules, if you like. We recommend giving these new Groups a try. New Groups can be both fun and add a lot to a game, especially if the game uses an exotic setting or unusual genre.

Soul Attribute Group (Optional)

The Soul Attribute Group is an optional set of three attributes intended for campaigns where melodrama and emotion play a major role. Each of the three attributes – Passion, Focus, and Heart – represents a facet of a character's inner motivations. The Soul Group's attributes do not appear as governing attributes for any skills or relevant attributes for any Abilities. Rather, the attributes in the Soul Group are specifically meant to be used in odd places, where a character's motivation becomes more important than his or her skill.

Passion (PSN)

Passion is the "Power" attribute for the Soul Group. The burning desire to succeed is represented by Passion. Passion is often unfocused and random but powerful, like a raging fire.

Focus (FCS)

Focus is the "Aptitude" attribute for the Soul Group. Characters with a high Focus are able to aim themselves at a goal and bring their full abilities to bear. Focus does not have the burning quality of Passion or the warmth of Heart, but it allows a character to direct her will in a way that is precise and focused.

Heart (HRT)

Passion is the "Resistance" attribute for the Soul Group. Heart is that warm, caring quality – a kind of inner strength that is subtle and caring. Characters with a high Heart attribute are defined and strengthened by their connections to others, whether friends or lovers.

Using Soul Attributes

The following are some of the ways in which these attributes can be used. These are best used somewhat sparingly, so that the normal uses of attributes and skills aren't marginalized in the game.

- Attribute Check: Although it can be difficult to find the right time and place, Soul Attributes can be used for basic attribute checks.
- Complimentary: If a Soul attribute is contributing to but not dominating a particular action, the GM might allow the player to use that Soul attribute as if it were a Complimentary Skill, adding half (rounded down) of the attribute score to the roll.
- Energy: The GM may wish to allow a character to substitute either HLT or WIL with his

or her highest Soul attribute when calculating base Energy Points.

- Special Powers: In some settings it can be extraordinarily appropriate for Soul attributes to be treated as the Relevant Attribute for Abilities representing special powers. One option is for the Relevant Attribute to be assigned on the basis of the intent behind a particular use of the power; a magic spell intended to protect a beloved friend could be based on a Heart check, while one intended to eliminate a troublesome foe could be based on a Focus check, even if they're both the same attack spell.
- Substitution: In exceptional circumstances a character's motivation can overshadow his or her actual ability so completely that a Soul attribute could be used in place of a Body or Mind attribute. This happens at the GM's discretion, and there could be a cost in Action Points for doing so.

Derived Attributes

There are also a few special attributes. They are not assigned points during character creation like the core attributes. Instead, the following attributes are derived from attributes in the Body or Mind Group.



Derived attributes in the core rules are Defensive Target Number, Initiative, Toughness, Life, and Move. You can create new derived attributes in addition to these.

Some special attributes can have scores higher than 10; derived attributes are not necessarily scaled the same as a character's attributes, such as STR, INT or REF.

Derived attributes can be increased using Character Points (but not Attribute Points). The cost for increasing each Derived Attribute above its base score is given in the description.

Defensive Target Number (DEF)

A character's Defensive Target Number (abbreviated DEF) represents how difficult it is to successfully hit the character in combat. DEF becomes the base Target Number (TN) needed for any skill rolls made to hit the character in combat, for hand-to-hand, melee and ranged attacks. A character's DEF score may be modified up or down for variables such as distance, armor (heavy armor lowers a character's effective REF) and so on.

A character's DEF equals his **REF + 10**. Mike's character, Arelius, has a REF of 7. His REF+10 gives him a DEF of 17, so any characters who attempt to attack Arelius must roll against a Target Number of 17.

Initiative (INI)

Initiative (abbreviated INI) represents how quickly a character can act in a turn.

A character's Initiative equals his **(REF + INT)/2**, rounding up. At the beginning of each turn of combat (or any other time the GM calls for the players to determine initiative), each player rolls 1d6 and adds the number rolled to his character's INI score.

The character with the highest INI total acts first in a turn. In cases of a tie, the character with the higher INT goes first. If both characters have the same INT, then the characters act simultaneously.

For more information about how Initiative works, see the section on *Combat*.

Toughness (TGH)

Toughness (abbreviated as TGH) represents a character's resistance to blunt force damage, such as from a punch, a baseball bat, or auto collision.

A character's starting TGH equals **(STR + WIL)/2**, rounding up.

When a character suffers damage from a pummeling, bashing, or blunt attack, subtract the character's TGH score from the damage, then subtract the remaining damage (if any) from the character's Life points (see *Life*, below). If a character suffers an amount of damage that does not exceed his TGH score, he suffers no loss of Life; he has completely shrugged off the attack.

For example, Swingin' Sam has a Health of 4 and a Toughness of 8. In a fist fight with a bad guy, Swingin' Sam is hit by his opponent, and the GM rolls 19 points of damage. Albert subtracts Swingin' Sam's Toughness of 8 from the damage, leaving 11 points of damage.

Toughness may also be used to decrease the damage suffered from some forms of *Special Damage* at the GM's discretion (see *Damage*, pg.).

Life (LIF)

Life (abbreviated as LIF) points are used to keep track of damage a character suffers during an adventure. Any time a character suffers damage, he temporarily loses a number of Life points equal to the points of damage inflicted.

A character's LIF points equal **(HLT x 3) + (WIL x 2)**.

Continuing from the example above, Swingin' Sam has a Health of 3 and a Willpower of 5, so he has 9 + 10 = 19 Life points. Albert subtracts the 11 points of damage from his character's Life points. After getting punched, Swingin' Sam has 8 Life points left.

Stunning and deadly damage are both subtracted from a character's LIF (see *Damage*, page 70). When a character reaches 0 LIF from lethal damage, they are dying. If a character suffers combined stunning and deadly damage that exceeds the character's LIF, the character is unconscious but not dying.

Swingin' Sam has 19 LIF points. He has suffered 11 points of stunning damage from a punch and then a short time later he is shot (Sam's had a hard day) and suffers 8 points of deadly damage. Sam has suffered 11 points of stunning damage and 8 points of deadly damage, for a total of 19 points of damage, bringing his current LIF points to 0. Sam is unconscious. Until he regains some of his LIF points back (either from healing, medical aid or other means) he will remain unconscious.

A character may also be stunned or knocked unconscious by one mighty blow. Any time characters suffer an amount of damage from a single event or attack that exceeds half their LIF score (round up), after subtracting TGH (if applicable), they are stunned. A stunned character's STR, REF, PRE, and INT all drop to 0 for as long as the character is stunned. In addition, stunned characters lose their next action, which is spent "recovering from being stunned." On the subsequent turn, the character has recovered and may act normally.

If a character has not yet acted in the turn in which he is stunned, he loses his action for that turn but may act normally on the next (second) turn. If a character has acted in the turn in which he is stunned, he loses his action for the next (second) turn and may act normally on the following (third) turn.

Kyle's character has 20 LIF points and a TGH of 5. He is hit by a punch for 17 points of blunt damage. Kyle subtracts his character's TGH from the damage, leaving 12 points of damage. Because 12 is more than half his character's LIF, Kyle's character is stunned for one turn.

At the GM's discretion, a stunned character may go completely limp, fall down, or otherwise lose the ability to maintain his current action (for example, hold a rope, stay in the saddle, etc). A

OPEN ANIME

stunned character has a base DEF of 10, with no bonus for REF.

Energy Points (EP)

Energy Points (EP) represents the personal reserves and fortitude your character has at his or her disposal when carrying out difficult or spiritual tasks. Energy Points are needed to fuels certain Abilities such as Magic, but they can also be used to temporarily increase Attributes or Life points. This Ability only lasts for a few minutes — the duration of an important task.

Any Attribute can be raised by 1 for every 5 Energy Points drained from your character's total. Life points can be increased by 2 for every 5 Energy Points sacrificed and may keep a character who has fallen deep into the negatives alive long enough to receive medical attention. If your character's Energy Points total is ever reduced to 0, he or she will fall unconscious from exhaustion. Even in a campaign that does not use the Ability rules outlined below (see chapter Abilities for more information) Energy Points can be use to represent the Endurance of the character.

Energy Points can be used to "power" Abilities, making them Fatiguing to use. Each time an Ability is used it drains Energy Points from the character equal to one half (round up) the Character Points that were spent to acquire that Rank of the Ability. While this is optional for most Abilities, those that specifically mention Energy Points use this rule. Depending on the "reality" of the campaign, the GM may rule that most super-normal Abilities cost Energy Points when used. In these campaigns, having a few Ranks of the Energy Bonus Ability would be a good thing.

The increase to Life points is permanent and cannot increase a character's Life points above their starting amount.

Using Energy Points to increase an Attribute lasts for three turns (9 seconds), after which the character must spend an additional 5 Energy Points, or the Attribute score is reduced to normal. Continuing to spend Energy Points on increasing an Attribute score can quickly exhaust a character.

A character's Energy Point total is determined by averaging the Health and Will Attributes **(HLT+WIL)/2.**

Move (MOV)

Move (abbreviated as MOV) represents the distance a character can move in a single action. A character may move up to his MOV in yards each turn, as a normal Move action or, if running, up to 2x his MOV in yards per turn. A character may also sprint, moving up to 3x his MOV in yards per turn, but a character can only sprint for a maximum number of turns equal to his HLT, after which time he must rest for one minute for each turn spent sprinting (see *Taking Actions*).

A character's MOV is **REF + (STR+HLT)/2,** rounding up.

Albert is playing in a pulp adventure game. His character, Swingin' Sam, a brawler, has a REF of 6, a HLT of 5 and a STR of 4. Albert averages his character's STR + HLT and gets 5. Then he adds his REF of 6, for a total MOV of 11. Swingin' Sam can move up to 11 meters each turn normally (the equivalent of 7.8 mph) or 22 yards per turn when running (15.5 mph), and he can sprint for up to 6 turns at a speed of 33 meters per turn (about 23 mph)!

STEP 3: SKILLS

BUYING SKILLS

The cost for each level of skill is shown below.

Level	Cost
Skill	1 Pt./Lv
Skill (Type)	1 Pt./Lv
Skill (Specialty)	2 Lv/1 Pt.

To buy up levels in Skill Groups use the ***Skill Knack Ability***. Skills (including Skills requiring a specific "Type") cost 1 point per level. A Specialty

SKILL LEVELS TABLE

Score	Description
0	**Clueless (Non-existent):** Characters with a rating of 0 in a skill have absolutely no idea about that Skill or how it works. They may have never even had heard of it before, much less know where to begin trying to accomplish an action with that skill. All skills are rated 0 until the Player uses his Character Points or Experience Points to purchase at least 1 level in that skill.
1	**Novice:** The character is familiar with the field, having done moderate reading on the subject or watched the skill being performed by others, but has no actual hands-on experience of any significance. The character is new to the particular field or activity, essentially an apprentice or beginner (e.g., a hobby, a police academy recruit, a soldier in boot camp).
2	**Amateur:** This level of knowledge indicates the character has become more familiar with the field, having read extensively on the subject with little or no formal training (e.g., an apprentice, fresh academy graduate, probationer or rookie). (Basic)
3	**Trained:** This level of knowledge indicates the character has a general, working understanding of that field, having received instruction from someone of Experienced level (a skill score of 5) or above. The character has obtained hands-on experience and practiced extensively under the tutelage of his mentor (e.g., an Associate's degree, an experienced cadet, AIT or tech school graduate).
4	**Competent:** This level of knowledge indicates the character possesses a good grasp on the details and theories of his chosen field or is capable of performing the action on his own without supervision (e.g., a Bachelor's degree, 2-year cop, junior NCO, college athlete). (Professional)
5	**Experienced:** This level of knowledge indicates the character is well qualified and informed in his chosen field, having used his knowledge or completed the action on several occasions in actual situations (e.g., a veteran professional, a senior NCO, veteran cop, professional athlete, a Master's degree).
6	**Specialist:** This level of knowledge indicates the character has become highly trained or informed in his chosen field or skill to the point he practices his skills on a regular or daily basis, even able to earn his living using skills in an occupation. Others may come to the character for training (e.g., Army Ranger, black belt, Olympic athlete, a Doctorate degree).
7	**Expert:** This level of knowledge indicates the character has become an authority in his chosen field or skill, having honed his skills to perfection after continuous practice and use (e.g., a 10-year Special Forces veteran). Without regular training and active use of the skill it is nigh impossible for a character to exceed a score of 7 in most skills.
8	**Master:** This level of knowledge indicates the character has excelled in his field, surpassing others of lesser dedication to become superior in quality, skill or achievement. There is very little the character does not know about this skill (e.g., a pioneer in the field).
9	**Genius:** This level of knowledge indicates the character has risen to a level where he is using his great mental capacity, physical prowess, and inventive ability to make unique breakthroughs in his field, creating his own original styles and theories and setting new standards (e.g., Nobel Prize winning scientist).
10	**Legendary:** This level of knowledge indicates the character has achieved the most rare and highest level of skill or knowledge possible, becoming a revolutionary figure in his field. He has become so talented that he inspires wonder, and is capable of creating, theorizing or performing any most related action with minimum effort (e.g., noted physicist Stephen Hawking, martial arts master Bruce Lee, child prodigy chess master). (Normal human max.)
11+	**Supernatural:** This level of skill surpasses normal human thresholds and enters into the realms of the augmented, enhanced, or metaphysical (e.g., computers may demonstrate this level of skill).

OPEN ANIME

OPEN ANIME

costs 1 point for 2 levels. Levels in a specialty may only be purchased in pairs (i.e., a character cannot purchase 1 level in a Specialty).

Here's an example of how you might record some of your character's skills on your character sheet. We'll just use one Skill Group—the Arts & Crafts Group—in this example. In this example, the player has purchased 2 levels in the Arts & Crafts Skill Group, 2 levels in the Cooking skill, plus 2 additional levels in the cooking Specialty "Fast Food" (total cost: 13 CPs).

Name	Level	Total
Arts & Crafts	2	+2
Art (Painting)		+2
Cooking	2	+4
Fast Food	2	+6
Craft (Silk-screening)		+2
Jeweler		+2
Photography		+2
Smith		+2

SKILL GROUPS

Skills are organized into Skill Groups, representing collections of skills with a logical common theme. Think of it in terms of a "skill tree," in which Groups are the "branches," with individual Skills being the "leaves."

In simpler, "rules-light" games, only *Groups* are used. In many games, however, *Groups* and specific *Skills* (as well as sub-categories, called *Specialties* and *Types*) are used. Whether you use some or all of these in your game is up to you.

Game Type	Skill Group	Skills	Spec/Type
Very simple	X		
Moderate		X	X
Detailed	X	X	X
Very detailed	X	X	X

Skill Group Scores

A score in one level is applied to the score for all other levels below it, but does not add to the score of any higher level. So, a score of 1 in a Group (see Skill Knack Ability for information on buying levels of a Skill Group) adds +1 to the score for any Skill or Specialty in that Group. This is called a "cascade bonus," and is written as a second score, with any cascade bonus added in, in parenthesis after the basic score for that level. A score of 4 in a Skill does not add +4 to the score of the governing Group, however; Cascade bonuses only apply downward, not upward.

Bicep the Barbarian has a score of 2 in the Melee Combat Group, and he has the Swords Skill at +4. He would record the skills like this: Melee Weapons +2, Swords +4 (+6).

When a character buys levels in a Skill Group, any skills within that group that require a "Type" must be defined when the group's levels are purchased. Skill Group levels apply only to the specific Skill "Type" selected by the character, not to all possible "Types" for that skill.

Mike buys two levels in the Arts & Craft Skill Group. Because the specific skills Art and Craft both require a Type, Mike selects Art (Painting) and Craft (Silk-screening).

For purchasing levels of a Skill Group, see the Skill Knack Ability (pg. XX). Skill Groups are not appropriate for all types of campaigns, and GMs of less cinematic campaigns may want to restrict the number of Ranks in Skill Knack that a Player is able to purchase, if the Ability is available at all.

SKILL LEVELS

The score reflects the level of competence or knowledge a character possesses for that skill. Skills are listed on the character sheet only if the character has levels in them. These are written on the character sheet as "**Skill +#**," where "#" is the level of skill.

Colleen is playing in a modern conspiracy game. Her character, Special Agent Glenn, has the Driving

Open Anime

skill at level 3, so Colleen writes it on her character sheet as "Driving +3."

The definitions below are not absolute, but meant as a guideline for players and GMs. To see the proficiency each level of skill represents, comparatively speaking, consult the *Skill Levels* table.

Specialties

Some skill names are followed by "(Spec)." These skills include a number of related specialties within the skill.

Players may buy additional levels with one of the specialties when purchasing the skill (see *Buying Skills*). The character pays 1 point for every 2 levels in a specialty. These levels are added to the basic skill score when making skill rolls involving the specialty.

Specialties are listed on the character sheet only if the character has levels in them. These are written on the character sheet as "**Skill +# (Specialty +#)**," where "#" is the level of the skill or the bonus in that specialty. Otherwise, only the base skill is listed.

Colleen is playing in a modern conspiracy game. Her character, Special Agent Glenn, has the Writing skill with a specialty of Reports. Special Agent Glenn has a score of 4 in the base skill and she has two extra levels in the specialty "Reports," so Colleen records it on her character sheet as "Writing +4 (Reports +2)."

Types

Some skill names are followed by "(Type)." These skills cover several sub-categories that may or may not be inter-related.

Players must select a specific "type" or category when purchasing the skill. The character's score for that skill applies only to skill rolls involving that specific category or Type (i.e., each "Type" represents a separate skill).

Group Skill levels apply only to those "Types" that the character possesses, which must be chosen by the player when the Skill Group levels are purchased.

Types are listed in parenthesis following the skill name, as "**Skill (Type) +#**," where "#" is the level of the skill.

Paradise wants to buy the Craft skill for her character. Because Craft requires the selection of a specific "type" of craft, Paradise selects Sculpting, and buys 2 levels in the skill. Paradise writes the skill on her character sheet as "Craft (Sculpting) +2."

USING SKILLS

Skills are used in conjunction with attributes to resolve actions. When characters attempt an action in the game that has an uncertain outcome, the player tells the GM which skill his character is using and how he is using it. The GM sets a difficulty level for the task (see *Difficulty Levels and Target Numbers*, below).

When to Roll

The most important thing to remember is that no skill rolls are needed for characters to accomplish everyday tasks related to their skill. Rolls are required only for tasks that are out of the ordinary for characters with that skill—no matter how hard they might seem to those without the skill.

Obviously, if everyone had to make a Driving skill roll just to drive to work, no one would survive the commute! Also, excess skill rolls only slow down the game. Save the rolls for amazing tasks or exciting action sequences involving great risks and daring acts.

Ben's character does not have the Piloting (Helicopters) skill. Trying to fly a helicopter will be very difficult for him, and will require Ben to make a number of Attribute rolls at high penalties.

Jenny's character, however, has the Piloting (Helicopters) skill. She does not need to roll her skill at all to perform ordinary piloting tasks, such as taking off, flying and landing under normal conditions. But Jenny will have to make a skill roll for her character to land her chopper after it has been damaged by a SAM fired by terrorists, for example, because this is an extraordinary task even for a trained pilot.

Here's another example..

Arzhange is playing the character of Dr. Raul Wayland, an emergency room physician aboard a

Target Numbers (Roll needed, or more)

Attribute +Skill	Avg (TN 12)	Tricky (TN 15)	Chall (TN 18)	Diff (TN 21)	Deman (TN 24)	Extr (TN 27)	Leg (TN 30)
1	11	14	17	***20***	***23***	***26***	***29***
2	10	13	16	***19***	***22***	***25***	***28***
3	9	12	15	18	***21***	***24***	***27***
4	8	11	14	17	***20***	***23***	***26***
5	7	10	13	16	***19***	***22***	***25***
6	6	9	12	15	18	***21***	***24***
7	5	8	11	14	17	***20***	***23***
8		7	10	13	16	***19***	***22***
9	No roll	6	9	12	15	18	***21***
10	No roll	5	8	11	14	17	***20***
11	No roll	4	7	10	13	16	***19***
12	No roll	No roll	6	9	12	15	18
13	No roll	No roll	5	8	11	14	17
14	No roll	No roll	4	7	10	13	16
15	No roll	No roll	No roll	6	9	12	15
16	No roll	No roll	No roll	5	8	11	14
17	No roll	No roll	No roll	4	7	10	13
18	No roll	No roll	No roll	No roll	6	9	12
19	No roll	No roll	No roll	No roll	5	8	11
20	No roll	No roll	No roll	No roll	4	7	10

futuristic orbital hospital in a science fiction game. Dr. Wayland has the skill of Medicine, along with various Science and Specialist skills representing his medical knowledge. Arzhange does not have to roll at all for Dr. Wayland to successfully diagnose ailments, suture lacerations, perform routine surgeries, and so forth. All these are everyday tasks for a trained physician, even though they might be impossible for a person without the skill of Physician to accomplish.

But when Peggy's character, Officer Becky West, is rushed to the ER on the verge of death after being riddled by laser f ire in a shootout, the GM tells Arzhange to make a Medical skill roll for Dr. Wayland as he tries to save her life. The extent of her wounds makes this an extraordinary task even for a trained physician. Also, the dramatic tension of treating another character who has been severely injured makes this an exciting time for a skill roll.

Difficulty Levels and Target Numbers

If the task or action that the character is attempting is a simple one (such as opening a door, climbing a ladder, starting a car, and so on), no skill roll is required—the character simply succeeds at the action. If the action has a possibility of failure, the GM should require the player to make a skill roll and set the appropriate difficulty level for the task.

As a rule, only tasks of "average" difficulty or higher (i.e., more difficult) require a skill roll.

OPEN ANIME

The GM assigns a difficulty level based on how difficult he believes the task would be for an average person. Use the *Difficulty Levels & Target Numbers* table, below, to help you decide what kind of difficulty level to assign the task, if any. The Target Number (TN) is the difficulty target of a task that must be beaten by Attribute + Skill + 3d6, taking into account any modifiers.

Difficulty Levels & Target Numbers

Description	TN
Average/Easy	12
Tricky	15
Challenging	18
Difficult	21
Demanding	24
Extreme	27
Legendary	30

Target Numbers in Combat

In cases where a character is trying to attack another character, such as in melee or ranged combat, use the target's DEF as the base TN instead of the table above. If the character is actively defending himself, add the appropriate skill to the target's DEF score. In addition, the GM can then add any other modifiers, as appropriate. (see *Combat Modifiers*).

Pat is playing Jake, a barnstormer pilot, in a 1920s otherworldly horror game. Jake has a DEF of 15 and is pretty good at barehanded fighting, with an Unarmed Combat skill of +5. During the game, a mad cultist tries to grapple with Jake. The GM decides that because they are both using the Unarmed Combat skill that Jake's Unarmed Combat score can be added to his DEF. The final TN that the cultist needs to hit Jake is therefore 15 + 5 = 20.

Making Sense of Difficulty Levels

While this may seem a little confusing, it's really very simple. Here's an example.

Pat is playing in a Revolutionary War (American War of Independence) game. Pat's character, Nathan Greene, an idealistic young infantryman in the Continental Army, is walking alone down a dirt road when he spots a group of British Redcoats coming his way! Pat tells the GM, Mark, that his character dashes off the road and dives into the woods to hide. Mark decides that diving into the woods quickly, before the British troops can spot Nathan, requires a skill roll. Mark isn't sure just how difficult a task it is, however, so he looks on the Generic Difficulty Levels table. Looking at the table, Mark figures the level to be one of the following: Average, Tricky, Challenging, Difficult, or Demanding. Mark thinks that diving into the woods, which includes avoiding rocks and such, is more than "average" or "tricky" difficulty, but is less than "difficult" and certainly not "demanding," so he assigns it a rating of "challenging." Mark tells Pat to make a Challenging Leaping roll. Challenging difficulty has a Target Number (TN) of 18. Pat rolls the dice and gets a total of 19—a success! Nathan Greene leaps into the woods unseen, moments before the British soldiers pass.

Automatic Success & Failure

If the Target Number for any task is lower than the character's combined (**attribute + skill score + 3**), no skill roll is required—it's an automatic success for the character.

If the Target Number (TN) is greater than the character's combined **attribute + skill score + 18**, the player may still make a skill roll. In such cases, a natural roll of 18 on the dice (i.e., three sixes) indicates success.

Characters can also use Action Points to turn a failed roll into a successful one, allowing even untrained characters to succeed at nigh-impossible tasks, thus reflecting a more cinematic approach. The player characters are assumed to be heroes in most settings—there should always be *some* chance

for heroes to succeed, no matter how difficult the task. (See *Action Points*.)

Expanded Target Number Table

The following table indicates the modified target number based on the assigned difficulty of the task.

To use the table, simply add the character's attribute + skill scores (for skill rolls) or use 2x the attribute (for attribute rolls). Find that number on the left column, then read across until you find the number in the column for the assigned difficulty level of the task. For a skill roll to be successful, the player must roll the indicated number or higher *on the dice*.

Bold italicizednumbers indicate that the minimum roll needed is not obtainable with a simple dice roll, and that additional bonuses (such as the use of Action Points) may be required for the task to possibly succeed.

"No roll" indicates that the player does not need to roll the dice; the task is automatically successful.

Which Attribute to Use?

All skills are associated with a primary attribute group—either the Body or Mind group. This is the group that contains the attributes associated with the common applications of the skill. The primary attribute group is indicated for each skill after the skill name.

In addition, suggested uses of specific attributes are also given (in parenthesis) in the skill description.

Governing Attribute

Which attribute is used with the skill (called the "governing attribute") depends on *how* the skill is being used. The most appropriate attribute used depends upon what the player says he wants to do. If the task involves exerting force, overbearing, or general power, the GM should assign the group's Power attribute (PRE for the Mind group, STR for the Body group). If the task involves subtlety, finesse, accuracy, or aptitude, the GM should assign the group's Aptitude attribute (INT for the Mind group, REF for the Body group). If the task involves endurance, stamina or resistance, the GM should assign the group's Resistance attribute (WIL for the Mind group, HLT for the Body group).

Tony is playing Frank Marione, a gangster in the Roaring '20s. Tony tells the GM that he wants to have Frank Marione convince a beat cop not to arrest him on some trumped up charge. The GM asks him how he plans to do this. Tony says that Frank is going to try to intimidate the cop. The GM thinks about it and decides that intimidation is essentially a projection of the "power" of the character's charisma, so he assigns PRE to the skill roll. Tony reconsiders, because Frank's PRE score is only a 3, and decided to have Frank try to fast talk the cop, in the hopes that the cop would get confused and let Frank go. The GM thinks about it and decides that baffling the cop like that requires quick thinking and wit, so he assigns INT to the skill roll.

Unusual Applications of Skills

In most cases the logical governing attribute will be obvious. For instance, knowledge- and memory-based skills will most often use the INT attribute.

Occasionally, however, characters will use skills in such a way that using a different attribute makes sense. The GM should consider which attribute is the most applicable and assign it as the governing attribute for the skill roll. Which attribute from the primary group is used with the skill to resolve actions depends on how the skill is used, as described by the player.

Example 1: a player tells the GM "My character is going to stay awake and drive all night if he has to." The GM decides that knows that this requires the Driving skill. Ordinarily, a Driving roll would use REF, but using the REF attribute just doesn't make as much sense as using HLT in this case. HLT deals with stamina and fatigue, whereas REF deals with reaction and coordination. The GM decides to require the player to make a skill roll using the character's HLT + Driving, and decides that "driving all night" is a

Skill Group			
Skill Group	**Skill**	**Tools**	**Gov Attribute**
Arts & Crafts			
	Art (Type)	I	Body/Mind
	Cooking (Spec)	I	Mind
	Craft (Type)	I	Body
	Jeweler	I	Body
	Photography	R	Body
	Smith (Spec)	I	Body
Athletics			
	Acrobatics		Body
	Climbing		Body
	Contortionist		Body
	Jump		Body
	Para (Spec)	R	Body
	Sport (Type)	I	Body/Mind
	Swimming		Body
	Throwing (Spec)		Body
	Unarmed Combat (Type)		Body
	Zero-G		Body
Communication			
	Bluff		Mind
	Instruction		Mind
	Negotiation (Spec)		Mind
	Orate (Spec)		Mind
	Persuasion (Spec)		Mind
	Writing (Spec)		Mind
Covert Skills			
	Disguise	I	Body
	Forgery (Spec)	I	Body
	Gambling		Body/Mind
	Lockpicking	I	Body
	Shadowing		Mind
	Sleight of Hand		Body

Challenging task. The player must make a Challenging Driving roll using HLT (HLT + Driving + 3d6).

Example 2: Sean's character has the Conversation skill, allowing him to unobtrusively gain information

	Stealth		Body
Education			
	Area Knowledge (Type)		Mind
	Hobby		Mind
	Knowledge (Type)		Body/Mind
	Language (Type)		Mind
	Research (Spec)		Mind
Enterprise			
	Accounting		Mind
	Appraisal		Mind
	Bureaucracy		Mind
	Business		Mind
	Economics (Spec)		Mind
	Professional (Type)		Body/Mind
	Trading		Mind
Focus			
	Awareness (Spec)		Mind
	Concentration		Mind
	Intuition		Mind
	Lip Reading		Mind
	Power Usage		Varies
	Sense Motive		Mind
Heavy Weapons			
	Artillery (Spec)	R	Body
	Machine Guns (Spec)	R	Body
	Missile Launchers (Spec)	R	Mind
	Portable Launchers (Spec)	R	Body
	Vehicle Weapons (Spec)	R	Body
Investigation			
	Cryptography		Mind
	Deduction		Mind
	Forensics	R	Mind
	Gather Information	I	Mind
	Intel Analysis		Mind
	Interrogation		Mind

	Surveillance (Spec)		Mind
Medicine			
	Dentistry	I	Mind
	First Aid * (Spec)	I	Mind
	Physician (Spec)	I	Mind
	Pharmacology		Mind
	Surgery (Spec)	I	Body/Mind
Melee Weapons			
	Axes (Spec)	I	Body
	Bayonets	I	Body
	Flexible Weapons (Spec)	I	Body
	Knives	I	Body
	Maces/Clubs (Spec)	I	Body
	Polearms (Spec)	I	Body
	Swords (Spec)	I	Body
Military Sciences			
	Combat Engineer (Spec)	I	Mind
	Demolitions (Spec)	I	Mind
	Strategy (Spec)		Mind
	Tactics (Spec)		Mind
Nature/Outdoor			
	Animal Handling (Spec)	I	Mind
	Fish and Game (Spec)	I	Body/Mind
	Navigation (Spec)		Mind
	Riding (Spec)	I	Body
	Survival (Spec)		Mind
	Teamster (Spec)	I	Body
	Tracking		Mind
Performance			
	Acting		Mind
	Dancing (Spec)		Body
	Instrument (Type)	I	Body
	Juggling		Body
	Mimicry		Mind
	Singing		Body/Mind

	Ventriloquist		Body
Sciences			
	Astronomy		Mind
	Biology (Spec)		Mind
	Chemistry (Spec)		Mind
	Mathematics		Mind
	Physics (Spec)		Mind
Simple Missile Weapons			
	Boomerangs	R	Body
	Bows (Spec)	I	Body
	Crossbows (Spec)	R	Body
	Sling Weapons (Spec)	I	Body
	Slingshots	I	Body
Small Arms			
	Black Powder W. (Spec)	I	Body
	Gunplay	R	Body
	Gunsmith (Type)	I	Mind
	Pistols	R	Body
	Rifles	R	Body
	Shotguns	R	Body
	Sub-machineguns	R	Body
Social			
	Conversation*		Mind
	Intrigue		Mind
	Philosophy		Mind
	Sense Motive		Mind
	Society (Type)		Mind
	Style		Mind
	Symbols		Mind
Social Sciences			
	Anthropology (Spec)		Mind
	Archaeology (Spec)		Mind
	Geography (Spec)		Mind
	History (Spec)		Mind
	Politics		Mind
	Psychology (Spec)		Mind

in casual discussion. Conversation affixes to the Mind group. If the character tries to gain information by flattering or charming someone, he uses PRE + Conversation. If he tries to trick someone into revealing information, he uses INT + Conversation. And if he tries to keep a woman talking until she doesn't know what she is saying anymore, he uses WIL + Conversation.

	Religion (Type)		Mind
Technical			
	Astrogation		Mind
	Benchthumping		Ming
	Computers * (Spec)		Mind
	Electrician	I	Mind
	Electronics (Spec)	I	Mind
	Engineering (Type)		Mind
	Mechanic (Spec)	I	Mind
	Repair	R	Mind
	Technological Knowledge		Mind
	Operate Electronics (Spec)		Mind
Transportation			
	Drive (Spec)*	R	Body
	Piloting (Spec)	R	Body
	Sailing (Spec)	I	Body/Mind
	Starships (Spec)	R	Body/Mind
	Watercraft (Spec)	R	Body/Mind
* Indicates a universal skill (in modern or more advanced settings)			
R = Requires specialized tools.			

Both Body and Mind

Some skills can be used with both groups, depending on the specific application of the skill. This is perfectly acceptable, as long as it is plausible and the GM agrees to it.

Frank Marione is arrested by the cop after all and now Frank is being interrogated in the station house. But the cops are not interested in mind games; they intend to beat a confession out of him. Although the Interrogation skill is associated with the Mind group, the GM thinks about it and decides that such physical tactics call for an exception to the rule, and the GM assigns STR to the roll.

Making the Roll

The player rolls three six-sided dice (3d6) and adds the result to his character's skill score plus the governing attribute score. If the total meets or exceeds the target number (as indicated by difficulty level), the character has successfully used the skill.

Here is a summary of the steps of using a skill in the game.

Using a Skill—Summary

1. [Player] **Choose a skill** for the task
2. [Player] Tell the GM **how the skill is being used**
3. [GM] **Determine difficulty** level (and Target Number) for the task
4. [GM] Determine governing **attribute** for the skill roll
5. [Player] **Roll** 3d6 + attribute score + skill score
6. If total meets or exceeds the Target Number, task is successful

Pat's character, Nathan Greene, is a Minuteman in a Revolutionary War game. Pat tells the GM at one point that his character, Nathan, is throwing his tomahawk at a rope to try to sever it. The GM tells Pat that Nathan will need to make a Difficult Axes skill roll, using Reflexes (as the governing attribute). Nathan has Reflexes 5 and the Axes skill at +4. Pat rolls 3d6 (three six-sided dice) and adds Nathan's REF and Axes scores. Pat rolls 13 + 5 + 4 = 22.

Any time a skill roll is required or suggested, it is written as "a [Difficulty] [Skill name] roll (TN)." For instance, if Nathan's earlier escape into the trees were presented as part of a published scenario, it might read "diving off the road into the woods requires a Challenging Leaping roll (TN 18)."

Effect Numbers

The Effect Number (EN) of a roll is simply the number of points by which a skill roll (i.e., attribute + skill + 3d6) exceeds the Target Number. If the dice roll is exactly the target number, the effect number is 0. If the TN is 14 and the skill roll total is 19, the Effect Number is 5.

Effect numbers can be used in several helpful ways in the game. They are used to determine the outcome of contested skill rolls, to determine the winner of a contest (whose arrow is closest to the bullseye?), to determine the progress of a long task (such as complex repairs, a masterful work of art, ongoing research), and so on.

Contested Skill Checks

When two characters are attempting to outdo each other using skills, it's called a *contested roll*. In a contested roll, both characters make their skill rolls, using any difficulty modifiers assigned by the GM. The character whose player achieves the higher adjusted skill roll total is the "winner." Examples of contested skill rolls include trying to sneak past a guard unseen (Stealth versus the guard's Awareness), an arm wrestling contest, and so on.

Margaret's character in a science fantasy game, Laura Starwalker, tries to block a blaster shot by an imperial trooper with her energy blade. Laura Starwalker has a REF of 5 and Energy Blade +7. The GM makes a skill roll for the trooper. The trooper must make a successful skill roll, otherwise Margaret won't need to make an opposed skill roll at all (there's no need to try to block a shot that will miss anyway!). The GM rolls well enough for the trooper to hit his target. Margaret now needs to make an Energy Blade skill roll to block the shot. The TN for the block attempt is equal to the trooper's attack roll total—in this case 15.Margaret rolls 9 + 5 + 7 = 21. She did it—Laura deflects the blaster shot with her energy blade!

In situations in which each character must achieve a minimum level of effect in order to be partially successful (e.g., an archery contest to see who can hit the target closest to the center), the GM may assign a TN to each player's skill roll. The player who achieves the higher effect number succeeds. In effect, the total of the first character's roll becomes the TN for the second character's skill roll. If both player's effect number is 0 (i.e., if the rolls are tied) there is no winner, because both characters failed at their respective attempts. (see *Effect Numbers*, above).

Mike is playing Robin Hood, who has entered an archery contest. The TN to hit the target is 15. In the contest, each character makes a Simple Missile Weapons (Bows) skill roll against TN 15. That target number indicates merely hitting the target. The higher the effect number of the roll, the closer to the center the shooter's arrow lands. Thus, the character with the highest effect number wins the round. One contestant rolled a total of 13, for an effect number of -2. The other contestants' effect numbers are 1, 2, 2, 4 and 6. Mike makes his Simple Missile Weapons (Bows) skill roll for Robin Hood and gets a total of 27—an effect number of 12! Robin Hood has won the round!

Skill Roll Modifiers

This section outlines the various modifiers, positive and negative, that can effect character dice rolls.

Complementary Skills

Sometimes a character's knowledge of a particular subject can help with a skill roll for another skill. For instance, any character with the Appraisal skill

OPEN ANIME

can appraise an antique vase. But a character with specific knowledge of antique vases, knowledge of the culture from which the vase originated, of glazing techniques, or of the family that owned the vase may have particular insights into the history of the vase, thus allowing the character to more accurately determine its value.

When one skill can be used to help with a task that uses a different skill, it is called a Complementary Skill. When a skill is Complementary to another skill, the player receives a bonus to the skill roll equal to one half of the Complementary Skill's score, rounding down.

Mike's character has the skills Tactics (Ambushes) +5 and Sub-machineguns +4. He is laying an ambush for some enemy soldiers. The GM tells Mike that he can use his character's Tactics (Ambushes) skill as complementary to his Sub-machineguns skill for the first turn of combat, due to his character's knowledge of launching effective ambushes. Because one half Mike's character's Tactics (Ambushes) score is 2, Mike adds +2 to his Sub-machineguns score, raising it from +4 to +6, for the first turn of combat.

At the GM's option, the bonus from a complementary skill can remain in effect for the duration of an event or task.

Off-handed

Characters are either right- or left-hand dominant (player's choice) by default. The character's non-dominant hand is his "off hand." Using your off hand incurs a -3 penalty to any skill rolls requiring manual dexterity, such as shooting a gun, throwing, writing, and so on.

Characters with the Ambidextrous Combat Technique (see Combat Technique pg. 80) can offset this disadvantage.

Time

Every task requires a certain amount of time to complete, as determined by the GM. If a character takes more or less time than usual to perform a task, he receives a bonus or penalty to the Target Number, respectively.

When determining the bonus or penalty for more or less time taken on a task, refer to the *Time Chart*, below. Simply find the level on the Time Chart that is closest to the amount of time the task normally takes. The GM should determine the average length of time normally required to perform the task, then consult the *Time Chart*. If the time required to perform a task is longer than the closest level on the Time Chart, then use the next greater time increment as the default level.

Pat's character is picking a lock. The GM feels that picking a lock should take an average person about 20 seconds. "20 seconds" is more than 1 turn but less than the "30 seconds" level, so the base time level for Pat's character's lock picking attempt is "30 seconds" for purposes of determining any bonus or penalty for taking extra time or rushing the task.

Time Chart

1 turn (3 seconds)
30 seconds
5 minutes
1 hour
1 day
1 week
1 month
1 quarter (3 mos.)
1 year
1 decade
1 century
1 millennium

Taking Extra Time

Characters can take more time than normal to perform a task in order to improve their chance of success. By taking more time than normal, the task becomes easier. For each lower level down the *Time Chart* (i.e., for each larger period of time taken), the skill roll receives a +3 bonus.

Pat's character needs to pick a lock that he knows to be very tough. The GM has decided that picking the lock is a Challenging task (TN 18). Since there is no immediate danger and his companions are watching the passageway, Pat decides to take his time and concentrate. The referee decides that If Pat spends 1



hour on the task he will get a +6 bonus to his skill roll because "1 hour" is two steps lower on the Time Chart than 30 seconds. Not wanting to take quite that long Pat decides to take 5 minutes and gets a bonus of +3, making it equivalent to a Tricky task (TN 15).

Rushing

Characters can attempt to perform a task more quickly than normal. By taking less time than the "base time" for a task, the task becomes more difficult. For each higher level up the *Time Chart* (i.e., for each smaller period of time taken), the skill roll incurs a -3 penalty.

Pat's character picks the lock and makes his way into a stable where he finds a horse. Pat decides his character is going to try to ride the horse out of the city. Unfortunately for Pat the horse is not saddled and his character is not very knowledgeable about horses and riding gear, so the GM tells Pat that he will need to spend 5 minutes and make a Challenging Riding roll (18) using INT in order to properly saddle the horse. The city guards can also be heard nearby. Pat does not want his character to be found and captured, so he decided his character will rush the saddling of the horse, taking only 30 seconds to throw the saddle on and secure it as well as he can before riding off. Pat will suffer a -3 penalty for rushing, making the task a Difficult one (TN 21)!

Repeated Attempts

Characters who fail at a skill roll may make another attempt, with conditions.

A character who attempts a task again after failing it once may make a new skill roll, but is at -3 for each successive attempt. This penalty is cumulative and is in addition to any other modifiers for taking extra time or rushing (see *Taking Extra Time*, page 36).

Pat fails his skill roll to saddle the horse. But he really wants to get the task accomplished and soon, so Pat tells the GM that even though his character failed the first time, he is going to try again. The GM tells Pat that he can try another skill roll but this time at a -3 penalty. Pat decides to go for it, and he chooses to rush yet again. His character spends another 30 seconds on the task, the same as last time. Pat can make another skill roll, but this time with a -3 penalty for a repeated attempt, plus an additional -3 penalty for rushing, making the normally Challenging (TN 18) skill roll equivalent to a Demanding one (TN 24)!

Tools & Equipment

Some skills do not require equipment for their use. The use of specialized equipment with these skills may provide a +3 bonus to the skill roll, at the GM's discretion.

Some skills, on the other hand, require the character to have access to specific equipment in order to use the skill at all. Examples include a forge, for Blacksmith, or a weapon, for a weapon skill. If the character doesn't have the necessary items he cannot use the skill.

Other skills normally require tools of some kind but can be used with improvised tools. If a skill can be used with improvised tools, at GM's discretion,

OPEN ANIME

the character may attempt the task but suffers a -3 penalty.

WHICH SKILLS TO USE?

Note that not all of the skills listed will be appropriate for all campaigns. We have presented a number of skills that can be used in most settings. It is up to the GM to determine what skills are appropriate to a campaign. The recommended skills for a specific setting or genre will be listed in published genre and setting books.

Generic Skill List

The following is a generic skill list. That is, it's not created for any particular setting or genre. GMs are encouraged to make up their own setting- or genre-specific skill list for their games, omitting and/or adding skills as necessary. For guidelines for creating your own skill list for your game, see the *Skills* chapter.

Italicized skill names indicate a universal skill. All characters receive universal skills at +2 for no cost. Characters with no points spent on a universal skill still receive the +2 bonus. Any points spent on a universal skill add to this default level. Universal skills are skills common to all characters of a certain setting or genre (as determined by the published product or by the GM). Those skills marked with an asterisk are suggested common skills for modern settings.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

The following section provides descriptions for the skills listed on the Sample Skill List in the previous section.

Arts & Crafts Skill Group

Arts & Crafts skills are those primarily concerned with the creation of tools and knickknacks, entertainment and pleasurable pursuits.

Art (Type)

Characters with this skill are adept at creating works of art in a particular medium (REF). They also understand the finer points of artistic expression (INT) and can appreciate works of art more than the average person (PRE).

A type must be selected when this skill is bought. This skill may be purchased more than once, each time for a different type of Art.

Successful use of this skill means the character creates a quality work of art, recognizes the creator of the work, or appraises the quality or value of such works created by others. The effect number of the roll determines the quality of the work; the higher the effect number the better the quality, and, thus, the better the viewer's impression of the work.

This skill may also be used as a complementary skill to Social skills in the appropriate circumstances, such as if the character is giving a work of art as a gift (at the GM's discretion).

Types: Painting, Pottery, Sculpting, Sketching.

Cooking (Spec)

The skill of creating meals, from simple edible dishes to elaborate, gourmet meals (INT) including even artistic presentations of food (PRE).
Specialties: Cuisine, Ethnicity (e.g., Chinese, Italian), Fast Food, Gourmet.

Craft (Type)

Characters with this skill are adept at some craft, as defined by the player, and understand the finer points of their craft, including common tools, patterns, and methods associated with it (INT). The character is able to create attractive and/or functional items (depending upon the defined craft) and earn a living with his craft (REF).

OPEN ANIME

Characters can practice their trade and make a decent living, earning about half their check result in money per week of dedicated work. The character knows how to use the tools of the trade, how to perform the craft's daily tasks, how to supervise untrained helpers, and how to handle common problems.

The basic function of the Craft Skill, however, is to allow the character to make an item of the appropriate type. The TN depends on the complexity of the item to be created. The TN, the check results, and the price of the item determine how long it takes to make a particular item. The item's finished price also determines the cost of raw materials.

Example Item	Craft Skill	Craft TN
Armor or shield	Armorsmithing	12 + Hardness
Longbow or shortbow	Bowmaking	15
Composite longbow or composite shortbow	Bowmaking	15
Crossbow	Weaponsmithing	15
Simple melee or thrown weapon	Weaponsmithing	15
Martial melee or thrown weapon	Weaponsmithing	15
Exotic melee or thrown weapon	Weaponsmithing	21
Very simple item (wooden spoon)	Varies	12
Typical item (iron pot)	Varies	12
High-quality item (bell)	Varies	15
Complex or superior item (lock)	Varies	18

All crafts require artisan's tools to give the best chance of success. If improvised tools are used, the check is made with a –2 penalty. On the other hand, masterwork artisan's tools provide a +2 bonus on the check.

To determine how much time and money it takes to make an item, follow these steps.

1. Find the item's price. For most modern-day items it is easy to find what the price would be in any number of catalogues.
2. Find the TN from the table below.
3. Pay one-third of the item's price for the cost of raw materials.
4. Make an appropriate Craft check representing one week's work. If the check succeeds, multiply your check result by the TN. If the result × the TN equals the price of the item, then the item is completed. (If the result × the TN equals double or triple the price of the item, then the task is completed in one-half or one-third of the time. Other multiples of the TN reduce the time in the same manner.) If the result × the TN doesn't equal the price, then it represents the progress you've made this week. Record the result and make a new Craft check for the next week. Each week, you make more progress until your total reaches the price of the item in silver pieces.

If you fail a check by 4 or less, you make no progress this week.

If you fail by 5 or more, you ruin half the raw materials and have to pay half the original raw material cost again.

Progress by the Day: You can make checks by the day instead of by the week. In this case your progress (check result × TN) is decreased by one unit (from hundreds to tens, as an example, depending on the currency used in the campaign)..

Creating Masterwork Items: You can make a masterwork item—a weapon, suit of armor, shield, or tool that conveys a bonus on its use through its exceptional craftsmanship, not through being magical. To create a masterwork item, you create the masterwork component as if it were a separate item in addition to the standard item. The masterwork

OPEN ANIME

component has its own higher price and a Craft TN of 21. Once both the standard component and the masterwork component are completed, the masterwork item is finished. *Note:* The cost for the masterwork component is one-third of the given amount, just as it is for the cost in raw materials.

Repairing Items: Generally, you can repair an item by making checks against the same TN that it took to make the item in the first place. The cost of repairing an item is one-fifth of the item's price.

When you use the Craft skill to make a particular sort of item, the TN for checks involving the creation of that item are typically as given on the following table.

Types: Candle-making, Glazing (i.e., lacquering), Cobbling, Shipwright, Tanning, or any other reasonable craft that the player and GM agree upon.

Jeweler

The skill of crafting fine jewelry from precious metals (silver, gold, platinum, etc.), stones and gems (REF). Characters can also appraise the quality and value of such items, create rings, necklaces, brooches, set stones, and so on (INT).

Photography

The skill of taking photographs of various subjects (REF) and developing them from film to print (INT). Use of this skill to take pictures requires a camera, and developing film requires access to a film lab, with the proper chemicals, photosensitive paper, and possibly other equipment.

Smith (Spec)

The skill of forging and crafting items from metal (bronze, iron or steel, depending on the period and technology level of the setting or culture).

Weaponsmith is the skill of creating bladed weapons, such as knives, swords, spearheads, arrowheads, and the like. The creation of handles and shafts requires woodworking (a specialty of the Craft skill), although if the character has access to these finished items he can complete the weapon in question.

Blacksmith is the skill of creating metal tools (such as hammers), blunt weapons, horseshoes and the like.

Armorer is the skill of creating metal suits of archaic armor.

Specialties: Armorer, Blacksmith, Weaponsmith.

Athletics Skill Group

Athletic skills are those involving physical pursuits, exertion, and sport. The Athletic Skills group includes the following skills.

Acrobatics

Characters with this skill are very agile and able to perform flips, tumble, and swing in exciting, swashbuckling fashion. Acrobatics is very useful for sailors who spend a lot of time up in the rigging, balancing on swaying masts, and so on. While any character can attempt such actions by making a REF check (see *Attribute Checks*), characters with this skill do so in a much more flamboyant and impressive manner.

A successful use of this skill also allows a prone character to regain his feet as a free action, to "roll with a punch" (halving any damage received from a blunt blow), reduce damage from a fall (subtract the skill level in yards from the distance fallen before determining damage) or impose a -3 to Skill Checks for attacks made against him that phase, due to his incredible dodging ability (may be added to any bonuses for the Dodge maneuver).

Land Softly: The character can make an Acrobatics check (TN 15) when falling. If the check succeeds, treat the fall as if it were 10 feet shorter when determining damage.

Tumble past Opponents: With a successful Acrobatics check (TN 15), the character can weave, dodge, and roll up to 20 feet through squares adjacent to opponents, risking no attacks of opportunity. Failure means the character moves as planned, but provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.

Tumble through Opponents: With a successful Acrobatics check (TN 21), the character can roll, jump, or dive through squares occupied by oppo-

Combat Maneuver	Notes
Basic Strike	STR+1 damage bonus
Breakfall	Must make Fatigue check or lose consciousness, to regain feet costs an Action
Defensive Strike	STR damage bonus Strike; +1 to skill roll
Killing Strike	On successful attack (at a penalty of –2) target must make a Health check vs. TN of 21 or be killed by the attack
Martial Block	Blocks all weapons; +2 to skill roll
Martial Disarm	Disarm, +2 STR roll
Martial Dodge	+5 DEF for dodging purposes that Turn
Martial Escape	+3 to Unarmed Combat roll for escaping a grab during combat
Martial Grab	+2 REF for purposes of attempting to grab the target
Martial Throw	Target knocked prone, takes STR damage bonus, must spend an Action to get back up again
Nerve Strike	Target must make Fatigue check or be rendered unconscious, -2 on attempt to hit target.
Offensive Strike	STR) +2 damage bonus; -2 to attack roll
Sacrifice Throw	Martial Throw, with +2 to attack roll, Target and Attacker both knocked prone.

nents, moving over, under, or around them as if they weren't there. Failure means the character moves as planned, but provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.

With the GM's approval, a character with 5 or more ranks in Acrobatics may gain a +3 bonus to the Defense Derived Attribute.

Acrobatics may be used as a complementary skill to Climbing and Jump.

Climbing

Characters use this skill when climbing difficult surfaces or items, such as cliffs, walls, or ropes (STR). A successful check allows the character to move a number of yards equal to one half his MOV score or equal to his Climbing score (whichever is greater). Failure means the character has lost but regained his grip or footing, and has made no progress that turn. A serious failure (two or more levels below the difficulty of the roll) means the character has fallen (see *Falling*, page).

Climbing is a Universal Skill; all characters receive it at level 2 at no cost.

Contortionist

Characters with this skill can contort their body into difficult or unusual positions (REF), and remain in such positions for long periods of time (HLT). Contortionists often also have a complementary physical Feature, such as "double-jointed."

Jump

The character uses this Skill to leap over pits, vault low fences, or reach a tree's lowest branches.

The TN and the distance the character can cover vary according to the type of jump the character is attempting. Distance moved by jumping is counted against maximum movement in a round. A character can start a jump at the end of one turn and complete the jump at the beginning of your next turn.

Open Anime

Long Jump: This is a horizontal jump, made across a gap such as a chasm or stream. At the midpoint of the jump, the character attains a vertical height equal to one-quarter the horizontal distance. The DC for the jump is equal to the distance jumped (in feet). The TNs for long jumps of 5 to 30 feet are given in the table below. A character cannot jump a distance greater than his or her normal speed.

Long Jump Distance	TN	Long Jump Distance	TN
5 feet	N/A	20 feet	18
10 feet	12	25 feet	21
15 feet	15	30 feet	24

All Jump TNs covered here assume that the character can move at least 20 feet in a straight line before attempting the jump. If this is not the case, the TN for the jump is doubled.

If the character fails the check by less than 5, he or she doesn't clear the distance, but can make a Reflexes Check (TN 15) to grab the far edge of the gap. The character ends his or her movement grasping the far edge. If that leaves the character dangling over a chasm or gap, getting up requires a move action and a Climb check (TN 15).

High Jump: This is a vertical leap, made to jump up to grasp something overhead, such as a tree limb or ledge. The TN for the jump is the height x4 (in feet). The TNs for high jumps of 1 to 8 feet are given in the table below.

All Jump TNs covered here assume that the character can move at least 20 feet in a straight line before attempting the jump. If this is not the case, the DC for the jump is doubled.

If the character succeeds on the check, he or she can reach the height. The character grasps the object he or she was trying to reach. If the character wishes to pull him or herself up, the character can do so with a move action and a Climb check (TN 15). If the character fails the Jump check, he or she does not reach the height, and lands on his or her feet in the same square from which the character jumped.

The difficulty of reaching a given height varies according to the size of the character or creature. Generally, the maximum height a creature can reach without jumping is given in the table below.

Hop Up: The character can jump up onto an object as tall as his or her waist with a Jump check (TN 10). Doing so counts as 10 feet of movement. The character does not need to get a running start to hop up (the TN is not doubled if you do not get a running start).

Jumping Down: If the character intentionally jumps from a height, he or she takes less damage than if the character just falls. The TN to jump down from a height is 15. The character does not have to get a running start to jump down (the TN is not doubled if the character does not get a running start). If the character succeeds on the check, he or she takes falling damage as if the character had dropped 10 fewer feet than he or she actually did.

Effects that increase a character's speed also increase the character's jumping distance, since the check is modified by the character's MOV. Using the Jump skill is either a move action.

Para (Spec)

Characters with this skill can use various types of paraflight apparatus, including hang gliders, parachutes and paragliders (REF).

Specialties: Hang Glider, Parachute, Paraglider.

Sport (Type)

Characters with this skill are adept at organized athletic activities not already covered by other skills. Skills not covered by this ability include Archery and Swimming. The character knows the rules of the game (INT) and can compete in the sport. Some sports involve primarily stamina, such as long distance running (HLT), or strength, such as power lifting (STR). Most sports are predominantly agility-based, however, such as bowling, baseball, cricket, and similar sports (REF).

A Type must be selected when the skill is purchased. This skill may be purchased more than once, each time for a different type.

OPEN ANIME

Types: Baseball, Basketball, Bowling, Cricket, Football (American), Hockey, Soccer (i.e., European football), or other sports allowed by the GM.

Swimming

Characters with this skill are able to swim in water deeper than waist-level (REF) and can stay afloat for long periods of time (HLT). No Skill Check is needed to tread calm water. Rough water, however, requires the character to make a Skill Check to keep his head above water each turn (STR). Failure means the character has gone under and may be subject to drowning if a character cannot resurface on the subsequent turn by making a successful Swimming roll.

This is an important skill for sailors, competition swimmers, Navy SEALs, and the like.

Throwing (Spec)

Characters use this skill to throw objects, such as rocks and stones, for accuracy (REF) or distance (STR). (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on). It can be used to throw a grappling hook, toss a weapon to a friend, to play darts, or to hurl a spear at an opponent.

Throwing is a Universal Skill; all characters receive it at level 2 at no cost.

Specialties: Darts, Football, Javelin, Knives, Stones, et al.

Unarmed Combat (Type)

The skill of unarmed, hand-to-hand fighting. Characters must choose a type or style of unarmed combat when this skill is purchased. This skill may be purchased multiple times, each time for a different type of unarmed combat.

Characters with the Unarmed Combat Skill (and the permission of the GM) can purchase any to the following Martial Arts maneuvers that is appropriate to the style of combat that is being simulated for the character. Each maneuver costs an additional 2 CP, and the character may not have more maneuvers than levels purchased in the Unarmed Combat skill. The use of combat maneuvers in conjunction with the Unarmed Combat skill is completely optional, and if a campaign GM does not like the additional level of detail that it adds to the game, then this rule can be discarded.

Unarmed Combat (Brawling) is a Universal Skill; all characters receive it at level 2 at no cost.

Types: Aikido, *Brawling*, Judo, Karate, Kung Fu, Sumo, Wrestling, et al.

Zero-G

Characters with this skill are accustomed to operating in a zero-gravity environment (REF). They can perform simple tasks without incurring a penalty for the lack of gravity, such as performing EVAs (extravehicular activities—space walks, planet walks and the like), maneuvering at slow speeds, performing stationary repairs, and so on. Complex tasks, such as combat or fast movement, may be performed at no penalty with a successful Zero-G Skill Check, or at a simple -3 with a failed roll.

Communication Skill Group

The Communications Skill group is about the relaying of information, and about convincing others about things, swaying opinions and emotions. The Skill in this Skill Group are complementary to those in the Performance Skill Group.

Bluff

Bluff allows the character to make outrageous claims or untrue statements seem plausible. This skill encompasses such things as conning, fast-talk, misdirection, and deception through the use of body language. A character can bluff to create temporary confusion, get someone to turn his head in the direction the character points, or simply to try to look innocent in a situation.

A Bluff check is opposed by the target's Sense Motive check when trying to con or mislead. Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. Two circumstances can work against the character: The bluff is hard to believe, or the action that the bluff requires the target to take goes against the target's self-interest, nature,

personality, or orders.

If it's important, the GM can distinguish between a bluff that fails because the target doesn't believe it and one that fails because it asks too much of the target. For instance, if the target gets a +10 bonus because the bluff demands something risky of the target, and the target's Sense Motive check succeeds by 10 or less, then the target didn't so much see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. If the target's Sense Motive check succeeds by 11 or more, he has seen through the bluff, and would have succeeded in doing so even if it had not placed any demand on him (that is, even without the +10 bonus).



A successful Bluff check indicates that the target reacts as the character wishes, at least for a short time (usually 1 Turn or less), or the target believes something that the character wants him or her to believe.

A bluff requires interaction between the character and the target. Targets unaware of the character can't be bluffed.

A bluff is not the same thing as a lie. A bluff is a quick prevarication intended to distract, confuse, or mislead, generally only for the short term. A bluff is not intended to withstand long-term or careful scrutiny, but rather to momentarily deter an action or decision. Bluffs involve attitude and body language. Bluffs often include lies, but they usually aren't very sophisticated and aren't intended to deceive the target for more than a few moments.

A lie, on the other hand, is a simple misrepresentation of the facts. Body language and attitude aren't a big part of communication. The lie may be very sophisticated and well thought-out, and is intended to deceive a character at least until he or she discovers evidence to the contrary. A character should not make a Bluff check every time he or she utters a lie.

Feinting in Combat: A character can also use Bluff to mislead an opponent in combat so that the opponent can't dodge the character's attack effectively. If the character succeeds, the next attack the character makes against the target lowers the opponent's Defense score. The Defense of the opponent is lowered by the EN of the character's Bluff Check. Using Bluff in this way against a creature of animal intelligence requires a –8 penalty on the check. Against a non-intelligent creature, feinting is impossible.

Creating a Diversion to Hide: A character can use Bluff to help him or her hide. A successful Bluff check gives the character the momentary diversion needed to attempt a Hide check while people are aware of the character. (See the Hide skill)

Sending a Secret Message: A character can use Bluff to send and understand secret messages while

appearing to be speaking about other things. The TN for a basic message is 12. Complex messages or messages trying to communicate new information have TNs of 15 or 18. Both the sender and the receiver must make the check for the secret message to be successfully relayed and understood.

Anyone listening in on a secret message can attempt a Sense Motive check (TN equal to the sender's Bluff check result). If successful, the eavesdropper realizes that a secret message is contained in the communication. If the eavesdropper beats the TN by 5 or more, he or she understands the secret message.

Whether trying to send or intercept a message, a failure by 5 or more points means that one side or the other misinterprets the message in some fashion. Generally, a failed Bluff check makes the target too suspicious for the character to try another bluff in the same circumstances. For feinting in combat, the character may try again freely.

Bluff in Vehicle Combat: With a successful Bluff check, you mislead another vehicle so that it can't dodge your attack effectively. This check is opposed by the target pilot's Sense Motive check. You cannot use this tactic against a vehicle that's flying on autopilot. Using Bluff as a feint in vehicle combat is an attack action.

Instruction

Characters with this skill are able to teach others, imparting wisdom and knowledge to their charges (PRE). Characters may instruct others in those areas which the teacher himself is trained. The maximum skill level a student may obtain from study is equal to the average of the teacher's Instruction skill and the skill being taught.

Rourke has an Instruction skill of +4 and a Swords skill of +6. The average score of these two skills is 5, so the highest level he can train any student in Swords is a 5.

Negotiation (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at reaching compromises and relaying information without offending the recipient. Negotiation is an important skill for envoys, diplomats, politicians, and police crisis negotiators.

When engaged in negotiations, the character states his goal (or demand) and makes a Negotiation roll against a Target Number set by the GM. The difficulty number is based on the other's party's general reaction to the character's stated goal (see the table below).

Reaction to Demand/ Goal	Base Difficulty
Adamantly opposed (e.g., to the death)	Legendary (TN 30)
Generally opposed	Extreme (TN 27)
Somewhat opposed	Demanding (TN 24)
Apathetic, unimpressed	Difficult (TN 21)
Somewhat agreeable	Challenging (TN 18)
Generally agreeable	Tricky (TN 15)
Enthusiastically agreeable	Average (TN 12)

The target number represents the difficulty for the negotiator to achieve his stated goal while also making several concessions to the other party.

If the effect number of the Negotiation roll is 3 or higher, then the negotiator need make only one concession. If the effect number of the Negotiation roll is 6 or higher, the negotiator achieves his goal without making *any* concessions.

Effect Number	Agreement with…
0-2	Several concessions
3-5	Only one concession
6+	No concessions

It is up to the negotiator (or perhaps his superior) to decide if the final offer is acceptable. If so, the agreement is made and the deal struck. If not, then the negotiations are called off, at least for this round.

Mark is playing Mssr. Armonde, a nobleman in a Musketeers game. Mssr. Armonde is negotiating with a local lord for the release of his daughter, who is currently a "guest" (i.e., hostage) at the lord's estate. The lord

is demanding a sum of money and a portion of Mssr. Armonde's land in return for his daughter's release (i.e., two "concessions"). Mark tells the GM that his goal is the release of his daughter. The GM determines that this is something that the lord is somewhat opposed to (the lord is willing to release the daughter if his demands are met, after all) and sets the difficulty of the Negotiation roll at Demanding (TN 24). Mark makes a Negotiation roll and gets a 28, for an effect number of 4. Mssr. Armonde's EN of 4 means the lord agrees to release the daughter in return for but one concession from Mssr. Armonde. The GM decides that the lord is willing to forgo the demand for land and instead will settle for the sum of money to secure her release. Mssr. Armonde agrees. He pays the lord the money and his daughter is released.

Negotiations may last from several minutes to several months, depending on their nature and other factors, including the method of communication, and so on. It is up to the GM and the players to determine how much of the negotiations are covered by the Skill Check. A Negotiation Skill Check can represent the entirety of the negotiations, a single round of negotiations or each individual "point" of a negotiation.

This resolution system is intentionally abstract. A "concession" represents any reasonable demand or condition made by the other party that the negotiator can meet. If it is important to know the exact nature of the concessions, the GM should consider forgoing the Skill Check altogether and simply role-play the negotiations in the game.

Negotiation represents the skill of negotiation between nations or large organizations, Hostage negotiation is the skill of negotiating with hostage-takers, and Political negotiation is the skill of negotiation among or between politicians.

Specialties: Diplomacy, Hostage, Political.

Orate (Spec)

This is the skill of effectively communicating ideas and inspiring or moving an audience's emotions with the spoken word. Characters with the Orate skill know how to tell stories, issue commands, present information (such as news), give speeches, tell tales and otherwise inform (INT), entertain or motivate (PRE) listeners. Orate could also be used to kill time or bore someone to death (WIL).

Orate can be used as a complementary skill to Acting and Poetry (for monologues and one-person performances), Strategy (for leading and inspiring troops in battle) and Persuasion.

Specialties: Command (i.e., leadership), Debate, News Reporter, Poetry, Speeches.

Persuasion (Spec)

This is the skill of using one's voice, logic, expression, body language, or some combination, to influence others. Persuasion can be in the form of an intimidating glare, a boastful challenge, batting one's eyes (seduction), stroking a cheek (consolation), grasping the handle of one's sword in a threatening manner, or invoking the name of one's superior (or even God).

The character makes a contested Persuasion roll against the subject's WIL + Concentration roll. If the character's roll is higher than the person he is trying to persuade, then he is successful. The other person sees things the persuader's way (at least to some degree) and will act accordingly.

The GM should allow skills appropriate to the situation to be used as complementary to the Persuasion roll. The GM may also award a bonus of +1 to +3 to the player's roll for good role-playing.

Tim's character, Harcourt, is confronted by a would-be robber who has demanded Harcourt's purse. Harcourt grasps his sword handle, telling the robber "If you value your life, sir, get thee back. Retreat or I will run you through and leave you to be devoured by dogs, so help me God!" The GM gives Tim a +2 bonus to the Persuasion roll for good role-playing. Tim makes a Persuasion roll and adds the +3 bonus, for a total of 24! The GM makes a Persuasion roll for the robber, totaling 17. The robber is "persuaded" not to accost Harcourt and, in fact, runs for his life!

Specialties: Bribery, Fast Talk, Intimidation, Propaganda, Romance, Seduction.

OPEN ANIME

Writing (Spec)

Characters with this skill are capable of composing creative written works (INT). They also understand the finer points of written expression and can appreciate compositions within their specialty more than the average person (PRE). It is an important skill for bards and anyone wishing to create original songs. The appropriate performance skill is required to actually perform the composition.

A specialty must be selected when this skill is bought.

Successful use of this skill means the character composes a quality work, or appraises the value or quality of such compositions by others. The effect number of the roll determines the quality of the composition; the higher the effect number the better the writing, and, thus, the better the audience or reader's reaction and impression.

This skill may be used as a complementary skill to the appropriate skill when the composition is performed. For example, Writing (Music) is complementary to the Instrument skill, Writing (Speeches) is complementary to Orate, and so on.

Specialties: Comedy, Journalist, Literature, Music, Playwright, Poetry Screenwriter, Speeches.

Covert Skill Group

The Covert Skill Group contains, for lack of a better word, the sneaky and often under-handed Skills. These are the skills of spies, criminals, and sneaks.

Disguise

This is the skill of assuming another identity. It is usually accomplished by changing one's clothes, putting on a wig, applying makeup, and so on (REF). The GM should make the Skill Check for the player in secret, noting the total of the roll and using it as the difficulty number for Awareness rolls for anyone who scrutinizes the disguise.

Forgery (Spec)

Characters with this skill are able to create remarkable forgeries of documents, seals and the like (REF). The total of the character's Forgery roll is used as the target number for Awareness checks made by anyone scrutinizing the forgery to detect its true nature.

The original being copied must be available to the character for an accurate copy to be made. If the original is not available, the character uses INT with the skill (because he is working from memory) and suffers a -6 penalty to the Skill Check.

Specialties: Crests & Seals, Documents, Handwriting, Identification

Gambling

Characters with this skill know how to play common games of skill, such as cards, backgammon, and the like (INT). In addition, characters can use this skill to cheat at games of chance (REF), such as dice and roulette.

If used for games of skill, use a simple contested Gambling roll for each player; the person with the best roll wins the game. If used to cheat at a game of chance, the total of the character's Gambling roll is used as the difficulty number for Awareness checks made by the other players to spot the cheat (i.e., to catch him in the act). If not caught, the cheater automatically wins. If both players are cheating, use a simple contested Gambling roll for each player; the person with the best roll wins the game), and allow both players an Awareness roll to try to catch the other cheating.

Lockpicking

Characters with this skill are proficient with picking locks and bypassing other simple mechanical security measures (REF). This skill requires a set of lock-picking tools to be effective; -3 if only improvised tools are available.

Shadowing

The skill of following others without being seen (INT). Characters with this skill are able to keep a target within sight while walking or Drive behind him, while remaining inconspicuous and remaining unnoticed. The GM should require characters using this skill to make periodic skill checks, with the fre-

OPEN ANIME

quency and difficulty based on the environment and the shadowing character's chances of "blending in."

Charlene is playing Veronica X, an international secret agent. She is following her target through a crowded market in Cairo. The GM decides that a busy market in Cairo is pretty easy to hide in but Veronica X is a blonde and she is wearing her trademark black latex jumpsuit (so she stands out just a tad). The GM decides that Veronica must make a Difficult Shadowing Skill Check (TN 21).

If the Skill Check fails, then the subject gets a Tricky Awareness check (TN 15) to notice the character. If the character being followed is actively watching for anyone following him, have both characters make a contested Shadowing versus Awareness roll. The character with the higher effect number wins the contest.

Sleight of Hand

Characters with this skill can lift items from others, misdirect viewers' eyes, and conceal items or cut purses and the like (REF). When a character uses Sleight of Hand against another, use a simple contested Skill Check of the character's Sleight of Hand versus the subject's Awareness. If the subject's Awareness roll beats the Sleight of Hand roll, the other person has caught him in the act, knows which shell the ball is under, or otherwise wins the contest.

Stealth

This skill is used to hide oneself in shadows and move silently. The total of the Stealth roll is used as the difficulty number for Awareness checks made by anyone who may spot the character (whether actively searching or otherwise, as the situation dictates).

Diane's character Renee is trying to follow a man through the streets of London, without herself being seen by him. Diane makes a Stealth roll, for a total of 18. When the GM makes a Awareness roll for the man to notice Renee, his difficulty number will be 18.

This skill can also be used to hide items up to and including large animals, such as horses. A single roll is made by the GM. The effect number of the roll is used as the difficulty number for Awareness checks made by anyone searching for it.

Renee has ridden her horse into the woods to escape several pursuers. Thinking that she can escape notice if she hides her horse, she rides into the brush, dismounts, and attempts to conceal herself and her horse. The GM makes a Stealth check, for a total of 20. When the GM makes Awareness rolls for the pursuers to spot Renee, their difficulty number will be 20.

Stealth is a Universal Skill; all characters receive it at level 2 at no cost.

Education Skill Group

Education skills are those skills gained primarily from formal study, whether at a university, monastery or other institute. Most Education skills are associated with the Mind attribute group. The Education skill group includes the following skills.

Area Knowledge (Type)

Characters with this skill are familiar with the geography and popular culture of a certain area, be it a single street, a neighborhood, a shire, a city, a terrain type (mountains, caverns) or an entire planet or star system. With a successful Skill Check, characters with an Area Knowledge know the lay of the area, and can locate major and minor landmarks, major businesses or organizations, utilities, transportation centers (e.g., bus stations, ship ports and airports), and even knows notable people in the area, such as local celebrities and other popular folk.

Jon is playing Max, a bounty hunter in a cyberpunk genre game. Max is in San Angeles, a huge metropolis, looking for his target. Lucky for Max (but unlucky for the person he's hunting) he grew up in the city. Max has an INT of 4 and the skill Area Knowledge (San Angeles) at +5.

The TN is determined by the level of detail sought by the character. On a successful roll, divide the effect number of the roll by three, dropping any fractions. This is the number of additional pieces of information the GM should provide to the player.

Conversely, if a character is trying to recall as much detail as possible but has no specific information he is seeking, simply have the player attempt

OPEN ANIME

the Skill Check and compare the total of the roll to the table below to determine how much detail the character is able to recall about the area.

Max knows that his target likes to hang out in expensive nightclubs frequented by local celebrities, so Jon asks the GM for a short list of likely places that fit the description. The GM decides that this information requires a Challenging Area Knowledge roll (TN 18). Because "big city" is the default area size for Skill Checks, there is no modifier to the difficulty. Jon attempts his Skill Check—22! The GM gives him the names of three nightclubs that match his criteria. Because Jon needed an 18 but rolled high enough to achieve the next higher difficulty level (with a corresponding Target Number of 21), the GM tells Jon that of the three nightclubs, the "Neo-Matrix" is currently the hottest spot in town, since it changed owners last month. Jon takes the hint and Max gets on his motorcycle and heads for the "Neo-Matrix" club. He has someone to capture…

Area Knowledge can be used as a complementary skill to any appropriate Skill Checks. A character with Area Knowledge of a city could use it as complementary to Drive Skill Checks during a car chase through the city, a character with an Area Knowledge of a terrain type could use it as complementary to a Survival Skill Check, and so on.

Difficulty	Level of Detail
—	Very minor detail
Average (TN 12)	Minor detail (e.g., location of the nearest convenience store)
Tricky (TN 15)	Moderate detail (e.g., names of prominent citizens/local celebrities)
Challenging (TN 18)	Good detail (e.g., names of local leaders)
Difficult (TN 21)	Much detail
Demanding (TN 24)	Great detail
Extreme (TN 27)	Incredible detail
Legendary (TN 30)	Down to the last detail

Size of Area	Modifier
Apartment complex, street	+6
Neighborhood, village, town	+3
Large city (Tokyo, New York)	+0
State, small country	-3
Large country, continent	-6
Planet, star system	-9



Types: Specific locale or terrain.

Hobby (Spec)

This is the skill with a body of knowledge that is not formally taught through the educational system, and is either self-taught or learned through other individuals with similar interests.

Specialties: Comic books, science fiction literature, fantasy literature, bad movies, or other specialties as approved by the GM.

Knowledge (Type)

Characters with this skill are knowledgeable about some specific subject. The player chooses the subject when the skill is purchased for the character. The subject can be small or large in

OPEN ANIME

their scope. Most Knowledge skills are attached to the Mind group.

If knowledge skills involve the practical application of a skill, the character is also able to perform the task associated with it. A character may hold a job requiring the skill if the skill score is 3 or higher. Skill Checks for skills with physical applications may be associated with the BODY group or both the Body and Mind groups.

Peter Parker has the Knowledge skill Photography at 4. Peter understands how to use a camera, take pictures, develop film, and—because his skill is a 4—can even hold a job as a newspaper photographer. When taking normal run-of-the-mill photos, the skill uses Peter's INT. If Peter is taking photos at a sports event or in the middle of a fight, he might use his REF instead. Then, when he's back in the photo lab, developing the pictures, any Skill Checks there would likely use INT again.

The GM is encouraged to develop different Knowledge skills, and to separate them as new, unique skills for his game or setting. Depending on the specific topic covered, a Knowledge skill may be considered as being a Type, a Specialty, or neither, at the GM's discretion. Knowledge skills can be renamed and even moved to a more appropriate Skill Group (or a newly created Skill Group), based on the GM's discretion and the setting or genre of the game. Knowledge skills should not be created that duplicate other existing skills, however.

Matt is running a modern arcane magic game. Initially he creates the new skill KN: Arcana and KN: Arcane Research. After considering the new skills, he decides to rename "KN: Arcana" to "Arcane Lore." He also decides that "Arcane Research" is an unnecessary skill and that the existing "Research" will suffice, and that "Arcane Lore" can be used as a Complementary Skill with "Arcane Lore" for magic-related research. Matt adds "Arcane Lore" to his skill list in the Education Group.

Suggested Types: Civil Science, Cuisine, Family History, Humanities, Military Traditions, Mythology, Navy Ships, Wines, or any other general or specific topic that the GM approves.

Language (Type)

Characters with this skill understand and can speak a foreign language. If the character is literate he can also read and write the language (does not apply to languages for which there is no writing system, such as traditional Navaho).

This skill much be purchased separately for each language that the character understands.

All characters start with a score of 3 in their native language (unless they have a trait that limits their starting score). The character's native language should be noted on the character sheet.

In addition to being used in skill rolls, the skill score represents the character's fluency with the language.

Level	Fluency
1	Rudimentary; simple words and phrases only. Thick, noticeable accent (obviously not a local).
2	Basic; simple conversations. Moderate accent (requires Average Awareness roll to detect).
3	Conversational fluency. Minor accent or regional dialect (requires Challenging Awareness roll to detect).
4	Fluent; complex dialogue and expressions. No accent.
6	Expert; speaks perfectly, better than most natives.
8	Master; command of the language rivals the most learned scholar (a rarity!).

Language (Type) is a Universal Skill; all characters receive it at level 3 for their native language at no cost.

The 20 most commonly used languages in the world (in alphabetical order) are: Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Malay / Indonesian, Mandarin, Marathi, Punjabi, Urdu, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

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Research (Spec)

The skill of researching a topic (a person, place or thing, such as a rare artifact, an event or a ship) to discover clues, evidence or general or detailed facts about it. Sometimes research is simply a matter of locating where something is supposed to be, such as when looking for a known book in the library (INT). In other instances one must perform tedious research to find "the answer," such as when looking for an obscure passage in a huge tome with no index (WIL).

Research can be accomplished on the Internet, in a library, a laboratory, in a newspaper morgue, a corporate Human Resources office, floating city computer network, or wherever the GM thinks is reasonable and appropriate for the character to conduct the research. Remember, too, that sometimes getting into the place can be a task in and of itself!

The higher the effect number, the more information is gleaned about the topic.

Specialties: Internet, Library, Medical, Publications, Records, Scientific.

Enterprise Skill Group

Enterprise Skills are those skills gained through the study of enterprise and business, as well as those skill utilized by professionals and business people. Most Enterprise Skills are associated with the Mind Attribute group. The Enterprise Skill Group includes the following skills.

Accounting

The skill of keeping track of the money in any venture. This includes, but is not limited to, receipts, supply expense, rent, and all other areas of a profit and loss statement.

Appraisal (Spec)

Characters with this skill can appraise the approximate value of items, including items for which the character does not possess a relative skill. Appraising an item requires a Challenging Appraisal Skill Check (TN 18).

The Skill Check may be modified depending on the following conditions. All modifiers are cumulative.

-3	Character has no training in or knowledge of the item
-3	Item is a rare or obscure specimen
-3	Unable to inspect or examine the item closely

Characters may use appropriate skills as complementary to Appraisal (GM's discretion). For instance, a character appraising a sword could use Smith (Weaponsmith) as a complementary skill to the Appraisal Skill Check.

Characters may use appropriate skills as complementary to Appraisal (GM's discretion). For instance, a character appraising a gun could use Craft (Gunsmith) as a complementary skill to the Appraisal Skill Check.

Specialties can include almost any category of item (with GM's permission), including the following: Guns, Liquor, Knives, Textiles, Jewelry, Horses, Gold, Cattle and even Land.

Bureaucracy

The skill of dealing with bureaucracies and "cutting through red tape." Characters with this skill know what to expect from bureaucracies, how long things will take to get done and why (INT). In addition (and more beneficially), they also know how to get things done more quickly than normal, how to get in to see the "right people," and so on (PRE). Conversely, characters with this skill also know how to and how to slow projects down and impede requests to see people (WIL).

Business (Spec)

The knowledge and skill of running a business, from a lemonade stand to a multinational corporation. Business focuses on the day-to-day running of the business, including inventory, customer service, public relations and sales, but also covers broader topics, such as supply and demand, marketing, taxes, and business laws (INT). Business can also

OPEN ANIME

be used for Skill Checks involving customer service and public relations (PRE).
Specialties: Marketing, Operations, Personnel, Public Relations.

Economics (Spec)

The study and knowledge of the production, distribution and consumption of goods. Characters with this skill understand the basics, such as the law of supply and demand, as well as advanced economic theory. This skill is more the science of economics than the knowledge of running a business. Characters with the Economics skill can act as advisors, researchers, and the like, though they may have no practical experience running a company (that would require the Business skill, above).

Specialties: Business, National, World.

Profession (Type)

This skill represents a skill (or set of skills) for a specific profession not otherwise represented in the skill list. Characters with the Professional skill are able to do the job and operate any equipment normally associated with the profession. As with all skills, the higher the skill score the better the character is at his job.

Some professions may require special tools or equipment to perform adequately. The GM should determine if a given profession requires tools or not.

Profession (Type) is a Universal Skill; all characters receive it at level 2 at no cost. A Type must be selected for the skill.

Types: Specific career (attorney, farmer, firefighter, fisherman, page, police officer, rancher, soldier, student, weaver, etc.)

Trading

Characters with this skill are adept at negotiating a mutually agreeable price for a service or goods. Trading is an important skill for merchants, traders, service providers, and business owners of all kinds.

Either the buyer or seller can initiate a negotiation. When negotiating a price, the buyer and the seller make contested Trading rolls (use just WIL + 3d6 if a character does not possess the Trading skill). The winner gains a 5% advantage to the base (list) price for each point of difference between the winner's and loser's effect number. This represents the "best, final offer." It is up to the loser to decide if this "final offer" is acceptable. If so, the agreement is made and the sale made. If not, then the transaction is called off.

Lou is playing space marine Corporal Darren Newman in a science fiction game. Corporal Newman is in a distant starport browsing at a souvenir vendor's stall and finds a holocard (which has a list price of 10 credits) that he wants to buy for his son back on Earth. But Corporal Newman's money is a little tight, so rather than paying tourist prices he decides to try to haggle with the vendor. Corporal Newman doesn't have the Trading skill so Lou rolls his WIL of 4 + 3d6, and gets a total of 17. The GM rolls the vendor's PRE (4) + Trading (4) + 3d6, for a total of 15. Because Corporal Newman's effect number was 2 points higher than the vendor's was, he gains a 2 x 5 = 10% Ability in the price. Corporal Newman can buy the holocard for 9 credits.

This resolution system is intentionally abstract. The base price is the standard list price for an item (as determined by the GM or published price list). The initial price from each person isn't actually stated, and the "final price" resulting from the negotiations represents the best offer that the loser can get from the winner.

Focus Skill Group

Focus Skills are those skills that emphasize focus and concentration. Focus Skills are associated with the Mind Attribute group. The Focus Skill Group includes the following skills.

Awareness (Spec)

This represents the character's ability to spot, smell, hear or taste things that may otherwise escape attention (INT). The GM should call for an Awareness check any time a character may encounter a potential clue, may spot a shadowy figure in an alley, or any other appropriate situation. A success means the character has perceived the person or thing (a slight breeze, a shadowy figure, a minor

detail, or what have you). An effect number of 6 or higher means the character has perceived the item in detail; the GM should provide additional information about the person or thing in question that will assist the character.

Awareness is a Universal Skill.

Specialties: Hearing, Sight, Smell/Taste, Touch.

Concentration

This is the character's ability to focus his concentration on some task (WIL), as well as his general memory (INT). Concentration rolls can be assigned by the GM when a character is picking a lock in the middle of a huge brawl, laying still on a battlefield while cannonballs explode around him, keeping an eye on someone from hiding during a distraction, recalling the name of the man who gave you a coin two months ago, and so on. Success means that the character is able to concentrate on the task at hand, despite any distractions for that turn.

Concentration is a Universal Skill.

Intuition

This is the character's ability to know or understand something without conscious reasoning. Intuition can tell a character when someone is being dishonest or deceptive, whether a door is safe to open or not, or whether to go out on a date with someone he's just met. In short, Intuition can help a character decide what choice to make when logic or perception fails him.

A successful roll should result in the player gleaning some vague direction from the GM about the person or thing in question. Responses such as "Something doesn't feel right" are appropriate but responses such as "You think the car will explode if you turn the ignition" are not. Intuition should not be used as a replacement for the Danger Sense Ability.

The GM should prompt the player to make an Intuition roll any time he must make a choice that could have detrimental consequences. In addition, when the situation warrants it, the player may ask the GM "What does my character's intuition tell him?" The GM has the final discretion whether or not to allow the Intuition roll.

Bob's character is a cop cruising the streets in his patrol car. He decides to stop at a convenience store to get a cup of coffee. As he pulls into the parking lot of the Mini-Mart at 45th and Tyler, he checks out the store as usual, but Bob fails his Awareness roll, so nothing looks out of the ordinary. At that point the GM asks Bob to make an Intuition roll. He succeeds and the GM tells Bob "As your character opens the door of his patrol car, he gets a bad feeling about the situation." Bob is no dummy. He takes the GM's hint and tells the GM that he's going to wait in the car a minute and reexamine the scene. Suddenly the dispatcher's voice comes over the police radio. "All units be advised, 211 silent in progress at the Mini-Mart, 45th and Tyler. No telephone response." Thanks to his intuition, Bob narrowly avoiding walking into a robbery in progress!

Lip Reading

The ability to discern what someone is saying by watching his mouth move, without hearing what he is saying (INT). A successful Lip Reading roll means the character using this skill understands most of what has been said, though not necessarily the context nor any emotion (or sarcasm). The character will have to determine the context of the message based on the circumstances (who is speaking to whom, what is being discussed, and so on). An effect number of 3 or higher than required, the character understands everything said.

Power Usage (Types)

Unlike other Skills, Power Usage only offers a bonus to any check for the use of one specific Power. To receive a bonus on multiple Powers, this Skill must be assigned multiple times, once for each Power. The Skill is useful to a character who may not have a high ability (such as Intelligence) that is associated with one of his or her Powers (such as Mind Control or Telepathy). When the character must make a check for the specific Power, the Power Usage Skill adds a bonus as though the check is actually a Skill check.

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Please note that it is not required that a Character have the Power Usage skill for each relevant Ability, this skill is useful for those who want to try to make the most out of an Ability and work unusual variations out of them.

GM's may rule that the Power Usage Skill can be used for any unusual uses of Abilities, or in case of the need for activation.

The Relevant Attribute for this Skill is based on the Ability's Relevant Attribute.

Type: A different skill must be purchased for each Ability

Sense Motive

This skill represents sensitivity to the body language, speech habits, and mannerisms of others. A successful check allows the character to avoid being bluffed (see the Bluff skill). The character can also use the skill to tell when someone is behaving oddly or to assess someone's trustworthiness. In addition, a character can use this skill to make an assessment of a social situation. With a successful check (TN 18), the character can get the feeling from another's behavior that something is wrong. Also, the character can get the feeling that someone is trustworthy and honorable.

A character can use Sense Motive to detect that a hidden message is being transmitted via the Bluff skill (TN equal to the bluff check result of the sender). If the character's check result beats the TN by 5 or more, the character understands the secret message as well. If the character's check fails by 5 or more, the character misinterprets the message in some fashion. A Sense Motive check may be made as a reaction to another character's Bluff check. (When that's the case, the GM may roll the character's Sense Motive check in secret, so the character doesn't necessarily know someone's trying to bluff him or her.) Using Sense Motive to get a sense of someone's trustworthiness takes at least 1 minute.

Heavy Weapons Skill Group

This Skill Group represents the knowledge and training that would be given to members of the military in the maintenance and operation of their heavy weapons. The Heavy Weapons Skill Group contains the following skills.

Artillery (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use (REF) and maintenance (INT) of land-based, crew-served, artillery weapons, such as Howitzers, MLRS systems, and the like. This skill covers both towed and self-propelled artillery.

Specialties: AAA, Cannon, Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS)

Machine Guns (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use (REF) and maintenance (INT) of machine-guns and other automatic weapons (REF). The character selects a specialty for which the full skill level applies; all other types use the skill at one half level (rounding up). Heavy machine-guns include the Browning .30 cal., M2 .50 cal., and the Mk-19 grenade launcher. Light machine-guns include squad support weapons such as the M60, and M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW).

Specialties: Anti-aircraft, Heavy, Medium, Light.

Missile Launchers (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use (REF) and maintenance (INT) of large guided missiles and missile launching systems (INT). The character selects a specialty for which the full skill level applies; all other types use the skill at one half level (rounding up).

(Note: Although some modern anti-tank weapons are guided by radio or wire controls, these are governed by the Portable Launchers skill.)

Specialties: Anti-aircraft, Cruise Missiles, ICBMs, Orbital Platforms.

Portable Launchers (Type)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use (REF) and maintenance (INT) of portable grenade, anti-tank weapons (such as the TOW, Dragon, and M-72 LAW), grenade launchers (such as the M-79, M-203) and mortars (REF).

Types: Grenade launchers, Anti-tank Weapons, Mortars.

Vehicle Weapons (Type)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use (REF) and maintenance (INT) of modern, heavy, vehicle-mounted weapons. Characters using very simple weapons that have no guidance or "aiming" systems other than the aircraft itself, such as machine guns on a WWI bi-plane, can use the Piloting skill instead.

Types: Bombs, Cannon, Missiles, Rockets.



Investigation Skill Group

This Skill Group is made up of investigative skills that would be important to police officers, and any sort of detective. These skills are complementary to those in the Focus Skill Group.

Cryptography

The skill of ciphering and deciphering data, including text, digital image files, and others (INT). The technology level of the setting will determine the kinds of equipment available to the character, if any, and the complexity of the ciphers and codes the character is likely to deal with.

A number of skills can be used as a complementary to Cryptography, depending on the circumstances and the GM's discretion. Characters deciphering a code that uses or involves a foreign language should be able to use their language skill as complementary, for instance. Likewise, Computer Programming could be used as complementary to Cryptography, for designing and running decryption software.

Deduction

Characters with this skill are able to take a few known facts and leap to a usually (at least partially) correct conclusion (INT). Successful use of this skill can reveal the names of likely conspirators, anticipate an ambush, or determine the likely motivation behind any unexpected action.

The player may ask to make use of this skill at any time. If granted, the GM should reward a successful Deduction check with some bit of information about the current adventure that the character

OPEN ANIME

does not currently have. Success means the character has gained one answer or several potential "right answers." Failure means the character has gained no insight or possibly bad "insight," suspecting an innocent, or some other misleading information that could result in an embarrassing (or deadly) confrontation if acted upon.

The GM should make the Skill Check for the player in secret, telling the player only that which his character would "know," based on the outcome of the roll.

Forensics

The skill of handling (REF) and analyzing (INT) evidence. Evidence can include fingerprints, hair, fibers from clothing and carpet, and imprints (such as shoe and boot prints, tire tracks, and the like). Characters with this skill are able to identify the nature and origin of samples they analyze.

The higher the effect number of the Skill Check the more information is gleaned from the analysis. Consult the table below for suggested results of successful Forensics Skill Checks:

EN	Results
0-2	Trivial details about the item (size and style of footwear, content of a fiber, caliber of a bullet, etc.)
3-5	Minor details about the item (manufacturer of an item, the source of a fiber—vehicle carpet, wool jacket, etc.; make of weapon)
6-8	Important details about the item (manufactured at a factory in Korea, custom made, made exclusively for Ford, specific model number of a firearm, etc.)
9-11	Crucial details about the item (date of manufacture, lot number, city where item was originally purchased, and so on)
12+	Every detail about the item (serial number, exact store where item was originally purchased, VIN number, all known owners of the item)

Paul's character is analyzing residue from an explosion. Paul gets an effect number of 7 on his Forensics Skill Check, so the GM tells Paul that the residue is from an explosive compound manufactured solely for the U.S. military by a contractor based in Vermont. If Paul's effect number had been 9, the GM might have told him the date of manufacture and delivery point for the explosive, as well.

Gather Information

This is skill of, through bribery and persuasion, gathering information on a particular topic, or person. Persuasion is a complementary skill to this. This is not a skill that can be used from an armchair, or via a computer keyboard (in these cases the Research Skill might be a better purchase for the character). The person wishing to gather the information needs to go out and among the people who might know something about the subject or person at hand.

By succeeding at a skill check (TN 12) and spending 1d6+1 hours passing out money and buying drinks, a character can get a feel for the major news items in a neighborhood. This result assumes that no obvious reasons exist why information would be withheld. The higher the check result, the better the information.

Information ranges from general to protected, and the TN increases accordingly for the type of information the character seeks to gather, as given in the table below.

The determination of the "level" of the information is up to the GM. Ultimately, the more important or sensitive that the information attempted to be gathered, the higher the TN of the Skill Check.

Type of Information	TN
General	12
Specific	15
Restricted	18
Protected	21

General information concerns local happenings, rumors, gossip, and the like. Specific information

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usually relates to a particular question. Restricted information includes facts that aren't generally known and requires that the character locate someone who has access to such information. Protected information is even harder to come by and might involve some danger, either for the one asking the questions or the one providing the answer. There's a chance that someone will take note of anyone asking about restricted or protected information.

The character can increase the amount of money used to gather information, gaining a bonus (determined by the GM) by effectively offering a bribe (though the process might entail buying more expensive drinks, not necessarily offering a character extra money).

If the Skill Check fails and another attempt is desired, it takes 1d6+1 hours for each check, and characters may draw attention to themselves if they repeatedly pursue a certain type of information.

Intel Analysis

Characters with this skill are able to analyze intelligence and determine the significance (if any) of details gleaned from it (INT).

An agent could use Intel Analysis to examine a satellite photograph of an air field to determine if any aircraft were loaded with nuclear warheads or had been recently moved. A soldier could examine a reconnaissance report from a scout to determine the quality of troops at an enemy base.

The quality and quantity of the data that the character has to work with determines the difficulty of the task.

A high-resolution satellite photo of a military base would provide a relatively low difficulty to determine what sort of base it was, whereas a smudged, rough sketch drawn by a child overlooking the base from a nearby hill would provide a very high difficulty for the Skill Check.

Interrogation

The skill of obtaining information from an unwilling subject. The interrogator may attempt to use subtlety, confusion, or mental trickery (INT), sympathy or intimidation techniques (PRE), or simply try to "wear down" the subject through repetition and extended duration (WIL). Physically beating a confession out of a subject is also possible (STR), though not legal in most civilized nations.

When interrogating a subject, a contested roll is made against the subject's WIL Attribute Check. If the interrogator's effect number is greater than the subject's, then the subject has been broken and reveals the desired information.

Surveillance (Spec)

The skill of watching and gathering information about a target (INT). Characters with this skill know how to set up an observation point, observe a subject and record information concerning the subject's movements and actions, without being themselves observed (it is similar to the Shadowing skill, but does not involve moving and following the subject).

Police detectives, private investigators, covert intelligence operatives, snipers and soldiers assigned to reconnaissance missions or observation posts, most often possess this skill.

Can be used as complementary to Awareness Skill Checks in appropriate circumstances (GM's discretion).

Specialties: Bugging, Reconnaissance, Stakeouts, Stalking.

Medical Skill Group

Medical Skills are those skills gained through the study of medicine, as well as those skill utilized by doctors, nurses and paramedics. Most Medical Skills are associated with the Mind Attribute group. The Medical Skill Group includes the following skills.

Dentistry

Dentistry is the skill of cleaning and maintaining teeth. Successful use of this skill allows the character to diagnose symptoms (INT), treat minor and major dental problems (INT), perform procedures such as filling cavities, root canals, and the like (REF), and common procedures relating to dentist-



ry, such as teeth cleanings. Dentists cannot prescribe medications, however.

First Aid (Type)

Characters with this skill know the basics of treating injuries, from scrapes and cuts to compound fractures (INT). The character knows how to reduce pain, stabilize broken limbs, and when not to move someone to avoid risk of paralysis, etc.

Note that this skill may reflect different knowledge, based on the particular setting and technology level of the game. A character in medieval Europe will not know CPR, for instance, but he can still use herbal remedies to heal minor burns, leeches to remove "bad blood," and so on. GMs may wish to rename this skill to better fit the setting (e.g., Chirurgery).

Successful use of this skill restores 1 Life point to the victim and stabilizes him, so that no further Life points are lost due to bleeding or other continued damage (see *Stabilizing*).

Types: Primitive, Modern.

Physician (Spec)

Characters with this skill are proficient in the arts of healing the body. Successful use of this skill allows the character to diagnose symptoms (INT), treat minor and major wounds (INT), perform minor, out-patient surgeries (REF) and common procedures relating to his specialty, as well as identify and prescribe drugs and remedies available in the campaign (INT).

To perform complex and major surgeries the character should buy the Surgery skill.

This skill is common among physicians, EMTs, combat medics, and corpsmen.

Specialties: General, Hematology, Neurology, Oncology, Pediatrics, Podiatry, Psychiatry, or any other specialty approved by the GM.

Pharmacology

Pharmacology is the science of drugs, especially as they relate to medicinal use. Characters with this skill are able to identify drugs and their medicinal effects, reactions, and properties (INT).

Surgery (Spec)

Characters with this skill are able to perform surgical procedures. Successful use of this skill allows the character to perform minor to complex surgeries. Surgery can assist in the speeding up of recovery of damage with a successful skill check. Surgery can only be used successfully on a character once in a 24-hour period. A character who undergoes surgery is fatigued for 24 hours, minus 2 hours for every point above the TN the surgeon achieves. The period of fatigue can never be reduced below 6 hours in this fashion.

This skill is common among surgeons and paramedics.

Specialties: Cosmetic, Emergency, Neurological/Brain, Oral, or any other specialty approved by the GM.

Melee Weapon Skill Group

Melee Weapon skills are those skills gained through physical labor and effort, either through a martial training of some sort, monastery or other institute. Melee Weapon skills are associated with the Body attribute group. The Melee Weapon skill group includes the following skills.

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Axes (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and care of hand axes (includes tomahawks, hatchets, and other one-handed axes) and battle axes (includes two-handed axes or "great axes") (REF). This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons (REF). (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

Specialties: Battle Axes, Great Axes, Hand Axes.

Bayonets

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and care of rifle-mounted blades (REF). This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

Flexible Weapons (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use of chains, ropes (including lassos), and whips (including cat-o-nine-tails) as weapons. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons, with or without a weapon attached to the end (REF). (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

Specialties: Chains, Flails, Nunchaku, Ropes, Three-section Staves, Whips.

Knives

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and care of knives, dirks, and other small blades (REF). This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

Maces/Clubs (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and care of maces and war hammers. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons (REF). (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

Maces/Clubs is a Universal Skill; all characters receive it at level 2 at no cost.

Specialties: Clubs/Bats, Maces, Mauls, Tetsubô, Warhammers.

Polearms (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and care of polearms, including spears, lances, halberds and glaives (REF). This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

Specialties: Halberds, Pikes, Lance/Great Spear.

Specialties: Glaives/Halberds, Spears, Lances, Ôno, Pikes, Staves.

Swords (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and care of swords, including cutlasses, sabers, epee, foils, and other medium-length bladed weapons (REF). This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

Specialties: Foils/Epee, Long swords, Kenjutsu, Machetes, Rapiers, Sabers, Short swords, Two-handed Swords

Military Science Skill Group

Military Science skills are those skills gained primarily from formal study through some sort of Military education, or through the study of a related topic like history. Most Military Science skills are associated with the Mind attribute group. The Military Science skill group includes the following skills.

Combat Engineering (Spec)

Characters with this skill know how to construct buildings, make fortified defenses, dig foxholes, lay (and remove) anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, create roads and airstrips, breach barriers, construct bridges, etc., in a military environment or operation.

Specialties: Bridges, Defenses, Mines, Roads.

Demolitions (Spec)

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The skill of assembling explosive devices, placing them for best effect, and also disassembling and defusing them (INT). Characters with this skill can also identify types of explosive compounds, triggers and other related devices on inspection.

Only the foolhardy or those who know what they are doing play with explosives. Even setting a simple charge requires a Skill Check:

TN	Task	Base time required
15	Disarm simple charge	One Action
—	Cut fuse	One Action
15	Place charge	One Turn
18	Cut timed fuse	One Action
21	Build a complicated charge	One hour or more (GM's discretion)
Contested	Disarm a complicated charge	One Turn

With a successful Demolitions Skill Check, characters may increase the effectiveness of an explosive. For every 2 points of positive Effect Number, the player may choose to convert one die or damage normally caused by the explosive to an automatic 6 for purposes of calculating damage. For example, if a character is setting an explosive that normally caused 6d6 damage and the player achieves an Effect Number of 5 with the Demolitions Skill Check, the player may opt to take the maximum damage for two of the dice, resulting in a total of 4d6+12 instead of the normal 6d6.

Alternatively, a character may instead convert each such die to an "automatic 1," reducing the overall effectiveness of the explosive, if he is able to tamper with or move the device without triggering it.

Demolitions Actions

Disarm simple charge: This task covers disarming a simple charge or other explosive that isn't rigged to prevent tampering. It typically involves little more than cutting or pulling the fuse or detonator cord.

Cut Fuse: This is simply cutting a length of fuse to the desired length so that the charge detonates during the next turn of combat (this occurs on your character's Initiative score that turn).

Place Charge: This covers setting an explosive charge at the correct location to do maximum damage to a structure or object. This is in addition to cutting the fuse, if required.

Cut Timed Fuse: This task covers cutting a length of fuse to the desired length so the charge detonates anywhere from 1 to 10 rounds from the time it's lit. Tell the GM which turn you want the charge to detonate. If you successfully estimate the length of the fuse required, the dynamite explodes during your initiative action on the desired turn. If you fail to estimate the length of the fuse correctly, the GM rolls 1d6 and compares the number rolled on the following table to determine the turn in which the dynamite detonates.

Roll	Explosion Turn
1	Two turns prior
2	One turn prior
3-4	During flight
5	One turn after
6	Two turns after

Build Complicated Charge: This task is used when building an explosive device that is trapped to prevent tampering or disarming attempts.

Disarm Complicated Charge: This task covers attempting to disarm any charge that has been specifically made to prevent tampering. Your character must make an opposed Demolitions Skill Check versus that of the character who made the charge (if this character was a non-player character, the GM stands in for them in this case). If your cowpoke fails this Skill Check, the charge detonates immediately. An average complicated charge has a rating of TN 18.

Special: Anytime a character rolls a 3 on his Demolitions Skill Check, the explosive detonates immediately. The character handling the explosive may attempt a REF check to "avoid" the explosion, but suffers a –2 penalty to the check.

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Specialties: Dynamite, Nitroglycerine, Gunpowder, Bombs, C4, Mines, Primitive, Warheads.

Strategy (Spec)

Characters with this skill are skilled at managing multiple units in large, battle-sized engagements (usually of more than 100 soldiers per side). They can assess a battle, locate advantageous routes of advance (or retreat), determine the best place to establish a defense, and so on (INT). Successful use of this skill by the leader of an army gives his side an Initiative bonus of +1 for every two points of Effect Number. The bonus lasts for the duration of the battle (PRE). GMs may also wish to use this skill as a contested Skill Check between commanders.

Specialties: Land Battles, Logistics, Sea Battles, Sieges, Space Battles.

Tactics (Spec)

Characters with this skill are skilled tacticians and are able to lead small units with 100 soldiers or fewer. The character can assess an engagement, locate advantageous positions, determine the best place to establish a defense or execute an ambush, and so on (INT). Successful use of this skill by the leader of a group of combatants also affords an Initiative bonus to that side for the duration of the battle (PRE). GMs may also wish to use this skill as an opposed test between commanders.

Specialties: Ambushes, Close Quarter Battle (CQB), Defensive Positions, Patrolling, Skirmishes.

Nature/Outdoor Skill Group

This Skill Group is made up of those Skills that are important for interacting with, and survival in, the outdoors. These are the skills of naturalists and outdoorsmen.

Animal Handling (Spec)

Characters with this skill are proficient at caring, feeding and grooming of animals (INT), as well as training (WIL) and controlling them (PRE).

This is a critical skill for any character that works with animals, such as cowboys, ranch hands, farmers and mounted Police and Cavalry troops.

A character that does not possess this skill doesn't suffer any penalties to his other animal-related skills, such as Riding, but he will be unable to alter the temperament of the critters he's dealing with.

For example, a cowboy is riding a horse who spots a rattler and rears. The player makes a Riding roll to stay on the horse and to control it. The GM assigns a difficulty of Challenging (TN 18) to the cowboy's Riding skill check. The player makes the roll and tells the GM that he wants to calm the horse down in order to lower the Target Number for any future rolls. But the character doesn't have the Animal Handling skill so the GM tells the player that the Riding Skill Checks won't get any easier unless and until he gets the horse away from the rattler!

Animal IQ: As an optional rule, GMs may allow a bonus to the Animal Handling roll equal to the animal's INT when the roll involves training the animal.

Some specific applications of the Animal Handling skill are described below.

Task	TN
Handle an animal	12
"Push" an animal	27
Teach an animal a trick	15 to 24*
Train an animal for a general purpose	15 to 24*
Rear a wild animal	15 + HD of animal
* *See the specific trick or purpose below.*	

OPEN ANIME

General Purpose	TN
Combat riding	21
Fighting	24
Guarding	21
Heavy labor	15
Hunting	21
Performance	18
Riding	15

Animal Handling Actions

Handle an Animal: This task involves commanding an animal to perform a task or trick that it knows. If the animal is wounded or has taken any non-lethal damage or ability score damage, the TN increases by 3. If your check succeeds, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.

Push an Animal: To "push" an animal means to get it to perform a task or trick that it doesn't know but is physically capable of performing. This category also covers making an animal perform a forced march or forcing it to hustle for more than 1 hour between sleep cycles. If the animal is wounded or has taken any non-lethal damage or ability score damage, the TN increases by 3. If the Skill Check succeeds, the animal performs the task or trick on its next available action.

Teach an Animal a Trick: You can teach an animal a specific trick with one week of work and a successful Animal Handling Skill Check against

Trick	TN	Description
Attack	24	The animal attacks apparent enemies. You may point to a particular creature that you wish the animal to attack, and it will comply if able. Normally, an animal will attack only people or other animals. Teaching an animal to attack anything else (such as inanimate objects or supernatural creatures, if they exist in your game) counts as two tricks. Training an animal to attack takes eight weeks.
Come	15	The animal comes to you, even if it normally would not do so. Training an animal to come to you takes one week.
Defend	15	The animal defends you (or is ready to defend you if no threat is present), even without any command being given. Alternatively, you can command the animal to defend a specific other character. Training an animal to defend you takes three weeks.
Cease	12	The animal breaks off from combat or otherwise backs down. An animal that doesn't know this trick continues to fight until it must flee (due to injury, a fear effect, or the like) or its opponent is defeated. Training an animal to cease fighting takes two weeks.
Fetch	15	The animal goes and gets something. If you do not point out or name a specific item, the animal fetches some random object. Training an animal to fetch takes one week.
Guard	21	The animal stays in place and prevents others from approaching. Training an animal to guard takes four weeks.
Heel	15	The animal follows you closely, even to places where it normally wouldn't go. Training an animal to heel takes one week.
	15	The animal performs a variety of simple tricks, such as sitting up, rolling over, roaring or barking, and so on. Training an animal to perform takes two weeks.
Seek	18	The animal moves into an area and looks around for a specific category of item, such as flowers, or gunpowder, or even animals or people. An animal can be trained to seek one item or category of item for each point of INT. Training an animal to seek for an item takes four weeks. Teaching it to seek for an additional item requires 8 weeks, a third item takes an additional 16 weeks, and so on.
Stay	15	The animal stays in place, waiting for you to return. It does not challenge other creatures that come by, though it still defends itself if it needs to. Training an animal to stay takes one week.
Track	21	The animal tracks the scent presented to it. Training an animal to track takes four weeks.
Work	18	The animal pulls or pushes a medium or heavy load. Training an animal to work takes one week.

Trick	TN	Description
Combat riding	24	An animal trained to bear a rider into combat knows the tricks Attack, Come, Defend, Down, Guard, and Heel. Training an animal for combat riding takes six weeks. You may also "upgrade" an animal trained for riding to one trained for combat riding by spending three weeks and making a successful Animal Handling Skill Check (TN 21). The new general purpose and tricks completely replace the animal's previous purpose and any tricks it once knew.
Fighting	21	An animal trained to engage in combat knows the tricks Attack, Down, and Stay. Training an animal for fighting takes three weeks.
Guarding	21	An animal trained to guard knows the tricks Attack, Defend, Down, and Guard. Training an animal for guarding takes four weeks.
Heavy Labor	15	An animal trained for heavy labor knows the tricks Come and Work. Training an animal for heavy labor takes two weeks.
Hunting	18	An animal trained for hunting knows the tricks Attack, Down, Fetch, Heel, Seek, and Track. Training an animal for hunting takes six weeks.
Performance	15	An animal trained for performance knows the tricks Come, Fetch, Heel, Perform, and Stay. Training an animal for performance takes five weeks.
Riding	15	An animal trained to bear a rider knows the tricks Come, Heel, and Stay. Training an animal for riding takes three weeks.

the indicated target number. An animal can learn a maximum of 3 tricks for every point of Intellect it has. Thus, an animal with an INT of 2 can learn up to 6 tricks.

Possible tricks (and their associated TNs) include, but are not limited to, the following.

Train an Animal for a Purpose: Rather than teaching an animal individual tricks, you can simply train it for a general purpose. Essentially, an animal's purpose represents a pre-selected set of known tricks that fit into a common scheme, such as guarding or heavy labor. The animal must meet all the normal prerequisites for all tricks included in the training package. If the package includes more than three tricks, the animal must have an INT score of 2 or higher.

An animal can be trained for only one general purpose, though if it is capable of learning additional tricks (above and beyond those included in its general purpose), it may do so. Training an animal for a purpose requires fewer Skill Checks than teaching individual tricks does, but no less time.

Rear a Wild Animal: To rear an animal means to raise a wild creature from infancy so that it becomes domesticated. A handler can rear as many as three creatures of the same kind at once.

A successfully domesticated animal can be taught tricks at the same time it's being raised, or it can be taught as a domesticated animal later.

For tasks with specific time frames noted above, you must spend half this time (at the rate of 3 hours per day per animal being handled) working toward completion of the task before you attempt the Animal Handling Skill Check. If the roll fails, the character's attempt to teach, rear, or train the animal fails and you need not complete the teaching, rearing, or training time. If the check succeeds, you must invest the remainder of the time to complete the teaching, rearing, or training. If the time is interrupted or the task is not followed through to completion, the attempt to teach, rear, or train the animal automatically fails.

Animal Handling may be used as complementary to any appropriate animal-related skill checks, such as the skills Riding and Teamster (GM's discretion).

Note: If a character doesn't possess the Animal Handling skill, you can use a PRE Attribute Check

OPEN ANIME

to handle and push domestic animals, but not to teach, rear, or train animals.

Specialties: Cattle, Dogs, Horses, Pack & draft animals.

Fish and Game (Spec)

Characters with this skill are able to track and catch game and fowl, fish, and set traps. Depending on the prey, Fish and Game may involve cunning and wits to locate and trap one's prey (INT) or simple patience to wait for a bite (WIL).

Specialties: Hunting, Fishing, Trapping.

Navigation (Spec)

Characters with this skill are able to determine their approximate position on a map, tell the time of day or night (by the sun or stars), and plot a course between two known points (INT). Navigation may be used as a complementary skill to Survival, Fish and Game, Sailing, Water Craft and other skills with GM's permission. For navigating in space, between and within star systems, see the Astrogation skill. This skill is common among professional trackers, rangers, scouts, soldiers and sailors.

Specialties: Land, Sea.

Riding (Type)

Characters with this skill are able to ride domesticated beasts, manage tack and bridle, and perform simple care and grooming of their animals. A specialty must be selected when the skill is purchased. This skill may be purchased more than once, each time for a different specialty.

Types: Camels, Horses, or other beasts allowed by the GM (such as dragons, wolves, giant bugs, and so on).



Survival (Spec)

Characters with this skill are able to survive off the land (INT). They know which plants are edible, how to construct shelter, where to find fresh water, and the like. Even recreational campers may have some measure of this skill (e.g., a score of 1 or 2, or even higher for an avid camper).

A successful check means the character is able to survive in the wilds for a day, with food, water and shelter. A critical success extends this time to a week. A failed check means the character's efforts are insufficient for the day; he goes hungry and thirsty, is exposed to the elements, or what have you. A roll that fails by 6 points worse (i.e., an EN of -6 or lower) means the character has suffered some mishap. The mishap could be an accidental poisoning, an injury requiring a damage check, frostbite, or any other situation at the GM's discretion.

Specialties: Arctic, Desert, Temperate, Tropical, Water.

Teamster (Type)

The skill of driving teams of domestic beasts, usually to pull a wagon. The character also knows how to manage harness and bridle, and so on. A specialty must be selected when the skill is purchased. This skill may be purchased more than once, each time for a different specialty.

Types: Camels, Horses, or other beasts allowed by the GM (such as dragons, wolves, giant bugs, and so on).

Tracking

Characters with this skill are able to track both man and beast (INT). Unlike Fish and Game, which allows one to locate fresh game and fowl, Tracking is used to follow prints made by man or beast, either fresh or old. Successful use of the skill means the character is able to identify the maker of the tracks and to follow them for one day or to a point at which the conditions have changed (e.g., tracks leading through a forest and to a river). If at this point the subject has not been found, then a new Tracking roll must be made to continue.

Performance Skill Group

This Skill group consists of those Skills important to acting and other forms of public performance. These Skills are complementary to those in the Communication Skill Group.

Acting

Characters with this skill are adept at acting—more simply, feigning emotion and portraying roles that differ significantly from themselves (PRE). Actors also understand the finer points of dramatic expression and can appreciate theatrical performances from a more scholarly viewpoint than the average spectator (INT).

Successful use of this skill means the character performs in a manner that moves the audience, or appraises the quality of theatrical performances by others. The effect number of the roll determines the quality of the performance; the higher the effect number the better the performance, and, thus, the better the audience's reaction. This skill may also be used as a complementary skill to Persuasion or Orate in the appropriate circumstances (at the GM's discretion).

This skill is an important one for stage and screen actors, undercover police officers, and any character to whom misleading others is important.

Dancing (Spec)

This is the skill of dancing with grace and/or style (REF). Ballroom dancing is performed at large, formal balls, such as those thrown by royalty or the wealthy, and (in some cultures) is one of the skills expected of any cultured gentleman or lady. Dancing can also be part of important ceremonies, contests and other situations calling for stamina more than style or skill (HLT).

Successful use of this skill means the character is able to dance competently, following the steps and keeping time with the music. The character may be noticed as an accomplished and graceful dancer that evening, perhaps gaining the special attention of his

OPEN ANIME

partner, another suitor, or another person of note or repute.

Dancing may be used as a complementary skill for all appropriate Social skill checks, at the GM's discretion.

Specialties: Ballet, Ballroom, Break, Disco, Popular, Tap, Tribal, or any other reasonable kind of dance that the player and GM agree upon.

Instrument (Type)

Characters with this skill are adept at playing a musical instrument (REF). They also understand the finer points of musical expression (INT) and can appreciate instrumental performances more than the average person (PRE).

The specific instrument (or family of instruments, with the GM's permission) must be chosen when the skill is purchased.

Successful use of this skill means the character performs in a manner that moves or entertains the audience, or appraises the quality of instrumental performances by others. The effect number of the roll determines the quality of the performance; the higher the effect number the better the performance, and, thus, the better the audience's reaction.

This skill may also be used as a complementary skill to Persuasion in the appropriate circumstances (at the GM's discretion).

Types: Drums, Banjos, Flutes, Guitars, Harps, Horns, Keyboards, Violins, etc.

Juggling

Characters with this skill are adept at juggling and balancing objects (REF), including heavy and unbalanced objects (STR). They also understand the finer points of these physical forms of entertainment (INT) and can appreciate such performances more than the average person (PRE).

Successful use of this skill means the character performs in a manner that wows the audience, or appraises the quality of such performances by others. The quality of a performance is determined by the effect number of the roll; the higher the effect number the better the performance, and, thus, the better the audience's reaction.

Examples of people with this skill include: Chinese acrobats, street entertainers and James Ernest.

Mimicry

With this skill, characters can mimic voices and other sounds. Some common applications of this skill include impersonating another person's voice, making non-human sounds (such as bird songs, cars or machine-gun fire), and so on. Mimicry can be used either as a ruse or for entertainment.

Mimicry can be used as a complementary skill to Acting (for impersonating a specific person) and to other Social skills (at GM's discretion).

Singing

Characters with this skill have some ability with singing. They also understand the finer points of artistic expression and can appreciate singing performances more than the average person .

Successful use of this skill means the character performs in a manner that moves or entertains the audience, or appraises the value of song writing or performances by others. The effect number of the roll determines the quality of the performance; the higher the effect number the better the performance, and, thus, the better the audience's reaction.

This skill may also be used as a complementary skill to Persuasion in the appropriate circumstances (at the GM's discretion).

Ventriloquist

The skill of throwing one's voice. Characters with this skill can perform auditory illusions (HLT), making it sound as though their voice (or any sound they can make with their throat or mouth) is coming from some other location, such as another person, from behind someone, or even from an inanimate object.

This skill can also be used as complementary to Mimicry.

Sciences Skill Group

Scientific skills are useful as sources of information. In this way, they are like specialized versions of the Knowledge Skill, and other Skills in the

OPEN ANIME

Education Skill Group. Education Skills can be complementary to the skills in this Skill Group. A character with a scientific skill is more likely to use one of these Skills to know something than to do something. There are exceptions, of course, a chemist might roll to analyze or concoct something or a mathematician might roll to solve a complex equation.

Astronomy

The character has knowledge of the study of stars and planetary bodies, and includes knowledge of astrometrics, black holes, and the like. The extent of the character's knowledge will depend on the era in which the game is set (e.g., an astronomer in 2001 would know a lot more about outer space, as a rule, than one in 1801). The skill score reflects the depth of knowledge possessed by the character relative to the whole body of knowledge available in the current era.

Biology (Spec)

The character has knowledge of biology. The extent of the character's knowledge will depend on the era in which the game is set (e.g., a biologist in 2001 would know a lot more about biology, as a rule, than one in 1801). The skill score reflects the depth of knowledge possessed by the character relative to the whole body of knowledge available in the current era.

Specialties: Botany, Marine, Micro, Zoology or any other specialties approved by the GM.

Chemistry (Spec)

The character has a basic knowledge of chemical principles and formulae. The Skill's ranks reflects the depth of knowledge possessed by the character relative to the whole body of knowledge.

Mathematics is usually a complimentary skill to Chemistry.

Specialties: Biochemistry, Inorganic, Organic, or any other specialties approved by the GM.

Chemistry, Analytical

Training in chemical engineering theories useful in the analysis of compounds and their practical applications. A character with this is knowledgeable in the use of laboratory equipment and can analyze and synthesize chemicals (including explosives, but their use still requires the Demolitions Skill).

Geology

This is the science of the study of the earth. A geologist has knowledge of oil, rocks, metal ores and minerals, about earthquakes and volcanoes and about fossils.

Mathematics

The character has knowledge of mathematics (INT), including calculus, geometry, statistics, trigonometry and so on. The character is able to calculate mathematical formulae without the aid of a calculator or computer, given enough time (and, typically, something to notations, such as a pen and paper or chalk and a chalkboard). The use of a calculator, abacus, or other calculating device will provide a +3 to +9 bonus to the Skill Check.

Mathematics is usually a complimentary skill to Physics and Chemistry.

Physics (Type)

The character has knowledge of physics and the laws of nature, including kinetic energy, the effects of gravity on mass, and so on (INT). The extent of the character's knowledge will depend on the era in which the game is set. The skill score reflects the depth of knowledge possessed by the character relative to the whole body of knowledge available in the current era.

Mathematics is usually a complimentary skill to Physics.

A specialty must be selected for this skill when it is bought. This skill may be bought more than once, each time for a different science.

Types: Astrophysics, General, Nuclear, Quantum, or any other specialty approved by the GM.

OPEN ANIME

Simple Missile Weapon Skill Group

Similar to the Melee Weapons Skill group, these skills represent training in, and knowledge of, various simple ranged and missile weapons. Unless otherwise stated, these Skills are all based off of the Reflexes of the Character.

Boomerangs

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and care of boomerangs. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons (see *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on). Some boomerangs are designed to return to the thrower if they miss their intended target (takes 1d3 turns). Some boomerangs are heavy weapons with one "arm" longer than the other, that are designed to deliver a deadly blow. The latter, heavy variety do not return in the same manner as their smaller, symmetrical cousins.

Bows (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and maintenance (INT) of bows. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons (see *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on), or to string a bow in a hurry (STR).

Specialties: Longbows, Short bows, Composite bows.

Crossbows (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and maintenance (INT) of crossbows. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons (see *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on), or to cock a crossbow in a hurry (STR).
Specialties: Hand crossbows, Heavy Crossbows, Light Crossbows, Spear Guns.

Sling Weapons (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and maintenance (INT) of sling weapons. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons (see *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on), or to hurl missiles great distances (STR).

Specialties: Atlatl, Bolas, Simple Slings.

Slingshots

Characters with this skill are adept at the use (REF) and care (INT) of slingshots. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons (see *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on), or to fire small missiles great distances (STR).

Small Arms Skill Group

The Skills on this group represent the training in black powder (or energy) weapons that are fired by the character. This can range from pistols to shotguns to rifles of various types. The relevant Attribute of the Skill's use depends on whether the weapons is being used (REF) or maintained (INT).

Black Powder Weapons (Spec)

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and maintenance of primitive or low-tech firearms. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

In addition to firing a weapon, this skill can be used to reduce the time needed to reload one. The normal time required to reload a black powder weapon is 10 turns (about 1 minute). With a successful Challenging REF Attribute Check (TN 18), the time required is reduced to 10 - EN turns (minimum time required is 1 turn).

Specialties: Blunderbuss, Pistols, Long Rifles.

Gunplay

Characters with this skill are adept at tricks involving firearms. Some common tricks include spinning handguns and holstering them one-handed, fast drawing a weapon, and the like. Any cowpoke can point a pistol and shoot it, but a truly skilled gun hand can make it look like a work of art, or at least a circus sideshow act. Use this skill if you want

OPEN ANIME

your gunslinger to be able to make trick shots, spin his six-shooters like some dime novel hero or perform other gun tricks.



This skill allows the character to perform all manner of gun-handling maneuvers. Some of those tricks are nothing but a lot of flash, but others might just give you an edge in a gunfight. Some of the more common uses of this skill are listed below. Other uses are possible, but the GM has final say on what your character can and cannot accomplish with this skill. In addition, the Gunplay skill allows a character to offset penalties for performing a Fast Draw action. For every two levels in the skill, the character may ignore 1 point of penalty to his Firearms skill when performing a Fast Draw action. For example, a Ted's character, Jake Bannon, has Gunplay +5. Jake performs a Fast Draw action to take a +4 to his INI on the first turn of a shootout. Ordinarily this would impose a 6 penalty to Jake's Firearms Skill Check, but because Jake has Gunplay at +5, he only suffers a 4 penalty.

Note that while Gunplay is a common skill among gunslingers and shootists, it is not common among other character types. In fact, the mere display of gunplay skill could gain a character the reputation as a gunslinger, whether warranted or not.

TN	Task
15	Rifle Spin
15	Free Holster
18	Trick Shot (entertainment only)
18	Road Agent Spin (1 revolver)
21	Road Agent Spin (2 revolvers)
18	Border Shift

In addition, the Gunplay skill allows a character to offset penalties for performing a Fast Draw action. For every three levels in the skill, the character may ignore 1 point of penalty to his Firearms skill when performing a Fast Draw action. For example, a Ted's character, Jake Bannon, has Gunplay +5. Jake performs a Fast Draw action on the first turn of a shootout. Ordinarily this would impose a –3 penalty to Jake's Firearms Skill Check, but because Jake has Gunplay at +5, he only suffers a –1 penalty.

The Gunplay skill may be used as complementary to Persuasion (Intimidation) rolls made while a character is flashing his or her guns about.

Gunsmith (Type)

Characters with this skill are able properly maintain and effect repairs to firearms. In addition, the character can make minor modifications to the weapon, such as installing a custom mount or modifying the capacity of an ammunition magazine. Knowledge of energy weapons allows the character to effect repairs to various energy weapons, including blasters, lasers, energy swords, and other high-tech or sci-fi weapons (Electronics may be used as complementary to this skill). Heavy weapons

OPEN ANIME

include all of the weapons in the Heavy Weapons skill group. Small arms include all of the weapons in the Small Arms skill group.

Types: Energy Weapons, Heavy Weapons, Small Arms.

Pistols

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and maintenance of modern handguns, regardless of the type of action of the weapon (i.e., revolver, semi-automatic). This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

In addition to firing a weapon, this skill can be used to reduce the time needed to reload one or to clear a jam. The normal rate for reloading a revolver cylinder with loose rounds is 2 rounds per turn. Reloading a semi-automatic pistol (i.e., exchanging an empty magazine for a full one) or reloading a revolver using a speed-loader takes 1 turn. The standard rate for reloading an empty magazine is 1 round per turn. With a successful Challenging REF Attribute Check (TN 18), the character can load a number of rounds into a magazine or cylinder per turn equal to his REF, or reload a semi-automatic weapon with a fresh magazine (or a revolver with a speed-loader) and fire the weapon in the same turn.

Rifles

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and maintenance of modern rifles, regardless of the type of action of the weapon (i.e., lever-action, semi-automatic, bolt action). This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

In addition to firing a weapon, this skill can be used to reduce the time needed to reload one or to clear a jam. The normal rate for reloading a bolt action or lever action rifle is 1 round per turn. Reloading a semi-automatic rifle (i.e., exchanging an empty magazine for a full one) takes 1 turn. The standard rate for reloading an empty magazine is 1 round per turn. With a successful Challenging REF Attribute Check (TN 18), the character can load a number of rounds into a magazine or weapon per turn equal to his REF, or reload a semi-automatic weapon with a fresh magazine and fire the weapon in the same turn.

Shotguns

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and maintenance of modern smoothbore shotguns, regardless of the type of action of the weapon (i.e., breech-loaded, pump-action, semi-automatic). This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

In addition to firing a weapon, this skill can be used to reduce the time needed to reload one or to clear a jam. The normal rate for reloading a shotgun is 1 round per turn. With a successful Challenging REF Attribute Check (TN 18), the character can load 2 rounds into a magazine per turn.

Sub-machineguns

Characters with this skill are adept at the use and maintenance of modern submachine-guns. This skill is used when making attacks with such weapons. (See *Combat* for rules on making attacks, damage, and so on).

In addition to firing a weapon, this skill can be used to reduce the time needed to reload one or to clear a jam. The normal rate for reloading a submachine-gun (i.e., exchanging an empty magazine for a full one) is 1 turn. The standard rate for reloading an empty magazine is 1 round per turn. With a successful Challenging REF Attribute Check (TN 18), the character can load a number of rounds into a magazine or cylinder per turn equal to his REF, or reload a weapon with a fresh magazine and fire the weapon in the same turn.

Social Skill Group

Social skills are those relating primarily to social interaction with and the influencing of others. Social skills are generally governed by the Mind group, though some can be assisted by physical appearance or ability.

OPEN ANIME

Conversation

The skill of obtaining information from someone through conversation, without raising suspicion or, perhaps, without the subject even knowing he has been manipulated (INT). Conversation can also be used to make "small talk," to gain someone's trust or build a rapport with him (PRE). The difficulty of the Skill Check depends on the reluctance or inability of the individual to provide the information and the circumstances under which the conversation takes place.

Intrigue

This skill is the art of uncovering (or covering up) secrets. A secret could be a love affair, a disreputable past, or a plot to overthrow the king. Intrigue can be used to oppose Deduction (but not Intuition) when trying to effect a "cover up" or otherwise conceal important or sensitive information from others, especially in a social setting (such as at the Royal Court, a meeting of Parliament or a formal ball or dinner thrown at an embassy). This skill may also be used as complementary to Conversation, Persuasion or other social skills (GM's discretion).

Philosophy

This is the skill of philosophical theories, discussion and debate, covering such topics as "What is the meaning of life?" "Is there a God?" "What is mankind's greatest error?" and the like (INT). Philosophy also includes knowledge of theology and thus can be complementary to the Religion skill.

Sense Motive

A character uses this skill to try to determine if someone is bluffing, or lying to them (WILL). This skill represents sensitivity to the body language, speech habits and mannerisms of others.

A successful check allows the character to avoid being bluffed (see the Bluff skill). Sense Motive does not, however, allow a character to determine whether a given statement is a lie. The character can also use the skill to tell when someone is behaving oddly or to assess someone's trustworthiness. In addition, a character can use this skill to make an assessment of a social situation. With a successful check (TN 18), the character can get the feeling from another's behavior that something is wrong. Also, the character can get the feeling that someone is trustworthy and honorable.

A character can use Sense Motive to detect that a hidden message is being transmitted via the Bluff skill (TN equal to the bluff check result of the sender). If the character's check result beats the TN by 5 or more, the character understands the secret message as well. If the character's check fails by 5 or more, the character misinterprets the message in some fashion.

A Sense Motive check may be made as a reaction to another character's Bluff check. (When that's the case, the GM may roll the character's Sense Motive check in secret, so the character doesn't necessarily know someone's trying to bluff him or her.) Using Sense Motive to get a sense of someone's trustworthiness takes at least 1 minute.

Society (Type)

Characters with this skill are familiar with a particular sub-culture (INT), whether through direct interaction or some vicarious experience. This knowledge extends to important or well-known personalities, tastes in music and fashion, language (slang and/or dialects), as well as popular social spots and important businesses, and the like. For example, characters with Society (Courtier) know the finer points of court etiquette and the proper behavior for ladies and gentlemen. This is a critical skill among courtiers, diplomats and nobility.

A specific sub-culture must be chosen when this skill is purchased. This skill may be bought more than once, each time for a different sub-culture.

A success means the character acts appropriately (+3 all social skill checks for the rest of the event) or gains one important piece of information from interaction with one or more members of the group. An effect number of 6 or higher means the character is noticed and gains the special attention of one or more important figures in the group (+3 to all social skill checks for the rest of the event, or

OPEN ANIME

the GM may role-play some special result at his discretion).

Colleen is playing Adrienne, a commoner, in a Victorian Era game. Adrienne is masquerading as a noblewoman at a formal ball. As she mingles with the guests, trying to be accepted as one of them, the GM tells Colleen that she must make a Difficult Society (High Society) roll (TN 21). Colleen rolls and gets a total of 27! Because Adrienne's roll was 6 points higher than the required TN, the GM decides that she has gained special attention. He tells Erin that not only has Adrienne been accepted and performed as expected by the other guests, she has gained the notice of the Duke of Effingham, who invites her to dine with him!

A failed roll means the character has failed to gain any useful information or has made some simple, but forgivable, mistake (-3 to all social skill checks for the rest of the event). A roll that fails by 6 or more (i.e., a Skill Check total that is less than TN-6) means the character has made some major gaffe, insulting the host or other dignitary at the function. The GM should determine an appropriate consequence of the character's *faux pas*. The character may have gained an enemy, been challenged to a duel, been captured by a press gang, or been mugged in an alley. In cases of a very low roll resulting in failure (e.g., 9 less than the TN), the GM can simply assign an amount of injury for the mishap (e.g., potential stunning Damage Check) or run the event as an encounter; perhaps with the intervention of the other PCs. The latter approach could easily lead to an adventure unto itself.

In the same situation, Colleen rolls below an Average success, three levels below the required Difficult success. Disastrous! The GM decides that not only has Adrienne been exposed as a fraud, the Duke of Effingham is particularly offended and orders her to be arrested and placed in gaol!

The GM is encouraged to modify the Target Number of the roll based on circumstances.

Society may be used as a complementary skill to most, if not all, social skills, including Persuasion, Politics, and Conversation.

Types: Corporate, Courtier, High Society, Military, Streetwise.

Style

This skill covers knowledge of the latest styles and fashions, fashion design, and presentation (INT). Characters with this skill can keep up with the latest fashion trends, identify the origin (region or designer) of fashion styles, design new fashions and coordinate fashion shows.
Style can be used as complementary to certain social Skill Checks (GM's discretion).

Symbols (Type)

This skill represents the study and recognition of symbols. Characters with this skill are familiar with the various family, governmental and corporate crests, banners and devices (INT). A character making a successful Symbols Skill Check will recognize the owner (individual, family, organization or nation) to which a symbol or other device belongs. The GM may subject the roll to a +3 to -3 modifier, depending on how well-known or obscure the symbol is in the local area.

Sir Thomas sees a regal crest on a tapestry in the market. Sir Thomas' player wishes to identify the owner of the crest and tells the GM so. The GM has the player make a Symbols (Heraldry) check for Sir Thomas, with a +3 to the Skill Check because the GM knows the crest is that of a lord who lives some distance away.

Types: Corporate Logos, Heraldry, Naval Flags, Runes.

Social Sciences Skill Group

Social Science skills are those skills gained primarily from formal study, whether at a university, monastery or other institute, but which are different from the so-called "hard sciences" (see Science Skill Group above). Most Social Science skills are associated with the Mind attribute group. The Social Science skill group includes the following skills.

Anthropology (Spec)

Characters with this skill are familiar with the customs, traditions, and myth about a culture, nation, or region (INT).

Skill checks are not needed for "common knowledge," such as local holidays, the names of important local people, and so on.

A successful Anthropology roll provides the character with more obscure facts, such as the names of important persons or deities, methods of food preparation, and other details about the subject.

Note that this skill does not convey information about the local underworld or seedier side of the area. For that information the character will need the Society (Streetwise) skill.

Specialties: Specific culture or civilization.

Archaeology (Spec)

Characters with this skill are trained in the systematic study of past (even prehistoric) human life and culture by the recovery and examination of remaining material evidence, such as graves, buildings, tools, and pottery. Characters also have knowledge of the science or study of antiquities (especially prehistoric antiquities), such as the remains of buildings or monuments of an early epoch, inscriptions, implements, and other relics, written manuscripts, and so on.

Specialties: Artifacts, Early Civilizations, Excavation, Paleobotany, Paleontology, Prehistoric Civilizations.

Geography (Spec)

This skill covers knowledge of natural features of the earth, landmarks, climate, political, as well as cursory knowledge of the borders and inhabitants of the nations of the world. Characters with this skill can identify internationally known landmarks, the location of major bodies of water, the average climate and rainfall of a given country, and so on.
Specialties: Specific region or continent.

History (Spec)

Characters with this skill know a great deal about history and can recall general or specific details with a successful skill check (INT). The more obscure the detail or more distant the subject from the character's locality, the higher the required difficulty of the roll is.

Sir Thomas, having recognized a tapestry as belonging to Lord Culler, tries to recall information about the lord's family from history. The player makes a History skill check for Sir Thomas and succeeds, so the GM tells the player that Sir Thomas recalls that Lord Culler died on the battlefield 20 years ago.

Specialties: Locality, National, Organizational, World.

Politics

Politics is the study of the processes, principles, and structure of government and of political institutions. Characters with this skill are familiar with government and the governing of a political entity, such as a nation or municipality, as well as the administration and control of its internal and external affairs (INT). Characters with this skill understand the procedures and rules of government, how to conduct a government meeting, draft bills and pass them into law, and how to engage in political debate (PRE). Characters also know how to garner and maintain public support, how to manipulate public opinion (PRE) and how to present information in the best possible light or to misrepresent information to avoid a scandal (INT).

Politics is an important skill for members of government (politicians), lobbyists, and even some special operations forces (such as counter-insurgents) and CIA operatives.

Orate can be used as complementary to this skill.

Psychology (Spec)

The character has knowledge of human behavior and the conscious and subconscious mind, including effects of abuse, the effects of mood disorders, and so on (INT). The extent of the character's

OPEN ANIME

knowledge will depend on the era in which the game is set. The skill score reflects the depth of knowledge possessed by the character relative to the whole of knowledge available in the current era.

A specialty must be selected for this skill when it is bought. This skill may be bought more than once, each time for a different science.

Specialties: Alien (species), Animal, Behavioral, Criminal, Counseling, Profiling, or any other specialty approved by the GM.

Religion (Type)

Characters with this skill are knowledgeable in the history, traditions, tenets and ceremony of major religions (INT). When this skill is purchased, the character must specify one primary religion to which the skill score applies.

Sir Thomas has the skill Religion (Christianity) +5. He has a skill of +5 with his specialty (Christianity) but no practical knowledge of other major religions.

Religion may be used as a complementary skill to other applicable Skill Checks (GM's discretion). For example, the GM should allow Religion to be used as complementary to a Philosophy roll if the character is involved in a religious debate.

Types: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Paganism, Wicca or any other religion allowed by the GM.

Technical Skills

The Skills in the Technical Skill Group represent a practical application of many of the Skills available in the Education and Science Skill Groups. While those Skill Groups deal with the knowledge of a particular subject matter, science, or topic, the Skills in the Technical Skill Group deal with the practical application of that knowledge. Many of the Skills of the Science Skill Group, and individual Knowledge skills can be appropriate as complementary skills for Skills in this Skill Group. Unless otherwise stated, the Skills of the Technical Skill Group are governed by the Mind Attribute group.



Astrogation

Characters with this skill are able to determine their approximate position in space, plot a course between two known points and navigate between and within star systems. Astrogation may be used as a complementary to the Starships skill and others with GM's permission.

This skill is common among professional starship pilots, merchants, and space smugglers.

Benchthumping

Sometimes equipment or machinery becomes fouled up to the

OPEN ANIME

point that no amount of tinkering or repair will fix it. At this point, as a last ditch effort, a good, solid hit is all that can get the machinery working again. On a successful check with this skill, the machine will operate for a number of Turns equal to the EN of the check. On a failed check, the equipment is inoperable until it can be worked on.

Computers (Spec)

The knowledge and use of computer language code to create or alter software programs. Characters with this skill can create programs, hack computer networks, and so on.

Specialties: Hacking, Programming, Use.

Electrician

Electrician is the skill of building, installing, maintaining, and repairing electrical devices and systems, such as those in computers, vehicles, environmental systems, buildings, and the like. Characters with this skill are able to effect repairs on, maintain and even rebuild items within their specialty. The types of devices or equipment that a specialty will apply to depend on the technology level available in the campaign.

Electronics (Spec)

Electronics is the skill of building, repairing and, maintaining electronic devices and equipment. Characters with this skill understand the principles of electronics and are able to diagnose problems occurring in electronic devices and fix them.

Specialties: Appliances, Comm., Security Systems, Weapons.

Engineering (Type)

Engineering is the skill of designing, building, maintaining, and repairing systems. Characters with this skill are able to effect repairs on, maintain, and even rebuild items within their specialty. The kinds of devices or equipment that a specialty applies to depends on the technology level available in the campaign.

This skill must be purchased separately for each type of engineering the player wishes his character to possess. Note that this is not the same skill as Combat Engineering.

Specialties: Architectural, Propulsion, Structural, Transportation.

Mechanic (Spec)

Mechanics is the skill of repairing and maintaining motorized vehicles (such as planes, cars, trucks, boats and military vehicles), as well as diagnosing problems. When the skill is bought the player must select a specialty. Characters with this skill can repair axles, motors, brakes, and so on.

Specialties: Specific part or system (e.g., brakes, transmission, jet engines).

Repair

The character is skilled in repairing, or jury-rigging, damaged machinery or equipment.

Most Repair checks are made to fix complex electronic or mechanical devices. The DC is set by the GM. In general, simple repairs have a TN of 10 or 15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex repair work has a TN of 18 or higher and can require an hour or more to complete.

Repair Task (Example)	Repair TN	Time
Simple (tool, simple weapon)	10	1 min.
Moderate (mechanical or electronic component)	15	10 min.
Complex (mechanical or electronic device)	20	1 hr.
Advanced (cutting-edge mechanical or electronic device)	25	10 hr.

Jury-Rig: A character can choose to attempt jury-rigged, or temporary, repairs. Doing this reduces the Repair check's TN by 5, and allows the character to make the checks in as little time as a turn. However, a jury-rigged repair can only fix a single problem with a check, and the temporary

OPEN ANIME

repair only lasts until the end of the current scene or encounter. The jury-rigged object must be fully repaired thereafter. A character can also use jury-rig to hot-wire a car or jump-start an engine or electronic device. The TN for this is at least 15, and it can be higher depending on the presence of security devices.

The character can re-attempt a failed Repair check, but in some specific cases, the GM may decide that a failed Repair check has negative ramifications that prevent repeated checks.

Repair requires an electrical tool kit, a mechanical tool kit, or a multipurpose tool, depending on the task. If the character do not have the appropriate tools, he or she takes a –4 penalty on the check. Mechanic or Electronics can provide a +2 bonus on Repair checks made for mechanical or electronic devices.

Technological Knowledge

The one thing that the Character knows is technology, so much that he can make guesses about advanced or alien technologies as well. Of course, these technologies do not stay alien to the Character for very long.

The character can make a Technological Knowledge Check to correctly identify starships, mecha, robots, and cybernetic attachments, as well as identify unfamiliar technological devices. The TN for identifying technological items vary depending on the type of information required:

Unfamiliar Item	TN
Basic tool or instrument	12
Robotic or vehicular component	15
Cybernetic attachment	18
Alien weapon or nano-technology	21
Alien artifact	24

Identifying a starship by its type and subtype, identifying a mecha by its superstructure, or identifying a robot by its frame: TN 12.

Determining the function or purpose of a particular mechanical system or cybernetic attachment: TN 15.

Recalling the standard, factory-model design specs of a particular type or class of starship, mecha, or robot: TN 18.

When confronted with an unfamiliar piece of technology or alien artifact, you can make a Knowledge (technology) check to correctly surmise the primary (if not singular) purpose of the device. A successful check result does not enable you to activate the item, nor does it make you proficient with the item. The TN of the Knowledge (technology) check depends on the item being identified and the difference in Progress Level, as shown below.

Operate Electronics (Spec)

Characters with this skill can operate electronic communication and sensor equipment, including both military and civilian versions, and those aboard vessels, portable and stationary devices, and so on. Characters can also maintain and make minor, emergency repairs to such devices, though any complex repairs will require the Electronics skill.

A successful Skill Check also allows the user to detect objects using sensor equipment, such as sonar and radar. Operate Electronics can also be used to try to jam sensors as with jamming communications.

Attempts to jam communication equipment requires a contested Skill Check, with both sides using the Operate Electronics skill. If one side has more advanced or powerful technology, the GM may allow a bonus of +1 to +5 to that side's Skill Check. The side with the higher Effect Number wins the contest.

Specialties: Communication, Sensors.

Transportation Skill Group

The Transportation Skill Group consists of those Skills which deal with the operation and driving/piloting of the various sorts of vehicles that

would be available in a campaign. These are the skills of race car and truck drivers, as well as Air Force pilots, and ship captains.

Drive (Spec)

Characters with this skill have practical experience operating ground vehicles, including performing maneuvers in difficult conditions, avoiding obstacles, performing routing maintenance and operating all common equipment normally associated with them (such as climate control, radio, checking gauges, and filling the gas tank).

Drive is a Universal Skill.

Specialties: Cars, Motorcycles, Tracked Vehicles, Tractors/Semis.

Piloting (Spec)

Characters with this skill have practical experience piloting aircraft, including performing maneuvers in difficult conditions, dog fighting, aerial acrobatics, performing routing maintenance and pre-flight checks, and operating all common equipment normally associated with them (such as climate control, radio, radar, and so on).

Specialties: Helicopters, Jets, Planes, Space Craft, Vectored Thrust.



Sailing (Spec)

Characters with this skill have practical experience piloting sailing vessels, including performing maneuvers in difficult conditions, performing inspections for fitness and sea-worthiness, and operating all common equipment normally associated with them (such as securing sails and rigging, radio [if appropriate], signaling with flags, and so on). Any characters with this skill can perform as a crewman on a sailing ship. Seamanship is also important for ships' captains and masters, who must issue orders to the crew.

Specialties: Sailboats, Tall Ships.

Starships (Spec)

Characters with this skill have practical experience piloting interplanetary and interstellar craft, including performing maneuvers in difficult conditions, dog fighting, performing routine maintenance and pre-flight checks, and operating all common equipment normally associated with them (such as climate control, radio, sensors, and so on).

Specialties: Capital Ships, Cargo Ships, Starfighters, System Boats.

Watercraft (Spec)

Characters with this skill have practical experience piloting powered, sea-going vessels, including performing maneuvers in difficult conditions, maneuvering and formations, performing inspections for fitness and sea-worthiness, and operating all common equipment normally associated with them (such as climate control, radio, radar or sonar, signaling with flags, and so on). Characters with this skill also know the basic workings of powered sea-going vessels and can perform as a crewman on one.

Specialties: Hovercraft, Large Vessels, Motorboats, Submarines.

STEP 4: ABILITIES

What are Abilities? Many role-playing systems have advantages or other character traits that help to make the characters different from each other (in a "positive" way, giving some form of benefit or super power to a character), to give each character different advantages during play. In the *Open Anime* system those traits are known as Abilities. This section outlines the most common Abilities that would be available for characters in a wide variety of different campaign types and genre simulations.

Associated Skills

If an Ability logically requires a skill to use it efficiently, the skill must be bought separately. For example, the superpower Flight allows a character to fly, and usually no skill roll is needed. But the ability to make intricate maneuvers in close combat without slamming into a wall requires a roll against the Athletics skill. (The GM may ignore this and simply say that no roll is needed for any flying maneuver with a Flight Power.)

This can be especially true with magic: the ability to cast spells at all may be a gift, but to do it right is a skill, or even many different skills. Focus is the Skill for *using* magic (or psionics, etc.) while Arcana is the Skill for knowledge *about* magic.

Effect-Based vs. Power-Based

Open Anime is an effect-based system. This means that the effects of an Ability are provided, and then the player or GM have to define the specific application of those effects. For example, a character may achieve the capabilities of the Flight Ability by using: wings, magic, anti-gravity field, psionics, force of Mind, reality-warping techniques, thermal wave-riding, or many other methods. Similarly, a Rank 2 Special Attack does 2d6 points of damage that could take the form of a near- infinite number of sources.

A power-based system defines both the effects and the application of an ability or power. That fantasy RPG, for example, details magic and special attack spells such as Burning Hands, Fireball, Lightning Bolt, and Magic Missile. They all deliver damage, but the way in which the way in which they deliver damage is determined by the rules, not the players.

An effect-based system gives players more freedom to create, but a particular application might not make any sense if not used with forethought. Talk with your GM if you have any questions regarding the special effect applications of your character's Abilities

An important thing to remember when purchasing Effect-Based powers, is that in order to get an effect the Player **must** pay for that effect. Otherwise, assume that the character can not do it. GMs are allowed some flexibility in allowing characters to do things, but as a rule of thumb the Player and the GM should keep in mind that there is no such thing as a free lunch.

Effects in Open Anime

Special effects are a very important factor to character creation using the Abilities in *Open Anime*. The special effects of a power created with these Abilities help to define what it is and how it's created, and help distinguish one power from another power. For instance, three different characters could all have 4d6 Special Attacks, but each might have different effects: One is fire, another uses electricity, and the third fires a sonic attack. Each type of effect can have extra benefits or limits beyond the basic power description; exactly what is up to the GM.

Some campaigns may have GM-imposed limitations on what is considered to be "legal." Always check with the GM of the campaign before using any effect for your character's Abilities.

Handling Effects in Campaigns

Effects can and should be used to make adventures more dramatic, and sometimes to help characters overcome problems. It's a classic bit – the hero manages to defeat the villain's plot by tuning his energy blast to just the right frequency to deactivate the force field, or some such pseudo-scientific explanation.

Effects can let a character do a little bit more than the basic power description suggests, or sometimes they can restrict a power somewhat. For instance, sonic effects just won't work in a vacuum, but the GM may let you do some extra damage with a sonic effect under water. It's up to the GM how much or how little the special effect can affect an Ability.

The GM can have the Player make a Power Use skill check to see if effects can have a game effect outside of the ordinary; the relevant Attribute for this is typically Mind, but can be based on other Attributes depending on the nature of the power being simulated, as well as the GM of the campaign.

The important thing to remember is that *Open Anime* is your game, to be used as you desire. How the given effect of a power built through the Abilities is ultimately up to the decision of the GM and the "reality" of her campaign.

Fatigue and Abilities

While this is not appropriate to all games or genres, GMs of *Open Anime* games may introduce the concept of Fatigue to their games. Fatigue comes in two types (mental and physical) one for each of the Core Attributes. When a character is in a long term situation (typically more than 5 Turns in Combat) that would be mentally or physically fatiguing to the character, the GM may require a Fatigue check. To make a Fatigue check roll three dice and add the appropriate Core Attribute, and compare it to a TN of 21. If the check succeeds, the character is not fatigued and may continue; making another Fatigue check the next Turn.

If the Fatigue check fails, the character is at -3 to all actions for a number of Turns equal to the amount by which the check failed. So, if the character's total on the Fatigue check was 18 then the effects of the fatigue would last for 3 Turns.

For a mental Fatigue check, all Skills and Abilities associated with the Mind Attribute receive the -3, and if it is a physical Fatigue check then all Skill and Abilities associated with the Body Attribute are affected.

Ability Checks

An Ability Check is a roll to see if an Ability can be used successfully. As with Attribute Checks and Skill Checks, it isn't necessary to roll for every little thing that a character wants to do, but rather the rolls are saved for when the character is trying something that requires extra effort, or is in direct competition with someone else. If a skill is needed as part of the check, it is recommended that the Focus skill of your character be used.

Relevant Attributes: Each Ability lists a *Relevant Attribute*; Ability Checks will usually be treated as an Attribute Check using the Relevant Attribute. For certain Abilities there are multiple possible Relevant Attributes; in these cases the choice of which one to use depends on the nature of the Ability itself, and how the character is using it in that particular instance.

Ability List

Below is a list of the Abilities available in *Open Anime*. GMs may also create new Abilities for their campaigns, and players may sometimes wish to create new Abilities for their characters, using these Abilities as a guideline. Just be sure to stick close to the existing Abilities so that any new ones will be balanced against the existing ones. New Abilities are deliver too much power or too much of an advantage for too little of a cost are grossly unbalancing to the existing Abilities.

Ace! Techniques

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Stat: None
Progression: 1 technique per Rank

The Ace! Ability is for those characters whose forte is with vehicles, whether automobile, aircrafts or watercraft. The character is a natural Ace with a type of vehicle. Each Rank gives the character one Ace! technique, the GM will determine if a special maneuver can be assigned multiple times. While some of these techniques are usable only for certain types of vehicles, most are usable for almost any type. When this Ability is combined with a Skill Knack (pg. XX) that effects driving and/or piloting skills, the combination creates a character who is truly the best at what they do.

- Acceleration Tolerance
  This is the ability to withstand the sudden high-G forces of extreme acceleration for short periods. It is most useful for fighter pilots, especially those pilots that fly jets or other high-speed vehicles. This advantage gives a bonus on HLT rolls to avoid the effects of acceleration. The character's bonus to skill rolls involving sports or athletic pursuits and HLT checks is +4, when the character is under high-speed conditions.
- Battle Run
  When using an attack action with a vehicle ranged weapon, the pilot can move both before and after the attack, provided that the total distance moved does not exceed the vehicle's normal MOV.
- Dodge
  When operating a vehicle of a type with which the character is skilled, apply a +1 bonus to the vehicle's Defense against attacks from one enemy vehicle designated during your action. The character can select a new enemy ship on any action.
- Feel For the Road
  The character has an unusually good sense of how a vehicle reacts to rough terrain; reduce all terrain penalties by half.
- Feint
  When piloting a vehicle with which the character is skilled, make a Bluff check in vehicle combat as a move action. In addition, the character receives a +2 bonus on Bluff checks made to feint in vehicle combat. Feinting in vehicle combat requires an attack action.
- Force Stop
  The character knows how to make another vehicle come to a stop after a special kind of sideswipe attack. When the character attempts a sideswipe stunt with a surface vehicle, the character can force the other vehicle to a stop by nudging it into a controlled sideways skid. In addition to the normal requirements for attempting a sideswipe stunt, the character must have sufficient movement remaining to move a number of squares equal to the character's turn number.

  After succeeding on the check to attempt the sideswipe, the character makes a Drive check opposed by the other driver. If the character succeeds, turn the other vehicle 90 degrees across the front of the character's, so that they form a tee. Move them forward a distance equal to the character's turn number. The vehicles end their movement at that location, at stationary speed, and take their normal sideswipe damage. If the character fails the check, resolve the sideswipe normally.
- Gunnery
  The character does not take a penalty on attack rolls when firing a vehicle weapon. Without this technique, the character take a –4 penalty on attack rolls when firing a vehicle weapon.
- Heavy-Helmer
  The character is unusually adept at handling large and heavy vehicles. When piloting Colossal or larger vehicles, the character can ignore up to 4 points in handling penalties. If the vehicle's MB (see p. 213) is -1 or better, the character gets a +2 bonus instead.
- Hotshot
  The character gains a +4 bonus to piloting rolls made for attempting Extreme Maneuvers (see p. 216).

- Internal Compass
  The character has a naturally unshakable sense of direction; +2 to all navigation checks.
- Masterful Control
  The character has a deft touch on steering wheels, throttles, and other control surfaces. Whenever the character suffers a vehicular mishap, he or she may attempt an immediate Driving Check without using an action to regain control of the vehicle before anything can go wrong.
- Mobility
  When operating a vehicle of a type with which the character possesses a Drive/Pilot skill, apply a +4 bonus to the character's Skill checks.
- Move-By Attack
  The character takes no vehicle speed penalty when making an attack while in a moving vehicle. Also, if the character is the driver, he or she can take his or her attack action to make an attack at any point along the vehicle's movement. When attacking from a moving vehicle, a character takes a penalty based on the vehicle's speed. Passengers can ready an action to make an attack when their vehicle reaches a particular location, but the driver must make his or her attack action either before or after the vehicle's movement.
- Ram
  The character knows how to use his or her vehicle as a weapon. When he or she attempts to ram another vehicle, the target does not get a Reflexes check for half damage.
- Strafe
  The character can use a vehicle's ranged weapon set on automatic fire to affect a wider area than normal. When using a starship's ranged weapon on autofire, the character can affect an area 2,000-feet long and 500-feet wide (that is in a straight line). A vehicle's weapon on autofire normally affects a 1,000 feet by 1,000 feet area.
- Throttle Jockey
  The character has a masterful control over his or her vehicle's speed; penalties for maneuvering at high speeds are halved.

Adaptation

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: The character is adapted to 1 environment/Rank

The character can adapt to survive in a number of environments hostile to ordinary humans equal to his or her Adaptation Rank. Examples of hostile environments include: acidic/basic liquids, extra dimensional, extreme pressure, intense cold, intense heat, noxious gases, radiation, underwater (the ability to "breathe" water), and vacuum (low pressure, not the absence of air). Adaptation does not apply to non-human characters whose natural environment is not the Earth's atmosphere (such as a mermaid living in the ocean). In these cases, the character must assign Adaptation (Earth Atmosphere) to survive in normal human environments. Surviving in low- or no-oxygen environments is a Special Defense Ability, not Adaptation.

When faced with "attacks" of a type that would be covered by your character's Adaptation (such as heat or fire based attacks for someone with Adaptation (Fire), your character's Toughness is considered to be +2 for purposes of taking damage.

Alternate Form

Costs: 2, 3 or 9 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: The character's alternate form is built from 10 Character Points/Rank

A character with Alternate Form can instantaneously transform into one other specific form that is determined during character creation and approved by the Game Master. Once selected, the form cannot be altered. Alternate Form allows the character to possess a radically different body shape than his or her normal human form, and exhibit exotic physical features as well. Remember, everything

OPEN ANIME

for the Alternate Form (including Attribute scores) need to be purchased using this pool of points.

If a character only has a single, permanent, non-human form, this Ability should not be applied. Instead, the character must acquire the relevant Abilities and Disabilities that best represent the form's capabilities. A character with several different Alternate Forms should assign this Ability multiple times. The Abilities gained in the character's Alternate Form obviously cannot be Dependent upon the Alternate Form Ability. Different Alternate Forms can be built with different Ability Ranks as well.

Partial-Powered Form (3 Points/ Rank)

The form is built from 10 Character Points for each Alternate Form Rank, which can be used to acquire Attributes and Abilities. The character's Attributes all drop to zero and thus must be raised with the Alternate Form's new Character Points (using the Enhanced Attribute Ability below); Derived Attributes also must be recalculated. Additionally, the character's regular Abilities, Skills, and Disabilities no longer function in the Alternate Form, though the GM may decide that some Abilities (such as Connections, Item of Power, and others) and some Disabilities still retain their effects. Disabilities can also be assigned to the new Form to provide additional Character Points. Unless the GM indicates otherwise, normal clothing becomes part of the Alternate Form as well.



Full-Powered Form (9 Points/ Rank)

The form is built from 10 Character Points for each Alternate Form Rank, which can be used to acquire Abilities for the new form. The character retains all the Attributes, Ability Ranks, Skill Ranks, and Disability Bonus Points associated with his or her regular form. The newly acquired Abilities and Disabilities add to the character's normal form. Unless the GM indicates otherwise, normal clothing becomes part of the Alternate Form as well.

Cosmetic Changes (2 Points)

A "Rank 0" option of the Alternate Form Ability is also available at the cost of 2 Character Points. This Rank allows a character to undergo cosmetic changes that confer no additional abilities on the target. This includes: a 10% size increase or decrease, change of gender, 50% age increase or decrease, color changes (eye, skin, or hair), and minor physical changes (shape of ears, facial features, or bodily proportions).

Animal Friendship

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Presence
Progression: Descriptive; see below

OPEN ANIME

A character with this Ability has an unusual, instinctive empathy towards animals. On a successful Presence check, the character can befriend an otherwise hostile or even ferocious animal. For example, this would allow a character to get past a police dog or guard dog. Utilizing this ability requires behaving in a calm and friendly manner; a friendship cannot be made if the character or his or her friends have already attacked the animal. An "animal" is defined as a natural creature with Intellect of 1-2 that lacks the ability to communicate via a structured language (that is, it cannot speak).

The GM can apply difficulty penalties or bonuses to the Presence check based on the character's actions and the situation. For example, the dice roll modifier could be -4 if the animal is especially fierce or very loyal to its current owner, or +4 if the characters just saved the animal from some nasty fate. When befriending a pack of animals, a dice roll penalty of -2 is assigned for two animals, -4 for 3-4 animals, -6 for 5-8 animals, -8 for 9-16 animals, and higher penalties for larger packs. If the attempt fails, the animal(s) may attack, threaten the character, or slink away, depending on its nature. A second attempt is usually not possible within a short period of time. If an animal is befriended, it will let the character and companions approach it, and will not attack or act aggressively unless it or the members of its pack or family are threatened. At the GM's option, it may be affectionate enough to want to follow behind the character or somehow assist him or her.

An animal that has been befriended simply likes the character. Actual training of the animal takes time and requires the application of the Animal Handling Skill. The character's Rank in this Ability (round up) is added to his or her Animal Handling Skill.

Rank 1	+1 to the Animal Handling Skill.
Rank 2	An additional +1 modifier is applied to the Presence check. +2 to the Animal Handling Skill.
Rank 3	An additional +2 modifier is applied to the Presence check. +3 to the Animal Handling Skill.
Rank 4	An additional +3 modifier is applied to the Presence check. +4 to the Animal Handling Skill.
Rank 5	An additional +4 modifier is applied to the Presence check. +5 to the Animal Handling Skill.
Rank 6	An additional +5 modifier is applied to the Presence check. +6 to the Animal Handling Skill.

Armor

Cost: 2 or 4 Points/Rank

Relevant Attribute: Health

Progression: All attack damage the character receives is reduced by 4 points/Rank

The Armor Ability represents actual Armored plates, or simply skin or clothing that is highly resistant to damage. It is most often found on combat vehicles, cyborgs, androids, giant monsters, and, powerful magical beings.

Armor reduces the damage that is inflicted on the character or structure. Armor reduces the damage of each attack by 4 Points per Rank. The base cost for Armor is 4 Points/Rank. Unlike TGH, which only protects effects Blunt or Stunning damage, Armor protects against all sorts of damage/

A number of options are available for the Armor Ability, which alter the Ability's Point cost or modify the Armor's effectiveness. The minimum Point cost of Armor, regardless of options, is 1 Character Point.

Partial

The Armor has a small thin area (half Armor value, -1 to Point cost) or an unarmored area (no Armor value, -2 to Point cost) that can be targeted

OPEN ANIME

using a Called Shot. Point cost reductions apply to the total cost of Armor, not the cost per Rank.

Optimized Armor

The Armor is focused against a particular uncommon attack form. Eligible attack forms include electricity, cold, laser beams, fire/heat, energy blasts, psionic attacks, etc. Armor cannot be optimized against broad categories such as blunt impacts or piercing weapons, however. Optimized Armor provides doubled protection against the chosen attack form only, and no protection against other forms. A character can acquire both Optimized Armor and ordinary Armor by assigning the Armor Ability twice.

Shield Only

The Armor does not cover the character's entire body. Instead, it is a shield that the user must deliberately interpose in front of a melee or unarmed attack using a Block Defense. The character must also possess the Combat Technique (Block Ranged Attacks) Ability to use the shield in a Block Defense against ranged attacks. If the character successfully defends, the shield's Armor can protect against damage associated with the Ability Rank. This option reduces the cost of Armor to 2 Points/Rank (rather than 4 Points/Rank), and increases the protection provided from 4 Points/Rank to 8 Points/Rank.

Attack Combat Mastery

Cost: 2 or 3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: +1/Rank; see below

Attack Combat Mastery denotes either an innate "killer instinct" or the character's intimate knowledge of a wide range of offensive combat techniques covering all aspects of armed and unarmed encounters (including ranged weapons). Individual Combat Skills let a character specialize with particular weapons or specific styles, but Attack Combat Mastery allows a character to pick up any weapon (or use none at all) and still be dangerously proficient. The bonus gained from Attack Combat Mastery is applied to your character's Combat or Athletics skills, as well as being applied to the Initiative score.

This Ability can be used to simulate someone who is not very graceful or agile under normal circumstances, but has had a great deal of combat training, natural ability in this area, or someone who has a power or talent that simulates combat prowess, like the "photographic reflexes" ability popular in comic books.

Purchasing this Ability with the Restriction Disability can tailor the bonuses of Attack Combat Mastery to forms of combat besides just the straight forward. For example, if purchased with the "Psionic Combat Only" Restriction, Attack Combat Mastery can be applied to the Mind rolls for psionic combat. Clever GMs and Players could likely come up with more variations upon this Ability. If Attack Combat Mastery is purchased with either of these restrictions, the cost is only 2 Points/Rank.

Aura of Command

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: Descriptive; see below

The character possesses a natural knack for leadership. This Ability only works on allies or subordinates or possibly with leaderless individuals looking for guidance (such as ordinary people caught in an emergency). Instead of distracting them, the character is able to inspire allies or neutrals into following him or her into dangerous situations that they might otherwise avoid.

Simply because a character is in a position of authority over other people does not automatically imply that he or she possesses the Aura of Command Ability. In a military structure, subordinates Mind usually follow most orders (even dangerous ones) without hesitation because it is part of their job. Aura of Command reflects a character's almost unnatural ability to inspire others to engage in actions that few people would ever consider undertaking. Note that few leaders have an Aura of Command sufficient to inspire their entire force at once.

OPEN ANIME

Commanders usually concentrate on key individuals (such as immediate subordinates) and hope the actions of these people Mind encourage others to follow them.

Rank 1	The character can inspire one person.
Rank 2	The character can inspire up to two people.
Rank 3	The character can inspire a small team (1-10 people).
Rank 4	The character can inspire a medium sized group of people (up to 100 people).

Awareness

Cost: 5 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: +1 to Mind checks to detect upcoming cosmic or mystical events

This Ability allows the character to be "in tune" with the cosmos while possessing a certain faculty for anticipating events on the cosmic scale and recognizing when the universe is being threatened.

Whenever a cosmic event or catastrophe is imminent or occurring, the GM should allow a character with the Awareness Ability to make a Mind check (modified by the character's Ranks in this Ability) against a TN determined by the GM. The more powerful the "individuals" and the larger of the "scale" of the events, the easier it is for the character with Awareness to detect what is coming. In most cases, the GM should make the Mind check when using Awareness, so that the player will not automatically assume that something is going to happen. The information given about the upcoming cosmic event should be as vague or as detailed as the GM thinks is necessary.

Characters with the Awareness Ability (at any Rank) are able to perceive and communicate with spirits, ghosts, and any sort of mystically insubstantial and/or invisible creatures or beings.

Block Ability

Cost: 1 or 6 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: Linear, see text

Opponents have difficulty affecting the character with specific Abilities because the Abilities' effects are blocked. For 1 Point/Rank the character can block one Ability at each Rank (that Ability must be determined during character creation) or when the Block Ability is purchased for the character. In the case of the Special Attack Ability, only another character's single, specific attack is blocked (which reduces an enemies chance to hit the character). For 6 Points/Rank, the character can block all Abilities, including all Special Attacks (they suffer a penalty to hit the character but if they do hit, they have full effect). Targets cannot be blocked from the effects of their own Abilities, however.

When an opponent targets the character, he or she must make a successful Attribute check against a TN of 15 with a +1 to the TN for every Rank of the target character's Block Ability. If the check fails, the Ability does not affect the character (although a multi-target Ability may still affect the other targets). The Attribute check roll is determined by the "Relevant Attribute" of the Ability used. If the check succeeds, the target character is affected by the Ability as normal.

Charismatic

Cost: 2 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Presence
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Art of Distraction may represent oratorical ability, innate Presence, or even a beautiful or resonant voice. This Ability allows a character to distract a number of people or animals at a critical moment, provided he or she has some method of communicating with them (for example, talking, dancing, television broadcast, illusionary image, written word, etc.) If the character is trying to directly distract a potentially hostile group, such as an angry mob or a group of security guards, his or her Rank dictates how many people are distracted. If the

OPEN ANIME

character has an audience that is already prepared to listen, the Rank determines the percentage of that audience that is distracted or moved enough to take action, whether that involves buying the character's next CD, donating money to a charity, or voting for the character in an election.

If multiple people with this Ability work as a team, the total number of people distracted is added together. Presence is used both when distracting people physically (for example, with sex appeal) and when distracting someone through emotion, rhetoric, or force of personality.

Also, characters can add their Ranks of Charismatic to any Skills from the Performance and Social Skill Groups, however the character must have Ranks in individual Skills in order to use this Ability as a modifier.

Rank 1	The character can distract one individual, or 5% of an audience will be motivated.
Rank 2	The character can distract up to two individuals, or 10% of an audience will be motivated.
Rank 3	The character can distract a small crowd (1-10 individuals), or 20% of an audience will be motivated.
Rank 4	The character can distract a medium crowd (11-50 individuals), or 50% of an audience will be motivated.
Rank 5	The character can distract a large crowd (50-200 individuals), or 75% of an audience will be motivated.
Rank 6	The character can distract a very large crowd (200-1000 individuals), or 95-100% of an audience will be motivated

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Combat Technique

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Stat: None
Progression: 1 technique per Rank

The Combat Technique Ability allows a character to perform astounding feats with a wide variety of melee or ranged weapons, or Special Attacks. Each Rank gives the character one combat technique, the GM should determine if a special maneuver can be assigned multiple times.

- Accuracy
  The character suffers reduced dice penalties when attempting an accurate attack, such as striking at partial Armour, weak points, or vital spots, shooting at longer-than-usual ranges. Accuracy is also used when attempting a special trick shot, such as carving an initial on someone's body or ricocheting an arrow off a wall to shoot a target around a corner, and when using the Deflection Feat. Each difficulty penalty is reduced by 2 (to a minimum of 0).
- Ambidextrous
  The character does not suffer penalties when using his off hand in Combat (see Off Handed). The normal –3 Off Handed penalty (see Off Handed, pg. xx) does not apply to the character with this Technique.
- Blind-Fight
  The character does not suffer penalties associated with attacking or defending with melee weapons or while unarmed in poor light, absolute darkness, or against an invisible opponent.
- Blind-Shoot
  The character suffers half penalties associated with attacking with ranged weapons in poor light, absolute darkness, or against an invisible opponent. This Feat can be assigned twice to reduce the penalty to zero. The character must be capable of detecting the general presence of the target, however, through one of his or her senses (smell, hearing, sixth sense, etc.).
- Block Ranged Attacks
  Under normal circumstances, a character cannot use a Block action against a ranged attack. With this technique, a character gains this defensive option.
- Concealment
  The character has an unearthly ability to conceal weapons about his or her person. As

long as the character has something to hide the weapons (even if it only long hair or a light robe) the character's weapons will not be noticed by anything short of an actual physical search, and such a search is conducted at a penalty of -8. A Special Attack weapon with the Concealable Ability is even harder to find: searches suffer a -12 penalty.

- Deflection
  If the character makes a successful Block Defense, he or she can deflect a standard melee or ranged attack away harmlessly without damaging the blocking object. The GM may decide that some types of attacks cannot be deflected. When trying to deflect a Special Attack, the Block Defense roll is penalized: -2 for each Rank of the Special Attack.
- Dodge
  During the character's action, the character designates an opponent and receives a +1 bonus to Defense against any subsequent attacks from that opponent. The character can select a new opponent on any action.
- Far Shot
  When the character uses a projectile weapon, such as a bow, its range increment increases by one-half (multiply by 1.5). When the character uses a thrown weapon, its range increment is doubled.
- Judge Opponent
  The character can judge his or her opponent's approximate Attack abilities and weapon Skill Rank from the foe's attitude and posture even without actually seeing him or her fight. Additionally, the character can accurately estimate the opponent's remaining Life points. For both of these Abilities, the GM may decide to provide descriptive indications such as "your enemy is much better than you with a sword, but if you connect a few times with your ki blast, it will drop him," rather than saying "the enemy's REF is 14, with a Sword Skill of +4, and he has 60 Life points remaining."
- Leap Attack
  The character can make leaping attacks with his or her melee weapon, delivering additional damage due to momentum. Any time the character has a higher Initiative than his or her opponent, he or she may attempt a leaping attack. If the strike is successful (it hits and the target fails a defense) the character gets an extra +2 bonus to damage and may



additionally add half his or her Jump Skill Ranks (if any) to the damage. . If the character fails to hit, however, or the opponent succeeds with his or her defense, the character is off balance and receives a -4 penalty to Defense until his or her time to act in the following turn.

- Lightning Reflexes
  The character gets a +2 bonus on all Reflexes and INI rolls.
- One Shot Left
  The character will always have at least one projectile remaining for his or her ranged weapon, even after an extended combat. This might be a final bullet in a gun, arrow in a quiver, plasma unit in a wrist blaster, or stone in a sling. This option does not remove the need to reload weapons in a game that uses realistic ammunition rules, but rather assures that the character will not be forced to reload at a critical moment. One Shot Left does not affect weapons or Special Attacks built using the Limited Shots Drawback.
- Point Blank Shot
  The character gets a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons against opponents within 30 feet.
- Portable Armory
  The character will always have easy access to any weapon required for a particular task, including illegal weapons and accessories not available to the general public. The actual weapons and accessories must still be acquired via the Personal Gear Ability, but remarkably, the character can access them whenever he or she needs them instead of being forced to return to where they are normally stored. Characters with Portable Armory may also make field modifications on their weapons, switching options such as laser sights or scopes in a single round.
- Quick Draw
  The character can draw a sheathed or holstered weapon and attack in the same round without penalty. Otherwise it requires on combat action to ready his or her weapon.
- Steady Hand
  This is the ability to attack with ease while moving quickly (running or sprinting, flying at high speeds, etc.) or otherwise engaged in complex stunts. This reduces the penalties suffered for attacking while in motion. Each penalty is reduced by 2 (to a minimum of 0). A character with this Feat may also use weapons in conjunction with the Acrobatics Skill, and may aim while they are moving. This Feat may be assigned more than once.
- Two-Weapon Fighting
  The character can effectively fight with two melee or ranged weapons at once against the same or different targets, provided both weapons are designed for one-handed use. When using two weapons, the character can attack twice using the normal Two Weapons rules, but the penalties for doing so are reduced by 2 each time this Feat is assigned (to a minimum of 0). Alternatively, the character can attack with one weapon and defend with another receiving a -2 penalty to Attack checks he or she makes but adding a +2 bonus to his or her DEF checks vs. melee or unarmed attacks. This bonus lasts until the character's turn in the following round.
- Weapons Encyclopedia
  A character has the ability to recall the vital statistics and important quirks of practically all known commercially available weapons. This includes, but is not limited to, its general level of reliability as well as all vital statistics — material composition, ammunition capacity, caliber, possible outfitted accessories, etc. Characters without this ability will only have such information on weapons they actually own or use regularly and will need to successfully roll an Intelligence based Knowledge: Military Science (Hardware Recognition) Skill check to recall important details. In addition, Weapons Encyclopedia also includes knowledge on acquiring weapons, so characters will have a +4 bonus on any Society (Streets) or Business Skill checks needed to locate or buy weapons.

OPEN ANIME

Combination Attack

Cost: 3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character can combine attacks with up to 2 other characters/Rank

With training, individual characters can learn to combine their Special Attack Abilities into awesome displays of power. In order to do this, all the characters must have both the Combination Attack Ability and the Special Attack Ability. The number of characters that can combine at once is dependant on the Rank of Combination Attack; a character can combine with up to 2 other characters for each Rank. There is also an Energy Point cost associated with Combination Attack: 2 Energy Points per person involved in the attack. Each character must pay this cost separately. For example, if four characters are combining, they each must pay 8 Energy Points.

The attack takes place on the Initiative of the character with the lowest Initiative and uses the character with the lowest REF to determine if it hits. A single attack roll is made. The target has a DEF of -1 per character involved in the attack. If the attack succeeds, it inflicts double the damage of the character with the most powerful attack (for example, if two character combine, one with a 2d6 Special Attack and one with a 5d6 Special Attack, the total damage inflicted would be 10d6 — 5dd doubled).

Note that characters with the Combination Attack Ability are not subject to the same restrictions as normal characters that perform a similar action.

Computer Intrusion

Cost: 2 or 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect
Progression: Descriptive; see below

This Ability allows a character to access, read, and understand data from all computers or "Silicon Age" technology in the surrounding area. The TN for the check is determined by the complexity and security of the computer; most home computers are TN 12 while high-tech secure machines are TN 18 to 24. For 2 Points/Rank, the character has the ability to read the data on computers (and computer media) within his range. When trying to access a computer built as an Item of Power, the character suffers a penalty of -2 for each Rank of the Item of Power. The Ability Rank determines the maximum distance in which scanning can take place. To read multiple computers over a network, the area must be sufficient to encompass the target computers. Since this Ability can be a very powerful tool in a campaign, the GM and players should ensure it is used appropriately.

For 4 points/Rank, the character possesses a more powerful tool with the ability to also write to the system, effectively interacting with the operating system and data. The TN halved is also the time needed to input the new data onto the system. The character doesn't need computer skills to think in "plain language" instructions as the Interface Ability directly translates into machine code. However characters with computer hacking skills may either complement the Interface's success or further halve the time needed (pick one depending on the situation). Self-Aware Artificial Intelligences are nigh impossible to reprogram, however there are ways around this depending on the computer knowledge and resourcefulness of the player or character.

See the rules for Computer Intrusion (pg. 82) for more details.

Rank 1	Scanning can happen at the range of 1 foot.
Rank 2	Scanning can happen at the range of 10 feet.
Rank 3	Scanning can happen at the range of 100 feet.
Rank 4	Scanning can happen at the range of 1 mile.
Rank 5	Scanning can happen at the range of 10 miles.
Rank 6	Scanning can happen at the range of 100 miles.

OPEN ANIME

Connections

Cost: 1-3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

The Connections Ability represents your character's close relationship with an individual or a hierarchy of some sort that grants him or her access to respect and privileges. Examples of organizations include the feudal system, powerful corporations, organized crime rings, secret guilds and societies, governmental positions, military organizations, and some religions.

The value of the Connections Ability depends on its importance in the setting. An organization or individual that exerts moderate power within the setting is worth 1 Point/Rank, one that has significant power costs 2 Points/Rank, and one that has great power in the setting costs 3 Points/Rank. Players should not assign this Ability to represent organizations that have very little power. The GM determines the extent of the organization's influence. In a high school comedy campaign, the school's autocratic Student Council might wield "significant power," while in most other settings it would be completely trivial and not worth any Points. Similarly, a criminal organization like the Mafia or Yakuza might count as "great power" (3 Points/Rank) in a traditional low-powered game set in modern times, but merely as "moderate power" (1 Point/Rank) in a high-powered magical girl or super-hero campaign.

This Ability has an alternate name of Fraternity. Fraternity is used to represent your character's connection to a "scene" (such as a club or musical scene, or other types of loose sub-cultural "groups") or any other loose confederation of individuals (such as groups of nomadic individuals or even homeless people). When your character has a fraternal connection, it tends to be with groups that are of a more informal nature.

Rank 1	The organization or individual is local in its scope.
Rank 2	The organization or individual is regional in its scope.
Rank 3	The organization or individual is national in its scope.
Rank 4	The organization or individual is global in its scope.
Rank 5	The organization or individual is galactic in its scope.

Contamination

Cost: 2 or 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

This Ability represents the character's ability to transform other people (or animals, or objects) into entities like him or herself. Frequently, this victim can then contaminate even more people. The method should be specified when the character is created. It might be similar to myths behind the vampire legend — the character's blood carries a "plague" that, when ingested, mutates the person over a matter of hours or days. Alternatively, the character might lay an egg or seed (real or metaphorical) in the body of his or her prey, which could later hatch within the victim, killing him or her as a new monster is born. The character might even need to perform some special ritual that alters the victim. Whatever the case, the conditions under which the victim can become "contaminated" must be specified.

For 2 Points/Rank, contamination is "difficult" — the victim must be willing, unconscious, or restrained for deliberate contagion to occur, or the target must perform an unusual activity (such as eating a morsel of the character's flesh).

For 4 Points/Rank contamination is "easy" — the contagion might be similar to a traditional werewolf attack, where a scratch or bite results in a victim becoming a werewolf. The GM can add special conditions, limitations, or effects to ensure that becoming a monster is a curse and not a blessing.

The higher the Rank of Contamination, the faster the transformation occurs. There should

OPEN ANIME

always be some means of curing or delaying the eventual mutation, however. Possible cures include the death of the creature that inflicted the contaminant, radical surgery, blood transfusion, or a successful mystical healing.

The GM should decide whether a player character who is turned into a monster remains in the player's control or is reclassified as an NPC. Any retention (dreams, memories, etc.) of the victim's former existence depends on the nature of the contamination and whether the victim has been "transformed," "devoured," or "reborn" in the process. A person who has been successfully contaminated should usually gain a certain number of Abilities "paid for" with the Bonus Points acquired by assigning new character Disabilities (often including Cursed, Ism, Marked, Permanent, and Owned, the last one representing servitude to his or her new master). Usually the mutation should result in a monstrous form similar to that of the character responsible. Thus, a spider alien that laid an egg in its victim may produce another spider alien, the victim of a vampire should grow fangs, etc. The GM should be wary of potentially undesirable possibilities such as a werewolf character infecting the entire group of characters, thereby creating an entire group of werewolves.

The Contamination Ability usually allows the creator or mother some measure of control over the newly transformed character. In these instances, the Rank of Contamination is added as a favorable modifier to any Mind Control attempts performed against the subject.

A variation to Contamination inflicts the target with some sort of curse or disease, rather than transforming him or her into a different type of creature. Examples of these afflictions include rapid ageing, debilitating diseases, sensitivity to specific elements, etc.

Rank 1	The transformation occurs over several months.
Rank 2	The transformation occurs over several weeks.
Rank 3	The transformation occurs over several days.
Rank 4	The transformation occurs over several hours.

Create Minion

Cost: 10 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: Varies; see below.

Some characters have their minions on call, some have them tucked away in a pocket dimension, and a few prefer to come up with them on the fly. A character with this Ability can produce temporary minions at need. This effect could be achieved any number of ways, whether through a technical talent for building useful helpers, a special magical power, social connections to bring out minions at need, a form of mind control, or something more exotic.

Minions created with this power will generally last for a few hours, or until they're either destroyed/incapacitated or dismissed by their creators. How exactly the character produces these minions varies, and must be determined when Create Minion is purchased.

When the character creates a single minion, he or she is given a certain amount of Character Points with which to design the minion's capabilities, as determined by the character's Ability Rank, and modified by the method of creation. Characters can also create groups of minor minions. These are created just like Flunkies (see p. 93), each built on 20 CP. Combat-capable flunkies use 8 CP out of the character's creation limit, while non-combat flunkies only use 6 CP. A character can create however many minions he or she wishes, but their total CP value can't exceed the CP limit from the character's Rank in Create Minion.

- Construction

Open Anime

With this option the character simply builds his or her minions out of what materials are available. This approach is more time-consuming (though the Mechanical Genius Ability could reduce the time required), but can potentially create better minions. The player needs to take some time to determine what method the character is using to construct his or her minions, whether by assembling robots out of electronics, making steam-powered automatons, or building and enchanting golems. Building a minion this way generally takes about 10 minutes per 5 CP the new minion has.

Characters that use Construction receive can create minions totalling 25 Character Points plus 15/Rank.

- Corruption

Some have the power to somehow "corrupt" living things into creatures that serve them, though this power works best for villains. This usually takes the form of magic, but it could be an ability to hack into and take control of machines and possibly cyborgs. The player should define what kinds of things the player is capable of corrupting. This method has the advantage of building on the capabilities of the original rather than creating a minion character from scratch, but it also carries the risk that the corrupted minion will regain his or her senses and return to normal, or possibly even use the Abilities that have been added to turn on the one who transformed them.

The character can create minions totalling 10 Character Points plus 5/Rank, but minions created this way retain all of their normal Attributes, Skills, Abilities, and Disabilities.

- Enchantment

Minions can also be created from objects. This could involve infusing the object with spiritual energy so that it transforms into something, a means of simply giving life to an existing inanimate object, a spell that animates corpses, etc. The player should take some time to define how the process works, and what types of objects can be enchanted. As with other types of minion creation, the player can determine how the CP are spent, but the capabilities of the new minion must somehow reflect the nature of the object used. The character can create minions totalling 25 Character Points plus 10/Rank

- Summoning

Sometimes minions are simply summoned from Somewhere Else. This could be a magical effect, drawing one's minions from another plane of existence or simply drawing them to the summoner's position in the same world. Or it could represent social connections that let the character make a few phone calls and have either a skilled specialist or a squad of flunkies arrive to deal with a problem.

The character can create minions totalling 25 Character Points plus 10/Rank

Damage Absorption

Cost: 8 or 10 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: Linear, with 5 points damage converted into Life points per rank

A character with this Ability can absorb up to 5 points of damage received from physical attacks (such as guns, swords, punches, or energy blasts) for each Rank, and change them into a corresponding number of Life points before damage is inflicted. The new Life points are added to the character's current total immediately, which may temporarily raise the total above its normal maximum. Damage that is blocked by the character's Amour or Force Field Abilities cannot be absorbed. For 8 Points/Rank, the character's Hit Point total can never rise above his or her normal maximum (extra points are lost). For 10 Points/Rank, the character's Life points total can be raised as high as twice their normal maximum value (for a duration of one hour). Damage Absorption does not affect damage from non-physical or "complex" attacks (as determined by the GM).

Damage Conversion

Cost: 6 or 8 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Health
Progression: Linear, 1 CP for every 10 points of damage received per Rank

A character with this Ability suffers damage from physical attacks (such as guns, swords, punches, or energy blasts) as normal, but receiving damage grants additional CPs he or she can assign to Abilities temporarily. Points can be accumulated between attacks or combat rounds. Additionally, these CPs can only be assigned to Abilities the character already possesses at Rank 1 or higher. Damage can both be converted and absorbed (by the Damage Absorption Ability) at the same time. Damage Conversion does not convert damage from non-physical or complex attacks, including Special Attacks with the following Abilities: Burning, Drain (Any), Flare, Incapacitating, Irritant, Mind or Soul Attack, Stun, Tangle. The extra CPs gained through combat dissipate very shortly after the battle has finished, or before the next dramatic scene (GM's discretion).

For 6 Points/Rank, damage that is blocked by the character's Armor Ability cannot be converted. For 8 Points/Rank, damage that is blocked by the character's Armor Ability can be converted. Damage blocked by the Force Field Ability can never be converted.

At each Rank, the character gains 1 CP for every 10 points of damage received from each single attack (round down). Most often, characters use these points to enhance the following Ability Abilities: Armour, Regeneration, Special Attack, and Enhanced Strength. Additionally, characters can also enhance the Extra Attacks, Extra Defenses, Massive Damage (for specific or for all attacks) Abilities. Damage Conversion cannot be used to increase Damn Healthy! - to increase the character's Life points see Damage Absorption, page 43.



For example, a character with Rank 5 Damage Conversion gains 5 CPs for every 10 points of damage received. If an enemy blasted the character with a weapon that inflicts 47 points of damage, the character's Hit Point total would reduce by 47 points, but he or she would gain 20 temporary CPs (47 ÷ 10 = 4.7, rounded down to 4; 4 x 5 = 20). If the character possessed Enhanced Strength at a minimum of Rank 1, he or she

Open Anime

could raise it by 5 ranks immediately (since 20 CPs ÷ 4 Points/Rank = 5 ranks). Alternatively, the character could raise his or her other Attribute scores by a total of 40 through the Enhanced [Attribute] Ability (since 20 CPs ÷ 2 Points/Rank = 10 ranks).

With GM permission, Damage Conversion may be designed to convert forms of energy into CPs, rather than converting damage. Examples of energy include: sound, light, radiation, mass, heat, and others. The progression of the Ability under these conditions must be discussed with the GM.

Damn Healthy!

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character's Life points are increased by 2d6/Rank

Possessing this Ability increases the Life points of the character, allowing him or her to withstand more damage in combat. Note that characters with high Health scores may be very healthy even without this Ability.

Defense Combat Mastery

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character's DEF is increased by 1/Rank

Defense Combat Mastery denotes either an innate "danger instinct," or the character's intimate knowledge of a wide range of defensive combat techniques covering all aspects of armed and unarmed encounters (including Special Attacks and ranged weapons). Individual Defense combat Skills let a character specialize with particular weapons or specific styles, but Defense Combat Mastery allows character to defend him or herself proficiently at all times.

Displacement

Cost: 3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Relfexes
Progression: Attack rolls against the character are at –2/Rank.

A character with the Displacement Ability is never quite where he or she seems to be. Often this ability is possessed by speedsters, as another way to simulate their incredible speeds, and the difficulty in track or even touching them. Special Attacks with Area Effect work normally against the character, and other speedster with the Speed Ability and Displacement are put on an equal footing if their Ranks are equal to or higher than the character's.

A character with a higher Rank of Displacement than another speedster subtracts the other speedster's Ranks in Displacement from his own, to create an effective Rank in Displacement when dealing with that speedster.

Divine Relationship

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The player may re-roll a number of dice rolls each game session equal to 1/Rank

A character possessing a Divine Relationship may have powerful forces acting as his or her guardian, which can beneficially influence the outcome of important events. Alternatively, the character may be really lucky, have great karma, or can subtly influence his or her surroundings with thought alone. This relationship is represented through the re-rolling of undesirable dice rolls (this includes undesirable re-rolls as well). The player may choose to use the original roll, or any of the re-rolls, when determining the success of the action. The Rank dictates the number of times dice can be re-rolled in a single role-playing session, though the GM can alter this time frame as desired.

Duplicate

Cost: 6 or 8 Points/Rank
Relevant Stat: Health
Progression: The duplicate is built from 10 Character Points/Rank

A character with this ability can create one or more independent, self-aware duplicates of him or

OPEN ANIME

herself, each of which have a maximum number of Character Points dictated by the Ability Rank. The duplicate is not under the character's control, but will act in a manner consistent with the original character. Multiple duplicates can be in existence at any time, but creating a duplicate requires one non-combat action.

Duplicates only remain in existence for a limited time, usually for a single scene or long enough to complete a single task. Since this Ability can have tremendous impact on a campaign if used too frequently, the GM should impose restrictions on its use as necessary. For example, the GM may limit the total number of simultaneously existing duplicates. The player should consider what consequences, if any, will arise should an enemy kill the duplicate.

There are two different types of Duplicate: Customized (8 Points/Rank) and Proportionate (6 Points/Rank).

Customized Duplicate

The character can assign the duplicate's Character Points as desired when this Ability is first acquired, provided the duplicate does not gain any Abilities or Disabilities the original character does not possess. Additionally, Abilities and Disabilities cannot be raised to Ranks that would exceed the original character's Ranks. The GM may waive this restriction if it seems appropriate. Once the Character Points are allocated to the duplicate in a specific pattern during character creation, the distribution cannot be changed; all duplicates ever made will be identical.

Proportionate Duplicate

If the Duplicate Rank is not sufficiently high to create a duplicate with the exact same number of Character Points as the original, a less-powerful duplicate is created. In these cases, the reduced Character Points are distributed over the duplicate's Attributes, Abilities, Skills, and Disabilities proportionately with the original character. The one exception to this rule involves the Duplicate Ability; the character may decide that his or her twin does not have the Duplicate Ability.

Elasticity

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: Descriptive; see below

The character can stretch or contort his or her limbs and/or body to a superhuman degree. Increased Ranks not only provide greater flexibility, but also the control over fine manipulation (such as using a stretched finger to move specific tumbling mechanisms on a key lock). At high Ranks, characters can squeeze under doors and through small holes and cracks, as well as mimic crude shapes (an excellent way to represent a character who has a liquid-like form as well). While stretched, the character receives +1 to Combat Skill checks for each Rank of Elasticity. Examples of characters with this Ability are monsters (especially those with serpentine or tentacle limbs) or giant robots with extendable arms.

Rank 1	The character can stretch one body part up to 5x its regular dimensions and receives +1 to Combat Skill checks.
Rank 2	The character can stretch two body parts up to 5x their regular dimensions and receives +2 to Combat Skill checks.
Rank 3	The character can stretch three body parts up to 5x their regular dimensions and receives +3 to Combat Skill checks.
Rank 4	The character can stretch his or her entire body up to 5x its regular dimensions and receives +4 to Combat Skill checks.
Rank 5	The character can stretch his or her entire body up to 10x its regular dimensions and receives +5 to Combat Skill checks.
Rank 6	The character can stretch his or her entire body up to 20x its regular dimensions and receives +6 to Combat Skill checks.

OPEN ANIME

Enhanced [Attribute]

These are the "enhanced" version of the Attributes that are used to help define all characters in the Open Core *RPG*. There is a different Enhanced [Attribute] for each of the Attributes in this system. In order to purchase any Attribute above the campaign maximums, the Player must have one of these Super [Attribute] Abilities. The use of any of these Abilities in a campaign must be approved by the GM before they can be purchased for a character.

Enhanced Presence

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Presence
Progression: The character's Presence receives a +1 for Presence and Presence-based Skill Checks/Rank

The character is extremely charismatic, with a force of personality and influence beyond that of normal people. Super-Presence adds its rank to Presence Checks and Skill Checks with Presence as their key ability score.

Enhanced Health

Cost: 3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Health
Progression: The character's Damage and Health Checks are at +1/Rank

The character has a superhuman endurance and stamina, beyond the ability of normal people. Super-Health adds its ranks to the Damage and Health Checks of the character, for resisting physical harm ranging from attacks to disease, poison, and environmental hazards.

Enhanced Reflexes

Cost: 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Reflexes
Progression: The character's Reflex Checks and Defense are +1/Rank

The character is both extremely agile and dexterous, beyond the ability of normal people. Super-Reflexes adds its rank the character's Defense and to his Reflex Checks, for avoiding danger based on speed and reaction time. Also, add its Ranks to any Skill Checks for Skills that are based on Reflexes.

Enhanced Intellect

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect
Progression: +1 to Intellect and Intellect-based Skill Checks/Rank

You're extremely intelligent, with intellectual abilities beyond those of normal people. Super-Intellect adds its rank to your Intellect checks and to Checks on Intellect-based Skills.

Enhanced Strength

Cost: 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Strength
Progression: Descriptive; see below

The character is capable of tremendous feats of strength. Super-Strength adds its rank to your damage with melee attacks, Climb, Jump, and Swimming skills and any skill checks based on Strength, and Strength checks (for feats of strength like breaking through doors or walls or snapping chains). Each rank also doubles the character's Drag, Dead Lift and Carry. It does not provide a bonus to melee attack rolls.

Enhanced Will

Cost: 3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: +1 to Will Checks and Will-based Skill Checks/Rank

The character has self-control beyond that of normal people. Super-Will adds its rank to the character's Will Checks, for resisting attempts at influence or powers that directly affect the mind, and to any Skill Checks for Skills based on Will.

Environmental Control

Cost: 1-2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Your character can affect environmental conditions such as light, heat, darkness, or weather. This

OPEN ANIME

is most appropriate for characters with magical control over a particular element or facet of nature such as sorcerers, demons, and spirits, but it could also represent various technological devices. If a character wishes to perform multiple effects (for example, control light and darkness) he or she should acquire the Ability multiple times.

Other environmental effects can be controlled by your character, and are limited only by your imagination and the approval of your GM. Any sort of directly damaging attack should be simulated using the Special Attack Ability.

- Light
  Your character can illuminate an area with light as bright as a sunny day on Earth. Light control costs 1 Point/Rank.
- Darkness
  Your character can summon smoke, fog, darkness, or the like to enshroud an area, blocking normal vision. Darkness control costs 2 Points/Rank if the character can create total darkness that completely obscures light sources, or 1 Point/Rank if the darkness is only partial.
- Silence
  Your character can block out sounds within the area of effect. It costs 1 Point/Rank to create a barrier that prevents anyone outside from hearing sounds coming from within or vice versa, or 2 Points/Rank to create a zone of silence where no sounds exists.
- Temperature
  Your character can alter temperatures in the area from arctic cold to desert heat. If the character wishes to produce heat or cold sufficient to start fires or instantly freeze someone solid, the player should assign the Special Attack Ability instead. Temperature control costs 1 Point/Rank if the character is limited to either increasing or decreasing temperature, or 2 Points/Rank if he or she can do both.
- Weather
  Your character can alter the weather to create or still weather conditions of various sorts such as breezes, winds, rain, snow, fog, or storms. For weather that is reasonable for the local climate, the area affected depends on the rank that your character has in this Ability. For weather that is abnormal (rain in a desert, snow in a hot summer) or violent (lightning storm, blizzard, hurricane), the character's Rank is treated as one less for purposes of area affected or two less if both violent and abnormal. If this would reduce the Rank below 1, the effect cannot be produced. For focused attacks, such as lightning bolts or tornadoes, use the Special Attack Ability instead. To produce precise effects or keep abnormal or violent weather under control, the GM may require a Mind Check with a penalty equal to the Rank (for example, -4 if affecting a regional area) of the Ability. It should often take several turns (roll 1d6 to determine the number of turns) for weather to build up or disperse. Abnormal weather effects should return to normal soon after a character ceases to use this Ability, typically one turn for every Rank that your character has in this Ability. Weather control costs 2 Points/Rank if general in its nature, or 1 Point/Rank if very specific (such as, "rain making" or "wind blowing").

  Maintaining Environmental Control requires a slight amount of concentration: the character can perform other actions while doing so, but can only affect one area at any given time. The size of the environment the character can control is determined by the character's Rank.

OPEN ANIME

Rank 1	The character can affect a small area (such as a room).
Rank 2	The character can affect a modest area (such as a house).
Rank 3	The character can affect a local area (such as a neighborhood or village).
Rank 4	The character can affect a small to medium-sized regional area (such as a city and its associated environs)
Rank 5	The character can affect a larger regional area (such as a few counties or part of a state)

Exorcism

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: Descriptive; see below

A character with this Ability knows how to perform or create rituals, charms, or spells capable of driving out, binding, or banishing demons (or possibly other supernatural entities). Exactly what entities qualify will depend on the nature of the game world; in some settings, undead, such as zombies or ghosts, may be vulnerable to exorcism. Normal characters and creatures are not affected by Exorcism.

Each attempt at exorcism counts as an attack and requires a Will check with a +1 bonus per Rank of the Ability. A ritual action is also necessary in most cases, such as a chant or mystical gestures, or use of particular objects, such as holy water or spirit wards. During the exorcism attempt, the character is completely focused on the exorcism and cannot defend against other attacks. In addition, the target entity must fail a Will Check, with a penalty equal to the Rank of the Exorcism Ability.

If the attack succeeds (the exorcist makes his or her Will check and the entity fails his or her own Will Check) the entity will be affected. It cannot attack the exorcist (and any companions sheltered behind him or her) for one round. In addition, the entity loses Energy Points equal to 5 Points times the attacker's Exorcism Rank. Although prevented from attacking the exorcist for one round, the creature may choose to take other actions, such as taunting or threatening the exorcist, fleeing, or even vanishing.

Exorcism may be repeated each round with successes draining additional Energy from the target, and failures having no effect (and leaving the demon free to attack the character). If the entity is ever reduced to 0 or fewer Energy Points as a result of the spiritual attack, it is either banished to its own dimension (if normally extra-dimensional), turned to dust, or permanently "sealed" in an object or in a mystic location (an Item or Place of Power may be ideal) until a specific action is taken that breaks the seal (GM's option).

Rank 1	The exorcist's Will check is made at +1 bonus. The target's Will Check made at -1 penalty. Success drains 5 Energy Points from the target.
Rank 2	The exorcist's Will check is made at +2 bonus. The target's Will Check made at -2 penalty. Success drains 10 Energy Points from the target.
Rank 3	The exorcist's Will check is made at +3 bonus. The target's Will Check made at -3 penalty. Success drains 15 Energy Points from the target.
Rank 4	The exorcist's Will check is made at +4 bonus. The target's Will Check made at -4 penalty. Success drains 20 Energy Points from the target.
Rank 5	The exorcist's Will check is made at +5 bonus. The target's Will Check made at -5 penalty. Success drains 25 Energy Points from the target.
Rank 6	The exorcist's Will check is made at +6 bonus. The target's Will Check made at -6 penalty. Success drains 30 Energy Points from the target.

Extra Actions

Cost: 8 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character gains 1 extra Action each turn/Rank

OPEN ANIME

This Ability reflects the character's ability to use every combat situation to his or her benefit. For each Rank in this Ability, the character can take one additional Action per turn, without receiving any penalty. This Ability covers all types of actions: Offensive, Defensive, Movement and Special. So, at Rank 3, the character would be able to take four actions per turn. These actions can be split up in any manner the Player wants, so the Character can take two Offensive actions and two Defensive actions, depending on what the character may need to accomplish in a specific combat situation. This Ability can be used to simulate the speedster who's swiftness allows him or her extra attacks, or the combat "monster" who's intensive training makes him so much more deadly in combat.

Extra Capacity

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Each Rank of this Ability doubles the lifting capacity of your character (see Body and Strength pg. 117). Ranks of Extra Capacity should be applied to your character lifting capacity *before* the modifier for Scale (if any) is applied.

Extra Limbs

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Unless indicated otherwise, all characters possess two arms (or similar appendages) and hands. By assigning this Ability, the character can acquire more. In certain genres there are robots, tentacled monsters and non-humans with prehensile tails often have Extra Limbs. Some long-haired alien beings or demons also make their hair "come alive" to work as an Extra Limbs.

A "limb" is defined loosely as an appendage that can reach out and manipulate objects with some finesse. A trunk, tentacle, or prehensile tail is an arm; a limb that simply ends in a gun-barrel, melee weapon, or tool mount is not. Legs with paws or feet are not usually considered to be "arms" unless the character has good manipulation ability when using them (such as the way chimpanzees can use their feet to grasp objects). Extra arms are useful for holding onto several things at once, but do not give extra attacks (for that ability, see Extra Attacks Ability). A tractor beam is a specialized "arm" best simulated by the Telekinesis Ability.

Possessing only one arm or no arms is reflected by the Physical Impairment Disability.

Rank 1	The character possesses 1 extra limbs.
Rank 2	The character possesses 2-3 extra limbs.
Rank 3	The character possesses 4-8 extra limbs.

Features

Cost: 2 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character has 1 feature/Rank

The character possesses one or more secondary abilities that grant useful but mundane, non-combat related Abilities. Features are typically possessed by non-humans and reflect various, minor biological or technological Abilities. All Features must be approved by the campaign's GM before they can be purchased for a character.

Examples of racial features include homing instinct, longevity, molting ability, a pouch, scent glands, secondary eyelids, etc. Examples of technological features suitable for building into cyborgs, robots, or androids include diagnostic equipment, gyrocompass, modem, radio, self-cleaning mechanism, etc. A wide range of other Abilities cover other more useful features such as gills, wings, fangs, and enhanced senses.

Flight

Cost: 2, 3, or 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Reflexes
Progression: Descriptive; see below

A character with Flight can fly through an atmosphere or in space (in space, he or she would still need protection from the environment). This is a common ability for non-humans, and people with

OPEN ANIME

paranormal powers. The method used to achieve flight can vary greatly: wings, propellers, rotors, rockets, anti-gravity, hot air, psionic levitation, magic, or some other technique.

Depending on the speed at which the character is moving, opponents may suffer a penalty to hit the character. A fast-moving character may have an attack penalty as well.

Flight costs 4 Points/Rank if the character can hover and fly at variable speeds, take off and land vertically, or stop in mid-air. This is the most common type of flight possessed by characters.

Flight costs 3 Points/Rank if the flyer cannot hover, but instead flies like a normal airplane. Thus, the character needs a smooth surface for landing and take off, and must maintain a minimum speed (at least 1/10 of its maximum speed) once airborne to avoid crashing.

Flight costs 2 Point/Rank if the flyer is either a Skimmer/Hovercraft or a Glider.

- Skimmer / Hovercraft
  The character is limited to skimming no more than a yard or two off the ground or water. He or she may be riding on a cushion of air, magnetic lines of force, or even traveling along magical lines.
- Glider
  The flyer can only become airborne if he or she launches from a high place (like a tree or rooftop) or from a fast-moving vehicle. Additionally, he or she can only gain speed by diving, or gain altitude by riding thermals.

Rank 1	The character can fly at speeds up to 10 mph (approximately 18 feet/round).
Rank 2	The character can fly at speeds up to 50 mph (approximately 90 feet/round).
Rank 3	The character can fly at speeds up to 100 mph.
Rank 4	The character can fly at speeds up to 500 mph.
Rank 5	The character can fly at speeds up to 1,000 mph.
Rank 6	The character can fly at speeds up to 5,000 mph.

Flunkies

Cost: 1 or 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Presence
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Flunkies hang around the character doing whatever he or she wants and never ask for anything in return. They can provide a character with more free time ("Got some more homework for you, my faithful friend...."), can keep the character safe from danger ("Quickly! Interpose yourself between me and that rabid wolf...."), or can simply make the character's life easier ("My shoe is untied. Fix it!") Flunkies aim to please, even at their own expense. They are also known as groupies, stooges, or toadies.

For 1 Point/Rank, the Flunkies are not warriors; they may get in the way of an enemy, or fight in self-Defense, but will not attack. For 2 Points/Rank, the Flunkies will take up arms at the request of their master. For specific talented and loyal battle-ready followers, see the Servant Ability. Mercenaries who the character hires for specific tasks are not Flunkies, since they have their own agenda and expect compensation.

Individual Flunkies are NPCs. A character's Flunkies normally have identical Abilities and Abilities, although Skills may vary. A character may have Flunkies with varied Abilities or Abilities, but each one with a different set of Abilities or Abilities

OPEN ANIME

counts as two Flunkies. A Flunky should be built on 20 Character Points (plus any Disabilities). Skills for the Flunky are purchased using the Highly Skilled Ability.

Rank 1	The character controls 1 flunky.
Rank 2	The character controls 2 flunkies.
Rank 3	The character controls 3 or 4 flunkies.
Rank 4	The character controls 5 to 7 flunkies.
Rank 5	The character controls 8 to 12 flunkies.
Rank 6	The character controls 13 to 20 flunkies.

Force Field

Cost: 2, 3, or 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: The Force Field reduces damage by 10 Points/Rank

A Force Field is an energy field around the character that protects against incoming attacks. Force Fields can represent magical barriers, telekinetic shields, or technological "screens" that protect ships.

A typical anime Force Field is different from Armor, since it can be battered down by a sufficiently powerful attack. A Force Field can be "up" or "down." When down, it does not stop any damage. Unless the Detectable Disability is assigned, an up Force Field is invisible. Force Field status must be determined at the start of the character's actions for the round and cannot be changed until his or her turn to act in the next round.

Attack damage is first applied to the Force Field, with any additional penetrating damage applied against Armor (if any). Thus, if a weapon hit successfully penetrates a Force Field, the Armor Ability can still protect against it. A Force Field can be reduced or even knocked down by a sufficiently powerful attack. If an attack does more damage than the Force Field prevents (even if the rest of the damage is absorbed by Armor), the Force Field temporarily loses one Rank of effectiveness. The character can only regain Ranks if the field is down and regenerating, unless the Regenerating Ability is assigned. A Force Field recovers one Rank every round it is turned off and not in operation ("down"). A Force Field that is knocked down to zero Ranks automatically shuts off to regenerate.

The cost is 4 Points/Rank if it is an area Force Field that is extendable to protect others nearby, 3 Points/Rank if it only protects the character, or 2 Points/Rank if it is a two-dimensional wall (up to 100 square feet) or shield that acts as a barrier. A wall can be projected out to a distance of up to 15 feet away from the character.

An extendable Force Field can be assumed to cover a diameter out to about 25% more than the character's longest dimension (for example, the Force Field of a six-foot human would be about eight feet across). A wall is assumed to be about 100 square feet (such as a 10'x10' wall), while an ordinary Force Field is form-fitting. All Fields will block anyone who is not Insubstantial at Rank 6 from moving through it. If a character with an extended Force Field also has Flight or Hyperflight, the GM may allow the character to carry other people who are inside the Force Field with him or her while flying.

A Force Field can be given additional customized Adders or Drawbacks. Each Adder taken reduces the protection provided by the Field by 10 Points, but gives it some special capability. Each Drawback taken increases the protection of the Field by 10 Points but adds some sort of weakness.

Force Field Adders

- Air-Tight
  The Field prevents the passage of gas molecules. While this is a beneficial defense against toxic gas attacks, a character in the Field will eventually deplete all breathable oxygen.
- Blocks Incorporeal
  The Field prevents the passage of astral or extra dimensional characters through it. It also stops characters currently using Rank 6 Insubstantial.
- Blocks Teleport

A character cannot teleport into or out of the Field. This is mostly useful only for extendable Force Fields. It cannot be used with the Shield Only Drawback.

- Field-Penetrating

The Force Field can be used to interpenetrate other Force Fields while making attacks (or moving through them). If the character's Field is in direct contact with an enemy Force Field, and can stop more damage than the foe's, the enemy's Field is neutralized and offers 1 protection against the character's attack, but is still up. In the case of an extended Field or wall, the character can actually move through the Field.

- Offensive

The Field delivers a powerful electric or energy shock to anyone who touches it, inflicting 1d6 damage for every 10 damage the Force Field currently blocks. Consequently, the damage delivered by an Offensive Force Field decreases as the Field becomes damaged and is knocked down in Ranks of effectiveness.

- Regenerating

If the character uses one non-combat action to regenerate the Force Field, it regains one lost Rank of effectiveness. A character with the Extra Attacks Ability can regenerate multiples Ranks each round.



Force Field

Drawbacks

- Both Directions

The Force Field blocks attacks moving in any direction, both inwards and virtually prevent- when the Force Field is up. This means that when the Force Field is active and the user makes an attack, the Force Field will affect their attack as it would an outside attacker's (reducing the damage inflicted and going down in Ranks if its protection value is exceeded). This Drawback cannot be used with the Shield Only Drawback.

- Internal

The field is only usable inside a specific structure. This can be used to represent a Field that protects a vital part of a building's interior such as the power plant or dungeon cells, or

a character who draws his or her personal Force Field's energy from some sort of power source inside his or her headquarters.

- Limited
  The field has a major or minor limitation. An example of a minor limitation would be a Force Field that is effective against ranged attacks but not melee, one that offers full-strength frontal and rear protection but only half-strength protection from above, or one that requires one minute to reach full strength. An example of a major limitation would be a Force Field that prevents the character from making any attacks during operation, one that is unstable in certain types of environments (such as sub-zero temperatures or near water), or one that only works against a very specific type of weapon (such as lasers). A minor limitation counts as one Drawback, a major limitation as two Drawbacks.
- Shield Only
  This type of Field is one of the 2 Points/Rank versions. The Field does not entirely surround the character. Instead, it is a shield (maximum of about 1 yard in diameter) that the user must deliberately interpose between an attack using a Block Defense. The character must also possess the Combat Technique (Block Ranged Attacks) Ability to us the Field in a Block Defense against ranged attacks. If the character successfully defends, the Force Shield provides protection as normal. This Drawback cannot be used with the Block Teleport Ability or Both Directions Drawback. It counts as two Drawbacks.
- Static
  The character cannot move when generating the Field. He or she may still attack or otherwise act, but must stay in one place (or continue to drift if floating through space, continue to fall if falling, etc.)
- Uses Energy
  The Force Field drains Energy Points from the character. Upon activation, the Field burns a number of the character's Energy Points equal to half the total Point cost of the Ability. The same number of Energy Points are consumed each minute the Field is up. This is not available for Force Fields acquired with the Magic Ability since they ordinarily burn Energy Points.
- Psionic Only
  The Force Field is usable only against attacks of a Psionic nature: such as Special Attacks with the Drain Mind or Mind or Soul Attack Adders.

Fringe Benefit

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character has 1 fringe benefit/Rank

Your character has some significant perquisite or fringe benefit, the exact nature of the benefit is determined by you and the GM of the campaign. The Gm is the final arbitrator of what does and does not constitute a fringe benefit in the campaign.

Sample Fringe Benefits:

Alternate Identity: your character has an alternate identity, complete with any appropriate governmental paperwork and identification (driver's license, birth certificate, social security card, and etc.).

Credibility: This fringe benefit represents how believable your character is, either by viewers, police, the general public, or rich and powerful people. Your character with the Credibility Fringe Benefit receives a +2 to their Social skill when dealing with their target "audience."

Diplomatic Immunity: Because of your character's diplomatic status, they cannot be prosecuted for crimes in nations other than their own. All that another nation can do is deport your character to their home country.

Legal Enforcement Powers: Your character has the ability to call upon the authority of the law and government to be able to do things like question suspects, arrest individuals, confiscate potential evidence, and obtain warrants to search individuals or locations. This should be purchased separately to represent state or local law enforcements powers,

OPEN ANIME

and national or federal powers. Your character also receives a +1 to their Investigation skill; this is a one time bonus and received for each Rank of Fringe Benefit that the character possesses.

Military Rank: Your character has some level of rank in a military organization in the campaign world. This can either represent someone who is in active duty, or the honorary rank of someone who is inactive with the military. Your character receives a +1 to their Military Science skill and a +1 to their Social skill for military uses. These skill bonuses are a one time only bonus, and are not received for each Rank of Fringe Benefit. Each Rank of Fringe Benefit gives your character one military rank.

Security Clearance: Your character has access to classified government information, installations and possibly equipment and personnel. The GM may require that multiple ranks of the Fringe Benefit Ability for your character to have higher levels of security clearance.

Status: Due to "accident" of birth or because of personal achievement, your character has a special status in their society. Examples of Status include high-ranking international corporate personnel, nobility, celebrities, and etc.

Zeroed: Your character, through legal or illegal means, has absolutely no legal records of any sort. There are no records of birth, existence, or death and any attempt to find information based on methods such as fingerprinting, DNA sampling, or other methods of securing identity in the campaign world will not gain any results. However in some campaigns, there may be records or documentation of those who have no records.

Healing

Cost: 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: The character can restore up to 5 Life points/Rank to a target

This Ability allows a character to heal a target's injuries (including him or herself; for continuous healing, see the Regeneration Ability). Characters with healing power can include holy individuals, psychic healers, and sorcerers.

The maximum number of Life points that a Healer can restore to a particular person in any single day equals 5 per Rank. This cannot be exceeded, even if multiple healers work on a subject; the combined Life points restored cannot exceed the maximum Life points that the character with the highest Rank could restore. The subject must have at least a full day's rest before he or she can benefit from any additional healing. Life points are restored over a 10-minute period, rather than instantly.

A subject must normally be alive to benefit from Healing. A character with Healing Rank 3+ may, however, revive someone who is "clinically" dead (serious injury, heart stopped) but not actually brain dead. A character is considered "dead" if his or her Life points are reduced to a bigger negative number than the characters maximum Life points. A healer can revive a mortally wounded character, however, if he or she can bring the subject's Life points back up from beneath the negative threshold to a positive value quickly. This grace period can be extended indefinitely if the subject's remains have been somehow placed in suspended animation.

Heightened Awareness

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: The character gains a +2 bonus/Rank to Perception and/or Skill checks

The character possesses a high degree of situational awareness. He or she is usually very alert and receives a bonus on Perception Checks, and on Skill Checks relevant to noticing otherwise hidden things, such as concealed objects, ambushes, or anything else related to sensory awareness. The bonuses of Heightened Awareness are cumulative with those of Heightened Senses.

Heightened Senses

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: The character gains one heightened sense or technique/Rank

A character with Heightened Senses has one or more senses that have been sharpened to a super-

human level of acuity. It can represent either the preternatural sharpening of a specific sense honed by special training (such as a blind person's trained sense of touch) or the enhanced senses of a paranormal or technologically augmented character. Additionally, several Ranks of Heightened Senses reflect the capabilities of sensors built into spaceships and other commercial or military vehicles. For each Rank of the Heightened Senses Ability, the character either gains one enhanced sense (Type I) or one sense technique (Type II). The character must make a successful Mind or relevant Skill check against an appropriate TN to detect and pinpoint a specific target within a large area (for example, to listen to a specific conversation though the background noise of the city).

Type I

One of the character's five senses — hearing, smell, vision, taste, or touch — is enhanced, and can operate over an area of several city blocks. The character may take the same sense twice, which doubles the effect and extends the area of detection. A character using a Heightened Sense has a +4 bonus (+8 if the sense was heightened twice) on Perception and relevant Skill checks that relate to using that sense to perceive things that someone with human-level senses might conceivably notice.

Type II

The character has one Heightened Sense technique, which extends beyond human capabilities. Examples of techniques include: dark vision, electric current detection; infra-vision; magnetic field detection; microscopic vision; radar sense; radio reception; sonar detection; ultrasonic hearing; ultra-vision; vibration detection; X-ray vision. Most techniques only work at short range, often requiring line of sight.

The Heightened Awareness Ability allows a lower Rank of enhancement for all of a character's senses.

Highly Skilled

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Variable
Progression: The character gains an additional 5 Skill Points/Rank

A character with this Ability is more experienced or better trained than an ordinary person, and as a result has more Skill Points than an average adult. Extending this Ability beyond Rank 6 provides 5 additional Skill Points per Rank (for example, Rank 11 would provide a total of 55 Skill Points). Acquiring several Ranks of the Highly Skilled Ability is the ideal method for creating a versatile character.

Hyperflight

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: Descriptive; see below

This Ability is intended for use in star-spanning campaigns, involving travel between solar systems or galaxies (or even planets at low Ranks). A character with Hyperflight can fly in the vacuum of space (but not in an atmosphere) between planets, starts, asteroids, solar systems, and galaxies, at speeds equal to or exceeding the speed of light. The player can determine whether this Ability represents warp technology, jump point formation, or the breaking of known physical laws. The Flight Ability is required to escape from the atmosphere and gravity of a planet similar to Earth. Without Flight, the character can only achieve Hyperflight speeds by taking off when already in space.

Just because your character can fly through space, does not mean that they can survive in space. Characters with the Hyperflight Ability should take two Ranks of Special Defense: Space, to give them the ability to be able to survive in the hazards of the vacuum of space.

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Rank 1	The character can travel at the speed of light.
Rank 2	The character can travel at 10 times the speed of light.
Rank 3	The character can travel at 100 times the speed of light.

Immovable

Cost: 1 Point/rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: Linear, -5 m/y to knock back/Rank

Characters with this Ability absorb physical impacts better than the average person, reducing the distance by which they are knocked back from impact attacks and forceful blows. Each Rank of this Ability reduces the knock back suffered by the character by 5 m/y. If a Special Attack's or melee attack's knock back distance is reduced to zero or below, the target has successfully absorbed the impact of the entire attack (but the attack still inflicts damage).

Immunity

Cost: 10 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Health
Progression: Descriptive; see below

With this Ability, the character is completely immune to damage and adverse effects that stem from a particular weapon, element, application, or event. For example, a character with Rank 1 Immunity to silver cannot be hurt by silver weapons and will not feel pain if clubbed with a sack of silver dollars. Similarly, a character with Rank 4 Immunity to fire/heat could walk into the most intensive firestorm possible and emerge unscathed.

Rank 1	The Immunity plays a small role in the game. Typical examples include: weapons made from a rare substance (such as gold, silver, or adamantine); attacks from a specific opponent (such as a brother, single animal type, or oneself); under specific conditions (such as in water, one hour during the day, or at home).
Rank 2	The Immunity plays a moderate role in the game. Typical examples include: weapons made from an uncommon substance (such as wood, bronze, or iron); attacks from a broad opponent group (such as blood relatives, demons, or animals); under broad conditions (such as during the night, on weekends, or in holy places).
Rank 3	The Immunity plays a large role in the game. Typical examples include: electricity; cold; a specific weapon type (such as daggers, arrows, or rapiers).
Rank 4	The Immunity plays a major role in the game. Typical examples include: fire/heat; a broad weapon type (such as swords or clubs); mental attacks.
Rank 5	The Immunity plays an extreme role in the game. Typical examples include: gunfire (including forms of artillery); bladed weapons; unarmed attacks.
Rank 6	The Immunity plays a primal role in the game. Typical examples include: weapons; energy; blunt trauma.

Insubstantial

Cost: 3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Each Rank of this Ability reduces a character's density so much that he or she can pass through certain types of objects (including weapons) as though insubstantial. The density of the human body, for example, falls approximately at Rank 2; consequently, a punch from an enemy would harm-

OPEN ANIME

lessly pass through a character with Rank 3 Insubstantial. Characters with Rank 6 Insubstantial are effectively incorporeal and can pass through virtually anything, including most forms of energy.

Invisibility

Cost: 3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character is invisible to one sense or technique/Rank

This Ability should completely hide the character from one or more senses or detection methods. The character may possess a supernatural concealment ability or a technological cloaking device, or have a psychic or magical talent that causes observers to overlook him or her.

For each Invisibility Rank, the player selects one sense or technique to which the character is "invisible." Senses include the human range for sight, hearing, taste, touch, or smell. Detection techniques include: astral; ethereal; infrared; mental; radar; radiation; sonar; spiritual; ultraviolet; vibration. The GM may decide that the most common forms of Invisibility — often sight and hearing — cost 2 Ability slots rather than only 1.

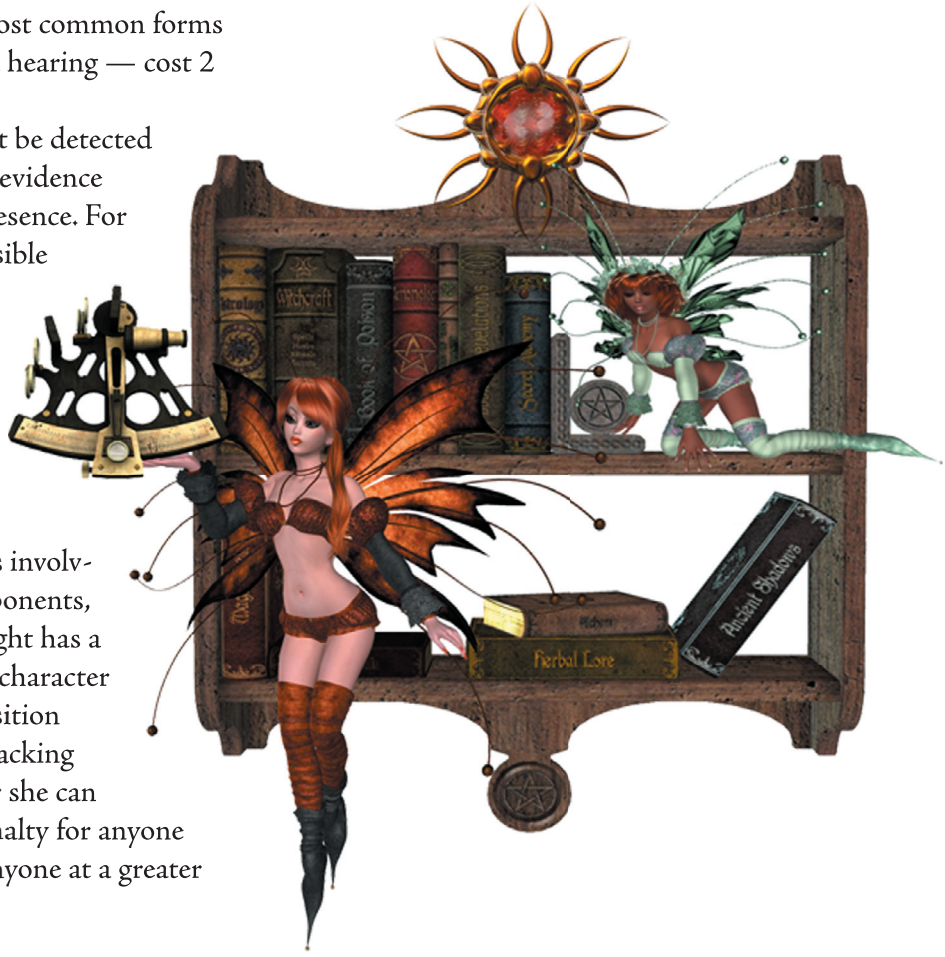
While the character may not be detected using specific methods, indirect evidence can still reveal the character's presence. For example, a character who is invisible to sight will still leave footprints in muddy ground. Similarly, a vase that is knocked from a table by a character who is invisible to sound will still make noise as it smashes on the floor.

In normal combat situations involving human or nearly human opponents, a character who is invisible to sight has a great Ability. Once the invisible character gives away his or her general position (for example, by firing a gun, attacking with a sword, or shouting) he or she can be attacked, but there is a -4 penalty for anyone within melee range and -8 for anyone at a greater distance. Heightened Awareness and Heightened Senses can reduce this penalty, as can the Blind-Fight or Blind-Shoot Combat Techniques. This penalty is halved if using an Area or Spreading Special Attack on the invisible character. (See Heightened Senses for other Detection techniques.)

Item of Power

Cost: 3-4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Usually none, but sometimes Will
Progression: The item is built using 5 Character Points/Rank

This Ability describes any exotic, portable item that directly enhances a character in some way (perhaps by conferring Abilities). An Item of Power represents advanced technology or a relic with paranormal powers. More ordinary but useful items (such as a sword or a medical kit) are covered by the Personal Gear Ability. Special weapons that others



OPEN ANIME

can use are often designed with Item of Power, with Points allocated to the Special Attack Ability.

Each item is built using up to 5 Character Points per Rank of the Item of Power Ability, which can be used to assign other Abilities. For some character concepts, Items of Power above Rank 6 are not unreasonable. Assigning Disabilities to the item earns Character Points, which are used to acquire additional Abilities for the item. Disabilities that cannot usually be assigned include: Ism, Marked, Nemesis, Owned, Significant Other, Skeleton in the Closet, and Wanted. Players selecting this Ability must have a discussion with the GM to determine what abilities the Item of Power possesses and how it works. The player, with GM approval, may also create specific abilities for Items of Power using the Unique Ability. An Item of Power may be combined with a mundane, minor, or major Gadget (such as a car that can fly, or a sword that can teleport people).

The item costs 4 Points/Rank if it is difficult for the character to misplace or for an enemy to steal/knock away, or it is almost always with the character. Examples include jewelry, frequently worn clothing, or equipment the character carries with them always. The item costs 3 Points/Rank if it is easier for the character to misplace or for an enemy to steal/knock away, or it is often distant from the character. Examples include thrown weapons, Armor that is stored when not in use, and vehicles or equipment that stay at the character's home until needed.

Additionally, the total Point cost (not cost per Rank) for the Item is increased by 1 if it can only be used by a small subset of individuals (Restricted Use). For example: only characters with a Strength above 18, only magicians, only members of a specific religion, or only goddesses. The total Point cost is increased by 2 if the Item can only be used by the character (Personal Use); this restriction cannot be reconfigured by someone with the Mechanical Genius Ability.

Some genres are best simulated by the Undefined Item of Power. This simulates the ability of a hero to have exactly the needed gadget for a needed situation. With an Undefined Item of Power, the Character Points purchased with the ranks of this Ability are not spent until the Item of Power needs to be defined, usually at a dramatic moment when a character needs a specific device for a specific situation, at that point the Character Points are spent and the Item is Defined. Purchasing an Undefined Item of Power costs an additional 2 Character Points per rank. Once the Item of Power is Defined, that is what that Item of Power will be (unless destroyed or lost somehow), however for +1 Point/Rank, the Undefined Item of Power can be "switched" back to its Undefined state at the end of a session. These Items of Power are considered Switchable Undefined Items.

Undefined Items must be approved by the GM, both during character creation and when the Item is Defined during play.

Items that cannot be lost or stolen, such as objects that are implanted in or fused to the character's body (often true for cyborgs), are not Items of Power. In these cases, the items are considered part of the character and thus the player should use Points to acquire the Abilities directly. If a character requires a specific object, or group of objects, to act as a focus when using one or more of his or her innate Abilities, the Special Requirement Disability applies instead of Item of Power.

Leaping

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Strength
Progression: +5 feet of jumping distance/Rank

The Character can jump greater distances than a normal person (see Jump Skill). The character can make a standing jump of a distance of five feet for every Rank of this Ability. With a running start, the MOV of the character can be added to the Leaping distance total (the character must run a number of feet equal to the value of his MOV score to gain this additional distance).

Magic

Cost: 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect

Progression: The character receives 10 Magic Points/Rank to acquire magical powers

The Magic Ability can be defined as almost anything, depending on the campaign and the desires of the GM. This Ability can be used to simulate Psionics, power rings, or any sort of group of related powers that don't exactly fit with the other Abilities in this Variant.

A character with the Magic Ability has the ability to manipulate arcane energies to produce a specific set of effects that seemingly defy physical laws. The player should define the character's magical ability and establish a consistent theme for his or her powers. Themes that are common include:

- Elemental magic such as mastery over traditional elements like wind, water, or fire, or less traditional "elements" like darkness, the moon, or even love.
- Spells or powers that involve contacting or controlling natural spirits (shamanism) or the dead (necromancy).
- Black magic, involving destructive forces or evil or negative energies.
- Magical powers with an exotic or whimsical theme such as a set of abilities whose "special effects" all relate to tarot cards, flowers, cats ("nekomancy"), or pretty much anything else.
- Psionic abilities that produce psychic effects such as Telepathy, Telekinesis, or Precognition; psi powers are normally assumed to be talents with which the character was born, although they may have required special training to awaken.
- Ki-based magic, where the character focuses his or her inner spirit through martial arts training to produce various exotic attacks and abilities.
- Divine powers granted by a deity to a priest, priestess or other holy individual.
- Legendary powers innate to a magical entity such as a fox spirit's ability to change shape or possess people or the myriad powers of a vampire.

The GM may rule that only certain types of magic exist within his or her campaign setting and that all characters with the Magic Ability should conform to them. For example, in a game aimed at simulating a particular "magical girl" show, any character with the Magic Ability may be expected to emulate the way the magical powers work in the show. It is perfectly reasonable for a character to take the Magic Ability multiple times to represent a character who has multiple styles of magic.

A character with the Magic Ability receives 10 Magic Points per Rank of this Ability. Magic Points may be used like Character Points to acquire individual Abilities. Abilities acquired using Magic Points are designated "Magical Powers" and represent the extent of the character's magic. A Magical Power is used just like an ordinary Ability, except each time the character uses it he or she must perform an invocation and expend Energy Points. This can represent casting a spell, concentrating on his or her inner ki, focusing a psychic power, etc.

Characters can acquire almost any Abilities as Magical Powers using their Magic Points with these exceptions: Energy Bonus or Magic. The GM should exercise caution in allowing characters to acquire Highly Skilled or Organizational Ties, since either can be inappropriate or unbalancing. In addition, each Magical Power should be given its own descriptive name or special effects. Thus, while a Magical Power may be acquired as "Special Attack Rank 2," on a character sheet it should be written down as "Lightning Bolt: Special Attack Rank 2," etc.

An invocation normally involves a short verbal incantation or magic phrase combined with gestures, which should take one action; the character must be able to speak and have his or her hands free to perform it. (For ways to get around this, see Magic Options). If the power is an offensive one (such as Mind Control or Special Attack), the character can make his or her attack as part of the invocation.

Each invocation normally drains Energy Points from the character equal to one half (round up) the Magic Points that were spent to acquire that Rank of the Ability. For example, acquiring the Elasticity Ability at Rank 5 as a Magical Power, costs 10 Magic Points. Invoking the Elasticity Magical Power at Rank 5 drains 5 Energy Points from the character (10 ÷ 2 = 5). A character can choose to use a Magi-

cal Power as if it were acquired at a lower Rank to conserve Energy Points, however. Continuing the example, the character can use Elasticity at Rank 2 instead (even though it can be used at a maximum of Rank 5), which only drains 2 Energy Points.

If the Magical Power is an Ability with instantaneous effects, such as Exorcism, Teleportation or Weapon Attack, the character must invoke the power anew (and spend Energy Points) each time he or she wishes to make use of it. If it has continuing effects (as in the case for most other Abilities), these effects will last for one minute; the character can maintain it for a greater duration by spending additional Energy Points equal to the Magic Point cost every minute. The Game Master can adjust this time up or down as necessary for his or her campaign. Maintaining a Magical Power requires no special concentration, but if the Power is not maintained it will cease to function and need to be invoked all over again in order to reactivate it.



Magic Options

A specific Magical Power may be further customized by assigning it one or more of the following Magic Options when the character's powers are being designed. Note that a character may assign different Magic Options to each of his or her Magical Powers. There are no cost increases or breaks from utilizing Magic Options, it is mostly a matter of role-playing color and a method for creating distinctive magical styles for characters. All effects are cumulative.

- Focus
  In order to invoke a Magical Power that was given the Focus option, the character requires a special tool. This may be a talisman, magic wand, or other device, or a set of exotic "spell components" such as the traditional eye of newt and wing of bat. A Magical Power that requires a Focus costs half as many Energy Points to invoke (round down). The Energy Points required to maintain the Magical Power are unaffected.
- Gesture
  In order to invoke a Magical Power, the character needs to utilize some form of ritualized hand gestures, gestures that are out of the normal and would not be confused with "typical" gestures.
- Incantation
  In order to invoke a Magical Power, the character needs to speak a specific incantation. The incantation must be something that does not sound like normal speech. Typically, incantations will be in some sort of poetic form, invoking strange and unusual deities.
- Ritual
  Invoking a Magical Power that has this option requires a special ceremony taking several minutes to several hours to perform

(GM's option), however, the Energy Points required to invoke the power and maintain it are halved (round down). If the character is interrupted during the Ritual or does anything other than concentrate on it, the Ritual fails and the character must begin again if he or she wishes to invoke the power. If a Ritual is interrupted at the last minute (when nearly complete) the GM may optionally have it go out of control, producing an undesirable or disastrous effect rather than simply fail. The GM may allow the magic-using character a Concentration Skill Check to avoid this. The magnitude of the disaster will depend on how powerful the Magical Power is and will usually be somehow related to what the character was trying to achieve.

- Silent
  A Magical Power that has this option does not require magic words. A Silent Power costs twice as many Energy Points to invoke (but regular cost to maintain). This option is very common for innate or psychic powers.
- Sacrifice
  While most often in the realm of evil magicians, the character is required to perform some manner of sacrifice to activate the power. This sacrifice can be anything from mystic objects to Life points (from the character or others) or even an increased Energy Point cost. The exact sacrifice is determined when the power is created.
- Still
  A Magical Power that has this option does not require any gestures or motions. A Still Power costs twice as many Energy Points to invoke (but regular cost to maintain). Again, this option is very common for innate or psychic powers.

Massive Damage

Cost: 2 or 5 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Damage the character delivers is increased by 5 Points/Rank.

A character with the Massive Damage Ability knows precisely how and where to hit any opponent in order to inflict incredible amounts of damage.

For 2 Points/Rank, additional damage is only inflicted when the character uses one specific weapon type, Special Attack, or method of attack; this attack is defined during character creation. For example, it might represent a special talent with a weapon (such as guns, blades, blunt weapons), knowledge of a particular martial arts technique, or ability with a specific Special Attack.

For 5 Points/Rank, this knowledge can be applied to all forms of physical combat including armed, unarmed, martial arts, and ranged weapons, as well as Special Attacks such as energy blasts, magical spells that inflict damage, or vehicle weapons.

Naturally, the character's attack must be successful to inflict any damage. Physical strength is not the key to delivering massive damage in an attack; the ability to sense a weakness is far more important. The capacity of Massive Damage to augment any kind of attack makes it a very useful Ability for a combat-oriented character.

Mechanical Genius

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect
Progression: Descriptive; see below

The character has an innate knack for creating, modifying, and working with complex machines. Unlike someone who is merely well trained in a particular technical skill, a Mechanical Genius is a natural and is able to flip through a tech manual for an advanced technology in 30 seconds and figure out a way to repair the machine in an hour or so. Such characters often have high levels in Electronics and Mechanical Skills as well. (GMs may want to consider these high skills as a prerequisite to this Ability.)

A character with this Ability can also build new and modify existing gadgets at an astonishing rate, provided he or she has appropriate parts and facilities. In game terms, this means he or she can modify existing Personal Gear or technology-based Items

OPEN ANIME

of Power by exchanging Abilities and Disabilities, as long as the overall Point total is unchanged. A Mechanical Genius can also build Gear and Items of Power, but their creation requires the character to allocate the appropriate number of Character Points.

Alternatively, the GM may describe this Ability as "Magical Genius," that allows a character to modify magical Items of Power by exchanging Abilities and Disabilities.

Rank 1	The character can build/repair machines at 2 times normal speed.
Rank 2	The character can build/repair machines at 5 times normal speed.
Rank 3	The character can build/repair machines at 10 times normal speed.
Rank 4	The character can build/repair machines at 20 times normal speed.
Rank 5	The character can build/repair machines at 50 times normal speed.
Rank 6	The character can build/repair machines at 100 times normal speed.

Metamorphosis

Cost: 5 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Physical transformations are a major part of Japanese folklore, and a common ability for supernatural anime creatures or individuals laboring under a curse. Technological transformations are also possible, such as the robot who can shed its human guise and sprout weapons pods and rocket engines. Sorcerers, witches, or demons may also know how to transform others, usually through powerful magic.

The Metamorphosis Ability allows a character to transform a target into alternate forms by adding Abilities to, or adding/removing Disabilities from, the target character. The maximum duration of this change is dictated by the Ability Rank. If the target character successfully makes a HLT roll (TN 14 + Rank of Metamorphosis), the Metamorphosis attempt does not work. The GM may rule that Metamorphosis automatically fails if the subject's new form could not survive in the present environment. Consequently, a character could turn an enemy into a goldfish, but the attempt would only work if the target was currently in water. This prevents this ability from being used as a quick way to instantly kill an opponent. Again, GMs may waive this restriction where appropriate (such as for a villain in a supernatural horror campaign). In order to transform him or herself, the character needs the Alternate Form Ability.

For each Rank of Metamorphosis, the character can assign 1 Character Point to a target's Abilities. This can either raise the target's current Ability Rank, or result in the target gaining a new power. Alternatively, for each Rank the character can add 3 Disability Bonus Points to, or remove 3 Disability Bonus Points from, a target. Cosmetic changes that confer no additional abilities on the target, but do not fall under the Marked Disability, are considered a 1 Bonus Point change total (for all changes). This includes: change of sex, 50% apparent age increase or decrease, color changes (eye, skin, or hair), and minor physical changes (shape of ears, facial features, or bodily proportions).

Unless the GM indicates otherwise, Character Points gained through Metamorphosis can only be used to add Ranks to the following Abilities: Adaptation, Armor, Elasticity, Enhanced Strength, Extra Arms, Features, Flight, Heightened Senses, Insubstantial, Jumping, Natural Weapons, Regeneration, Special Defense, Special Movement, Speed, Tunneling, and Water Speed. Additionally, only the following Disabilities can be changed: Ism, Marked, Not So Tough, Physical Impairment and Sensory Impairment. Metamorphosis is not intended for transforming people into stone or other forms where they would be effectively immobilized. In order to do that, use the Special Attack Ability with the Incapacitating Ability.

OPEN ANIME

Rank 1	The character may change up to 1 Character Point or 3 Disability Points. The Metamorphosis lasts for 1 minute.
Rank 2	The character may change up to 2 Character Points or 6 Disability Points. The Metamorphosis lasts for 2 minutes.
Rank 3	The character may change up to 3 Character Points or 9 Disability Points. The Metamorphosis lasts for 5 minutes.
Rank 4	The character may change up to 4 Character Points or 12 Disability Points. The Metamorphosis lasts for 10 minutes.
Rank 5	The character may change up to 5 Character Points or 15 Disability Points. The Metamorphosis lasts for 30 minutes.
Rank 6	The character may change up to 6 Character Points or 18 Disability Points. The Metamorphosis lasts for 1 hour.

Mimic

Cost: 7 or 10 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Upon a successful Power Usage: Mimic Skill check against a TN of 15 plus the Rank of the target Ability or Skill, the character can temporarily mimic any Ability or Skill Rank of any single target character within range. The Rank of Mimic equals the maximum Ability Rank that can be mimicked (doubled to determine the maximum Skill Rank). The Rank of a mimicked Ability/Skill only replaces the character's corresponding Rank (if applicable) if it is higher; the character's Ability/Skill Rank cannot decrease through Mimic unless a specific Restriction is assigned.

Alternatively, upon a successful Power Usage: Mimic Skill check against a TN equal to the target Ability Score, the character can temporarily mimic any Ability Score of any single target character within range.

For 7 Points/Rank the character can only mimic one Ability/Ability/Skill at any single time. For 10 Points/Rank, the character can mimic as many Abilities/Abilities/Skills simultaneously at the appropriate Ranks (as indicated) as he or she desires (each mimicked Ability/Ability/Skill must be copied separately, each requiring a separate Skill check).

Rank 1 The character can mimic up to Rank 1 Abilities or Level 2 Skills, at a range of 15 feet and a duration of 5 rounds.

Rank 2 The character can mimic up to Rank 2 Abilities or Level 4 Skills, at a range of 30 feet and a duration of 1 minutes.

Rank 3 The character can mimic up to Rank 3 Abilities or Level 6 Skills, at a range of 45 feet and a duration of 2 minutes.

Rank 4 The character can mimic up to Rank 4 Abilities or Level 8 Skills, at a range of 60 feet and a duration of 4 minutes.

Rank 5 The character can mimic up to Rank 5 Abilities or Level 10 Skills, at a range of 75 feet and a duration of 8 minutes.

Rank 6 The character can mimic up to Rank 6 Abilities or Level 12 Skills, at a range of 90 feet and a duration of 16 minutes.

Mind Control

Cost: 3-6 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: Descriptive; see below

This Ability allows the character to mentally dominate other individuals. Sorcerers, some psionic adepts, and creatures with hypnotic Powers (such as many demons and vampires) are among those likely to have Mind Control.

Mind Control costs 6 Points/Rank if it can be used on any human or alien with an Intellect of 3 or higher (animals are excluded). It costs 5 Points/Rank if it works on broad categories of humans ("any Japanese" or "any male," for example). It costs 4 Points/Rank if the category is more specific and less useful ("Shinto priestesses" or "people obsessed

OPEN ANIME

with beauty"). Finally, it costs 3 Points/Rank if the category is very specific (members of the character's family, or members of a specific military unit). The effects of Mind Control should be role-played. If necessary, the GM can take over the character, although it is more fun if the player (with GM guidance) continues to play the character.

Initiating Mind Control requires a full round. The character must successfully make a Power Usage: Mind Control Skill check (if attacking multiple targets, roll only once) against TN 15. At Ranks 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9, the character receives a +1 bonus to his or her attempt to Mind Control a target. If the check is successful, the target must make a Willpower check against TN 15 plus the attacker's Ranks in mind and the attacker's Rank in Power Usage: Mind Control. When controlling a large number of people, an average Will Check for the entire group could be used. At Ranks 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10, the target also receives a -1 penalty when attempting to defend against Mind Control (or when trying to break established contact). At Rank 7, for instance, the character gains a +4 bonus while the target suffers a -3 penalty. A character needs to defeat an opponent in Mind Combat to toy with the target's emotions (for example, giving the opponent new fears or a prejudice).

Once Mind Control is established, it remains in effect until the dominating character willingly relinquishes control, or until the target breaks free from the control. A target may attempt to break control under two circumstances: whenever he or she is given a command that conflicts with the nature of the character, and whenever the GM deems it appropriate for dramatic effect. To sever the connection, the target must make a successful Willpower save against TN 12 plus the attacker's Intellect modifier and Power Usage: Mind Control Skill Rank plus the modifiers based on the controller's Mind Control Rank.

Against Target's Nature

If a Mind Controlled target is commanded to perform an action that he or she would not willingly do under normal circumstances, the target can attempt to break control. Additionally, the target may receive a bonus if the action goes against his or her nature. The more distasteful the target finds the command, the greater the bonus. For mildly distasteful actions (such as licking an enemy's boots), no bonus is given. For highly distasteful or undesirable actions (such as stealing from an ally), a +4 bonus is given. Finally, for exceptionally distasteful or undesirable actions (such as attacking an ally), a +8 bonus is given. Note that these bonuses are cumulative with penalties associated with the controlling character's Mind Control Rank.

When the GM Deems Appropriate

If the character commands his or her target to perform a number of mundane activities (clean the house, fetching a drink of water, etc.), the GM may decide the target does not receive an opportunity to break established control. Even a seemingly inoffensive command such as "sit in the closet" or "go to sleep," however, may have a drastic impact on the lives of others if a bomb is about to explode in the shrine or the target is piloting a ship at the time. In these instances, the GM may give the target a chance to break free of the Mind Control even if the target does not regard a command as dangerous or distasteful (which would present an opportunity to end the control). This option puts the GM in direct control of the situation, which will benefit the campaign. Naturally, the GM can also apply modifiers to the save attempt that are cumulative with penalties associated with the controlling character's Mind Control Rank.

A character need not control every thought and action of his or her victims but can allow them to live normal lives until they are needed; these targets are known as "sleepers." Additionally, people who have been Mind Controlled will not usually remember events that occurred during the time period they are controlled and will have a gap in their memories.

The GM may allow a character to temporarily boost his or her Mind Control Ability by one or two Ranks against a single individual who is his or her captive by "working" on the subject for a day or

OPEN ANIME

more. This bonus can represent concentrated brainwashing techniques or dedicated study of a subject.

Player Characters should only be placed under Mind Control for extended periods of time in exceptional circumstances.

Rank 1	The character can control the mind of 1 target for a duration of several minutes.
Rank 2	The character can control the minds of 2-3 targets for a duration of several hours.
Rank 3	The character can control the minds of 4-8 targets for a duration of several days.
Rank 4	The character can control the minds of 9-15 targets for a duration of several weeks.
Rank 5	The character can control the minds of 16-25 targets for a duration of several months.
Rank 6	The character can control the minds of 26-50 targets for a duration of several years.

Mind Shield

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: The character gains a +2/Rank for Mind Checks involving mind invasion

A character with Mind Shield is protected against psychic intrusion. This may be a reflection of his or her own psychic abilities, a protective spell, special training, or some innate ability. A character with Mind Shield can detect and block attempts to read his or her mind by a character with Telepathy of equal or lower Rank to the Mind Shield. The character may also add twice the Rank of Mind Shield to his or her Mind Check (as appropriate) when defending against a Mind Control attempt or telepathic Mind Combat.

Natural Weapons

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character gains 1 Natural Weapon/Rank

The character has one or more relatively mundane natural weapons, such as sharp teeth, claws, tentacles, etc. Natural weapons are normally possessed by animals, monsters, and similar characters, but could also represent technological capabilities that mimic such abilities such as an android or cyborg with retractable claws. More powerful Natural Weapons can be designed using the Special Attack Ability.

The character possesses one such attack form per Rank. Possessing more than one such natural weapon gives the character a wider variety of attack forms. Hands, feet, a heavy tail, ordinary teeth, or hooves are not normally counted as Natural Weapons since they are (relatively) blunt; and thus inflict usual unarmed damage. Actually attempting to hit someone or something with a Natural Weapons uses the Combat skill of your character, and your character gains a +2 to their Combat Skill when attacking with their Natural Weapon.

Since the damage from any Natural Weapon is based upon the physical strength of your character, Scale can be applied to it as well.

- Claws or Spikes
  The character possesses sharp talons or spikes on his or her fingers, paws, or feet. In addition to regular damage, the claws inflict an additional +4 damage when used in melee combat.
- Fangs, Beak, or Mandibles
  The character has very sharp teeth, or alternatively, a beak or insect-like mandibles. This natural weapon inflicts +2 to damage in melee combat, but a successful strike that penetrates Armor gives the character the option to maintain a biting grip and continue to inflict equivalent damage in subsequent rounds. These additional attacks are automatically successful, but the opponent can break the hold with a successful Body check. While the attacker is maintaining a biting grip, his or her own ability to defend is impeded: the attacker cannot use weapons to defend, and suffers a -4 DEF penalty against any attack.
- Horns

OPEN ANIME

These are large horns for butting or stabbing. Horns add 2 extra damage to normal damage in melee combat but are exceptionally effective if the character charges into battle. If the character wins Initiative against an opponent and has room for a running start, he or she can lower his or her head and charge. A successful attack will deliver normal attack damage, plus 1d6. If a charge fails to connect, the charging character will be off balance and suffers a -2 penalty to his or her DEF for the remainder of the round and a -4 Initiative roll penalty on the following combat round.

- Spines
  The character is covered in nasty spikes, quills, or sharp scales. Anyone who wrestles with the character automatically suffers 2 damage each round. This damage is in addition to any attack damage delivered. During these struggles, the opponent's clothes should also be ripped and shredded unless they are Armored.
- Tail Striker
  If the character has a combat-ready tail, it can be equipped with spikes, a stinger, or other similarly nasty weapon. The attack inflicts an additional 2 damage (in addition to normal damage). Upon a successful attack, the target must make a Body roll or suffer a -4 INI penalty the following combat round (the target is off balance).
- Tentacles
  One or more of the character's limbs — or possibly his or her hair — are actually tentacles. A character with tentacles gains a +2 bonus to their Combat Skill and DEF when engaged in a wrestling attack or defending against one. Tentacles are also difficult to avoid in combat (opponent suffers a -1 DEF penalty).

Nullify

Cost: 7 or 12 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: 1 Ability Rank worth of Abilities neutralized/Rank

With a successful Power Usage: Nullify Skill check against TN 12 plus the target Ability's Rank (highest Rank if targeting more than one Ability), the character can temporarily render the Ability or Abilities of other characters unusable within the Area of the Ability (see Area Table below). The Nullify Ability Rank determines the maximum Ability Rank that can be nullified.

For 7 Points/Rank the character can only nullify one Ability each combat action. Thus, a character with Extra Attacks Rank 3 can Nullify four Abilities each round. For 12 Points/Rank, the character can nullify all Abilities simultaneously at the appropriate ranks (as indicated above).

Area Per Rank	
Rank	Area
1	8 inches
2	1 yard
3	10 yards
4	100 yards
5	1 miles
6	10 miles
7	100 miles
8	1,000 miles
9	10k miles
10	100k miles

- Nullify (Drain)
  For an additional 3 Points/Rank, this Ability can be specified as a Nullify (Drain). At each Ability Rank, the target's single Ability (at 10 Points/Rank) or multiple Abilities (at 15 Points/Rank) are reduced by one Rank, to a minimum of Rank 0. For example, if a character with Rank 5 Nullify (Drain) at 15 Points/Rank targets a character who has Rank 3 Armour, Rank 8 Flight, and Rank 10 Teleport, the target is reduced to Rank 0 Armour (3-5=0), Rank 3 Flight (8-5=3), and Rank 5 Teleport (10-5=5). If, instead, the character only had regular Nullify, the Flight



and Teleport Abilities would be unaffected since they are above Rank 5 Abilities.

If the character uses Nullify (Drain) on the Special Attack Ability, only damage is reduced. None of the Attack Abilities are affected directly, though the effectiveness of Abilities that depend on the amount of damage delivered will be reduced.

To create a character that steals a target's Abilities for his or her own use, assign both the Nullify and Mimic Abilities, linked through the Dependant Disability.

Organizational Ties

Cost: 1-3 Points/Rank

Relevant Attribute: Presence

Progression: Descriptive; see below

Organizational Ties represents a character's close relationship with a hierarchy of some sort that grants him or her access to respect and privileges. Monetary advantages are usually covered by the Wealth Ability, while access to special equipment may be represented by the Personal Gear Ability. Examples of organizations include the feudal system, powerful corporations, organized crime rings, secret guilds and societies, governmental positions, military organizations, and some religions. For campaigns in which all players belong to the same organized group, the GM may decide that Organizational Ties are not required. Consequently, this Ability is optional; the GM may prefer to treat organization membership as a background detail instead.

The value of Organizational Ties depends on its importance in the setting. An organization that exerts moderate power within the setting is worth 1 Point/Rank, one that has significant power costs 2 Points/Rank, and one that has great power in the setting costs 3 Points/Rank. Players should not assign this Ability to represent organizations that have very little power. The GM determines the extent of the organization's influence. In a high school comedy campaign, the school's autocratic Student Council might wield "significant power," while in most other settings it would be completely trivial and not worth any Points. Similarly, a criminal organization like the Mafia or Yakuza might count as "great power" (3 Points/Rank) in a traditional low-powered game set in modern times, but merely as "moderate power" (1 Point/Rank) in a high-powered magical girl campaign.

Normal organizations should be limited to a geopolitical area, such as a single country. Global organizations, or those that span multiple geopolitical areas, function at 1 Rank lower. Multi-planetary organizations function at 2 Ranks lower, while multi-galaxy organizations function at 3 Ranks lower. For example, the president of a global corporation needs

Open Anime

to assign Rank 6 to gain access to the Controlling Rank category (1 Rank lower). Similarly, a character who has Senior Rank in a universe-wide military organization should have Rank 7 Organizational Ties (3 Ranks lower). Some organizations may be ostensibly limited to a single country, but the higher ranks still have global or multi-planetary influence. For example, the President of the United States is a Controlling Rank (Rank 6). Since the US has great influence across the world, however, the position would be Rank 7 (as if it was a global organization).

These far-ranging organization positions are only relevant, however, if the character can actually gain access to the resources of all branches of the group. If an Earth character is Connected to a multi-planetary police organization, for instance, but can only interact with and be influenced by the Earth chapter of the organization, the group is only considered to be a global organization (1 Rank lower) for that character. The group is not categorized as multi-planetary (2 Rank lower), since the extensive resource benefits normally associated with an organization that size are not available to the character.

Rank 1 The character is connected to the organization and can rely on it for occasional support and favors (and expect to be called on in return).

Rank 2 The character has respected status in an organization such as a landed knight in the feudal system, a junior executive in a corporation, a city council member, or a Mafia "Wise Guy" in an organized crime family. The organization brings the character status and some wealth.

Rank 3 The character has middle rank in an organization such as a corporate vice president in charge of a department, a lesser feudal lord with a castle and lands, or a Mafia "captain" who runs a neighborhood, or a junior congressman or member of parliament.

Rank 4 The character has senior rank in an organization, such as the senior vice-president of a large corporation, a high-ranking officer in the JSDF, or a US senator.

Rank 5 The character has controlling rank in an organization, such as the president of a corporation, the boss of a large crime family, or a US state governor.

Rank 6 The character has a controlling rank that spans multiple organizations, such as the ruler of a small nation, or "boss of bosses" of many different crime families.

Personal Gear

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character gains 1 major and 4 minor items of Personal Gear/Rank

The Personal Gear Ability represents a character's access to useful equipment. Characters do not need to spend Character Points for items that are legal, inexpensive, and mundane in the campaign setting (such as clothing, a backpack, a knife, or consumer goods). GMs may require players to allot Points to this Ability, however, if their characters will begin the game with numerous pieces of equipment to which the average person might not have easy access such as weapons, body Armor, or specialized professional equipment. The GM may give starting players a weapon of choice and a few other inexpensive items for free.

Personal Gear cannot include magic items, secret prototypes, or technology more advanced than what is standard in the setting. It can include common civilian vehicles appropriate to the setting (for example, a car, truck, light airplane, or motorbike in the present day; perhaps a horse for fantasy campaigns). For less common or more expensive objects, see the Item of Power Ability. The GM always has the final say on whether or not an item is available to the characters. Costumes for super humans that are merely designed to withstand the effects of the character's Abilities and Disabilities (such as an outfit that stretches with a character possessing the Elasticity Ability) one minor or major slot (depending on how common the Game Master determines them to be in his campaign).

Although characters may have items that are owned by the organizations to which they belong, they still must acquire these items as Personal Gear if they will make regular use of them (though the

Conditional Ownership Disability may apply). Thus, a police officer would use Gear for a pistol, police car, or handcuffs, although these items are property of the police department. This rule is intended mainly for play balance and, naturally, the GM has final say on this issue.

Each Rank in this Ability permits the character to take one major and four minor items. Alternatively, the character can exchange one major item for four minor items, or vice versa. Use these guidelines to differentiate between major and minor items:

- Minor

The item is somewhat hard to get, or rather expensive. It is something available in a shop or store or from a skilled artisan, but it costs as much as an average person's monthly wage. Alternatively, the Gear can be less expensive but needs a license or black market contact to acquire. Non-standard items that modify or improve other items of Gear, but are not functional by themselves (for example, a scope for a rifle, silencer for a pistol, or supercharged engine for an automobile) are also minor items of Gear.

Modern examples of minor items include weapon and vehicle modifications, handguns, premium medical kits, night vision goggles, full camping gear, burglary tools, expensive tool kits, and personal computers. Ancient or medieval examples include swords, longbows, crossbows, shields, lightweight Armor (such as leather or a light mail shirt), lock picks, poisons, or a mule. Gear must be appropriate to the world setting — a pistol is a minor item in a modern-day or future setting, but an Item of Power in a medieval fantasy game!

- Major

The gear is usually illegal for civilians, but it may be issued to an elite law enforcement agency, an average soldier, or a government spy may be issued. Modern-day examples of major items include machine guns, tactical Armor, and grenade launchers. Major gear items can also include quite expensive but commercially available equipment such as a science lab, workshop, car, or motorbike. The GM can rule that an occasional, very expensive item (for example, an airplane or semi truck) counts as two or more major items of Gear. Ancient or medieval examples of major items include a full suit of chain or plate Armor, a cavalry horse, a smith's forge, an alchemist's lab, or a wagon and team of draft animals.

- Mundane

Items that are easy to acquire, legal, and inexpensive count as "mundane items" and do not count as Personal Gear unless taken in quantity (GM's option). For example, "a complete tool box" would be a single a minor item; a single wrench is mundane.

Place of Power

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

A Place of Power is a home base or lair that is infused with magical or holy energies. It might be a shrine, magical circle, a sacrificial altar, a ring of standing stones or something less traditional. The place usually radiates good or evil energy, and a nearby character with an appropriate Sixth Sense can detect its presence.

While within his or her Place of Power, the character alone can perform activities using either Sorcery or Magic more easily. The Place of Power has a pool of 10 Energy Points for each Rank of this Ability. While the character is standing somewhere within the Place of Power, he or she can draw on these Energy Points as if they were the character's own. Once used, the Energy Points replenish at a rate of 1 Energy Point for each Rank of the Place of Power Ability per hour.

Several characters may share the same Place of Power. While this option does not reduce the Ability's cost, it can provide greater convenience. Each character sharing the Power has his or her own source of additional Energy Points.

At the GM's discretion, a Place of Power may also offer additional Abilities. In particular, one usually exerts a subtle, long-term, emotional influence on people who live in or near it, which may be positive if the owner of the Place of Power is a good person or negative if he or she is an evil one. In addition, individuals born or raised in a Place of Power are more likely to develop supernatural abilities.

OPEN ANIME

Rank 1	The Place of Power is the size of a small rug and provides 10 Energy Points.
Rank 2	The Place of Power is the size of a small room and provides 20 Energy Points.
Rank 3	The Place of Power is the size of a large room and provides 30 Energy Points.
Rank 4	The Place of Power is the size of a house and provides 40 Energy Points.
Rank 5	The Place of Power is the size of a city block and provides 50 Energy Points
Rank 6	The Place of Power is the size of several city blocks and provides 60 Energy Points.

Plant Control

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: Descriptive, see text

Characters with this Ability can control the growth and movement of all plants in the surrounding area. The Ability Rank determines the maximum area in which the plants can be controlled (see Table: Area in Nullify Ability).

If the character limits the Control to a single broad group of plants, the Ability functions at one Rank higher. Broad plant groups include: trees, grasses, weeds, bushes, flowers, mosses, vegetables, ferns, vines, seaweeds, etc. If limited to a specific type of plant, the Ability functions at two ranks higher. Examples of plant types include: oak trees, wheat, dandelions, raspberry bushes, sunflowers, club moss, carrots, etc.

Controlled plants can grow to a maximum size of 5 times their normal mature state. For Fast growth, the Ability functions at one Rank lower when determining area. For 50x growth, two ranks lower; for 100x growth, three ranks lower; for 500x growth, four ranks lower; and for 1,000x growth, five ranks lower.

To cause significant damage with controlled plants, the character should acquire the Special Attack Ability with the Dependant Disability.

Pocket Dimension

Cost: 2, 3 or 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: Descriptive; see below

This Ability allows the opening of a hole or doorway — a portal — into another dimension. In anime, this power is sometimes possessed by demons or even vampires, or, in Western myth, by fairies. Mages often create dimensional portals leading from closets or doors into other places. In less serious games, Pocket Dimension can also represent the ability some characters have to suddenly produce big items (like huge hammers or swords) seemingly out of nowhere. A Pocket Dimension could also represent an object that is simply bigger on the inside than on the outside.

The Rank of Pocket Dimension determines the maximum size of the dimension. The environment and furnishings of the dimension are up to the player within the GM's limitations; extensive furnishings should be acquired as Personal Gear. A dimension could even be partially unexplored or dangerous territory, providing adventuring opportunities to the characters.

The cost of Pocket Dimension is 2 Points/Rank if it is limited to a single fixed portal (such as a house closet), 3 Points/Rank if the portal is in a mobile location (such as inside a vehicle, or attached to an item), or 4 Points/Rank if the character can use a particular class of objects as a portal (such as "any mirror" or "any pool of water").

A character with this ability at 2 or 3 Points/Rank cannot create new portals leading out of the dimension; he or she may only leave by the one that was entered. A character can usually only have a single portal opened to his or her dimension at a time, but additional apertures to the same dimension may be possessed for 1 extra Character Point each. At the 4 Points/Rank version, the character can leave the Pocket Dimension through any other appropriate exit within 1 mile times the Rank (for

OPEN ANIME

example, within a 6 mile radius for Rank 6); the character is not required to leave through the same one he or she entered.

Once opened, a portal can stay open for as long as the creator is in the dimension. The creator may also be able to "leave the door open" if he or she wishes to allow individuals to enter or leave while the creator is not present within the dimensional pocket.

Pocket Dimensions may optionally be designated as only one-way, restricting access in or out until the character or machine maintaining them is destroyed, or some other condition is fulfilled. This Ability may be taken multiple times to give access to multiple different dimensions. If so, it may be taken at different Ranks for each individual dimension.

Using Pocket Dimension Offensively

Some characters may have the exotic ability of being able to suck or warp unwilling targets into their alternate dimension (at the 3 or 4 Points/Rank version only). To indicate this, assign the Pocket Dimension Ability and think acquire the Special Attack Ability with the Linked (Pocket Dimension) Ability.

Characters who have an ability to travel between dimensions should possess the Dimension Hop Special Movement Ability.

Rank 1	The dimension can be as large as a closet.
Rank 2	The dimension can be as large as a room.
Rank 3	The dimension can be as large as a house.
Rank 4	The dimension can be as large as a city block.
Rank 5	The dimension can be the size of an entire village.
Rank 6	The dimension can be the size of an entire city (or even larger).

Power Flux

Cost: 5, 10, 15, or 20 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Variable
Progression: Linear, 5 Flux Points/Rank

Power Flux represents extensive control over an element, ideology, natural phenomenon, or sphere of influence. This is a very open-ended Ability and should be discussed with the GM at length to determine the effects and limitations in his or her game. Proper use of Power Flux will not unbalance the game, but rather can provide many opportunities for character innovation.

A character with this Ability has a pool of reserve Character Points (called flux points) that can be allocated to different Abilities as needed, within the thematic category chosen by the player. This often represents a magical or psionic Ability, but it can also reflect a character who has several different powered forms, or a character who has little control over his or her range of Abilities.

Power Flux uses a special table for Duration. This Duration represents how frequently a character can change the allocation of flux points from one group of Abilities to a different group, and not how long a character can use Power Flux. At low Ranks, the character will be forced to use the same group of Abilities for extended periods of time before he or she can use the flux points for alternates. At high Ranks, the character can gain a complete new set of Abilities almost at will. Attribute scores and Disabilities cannot be raised or lowered with Power Flux (though the Enhanced [Attribute] Ability may be altered).

Power Flux Duration	
Rank	Duration
1	6 months
2	1 month
3	1 week
4	1 day
5	12 hours
6	1 hour
7	10 minutes
8	1 minute
9	5 turns
10	1 turn

Minor or small thematic categories cost 10 Points/Rank. Examples include: a classical element (water, fire, wind, earth), a limited concept or idea (lust, protection, charm, pride), a minor aspect of nature (temperature, insects, sunlight, clouds, orbits, sea creatures), or a limited sphere of influence (silence, cats, writing, guns, a small locality, nutrition).

Major or large thematic categories cost 15 Points/Rank. Examples include: a broad concept or idea (love, travel, strength), a major aspect of nature (weather, magnetism, gravity, electricity, animals), or a broad sphere of influence (cities, computer data, health, truth, manufacturing, fertility, weapons, drugs).

Primal or universal thematic categories cost 20 Points/Rank. Examples include core concepts and primary spheres of influence: Time, War, Death, Life, Earth, Thought, Magic, Force, Math, Self, Law, Chaos, Creation, Heaven, Hell, Dimensions, Dreams, and others.

If the character makes a successful Attribute check (the relevant Attribute score is determined by the GM) against TN 12, he or she can assign flux points to one or more Abilities that grant Abilities that fit within the thematic category. A flux point is equal to one CP, which can be assigned to the cost of the Ability directly. Power Flux cannot imitate the Sorcery Ability (if the optional Ability from the Appendix is being used).

For example, a character with Rank 6 Power Flux with a "cat theme" has assigned a total of 65 CP to the Ability. In return, he or she gains 30 flux points. At a minimum interval of 12 hours, the character can allocate the 30 flux points to any combination of Abilities that fit the cat theme. Perhaps in the morning, the character needs to prowl around the city on patrol and assigns the following Abilities: Armor Rank 3 (9 flux points); Heightened Awareness Rank 9 (9 flux points); Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell, Vision) Rank 3 (3 flux points); Jumping Rank 5 (5 flux points); and Enhanced Strength Rank 1 (4 flux points).

Limited Point Exchange

An alternate method of Power Flux only costs 5 Points/Rank, but limits the character to a small assortment of Ability Abilities among which CP can be exchanged. At Rank 1, CP can be exchanged in any way between the Rank cost of any two Abilities, which are determined during character creation. From Rank 2 through 10, each Rank adds one additional Ability to the list of Abilities that can be fluxed (extending to 11 Abilities at Rank 10). For instance, if a character with this Rank 3 Power Flux and Rank 4 Duration (1 day) has allocated 47 CP to four fluxable Abilities (Armor, Flight, Special Attack, and Teleport), he or she can redistribute the 45 points in any way over the four Abilities once every 24 hours.

Power Defense

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Variable
Progression: The character reduces the TN of Attribute Checks related to the defensive use of an Ability by 1/Rank

Power Defense is acquired in conjunction with another Ability not normally used for Defense (Ability must be defined when Power Defense is assigned). Power Defense allows a character to use the other Ability to defend against attacks, possibly avoiding all damage entirely. The character must make a roll (as appropriate for the situation or Ability) with a bonus of +1 per Power Defense Rank against a TN equal to the attacker's final to hit roll result. If successful, the character activates his or her Ability in time to defend against the attack and avoids all damage (and effects) from the attack. The player should consult with the Game Master to determine which Abilities are appropriate for a Power Defense.

A character may only attempt one Power Defense each round unless he or she also possesses the Extra Defenses Ability, in which case he or she may sacrifice one extra Defense to attempt an additionally Power Defense (the two may not be used in conjunction, through).

Characters must assign this Ability once for each Ability they wish to use defensively.

Projection

Cost: 1 to 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Ability: Mind
Progression: Descriptive; see below

The character can projected images that fools one or more senses. The Projection cannot be touched because it is not substantial. Closer inspection will usually reveal the Projection for what it is, which may cause it to disappear (GM's discretion). The GM may require a Will save to "see through" a Projection against a TN equal to: 10 plus the projector's Wisdom modifier plus the projector's Rank in Power Usage: Projection.

A Projection may be of a particular object or entity, or of a complete scene (such as a furnished room or crowd). It may also be thrown over an existing person, scene, or object to make it appear different than it really is. A Projection that is untended is normally static, either remaining in one place or (if created over something) moving as the underlying object or entity moves. To give a Projection the semblance of independent activity (such as a projected image of a person who moves and speaks), the character must actively concentrate on manipulating the Projection, and perform no other actions.



For 1 Point/Rank the character can create Projections that can be detected by one sense, usually sight (sense must be determined during character creation). For 2 Points/Rank the Projections can be detected by two senses, usually sight and hearing. For 3 Points/Rank the Projections can be detected by three senses. For 4 Points/Rank the Projections can be detected by all senses. No matter how realistic the Projections, however, they can never cause physical sensations intense enough to inflict pain or damage. An image of a roaring fire may feel hot, and a character may believe that he or she is burning, but the fire cannot actually deliver damage.

A character can normally maintain only a single Projection at a time. To be able to maintain multiple Projections at once costs the character an extra 1 Point for every distinct Projection the character can sustain simultaneously after the first. Thus, "Projection Rank 3 (one sense, four Projections)" would cost six Points: three Points for Rank 3 (one sense) and three more Points for being able to sustain four Projections at a time. The GM can assume that a group of objects or entities in close proximity, such as a furnished room, a swarm of insects, or a horde of charging warriors, counts as a single Projection rather than several. If a character is already sustaining his or her maximum number of Projections and wishes to create another one, an existing Projection must first be dispelled.

The GM can adjust the TN depending on how familiar or unfamiliar the character is with the scene that is being simulated. The GM may also give the character a +1 bonus for every Rank he or she has in excess of the minimum Rank needed to create the Projection. For example, if a character with Projection Rank 5 decides to create a merely human-sized Projection (which needs only Rank 1), a +4 bonus applies.

Open Anime

If the roll fails, the character's Projection has some subtle flaw in it; the character creating it may not be aware of this until someone else points it out, however.

Rank 1	The character can an create small illusions, about the size of a single person.
Rank 2	The character can create medium illusions, large enough for an entire room, or a large object like a car or elephant.
Rank 3	The character can create large illusions that can cover a house-sized area.

Regeneration

Cost: 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character can regenerate 5 Life point each Turn/Rank

Characters with this Ability automatically heal their own injuries, whether the characters are awake, asleep, or unconscious. The character's Life points cannot exceed their original total. At higher ranks, the character's body will revive itself if "clinically" dead but not actually brain-dead (Rank 3+), repair massive trauma such as lost limbs or organs (Rank 6+), or restore the character if cut into several pieces (Rank 6+). The body cannot repair itself if it is blown to bits or disintegrated, however.

Reincarnation

Cost: 2 or 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

If the character is destroyed, some of his or her essence may still survive. This may be in spiritual or digital form, or it may be something that must be retrieved from the corpse. A robot whose memory can be copied or uploaded, a creature that leaves an egg in its body upon death, or an undead monster that will reform a few minutes, hours, or days after its apparent death are all examples of this. If this remnant can be salvaged or otherwise recovered, in a matter of days or weeks and with proper care, it will develop a new body similar to the original. A reincarnated character usually starts with 1 Life point.

Reincarnation can be prevented in some way. This may be as simple as burning, blowing up, or dismembering a body, or as obscure as requiring a special ritual. For 2 Points/Rank, the Reincarnation is easy to stop; for 4 Points/Rank, the Reincarnation is difficult to stop. The GM and player must work together to determine the parameters involved in preventing the rebirth.

Rank 1	The reincarnation occurs within a few weeks.
Rank 2	The reincarnation occurs within a few days.
Rank 3	The reincarnation occurs within a single day.
Rank 4	The reincarnation occurs within a few hours.
Rank 5	The reincarnation occurs within a single hour.
Rank 6	The reincarnation occurs within a few minutes.

Rejuvenation

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: Under specific conditions, the character instantly regain 5 Life points or Energy Points/Rank

Characters with this Ability can focus on their adrenaline rush and internal reserves to restore lost Life points or Energy Points. Rejuvenation can only take place under certain circumstances (like a crowd getting behind a wrestler, a sound that triggers a certain memory or the presence of a master, or a dashing knight inspiring a magical girl) and can happen only once in a scene. The GM and player should work together to determine when Rejuvenation can occur. Rejuvenation requires one combat round, during which the character can only dodge or avoid attacks. Neither Life points nor Energy Points can be raised above their maximum.

OPEN ANIME

Resistance

Cost: 5 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character gains 1 Special Defense/Rank

A character with this Ability is resistant or completely immune to a specific type of uncommon ailment or injury, normally one whose effects are otherwise insidious in nature. Resistance can be acquired multiple times to represent a character who is resistant or immune to different kinds of attacks/events.

If a category is assigned one Rank, the character is partially resistant; for two Ranks, the character has complete or enhanced resistance. For ability to survive under harsh physical conditions, see the Adaptation Ability. Several examples of Resistances and their effects are shown. The GM and players are encouraged to develop their own as well.

Sample Resistances		
Effect	**1 Rank**	**2 Ranks**
Ageing	Ages slowly	Does not age
Air/Oxygen to Breathe	Survive in low-oxygen environment	Does not breathe
Hunger	Need to eat once every 2-4 days	Never need to eat
One Type of Damage	+3 DEF	+6 DEF
Pain	Unwanted sensation is reduced	No pain is felt
Sleep	Sleep once every 3-7 days	Never need to sleep
Specific Attack Ability	+3 DEF	+6 DEF

Sensory Block

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect
Progression: Descriptive; see below

A character with Sensory Block can cover an area (size is determined by the Rank) with a field that partially blocks specific senses or detection techniques. This can represent a magical ability, technological enhancement, or paranormal effect. Each time this Ability is assigned, the character can either block one sense or enhanced sense (Type I) or one detection technique (Type II), which is determined during character creation. The GM may allow multiple assignments to the same sense or technique, which results in cumulative penalties. To fully block a detection technique, see the Invisibility Ability.

Sensory Block, defined as Electronic Counter Measures, can also be used to block the Computer Intrusion Ability (Computer Intrusion Ability, pg. 82). In this case, each Rank of Sensory Block can block one Rank of Computer Intrusion.

Sensory Block must be purchased separately for each sense, technique or Ability that it is to block.

Type I

One of the five senses — hearing, smell, vision, taste, or touch — is partially blocked. This may mean that individuals within the area covered cannot see well (vision), cannot hear well (hearing), etc. Rolls made by these individuals when pertaining to the specific senses suffer a -4 penalty, which is cumulative with any Heightened Senses bonus.

Type II

A detection technique is partially blocked. Examples of techniques include: dark vision, electric current detection; homing weapons; infra-vision; magnetic field detection; microscopic vision; radar detection; radio reception; sonar detection; a specific Sixth Sense technique; ultrasonic hearing; ultra-vision; vibration detection; X-ray vision. Ability or Skill rolls relating to these detection techniques suffer a -4 penalty.

OPEN ANIME

Rank 1	The Sensory block covers up to 100 ft radius.
Rank 2	The Sensory block covers up to 500 ft radius.
Rank 3	The Sensory block covers up to 1 mile radius.
Rank 4	The Sensory block covers up to 5 mile radius.
Rank 5	The Sensory block covers up to 50 mile radius.
Rank 6	The Sensory block covers up to 500 mile radius.

Servant

Cost: 2 or 5 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The servant is constructed from 25 Character Points plus 10/Rank

The character has a servant or companion entity. It serves as a familiar, pet, companion, or bodyguard. Examples of Servants could include: a magical girl's talking animal companion, a pet robot, a sorcerer's apprentice, a fierce wolf, a bound demon or ghost, a mage's familiar cat, or a vampire's enslaved servants. Servants are NPCs controlled by the GM, but they will normally work toward the character's best interests. Nevertheless, they should have their own personalities and may occasionally get into trouble of their own.

A Servant is assumed to be around "all the time." To create a servant that the character summons for a brief period of time, acquire the Ability as a Magical Power — this will result in the servant only remaining around as long as the character spends appropriate Energy Points.

This Ability costs 2 Point/Rank if the character is limited to one particular Servant. If the character can dismiss the Servant and replace it with a different one between adventures or during an adventure with suitable effort (GM's option such as casting a summoning spell or taming a new animal), then the Ability costs 5 Points/Rank. A character can take the Ability several times to have multiple Servants.

A Servant is created with his or her own Attribute Scores, Abilities, Disabilities, and Skills as normal but with only 10 Character Points. Each Rank of the Servant Ability also gives the player 10 additional Character Points to add to the Servant (for example, 20 Points at Rank 1, 30 Points at Rank 2, etc.). The Servant may not have the Servant Ability, and some relationship-based Disabilities should not be assigned due to its innate role as a character's Servant. Thus, it is inappropriate for a Servant to have the following Disabilities: Owned, Red Tape, or Significant Other.

Sixth Sense

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: The character gains 1 Sixth Sense/Rank

Some characters have the ability to detect things that are hidden to normal senses or technological sensors, while others have affinities for specific objects or people. Sixth Sense typically represents psychic or magical ability, but can also reflect trained and acute senses or divine intervention.

The character may sense one particular category of phenomena per Rank. The player should define the category with the GM's approval (Sixth Sense is very much a GM-defined ability). As a guideline, the character is automatically alerted when something his or her Sixth Sense detects is in close proximity (roughly 20 foot radius area). The GM may require a Mind Check to do this, with difficulty modifiers depending on the strength of the source of whatever emanations the character can sense. In some cases, the GM may allow detection at greater distances if the source is very strong. The GM should give a bonus (+2 modifier or more) if the character is touching the source.

A character who specifically concentrates on using his or her Sixth Sense may gain more precise information on a successful Mind Check. The exact content of this information is up to the GM. If the check succeeds, the GM may provide the character with a few extra clues about the source such as "the magic is coming from those buildings over there"

or "you sense the evil presence feels otherworldly... and hungry." If the check fails, the character will not gain any additional information unless something happens, such as the phenomena becoming stronger, or coming much closer. The GM should always try to use Sixth Sense to plant clues that make a story more exciting, but not allow it to short-circuit the process of discovery in a mystery plot.

Examples of phenomena to which the character may be sensitive include astral/ethereal beings, danger, Pocket Dimensions, electricity, elements, emotions, evil, illusions, interpersonal dynamics, magic, magnetics, paranormal nexus points, particular objects, places of power, psionics, spirits, telepathy, truth, virtue, or the use of specific Abilities or Disabilities.



Precognition and Post-cognition

Alternatively, Sixth Sense can be assigned to represent precognition and post-cognition — the ability to access visions of past and future events. This option is a GM-defined Ability, however, which allows him or her limit its application and scope within the campaign. For precognition and postcognition, the Ability's Rank reflects the maximum time difference between the present situation and a perceived future or past event (the higher the Rank, the longer the time difference). Low-Ranking character may only perceive events within minutes or hours of the current time; high-Ranking characters can extend this time to hundreds or even thousands of years. For either of these types of powers, the GM may want to consider modeling them on the Awareness Ability (pg. 49) where, you make a Mind + Sixth Sense Ranks check vs. a TN to determine if your character is able to view either the past or the future.

Skill Knack

Cost: 5 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Varies with Skill
Progression: Character receives +1 to all Skills in a Skill Group

The character has a natural aptitude or gift with a particular set of skills. The bonus received is applicable to one particular Skill Group only, and this Ability must be purchased separately for any Skill Group with which the character is gifted. Some examples of Skill Knack being used as other types of Skill enhancers:

Jack of All Trades: +1 to any 5 Professional Skills

Linguist: +1 to any 5 Language Skills

Scholar: +1 to any 5 Knowledge Skills

Traveler: +1 to any 5 Area Knowledge Skills

Skill Specialist

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Your character receives a +1 to a specified skill when dealing with specialized knowledge/Rank

This Ability can be applied to any of the Skills except for the Combat skill. When taken, you must list the specialized knowledge or training possessed by your character that is represented by this Abil-

OPEN ANIME

ity. A character must have at least one rank in a skill before they can have a Skill Specialist that modifies that skill.

Examples: A character who is a rocket scientist with the Science skill with a score of +5 may have Skill Specialist (Science - Rocketry) +2. This means that when the character is trying to figure out a problem with a rocket's propulsion system, their skill score would be +7 instead of the base +5.

A character who is a solider and who has the Military Science skill with a score of +4 is a real military history buff. By taking Skill Specialist (Military Science – Military History) at +3, their effective skill when dealing with a matter of military history would be +7.

Special Attack

Cost: 1 or 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: The character possesses an attack that delivers 1d6 damage/Rank

Characters sometimes wield powerful offensive energies, such as electric zaps, magical fireballs, ki-powered martial arts strikes, or energy swords. Some characters, such as cyborgs or robots may have guns, missiles, or beam weapons built into their bodies.

Special Attack costs 4 Points/Rank, and delivers 1d6 damage per Rank.

Special Attacks may be further customized by assigning one or more attack Abilities. Each attack Ability taken reduces the damage by 1d6 but adds an additional capability. Attacks may also be assigned one or more attack Drawbacks. Each attack Drawback increases the damage by 1d6 but reduces the attack's utility by imposing some form of limitation.

The player must assign Abilities and Drawbacks when the Special Attack is designed. On the player's character sheet, they are listed in parentheses following the attack's modified damage. He or she may assign a combination of Abilities and Drawbacks that would reduce its damage to a minimum of 1d6. To create a "zero damage" Special Attack, one would select the No Damage Drawback. For example, suppose a character has a Special Attack at Rank 2. He or she would only be able to purchase one Ability, which would reduced the attack's damage from 2d6 to 1d6. If the character wanted to purchase a second Ability, he or she must first assign a Drawback, which would raise the attack's damage back to 2d6. The character could then purchase a second Ability, reducing the damage back to 1d6.

A Special Attack should always be given a descriptive name such as "90mm Auto-Cannon" or "Raging Thunder Dragon Fist." When designing the attack, the player (with GM input) should determine what Skill and Specialization is appropriate for its use. For most magical or super-powered ranged attacks, it will be Special Ranged Attacks. For ranged weapons designed as Personal Gear, it is usually Guns or Thrown Weapon with an appropriate Specialization depending on the description. Any weapon with the Melee Drawback uses the Melee Attack or Unarmed Attack Skills depending on its description. For example, Melee Attack (Sword) is appropriate to an energy sword, while Unarmed Attack (Striking) would be suitable for a wraith that drained energy by its touch or a ki-energized martial arts strike.

Alternate Attacks

Although a character often uses his or her highest-Rank "primary" weapon, alternate or backup ones may also be possessed. The Point cost of these additional "secondary" attacks are one quarter the cost of the primary attack at 1 Point/Rank. The primary attack — the attack with the highest Rank — is the only one that costs the standard 4 Points/Rank. Secondary attacks may each possess different damages, Abilities and Drawbacks. If acquiring alternate attacks as Magical Powers (see Magic) the secondary attacks drain the regular 2 Energy Points/Rank, not 0.5 Energy Points/Rank.

Special Effects

The special effects of Area Effect, Drain (Any), Flare, Incapacitating, Irritant, Spreading, and Tangle are determined by the Rank of the Special Attack only. Massive Damage, Enhanced Strength are not

OPEN ANIME

included in the calculation. Additionally, Armor and Force Fields do not normally protect against the special effects of Drain (Any), Flare, Incapacitating, Irritant, or Tangle. Before making an attack, a character can choose to inflict less damage than the normal 1d6/Rank, or reduce the power of their special effects.

Effects Based on Damage Inflicted

The scope of the special effects for attacks with the Area Effect, Drain (Any), Flare, Incapacitating, Irritant, Linked, Spreading, or Tangle Abilities depend on the Rank of the Special Attack. For example, Drain (Mind) reduced the target's Intelligence Score by 2 for every Special Attack Rank; similarly, Tangle creates restraints that have 4 Life points for every Special Attack Rank. Attacks with the No Damage Drawback are treated as one Rank higher when determining the special effects for these Abilities.

To introduce randomness into these special effects, their scopes could instead be based on every 1d6 damage that the attack inflicts (or would have inflicted in the case of attacks with the No Damage Drawback). For the above examples, Drain (Intellect) would reduce a target's Intelligence Score by 2 for every 5 damage, and Tangle would create restraints that have 4 Life points for every 5 damage.

If this alternate rule is used, damage must be rolled for all attacks — including ones with the No Damage Drawback — to determine the special effect scope. While this rule will balance the attacks with each other more accurately (particularly if the No Damage Drawback is assigned), a little more calculation is involved.

Special Attack Adders

The following Adders may be assigned to a Special Attack. The GM may disallow any combination of Adders that seems inappropriate.

- Accurate
  The attack is unusually accurate giving a +4 bonus to Attack rolls (or Ability checks if the attack has the Mind or Soul Attack Ability). This Ability can be assigned two or three

Special Attack Adders	
Adders	# of Slots
Accurate	1
Affects Incorporeal	1
Area Effect	1
Aura	2
Auto-Fire	3
Burning	1
Concealable	1
Contagious	2 or 4
Drain Body	2
Drain Energy	1
Drain Mind	2
Drain Soul	2
Enduring	1
Flare	1
Flexible	1
Flurry	1
Homing	1 or 2
Incapacitating	3
Incurable	4
Indirect	1
Irritant	1
Linked (Attack)	2
Linked (Ability)	1
Long Range	1
Mind or Soul Attack	5
Muscle-Powered	1
No Regeneration	1
Penetrating (Armor)	1
Penetrating (Force Field)	1
Quake	1
Spreading	1
Stun	1
Tangle	2
Targeted	1 or 2
Trap	1
Undetectable	4
Unique Ability	1
Vampiric	2-4

OPEN ANIME

times for a +8 or +12 bonus, but may not be combined with the Linked (Attack) Ability.

- Affects Incorporeal

This attack will affect characters who are currently Astral or Incorporeal as if they were solid.

- Area Effect

  This is an attack, like an explosive blast, that affects not only the direct target, but also anyone in the immediate area. All affected characters are allowed a Reflex check (diving for cover, swerving out of the way) for half damage. Characters that can shield themselves with very solid objects or terrain in the vicinity may avoid damage completely (GM's discretion) on a successful Reflexes roll. This represents the character ducking or moving behind cover. The GM will decide whether an object or person is within the area of effect, and may assume the area radius is equivalent to 5 feet for every Special Attack Rank. Area Effect can be assigned multiple times; each Adder doubles the area radius.

- Aura

  Rather than having to make an actual attack, the character instead automatically damages anyone who touches his or her body. An example might be a character who was sheathed in flame or electrified. If this Ability is combined with the Area Effect Adder, it automatically damages anyone in the designated area around the character. Aura counts as two Adders.

- Auto-Fire

  The attack consists of a burst of multiple shots like a machine gun or rapid sequence of energy bolts. Instead of scoring one hit when an attack is successful, the attacker scores hits (minimum of one, maximum of five) equal to the difference between his or her final to hit roll (including all modifiers) and the target's DEF (including all modifiers) divided by five, rounded down. For example, if a character (with a final hit roll result of 27) attempts to hit a target that has a DEF of 16, he or she would score 2 hits (27 - 16 = 11; 11 ÷ 5 = 2.2; round down to 2). Each hit delivers separate damage (important when considering Armor and Force Fields). Bonuses from Massive Damage, Enhanced Strength, and critical hit multipliers are only applied to the first hit in an Auto-Fire burst — all others only inflict the normal damage of the Special Attack. Auto-Fire counts as three Adders.

- Burning

  This represents acid, flaming liquid, or similar attacks that deliver continuing damage over several rounds. If the initial attack damage penetrates the opponent's Armor, the target will suffer an additional 1 damage/Rank of the Special Attack each Turn for 5 Turns or until the effect is somehow neutralized (GM's discretion; it should depend on the type of attack, and may require several rounds for full neutralization). Armor does not protect against the extra burning damage in subsequent rounds. Alternatively, Burning can be defined as a "hourly burn," in which case the damage is 2 per Rank rather than 1 but is applied on a daily basis (rather than round-by-round). Finally, a "slow burn" inflicts 4 damage/Rank inflicted daily (rather than round-by-round). This Adder may best represent a disease or slow poison attack. Unlike a regular Burning attack, the hourly burn and slow burn damage will continue until the victim is dead or makes a successful HLT roll against a TN or 15 + the Rank of the Special Attack (made on an hourly or daily basis).

- Concealable

  This option is only available for Hand-Held weapons or personal gear. Such weapons are normally assumed to be visible. A Concealable weapon is not so obvious; it may extend out from the vehicle or be disguised as something else. If built as a Hand-Held Weapon or Personal Gear, this means it is small enough to be used with one hand and concealed under clothing. Most pistol-sized or knife-sized weapons are Concealable. For more cinematic games, larger weapons such as swords and machine guns can be designed as Concealable as well.

- Contagious
  Some or all of the attack's damage or other effects will be passed on to others who touch (or otherwise contact) a victim. If mildly contagious, not everyone will be infected; a prospective victim must fail a HLT versus a TN 15 + Rank of Special Attack to be affected. If taken twice, it is highly contagious; someone must fail the Save at a -4 penalty in order to be affected. Alternatively, the contagion may be automated under some circumstances. The roll is normally a HLT Attribute check, but some contagion may require a Will roll. The GM should adjudicate Effects and countermeasures. This Adder is usually combined with the Toxic Drawback. Contagious counts as two Adders if mildly contagious or four Adders if highly contagious.
- Drain Body
  The attack causes the victim to suffer weakness and/or loss of co-ordination. The victim's Strength, Reflexes, or Health (chosen when the attack is designed) is reduced by 1per Rank of the attack. The Ability drain is in addition to any Hit Point losses from the attack. To design an attack that only drains the chosen Ability, but inflicts no other punishment, the No Damage Drawback must also be assigned. If a target's Health is drained to 0, he or she is rendered unconscious but does not die. Lost Attribute Points are recovered at two Points per hour of rest. This counts as two Adders.
- Drain Energy
  The attack drains away the victim's personal energy supply, causing him or her to become fatigued and/or despondent. In addition to the damage delivered to the victim's Life points, the attack causes the same loss of Energy Points. To design an attack that only drains Energy Points, the No Damage Drawback must also be assigned. Lost Energy Points recover at their normal rate.
- Drain Mind
  The attack causes the victim to lose his or her mind. The attack may be a psionic attack, a tranquillizer or similar drug, or another form of attack. The victim's Intellect is reduced by 1per Rank of the attack. This Intellect drain is in addition to any Life point losses from the attack. To design an attack that only drains Intellect, the No Damage Drawback must also be assigned. The drained Points return at the rate of two every hour. This counts as two Adders.
- Drain Soul
  The Attack affects the victim's spirit. This attack may be a wave of fear, despair, or some other willpower-destroying emotion. The victim's Will or Presence (chosen when the attack is designed) is reduced by 1per Rank of the attack. This drainage is in addition to any Life point losses from the attack. To design an attack that only drains the chosen Ability, the No Damage Drawback must also be assigned. The drained Points return at the rate of two every hour. This counts as two Adders.



OPEN ANIME

- Enduring
  Enduring can only be assigned in conjunction with Area Effect. The attack remains active within the affected area over multiple rounds. Examples of this type of attack include chemical clouds, sheets of fire, electrical charges, or super cooled vapors. Anyone entering or remaining in the area is immediately subject to the attack; DEF checks are outlined under Area Effect. Each time Enduring is assigned, the Area Effect attack remains active for 1 additional round.
- Flare
  If the target is hit (or in the radius of an Area Effect weapon attack) the defending character may be blinded. Every target looking at the attack must roll a HLT roll against TN 12 + 2 per Rank of the Special Attack. If a target character fails his or her HLT check, he or she is blinded for a number of combat rounds equal to the amount by which the save was failed. Characters with appropriate Special Defenses will not be blinded. Flare may be taken multiple times; each time it is taken, add an extra 2 to the TN of the HLT roll. Flare can also be generalized to cover other sense-overloading attacks. For example, the attack might cause deafness.
- Flexible
  This Ability represents long, flexible, or extendible attacks such as a prehensile whip, energy-lash, razor-ribbon, or similar attack mode. The target's Defense rolls are at a -2 penalty. If the attacker is strong enough to physically lift the target, a successful attack can trip or disarm an opponent (snagging a hand-held weapon) in lieu of delivering damage. Such non-damaging attack stunts are made at a -4 penalty to the attack roll since they require great talent to execute accurately.
- Homing
  The attack or weapon fires a projectile or energy bolt that can track and follow its target. The character receives a +4 bonus to his or her attack roll, and if the attack misses or the target successfully defends, the weapon will return to try again (only one more time) in the next combat round. A Homing attack is vulnerable to Sensory Block, however. In a setting where electronic Sensory Block is not common (such as ancient Japan), Homing counts as two Adders.
- Incapacitating
  This represents any form of attack that can instantly incapacitate a foe even if it does not inflict actual damage. This includes putting an opponent to sleep or turning him or her to stone. Regardless of whether the attack does physical damage, the victim must make a saving throw (either Health or Will — decide when the attack is designed) against TN 12 + 2 per Special Attack Rank to avoid being completely incapacitated. When designing the attack, specify the form the incapacitation takes: asleep, awake but paralyzed, turned to stone, transformed into an inert doll, etc. The effects will wear off in several minutes, unless the Incurable Ability is also taken. To design an attack that only incapacitates the target, the No Damage Drawback must also be assigned. Incapacitating counts as three Adders.
- Incurable
  The attack produces wounds or other effects that do not heal naturally, and are incurable by normal methods. Rather than recovering at a normal rate or being amenable to standard medical treatment, recovery cannot take place until some exotic event or treatment has occurred. This requirement must be specified when the attack is designed, subject to GM approval. The GM may rule that only the Healing or Regeneration Abilities, with specific effects, can counteract the Life points lost through an Incurable attack. Incurable counts as four Adders.
- Indirect
  The weapon can fire shots in a high ballistic arc. Examples include grenade launchers and artillery guns. This allows the attacker to shoot at targets hidden behind buildings, hills, or other obstacles (or even shoot over the horizon, if the Long Range Ability is

also assigned). Indirect fire is tricky, however. To effectively fire at an indirect location, the attacker must be able to "see" the target (sensors can be used), or someone else must spot the target and relay its position to the attacker. Indirect fire results in a -2 penalty to the attack roll with an additional -6 penalty if the target cannot be physically seen by the attacker (for a total of -8). A weapon with the Indirect Ability can be used under normal medium and short ranges without any penalty.

- Irritant
  This represents pepper spray, a skunk's musk, an itching spell, or similar effect. Whether or not damage penetrated Armor, the subject must make a HLT roll against TN 12 + 2 per Special Attack Rank. If the target fails, the character is partially blinded and distracted (-2 penalty on all rolls to do anything) for a number of rounds equal to the amount by which he or she failed the check. Irritant is usually taken in conjunction with the Toxic Drawback to simulate an attack against which a gas mask or the like offers protection.
- Linked (Attack)
  An attack with this Ability is "attached" to another (or "master") attack. The master attack may be an ordinary weapon (such as an item of Personal Gear, like a sword or gun), a Natural Weapon or unarmed attack, or a different Special Attack. If that master attack is successful, this linked attack automatically hits as well (no Defense allowed), but if it misses or fails to penetrate the target's Defenses (Armor, Force Fields, etc.), the linked attack automatically fails too (with full Energy Point cost, if applicable). If the master attack hits and delivered enough damage to successfully penetrate Armor, then the Armor does not protect at all against the damage of the second linked attack. Damage bonuses from Massive Damage, Enhanced Strength, and critical hit multipliers only apply to the master attack, not to each attack. An attack with the Linked Ability may not be given the Accurate or Long Range Abilities or the Inaccurate, Low Penetration, Melee, or Short Range Drawbacks; its range and accuracy are dependent on the attack to which it is linked. The attack can only be used in conjunction with the master attack; it cannot be used separately, on its own. Unless the GM indicates otherwise, only one Special Attack can be attached to each master attack. Linked (Attack) counts as two Adders.
- Linked (Ability)
  An attack with this Ability is attached to one of the following Abilities, which the character must also possess: Dimensional Portal, Insubstantiality, Metamorphosis, Shape Change, Size Change, or Teleport. If the attack hits, a living subject will be affected by that Ability provided he or she fails a HLT roll to resist against TN 12 + 2 per Special Attack Rank.
- Long Range
  An ordinary attack is assumed to have an effective range of about 500 feet (2 miles in space). This Ability extends the range to 1 mile (20 miles in space). Long Range weapons are typical of beam cannons on spaceships, guided missiles, or the guns of tanks. It can be assigned multiple times: each time it is taken after the first doubles the actual range. Since the Earth's horizon limits line-of-sight for characters standing on the ground, multiple Long Range Abilities are often combined with the Indirect Ability. This Adder is incompatible with the Melee and Short Range Drawbacks.
- Mind or Soul Attack
  The attack is not a physical attack but rather is a mental assault (Mind Attack) or contest of spirit or will (Soul Attack). During creation, the player must specify either Mind or Soul as the focus of the Ability. Instead of using the character's physical attack Attribute, the character must roll a successful Intellect (Mind Attack) or Will (Soul Attack) check for his or her character. Furthermore, instead of a normal Defense check, the subject has to

OPEN ANIME

make a Will Check plus any bonuses for the Mind Shield Ability (TN is the attacker's Intellect). Soul Attack ignores Armor and Force Fields, and affects Insubstantial characters normally. Both versions count as five Adders.

- Muscle-Powered
  This ability normally is only appropriate for melee or thrown weapons. The character adds any damage modifier due to Strength to the attack's base damage.
- No Regeneration
  This is a lesser form of Incurable. The damage from the attack cannot be restored using the Healing or Regeneration Abilities but can otherwise recover or be repaired normally.
- Penetrating (Armor)
  Armor does not stop damage from these attacks as efficiently as usual. Each time Penetrating (Armor) is assigned, the Armor's AV is halved against that attack.
- Penetrating (Force Field)
  The Force Field Ability does not stop damage from these attacks as efficiently as usual. Each time Penetrating (Force Field) is assigned, the Force Field is halved against that attack (up to the Field's maximum rating).
- Quake
  This attack causes a linear shock wave in the ground, causing rumbling and fractures. The quake "fault" will only be large enough for one person to fall into its depths unless it is combined with the Area Effect Ability. A victim may fall into the crevasse if he or she fails a Reflex roll (TN 15 + Special Attack Rank). The fissure will be approximately 3 feet deep for the first 6 damage (including bonuses for Strength and Massive Damage) and is doubled for every additional 6 damage the attack inflicts. Thus a quake that delivers a total of 24 damage creates a fissure 12 feet deep, while one that delivers 30 damage creates a crevice 96 feet deep. Quake can only be used on a solid surface (which may be earth, sand, cement, or asphalt), and may not be combined with the Aura Adder or No Damage Drawback.
- Spreading
  This type of attack spreads to cover an expanding area like a cone of energy or a spray of projectiles or energy bolts. The defender receives a -1 penalty to his or her DEF roll. Multiple adjacent targets in the attack path may also receive damage if they are lined up or in a dense formation, up to a maximum of one extra target for every Special Attack Rank. The Spreading Adder can be acquired multiple times; each one further penalizes the target's Defense roll by -1 and doubles the number of possible adjacent targets. Spreading is often assigned in conjunction with the Short Range Drawback.
- Stun
  An attack with this Adder inflicts temporary damage such as an electric shock that shorts out electronics and renders people unconscious. Lost Life points are recovered or repaired at one Point every minute rather than at the normal rate. Stun damage cannot kill. Although the attack only inflicts temporary damage (compared to the real damage of a regular attack), it has the Ability that it may be used to incapacitate a foe without the risk of killing him or her.
- Tangle
  Attacks that can entangle the victim may include a spray that freezes the target in ice, or traps him or her in the branches of an animated plant, simple webbing, etc. The entanglement has 4 Life points for every Special Attack Rank. If a target does not successfully defend a Tangle attack, he or she is trapped until sufficient damage is delivered to the entanglement to reduce its Life points to zero or lower (at this point it is destroyed). A trapped character has restricted movement and attacks physically at a -4 penalty, cannot defend (ignore Reflexes bonuses for DEF), and cannot perform actions that require complex gestures. A character is usually able to speak, however. A victim who has partially destroyed an entanglement may regain additional body movement (GM's discretion). A

Open Anime

Tangle attack also inflicts damage as normal unless the No Damage Drawback is also assigned to the attack. An "Incurable" entanglement can only be damaged by some special means (such as fire or water) defined when the Tangle attack is created. Tangle counts as two Adders.

- Targeted
  The attack inflicts double damage to a specific group of targets and normal or no damage to everyone else. Thus, an attack could be good energy (double damage to evil creatures), chaos energy (double damage to lawful creatures), life energy (double damage to undead creatures), or detrimental to a specific race. Targeted counts as one Adder if no damage is delivered to non-Targeted opponents, or two Adders if normal damage is delivered.
- Trap
  The attack lays a mine, booby trap, or some other similar device, which "sits and waits" until someone triggers it. A successful Awareness (Sight) Skill check (TN 12 + Special Attack Rank) will reveal the trap's presence. The GM may determine that other Specializations of Awareness may be appropriate for this as well. The Trap Ability can be paired with the Melee Drawback to simulate a booby trap that must be carefully planted. Without the Melee Drawback, the trap can be deployed at a range; a successful attack roll indicates that the Trap was fired or tossed into the correct area.
- Undetectable
  Most Special Attacks have a visible component that makes it easy for targets to determine who is attacking them. An attack with the Undetectable Ability does not provide any indication that it is about to strike and cannot be traced back to the attacker using normal methods. This may result in the attacker gaining surprise (INI of target halved). If the target knows he or she is under attack, he or she may still defend. This Ability is most often associated with non-physical attacks such as ones with the Drain (Any), or Mind or Soul Attack Adders. Undetectable counts as four Adders.
- Unique Ability
  The attack has some other unspecified Ability that is not listed, and is subject to GM approval. Examples can include an attack that alters the target's memories, one that affects the appearance of the target, and many more. The number of Adder slots is determined by the GM based on the benefit the Unique Ability provides.
- Vampiric
  This Ability can be added to any attack that causes normal damage or one that drains Attribute Score values. Upon a successful attack, the lost Life points or Attribute Scores are transferred to the attacker. Vampiric counts as two Abilities if the attack can only restore lost Life points or Ranks (thus, the character could heal him or herself). It counts as three Abilities if the attack can increase the character's Life points above their normal maximum value (no more than twice normal, however). Finally, it counts as four Abilities if it can increase the character's Ability Scores above their normal maximum value). Any values or Points in excess of the user's normal Rank fade at a rate of 10 Life points or two Attribute Score values per hour. This Ability may not be combined with the Area Effect or Spreading Abilities. Vampiric costs 2, 3, or 4 Adder slots.

Attack Drawbacks

Some, none, or many of these Drawbacks may be assigned to a Special Attack. The GM may disallow any combination that seems inappropriate.

- Backblast
  The attack produces some sort of backblast or other side effect that affects anyone or anything standing directly behind the attacker (within 5 feet). An example is a rocket launcher that produces a hazardous backblast to anyone standing behind the gunner, but some spells or other abilities might have

OPEN ANIME

similar risks. The damage of the backblast is normally one quarter the damage of the actual attack. If this Drawback is taken twice, it affects everyone in a 5-foot radius around it, including the attacking character (unless he or she also has Immunity to one's own attacks). Backblast cannot be combined with the Area Effect and Aura Abilities at the same time.

- Drop Shields
  This Drawback can only be taken if the character also has a Force Field. It requires the character to turn off all Force Fields before using the attack, and they must remain down until the character's turn to act on the following round.
- Extra Energy
  The attack costs twice as many Energy Points as normal (and must be combined with the Uses Energy Drawback below). Extra Energy can be taken multiple times, with each time doubling the Energy Points requirement. This is useful for simulating those "ultimate" attacks that characters have, that usually defeat the enemy but leave the character drained and sometimes helpless.
- Inaccurate
  The attack is not as accurate as normal ones, and imposes a -4 penalty to all attack rolls. This Drawback can be taken two or three times for a -8 or -12 penalty.
- Internal
  The attack is only usable inside a specific structure. This may represent a structure's built-in internal security systems or an attack for which the character draws power from a mechanism inside and channels it through his or her body.
- Limited Shots
  The attack is only usable for a few combat rounds, after which it either runs out of ammunition or power, or simply burns out. Assigning this Drawback once means it can make up to six attacks; if taken twice, up to three attacks; if taken three times, only one attack. If the attack also has the Auto-Fire Ability, one "attack" means a single Auto-Fire burst.

  The base number of Drawback slots are for attacks that take several minutes or more to "reload." If the attack can be "reloaded" with one action, the number of Drawback slots is reduced by 1 (minimum of 1 slot). If the attack can be "reloaded" instantly (an ammunition source is still required), the Drawback is worth two fewer slots (minimum of 1 slot).
- Low Penetration
  The attack has an inferior ability to penetrate Armor and Force Fields relative to its damage. Examples include shotgun blasts, hollow-point bullets, or phased plasma guns. Any Armor or Force Field Ability stops an additional 10 damage. This Drawback is incompatible with either of the two Penetrating Abilities. GMs must approve Special Attacks

Special Attack Drawbacks	
Drawback	# of Slots
Backblast	1
Drop Shields	1
Extra Energy	1
Inaccurate	1
Internal	1
Limited Shots	1
Low Penetration	1
Melee	2
No Damage	1
Only In (Environment)	1 or 2
Self-Destruct	4
Short Range	1
Slow	1
Static	2
Stoppable	1
Toxic	1
Unique Drawback	1
Unreliable	1
Uses Energy	1



with multiple assignments of Low Penetration.

- Melee
  The attack is only usable against adjacent opponents and may require physical contact. An example of a Melee attack is a physical or energy sword or a touch that inflicts debilitating effects. Of course, many Melee weapons can be thrown as well in desperate situation, but the attack suffers a -4 attack penalty and the damage is divided in half. The Melee Drawback cannot be combined with the Long Range Ability or Short Range Drawback. It is sufficiently limiting that it is equivalent to two Drawbacks.
- No Damage
  The attack does not deliver ordinary physical damage. This Drawback is usually only taken if combined with Abilities such as Drain (Any), Flare, Incapacitating, Irritant, Linked (Ability), or Tangle that produce effects that do not rely on physical damage. The damage value of the attack is used only to rate the effectiveness of these special abilities — the greater the damage value, the more effective the attack. Characters that use Special Attacks with the No Damage Drawback may still need to roll to determined the effectiveness of some attack Abilities, however.
- Only In (Environment)
  The attack or weapon can only target objects that are on or in a particular limited environment, for example, "only in water" (representing a torpedo) or "only in space" (representing a powerful weapon that requires a vacuum to work). The environment should not be one that is ubiquitous in the campaign (for example, "only in air" is not valid unless a lot of the game action will take place in airless environments). If the environment is very rare in the campaign, the GM may allow this to count as two Drawbacks.
- Self-Destruct
  Use of this attack destroys the weapon (characters obviously assign this Drawback to themselves very rarely). This Drawback is usually combined with Melee and Area-Effect to represent an explosive self-destruct system. It may not be combined with Limited Uses. It counts as four Drawback slots.
- Short Range
  This attack is only usable at fairly close range (effective range of about 50 feet). The Short Range Drawback cannot be combined with the Long Range Ability or the Melee Drawback.
- Slow
  The attacker must use one combat action to aim, charge, chant an incantation, load the weapon, or perform some other necessary activity before each attack. Someone with the Extra Attacks Ability can use one of his or her extra actions to prepare the attack rather than wasting the entire round. The Slow Drawback can be taken more than once to represent an attack that takes even longer to initiate. Assigning it twice increases the time to three rounds; three assignments increases

Open Anime

the time to 10 rounds (about a minute); four increases the time to two-six hours; five increases the preparation to days. This Drawback may not be used with the Linked (Attack) Adder.

- Static
  The attack cannot be used while the character is moving. This could be due to a need for precise aim or total concentration. The weapon might also require all power to be diverted to its energy supply, or might be static because of recoil, or another reason. The character cannot defend against attacks or do anything except ready the Special Attack while preparing to fire the attack. Static is worth two Drawbacks.
- Stoppable
  The attack fires a projectile or energy bolt that is massive or slow enough to be shot. Consequently, the attack can be stopped in mid-flight. A cannon shell would probably not qualify, but a missile or plasma-ball might. Anyone with an unused combat attack action during the same round may make a ranged attack against the projectile. To stop the attack, a successful hit (or hits) must deliver at least 3 damage for every 1d6 of damage of the attack. Stoppable may not be combined with the Melee Drawback. Stoppable may be purchased more than once to reflect an attack that takes even longer to reach the target. Assigning Stoppable twice increases the time to reach the target to two rounds; each further assignment doubles the transit time. Slow moving missiles and plasma bolts are examples of attacks that might have Stoppable two or three times.
- Toxic
  The attack is a gas, toxin, biological weapon, sound, radiation, or other harmful effect that only damages living things. Non-living material or characters who have the appropriate Adaptation or Special Defense Abilities are immune to its effects.
- Unique Drawback
  The attack has some other unspecified limitation, which is subject to GM approval. Examples could include a weapon that fires in a random direction, one that is extremely costly to operate, an attack that drains Life points from the user, etc.
- Unreliable
  Any time this attack is used and the attack roll is an unmodified (or "natural") 3, the attack fails to take place and the weapon or ability either burns out, jams, overheats, or otherwise malfunctions. The Special Attack will not work again until some condition is fulfilled. For example, repairing a weapon requires a skilled individual to make a successful and appropriate skill roll (one attempt each round), and while the character is making repairs, he or she cannot carry out other activities. The same could apply to a magical attack with a Intellect check needed to remember the correct words. Other remedies might be appropriate for recovering different attacks (for example, a dragon whose breath weapon has "burned out" might have to eat a hearty meal first).
- Uses Energy
  The attack draws upon the user's personal energy, each attack draining 5 Energy Points. This Drawback can be taken twice, and, if so, it uses 5 Energy Points per Rank. This Drawback is not available for Magical Powers, which automatically use energy (see the Extra Energy Drawback instead).

Special Defense

Cost: 1 Point/Rank

Relevant Attribute: None

Progression: The character gains 1 Special Defense slot/Rank

A character with this Ability is resistant or completely immune to a specific type of uncommon ailment or injury, normally one whose effects are otherwise insidious in nature. Special Defense can be acquired multiple times to represent a character

OPEN ANIME

who is resistant or immune to different kinds of attacks/events.

If a category is assigned one slot, the character is partially resistant; for two slots, the character has complete or enhanced resistance. For ability to survive under harsh physical conditions, see the Adaptation Ability. Several examples of Special Defenses and their effects are shown. The GM and players are encouraged to develop their own as well.

Special Defense		
Effect	**1 "Slot"**	**2 "Slots"**
Ageing	Ages slowly	Does not age
Air/Oxygen to Breathe	Survive in low-oxygen environment	Does not breathe
Hunger	Need to eat once every 2-4 days	Never need to eat
One Type of Magic	+3 DEF and rolls	+6 DEF and rolls
Pain	Unwanted sensation is reduced	No pain is felt
Sleep	Sleep once every 3-7 days	Never need to sleep
Specific Attack Ability	+3 DEF and rolls	+6 DEF and rolls

Special Movement

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Reflexes
Progression: The character gains 1 type of movement/Rank

This Ability is appropriate for characters such as non-humans, super martial artists or super ninja who may possess exotic ki-based abilities that let them perform unusual stunts like running over water, etc. The character may select one special movement ability for every Rank of this Ability. GMs may also develop a selection of other special movement abilities.

- Cat-Like
  The character will take half damage (round down) from most falls and always lands on his or her feet.
- Dimension Hop
  Upon a successful Will check against TN 12, the character can instantly travel between his or her home dimension to one other dimension, such as Asgard, Heaven, Hell, alternate Earth, the astral plane (the body is left behind), etc. Each time this method is assigned, the character can travel to another single dimension. The GM will determine if Dimension Hop is appropriate for his or her campaign.
- Light-Footed
  The character can skim over sand, snow, or ice at full speed.
- Slithering
  The character can slither along the ground at normal walking/running speeds. This allows a character to move quickly while maintaining a very low profile.
- Swinging/Brachiating
  The character can swing through forests and cities (areas with natural or artificial structures above swinging height) using vines/ropes/webbing or simply his or her arms.
- Temporal Movement
  To use the Temporal Movement Ability, the character must make a successful INT check, with the TN being 15 + 1 for every hundred years that separate the character's time from the time to be traveled to. Thus, attempting to move to an event in the 18th century, which is 300 years in the past, has a TN 18. Failure of the INT check can result in the character become lost and adrift in the "time stream." The GM is encouraged to be creative in adjudicating the results of failed checks.
- Untrackable
  The character never leaves footprints, tracks, or a scent when he or she walks or runs.
- Wall-Bouncing
  The character can move at regular walking speed without touching the ground by

OPEN ANIME

bounding back and forth between nearby vertical surfaces (walls). For example, he or she can proceed down hallways or climb an alleyway between two buildings (bouncing from wall to wall).

- Wall-Crawling
  The character can cling to walls or ceilings as though they were on the ground or floor. This counts as two Special Movement abilities.
- Water-Walking
  The character can run over water as if he or she were on land. This counts as two Special Movement abilities.
- Zen Direction
  When the character opens his or her mind to the natural world, he or she will always move in the "right" direction. The "right" direction is not always the desired direction, however.

Speed

Cost: 4 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: Descriptive; see below

A character with the Speed Ability can do many things much faster than a normal character. Add the character's Ranks in Speed to the character's INI and when figuring initiative for any combat situations. Also, add half of the Ranks of this Ability (round down) to the character's Defense. For every two ranks of Speed, your character receives one Extra Action (as per the Extra Action Ability pg. 91). Ranks in Speed are a bonus to the character's base Move, but only when using this Ability. This would not be a permanent change to the character's Move score.

Many characters with Speed are encouraged to also purchase one or more Ranks in the following Abilities: Heightened Awareness, Massive Damage, Regeneration, or Special Movement. These Abilities do not come automatically with the purchase of the Speed Ability, and are often possessed by "speedster" characters.

Spirit Ward

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: The character's Spirit Ward inflicts 1d6 damage/Rank; targets suffer a -1 Will Check penalty/Rank.

A character with this Ability can create potent spirit wards against demons, ghosts, or other supernatural spirits. This might only be possible at an appropriate holy place such as a shrine, temple, or church; this is up to the GM. A supernatural entity cannot pass through a doorway, window, or other portal with a ward on it unless the entity expends great effort (spending 5 Energy Points per Rank of the ward and making a successful Will Check against TN 15 plus the Rank of the ward). Repeated attempts are possible as long as the creature still has Energy Points to spend. If the entity does pass through, the spirit ward might burst into flame or otherwise vanish, its power overcome by the intruder.

If a supernatural entity is struck with a spirit ward (this requires a successful attack in combat), it suffers 1d6 damage per Rank of the ward for every round the ward is in contact with it. If a Spirit Ward is placed on a person who is possessed by or under the Mind Control of a supernatural entity, the controlled character receives a chance to break free.

Telekinesis

Cost: 8 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect
Progression: Descriptive; see below

The character can concentrate on an object and move it without physically touching it. Telekinesis may represent psionic ability, magic, or some form of tractor beam. Characters with the ability to magically control a particular element (Earth, Water, etc.) may also use Telekinesis to represent their particular ability.

A character's Telekinesis Ability does the same sorts of things that a character's physical Strength does: lift, drag, throw and even punch. Telekinetic

Mind Combat

Mind combat is a special type of conflict that uses the Telepathy Ability to forcibly invade another's mind. This mental conflict, however, is a clashing of two psyches, each struggling to subdue the other — it is akin to two people getting into a mental fist fight. Mental combat can become lethal if either person begins tearing down neural pathways, erasing memories, or destroying brain cells. Physical strength does not play a role in this battle, only the power of the mind. Each turn of mind combat covers the same amount of time as one turn of physical combat.

Mind combat can only be carried out once mental contact has been established, usually using the Telepathy Ability. Once two minds have touched, the initiator of the contact may withdraw at any time. Alternatively, physical damage to the initiator or perhaps use of an appropriate Item of Power can break the contact. For the target to break unwanted mind contact, the player cannot initiate any other actions for one round and must make a successful Mind check against a TN of 15 plus the attacker's Telepathy Ability Rank. If the check is successful, the aggressor is forced from the character's mind and the mind combat ends immediately.

If any character in mental contact forfeits all physical actions for the round, he or she can attack through mind combat. A successful attack requires the player to make a successful Mind check against a TN of 12 plus any bonuses from Mind Shield or other appropriate abilities. The GM has the option of modifying the TN should the attack be particularly easy or difficult.

The psychic damage of a successful attack is equal to the attacker's Ranks in the Telepathy Ability. The damage is removed from the target's Life points. However there is no actual damage that occurs to the target, this "damage" is purely for the purposes of determining the mental "status" of the target. If a character is ever reduced to or below zero Life points while in mind combat, his or her mind has been broken and is now at the mercy of the opponent. The victor can end the character's life, search through memories, plant powerful suggestions, erase thoughts, or simply render the character unconscious. Any changes to a character's mind (other than death) will remain until reversed by another character skilled in the Telepathy Ability. The GM should decide exactly how this must be accomplished. Role-playing a character whose mind has been altered is challenging but can also be very rewarding when played with consistency.

A telepath who wishes to alter a target's mind after winning a mind combat battle must spend a great deal of time to alter it. Minor changes such as removing unimportant memories or implanting unessential false memories can take a couple of hours. Massive changes, such as instilling (or removing) a prejudice or phobia, rebuilding a large portion of the target's memories, or similar large scale remodelling should take days to complete. Characters may rush the procedure, if pressed, but there is a risk of the alteration failing over time. The target may notice a gap in his or her memory and question what happened, or a personality adjustment (new phobia, for example) may weaken over time. If the character wishes to perform a change quickly, the character may perform minor changes in a matter of rounds while the character can accomplish massive changes in about an hour.

When a character attempts to alter a target's mind, he or she must make a Focus Skill check against a TN appropriate for the extent of the change; 12 for minor changes, 18 for major changes, 24+ for massive changes. The GM may increase the TN further if the alteration is particularly severe or drastic. The character's margin of success determines how long the modification lasts, measured in years if the character took his or her time with the procedure or measured in days if the character rushed things. GMs should make this Skill check secretly and not inform the player of the result unless it is a failure — he or she will not know how long the change will hold, only that it has occurred or not.

The Mind Shield Ability provides a bonus to the character's attempt to resist mind combat and mental alterations, as well as Armor against mind combat damage.

OPEN ANIME

or Psychokinetic blasts or energy attacks, however, are separate from this and must be simulated using Special Attacks (pg. 117).

In order to calculate the basic capabilities of the character's Telekinesis, take the character's Intellect and, using the Basic Strength table (pg. 17) determine the character's base Telekinetic ST. This is determined by using the Intellect score instead of the character's Strength. Record the weights for the character's Drag, Dead Lift and Carry. These weights are then doubled by each Rank in the Telekinesis Ability. Characters without the Telekinesis Ability do not have a Telekinetic ST score.

Example: The Mind Master has an Intellect of 5 and Telekinesis +2. The base Telekinetic ST for The Mind Master would be: Drag – 660 lbs., Dead Lift – 330 lbs., and Carry – 165 lbs. Then, each Rank of Telekinesis, in this case +2, doubles those capacities, so the character would have: Drag – 2640 lbs., Dead Lift – 1320 lbs., and Carry – 660 lbs.

See Strength (pg. 17) for a description of each of these capacities.

Telekinesis, being a Mental Ability, does not work in the same manner as other Abilities when it comes to range. This Ability works on line of sight, so if the character can see a target using normal or enhanced senses the Telekinesis can be used on that target.

Extra Fatigue: For a –1 Point/Rank cost, Telekinesis can be much more fatiguing to the character. Fatigue costs for this Ability are doubled.

Limited Form: For a –2 Point/Rank cost, Telekinesis can only effect one type of material (from the options outlined below):

- Air
  The character can only move air (or other gases). A cubic yard of air weighs about 2.1 pounds. Enough air to fill a roughly 10' x 10' x 10' room weighs 75 pounds.
- Earth
  The character can only move dirt, rock, stone, sand, etc. He or she cannot affect treated metals. A cubic yard of packed dirt masses about 2 tons; the same mass of concrete weighs about 2.5 tons, while a cubic yard of solid granite weights about 2.7 tons.
- Fire
  The character can only affect flames of an existing fire, or can possibly start them with his or her mind as well (GM's discretion). Since fire does not have mass, the Rank indicates the size of the flames that can be controlled and manipulated: small fires at Rank 1 (like a candle or match flame), up to raging infernos that cover several city blocks at Rank 6.
- Metal
  The character's Telekinesis only works on metal. This may be a mystical limitation, or it may be the character's power is actually based on magnetic. A cubic yard of steel weighs about 8 tons.
- Water
  The character can lift and move water. A cubic yard of water weights about 1700 lbs. (close to a ton). A gallon of water weights about 8 pounds.
- Wood
  The character's power only works on wood (living or dead). This ability is usually mystical in nature and common to nature priests and spirits. A cubic yard of wood weighs less than a ton.

Rank 1	The character can lift up to 2 lbs.
Rank 2	The character can lift up to 20 lbs.
Rank 3	The character can lift up to 200 lbs. (a person).
Rank 4	The character can lift up to 1 ton (a car).
Rank 5	The character can lift up to 10 tons (a large truck).
Rank 6	The character can lift up to 100 tons (a small spaceship or house).

OPEN ANIME

Telepathy

Cost: 1-3 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Mind
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Telepathy is the classic psionic ability, and characters with ESP powers often possess it. Versions of telepathy may also represent other magical capabilities; demons who can tempt their victims often possess Telepathy, for example.

Telepathy costs 1 Point/Rank if its utility is quite restricted (for example, "only works with canines" or "only with close friends"). It costs 2 Points/Rank if its utility is somewhat restricted (for example, "only with humans" or "only with beasts"). It costs 3 Points/Rank if it has universal utility.

This Ability allows the character to read and transmit thoughts, and at higher Ranks, to actually "invade" a person's mind and probe their memories or alter their thoughts. Telepathy normally works only if a subject is in sight, or can be otherwise perceived (touched, heard, etc.). If the subject is beyond normal perceptions, mental invasion is impossible, while transmitting thoughts, reading surface thoughts or sharing the subject's sensory impressions only works if that particular subject is someone the character is close to, such as a parent, sibling, long-term co-worker, close friend, or lover.

A subject cannot detect a telepath reading thoughts or sensory impressions unless he or she has the Telepathy or Mind Shield Ability at an equal or higher Rank. If so, he or she can choose to block the telepath (or attempt to block it with the Mind Shield), in which case the only way to get through is via mental invasion. A subject should always be aware of a mental invasion (although a non-telepath may not understand exactly what is going on).

Rank 1	The character can, by concentrating, use mind reading to pick up the "loud" surface thoughts of a particular subject. A "loud" thought is something about which the subject is thinking hard or that has a very strong emotional content. The character can also transmit a single feeling, such as "fear" or "love" to another person.
Rank 2	The character can, by concentrating, use mind reading to pick up the ordinary surface thoughts of a particular subject. The character can only read what a person is actually thinking at the time. Two telepaths can communicate with one another at conversational speeds by reading each other's thoughts. The character can also transmit a word, simple image, or simple concept (like "flower" or a person's face) to a non-telepath on which he or she concentrates. It requires an entire round of concentration to convey one concept, which makes telepath to non-telepath communication slow.
Rank 3	The character can, by concentrating, pick up a single subject's surface thoughts and sensory impressions (i.e., see through a subject's eyes, feel what he or she feels, etc.). The character can choose to edit out some senses if desired. Alternatively, the character can concentrate and read "loud" surface thoughts from 2-6 people. The character can transmit sub-vocalized speech to a single non-telepath at normal conversational speeds or send a single powerful image or word to 2-6 people.

OPEN ANIME

Rank 4	The character has the same capabilities as at Rank 3 Telepathy. In addition, he or she can invade another person's mind. This counts as an attack, and if the subject is unwilling or unaware, the character should enter Mind Combat with him or her. If the subject is willing or loses the mental combat, the telepath can probe his or her memory for information he or she needs. The character should also instinctively read "loud" surface thoughts of anyone he or she touches (unless deliberately blocking the ability) without any need for concentration. The character can transmit thoughts at conversational speeds to 2-6 people at a time, simultaneously.

Teleport

Cost: 5 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect
Progression: Descriptive; see below

Teleport enables the character to transport him or herself instantly from place to place without crossing the intervening space. It is a common ability for psionic anime characters and not unusual for sorcerers and various super humans.

Teleporting is only possible if the character has visited the intended destination or can clearly see or otherwise sense the destination (possibly through the Heightened Senses or Sixth Sense Abilities). The GM may allow characters to teleport to unknown destinations (such as "100 yards up" or "to the other side of the door"), perhaps for an additional 1 or 2 Character Points total. Accidentally teleporting into a solid object may be fatal or simply cause a failed teleport at the GM's option. A character can carry anything while teleporting that he or she could normally carry.

Teleporting is much quicker than any other means of travel (Flight, Space Flight, etc.), however, it is often risky. A Power Usage: Teleport Skill check against TN 15 should be required to perform a teleport beyond a "safe" distance. Failure means the character ends up in the wrong place (GM option) and his or her power "burns out" or "malfunctions" for hours or days.

When Teleport is first assigned, the GM may ask the player to decide if velocity (speed and direction) is conserved during travel. Alternatively, the character might adapt velocity to each Teleport individually. In many campaigns, the effects of velocity will simply be ignored.

Rank 1	The maximum teleportation distance is 1 miles, while the safe distance is 30 feet.
Rank 2	The maximum teleportation distance is 10 miles, while the safe distance is 300 feet.
Rank 3	The maximum teleportation distance is 1,000 miles, while the safe distance is 1 mile.
Rank 4	The maximum teleportation distance is 10,000 miles, while the safe distance is 10 miles.
Rank 5	The maximum teleportation distance is 100,000 miles, while the safe distance is 100 miles.
Rank 6	The maximum teleportation distance is 1,000,000 miles, while the safe distance is 1,000 miles.

Transmutation

Cost: 2-5 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Intellect
Progression: Descriptive; see below

This Ability allows a character to transmute one non-living object (or set of connected objects) into another, or even create them an object from nothing. Transmutation costs 5 Points/Rank if the character can transmute any object into another (within the limits of his or her Rank). It costs 4 Points/Rank if the character can only transmute (to or from) a general class of objects such as "metal," "weapons," "clothing," or "food." It also costs 4 Points/Rank if the character can only transmute one object to another of similar mass; the types of objects are

OPEN ANIME

unrestricted. The cost is 3 Points/Rank if the character is limited to a transmutation within a specific category and of similar mass, such as "regular clothes to battle costume," "lead to gold," or "spoiled food to edible food." Finally, if the character can only create objects in one of the categories, but not transmute one object to another, the cost is reduced by 1 Point/Rank. The GM may restrict any categories that seem overly broad or too powerful.

The character cannot transmute material into new objects outside the character's experience. The character could transmute a weapon into a book, painting or videotape, but the content must be something with which he or she was already familiar. Likewise, a character with no familiarity with computers could not transmute a television into one using Transmutation. The GM may choose to require a Intellect Attribute check (or relevant Skill check) if the character attempts a particularly complex transmutation. Failure may indicate the new object does not function properly; this is especially applicable when creating complex technological devices. Unless the GM decides otherwise, Transmutation is only able to make objects that could be classified as Personal Gear; it cannot create Items of Power. When attempting to transmute an Item of Power, the character suffers a penalty to the Intellect Ability check of -2 for each Rank of the Item of Power.

Using this Ability to create costs 3 Points/Rank if the character can create anything (within the limits of his or her Rank). It costs 2 Points/Rank if the creation is limited to a general class of objects such as "metal," "weapons," "clothing," or "food." The character cannot create new objects outside his or her experience. The character could create a book, painting or videotape, but the content must be something with which he or she was already familiar. Likewise, a character who had no familiarity with guns could not create one using Creation. The GM may choose to require a relevant Skill check if the character attempts a particularly complex creation with a TN appropriate to the difficulty of the task. Failure may indicate the created object does not function properly, or is otherwise flawed; this is especially applicable when creating complex technological devices. Unless the GM decides otherwise, Creation is only able to make objects that could be classified as Personal Gear; it cannot create Items of Power.

Rank 1	The character can transmute objects weighing up to 1 lb.
Rank 2	The character can transmute objects weighing up to 5 lbs.
Rank 3	The character can transmute objects weighing up to 10 lbs.
Rank 4	The character can transmute objects weighing up to 50 lbs
Rank 5	The character can transmute objects weighing up to 100 lbs.
Rank 6	The character can transmute objects weighing up to 500 lbs.

Tough

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Body
Progression: +1 to TGH/Rank

Possessing this Ability increases the Toughness of the character, allowing him or her to withstand more damage in combat. The character permanently gains one additional die (1d6) of points to their Life Points, when this Ability is taken. This is a one time only bonus.

GMs should probably not allow *just* the Toughness bonus from this Ability to have Scale applied to it. The character will rapidly become complicated as everyone tries to remember which of the character's Toughness is which Scale and is affected how. Only apply Scale to the character's *total* Toughness, after any bonuses from this Ability have been applied to it.

Train a Cute Monster

Cost: 1 Point/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Will
Progression: The character gains 1 trainer technique/Rank

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A character with Train a Cute Monster is experienced in the arts and sciences of pet monster instruction and fighting. Through painful experience, mostly on the part of the pets, the trainer learned to effectively control the creatures in battle and to properly care for their needs in daily life. Only characters with the Pet Monster Attribute may take Train a Cute Monster. Each Rank of Train a Cute Monster gives the character one trainer technique.

- Analyze Monster
  The character can identify all commonly known species of pet monster. He or she also receives a +2 bonus to any Intellect check (TN 18 to 24) required to identify rare types or newly evolved versions of existing species. He or she can judge another monster's combat skills, remaining LIF and elemental association from its size, species, attitude, apparent health, and even posture, without seeing it actually fight.
- Battle Motto
  The character has mastered the hideous rhyming battle motto. If chanted within listening range of an opposing trainer just prior to a duel, it fills the motto-using character with pride while simultaneously revolting, boring and/or irritating his or her enemy. The opposing trainer loses 4 Energy Points, which are immediately transferred to the motto-using character for the duration of the encounter. Note that if two trainers have mottoes, the effects cancel each other out; a motto can only be used once in a particular encounter.
- Breed Monster
  This is the ability to breed two monsters together that do not normally mate, and have them produce viable offspring. The GM may require a Will check, with a TN determined by the strangeness of the combination (usually 15 to 18). On a successful roll, the union of the two monsters is a positive, viable hybrid. On a very bad roll something goes hideously wrong – they start fighting each other, or they mate, but the resulting offspring is a horrifying menace.
- Feed Monster
  The character knows exactly what to feed his or her monsters to ensure they have a properly balanced diet. As long as the character can supervise his or her monster's nutrition (which takes a half-hour per creature per day) the monsters will be healthier and happier. They will not catch diseases and will recover lost Hit Points and Energy Points twice as fast as normal. The GM can require characters to devote time to finding special food, vitamins, or ingredients.
- Inspire Monster
  The trainer is especially good at inspiring his or her monster in combat through shouts of encouragement, cheerleading, yelling "banzai!" and other energetic techniques. At the start of any combat round the trainer can spend 4 of his or her own Energy Points. This either adds a temporary +2 to the monster's attack rolls and a +2 bonus to DEF (this lasts for one round) or restores the monster's lost Life points. The character can repeat the expenditure every round, to continue giving the monster a bonus.
- Instil Discipline
  The character is especially good at making his or her monsters obey orders and resist their natural urges. Instilling discipline takes a one-hour training session and costs the trainer and monster 4 Energy Points each. The effects last for 24 hours, minus one hour times the Wisdom of the disciplined monster (24-[2hrs x Will] = hours). A disciplined pet will be cautious during fighting, and will not lose control or expose itself recklessly. It receives a +1 bonus to DEF.
- Instil Ferocity
  The trainer can instil the fighting spirit in his or her monster and teach it to go for the jugular. This technique takes a one-hour training session and costs the trainer and monster 4 Energy Points each. The effects last for (4 + the monster's Will) hours. A ferocious monster receives a +2 bonus to its attack rolls. It is also likely to be bad tempered, and may

OPEN ANIME

snap at or otherwise harass anyone nearby. A trainer can Instil Ferocity against a specific opponent (such as type of monster) – this requires appropriate training aids (such as a picture or look-alike doll). This doubles the normal bonus, but only against that target; the monster does not gain an attack bonus against any other opponent. This option is useful if the trainer has a good idea who his or her monster will face.

- Monster Tactics

The character has carefully studied cute monsters in battle. He or she understands which attack to use for the greatest effect, when to order a finishing blow at the right moment, and when to sound the retreat. The trouble is, it is the monster fighting, not the character. If the character is supervising the duel, however, and is in a position to shout orders, then his or her monsters receive a +4 bonus on their INI through the battle. This can be used in conjunction with Inspire Monster.

- Nurse Monster

The character is a natural monster physician. As long as the monster is under his or her tender care, it heals LIF points three times faster then it would otherwise. If the character also has Feed Monster, the monster heals five times as quickly as it would otherwise.

- Stat Master

The character possesses an encyclopaedic knowledge of other trainers, as well as teams and monster dojo (if they exist). The character keeps track of who they are, how they Rank in any league or organisation, and what pet monsters they possess. The GM may require an Intellect check (TN 18) to see if the trainer knows anything about someone specifically.

Unique Ability

Cost: 1-5 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: Varies
Progression: Descriptive; see below

This Ability covers any abilities not detailed in the rules. Often a single Point is sufficient to give the character "flavor," but more Points can be allocated to enhance the effects on game play and must be added if the Attribute would be of considerable benefit. Discuss the Attribute with the GM to determine what specific game effects the Attribute possesses.

The GM should assign a Point cost per Rank based on how the Attribute compares to other Attributes and how useful it is. In general, an Attribute that is somewhat useful in the game should cost 1 Point/Rank, one that is very useful should cost 2-3 Points/Rank, and one that is extremely useful should cost 4-5 Points/Rank (or more).

Rank 1	The Attribute has little character or game effect.
Rank 2	The Attribute has a moderate character or game effect.
Rank 3	The Attribute has a large character or game effect.
Rank 4	The Attribute has a major character or game effect.
Rank 5	The Attribute has an extreme effect on the character or game.
Rank 6	The Attribute has a primal effect on the character or game.

Unknown Superhuman Power

Cost: Variable
Relevant Attribute: Variable
Progression: Variable

In some campaigns, the characters may be unaware of their superhuman abilities until they manifest at crucial moments. To represent this, the player can allocate some Points to Unknown Superhuman Power when creating the character. The player does not purchase Ranks in this Ability — he or she simply spends a selected amount of Character Points. The GM takes those Points and adds a bonus of 50% (rounding up) and uses them to assign other Abilities to the character. The GM does not tell the player which Abilities have been assigned; they are

OPEN ANIME

revealed to the player (and character) as the game unfolds and the powers manifest. GMs are encouraged to reveal the character's powers slowly and when it is appropriate for the campaign's story. The GM should never feel pressured to tell the player what his or her character's unknown Abilities are before the time is right.

Water Speed

Cost: 2 Points/Rank
Relevant Attribute: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

A character with Water Speed can float and travel on or under water. The character can swim on the surface at high speeds and dive underwater for brief periods by holding his or her breath, or indefinitely if he or she has the Adaptation (Underwater) Ability. To survive the pressure associated with deep diving, the Adaptation (Pressure) Ability must also be assigned. Also, depending on the speed at which the character is moving, opponents may suffer a penalty to hit the character. A character without Water Speed can still swim but much more slowly (about 2 mph).

You character has a base water speed equal to their Move. This is what Rank 1 of Water Speed gives to your character and each Rank past the first doubles your character's water speed. It is important to note that without this Ability, your character's swimming speed would be one half of their Move.

Wealth

Cost: 3 Points/Rank
Relevant Ability: None
Progression: Descriptive; see below

The character is more financially stable ("liquid") than an average person. This will allow him or her to easily acquire commercially available goods, and bribe or hire people. Note that hirelings that are intensely loyal to the character should still be acquired through Flunkies or the Servant Abilities. The character can be assumed to have non-liquid assets (like houses or real estate) commensurate with his or her wealth. In order to have access to things that are difficult to acquire without special licenses, or which are illegal, he or she should still take Organizational Ties or Personal Gear Abilities.

Rank 1	The character is W*ell Off*. In a modern-day setting, he or she has assets totaling about $500,000.
Rank 2	The character is W*ealthy*. In a modern day setting, he or she has assets totaling about $1,000,000.
Rank 3	The character is *Rich*. In a modern day setting, he or she has assets totaling a about $10 million.
Rank 4	The character is *Very Rich*. In a modern day setting, he or she has assets totaling about $100 million.
Rank 5	The character is E*xtremely Rich*. In a modern day setting, he or she has assets totaling about $1 billion.
Rank 6	The character is F*antastically Rich*. In a modern day setting, he or she has assets totaling about a $10 billion.

DISABILITIES

Disabilities are disadvantages through which your character must suffer in order to overcome the hardships of day-to-day life. Disabilities serve as an excellent and often comical role-playing opportunity. They only impede your character to a limited extent and are not intended to totally negate his or her many abilities.

By taking a character Disability you can gain up to two (or occasionally more) Character Points (CP) to increase Attribute Scores or Abilities Ranks, or select additional Abilities. The number of Points you receive is directly proportional to how much the Disability hinders your character; Disabilities that do not inflict a significant disadvantage (such as a weakness to bullets made from the earth of planet Neptune) are not worth any CP.

It is recommended that you assign two to five Disabilities to a Character.

Tapping Disabilities

Tapping Disabilities is an optional rule, and not for all play groups. This rule helps to spread the narrative control of a campaign between the GM and the players. Not all players are comfortable with this active of a level of play, and that is why this rule is optional.

Tapping a Disability is a method to allow you and the other players input in the GM's scenario. Disabilities are primarily considered by some to be a way in which to gain additional Character Points, but by using this optional rule Disabilities can become a method for you and the other players to take an active part in telling the story of the campaign.

Obviously this requires a GM with the flexibility to be able to quickly work with potential scene editing by the players. When Tapping a Disability, you are suggesting scenes to the GM for a session. These scenes spotlight your character in some manner, through the framework of your character's Disabilities. Tapping Disabilities also requires that the players *want* to take an active part in shaping the campaign and their character. This rule will not work as effectively in games where the players are more passive, or are not as comfortable with asserting themselves within the campaign. This has to be an all or nothing proposition for the group, if not all of the players are comfortable with taking this active role in things, it is not fair to those who would not be if more active players are allowed to use this rule.

Each of your character's Disabilities may be Tapped once, potentially, per session, and only once per session. Besides the benefit of actively participating in the campaign's story you also receive a number of temporary Action Points for your character. When a Disability is Tapped you receive for your character a number of temporary Action Points equal to the amount of Character points that your character gained when the Disability was taken during character creation.

These Action Points gained through Tapping are only temporary and expire at the end of a game session if not used during the session. Action Points gained in this way can never be carried over to the next session.

Example:

Sean's character, Mega-Man, has the Nemesis (2 CP) and Significant Other (1 CP) Disabilities. Thinking that he wants a confrontation with his character's arch enemy, since it has been a while since the villainous Nega-Man has been brought up in the campaign, Sean decides to ask the GM if he can Tap his Disabilities this session. At the beginning of the session, the GM ask if anyone want to Tap the character's Disabilities. Sean says that he wants to Tap Mega-man's Nemesis and Significant Other Disabilities. He adds that his idea is that Nega-man could kidnap Mega-Man's girlfriend, Kristen Scott.

Looking over his notes for the game session the GM determines that be moving things around slightly he can accommodate Sean's subplot during the session. He notes that Sean has Tapped those Disabilities and give Sean three temporary Action Points for the session.

It is suggested that the GM have a period at the beginning of each game session to ask the players if any of them wish to Tap their character's Disabilities. This allows the GM to be able to accommodate the suggested subplots of the players.

The GM may ask to commute a player's subplot to the next session, if for some reason it will not fit in with the current session. If this is the case, the Action Points that would be received are also commuted to the next session. However, the player does receive two temporary Action Points for the current session in return.

It is important to note that when your character's Disabilities come up normally in play, such as an Impulsive character recklessly jumping into combat or another dangerous situation, is not the same as Tapping that Disability to enhance the narrative of th campaign. These uses of Disabilities do not garner the temporary Action Points.

Tapping Disabilities is away for you, the other players, and the GM to be able to make the campaign much more collaborative in its focus and al-

Open Anime

lowing you and the other players to have more input into how the stories of the campaign are told. This can be a bit daunting at first, particularly with some inexperienced players, but with time and practice everyone in the group can find that this adds extra dimension and fullness to ongoing games.

It is not required that you (or any of the other players) Tap your character's Disabilities every game session, as it may, at times, disrupt the flow of the campaign or even be inappropriate at times. For example, if the campaign has the characters stranded on a desert island, Tapping your character's Duty Disability to have him foil a bank robbery would be inappropriate to the session. In cases of inappropriateness, the GM has the ability to outright veto a subplot, or to ask you to come up with something more appropriate to the situation.

Disabilities List

Achilles Heel

The character loses twice as many Life Points as normal from a particular attack form, which must fit with the character concept. It might be something with appropriate mystic resonance, such as wooden stakes for vampires or silver for werewolves. It could also reflect the character's nature such as a robot taking extra damage from water (as it causes short circuits), or an alien's weakness to weapons from his or her home planet. The GM must approve any Achilles Heel Disabilities. A character may have an Achilles Heel to either a common, uncommon, or rare attack form (in the context of the campaign).

1 CP	The attack form is rare.
2 CP	The attack form is uncommon.

Bane

A character with the Bane Disability is vulnerable to an otherwise non-damaging substance such as water, sunlight, or a specific element, material, or object. The Bane should relate to the character's background or powers in some way. For example, a fire demon's bane might be water, while myths indicate that a vampire suffers damage when touched by a crucifix.

The character suffers damage if his or her skin is physically touched by the Bane. If the Bane does not require direct physical contact (such as sunlight, seeing one's reflection, hearing the noise of a church or temple bell, or having the Bane in close proximity), the damage is halved. Alternatively, if the Bane only affects the character when ingested, the damage is doubled. Finally, the damage rating assumes that the Bane is common, such as water, sunlight, steel, or wood. If it is less common such as a holy symbol, Buddhist scripture, or rare element, the damage is also doubled. If it is even more rare, such as one particular artifact, the damage may be tripled or quadrupled.

1 CP	The Bane causes minor damage (1d6/round of exposure).
2 CP	The Bane causes moderate damage (2d6/round of exposure).

Blind Fury

Under specific conditions selected by the player (and approved by the GM), the character will enter a state of unbridled anger. While enraged, the character will furiously attack the closest person, whether that individual is a friend or foe. Once that person is defeated or flees, the berserk character will attack the next closest "threat." Examples of conditions that might initiate Blind Fury include: receiving a certain amount of damage, sight of blood, a specific sound or smell, being outnumbered in combat, seeing a friend in mortal danger, confrontation with a specific opponent, etc.
The character can only return to a normal emotional state under another specific condition. This return could involve a Willpower save, or could be an automatic reversion. Examples of return conditions include: no opponents in the vicinity, a specific calming technique performed by an ally, solitude, injection of a particular drug, being knocked unconscious, etc.

OPEN ANIME

1 CP	Initiating the Blind Fury is difficult; reverting to normal emotional state is easy.
2 CP	Initiating the Blind Fury and reverting to a normal emotional state are both moderately difficult.

Concentration

The character must concentrate while using a specific Ability that functions over a period of time; it does not apply to Abilities with an instantaneous effect. If the character's concentration is interrupted voluntarily or by an outside event, the Ability ceases to function.

1 CP	The Ability requires slight concentration. The character can still perform other non-combat actions, but cannot engage in combat or use other Abilities that also require Concentration.
2 CP	The Ability requires intense concentration. The character can move at a slow speed and talk with others while using the Ability, but cannot perform any complex actions or use any other Ability.

Cursed

A Cursed character has likely offended a great being of power in his or her past, or is the direct descendent of someone who did (Curses often pass through bloodlines). The Curse can take a near limitless number of forms, but should not provide a character with an obvious advantage (remember, it's a curse!). The exact nature, background, and limitations of the Curse should be discussed with the GM.

1 CP	Your character suffers from a slight disadvantage.
2 CP	Your character suffers from a moderate disadvantage.

Famous

The character is recognizable by many people, and thus it is difficult for him or her to keep secrets or maintain a private life. Journalists and photographers may hound the character regularly, and report his or her actions on television, in newspapers, and on websites. While being Famous may have some privileges (preferred seating at restaurants, daily special treatment, etc.), it is a significant disadvantage for a character that maintains a secret identity (such as a super hero).

1 CP	Your character has regional fame.
2 CP	Your character has national fame.

Inept Attribute

In some aspect of one of the two Core Attributes, your character is less capable than the Attribute's score would show. Your character may be less graceful or dexterous, less personable or less intelligent than others. In these situations, your character receives a penalty to all Attribute and Skill checks.

1 CP	Your character receives a -1 to related Attribute and Skill checks.
2 CP	Your character receives a -2 to related Attribute and Skill checks.

Ism

Ism is discrimination based solely on one particular aspect of a character. Examples of Ism include: ageism, elitism, racism, sexism, or discrimination based on education, species, genetics, sexual preference, occupation, religion, physical features, etc. The players and GM are strongly encouraged to discuss these contentious discrimination issues, and their role in the game, before play begins.

1 CP	Your character experiences a small degree of discrimination.
2 CP	Your character experiences a large degree of discrimination.

OPEN ANIME

Marked

A character is considered Marked if his or her body hosts a permanent and distinguishing design that may be difficult to conceal. The design may be a family symbol, an identifying birthmark, a permanent scar, or a unique tattoo. If the mark is not considered out of the ordinary (such as freckles or a common tattoo), this Disability does not apply. Characters who are obviously non-human (robotic, demonic, alien, etc.) in a setting where most people are human (or vice versa) would also have the Marked Disability. In a standard high-fantasy setting, none of the typical races (dwarves, elves, halflings, etc.) have this Disability.

1 CP	The mark is easily concealable because it is small or in an inconspicuous location.
2 CP	The mark can be concealed, but this is difficult because it is large or in an obvious location.

Nemesis

The character has someone in his or her life that actively interferes with goal achievement on a regular basis. This Nemesis can take several forms. He or she could be a professional rival such as someone competing for the favor of the character's boss. The Nemesis could also be personal; for example, a thief may be pursued by a cop who devotes his or her existence to putting the character behind bars. The Nemesis may even be a romantic rival such as someone chasing the same person the character is pursuing.

The Nemesis should be someone who makes the character's life difficult frequently (and cannot easily be removed), but the Nemesis does not need to be a mortal enemy. It might be someone the character loves very much, but one whom they cannot avoid. An overbearing parent who lives at home is an example of this. If for any reason the Nemesis is defeated or goes away, the GM should create another Nemesis, unless the player also wishes to use Power Points gained through advancement to eliminate the Disability permanently.

1 CP	The Nemesis is merely annoying and/or interferes infrequently.
2 CP	The Nemesis may actively try to harm the character and/or interferes frequently.

Not So Tough

The character is less durable than his Attributes would otherwise suggest. This Disability is appropriate for characters with a "glass jaw," or those who succumb to physical trauma easily. Your character may not have this Disability if it would reduce his or her Life Points below 1.

1 CP	Your character's Life Points are decreased by 5 Points.
2 CP	Your character's Life Points are decreased by 10 Points.

Owned

Free will has little meaning for a character who is Owned by a corporation, government, crime ring, or other organization or individual. Control over the character can be exerted through a variety of methods including blackmail, brainwashing, legal contract, technology, or just highly effective propaganda. Dire consequences await a character whose actions conflict with the mandate of the owning body.

1 CP	The organization has partial ownership of the character; the character is subject to slight punishment for opposing the owners.
2 CP	The organization has significant ownership of the character; the character is subject to moderate punishment for opposing the owners.

Phobia

A Phobia is a fear (often irrational) of an event, object, or person that can limit a character's choice of actions. Avoiding situations that could trigger the

phobia may take a high priority in the character's life. Note that a Phobia that effectively cripples the character with fear does not add constructively to the role-playing experience.

1 CP	The character has a slight phobia or one that is encountered infrequently.
2 CP	The character has a moderate phobia or one that is encountered frequently.

Physical Impairment

The character has a physical impairment that makes aspects of daily life more challenging. Possible impairments include: one or more missing (or unusable) limbs, loss of speech, constant sickness, nagging injury, problem with one of the senses, severe headaches, an android that requires frequent repairs, etc. The player and GM should discuss the problems and limitations associated with the impairment.

1 CP	The impairment is a slight inconvenience to the character.
2 CP	The impairment is a moderate inconvenience to the character.

Psychological Impairment

The character has a psychological impairment that makes aspects of daily life more challenging. Possible impairments include: memory loss, depression, mania, attention deficit disorder, shyness, compulsive disorders, etc. The player and GM should discuss the problems and limitations associated with the impairment.

1 CP	The impairment is a slight inconvenience to the character.
2 CP	The impairment is a moderate inconvenience to the character.

Recurring Nightmares

When the Recurring Nightmare Disability haunts a character, he or she has trouble sleeping at nights and functions at less-than-optimum performance during the day. The nightmare can be a memory of a tragic event or traumatic experience, or it might be something else such as a prophetic vision or warning. The nightmare may not occur every night but it will haunt the character on a regular basis. Additionally, the nightmares do not need to portray the exact same events repeatedly, but the visions should be related in some way. The details concerning the subject matter of the nightmares and why they occur is the responsibility of the GM and the player to create.

1 CP	The nightmares occur infrequently and have a slight effect on the character's lifestyle.
2 CP	The nightmares occur frequently and have a moderate effect on the character's lifestyle.

Red Tape

The character must negotiate his or her way through a complicated bureaucracy in order to accomplish tasks. This Disability is often associated with characters who are members of law-enforcement organizations or similar government agencies that require paperwork. A large criminal organization, however, may also require a character to receive permission from several levels of bosses before undertaking certain high-profile jobs. It is not unusual to have some sort of Red Tape Disability applied to the Connections Ability.

Red Tape also includes whatever measures the character must take "after the fact" to appease the organization to which he or she belongs. For example, a cop may need to fill out a report every time his or her weapon is fired or may have to follow a complicated series of steps to obtain a search warrant. A criminal may be required to pay a percentage of his or her take to the local crime boss or face some very strict penalties.

OPEN ANIME

1 CP	The Red Tape only impedes the character before or after a major action (but not both) and/or the Red Tape is easy to manage most of the time.
2 CP	The Red Tape impedes a character both before and after a major action, and/or is difficult to manage most of the time.

Sensory Impairment

One or more of your character's senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell) are either diminished or lost. An example of a diminished sense is being near-sighted or hard of hearing; the GM should take the impairment into consideration when deciding what the character is able to perceive, and may apply a -4 penalty on checks to notice things with that sense. An example of a lost sense is blindness or deafness. Any diminishment or loss is based on the character's status after benefiting from any technological aids such as eyeglasses or hearing aids in the setting. For example, if a character has a hearing aid but is still hard of hearing, he or she has Sensory Impairment (Diminished Hearing, 1 CP). In a setting where a hearing aid was unavailable or could not correct his or her particular impairment, he or she would have Sensory Impairment (Deaf, 2 CP) instead.

1 CP	Your character has a diminished primary sense (such as short-sightedness or being hard of hearing), or has lost a secondary sense (such as taste or smell).
2 CP	Your character has completely lost a primary sense (sight or hearing), or has two diminished primary senses, or has completely lost multiple secondary senses.

Significant Other (S.O.)

A character with this Disability has someone for whom he or she must go to any lengths to keep safe from harm, even at the risk of his or her own life. The S.O. should be a regular fixture in the campaign. A one-night stand, or a cousin visiting for two weeks is a plot complication and not an appropriate S.O. The character's sense of obligation towards the S.O. is enough that the character will take great pains to ensure his or her safety and well-being. Examples include spouses and steady boy or girl friends, immediate relatives (parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, perhaps very close cousins), and close co-workers (such as a cop's partner). It is acceptable for a character to take another character as an S.O., provided the players role-play this relationship appropriately. In this case, the S.O. relationship is always worth just 1 CP but is treated as a 3 CP Disability by the GM in terms of the frequency with which it affects the game.

1 CP	The S.O. is rarely placed in grave danger and appears infrequently.
2 CP	The S.O. is often placed in grave danger and appears frequently.

Skeleton in the Closet

The character has a dark secret. Exposure of this secret could cause harm to the character in the form of public humiliation, loss of a job, arrest, injury, or even death. The number of CP gained from this Disability is based on the severity the consequences if the secret is revealed. The secret must be important enough that the character will actively take steps to keep others from learning of it. If the Skeleton is ever revealed, the character will suffer the associated consequences, and the GM should replace it with an appropriate Disability or Disabilities worth at least as many CP as Skeleton in the Closet. Skeleton in the Closet is inappropriate for most Flunkies and Servant characters.

1 CP	The Skeleton is difficult to discover, and/or the consequences of discovery are slight, and/or the character's reputation will be impacted slightly.
2 CP	The Skeleton is relatively easy to discover, and/or the consequences of discovery are moderate, and/or the character's reputation will be seriously impacted.

OPEN ANIME

Unique Disability

This Disability covers any and all possible Disabilities that a character might possess but are not detailed in the rules. The boundaries and limitations of the Disability should be discussed with the GM.

1 CP	The Defect occurs infrequently and/or has a slight effect (-1 to Skill or Attribute).
2 CP	The Defect occurs frequently and/or has a moderate effect (-2 to Skill or Attribute).

Vulnerability

The character has a critical weakness to a specific object, environment, thought, activity, or condition. When in close proximity to the Vulnerability, it can temporarily strip the character of some of his or her Abilities (GM determines which Abilities are affected). The Vulnerability should only affect the character rarely, however, since it impacts him or her so severely.

1 CP	The character's accessible Ability Ranks all drop by up to 2 Ranks when affected by the Vulnerability.
2 CP	The character's accessible Ability Ranks all drop by up to 4 Ranks when affected by the Vulnerability.

Wanted

The character is wanted by the law, a powerful criminal, or private organization that has placed a price on his or her head. Being Wanted is different from having a Nemesis; there is no single person devoting his or her life to annoying or hunting down the character. The character will need to conceal his or her identity or move around regularly to avoid having complete strangers calling the police or pursuing the character (depending on the circumstances).

1 CP	The incentive to hunt the character is minor. For example, he or she may be wanted on outstanding warrants, but there may be no actual reward posted, or the reward is fairly small.
2 CP	The reward, contract, or other incentive offered to hunt the character is significant.

Character Creation Advice

ANIME TEMPLATES

This section has several "templates" for archetypal anime characters. These are meant to provide you with some inspiration and guidelines for creating anime-inspired characters with the Open Anime rules; feel free to use them as-is for PCs and NPCs, or modify them to suit your own tastes. The selection here isn't meant to be comprehensive; instead it provides an overview, concentrating on character types where advice and examples for building and playing such a character would be useful.

Android Girl

"Diagnostic shows all systems are normal. Now can I have some ice cream?!"

You were created in a lab, built of metal and wires and for some reason covered in squishy pink plastic. You're not really sure why exactly your creator makes you wear clothes all the time (apart from the fact that red stuff comes out of his nose when you don't), but your Modesty Module tells you to get really angry and embarrassed whenever someone sees you without them on.

Oh, and another thing: you're, like, super-duper strong. Which is good because there's these bad guys from the company your creator used to work for who can't seem to make up their minds whether they want to capture you or blow you up.



Notes

This character serves as a good example of how to create an android or cyborg in Open Anime – her special Abilities are mostly superhuman capabilities that represent her superior artificial construction – though they needn't necessarily be this powerful. Her tough body is a combination of Armor and Damn Healthy!, and she has Speed and Enhanced Strength (plus some related skills) for her superior physical abilities. Some of her Combat Techniques also represent properties of her artificial construction; handedness is not an issue for her (Ambidexterity), and having a computer for a brain lets her collect and analyze certain kinds of data very quickly, which accounts for Blind-Fight and Judge Opponent.

Power Level: Extremely High

Attributes: STR 8, REF 6, HLT 6, PRE 4, INT 3, WIL 5

Derived Attributes: DEF 16, INI 5, TGH 7, LIF 37, EP 6, MOV 13 (52)

Skills: Acrobatics 5, Computers 5, Jump 6, Maces/Clubs 5, Power Usage (Computer Intrusion) 4, Power

Usage (Eye Beams) 5, Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 6

Abilities: Armor 3 (12 CP), Attack Combat Mastery 2 (6 CP), Combat Technique 6 (6 CP; Ambidextrous, Blind-Fight, Block Ranged Attacks Deflection, Judge Opponent, Lightning Reflexes), Damn Healthy! 2 (4 CP), Computer Intrusion 1 (4 CP), Enhanced Strength 3 (12 CP), Extra Actions 1 (8 CP), Features 3 (3 CP; cell phone, GPS, self-diagnostic system), Special Attack 4 (12 CP; Eye Beams, 4d6 damage), Speed 2 (8 CP)

75

Disabilities: Blind Fury (triggered by friends in danger) 1, Psychological Limitation: Clueless 2, Marked 1, Special Requirement (Recharging) 1, Unique Defect: No Natural Healing 2, Unskilled 3 (-10)

Catgirl

"Nyaa… I'm gonna' take a nap now,'kay?"

Not only are you cute, but you're the center of the universe. And best of all, now you have a human that gives you food and stuff. He must recognize how important you are or something; so why the heck does he keep complaining when you eat all the fish in the house? It wouldn't be there if it wasn't for you, right?

Notes

Catgirls are properly called nekomimi (literally "cat-ear") in Japanese, girls with the ears and tails of cats. Although there are some of Japanese myths involving various types of supernatural cats, nekomimi are for the most part a modern invention, and there isn't any one established cliché for how they're supposed to be. Catgirls are more prevalent in works by fans than actual anime series, and when they do make their way into an anime they can seem like blatant pandering to the fans. Not that that's a bad thing per se. There are also occasionally other types of animal girls, dog-girls and bunny-girls being the most common, and once in a while there are cat-guys to be found.

The stats here are meant mainly to give an idea of what a generic catgirl might be like, assuming she had some catlike personality traits and abilities. Unless it's a very low-powered campaign, this template would simply be a base onto which players can add other stuff. Catgirls in anime have been genetic experiments, alien races, androids, mutations, magical girls, and in a few cases they've shown up with no explanation at all.

Power Level: Average

Attributes: STR 3, REF 5 (8), HLT 4, PRE 5, INT 3, WIL 4

Derived Attributes: DEF 18, INI 4, TGH 4, LIF 20, EP 4, MOV 9

Skills: Acrobatics 3, Bluff 2, Climbing 3, Dancing 3, Intuition 3, Jump 4, Style 2

Abilities: Divine Relationship 4 (4 CP), Enhanced Reflexes 3 (12 CP), Heightened Senses: Hearing 1 (1 CP), Heightened Senses: Night Vision 1 (1 CP), Heightened Senses: Smell 1 (1 CP)

Disabilities: Easily Distracted (balls of yarn, mice, cat toys, etc.) 2, Marked 2, Psychological Limitation: Lazy 1

Delinquent

"What the hell do you think you're doing with my little sister?"

There was a time when you were a total wuss, when you cried and cried whenever something bad happened. But apart from your older sister (who can still kick your ass) no one remembers that kid anymore. They call you "Devil Fist," and no one messes with you if they know what's good for them. Lucky for you, a lot of them don't have any idea what's good for them.

Only, now everything's gotten a bit weird. The girl who's lived next door to you your whole life is starting to look at you with different eyes. And this other girl from your class who used to always be giving you crap for being such a delinquent has been a lot nicer to you lately for some reason. It's all getting… tangled. And that's a bad thing, especially when your old rival from middle school is back in town and out for blood.

Notes

There's a long tradition of furyou (delinquent) characters in anime. They have funny hair, try to act super-macho, and are just barely managing to stay in school. This template represents a typical "heroic" delinquent (as seen in series like Bleach, Midori no Hibi, Nanaka 6/17, etc.), a lone wolf with incredible fighting ability who just might have a heart of gold underneath all that machismo.

His Abilities mostly reflect his fighting prowess, with the exception of Rejuvenation, which represents how he gets a surge of renewed strength when he has something meaningful to fight for (like protecting the girl who's his childhood friend). His defects include Famous (which burdens him with a constant flow of challengers hoping to prove something by beating him) and Marked (since delinquent characters usually have some kind of distinctive weird hairstyle or something). In addition to these, Girl/Guy Magnet, Nemesis, Psychological Impairment, and Significant Other could all be appropriate.

In a campaign that concerns modern-day high school students he's pretty much ready to go. For a campaign that includes weird special powers, Unknown Superhuman Power could be very appropriate for him.

Power Level: Average

Attributes: STR 5, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 4, INT 2, WIL 4

Derived Attributes: DEF 14, INI 3, TGH 5, LIF 31, EP 5, MOV 9

Skills: Area Knowledge (local neighborhood) 3, Hobby (pick one) 2, Intuition 3, Society (Streetwise) 5, Swimming 2, Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 5

Abilities: Attack Combat Mastery 1 (3 CP), Combat Technique 2 (2 CP; Judge Opponent, Lightning Reflexes), Damn Healthy 1 (2 CP), Heightened Awareness 1 (1 CP), Massive Damage 3 (6 CP; punches only), Rejuvenation 4 (4 CP; when protecting someone important to him)

Disabilities: Famous 1 (super-tough delinquent), Marked 1

Magical Girl

"He won't even look at me. Not the real me. But it's not like I can stop now."

It started on a normal enough day. After school you went and hung out with your friends around the shopping district, window shopping and laughing as you went. When you found an injured kitty in an alleyway, you were the one nominated to take her home. And when the kitty was feeling a bit better you were shocked to find that she could talk! Not only that, but she wanted you to accept a magic wand!

So now you can transform into a beautiful magical girl and protect the town from evil, with the guidance of your kitty sidekick/mentor. Sometimes it's dangerous, but someone has to stop those monsters from hurting people. There's also this boy you like… The problem is he seems to be in love with the magical girl, not the real you. Sometimes it hurts just thinking about it. Sometimes you want to take that magic wand and throw it away.

Notes

This is a "love fighter" type magical girl, in the style of the heroines of series like Sailor Moon, Wedding Peach, and Pretty Sammy, and not the only type of magical girl out there (see pg. 7 for more details). She is, in effect, a normal 12-year-old girl, with the power to transform (Alternate Form) and become a "magical girl" with the powers to fight the monsters ("youma") that threaten the town from time to time. Thus she's a fairly weak, unskilled character, and most of her points are put into the Alternate Form. This character is built for an Average-Powered Game, but with a ruling that the character's transformed self can have Attributes and Skills as per a High-Powered Game (i.e., the maximum is 8 rather than 5). In a campaign not completely based around magical girls or similar character this use of Alternate Form would be inappropriate.

She also has a Servant, representing her cute mascot critter and mentor. Its stats are left out (mascots almost never get into combat, and when

Magical Girl Alternate Form

Attributes: STR 4, REF 7, HLT 6, PRE 5, INT 4, WIL 6

Derived Attributes: DEF 19, INI 6, TGH 5, LIF 42, EP 46, MOV 12

Skills: Acrobatics 3, Area Knowledge (home town/neighborhood) 5, Cooking 2, Deduction 3, Hobby (choose one) 4, Instrument (Flute) 2, Power Usage (Special Attack) 4, Singing 2, Swimming 2, Unarmed Combat (Martial Arts) 3

Abilities: Armor 1 (4 CP), Damn Healthy! 2 (4 CP), Defense Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Divine Relationship 3 (3 CP), Energy Bonus 2 (6 CP), Features 2 (2 CP; Costume, Protected Identity), Highly Skilled 6 (6 CP), Jumping 3 (3 CP), Sixth Sense 1 (1 CP; Magic), Special Attack 4 (16 CP; 7d6 Damage, Accurate, Short Range, Uses Energy 3)

Disabilities: Attack Restriction 2, Marked 1

they do they never fare well), but the typical mascot is very knowledgeable about magic and such, but is no more helpful in combat than a normal small animal would be; only it has the intelligence to find somewhere safe to hide. This particular magical girl needs to have her mascot present in order to transform, but this is only one possible variation.

For this character the Ism and Obligation defects aren't appropriate, since 12-year-old kids who have to go to school are assumed to be the norm for the campaign, but if she were made a part of a different campaign they might be.

Power Level: Average

Attributes: STR 3, REF 4, HLT 3, PRE 3, INT 4, WIL 3

Derived Attributes: DEF 14, INI 4, TGH 3, LIF 15, EP 3, MOV 7

Skills: Area Knowledge (home town/neighborhood) 5, Cooking 2, Deduction 3, Hobby (choose one) 4, Instrument (Flute) 2, Singing 2, Swimming 2

Abilities: Alternate Form: Partial-Powered Form 8 (24 CP; see below), Servant 2 (Cute Mascot; 4 CP)

Disabilities: Nemesis 2, Psychological Limitation (Shy) 2, Special Requirement (mascot must be present to transform) 1, Unskilled 3

Martial Artist

"When I'm fighting a stronger opponent… that's when I truly feel alive. So don't you dare hold back."

You've gone through years of intense training, honing yourself as a warrior. While there are those who learn the martial arts because they crave power or fame, you're different. A good fight sends a thrill through you so powerful you can hardly wait for the next match to come along. Every once in a while that urge turns into something ugly. Once the thrill of battle became too great and you almost killed a man. Somehow you'll master this impulse though; what other choice is there?

Notes

This martial artist is a typical karate fighter with special ki powers. His stats are an example of where a lack of something can tell us a lot about a character; none of his Skills, Abilities, or Disabilities suggest that he's a sort of ascetic who largely eschews normal life in favor of wandering around and fighting, but he's very good at fighting and would be next to useless at anything where his raw physicality couldn't play a role.

His Special Attacks take after anime rather than fighting games in that they're used as finishing moves rather than bread-and-butter attacks. His "Ki Blast" (which would need a cooler name in actual play) is a burst of blue energy. The blue is partly because in anime good guys tend to produce blue energy and bad guys red or sometimes purple energy. His "Flame Punch" is a massively powerful punch that hits with explosive flames.

Power Level: Very High

Attributes: STR 8, REF 7, HLT 8, PRE 6, INT 4, WIL 7

Derived Attributes: DEF 19, INI 6, TGH 8, LIF 38, EP 68, MOV 15

Skills: Awareness 3, Bluff 2, Climbing 2, Concentration 4, Intuition 4, Jump 3, Knowledge (Martial Arts) 4, Power Usage (Ki Blast) 4, Sense Motive 3, Society (Fighters) 2, Survival 2, Unarmed Combat (Karate) 7

Martial Arts Maneuvers: Martial Block (2 CP), Martial Throw (2 CP), Offensive Strike (2 CP)

Abilities: Attack Combat Mastery 2 (6 CP), Combat Technique 2 (2 CP; Blind-Fight, Judge Opponent), Defense Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Energy Bonus 3 (9 CP), Power Defense: Ki Blast 4 (4 CP), Sixth Sense 1 (1 CP; Ki Sense), Special Attack: Ki Blast 3 (12 CP; 8d6 damage; Short Range, Uses Energy 3), Special Attack: Flame Punch 3 (3 CP; 6d6 damage, Burning, Flare, Melee, Uses Energy 2)

Disabilities: Blind Fury 2, Easily Distracted (Fights) 2, Famous 2, Nemesis 1

Mecha Jock

"Don't you get it? This war isn't some petty crap about some little strip of land or even about natural resources. We're fighting for the survival of mankind. We fight, and we kill to make sure we have a home to come back to. Clear?"

You grew up seeing those things on TV. In the official reports and whatnot they're called "Articulated Armor," but everyone just calls them "giant robots." When you first enlisted it was because you wanted to be in the cockpit of one. You were just a stupid kid then, but you worked hard and you eventually made it in. You had no idea that the skills you were picking up were about to be put to the test. The civil war that broke out was a messy affair that went on for a harrowing seven years, and there have been many times when you really wonder why it is that you were the one that lived and not someone more deserving.

It's been a decade since you joined up. You're one of the most seasoned pilots they have. They're already calling you one of the great armor aces. It's bullshit. You thought when the war was over things would be better, but instead you got restless. Maybe you were having a premonition, about the new war that was coming. Humans against aliens, Us and Them. Your new squadron is mostly rookies – promising rookies, but rookies all the same. Some of them aren't going to make it – that's just the way it works – but you don't have to like it.

Notes

Mecha pilots come in many different shapes and sizes; this guy is an ace pilot who serves in some kind of military organization. He has the Ace! Technique Ability to give him an edge in combat, but the six chosen for this template are pretty arbitrary and any will do. This template also assumes that the character doesn't have to pay points for the mecha he pilots; otherwise he'd need considerably more character points in order to have a reasonably powerful mecha.

This template demonstrates the use of Enhanced [Attribute] and Skill Knack Abilities to have capabilities that exceed Campaign Maximums. Although our pilot is built as an Average-powered character – which means Attributes and Skills can't exceed 5 – his REF and selected Piloting skills are effectively at 6. In a higher-powered game that might not seem like much, but this assumes a game world where 5 is the normal maximum and being able to roll 3d6+12 on his mecha piloting rolls makes him one of the best there is.

Power Level: Average

Attributes: STR 4, REF 5 (6), HLT 4, PRE 4, INT 5, WIL 4

Derived Attributes: DEF 16, INI 5, TGH 4, LIF 20, EP 4, MOV 9

Skills: Astrogation 2, Awareness 3, Concentration 2, First Aid 2, Gambling 1, Mecha 5 (6), Mecha Weapons 4, Para 2, Operate Electronics 4, Pistols 2, Tactics 3, Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 3, Zero-G 2

Abilities: Ace! Technique 5 (5 CP; Acceleration Tolerance, Gunnery, Hotshot, Masterful Control, Strafe), Enhanced Reflexes 1 (4 CP), Highly Skilled 2, Organizational Ties 2 (4 CP), Skill Knack: Transportation 1 (5 CP)

Disabilities: Nemesis (Enemy Ace) 2, Recurring Nightmares 2, Significant Other 2

Miko

"The women of my family have protected this town from the forces of darkness for generations. I'm sorry, but I can't just abandon that… I—I just can't."

You grew up knowing that you wouldn't get to have the life of a normal girl, but now that the trouble has started in earnest… you're starting to get scared. But as more and more evil spirits start appearing, your family and friends are going to be in danger, and you're the only one who protect them. It's hard, and dangerous. If you just had someone to fight alongside you, you could handle it.

Notes

Miko are Shinto shrine maidens, young girls who serve at shrines, theoretically until they either come of age or take a lover. Legends tell of miko who have the power to act as mediums, channeling the spirits of the dead. In real life miko are as often as not simply girls working in part time jobs, but in anime this notion of spiritual power is often extended to the point where the miko are capable of defending the people against supernatural threats.

This miko isn't a terribly effective character, except when it comes time to deal with the supernatural. Her Special Attack is a good example of one that's cheap yet effective; even though it's only Rank 1, it does 8d6 damage to supernatural creatures, and in story terms it takes the form of an arrow shot charged with spiritual energy. She's meant to be a miko that's pretty serious about her duties as such, but then she has a lot of motivation to when her friends are periodically threatened by monsters. Her shyness (which is extreme enough to be a 2-point Psychological Impairment) isn't typical of miko per se; this particular one is meant to paradoxically be brave and courageous when fighting monsters and quiet and shy when dealing with people.

Power Level: Average

Attributes: STR 3, REF 3, HLT 3, PRE 4, INT 4, WIL 5

Derived Attributes: DEF 13, INI 4, TGH 4, LIF 19, EP 44, MOV 6

Skills: Area Knowledge (Local Neighborhood) 3, Awareness 2, Bows 5, Concentration 4, Cooking 2, Dancing 3, First Aid 2, Intuition 3, Knowledge (Mythology) 3, Religion (Shinto) 4, Singing 3

Abilities: Energy Bonus 2 (6 CP), Exorcism 4 (4 CP), Highly Skilled 2, Personal Gear 1 (2 CP; Bow and Arrows), Sixth Sense 1 (1 CP; Supernatural Presence Sense), Special Attack: Spirit Shot 1 (4 CP; 4d6 [8d6] damage, Limited Shots [Requires a readied bow and arrow], Short Range, Targeted [Supernatural Targets Only], Uses Energy [2]), Spirit Ward 4 (4 CP)

Disabilities: Attack Restriction 2, Psychological Impairment (Shy) 2, Special Requirement (Must follow Shinto rules of cleansing to retain her powers) 1

Monster Trainer

"Don't be so sure! CryoMon! Go!"

You've wanted to become a monster trainer for as long as you can remember. And not just any monster trainer, but one of the masters! Now, at the tender young age of twelve, your dream is just starting to come true. The Professor let you have one monster to start off, and your mom gave you some money to help you along just before she kissed you goodbye, but for now you're on the road by yourself. Well, except for your critter – only so far he doesn't seem to be all that great. Most people say he's useless, that you should trade him in for a new one when you get a chance, but somehow you just can't bring yourself to do that. Your instincts are telling you something, though you're not sure what. Is he going to evolve into something really incredible? No one seems to know… but somehow you're willing to take the chance that he might not become anything special. Could it be that he's become your friend?

Notes

This is a stereotypical young monster trainer for the pet monster genre (see p. 8), a boy out to seek his fortune as a monster trainer. As such his limited abilities are almost completely focused on training

NekoMon (Sample Pet Monster)

NekoMon appears to be an oversized white housecat at first glance, but its glowing orange eyes mark it as a monster. NekoMon has certain special powers that are treated as Magical Abilities; these use Energy of course, but also can only be performed at a trainer's command.

Note that although the monster trainer above is an Average-powered character, this critter is effectively built with attribute and skill maximums as per a High-powered campaign. In the Pet Monster genre this is perfectly appropriate, since it's a major part of the genre that the trainers control monsters that are substantially more powerful than they are, but in other genres servants should usually abide by the same maximums as the player characters.

Power Level: 55 CP (Rank 4 Servant)

Attributes: STR 3, REF 6, HLT 4, PRE 4, INT 2, WIL 5

Derived Attributes: DEF 18, INI 4, TGH 4, LIF 22, EP 45, MOV 10

Skills: Awareness 5, Climbing 6, Jump 5, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Unarmed Combat: Brawling 4

Abilities: Attack Combat Mastery 1 (3 CP), Energy Bonus 2 (6 CP), Combat Technique 3 (3 CP; Dodge, Leap Attack, Lightning Reflexes), Defense Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Highly Skilled 4 (4 CP), Magic 3 (12 CP), Natural Weapons 2 (2 CP; Bite, Claws), Special Movement 2 (2 CP; Cat-Like, Zen Direction)

Magical Abilities:

Ghost Flame: A mysterious burst of bluish fire that briefly engulfs an enemy. Special Attack 4 (16 MP, 16 EP; 5d6 damage, Burning, Drain Energy, Extra Energy, Short Range, Static)

Speed Up: NekoMon can briefly speed up until he appears to be a white blur. Displacement 2 (6 MP, 3 EP), Speed 2 (8 MP, 4 EP)

Disabilities: Easily Distracted (fish, cat toys) 3, Psychological Impairment: Lazy 2

monsters, and he's pretty much useless for fighting himself.

His Personal Gear attribute should be used on items appropriate to monster trainers such as healing items and extra food for his monsters. He has the Servant Ability at Rank 6; this can be all put into a single critter or the Ranks distributed among several as desired. The "NekoMon" described below is one possible monster for him to have.

Power Level: Average

Attributes: STR 3, REF 4, HLT 4, PRE 5, INT 4, WIL 4

Derived Attributes: DEF 14, INI 4, TGH 4, LIF 20, EP 4, MOV 8

Skills: Animal Handling 5 (7), Climbing 2, First Aid 3, Knowledge: Monsters 5, Navigation 2, Survival 3, Throwing 4

Abilities: Animal Friendship 2 (2 CP), Personal Gear 1 (2 CP), Servant 6 (12 CP), Train A Cute Monster 3 (3 CP; Analyze Monster, Inspire Monster, Nurse Monster)

Disabilities: Easily Distracted (new monsters) 2, Red Tape (paperwork for official monster battles) 1

Ninja (Mystical)

"A ninja has no right to complain that a fight isn't fair. And if he fails his mission he has no right to live. Now! Ninpou! Hi no Mai!"

From an early age you were trained in the many arts of the ninja, learned how to be invisible, how to deceive men's eyes, how to kill with a single blow. You learned secret arts, and excelled in everything your mentor had to teach you. Today you're a Chuunin (mid-ranking ninja), well on your way to becoming a Jounin (high-ranking ninja).

So… why did the head Jounin make you babysit a trio of trainees? You've got better things to do than try to keep them out of trouble, especially when they're so good at finding it and so bad at getting out of it. Well, it's not like you hate them or anything – that one kid even reminds you a bit of how

you were at that age – but it just seems odd that your skills would be wasted like this. Where they are, they need someone to teach them basics like the Replacement Technique; it'll probably be years before even the brightest one of the three could pull off even a crappy imitation of your more advanced moves.

That's what you thought, but those kids keep surprising you at every turn with how quickly they learn. And as time goes on you're starting to see why you're needed; all three of them have the potential to be among the best of their generation, and all three are being targeted by the clan's enemies. No point in telling them about the danger though; better to just watch over them and do what has to be done.

That's what being a ninja is about – doing what has to be done.

Notes

Ninjas are one of those things in Japanese history that has become wrapped up in myth, to the point where their depictions in stuff like anime and manga are only tenuously connected to the historical reality. This "mystical" ninja is an example of the far extreme, as seen in titles like Naruto and Ninja Academy, where for all intents and purposes a ninja's powers are a form of magic. He's also designed with a quasi-feudal setting in mind.

This character has some potentially very potent abilities, but what makes him really effective is how he uses all of the tools at his disposal. His mind is easily his greatest weapon; with the Highly Skilled Ability, he literally has 80 points worth of skills, and a substantial portion of them aren't combat related. These can play a major role in the success of a mission – sometimes far more so than his Special Attacks or teleportation.

Power Level: Very High

Attributes: STR 5, REF 8, HLT 6, PRE 5, INT 5, WIL 6

Derived Attributes: DEF 17, INI 6, TGH 5, LIF 30, EP 46, MOV 12

Skills: Acrobatics 5, Acting 2, Bluff 3, Bows 3, Climbing 3, Concentration 2, Deduction 4, Disguise 3, First Aid 2, Jumping 5, Knives 4, Knowledge: Ninjutsu 4, Mimicry 3, Power Usage: Flame Dance 4, Power Usage: Shadow Slash 4, Society: Samurai 3, Stealth 6, Swimming 3, Swords 6, Tactics: Ambushes 4, Throwing 5, Unarmed Combat: Taijutsu 4

Abilities: Combat Technique 4 (4 CP; Blind Fight, Concealment, Deflection, Judge Opponent), Energy Bonus 2 (6 CP), Environmental Control 2 (4 CP; "Darkness" in the form of a swirling mass of autumn leaves), Highly Skilled 8 (8 CP), Jumping 4 (4 CP), Personal Gear 2 (4 CP), Sixth Sense 1 (1 CP; Presence Sense), Special Attack: Flame Dance 3 (12 CP; 5d6 damage, Area Effect, Burning, Melee, Uses Energy 2), Special Attack: Shadow Slash 3 (3 CP; 5d6 damage, Accurate, Drain Energy, No Damage, Short Range, Uses Energy 2), Special Movement 5 (5 CP; Cat-Like, Light-Footed, Untrackable, Wall-Crawling, Water-Walking), Teleport 1 (5 CP)

Personal Gear: A supply of kunai and shuriken. Smoke bombs. Explosive wards (3d6 damage). Ninja-to. Buddhist monk disguise.

Disabilities: Famous (known as one of the clan's most powerful and deadly ninjas) 2, Marked (blood-red eyes) 2, Nemesis (enemy ninja clan) 3, Obligation (trainee ninjas) 2, Psychological Impairment: Shinobi Code 2

Ninja (Kunoichi)

"Not only do I know the ancient ninja techniques of the Iga clan, but I look really sexy in this mesh shirt, don't you think?"

The Way of the Ninja is a difficult path, but you've persevered through the training to emerge as a full kunoichi, ready for whatever missions you might be sent on. As a Ninja of Justice, you always do what's right! Well… Not really. Mostly you just do what the clan elder (you know, that dirty old man, the one who can defeat you with his pinky finger if he wants) tells you, which lately seems to involve killing a lot of really stupid and greedy samurai. They're so tough when they've got their armor on and their swords out, but when they're standing there in those stupid loincloths they wear

underneath it all… you've actually seen some of them cry like little girls.

Every once in a while you wish you could be more like the normal girls you have to impersonate now and then. But the feeling of the wind whipping through your hair as you leap through the trees reminds you of why you love being a ninja. Even with all the hardships it involves, you feel more alive than you ever imagined possible.

Notes

This template gives us a somewhat more realistic ninja, and also a "kunoichi," or female ninja. Of course, in a high-powered, cinematic game a kunoichi can potentially have just as many crazy powers as their male counterparts. Kunoichi are supposed to have more intensive training in infiltration and seduction, which in turn means that they need skills appropriate to various types of women. In feudal times this meant such things as flower arrangement (ikebana), calligraphy, singing, and playing an instrument.

This particular kunoichi is intended to be very skilled – at fighting, stealth, and dealing with people – but a little silly and quirky too. As you can tell, she's a little arrogant about her abilities, and she also has trouble resisting when there are snacks to be had. Her favorite are dango, a type of sweet dumpling made from rice flour – these look like little white balls glazes in syrup, and there are usually three or four of the served on a skewer with green tea. Even while on a mission she has a hard time passing up the chance to try out the dango served at whatever tea houses or restaurants she comes across, and she's not above using her ninja skills to get some without paying. She doesn't have any mystical abilities, but she is nearly superhuman in certain things, especially jumping. Notice that she has "Ninja Leaping" as a form of Special Movement; this is just a variant of Swinging/Brachiating where the character jumps from one branch or other foothold to the next. She also has a lot of Personal Gear, which she likes to find creative uses for during missions.



Power Level: High

Attributes: STR 4, REF 7, HLT 4, PRE 6, INT 5, WIL 6

Derived Attributes: DEF 19, INI 6, TGH 5, LIF 24, EP 5, MOV 11 (22)

Skills: Acrobatics 4, Art: Ikebana 2, Awareness 3, Bows 4, Climbing 3, Conversation 2, Dancing 3, Disguise 3, Gather Information 3, Intrigue 3, Jump 4, Knives 5, Politics 1, Shadowing 4, Singing 2, Stealth 5, Style 2, Survival 2, Swords 3, Throwing 5, Unarmed Combat (Taijutsu) 5

Abilities: Alternate Form: Cosmetic Changes (Can change into kunoichi outfit at any time; 2 CP), Combat Technique 4 (4 CP; Ambidextrous, Deflection, Leap Attack, Lightning Reflexes), Defensive Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Jumping 3 (3 CP), Highly Skilled 6 (6 CP), Personal Gear 3 (6 CP), Special Movement 4 (4 CP;

Cat-Like, "Ninja-Leaping," Wall-Crawling), Speed 1 (4 CP)

Personal Gear: Ninjato, a supply of shuriken, ten kunai daggers, disguise materials, grappling hook and rope, a tanto dagger, some smoke bombs, a single black powder bomb.

Disabilities: Easily Distracted (dango, rice balls, and other snacks) 1, Ism (Gender Discrimination) 2

Samurai

"'A sword is nothing but an instrument of killing…' I used to think that way too, but now I know there's more to life than the survival of the fittest. If you won't listen to my words, then maybe you'll listen to my blade instead."

There are many different kinds of samurai around. Some are great generals, and others are little more than fattened bureaucrats, but you're something different. It's only when you hold a sword in your hands, when you reach that perfect place just between life and death, that the world makes sense to you. Other samurai seldom know whether to view you with respect or to just roll their eyes when you come by, for you leave managing your holdings to retainers, yet you're willing to step in yourself to deal with the least petty bandit should the opportunity arises. On occasion your fellows even ask you to bring your skills to bear to deal with a particularly dangerous foe, and you've been led to many of your best opponents and your most impressive battles that way.

Now someone is aiming for the shogun himself. Whether the culprits are ninja assassins or dangerous ronin, or even a plot from one of his rivals, is immaterial. What matters is that your lord has made you his personal bodyguard. You'd rather not, if only because the more time you spend around him, the more you realize what kind of man he really is. For the first time your heart is at odds with your duty, but defying your lord is unthinkable.

Notes

This character is meant for the type of samurai anime that has no special powers per se, where swords are more about bright swords slashing and people dying. Samurai type characters with ki powers will tend to be a lot like the martial artist template (see above) but with a sword instead of karate. As such, this guy's Abilities mostly relate to simply being able to cut people better with his sword, with a few others pertaining to his social status. He's made to be an actual samurai – a member of the feudal society – albeit without too much concern for exact historical accuracy, so he has skills for handling himself among scheming courtiers, even if that isn't his main specialty.

To make his life a little bit more interesting, he has the Girl Magnet disability. Whether because of his good looks, his land holdings, or some other factor (we'll leave it up to your imagination) he has a few women after him.

Power Level: High

Attributes: STR 6, REF 6, HLT 6, PRE 5, INT 4, WIL 5

Derived Attributes: DEF 16, INI 5, TGH 6, LIF 43, EP 6, MOV 12

Skills: Animal Handling 2, Area Knowledge: Local Countryside 4, Art: Calligraphy 3, Bluff 2, Awareness 6, Bows 6, Conversation 3, Intrigue 4, Language: Chinese 2, Riding 5, Sense Motive 3, Strategy 3, Swords 6 (+2 for Katana), Tactics 4, Unarmed Combat: Jujutsu 5, Writing: Poetry 2

Abilities: Attack Combat Mastery 2 (6 CP), Aura of Command 3 (3 CP), Combat Technique 5 (5 CP; Ambidextrous, Blind-Fight, Block Ranged Attacks, Judge Opponent, Two-Weapon Fighting), Damn Healthy 2 (4 CP), Highly Skilled 5 (5 CP), Massive Damage: Swords 2 (4 CP), Organizational Ties 2 (4 CP), Personal Gear 2 (4 CP), Sixth Sense 1 (1 CP; Presence Sense), Special Movement 1 (1 CP; Zen Direction)

Personal Gear: Katana, Wakizashi, Samurai Armor, Longbow, Horse.

Disabilities: Girl Magnet 1, Nemesis: Rival Samurai 2, Psychological Impairment: Code of Bushido 2

Sorcerer/Sorceress

"Beyond the Darkness of Time, between the Three Worlds. Life and Death, intertwine. I fear

neither the Flame nor the Shadow. Let the Gate be opened, let your Wrath be known! I command you! GIGAS BLADE!"

From an early age you were trained in the ancient arts of magic by one of the great masters of the art. You were one of the academy's most precocious students, and excelled at all forms of magic. This was a relief to your parents, who were starting to think that you'd never be good for anything. Better to have produced a dangerous magic user than a worthless bum, right? Right?

Since graduating you've been out seeing the world, and occasionally blowing small bits of it up. It's getting kind of ridiculous now – people are starting to leave town when they find out who you are – but what can you do? Besides, it means you can get a job as a court magician, or failing that as a guild enforcer, pretty much any time you want to. You're thinking of trying to find somewhere with really nice weather, and lots of beautiful women around. After all, you're one of the best, so you deserve it.

Which is why every time you realize that you let yourself get caught up in that fool's crusade to save the world from the Dark Overlord you wonder why you're not hanging out somewhere eating grapes peeled for you by a new harem. Conscience or some crap like that. Well, okay, there's also the chance to get a hold of that ancient tome, and with it untold power, so maybe you haven't totally lost it yet. It's definitely not because of that mad sword-wielding half-elf girl. Even if she is kind of cute.

Notes

This template reflects a character that has concentrated on the study of sorcery almost to the exclusion of all else. Apart from a smattering of skills relating to lore and to a lesser extent to dealing with different levels of society, this character is almost completely defined by his Magic (or Sorcery if you prefer) Ability. A more balanced character might have broader skills (like being able to handle a sword half-decently), and Place of Power wouldn't be a bad idea considering that he'll be constantly burning Energy Points to cast spells.

Power Level: Very High

Attributes: STR 4, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 7, WIL 7

Derived Attributes: DEF 14, INI 6, TGH 6, LIF 29, EP 126, MOV 9

Skills: Arcane Concentration 4, Arcane Knowledge 5, Awareness 5, Knowledge: Monsters 3, Language: Dragon 3, Power Usage: Magic (or Sorcery) 7, Sleight of Hand 2, Society: Royal Courts 2, Society: Streetwise 2, Spellcraft 5, Strategy 4, Tactics 4, Use Magic Device 4

Abilities: Energy Bonus 6 (18 CP), Highly Skilled 2

Also, choose either Magic 8 (32 CP) or Sorcery 4 (32 CP). If the Magic Ability is selected, the selection of Magical Powers below can be used.

Magical Powers:

- Devil Calling: Create Minion: Summoning 2 (20 MP)
- Fireball: Special Attack 5 (5d6 damage, Area Effect, Short Range; 20 MP)
- Gentle Touch: Healing 2 (8 MP)
- Lightning Bolt: Special Attack 5 (4d6 damage, Accurate, 5 MP)
- Mage Armor: Armor 2 (8 MP)
- Mystic Arrows: Special Attack 4 (3d6 damage, Homing, 4 MP)
- Raven Wings: Flight 2 (6 MP)
- Sense Magic: Sixth Sense (Magic) 1 (1 MP)
- Titan's Might: Enhanced Strength 2 (8 MP)

Disabilities: Famous ("Powerful and Ruthless Mage") 2, Psychological Impairment: Arrogant 2

Space Bounty Hunter

"Most Wanted Criminal Christopher MacDonald. I'm here to capture you. Surrender quietly and you won't get hurt. Make things difficult and… well… the bounty doesn't require you to be alive now, does it?"

Most people assume you're in it for the money. Granted, sometimes the money's pretty good, but no one in their right mind would go through the kind of crap you've gone through just for money. Getting beaten up, double-crossed, shot at, framed,

and so on are all things you've just sort of gotten used to by now. You keep at it because you love the chase, you love how people know your name all over the place, and you just can't imagine yourself doing anything else for a living.

Other guys in your profession have trouble with the idea that a "meat-sack" like you, someone with no cybernetic enhancements at all, keeps showing them up, but as far as you're concerned that's their problem. You know how to handle yourself in a fight, but you also know that all the great bounty hunters were good at finding creative ways to not fight. The guys who insist on going in guns blazing into every situation don't last long, and while they are still around they get too many reduced bounties for bringing their quarry in dead. Circumstances are too good at getting screwed up on their own without you making it worse, after all.

Notes

This gal is from a high-tech spacefaring type of setting, but her emphasis is more on operating on foot than in space. She has no inherent powers, just plenty of skills and gear that'll help in a pinch. Her force field belt is meant to be a fairly rare item (otherwise it could be Personal Gear rather than an Item of Power), and something that's very conspicuous when it's activated.

She's meant to be a roguish cigarette-smoking type (never mind that in space people really frown on that waste of oxygen) who's always having bad luck. The Divine Relationship ability helps out with rolls (and contributes to her being so good at things like shooting people), but events beyond her control have a way of going awry for no good reason.

Power Level: High

Attributes: STR 6, REF 6, HLT 6, PRE 5, INT 5, WIL 6

Derived Attributes: DEF 16, INI 6, TGH 6, LIF 37, EP 6, MOV 12

Skills: Bluff 4, Demolitions 3, Gambling 3, Gunplay 4, Instrument: Harmonica 2, Jump 3, Knives 4, Negotiation 3, Piloting 5, Pistols 7, Rifles 5, Shadowing 3, Starships 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2, Swords 5, Tactics 3, Unarmed Combat: Jeet Kune Do 6, Zero-G 3

Abilities: Attack Combat Mastery 1 (3 CP), Combat Technique 8 (8 CP; Ambidextrous, Blind-Shoot, Block Ranged Attacks, Concealment, Far Shot, Judge Opponent, Quick Draw, Steady Hand), Damn Healthy! 1 (2 CP), Divine Relationship 3 (3 CP), Item of Power 2 (6 CP; Force Field Generator Belt, as per Force Field 3/9 CP), Highly Skilled 10 (10 CP), Personal Gear 3 (6 CP)

Personal Gear: Blaster Pistols (2), Blaster Rifle, Energy Sword, Trooper Armor, Personal Space Shuttle

Disabilities: Easily Distracted (attractive men) 2, Famous 2, Ism (seen as a "low-class scoundrel") 1

GENERAL CHARACTER ADVICE

About the Campaign

It goes without saying that the GM needs to explain the campaign world and the place the player characters will occupy within it. There's no one "right" way to do this, but in the early stages it's good to concentrate on information that will help the players decide what kinds of characters to create. The genre, setting, format, and overall power level are all important factors.

On the other hand, the planning of the campaign doesn't necessarily have to be a GM-only activity; the group could simply meet up and spend the first session hammering out the basic details of the setting and creating characters. The GM might start with something as specific as, "A steampunk campaign about honorable thieves in the smog-choked streets of Victorian London," or as vague as "A game with lots of action in it," or nothing at all, and let the group pitch ideas and shape the campaign as they go along. Aside from getting ideas from more people and increasing the odds of the players being pleased with the setting, this approach

can also make it much easier to build the setting around the player characters if desired.

Power Level

Although anime can go to some really ridiculous extremes when it comes to making powerful characters, raw power has nothing to do with how compelling of a story gets told, and for that matter its connection to real effectiveness is somewhat tenuous. A superhuman who can fly through space and blow up planets could find himself a complete failure if the challenge set before him was, say, a difficult game of chess or fixing a computer. What tends to burn up the most points is being powerful in combat; it's much easier to stretch your character points to create the world's greatest scientist than it is to create the world's greatest swordsman.

Love Your Character

Roleplaying games are all about vicarious gratification, so it pays to put some extra energy into creating the avatar through which you'll be experiencing this little fantasy world. Make a character you find neat. In fact, aim for a character who, if he or she was in a real anime series, you'd buy merchandise of by the truckload if you could.

Those Last Few Points

With a point-buy system you might find you have a couple of points left over… Or you might find you're a few points short and need to take a Disability. In either case, it pays to think of it in terms of not an annoyance but an opportunity. Look at your character concept, and try to think of something that would be plausible yet totally unexpected – and maybe even useful – for the character to have. Use this opportunity to enrich your character, and maybe surprise the other players later on.

"Equal" Characters

Point-buy systems are based on the idea that if you let every player start with the same number of points, their characters will be of equal power levels and everything will be nice and fair. In reality, what makes players feel like they've gotten something out of playing a character is being given a chance to take the spotlight and shine. Having the right number of points is helpful, but what helps a character take the center stage isn't necessarily bought with points. In fact, sometimes Disabilities or even intangibles that aren't on the character sheet are more important. Game Masters need to think in terms of what special shticks each player character has, and how to occasionally give them chances to show off.

Also, players aren't obligated to spend every last point if they don't want to; think of the CP allotment as a maximum, not a set figure. Plenty of anime series have diverse power levels among the cast, and this doesn't prevent the low-powered ones from having a fair share of screen time. The GM could go so far as to devise some way to compensate players for unspent character points, such as converting them into Experience or Action Points, or those points can simply be dumped into the Unknown Superhuman Power Ability.

Gender Bending

A good number of players like to play characters of the opposite sex. For a lot of gaming groups this isn't an issue at all, but like anything else it pays to respect the comfort zone of those involved. While some people just find that kind of discrepancy between the character and the person across from them at the gaming table to be too much, more often it comes from players making their cross-gender characters needlessly obnoxious. While in real life there are a few chauvinistic guys who are always scratching themselves and having belching contests and women who are always running around in skimpy clothing trying to seduce everything in sight, as RPG characters they're going to be obnoxious no matter who's playing them.

While there are differences between men and women – and exploring them is a major theme in anime – it's not exactly within the scope of this book to delve too far into that. The first step to having cross-gender player characters not be obnoxious is to have them be people first. Gender is no different from other traits in that there's no need to

constantly be smacking everyone upside the head with it.

Young Characters

For anime purposes it's next to useless to try and devise rules for creating younger characters. We're dealing with a medium where kids barely out of puberty (or in some cases, barely out of elementary school!) can pilot giant robots, join the military, become martial arts experts, write symphonies, possess godlike psychic powers, or just cut to the chase and save the world.

Average kids will have lower Strength and Stamina, and will be lacking in skills reflecting knowledge and education. On the other hand exceptional kids are commonly seen in anime, and they can potentially surpass adults in any of the above.

Depending on the kid in question, and the nature of the campaign, a younger character could have the Disability of Ism to reflect his or her limited privileges as a minor, and possibly Obligation, if going to school 5+ days a week, and possibly working a part time job on top of that, keeps the character from participating freely in the campaign's action without consequences.

Quirks

For many anime characters, "quirky" is a poor and inadequate term to describe how weird and messed up they really are. In a serious game character's quirks should be kept relatively low key with the exception of the occasional heroic flaw, but in a campaign that's unabashedly comedic in tone players can and should go to town. The thing with anime characters is that these kinds of flaws don't keep a hero from being heroic; they just make the journey there a bit more… interesting.

This section goes over some of the more common character quirks in anime, and how to represent them in game terms. It's important to keep in mind that a Disability represents something the character has little control over; putting a Disability on your character sheet means that you've pretty much given the GM permission to use it against your character (within reason) any time it seems appropriate. If the character has enough self control to put something aside at will, the Disability is inappropriate. A character can have whatever kind of personality the player wants; the absence of a Disability doesn't even imply, much less mandate, the absence of a personality trait.

Easily Distracted

The Easily Distracted Disability is extremely appropriate for characters from more comedy-oriented types of anime.

Cute Things: One notable way in which anime reflects a distinctly Japanese sensibility is cuteness. There's just no such thing as "too cute." To give you an idea, the Japanese postal service has a family of adorable cartoon squirrels as its mascots. The postal service. So naturally there are anime characters that have an obsession with cute things in one form or another.

Food: Gluttonous characters are a staple of comedy anime, and this translates into a weakness for food. In the most extreme cases a hungry character might literally be unable to control his or her body when there's tasty food around! This type of Disability goes well with a "Bottomless Stomach" and/or "Cast-Iron Stomach" Unique Ability; some of the more prolific eaters in anime are slim women who seem to have some kind of dimensional void in their stomachs that lets them consume more or less unlimited quantities of food without gaining any weight.

Hobbyist: Probably the most obvious form of Easily Distracted is a character that has a particular hobby, the object of which he or she will pursue whenever the opportunity arises. Anime delights in presenting characters who are into weird stuff, or who like something relatively normal but take it to a ridiculous extreme.

Lechery: In anime perversion isn't glorified per se, but animation studios don't exactly shy away from depicting it. Perverts in anime are mostly guys, and the modus operandi varies. Some are content with covertly snapping pictures, some like to do things like flip skirts, and a few are more direct about their sexual harassment. All of them eventu-

ally get punished for it; woe is the guy who attracts the ire of an angry girl with a broom.

Romantic: Some characters will drop everything for an attractive member of the opposite sex. For that matter some will drop everything for an attractive member of the same sex. Others have more specific (and possibly more questionable) tastes, and usually a more severe attraction.



Nemesis

The Nemesis Disability isn't just for deadly enemies bent on utterly destroying the character; it can represent pretty much anyone that causes difficulties for the character but can't be easily gotten rid of.

Annoying Family Members: You know how they say you can choose your friends but you can't choose your relatives? Well, it can be fun to have a character who wishes he or she could. Overbearing mothers, annoying little brothers, and insane older sisters all have their place in anime.

Fan Club: Rather than just one secret admirer the character could have a small cult of a fan club watching him or her from afar. Chances are these individuals generally consider the character to be so important and special that they're afraid to interact with him or her directly, but that only makes them that much more persistent in causing trouble for those people around the character whom they consider "unworthy" of his or her magnificent presence.

Unwanted Love Interest: Someone might be in love with a character but won't take no for an answer. An unwanted love interest will probably be doggedly persistent, insanely jealous, and a constant embarrassment.

Unwanted Protégé: Another type of annoying, embarrassing hanger-on is the unwanted protégé; this is someone who wants to follow the character around and do everything possible to learn to emulate whatever it is about the character that he or he finds admirable or appealing.

Rival: A rival is someone who is trying to defeat and/or one-up the character – an antagonist, but not necessarily an enemy per se. The two characters could even be working towards the same goal, but they'd be competing against each other to reach it first or to get the most glory along the way. Rivals are especially appropriate for characters who engage in some kind of regular competition; the rival would be an opponent with whom the character clashes over and over again. For a more absurd take, the rival could be self-proclaimed, someone whom the character doesn't actually care about, or maybe even

someone he or she doesn't even know about! Characters that are exceptionally nice and/or clueless often have "rivals" they see every day without really comprehending that there's any kind of competition going on.

Psychological Impairment

Psychological Impairment is a very broad Disability, and it pays to use it creatively. It can be used to represent most any form of insanity, as well as any extreme personality traits.

Amnesia: A character suffering from amnesia has forgotten his or her identity and past, and has started over again. Of course, the character's forgotten past probably will come back to haunt him or her. GMs should be wary of this Disability being overused; it creates a lot of potential for interesting storytelling, but it also basically allows the player to circumvent having to come up with a character background.

Arrogant: An Arrogant character is very certain of his or her superiority over others, and flaunts that fact as much as possible.

Clueless: A Clueless character doesn't quite know how to operate in the society he or she is currently living in. This can range from an airhead who doesn't quite get what's going on to a foreigner who doesn't entirely grasp the local customs to an alien or interdimensional visitor who has no real concept of human behavior or society.

Crybaby: A crybaby is annoying to be sure; a character with this Disability whines and cries whenever he or she is hurt or inconvenienced, or sometimes even when things just don't go his or her way.

Delusion: The character believes something that just plain isn't true, and will more often than not act on his or her flawed belief without any hesitation. Girls with special powers that have been thrust into everyday modern life often have the delusion, "My powers can fix any problem!" Even when their only power is hurling energy blasts.

Feral: A "feral" character is a creature of whimsy and chaos, completely unable to conform. Some feral characters are actually bestial, and prone to biting when threatened, while others are simply whimsical, and may actually be quite accomplished with technology, albeit with their own form of chaotic genius. Stereotyped Chinese characters in anime are often portrayed this way, along with speaking somewhat broken Japanese and of course knowing Kung Fu…

Hyperactive: Some anime characters are just outright spazzy; this fits well with characters that are very young and/or stupid.

Impulsive: The character very rarely thinks his or her actions through, and instead will almost always go off half-cocked without any real thought as to how to go about the matter at hand.

Shy: The "shy girl" is a very basic and prevalent archetype in anime; she sees others having fun together and envies them, but can't overcome her own hesitation and embarrassment. A shy character is character development waiting to happen; in anime series those characters almost always gradually learn how to make friends and be more outgoing.

Other Disabilities

Bad Skill: The most common example of this Disability in anime is cooking. Girls are theoretically supposed to be able to cook well, yet there are plenty of girls who, whether because of being tomboys who never learned ("What do I care about cooking?"), having strange ideas about what constitutes food ("Of course it twitches! That means it's good for you!"), etc., tend to produce dishes that are dangerous to one's health.

Involuntary Mental Change is a rather specific Disability that, while versatile, isn't appropriate for very many characters. In the context of anime it'll frequently be played off for laughs, with a character losing it under a given (predictable) set of circumstances. It's also often tied to an ability to transform (the Alternate Form Ability); more than one villain has turned out to actually be a good friend of the hero in this way.

Significant Other (S.O.): In spite of what the name implies, a Significant Other doesn't necessarily imply a romantic involvement. Rather, it's someone the character cares about and who he or she has

to protect from danger. Other types of Significant Others can include friends, pets, relatives, co-workers, classmates, etc. In a campaign where the player characters are heroes in high school, their entire class could be a "significant other" if they need constant protection from the bad guys.

A Significant Other could be a major part of a campaign, especially the 3 CP version. A character's S.O. could be someone important that requires constant protection from the villains that are targeting them, making the S.O. useful to the GM as an easy hook for individual episodes.

POWERS

Anime is rife with characters that have special "powers" of some sort. They can fall into some of the distinct clichés that have accumulated over the years, or try for something unique. This section explores some of the common types of special powers, and how to represent them as Abilities with the Open Anime system.

Androids and Cyborgs

An android is a robot designed to look and act (and usually think) like a human being. A cyborg is a living creature that has had portions of its body replaced or enhanced by specially designed technological implants. In anime such characters could be relatively normal, but more often than not they possess special powers above and beyond the abilities of normal humans. Naturally these usually take the form of more technological devices; Special Attacks are recognizable as weapon systems, Invisibility would be a system that creates holograms to create a realistic camouflage, Flight would probably be some kind of jet boosters, and so on.

Creating Android/Cyborg Capabilities

What exactly artificial systems can do depends on the particular setting. They might be limited and clunky, but in some settings Abilities like Teleportation are a possibility. If there's anything in particular that characterizes technological abilities in game terms, it's usually in the form of specific limitations on their usage, especially a need for ammunition of some kind. Guns need bullets, lasers need power cells, and a teleportation system might need special cartridges of green goo synthesized in a secret government lab. This kind of limitation could be represented by the Limited Use, Instantaneous Disability, a Reduction, or in the case of a Special Attack the Limited Shots Drawback.

Particularly in a setting where there aren't any supernatural powers, "Energy" points can be treated as the reserves available in a character's power cells (which could in turn be coupled with a Unique Defect to make running out of EP have consequences) and certain Abilities given an Energy cost (with a Drawback for Special Attacks, or as a Reduction for other Abilities).

Cyborg and android characters can also have the Special Requirement Disability to represent special needs for recharging, repairs, replacement batteries, etc.

Example Powers

- Concealed Laser: This power consists of a small laser concealed somewhere inside a cyborg or android's body, such as inside an eye or placed in an arm that opens up to reveal it. Treat this as a Rank 3 Special Attack (3d6 damage, Concealable, Short Range).
- Holographic Stealth: With this power the cyborg is equipped with a series of sophisticated miniature cameras and holographic emitters. When the system is active the character is surrounded by holograms that mimic his or her surroundings, creating a kind of limited invisibility. This system is at its most effective when the user is standing still, because there is a "ripple effect" when the user moves that can give away his or her position. Treat this as a Reduction of the Invisibility Ability; it costs 2 Points/Rank instead of 3, but penalties are halved when the character is moving at a walking pace, and quartered if he or she is running.
- Jump Jets: Just like power armor and mecha, androids and cyborgs can have small "jump jets" that can propel them into the air with enough power to

allow them spectacularly high jumps, but not actual flight. Naturally this is represented by the Jumping Ability.

- Liquid Metal Components: "Liquid metal" is a specialized "smart" metal, possibly based on nanotechnology, which can be reformed into different shapes. Some cyborgs and robots have liquid metal components, and in extreme cases a robot could be made almost entirely out of liquid metal. This capability can be represented with the Power Flux Ability. The point cost depends on just what the character is capable of, but especially if he or she is limited to forming physical objects out of the liquid metal it should be considered a minor or small thematic category (10 Points/Rank), though the Limited Point Exchange option could work well for this power too. If the character can form working electronic systems and even weapons, it will probably merit being purchased as the 15-point version of Power Flux.

Esper Powers

Psionics are powers derived from the potency of one's mind. That they have a (questionable) basis in science has given psychic powers a place in science fiction where most other types of Powers wouldn't normally be welcome. People who possess psionics abilities are usually called "psychics," but in anime more often than not "esper" is the preferred term, derived from E.S.P. (extra-sensory perception).

The powers possessed by espers typically primarily concern reading and otherwise affecting the mind and extending one's awareness to other times, places, and even planes of existence. Psychokinesis – the ability to exert physical force with one's mind – is also included among the commonly known psychic powers, and teleportation is spoken of as well.

Anime psychics may be limited to conventional psychic powers, but some possess potent powers that are far beyond anything conceived of in real-life studies of psionics. Anime psychics have been known to toss energy blasts, gain super-strength, or even fly by means of specialized forms of psychokinesis.

Creating Esper Powers

Especially if their use is wearying (as is often the case), psychic powers can be created using the Magic Ability, allowing the character to purchase several related powers at a discount, but with an Energy cost. Esper powers often have the Silent Magic Option, and may also have Still; because this increases the energy cost of Abilities substantially it is suggested that Esper characters take some extra Ranks of Energy Bonus to compensate. Abilities in line with the "standard" esper powers in anime include Force Field, Healing, Mind Control, Mind Shield, Sixth Sense, Special Attack, Spirit Ward, Telekinesis, Telepathy, and Teleport. However, more exotic esper powers in anime can produce just about any effect imaginable. In particular, some characters can have specialized forms of telekinesis that let them exert force or create/manipulate energy in very specific ways. Particularly powerful and/or versatile espers could be created with the Power Flux Ability.

Example Esper Powers

- Class VI Esper: A "class VI" esper assumes a setting where espers are ranked according to their power level as measured by some special test, and class VI is the highest. The Class VI Esper power is represented by Sorcery at Rank 6 (48 CP), along with Energy Bonus at a fairly high Rank.
- Levitation: Many psychics are capable of a simple application of psychokinesis that lets them hover above the ground rather than walking. This counts as Flight (Rank 1, 4 CP).
- TK Strength: Not all espers have the imagination and control necessary to fling objects around with their mind; some find other ways to instinctively channel their telekinetic ability. A few are able to telekinetically empower their own muscles, granting themselves super-strength for short periods of time. This falls under the Magic Attribute, with Enhanced Strength 4 (16 points) and Massive Damage 2 (hand-to-hand attacks only; 4 points, +10 damage). This comes out to Magic at Rank 2, 8 CP.

- Twin Mind Link: One fun cliché is for psychic characters who are twins to have a sort of permanent telepathic link, allowing them to communicate instantly over great distances. This can be purchased as the 1-point version of the Telepathy Ability; the deeper the link between the twins, the higher the Rank of the Ability should be.

Magical Abilities

"Magical abilities" in anime are different from what we have described as Sorcery below; Magical Abilities seen in anime typically take the form of "super powers" that a character has been granted through magical means. The character could have been granted his powers by an outside force (as has happened to more than one magical girl), or they can be something inherent in the character, awakened under dire circumstances.

What separates magic from other types of powers is often a matter of "flavor". Magical abilities generally involve calling out attack phrases or sometimes longer incantations. Especially in extreme circumstances, a character using magic may produce "special effects" such as simple glowing auras of power or complex magical circles appearing in glowing energy on the ground underneath the user.



Creating Magical Abilities

Magical abilities can take the form of just about any Ability imaginable; they're effectively "super" powers with some "magical" flavor added. Such powers could be purchased using the Magic Ability so that they use Energy Points and so forth, but they don't have to per se. "Mythical" style limitations, such as a power that can only be used three times a day, are common too.

Example Powers

- Love Destiny Wave: This is a special magical girl attack intended to remove evil influences and restore people who've been corrupted into youma back to normal. It's a Rank 5 Special Attack (6d6 damage, Accurate, Linked [Exorcism], Short Range, Uses Energy [2]), combined with the Exorcism Ability at Rank 4 or higher.
- Protected Secret Identity: Magical girls often have a curious special property; in spite of how blatantly obvious it should be, people who've seen their normal and transformed selves will not be able to tell that they're the same person. People with some kind of psychic sensitivity might be able to see through this protection, but otherwise a person will have to witness the transformation to realize the truth. This counts as a single Feature (1 CP).

Martial Arts and Ki Powers

The martial arts are highly developed techniques of hand-to-hand and/or melee weapon combat, including karate, kung fu, judo, kendo/kenjutsu, ninjutsu, and so forth. These can make a character superior to untrained opponents in close combat.

In anime, however, martial arts training often extends to the development of one's ki – the energy of life that resides in all things – often to the point of using it as a weapon. The most common use of ki power is the ki blast; a directed beam, ball, or wave of energy used to attack opponents at a distance. Countless other powers are possible, up to and including over-the-top "super" powers.

Creating Martial Arts Powers

In terms of creating martial artist characters, the character traits needed fall into the categories of traits that define the characters' overall combat effectiveness, and traits that represent specific martial arts "techniques."

Martial artists can be extremely tough as a result of general training and specific "body hardening" exercises, to the point where Damn Healthy! Or even Armor might be appropriate. Attack Combat Mastery, Combat Technique, Defense Combat Mastery, Extra Actions, Jumping, and Special Movement can all be useful for martial artists as well.

For special techniques, the sky's the limit. The Special Attack Ability is a good way to build any number of attack techniques, and it can be bought through the Magic Ability for techniques that require the expenditure of spiritual energy. Martial artists can often sense the "presence" of other beings with a strong spiritual energy in them, and possibly even gauge their strength this way; this would count as a Sixth Sense.

At higher power levels virtually anything imaginable can be a martial arts power, up to and including Force Field, Speed, Telekinesis, Teleport, etc.

Example Powers

- God Speed: "God Speed" is a special ability that lets a character momentarily move so fast he or she effectively seems to disappear to the human eye. This is represented in game terms as a combination of the Displacement and Speed Abilities, purchased as Magical Abilities.
- Ki Blast: In anime many martial artists are actually able to project their ki into an energy blast used as an attack. There are many different varieties, including ones that are homing or have elemental properties, but here are stats for a basic fighting game style ki blast. Special Attack 2 (8 CP, 4d6 damage, Short Range, Uses Energy).
- Ninja Leaping: Ninjas in anime are really astoundingly accomplished at jumping around; even the fattest ninja can usually move very quickly by leaping from tree to tree. In game terms this can be treated as a variant of Swinging/Brachiating under the Special Movement Ability.
- Presence Sense: Martial artists (and sorcerers for that matter) are often able to hone their instincts until they can sense the keihai ("presence") of others, especially if they're very powerful. The exact details of how Presence Sense works can vary from one setting to the next, but generally speaking a character will be automatically alerted to exceptionally strong and/or unnatural supernatural powers in the vicinity, and he or she may also be able to recognize the general type of power that is at work. This counts as a single Rank of the Sixth Sense Ability.
- Replacement Technique: The Kawarimi no Jutsu is a basic illusion technique favored by ninjas. The ninja appears to be hit by an attack, but in reality at the last possible moment he or she moves out of the way and leaves some kind of "replacement" (the cliché being a wooden log wearing the character's outer clothes) that takes the attack instead. This can be represented using the Teleport Ability at Rank 1, combined with the Power Defense Ability. The GM might even allow players to spend an Action Point to attempt to use this power after an attack has landed.
- Replication Technique: The Bunshin no Jutsu is another illusion technique, one that makes

it appear as though there are several copies of the character. This can be purchased using the Projection Ability. There could be any number of variations on it, but we'll use the 2-Point version (so it can fool sight and hearing), and use the option to add additional projections, letting the character make 4 copies. The total Points/Rank is thus 6, but since we only need to make human-sized projections, Rank 1 is sufficient. Bad guys love to use this power to surround an opponent and secretly lash out at them. For a more advanced Replication Technique could use the Duplication Ability to make solid duplicates capable of real fighting.

- Vital Point Mastery: The human body contains a vast and complex array of nerves, and long ago the Chinese studied their effects in great detail, leaning the many pressure points that could be deliberately activated. Much of the knowledge is now lost, owing in part to those secrets being so jealously guarded, but there are still a few who know these ancient techniques. Mastery of the "vital points" is a potent power, enabling the character to induce countless different effects, some beneficial and some extremely dangerous. This could be represented in game terms in a number of different ways, but the simplest is to assume that the character must use ki energy to activate a vital point, allowing Vital Point Mastery to be treated as the limited (4 Points/Rank) version of the Sorcery Ability.

Sorcery

What separates Sorcery from most other forms of Powers is that Sorcery isn't an inherent power but rather a method that must be learned by long and careful study. While there is a great deal of variety to be sure, the advantage of sorcery over other forms of power is a matter of flexibility. An accomplished sorceress is able to learn a huge variety of incantations, and may even be able to "improvise" magical effects to some degree.

While the game mechanics of spells are relatively consistent, the manner in which spells are cast, as well as what kinds of spells are available vary greatly. An elven wizard, a Chinese sorcerer, and an aboriginal priest all have very different ways of casting spells. Not only that, but high fantasy often features various "schools" of magic, which specialize in particular areas of magic such as elementalism, mind control, necromancy, healing, enchantment, etc.

Chinese/Japanese Sorcery

Sorcery as practiced in Asia isn't all that different from western sorcery; incantations and gestures are common, though gestures tend to resemble the mudra (mystic hand gestures) of Indian lore, made more emphatically. Especially when wielded by monks, miko, and the like, such magic can make use of wards (gohei), pieces of paper inscribed with mystical writing (usually in kanji or mystical variants thereof). These ofuda requires the use of special papers and inks, and these spells can be activated by burning the ward, throwing it, or adhering it to the target, depending on the nature of the spell.

High Fantasy Sorcery

Magic as presented in high fantasy type anime is generally divided into two types; spells and rituals. A basic spell requires only a simple incantation and/or hand gestures, and can be done quickly, usually in one turn. Rituals are required for more elaborate effects, involving the use of specific items and incantations and such lasting hours or even days. Incantations may be spoken in a magical language, though for anime purposes they are more often than not general-purpose attack phrases.

Religious Powers

Especially in fantasy roleplaying games, the faithful may receive powers from their deity. This can take in anything from Christian miracle-workers to native shamans to Greco-Roman priests or anything in-between. The powers involved can be of nearly any type imaginable, depending on the god or goddess in question, but will generally be appropriate to the deity's area of influence. "Spells" may take the form of prayers or religious rites, or they may manifest other special powers.

Creating Sorcery Powers

As with android/cyborg powers, from a mechanical standpoint sorcery is often distinguished by its limitations. Magic spells often require substantially more than a simple act of will to activate them. At a minimum, a typical spell requires some kind of incantation and hand gestures, and probably fatigues the caster (i.e. uses Energy Points) as well. By default this is how the Magic and Sorcery Abilities work. The Magic Ability has some additional room for customization through Magic Options, and both of them, as well as other sorcery-related Abilities can be further modified with Disabilities. Magical Restrictions is the most obvious, but nearly any Linked to Ability type Disability can potentially be appropriate.

Because sorcery is usually treated as a (relatively) predictable process, the GM may wish to establish a set of options and Disabilities that are required to go with the sorcery of the game world, or perhaps different ones for different types of magic. The Coven sample campaign setting (see p. 249) includes an example of this; all magic-using characters in that world are required to take the Backlash Disability at 2 or higher.

Example Powers

- Binding Goo: This icky spell launches a blob of faintly glowing green goo at an opponent that surrounds them and holds them in place. It's represented by a Rank 3 Special Attack (12 CP/MP, or 3 as a Secondary Attack) with Drain Body (Reflexes), Homing, No Damage, Short Range, and Tangle. The Drain Body effect comes from the slime that lingers on a victim's body even after they escape the goo, and lost REF points can be recovered by washing thoroughly. There are also alternate versions of this spell with other types of draining Adders.
- Communication: Not a few evil wizards (and even some good ones) need to keep in touch with their friends, allies, minions, etc. Projections and Telepathy don't quite do what we want for this power, so we'll treat it as a Unique Ability. It allows two-way audio and video communication over great distances (we'll use maximum distances from the Teleportation Ability's rank chart), but requires that both sides make appropriate preparations. The nature of the preparations can vary a bit, but the necessary materials can be left out and don't have to be triggered at exactly the right time on both sides. We'll have it only cost 1 Point/Rank. As we want it to work anywhere within a single continent, we'll give it Rank 4 (10,000 miles), for a total of 4 CP.
- Eagle's Wings: This power (which should be purchased as a Magical Power) causes a character to sprout wings that allow him or her to fly. Treat this as the 3-Point version of the Flight Ability, at rank 1 or 2 (3 or 6 MP).
- Fireball: The fireball is the classic magical attack, a ball of flame that explodes on impact. There are a few different ways a fireball attack could be built; the example below could easily have Adders like Flare, Homing, Indirect, etc. or Drawbacks like Backblast, Short Range, Slow, etc. Rank 5 Special Attack with Area Effect, Burning, Extra Energy, for 4d6 damage (20 MP, or 5 as a Secondary Attack).
- Ritual Summoning: Some sorcerers have the means to call forth creatures to do their bidding, and this spell is one possible method for doing so. Treat this as the Create Minion: Summoning Ability (see p. 84) at Rank 3, purchased as a Magical Power, and with the Ritual Magic Option. The total cost of this is 30 Magic Points (which is a full 3 Ranks of the Magic Ability, for 12 CP), and each use requires a lengthy ritual but costs only 8 Energy.
- Teleportation Circle: This spell requires the creation of a magic circle large enough to hold whatever is to be teleported, to a maximum diameter of about 10 feet. The Teleportation Ability normally only transports the user, so for the purposes of this spell we'll rule that a variation allowing the contents of the circle to be teleported works the same as the basic Teleportation but costs 6 Points/Rank instead of 5. This is bought as a Magical Power with the Ritual option, and the Teleportation Ability will be at Rank 3, for a total cost of 18 Magic Points. Because of the Ritual option however, the caster only spends 5 Energy.

Talents

Talents are not "powers" in the conventional sense, so much as exceptional skills the character has learned (such as a super-genius who can create gadgets), or areas where they have a knack for taking advantage of certain loopholes of dramatic schlock (such as a warrior who can at will call up his own poetic wind and dramatic flurry of cherry blossoms to awe opponents).

Creating Talents

Talents are where the effect-based nature of Abilities in Open Anime really comes into its own; the trick is to creatively use the effects of one or more Abilities to represent something that's potentially far outside their apparent intended usage.

Example Powers

- Costume: Some anime characters have a special costume for fighting that, for whatever reason, simply refuses to be seriously damaged, regardless of what might happen to the character. Fire, cutting blades, and worse things besides routinely fail to cause more than minor cosmetic damage to it. This can be purchased as one Rank of the Features Ability (1 CP). Some characters can also change into their special costume instantly, pulling off their normal clothes to reveal the glorious hero underneath – even if there's no conceivable way it could actually be concealed under the clothes they're wearing. This counts as a Cosmetic Changes Alternate Form (2 CP).
- Creepy-Sneaky: A character with this power has a frighteningly exceptional talent for sneaking around unnoticed. He or she has a way of just appearing places unexpectedly, even in the middle of a room full of people. This power is a "shtick" and the Abilities involved can't be used as actual supernatural powers. Creepy-Sneaky includes Invisibility (Rank 1, Invisible to Hearing, 3 CP), and for more advanced characters Teleport (Rank 1, 5 CP).
- Eye Beams: The mysterious Me kara Biimu (Eye Beam) attack, consisting of a beam of energy, is usually favored by robots, but in anime you never know who might have it. There's also a less popular variant called the Kuchi kara Bazuuka, or "Mouth Bazooka." Special Attack 5 (20 CP; 5d6 damage)
- Idiot Strength: Some characters seem to get incredibly strong when



they become angry and stupid. This is represented by Enhanced Strength with a special Reduction that makes the enhancement only work when the character is really angry, preferably about something totally pointless and idiotic, reducing the cost to 2 Points/Rank. If desired Massive Damage can be taken as well, allowing the character to be exceptionally good at breaking things when angry.

- Osaka PUNCH: This is a special super-powerful punching attack known only to people who come from the city of Osaka. Its use must be accompanied by showing "OSAKA PUNCH!" as loudly as possible. Special Attack 1 (4 CP; 3d6 damage, Melee)
- Resourceful Pockets: Some people carry a really amazing amount of stuff with them in their pockets, to the point where if you happen to need a small pair of scissors, a pen, a cigarette lighter, etc., they'll probably be able to dig one out eventually. A character with this power takes that notion to an extreme, and the contents of his or her pockets are many times what they ought to be able to hold. This is represented with the Pocket Dimension Ability (3-point version, Rank 1, 3 CP), possibly combined with Personal Gear.
- Super Mallet Attack: Cute girls sometimes have a way of producing a powerful stunning attack out of nowhere to subdue a boy who's acting up. In the past this was almost always done with a wooden mallet, but squeaky mallets, paper fans (harisen), and pro-wrestling submission finishing moves (such as the Full Boston Crab or Scorpion Deathlock) have all become popular, and all of them seemingly come out of nowhere[1]. This counts as a Rank 1 Special Attack, with Accurate, Incapacitating, Melee, and No Damage. (4 CP, or 1 as an Alternate Attack).

Other Powers

It's not at all unusual for anime to feature fairly unique types of special powers. More than one anime series has used a power concept as the basis for its whole premise. This is also true of many fantasy settings, which develop a unique take on how "magic" works. In both cases the goal is to design a power that lends a new feel to the story and which hopefully opens up new possibilities for storytelling.

Avatar Power

Some characters have an "avatar" – some sort of mystical second self – that they can summon to do battle for them. These can be seen in anime titles such as JoJo's Bizarre Adventure and S-cry-ed. This can be treated as a variation of the Servant Ability. The simplest version would be purchased using the Magic ability, so that the avatar would only remain active so long as the character spends Energy. An alternative version, where the avatar is summonable but doesn't drain energy, would be a bit more expensive, say 4 Points/Rank.

Elemental Powers

A fair number of anime feature characters with powers based on an element. Fire, air, water, and earth are the most obvious, but it's not at all unusual to see characters with powers based around electricity, ice, gravity, light, or other more exotic elements. Elemental powers may be a category unto themselves, a form of psionics or magic, or perhaps an affinity with elemental spirits. For examples, check out Elementalors and Tokyo Underground.

In game terms, elemental powers can take the form of a variety of different Abilities, though nearly all will include some kind of Special Attack. Depending on the element the character uses, other powers could include things like Armor, Environmental Control, Force Field, Immunity (to the character's own element), Natural Weapons, Plant Control, Rejuvenation, Special Movement, Telekinesis, etc. Especially if using elemental powers is fatiguing, these could be handled with the Magic or Sorcery Abilities as well.

[1] American fans theorize that there is a secret dimension called HammerSpace™ and these girls are somehow able to momentarily breach the barrier between that dimension and ours.

For elemental powers, even more so than with other types of powers, capturing the right flavor requires going a bit outside of the game mechanics, in this case by taking into account the properties of the different elements in play. If a water-user and a fire-user are facing off, that water can extinguish fires yet a hot enough fire can evaporate water should be a vitally important factor in determining who wins.

Pet Monsters

In the "pet monster" genre (see pg. 8), monster trainers need an Ability to represent their monsters; these are normally made using the Servant attribute. A pet monster is the ultimate friend and servant, ready to perform nearly any task for its master. Unlike a typical Servant, pet monsters have few desires beyond pleasing their master and rarely disobey orders. Frequently, pet monsters fight in gladiatorial combats for their owners' glory since they eager to please (and are usually more powerful than their owners as well).

In addition to Character Point assignment, players should consider the following five aspects for his or her character's pet monster:

- What is its name? Make sure it's a cute name.
- What does the Pet Monster look like? Make sure it's cute.
- What species is it? Common species types include: aquatic, beast, bird, bug, dragon/reptile, eyeball, gerbil/rodent, golem, metamorph, slime, spirit, and veggie.
- From what elemental force does the pet monster derive its powers? Common elements include: celestial, darkness, death, earth, electricity, fire, gas, ice, light, metal, psionics, sonic, water, and wind.
- How is the pet monster stored when not in use? All Pet Monsters come with their own device for free, which may include an electronic toy, a magical pocket ball, or an extra dimensional gadget. When the owner needs the Pet Monster, he or she summons them from the device, most commonly with a command phrase.

Untapped Potential

In anime, special powers are often a matter of an inborn potential. It then follows that out in the world there are individuals with incredible potential that remains untapped – and in anime they often get to be the main character. This provides a hero who starts off ignorant to the nature of the powers in question just like the audience, and quickly grows to become a major force in the world. In game terms, this falls under the purview of the Unknown Superhuman Power Ability (see p. 136).

Unknown Superhuman Power isn't something that just turns on like a switch in the first episode – if it were it wouldn't justify the 50% point bonus it gives. A hero with untapped potential has no idea how to control his power, and whether it's at the hand of a powerful enemy or simply through ignorance of his own power, he stands a good chance of getting badly hurt the first time around.

The Role of Powers

If special powers exist in the campaign, the question of what type of role they play in that game world arises. It's helpful to give some thought to what kinds of people possess special powers, and what role they play in society. Sometimes an anime will gloss this over, but there's a lot of potential for interesting storytelling here.

Powers are not always welcomed, much less allowed completely free reign, and if there's more than one kind of special power in the world the different powers can be viewed differently. Practicing one kind of magic might make a character respected if not honored while another could be a good way to be regarded with fear and suspicion. For that matter, the attitudes towards special powers might change completely from one area to the next; what is prohibited by law in one country might be the basis of the whole economy of another.

Everyday

In some settings a given power is an everyday thing, to such an extent that few people can imagine living without it. This means that a lot of people

have the power or at least can be trained to use it (though naturally some will be more powerful than others). Something like that is going to have a major impact on the nature of the setting, and it pays to think through it through.

Alternatively, a power could be common but not totally ubiquitous. If one person out of every ten is an esper, everyone is going to have to learn to cope with espers very quickly.

Hated/Feared

Sometimes a power is dangerous, or has a strong reputation for being that way. In other cases people fear a power because it has a reputation for being used by those who are mad, power-hungry, or otherwise people that good folk should stay away from. When a power is truly feared people are unlikely to want to risk raising a hand against someone who has that power, but there's a good chance they won't hesitate to call on someone else to deal with the threat.

Possessing a power that is hated but not actually feared is a much more difficult position to be in since people will act on their hatred and ignorance, often with violence. This type of attitude can only really be born when the power in question does not make those who use it a direct threat. For example espers who are only capable of reading minds could easily find themselves victims of suspicion and hatred from people fearing that their secrets will be revealed.

Necessary Evil

There are a lot of things in the world that people know they need but still don't want to live with. There's a good chance that at least some people feel that way about whatever special powers they have to deal with. After all, having someone to fight off the supernatural menaces that pop up from time to time is a Good Thing, but that doesn't necessarily mean you want to have someone with the power to throw around energy blasts living next door to you.

Prohibited

In some places a power might be considered illegal or otherwise be prohibited or restricted. This might be on the basis of religious beliefs, cultural taboos, a pragmatic concern for safety, or some more sinister reason. Average people may or may not be familiar with the true nature of the power in question so their reactions will vary. Some may even sympathize with power-users, especially if the penalty for being caught is particularly terrible.

Of course, it might be that illegal for a power to be used, but possessing the ability isn't actually against the law. Known power-users could be put on an "honor system," or the government could have some means to enforce the ban on the use of powers (say by requiring newcomers to wear an obvious bracelet or other trinket that suppresses those abilities).

Regulated

Even a power that's respected isn't necessarily unregulated. Especially if untrained power-users can potentially be dangerous, there could be strict laws governing the ways in which the power can be used, and the licensing of those who can use it. Characters might find themselves at odds with the regulatory organization from time to time, and might even find something fishy going on behind closed doors…

Respected

Some powers lead a person to be respected and honored by society. Priests in particular may gain a reputation as blessed miracle-workers and thus be welcomed with respect if not outright awe.

Other times a power might be respected because it serves a vital purpose in society. If alchemists making golems is a city's main source of prosperity then there's a good chance that everyone will look up to the alchemists and parents will hope that their brighter children will grow up and join the alchemists' guild and become rich. In some lands the same might be true of necromancers; where in one country they're feared as evil lords of the undead, in

another they might be known as just a good source of cheap (but smelly) labor.

Secret

It's very common for powers to be a secret from the world at large. The consequences of letting the world know about the existence of such superhuman abilities could be dire, but there's a good chance that an individual that finds out will be put into abject shock. Power-users might form a secret society (or several competing secret societies), which amongst other things actively works to keep their secrets from the prying eyes of the outside world. They might be doing this for purely selfish reasons, they could believe the world is not yet ready for the truth, or they might be dedicated to using their powers to protect the masses from a threat that they cannot afford for normal people to know about.

Gear and Technology

In anime technology can do pretty much anything the creators want. For that matter, technology can be pretty much anything the creators want. The question isn't what's possible, but what makes sense for the setting in question (which in turn comes from the question of what will make for more interesting stories). Where "powers" are an inherent part of the character, technology is tools, vehicles, and sometimes background scenery.

Equipment as Abilities

For some characters equipment isn't really a factor, while for others it's vital. Open Anime includes several Abilities that represent equipment rather than inherent capabilities, notably Item of Power, Own A Big Mecha, and Personal Gear. Below are some guidelines for how to represent various types of items in game terms.

Common Items: It's pretty much a given that characters will have certain everyday items. What those are will vary vastly depending on the character's lifestyle and current circumstances, but enumerating these isn't normally necessary unless the characters are in some kind of special circumstances.

Special Gear: Stuff that's not readily available falls under the Personal Gear Ability. Normal weapons and vehicles usually fall into this category, whether a sword and a horse for a medieval knight, a pistol and a car for a modern police officer, or a patrol shuttle and a laser gun for a more futuristic hero. Special gear can and should be lost or stolen if it makes sense for such to happen during the course of the campaign, though the GM may allow the character to replace missing items with some effort.

Signature Items: Special items that are a major part of a character's identity and powers are "signature" items, and are generally bought with Abilities like Item of Power, Own a Big Mecha, and occasionally Servant or Flunkies. These kinds of items aren't immune to being lost or stolen, but they shouldn't stay that way permanently. That doesn't mean that regaining a missing signature item has to be easy; recovering one that was stolen by an enemy could be the subject of an entire adventure after all. Considering the investment of character points involved, if a signature item is permanently lost, the GM should consider giving the character an opportunity to gain a new item of comparable power (i.e., about the same point value).

Iconic Items: Sometimes characters have items that they're pretty much guaranteed to have at all times, and which they simply won't lose and are unlikely to lend or throw away during the course of the game. The quintessential example of this is a magical girl's wand and other magical trinkets, which she'll always have handy any time she needs them. Items like these are "iconic" and in game terms shouldn't be considered items at all; instead the powers granted by the item are bought as normal Abilities, and the items itself is relegated to the realm of flavor text.

Uber-Items: Finally, there are occasionally items that are too powerful and/or important to be left in the hands of the player characters for any length of time. Items like this are usually "deus ex machina in a can," and in some cases are so powerful that they can't even be given meaningful stats in the game, much less purchased by player characters.

TAKING ACTIONS

Throughout the game each player declares to the GM, one at a time, the actions his or her character is performing each turn.

A turn varies in length. There is no set amount of time for a turn; a turn can be a month, a day, an hour or a few seconds. The GM during play determines the length of a turn, except during combat (see *Combat*).

What Can I Do?

The GM can allow characters to perform any action that the GM thinks is reasonable, as long as the story continues.

What Is An Action?

An action can be something as simple as opening a door, talking to another character, or even waiting for something to happen. Actions can also be more complex, such as firing a gun at something (or someone), trying to solve a puzzle or riddle, or performing calculations on a computer.

If a character performs or attempts a complex action, the player may be required to make a skill roll. The GM's job is to decide when a player needs to make a skill roll for something the character is trying to do (see *Using Skills*).

Limitations on Taking Actions

One Action Per Turn

Characters may perform one action per turn without penalty while walking or standing still. Characters who are running may perform one other action in the same turn at a -3 penalty. Characters who are sprinting may perform one other action at -6.

Jim is playing Private Stewart, a soldier in a World War II action game. Private Stewart is walking across a field when he comes under enemy fire. For his character's next action, Jim tells the GM that Private Stewart is going to run for cover while firing a few shots in the direction of the enemy. Because Private Stewart is running, but not sprinting, Private Stewart can perform both actions in the same turn, but has a -3 penalty on his shot.

Private Stewart can't make it to cover in one turn so on the next turn Jim decides to have his character sprint rather than run. Because Private Stewart is sprinting this time, he can perform an action that requires a skill roll in the same turn but at a -6 penalty, so the GM tells Jim that his character can sprint and fire blindly while sprinting (i.e., with no skill roll allowed) or he can sprint and make an attack roll at -6 in the same turn.

No Impossible Actions

A character cannot perform an action that is physically impossible given the circumstances.

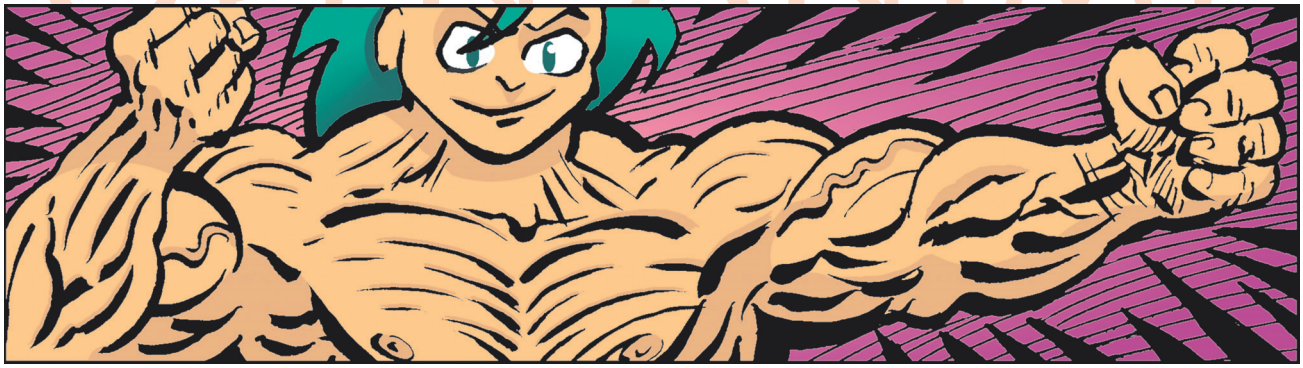
A character swimming in a river cannot suddenly "appear" in the middle of a desert. The character could get to the desert eventually, but it's impossible to do so in one turn. Likewise, a sword smith cannot forge a sword in a single turn; it is simply impossible to heat the steel, hammer and shape it, and so on, in a single turn.

Common sense and fair play should be the guides for the GM in deciding whether a task is physically impossible. For instance, in some game settings, the use of magic or high technology will allow characters to do things that would be impossible to do in the real world.

See Moving Outside The Box under Action Points (see Action Points pg. 207) for those times when a character **can** perform an "impossible" action.

Declaring Actions

When declaring their character's actions, the players can simply describe what their characters



say and do (called "narrative style") or they may talk "in character," talking the way they think their characters would (called, appropriately, "in character" style). Either way is fine. Most players of role-playing games use a combination of styles.

Here's an example of narrative style.

Player: *"My character tells the guy he's starting to annoy my character."*

Here's an example of in character style.

Player (in his character's voice): *"You're starting to annoy me."*

Here's an example of using a combination of the two styles.

Player: *"My character stands up."* (Then, in his character's voice) *"You're starting to annoy me."*

See? There's nothing to it.

Players who make especially good tries at role-playing and characterization should receive bonuses of +1 to +3 (added to the character's dice roll). GMs can also award Action Points to players for especially good play (see *Gaining Action Points*).

AVAILABLE ACTIONS

The following is a list of actions available to characters. This list is not exhaustive. There may be moments in your game when the players want to do something that is not specifically covered by the actions presented here. In these cases, GMs are encouraged to make up additional actions for use in their game.

Indeed, if some rule or modifier strikes you as inappropriate or just plain "wrong," then go ahead and change it for your game. This game is designed to be fun, so if you feel that any rule is getting in the way of you having fun, toss it out!

Defensive Actions

Defensive actions are those designed to protect a character from injury and harm. If a player has a held action, he may abort the held action in order to declare and use a defensive action (see *Wait*, below).

Characters may "abort" to a defensive action at any time during a turn, even if it means acting before their INI would indicate. If a character is attacked (or if a player otherwise feels her character is in danger), the player may declare that their character is aborting their normal action that turn in order to perform a defensive action. This is particularly useful if a character is ambushed or attacked unexpectedly.

Pat is playing in a modern military game and his character is getting ready to fire his weapon at a bad guy. Before Pat's turn comes around, however, the GM tells him that a grenade lands at his character's feet! Pat tells the GM that his character aborts his action that turn and instead dives for cover.

Block Melee Attack

Block can be used to thwart an attack. The character must have something sufficiently durable with which to deflect the incoming the attack. A plastic fork, for example, cannot block a sword blow. Edged weapons may not be blocked using the Unarmed Combat (Brawling) skill,

though they may be blocked using other styles, such as Karate or Aikido, at the GM's option.

To Block a hand to hand or a melee weapon attack, the character must make a successful skill roll, using his REF + appropriate combat skill +1. If the effect number of the Block roll is equal to or greater than the effect number of the attacker's skill roll, the attack has been blocked and the blocking character gains a +4 to his INI against his attacker on the next turn. This INI bonus does not apply to actions against characters other than the attacker whose attack was blocked.

Characters who are blocking a melee attack receive a bonus of +2 to their DEF against melee attacks, but no bonus against ranged attacks. This bonus lasts until their next action.

Unless the character has the Block Ranged Attacks Combat Technique (see Combat Technique pg. 80), he can not block a ranged attack.

Dodge

With this action, the character can avoid damage from a blow or other attack. The character must have an action available to use in the turn he is being attacked. No skill roll is required.

When a character is dodging, the character receives a bonus of +3 to his DEF. This bonus lasts until his next action. The character may also move up to one half his MOV in yards.

The player must declare he is dodging before the attack roll is made against the character. A character may use a held action to perform a Dodge.

Roll With the Blow

With this action, a character that has been struck by a melee or hand-to-hand attack can Roll With the Blow to avoid some of the damage. The character must have an action available to use in the same turn he was attacked. The character makes a skill roll using REF + (Unarmed Combat or Acrobatics skill). If the effect number for the skill roll exceeds the attack roll, the character suffers only half of the damage rolled, before subtracting his TGH. Characters who are rolling with the blow receive a bonus of +2 to their DEF. This bonus lasts until their next action.

A player may declare this action after the attack roll is made but it must be declared before the damage is rolled for the attack. A character may abort a held action to roll with the blow.

Soft Fall from Mount

The character reacts instantly to try to take no damage when he falls off a mount, such as when it is killed or when it falls by making an Athletics skill roll (TN 18). If the character fails the skill roll, he takes 1d6 B/L damage. If the cowpoke succeeds at this skill roll by 6 or more, he lands on his feet. Note that this skill function only applies to falls that occur from the saddle to the ground that the mount is treading on and, therefore, cannot be used protect a character from a long fall off a cliff from the mount's saddle or something similar.

Movement Actions

Crawl

With this action, the character may crawl along the ground or any surface he could normally walk on. The character moves a distance of up to one half his MOV (rounding up) in yards each turn spent crawling.

Crawling characters are treating as if they are prone and do not add their REF to their DEF while crawling.

Climb

With this action, the character may climb a distance of up to one half his MOV (rounding up) in yards each turn. Some surfaces may require the character to make a Climbing roll, at the GM's discretion (see *Climbing*).

Dive

With this action, the character can attempt to leap out of harm's way, avoiding the effects of an explosion, a hail of gunfire, or simply dive across some distance, such as an open pit. The player declares the spot (i.e., the target hex) where he wants to land and makes a STR + Leaping roll. The base TN for the roll is equal to 10, plus 2 for every meter of distance.

If the roll is successful, the character clears the distance and lands safely. If diving to avoid an area attack, a successful roll means the character avoids the attack altogether. A failed roll means the character was caught in the area of effect in mid leap, suffering normal damage or effect of the attack.

A character may dive up to one half his STR score in yards. Characters receive a bonus of +3 to their DEF while diving. This bonus lasts until their next action.

Roll

With this action, the character may roll over an object, along the ground, or on any surface he could normally walk on. The character moves a distance up to ½ his MOV in yards each turn. Difficult obstacles may require a REF attribute roll or Acrobatics roll to successfully pass over, at the GM's discretion.
Characters receive a bonus of +2 to their DEF while rolling. This bonus lasts until their next action.

Run

With this action, the character can jog or run across the ground or any surface he could normally walk on. The character moves a distance up to 2x his MOV in yards and may take one additional non-movement action at -3.

Characters receive a bonus to their DEF based on their total MOV velocity (see *Combat Modifiers*).

Sprint

With this action, the character can sprint across the ground or any surface he could normally walk on. The character moves a distance up to 3x his MOV in yards and may perform one other non-Movement action at -6.

Characters do not receive their REF bonus to their DEF while sprinting. This restriction lasts until their next action. Sprinting characters still receive a bonus to their DEF based on their total MOV velocity, however (see *Combat Modifiers*).

Walk

With this action, the character can walk across the ground or any surface he could normally walk on. The character moves a distance up to his MOV in yards and may take one additional action at no penalty.

Walking characters may receive a bonus to their DEF based on their speed (see *Combat Modifiers*).

Offensive Actions

Aim

When firing a missile weapon (such as a bow, crossbow, firearm, and so on) at more than short range, the skill roll becomes more difficult. By taking time to aim, characters can offset some or all of these range penalties. For each full turn spent aiming a weapon (and nothing else), the character receives a bonus of +2 to his skill roll. The maximum bonus is +6.

While aiming, the character must remain focused and his DEF for any attack rolls against him do not receive the benefit of his REF. Any attempt to react to an attack (i.e., to gain the REF bonus to his DEF) or to perform any other action ruins his aim and any bonus gained for it. The character must spend another turn aiming for any benefit, essentially starting from scratch.

Sean is playing in a Marine sniper in a modern covert ops game, Sergeant Mace Silverhawk. Mace's target is 400 yards away, imposing a -12 penalty, re-

quiring Sean to make a Rifles skill roll with an effective TN of 22. Sean decides that Mace, who is hidden, is going to spend two turns aiming, reducing the effective TN from 22 to 18. Mace squeezes the trigger and Sean rolls the dice…

Bind Weapon

With this action, the character uses a melee weapon to bind or pin an opponent's weapon. With a successful combat skill roll at -1 (using Unarmed Combat or applicable weapon skill), the opponent's weapons are rendered immobile (e.g., the opponent's weapon arm is held, the two characters' weapons are locked together, etc.) and neither character can strike the other or otherwise use the pinned weapon.

To break out of a bind, a character must win a contested STR roll. Both characters roll STR + applicable combat skill + 3d6. The character with the higher total may either Shove his opponent, breaking the bind, or maintain the bind, at the winner's option.

Disarm

With this action, the character can disarm an opponent, causing him to drop a weapon, such as a sword or gun. The character must make a contested attack roll at -2. If the effect number of the disarm roll exceeds the effect number of the defender's roll, the opponent drops the weapon and is disarmed. Alternatively, the character may attempt a "take-away," with a successful Disarm indicating that the character has taken the opponent's weapon away and now has it in his possession and may be used against the opponent!

Characters attempting a Disarm receive a +1 bonus to their DEF. This bonus lasts until their next action.

Drag

A character that has successfully grabbed an opponent may drag or pull him. The maximum distance in yards that a resisting opponent can be dragged each turn is equal to the dragging character's STR + 1 minus the opponent's STR, up to a maximum distance equal to the dragger's MOV.

Jim has a STR 5 and Bob has STR 3. Jim has grabbed Bob and tries to forcefully pull him through a doorway, but Bob is resisting. Jim can drag Bob (5 -3 -1 = 1) meter for each action spent dragging him.

The distance a character can drag an unresisting object (such as an unconscious person) is equal to the dragger's STR +1 minus the STR required to pull the person or object, in yards, up to a maximum distance equal to the dragger's MOV.

A firefighter is trying to drag an unconscious victim out of a burning building. The victim weighs 100 kilograms and requires a STR of 3 to drag. The firefighter has a MOV of 8 and a STR of 4, so the firefighter can drag the unconscious victim (4+1-3) = 2 yards per turn. The farthest the firefighter could possibly drag an item each turn is 8 yards.

Drop

A character that has successfully Grabbed or Restrained an opponent may drop with him to the ground. Both character and opponent will fall to the ground in a pile. Each character suffers 2d6 damage from the fall, and the opponent remains Grabbed or Restrained.

Fire Multiple Shots

Characters may fire multiple shots with a firearm, up to the base Rate of Fire (RoF) for the weapon if it is a single shot weapon (such as a revolver or repeating rifle). The penalty is a cumulative –2 penalty for every shot beyond the first. This penalty is applied to *all* of the shots in that turn.

For purposes of the order of initiative, assume a –2 INI for each additional shot fired after the first. Any character that has an INI score higher than the adjusted INI score for the subsequent shots acts before the shooter fires those shots.

For example, Emmet has an INI score of 6 this turn. Clem has a REF of 5, a Firearms score of 4, and

his INI score this turn is 7. Clem has a revolver and is going to fire three shots with it this turn. He will suffer a penalty of –4 to each of his three Firearms skill rolls, and his shots will go off on INI segments 7, 5 and 3, respectively. Clem's first shot is resolved on INI segment 7. Then on INI 6, Emmet acts. On INI segment 5, Clem's second shot is resolved, then on INI 3 his third shot is resolved.

Grab

With this action, the character uses one or both hands to grab hold of the opponent. The grabbing character specifies an item (such as an article of clothing, a belt, etc.) or one limb that he will grab. The player rolls for the attack, using the Unarmed Combat skill, at -2. In addition, the grabbing character suffers a -2 DEF penalty.

If successful, the opponent is grabbed, and skill rolls for all actions attempted by the grabbed character are at -3. Once a character has an opponent grabbed, he may perform one of the following maneuvers: Drag, Drop, Restrain or Throw.

To break free from a Grab, the defender must overcome the grabber's strength with his own by making a contested STR + Unarmed Combat skill roll. If the grabber's total is higher than the defender's, then the defender remains grabbed.

Restrain

A character that has successfully grabbed an opponent may restrain him by expanding his Grab to restrain two limbs (either both arms or both legs). To successfully restrain an opponent, the character must succeed at a contested REF + Unarmed Combat skill roll against the opponent's REF + Unarmed Combat skill at -2. If the offensive character's total is higher than the defender's, the opponent is fully restrained and cannot use the restrained limbs, and any other actions attempted by the grabbed character are at -5. Once a character has an opponent restrained, he may only perform a Drag, Drop, or Throw, or he may release the opponent.

To break free from being restrained, the defender must overcome the restraining character's strength with his own by making a contested STR + Unarmed Combat skill roll. If the restraining character's total is higher than the defender's, then the defender remains restrained.

Shooting Gun Out of Enemy's Hand

A staple of many action genres is the gunslinger who shoots the gun out of his foe's hand.

Shooting something as small as a weapon is relatively difficult. The weapon's base Defense (DEF) is equal to 10 plus its user's REF bonus. Next, there's the weapon's size to consider, which effectively adds to its DEF. Most guns fall into the "Very Small" range (+4 DEF), though some long rifles and shotguns could be considered "Small" (+2) and some tiny pistols (such as Derringers) would be considered "Tiny" (+6).

For example, to shoot a pistol out of the hand of Leonard "Two Toes" Johnson (a maverick), who has REF 7 and who is standing a little over 30 feet away, using a small pistol, your character needs to make an attack against a DEF 10 + 7 (REF Bonus) + 6 (Size bonus) or DEF 23! He also gets a -3 penalty for range on top of that. In effect, your character is trying to hit at least a DEF 26 if nothing else is working against your cowpoke!

If your crack shot hits the weapon, it might break outright. The AV and Hits of firearms are listed on the table below.

Firearms DEF, Armor Value & Life Points

Weapon	DEF	AV	Life Points
Tiny pistol	+6	12	6
Pistol	+4	12	12
Rifle	+2	12	15
Shotgun	+2	12	18

Even if the weapon doesn't break when hit by the bullet, there's a good chance the shock

of the bullet hitting it may knock it out of your opponent's hand. To retain a grip on his weapon, your foe must make a successful STR + 3d6 roll versus a TN equal to 10 + the amount of damage rolled for your shot (before applying any AV). If he fails, the weapon is knocked from his hand, traveling 1 meter in a random direction.

For example, Marty shoots his pistol at Bart's pistol. The Target Number for the shot is 20. Marty's player makes a Firearms skill roll and gets a total of 23. He hit his opponent's pistol! Next the player rolls the damage; the shot does 17 points of damage. The pistol has an AV of 12, so 5 points of damage are applied to the gun's Hits, which is 12. Not enough damage was done to break the pistol outright. Next the GM makes a STR (4) + 3d6 roll for Bart against TN 17 (the total amount of damage rolled). The GM rolls a 12, plus Bart's STR of 4, for a total of 16. Bart drops his pistol!

Note: You cannot use a shotgun to disable a firearm.

Take-away

This action is similar to the Disarm action, except that with this action, the character attempts to maintain possession of the weapon that he is taking out of his opponent's hands. The character must make a contested attack roll at -3. If the effect number of the disarm roll exceeds the effect number of the defender's roll, the character has taken the opponent's weapon away and now has it in his possession. The weapon may be used against his opponent on the next turn.

Characters attempting a Take-away receive a +1 bonus to their DEF. This bonus lasts until their next action.

Throw

A character that has successfully Grabbed or Restrained an opponent may throw him to the ground. The opponent falls to the ground and suffers B/S damage equal to the thrower's STR in dice. The opponent may reduce the damage suffered from the Throw by making a successful Acrobatics roll (see *Acrobatics*).

Unarmed Strike

With this action, the character can strike an opponent with a fist, elbow, kick, etc., to inflict damage. The character makes an attack roll using his REF + Unarmed Combat + 3d6. A successful attack inflicts B/S damage for the attacker's STR, as shown on the STR Table. For determining damage for a kick, treat the attacker's STR as +1.



OPEN ANIME

Weapon Strike

With this action, the character attacks an opponent or object with a readied weapon. The character makes an attack roll using his REF + (appropriate weapon skill) + 3d6. If successful, the attack inflicts damage as per the weapon listing (see *Weapons*.)

Special Actions

Border Shift

This maneuver is a favorite with those who carry two guns but who don't fight two-fisted. To use this maneuver, your character must have both guns drawn, one in each hand. When his primary weapon runs out of ammunition, he can then, as a free action, attempt a Gunplay skill roll (TN 18) to make a border shift by tossing the two guns from hand to hand so as to move the fully loaded pistol to his shooting hand and the empty one to his off hand. The character can continue firing without pause. If the roll fails, the swap takes place, but the character's turn ends. If the roll fails by more than 6 (i.e., the effect number is –6 or lower), the gunslinger drops both weapons.

Fast Draw

Fast draw is taken in conjunction with a weapon attack, such as drawing and firing a gun or unsheathing and throwing a knife. When performing a fast draw, the character receives a +2 INI bonus for that attack on that turn but the attack roll is at -3. The penalty lasts only for one turn.

Free Holster

By making a Gunplay roll (TN 15), a character can holster his weapon as a free action (i.e., the character may still perform one action in the same turn at no penalty).

Load Weapon

The character is spending the turn reloading a weapon. Reloading a weapon may take multiple turns to accomplish. As a rule of thumb, sling weapons and bows require 1 turn to reload, crossbows require 2 turns, and black powder weapons require 10 turns. Modern firearms may be reloaded at a rate of 1 loose round or one magazine (or clip or cylinder/speed-loader) per turn.

Rifle Spin

Cocking a lever-action rifle requires two hands. With this action, the shooter attempts to cock the rifle with only one hand. The shooter makes a Gunplay skill roll (TN 15). If successful, the rifle is cocked as a free action and may be fired that turn, just as though he'd used two hands. If the roll fails, the weapon is not cocked. If the roll fails by 3, the weapon is dropped, and if the roll fails by 6 or more, the shooter has shot himself!

Road Agent Spin

Your character holds his pistol or pistols out butt-first, as if to surrender to his opponent. The maneuver requires the character to make a successful Gunplay skill roll (TN 18; TN 21 if attempting the move with two pistols). If the skill roll is successful, he quickly spins and flips the guns, turning them on his opponent as a free action. If the opponent fails an Awareness roll versus surprise, he is surprised and does not get his REF bonus to his DEF that turn. Of course, if the character fails the initial Gunplay roll, he's left with his guns tangled up in his fingers and looking really foolish. If the roll fails by more than 6 (i.e., the effect number is –6 or lower), he drops his gun (or guns, if he was holding two).

Trick Shot

This covers shooting a shot glass off a friend's head, putting a bullet hole through a silver dollar tossed in the air, and so on. While

it looks fancy and is sure to impress the ladies (or tinhorns), it really doesn't have all that much use in a combat situation. In effect, your cowboy can substitute his Gunplay skill roll (TN 18) for a standard attack roll when making showy trick shots outside of combat.

Examples include: quick-drawing and shooting out a candle-flame from across the room, shooting a cigarette out of someone's mouth without hitting them, or blowing someone's hat off without hurting them.

This use of the skill requires a full turn action for each trick shot attempted. Only one shot is allowed per turn. When used to impress others in this manner, Gunplay may be used as complementary to Persuasion.

Wait

With this action, the character is waiting to act. The player may either declare a specific intended action and a circumstance that will trigger the action (e.g., "My character is holding his action and will shoot the first person who walks through that door,") or simply declare that his character is waiting and will act later.

If the player declares a specific condition and a specific action, the character automatically acts first if the condition occurs.

If the player is simply waiting to act later in the turn but with no specific intent (as yet), the character can take an action at any point in the same turn. If a character does not use his held action by the end of the turn, the held action is lost and the character must wait to act until the next turn.

Characters who are waiting are still alert and able to defend themselves, and receives a REF bonus to their DEF, as well as any other applicable DEF modifiers (GM's discretion).

A character may always abort (that is, give up) a held action in order to use a defensive action.

Riding Actions

Riding actions may be performed by characters in accordance with the Core Rules. Treat Riding Actions as "Movement" for the purposes of determining any penalties imposed for characters performing multiple actions in a single turn.

Advanced Riding

Advanced Riding is an advanced version of the Cover Riding action (see below). If the character makes a successful Riding skill roll (TN 21), he gains the +3 DEF bonus and can perform another action (including an attack) that turn, as well. A failed roll indicates that the character not only fails to gain cover, but that he may not make any other actions that turn as well.

Control Mount in Battle

The character can attempt to control an untrained horse while in combat by making a successful Riding skill roll (TN 18). If the character fails, he can do nothing else that turn. A character must attempt to control his horse anytime he shoots a gun from horseback, when a gun is fired nearby (within 3 yards of the horse), and any time the mount is struck and suffers greater than a Light Wound .

Horses that are trained for combat (including most military horses) do not require the rider to make rolls to control the animal in combat.

Cover Riding

The character can react instantly to drop down and hang alongside the mount, using it as cover. This provides a +3 to the character's DEF. This maneuver requires a successful Riding skill roll (TN 18). The character cannot attack while using his mount as cover. If the character fails the skill roll, he doesn't get the cover Benefit.

Fast Mount or Dismount

The character can mount or dismount and perform a basic Movement action with the mount in the same turn as a free action (i.e., the

OPEN ANIME

action does not count when determining any penalties for performing multiple actions in a turn). Performing a fast mount with a successful Athletics skill roll (TN 15). If the character fails the roll, mounting or dismounting counts as a Special action and the character cannot perform a Movement action with the mount until the following turn.

Fight with trained horse

If the character directs a trained mount to attack in battle, he can still make his own attack or attacks but at -3. Directing a trained mount to attack requires a Riding skill roll (TN 18).

Guide with Knees

The character can react instantly to guide his mount with his knees so that he can use both hands in combat. This requires a successful Riding skill roll (TN 15), which is made at the start of the character's turn. If the character fails, he can only use one hand this turn because he needs to use his other hand to control his mount. Alternately, the GM may allow the rider to perform an action using both hands but the rider automatically falls off of the horse at the end of the turn.

Leap

The character can get a mount to leap obstacles as part of its movement. A Riding skill roll is made, with the TN based on the difficulty of the jump being attempted (see the table below). A failed roll indicates that the rider falls from his mount.

TN	Situation (example)
12	Jump a short barrier (e.g., fallen log)
15	Jump a medium barrier (2 foot wall, hedge row)
18	Jump a small crevasse or pit (up to 6 feet distance)
21	Jump a tall barrier (3 to 6 foot wall, person)
24	Jump off a short cliff (up to 20 feet)
27	Jump a wide crevasse or pit (3-6 feet distance)
30	Jump off a tall cliff (more than 20 feet)

It is up to the GM whether the rider falls before, during or after the jump. For example, after a player fails a Riding roll to execute a jump, the GM decides that the horse stops short, refusing to jump, and the rider falls to the ground in front of the horse.

Mount/Dismount

The character is able to mount or dismount a steed (usually a horse, but may be any creature used for such a purpose, depending on the campaign) or vehicle. This action does not require a skill roll except in extreme circumstances (e.g., when the beast is running or the vehicle moving).

Characters who are mounting or dismounting do not receive their REF bonus to DEF. This penalty lasts until their next action.

Stay in Saddle

The character can react instantly to try to avoid falling when his mount rears or bolts unexpectedly, or when he takes damage by making a Riding roll (TN 15).

OPEN ANIME

COMBAT

Combat is handled in more detail than most other situations. When any character enters a combat situation—by either attacking another character or non-player character or being attacked—game time "slows down."

The following rules are provided to allow players and GMs to determine the outcome of combat encounters in their game. And let's face it, there is likely to be a lot of combat—or potential combat—in any cinematic game.

Combat Turns

Each turn lasts for 3 seconds of "game time." Each character may perform one action per turn (see *Taking Actions*).

Initiative

During combat, characters act in order of Initiative (INI). To determine initiative, each player rolls 1d6 and adds the number rolled to his character's INI score. The GM rolls once, for the leader (usually the bad guy with the highest PRE or Persuasion), using the leader's INI +1d6 to determine the Initiative for all of the bad guys. The character with the highest initiative score acts first that turn, the character with the next highest initiative score acts second, and so on.

In the case of ties, the character with the highest Intellect acts first. If both characters have the same Intellect scores, then the actions are simultaneous (see *Initiative*).

Characters with a different length weapon than their opponent may receive a bonus to their INI when at the optimal distance for their weapon (see *Weapon Size*).

Modifying Target Numbers

In combat, the Target Numbers listed in the *Difficulty and TN Table* do not take into account the opponent's abilities. Rather than using the generic difficulty modifiers in melee combat, the Target Number for attacks against other characters is equal to the target's DEF (see *Defensive Target Number*). The target's base DEF is 10, to which modifiers may be applied.

DEF Modifiers

There are a number of situations that affect a character's DEF score and, therefore, an attacker's TN. Some examples and suggested DEF modifiers are listed below. All listed modifiers are applied to the target character's DEF score.

Character/target is…	DEF Modifier
aware of attack	+ REF
using a combat skill to defend	+ Skill score
at optimal distance for his weapon and fighting an opponent with a different length weapon	+3
Diving or Dodging	+3
Blocking or Rolling	+2
Grabbing another character	-2

Armor & Encumbrance	
Unencumbered (< STR kg)	No modifier
Partially encumbered (< Carry wt.)	-1
Greatly encumbered (> Carry wt.)	-3

Combat Modifiers

A variety of situations can affect a skill roll made to hit a target in combat. For example, skill rolls for ranged attacks are modified by the distance, size, and speed of the target. If a target is close, it will be fairly easy to hit. If a target is far away and moving quickly, it will be much harder to hit.

Some examples and suggested modifiers are listed below. All listed modifiers are applied to the skill roll for the attack.

Combat Modifiers Table

Target Size	Modifier
Colossal	+10
Gargantuan	+8
Huge	+6
Large	+2
Medium	0
Small	-2
Tiny	-4
Diminutive	-6
Fine	-8

Target Visibility	Modifier
Completely obscured/invisible	-5
Mostly obscured (heavy fog, good cover)	-3
Partly obscured (light fog, poor cover)	-1

Target Behind Cover	Modifier
Half body visible	-1
Head and shoulders only visible	-2
Head only visible	-3
Target silhouetted	+2

Elevation	Modifier
Target higher than attacker (uphill, mounted)	+2
Target lower than attacker (downhill, prone)	+1

Aiming	Modifier
Aiming	+2 per turn (+6 max)
Braced (stable base, bipod, pintle mount)	+2
Hip shot	-2

Miscellaneous Conditions	Modifier
Surprise Attack	-5
Improvised weapon (rock, bottle, small girder)	-2

Distance (ranged attacks only; offset by ACC)	Modifier
1 yard	0
2-3 yards	-1
4-5 yards	-2
6-15 yards	-3
16-25 yards	-4
26-35 yards	-5
36-50 yards	-6
51-100 yards	-7
101-150 yards	-8
151-200 yards	-9
201-300 yards	-10
301-400 yards	-11
401-600 yards	-12
601-800 yards	-13
801-1,000 yards	-14

Target Moving	Modifier
3-4 m/turn (walking)	-1
5-8 m/turn (jog)	-2
9-16 m/turn (running)	-4
17-32 m/turn (sprinting)	-6
33-64 m/turn (24-42 mph)	-8
65-128 m/turn (highway speeds, train)	-10
129-256 m/turn (small plane, helicopter)	-12
257-512 m/turn (racing car)	-14
513-1024m (1km) /turn (passenger jet)	-16
1025-2048m (2km) /turn (F-18, sound barrier)	-18
2049+ /turn (F-15 on afterburners)	-20

Offensive Actions	DEF	Skill Mod	Notes
Aim	+0	+2/ turn	+2 per turn (+6 max); No REF bonus to DEF
Bind Weapon	+0	-1	Opponent's weapon immobilized; requires contested (STR + combat skill + 3d6) to break.
Disarm	+1	-2	Disarms opponent
Drag	+0	+0	Drag resisting person (STR+1 - opponent's STR) yards; max distance = MOV.
Drop	+0	+0	Fall with Grabbed or Restrained opponent; 2d6 dmg
Grab	-2	-2	Grab one item or limb.
Restrain	+0	+0	Fully restrains a Grabbed character; -2 to overcome.
Take-away	+1	-3	Takes opponent's weapon away.
Throw	+1	-1	Inflicts normal STR dmg as B/S; victim thrown to ground
Unarmed Strike	+0	+0	Does STR damage as B/S
Weapon Strike	+0	+0	Does dmg as per weapon

Special Actions	DEF	Skill Mod	Notes
Fast Draw	+0	-3	+2 INI
Load Weapon	+0	+0	Load a weapon & make ready
Mount	+0	+0	No REF bonus to DEF
Wait	+0	+0	Wait to act later in same turn

Ranged Combat Example

A character with REF 5 is standing 40 yards away. His base DEF is 10 + REF (5), or 15. If someone 40 yards away shoots at our character, the GM applies the -6 range modifier to his attack roll against the 15 DEF, making the total TN for the shot 21!

Action Modifiers

A number of actions that are available to characters impose a modifier to a skill roll, the character's DEF or both. Below is a condensed list of available actions and their modifiers.

For a more detailed description of each action, see *Available Actions*. Note: "Skill Mod" represents the modifier to the attacker's skill roll to perform that action.

Autofire

A weapon with autofire "puts a lot of lead downrange," as they say.

When making an autofire attack, the player makes a single attack roll using his REF + Weapon Skill + 3d6 against the target's TN. To

Open Anime

determine how many rounds hit the target, the effect number is divided by a number based on the type of attack being made.

Burst

A burst autofire (or "autoburst") attack consists of firing a short, controlled burst of fire at a single target. The shooter makes an attack roll against the target , with any modifiers for size, distance, and so on. On a successful attack roll, the target is hit by one projectile plus an additional projectile for every 2 full points of effect number. The maximum number of rounds that may be fired in a burst is 4.

Mike is playing Sergeant Larry Craft, a SWAT team member. Larry has a REF 6 and Submachine-gun skill +6. He is carrying a submachine-gun with a RoF of 20. During a drug raid, Mike's character spots a gunman and fires a burst of four rounds, with a TN of 18. Mike makes his skill roll and gets a total of 24. Because Mike's effect number is 6 (24–18=6), his target is hit by 3 rounds of the burst. Mike rolls the damage separately for each round that hits his target.

Stream

A stream autofire attack consists of aiming the weapon at a single target and releasing a stream of rounds or projectiles at it. This is sometimes referred to as "hosing" a target. The shooter makes an attack roll against the target at a –1 penalty for every 10 rounds (or fraction) in the attack, plus any modifiers for size, distance, and so on. On a successful attack roll, the target is hit by one projectile plus an additional projectile for every 2 full points of effect number. The maximum number of rounds that may hit a target is equal to the RoF for the weapon.

Sergeant Craft spots another gunman. Mike's character fires a stream of 10 bullets at the gunman, with a base TN of 18. Because Mike's character is firing

Action Modifiers

Defensive Actions	DEF	Skill Mod	Notes
Block	+2	+1	+4 INI vs. melee attacks next turn if block is successful
Dodge	+3	+0	Up to ½ MOV in yards
Roll with the blow	+2	+0	½ damage

Movement Actions	DEF	Skill Mod	Notes
Crawl	+1	+0	No REF bonus to DEF
Climb	+0	+0	Up to ½ MOV
Dive	+3	+0	Up to ½ STR; req. Leaping roll (TN 10 +2/ meter)
Roll	+2	+0	Roll along ground or over obstacle; up to ½ MOV
Run	Var.	+0	Up to 2x MOV plus one non-movement action at -3; DEF bonus for velocity
Sprint	Var.	+0	Up to 4x MOV; plus one non-movement action at -6; DEF bonus for velocity
Walk	+0	+0	Up to MOV plus one other non-movement action

OPEN ANIME

more than a burst, he suffers an additional –1 penalty to his skill roll. Mike gets a 26, minus 1 for the stream penalty, for a total of 25. Because Mike's effect number is 7 (25–18=7), his target is hit by 3 rounds from the burst. Mike rolls the damage separately for each round that hits his target.

Spray

With a spray autofire attack, the shooter can attempt to hit multiple targets at once. The width of the area (in yards) must be defined by the player before the attack roll is made. This area is called the "fire zone."

The maximum number of rounds that can hit a given target in the fire zone is equal to the total width (in yards) in the fire zone divided by the number of rounds being fired, rounding down.

The attacker makes a skill roll for each target, with a -1 penalty for every 10 rounds (or fraction) in the attack, plus any modifiers for size, distance, and so on. On a successful attack roll, the target is hit by one projectile plus an additional projectile for every 3 full points of effect number.

Sergeant Craft spots three gunmen spread out in a warehouse, and fires a full 20 rounds into a 10-meter-wide area, hoping to hit them all. Each target can be hit by a maximum of 2 rounds (20 divided by 10 = 2). The adjusted Target Number (after counting all modifiers) for each target is 15. Jim (Sgt. Craft's player) makes a skill roll for each target, and gets a 14, 19, and 25, respectively. The first target is missed, the second is hit by 2 rounds, and the third is hit by 2 rounds (Jim's effect number was high enough to score 3 hits, but only 2 rounds entered his area in the fire zone).

Method	Modifier	Divide EN by	Max rds. per target
Burst	0	2	4
Stream	-1 per 10 rds	2	RoF
Spray	-1 per 10 rds	3	RoF/Fire zone (m)

Explosions

Explosive attacks cause damage in an area. Any targets in the area of effect of the explosion are automatically hit by the attack. The type and form of damage depends on the type of explosive attack (see the table below).

Type/Form	Example
Blunt/Stunning	Rubber pellet grenade
Blunt/Lethal	HE grenade or artillery round
Penetrating/ Stunning	Flash grenade, stun energy grenade, sound/kinetic wave
Penetrating/ Lethal	Anti-personnel mine, HEAP artillery round

Targeting Explosive Attacks

Explosive attacks may be targeted at a person or object (such as a vehicle), using the normal rules for combat. Because explosive attacks do damage over an area, however, its simpler to use a point on the ground (or a specific hex, if using a hex map) as the target.

Treat a 1 square meter area (or a 1 meter hex) as having a TN of 10 (similar to attacking a person with a base DEF of 10 but no REF bonus), and add any other applicable modifiers to the skill roll, such as modifiers for range, obscured visibility, and so on.

If the attack roll is successful, the attack lands in the intended spot.

If the attack roll fails, the attack misses the target. To see where the attack hits, roll 1d6 to determine the direction from the target, then roll another 1d6 to determine the distance the attack lands from the target (see table next page). The distance an attack misses the target by is equal to the number of points the attack roll missed by for thrown, simple missile weapon and small arms attacks. Multiply this number times 2 for heavy weapons.

The maximum distance the attack can miss the target by is one half the total distance from the attacker to the intended target.

Direction Missed Attack Lands

1d6	Attack lands…
1	Left (attack lands to left of target)
2-3	Long (attack lands beyond target)
4-5	Short (attack lands short of target)
6	Right (attack lands to right of target)

Damage Reduced by Range

The farther a target from the center of the explosion, the less damage is done to it. An explosive attack does the listed amount of damage in a 1 meter radius. For every additional meter of distance from the center, the damage is reduced by 3 points. Treat damage below 1 point as 0. The maximum distance at which 1 point of damage is caused indicates the maximum effect radius of the blast. The blast radius of an attack is defined as the number of yards equal to one third of the total damage points done by the attack. (Damage points/3 (round down) = Blast radius in yards)

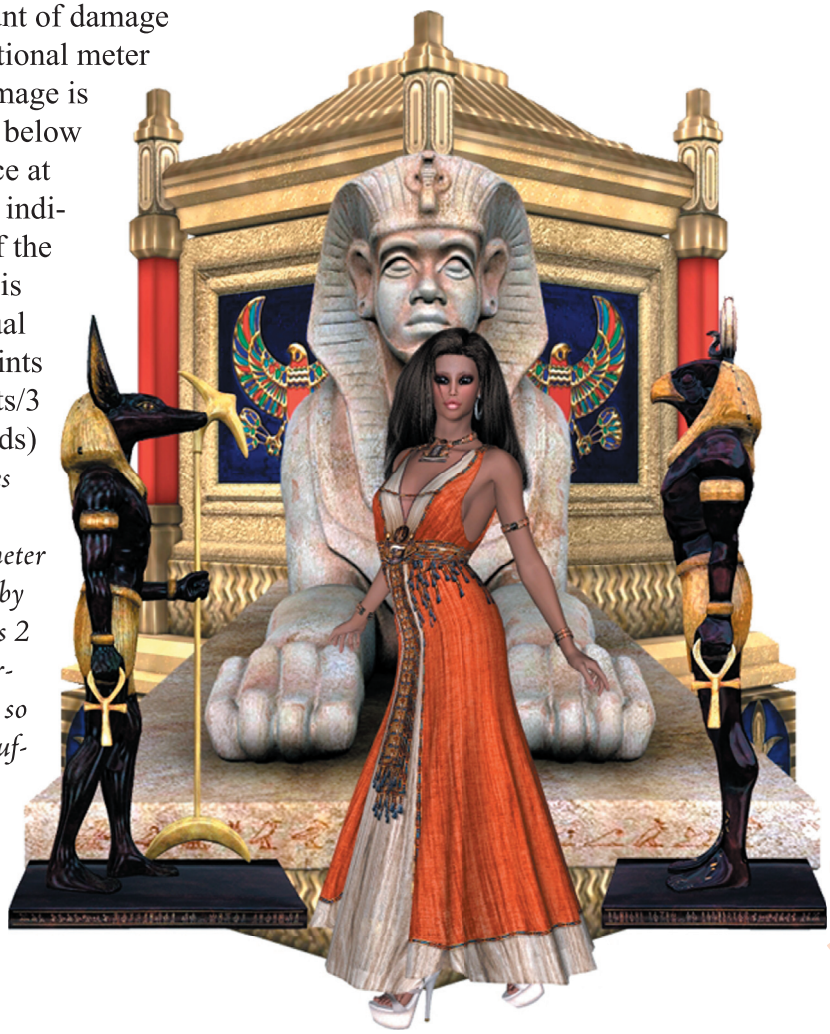
An anti-personnel grenade explodes doing 25 points of penetrating lethal (P/L) damage. Any targets within 1 meter of the grenade when it explodes are hit by a 25 point piercing lethal attack; targets 2 yards away suffer a 22 point attack; targets 3 yards away suffer 19 points, and so on, up to 8 yards away, where targets suffer a 2 point attack. Eight yards is the effective "blast radius." Targets nine or more yards away from the explosion's center suffer no effect from the blast.

Average Blast Radius

Rather than calculating the bast radius of the grenade based on the actual damage rolled, GMs can determine the average blast radius for an attack by adding the number of dice of damage for the explosion +1. The resulting number is the maximum blast radius for the explosion, in yards.

The GM decides to use the average blast radius of the grenade. Because the grenade's listed damage is 6d6, the average blast radius of the grenade (when it goes off) is 6+1=7 yards.

Using the average blast radius of an explosion can save the GM a lot of time during the game. For instance, if a 6d6 explosion goes off, the GM knows that the average blast radius of the explosion is only 7 yards. If the closest character is 10 yards away from the explosion,



the GM doesn't need to roll any damage dice at all; none of the characters are close enough to suffer any damage from the explosion. Instead of rolling the damage dice to determine the blast radius, the GM can simply describe the explosion and move on to the next character's action.

DAMAGE

Damage is categorized by its method of delivery (i.e., the "form") and its effect (i.e., the "type"). There are three types and three forms of damage. All damage effects in the core rules use one descriptor from each category. For example, damage from a knife wound is considered Penetrating Lethal damage (abbreviated as "P/L"). Each is explained below.

Types of Damage

The three basic Types of damage are Blunt (B), Penetrating (P), and Special (Sp).

Blunt

Blunt damage represents damage caused by blunt force (known as "blunt trauma" in the medical world). Examples of blunt damage include damage caused by punches and kicks, falling, collisions, clubs, and the like.

When a character suffers blunt damage, subtract the value of any armor the character is wearing and the character's TGH score from the damage, then subtract any remaining damage points from the character's LIF.

Penetrating

Penetrating damage represents damage from an injury that penetrates the body, such as damage cause by bladed and pointed weapons, arrows, fast-moving projectiles, and the like.

When a character suffers penetrating damage, subtract the value of any armor the character is wearing, then subtract any remaining damage points from the character's LIF.

Special

Special damage represents damage or other effects from unusual attacks, such as gas, drugs (e.g., stimulants or anesthesia), magic spells, radiation, mental powers, and the like. Generally speaking, any effect that does not reduce a character's LIF points is considered a Special Attack.

Forms of Damage

The three basic Forms of damage are Stunning (S), Lethal (L), and Special (Sp).

Stunning Damage

Stunning damage is damage that temporarily weakens or incapacitates the character. Stunning damage can render a character unconscious but cannot kill him. It reflects the non-lethal and temporary effects of special substances and substances, such as pepper spray (oleoresin capsicum or "OC"), sleep gas, flash-bang grenades, depressants (such as alcohol or barbiturates), the dazing effects of a punch or mild concussion, sedation, general weakening from fatigue, and so on.

When a character's LIF is reduced to 0 because of stunning damage, the character immediately falls unconscious. An unconscious character will not regain consciousness until his LIF is raised to a score of 1 or higher, whether through healing, natural recovery, or medical or supernatural aid.

Stunning damage is healed more quickly than lethal damage (see *Recovery*).

Lethal Damage

Lethal damage is that damage that can kill a character. Lethal damage can render a character unconscious as well as kill him. Lethal damage can reflect the effects of a trauma or injury caused by weapon, a collision such as from an auto accident or a fall from a great height, the effects of high doses of radiation, extreme weakening from illness, and so on.

Open Anime

When a character suffers a number of points of lethal damage that exceeds his LIF, the character is dying. A dying character will lose 1 additional LIF point each turn until he reaches –10 LIF. Medical intervention is necessary to prevent the character from dying (see *Stabilizing*, page 72). If a character's LIF score reaches –10, the character is dead.

Lethal damage is healed more slowly than stunning damage.

Special Damage

Special damage is damage to some aspect of the character other than the character's LIF. Examples include the reduction of an attribute, the suppression of a paranormal power, medical symptoms (such as hallucinations or nausea) and so on.

This category is a catch-all, for any effects that can't be clearly defined as either stunning or lethal.

Wounds and Effects of Damage

Wounds come in progressive levels of severity, from Superficial to Fatal. The description for each level of wound severity and its effects are explained below.

Superficial Wounds

Any wound from which a character suffers up to 1x HLT in damage points (after subtracting any damage for armor or TGH) is a superficial wound. Superficial wounds include minor cuts, scrapes and bumps.

Superficial wounds do not restrict or reduce the character's movement, attributes or skills, although they may be painful.

In medical terms, characters suffering from superficial wounds are conscious and comfortable (at least as far as the injury goes), their vital signs are stable and within normal limits, and indicators point toward an excellent recovery. Medical patients suffering from one or more superficial wounds are generally considered in "good condition."

Light Wounds

Any wound that causes up to 2x HLT in damage points (after subtracting any damage for armor or TGH) is a light wound.

Not exactly superficial damage, but there is little if any chance a character will die from light wounds. The character will lose 1 additional LIF point each day for 1d6 days until stabilized (see *Stabilizing*).

All Body-based skill rolls are at -1 until the character receives medical aid. This penalty may be ignored for one turn with a successful Tricky WIL attribute roll (TN 15).

In medical terms, characters suffering from superficial wounds are conscious but generally uncomfortable, though their vital signs are stable and within normal limits. Indicators point toward a favorable recovery. Medical patients suffering from one or more light wounds are generally considered in "fair condition."

Serious Wounds

Any wound that causes up to 3x HLT in damage points (after subtracting any damage for armor or TGH) is a serious wound.

Serious wounds are just that. The character is wounded in such a way that seriously impedes his ability to do anything. Serious wounds include some gunshots, broken limbs, and major burns.

Left untreated, serious wounds can pose a serious health risk from infection, bleeding, and other serious complications. The character will lose 1 additional LIF point each hour until stabilized (see *Healing*, below).

All Body-based skill rolls are at -3 until the wound is stabilized and then -1 until treated. Any Mind-based skill rolls are at -3 until treated. These penalties may be ignored for one turn with a successful Challenging WIL attribute roll (TN 18).

In medical terms, characters suffering from serious wounds are acutely ill. They may not be conscious, their vital signs are unstable and not within normal limits. Indicators are questionable. Medical patients suffering from a serious wounds are generally considered in "serious condition."

Critical Wounds

Any single wound causing up to 4x HLT in damage points (after subtracting any damage for armor or TGH) is a critical wound. Critical wounds do not close and will not just stop bleeding. Critical wounds include torn limbs, deep punctures, and lacerations, severe head trauma, and so on.

Critical wounds can be fatal without immediate stabilization and fairly quick medical treatment. A character with a critical wound will lose one additional point of LIF per minute until he is stabilized.

All Body skills are at -6 until stabilized and -3 until treated. Any Mind-based skill rolls are at -6 until treated. These penalties may be ignored for one turn with a successful Challenging WIL attribute roll (TN 18).

In medical terms, characters suffering from critical wounds may not be conscious, their vital signs are unstable and not within normal limits, and indicators are unfavorable. Medical patients suffering from a critical wound are generally considered in "critical condition."

Fatal Wounds

Any wound from which a character suffers more than 4x the victim's HLT in damage points (after subtracting any damage for armor or TGH) is a fatal wound. The character will die without immediate aid. Characters suffering from a fatal wound will lose 1 additional LIF point each turn unless stabilized (see *Healing*, below). Otherwise, treat this as a Critical Wound.

Wound Effects Table

Wound	Effects
Superficial	None.
Light	-1 to Body-based skills until medical aid received; -1 LIF per day for 1d6 days unless stabilized.
Serious	-3 to Body-based skill rolls until stabilized, then -1 until treated; -3 to Mind-based skill rolls until treated. -1 LIF per hour until stabilized.
Critical	-6 to Body-based skill rolls until stabilized, then -3 until treated; -6 to Mind-based skill rolls until treated. -1 LIF per minute until stabilized.
Fatal	-1 LIF per turn until stabilized; otherwise, treat as Critical.

Recording Damage

Damage that a character suffers should be marked on the character sheet in the boxes provided. Stunning damage is marked as a slash ("/") and lethal damage is marked as an "X."

A character suffers 2 points of lethal damage from a knife cut to the arm and 6 points of stunning damage from a kick to the chest. The damage from the knife wound is recorded on the character sheet as two "Xs" and the wound from the kick as six slashes.

If a character has suffered a total amount of combined stunning and lethal damage to bring his LIF to 0, any subsequent lethal damage should be recorded over (i.e., "replacing") any stunning damage on the character sheet. Any subsequent stunning damage is treated as lethal damage.

Mike's character has 20 LIF. During a fight he suffers 12 points of stunning damage and 8 points of lethal damage. Because the combined total of damage is 20, he is unconscious. He is then hit again for 5 points of lethal damage. Mike changes 5 of the slash marks (that indicate stunning damage) to "Xs" (indicating lethal damage).

OPEN ANIME

Poison and Drugs

Poisons are described by their *Mode* of delivery, *Speed (Spd)*, *Damage Rating (DR)*, and *Duration (Dur)*.

Mode

The mode is the manner in which a poison or drug is introduced to the victim. Whenever a poison is introduced to a person, the victim must make a HLT attribute roll using a target number based on the substance's mode (the TN for each mode is listed in parenthesis). This roll is made immediately upon successful introduction of the poison. If the roll is successful, then the poison's effects are halved. A failed roll means the poison is at full effect. This roll is made for poisons and drugs alike, including beneficial drugs; some substances just don't "take."

Topical (TN 15)

Topical poisons and drugs are introduced by contact with the victim's skin. They usually take the form of a cream or ointment. The poison is then absorbed into the victim's skin. Topical poisons are near useless in combat. Topical poisons can be mixed with makeup, perfume and even medicinal herbs. Topical poisons are generally the slowest type of poison.

Ingested (TN 24)

Ingested poisons must be eaten or drunk. They usually are in powder or liquid form. Ingested substances are usually mixed with food or drink, but may be introduced directly to the victim's mouth via water dropper, spit, blowpipe or any of a number of ingenious means. Ingested drugs and poisons are generally slow, though faster acting than topical ointments as a rule.

Inhaled (TN 21)

Inhaled poisons and drugs must be introduced to the lungs of the victim. This can be accomplished by use of a powder, vapors or smoke. Inhaled substances are generally faster acting than ingested ones, though not as fast as those introduced directly to the bloodstream.

Blood (TN 18)

Blood poisons and drugs must be introduced directly to the victim's bloodstream, through a cut or abrasion. Blood poisons may be put on a blade or needle, but such applications are only effective for one strike and the strike must penetrate any armor and deliver penetrating damage to the victim. Whether or not the strike delivers the poison, the dose of poison is "used up." Blood poisons are the fastest type of poison, as a rule.

Speed of Poisons and Drugs

Speed (abbreviated "Spd") measures how often the poison or drug's effects are applied. When a poison is introduced, it first takes affect as soon as an amount of time has passed, based on the poison's Speed. The poison's effect occurs again after each passing of this time.

A poison with a Speed rating of 10 minutes is introduced to a victim. After 10 minutes the victim will suffer the effects of the poison, and again after another 10 minutes have passed, and so on.

As a general rule of thumb, ingested poisons are faster than topical poisons, inhaled poisons are faster than ingested ones, and blood poisons are faster than inhaled poisons.

Effect

The Effect (abbreviated "Eff") represents the amount of damage or other effect caused by the substance. The effect is rolled once each time period (based on the Spd of the substance) for each dose that affects the victim. Being exposed to two doses of a substance doubles the Effect of that substance. All dice rolls for Effect are cumulative.

For harmful substances, this damage may be subtracted from a character's LIF or from an attribute, depending on the type of poison. A drug or poison need not be fatal; knock-out drugs also

2001

work by accumulation, with "damage" subtracted from different point pools depending on the type of effect.

For example, a sleeping drug rated at DR3 will cause 3d6 of stunning damage. Once the victim's LIF reaches zero, they are asleep.

Beneficial and medicinal drugs work by adding to an attribute or LIF.

For example, a stimulant rated at DR2 will add 2d6 to REF and LIF.

Duration of Poisons and Drugs

Duration (abbreviated "Dur") is the total amount of time that a poison can affect someone after it is introduced to the victim. The effect is applied to the victim (or patient, as the case may be) once each time period listed based on the drug or toxin's Spd, until the poison has either dissipated or "run its course," or (in extreme cases) until the affected person dies.

Chin-doku has Eff 2d6, a Spd rating of one minute and a Duration of 10 minutes. This means that the poison will cause 2d6 of effect every minute, for 10 consecutive minutes.

Treating Poison Victims

Characters suffering the effects of any poison may not heal, nor recover any lost LIF or attribute points, until the poison has run its course. They may recover LIF lost to stunning damage, unless the poison itself causes stunning damage, in which case the character doesn't recover any LIF points at all.

Once the poison has exceeded its duration, the character may begin to heal normally. Characters recover LIF and primary attribute points per the *Core Rules* (see *Recovery* in the *Core Rules*).

Torando was bitten by a sea snake and failed his HLT roll. Torando suffers 18 points of Sp/L damage and loses 3 points from REF. Luckily, Torando was quickly treated by a physician and survived the bite. Torando has a HLT of 7, and begins the healing process. Torando is in a Cinematic level campaign, so the recovery period is one day for lethal damage and one week for attribute points. Torando will recover 7 LIF per day and 1 point of REF per week.

Characters making a successful Physician (TN 21), First Aid or Herbalist (TN 18) skill roll can determine that a person has been poisoned. If the person treating the victim makes a second successful roll at -3, they will know which specific poison was used and how to counter it.

To stop a poison's progress, the victim must be given one dose of healing herbs or medicine, as prescribed by the attending doctor. This dose will immediately halt the progress of the poison; the person will suffer no additional damage. Any damage already suffered remains, but it may be healed normally, as the victim will begin the healing (i.e., Recovery) process.

Making Poisons

Characters with the appropriate skills can concoct healing and medicinal drugs.

To create a poison the character must first obtain one unit of the necessary raw materials. The materials and their weight will vary depending on the type of poison, but GMs can assume a basic weight of .1 kg of raw materials is needed to create one dose of poison. Some raw materials may be purchased in a market, while others will require the character to go to some effort to locate them. This could involve a trek into the mountains (possibly requiring a local guide), a quest or some other circumstances which can serve as the basis of an adventure itself.

Once the material components are gathered, the character must spend time preparing the materials, extracting the toxins and creating the final lethal product. The time it takes for this process is up to the GM, but should be no less than 1 hour for each dose of poison being created.

The final step is for the character to make a skill roll, with a target number determined by the GM, based on the skill being used. Recommended skills and

target numbers are given below. Not all skills will be available in all settings.

Skill	TN	Setting
First Aid	18	Primitive
Herbalism	15	Fantasy/primitive
Chemistry	15	Fantasy/Primitive
Chemistry	18	Modern
Chemistry	15	Sci-fi
Pharmacology	12	Modern/sci-fi
Physician	21	Fantasy/primitive
Physician	18	Modern

Success means that one dose of the desired poison is created. A critical success provides two doses or increases the Speed by one step up the time table (player's choice). A failed roll indicates that some mistake was made during the creation process, rendering the poison ineffective. A failure with an EN of –6 or more indicates the character has poisoned himself.

Healing

There are three basic parts to healing damage sustained by your character. Stabilization prevents the wound from becoming worse; Treatment repairs the damage sustained; Recovery heals the body.

For GMs who want simpler rules for healing, simply ignore the rules for Stabilization and make Treatment optional, relying primarily on Recovery to determine a character's healing rate. This has the affect of lowering the mortality rate for characters who are seriously injured.

For all First Aid and Physician skill rolls, the following situational modifiers apply. Note that in some settings or genres, some of these situations will not apply (e.g., "ample medical supplies" are simply not available in a medieval setting).

Situational Modifiers

Condition	
Very dirty or unsanitary conditions	-2
Makeshift sick bay (a bedroom or office)	-1
Improvised equipment and supplies	-1
Adequate medical supplies (first aid kit, med-pac)	+1
Ample medical supplies (sick bay, hospital)	+3

Stabilizing

Stabilizing a patient is the immediate treatment of an injury to prevent worsening of the injury or condition. This could involve setting a compression bandage, immobilizing an extrem-



ity (such as putting a splint on a limb with a broken bone), or tightening a tourniquet.

A successful First Aid or Physician roll will stabilize the wound, preventing the loss of any additional LIF, for a period of time. The difficulty of the skill roll is based on the severity of the wound (see the *Stabilization Table*, below). At the end of this time a new skill roll is required. A failed roll means that the character suffers additional damage, as per the severity of the injury (see *Wounds and the Effects of Damage*).

Jim's character has suffered a serious gunshot wound and has already suffered 23 points of damage, reducing his LIF to 2. He will continue to lose LIF points at the rate of 1 point per minute unless he receives medical aid. Luckily Tony's character has the First Aid skill. Tony makes his First Aid roll, so Jim's character will not lose any more LIF for that minute. Tony then makes another First Aid roll for the second minute but fails. Jim's character loses another point of LIF, lowering his score to 1. Tony rolls again for the third minute and succeeds! Fortunately for Tony the paramedics have arrived, who have better First Aid scores and can transport Jim's character to the hospital for treatment.

Stabilization allows a patient to be moved to a medical facility, whether by ambulance or some other conveyance, for treatment. It would also allow time for a priest to prepare a healing prayer or a late night flight to the Trauma Center in an aerodyne, depending on the genre being played.

Stabilization Table

Wound	Difficulty	Roll required
Superficial	No roll required	No roll required
Light	Average (TN 12)	every day
Serious	Tricky (TN 15)	every hour
Critical	Challenging (TN 18)	every minute
Fatal	Difficult (TN 21)	every turn

Treatment

Treatment is the active part of medicine. The doctor or medic will suture, medicate and repair some of the damage caused by an accident or violent event. This may include surgery to remove foreign objects, pin broken bones, remove dead tissue or toxins, and so on.

Treatment usually occurs within 24 hours; although some types of treatment may take longer, these will not usually have a doctor as an active participant. These include long-term antibiotics, chemotherapy treatments, and the like.

Successful treatment can remove or "heal" up to one half the damage caused by a wound. The time required to properly treat the patient is shown on the Treatment Table below, based on the severity of the wound (note: this is "game time," not real time). At the end of the time period indicated, the treating character makes a Physician or Surgery skill roll (GM's discretion), using the target number indicated. Success indicates the patient has been completely stabilized and will not lose any more LIF due to the wound. In addition, for every 2 points of the effect number for the skill roll (rounding up), the patient regains 10% of the lost LIF from the wound, up to a maximum of 50%.

Nick's character, Doctor Barrett, is working feverishly to save a patient that's just been brought to the emergency room. The patient has suffered 24 points of Special/Lethal damage from an explosion. Because the wound is a critical wound, Dr. Barrett must spend 2d6 hours working on the patient before Nick can make a Physician roll. The GM rolls 2d6 and gets 5. After 5 hours of game time, Nick must make a Difficult Physician skill roll (TN 21). Nick rolls a total of 24! The patient has been stabilized and will lose no more LIF points due to his injury. In addition, the patient regains 20% of the LIF lost due to that wound.

Treatment Table

Wound	Difficulty	Time required
Superficial	No roll required	No roll required
Light	Average (TN 12)	1d6 minutes
Serious	Challenging (TN 18)	1d6 hours
Critical	Difficult (TN 21)	2d6 hours
Fatal	Demanding (TN 24)	2d6 hours

Recovery

Recovery is the type of healing that the body does on its own. Characters heal a number of LIF points each healing period equal to their HLT. The rate at which a character heals depends on the decision of the GM, but the following is a suggestion based on broad campaign types.

Recovery Rate

	Damage Type		
Campaign Type	Stunning	Lethal	
Realistic	Hour	Week	Month
Cinematic	Minute	Day	Week

"Realistic" campaigns are those where realism plays the most important role, where the GM and Players are trying to as closely simulate realistic situations and character types with their play. Realistic campaign examples are: cops and robbers, some spy games, romance, and high school anime simulations. "Cinematic" campaigns are everything else – they tend to be higher energy, with more powerful characters and less of a care for simulating what is "real" within the game. Cinematic campaign examples are: wuxia martial arts, mecha combat, psionics, super-heroes, and high-level international espionage.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Falling

The amount of damage suffered from a fall depends on the falling object's velocity when it hits the ground. Damage suffered from a fall is 1d6 for every 2 yards of velocity.

Falling objects gain 10 yards of velocity per second. This is broken down on the chart as an increase of 2 yards/second for every 2 yards fallen. The maximum velocity of a falling object in the Earth's gravity is 60 yards per second. This is referred to as "terminal velocity."

Falling damage is Blunt/Lethal damage. Characters may subtract their TGH from any damage sustained before subtracting it from their LIF.

To determine the amount of damage suffered from a fall, simply find the total distance fallen on the first column of the *Falling and Velocity Table* (see p. 205), then read across that row to the "Random Damage" column. Alternatively, GM's may use "flat rate" damage for falls to speed things up a bit.

Mary's character has fallen off the roof of a 6-story building. The GM determines that 6 stories is roughly equal to 24 yards. The GM consults the Falling and Velocity Table and looks at the "Distance Fallen" column until he finds "23-26." Then he reads across that row to the "Random Damage" column and sees that a 24 yard fall will inflict 9d6 of damage on Mary's character, who will hit the ground after falling for two seconds (less than a full turn). The GM picks up nine dice and suggests to Mary that she review the rules for using Action Points to avoid damage.

A quick way to estimate damage from a fall is to determine how many seconds long the character is falling and multiply that number by 5, with a maximum of 30. This is the number of dice of damage that the character will suffer when he hits the ground.

Falling and Velocity Table

Distance fallen(y)	Velocity (y/sec)	Random Damage	Flat Rate Damage	Time (Seconds)	Notes/Examples
1-2	2y/s	1d6	3	1	6-foot ladder
3-4	4y/s	2d6	6	"	1-story building
5-6	6y/s	3d6	9	"	2-story building
7-8	8y/s	4d6	12	"	
9-10	10y/s	5d6	15	"	5-story building
11-14	12y/s	6d6	18	2	
15-18	14y/s	7d6	21	"	Mature Oak tree
19-22	16y/s	8d6	24	"	
23-26	18y/s	9d6	27	"	
27-30	20y/s	10d6	30	"	10-story building
31-36	22y/s	11d6	33	3	
37-42	24y/s	12d6	36	"	
43-48	26y/s	13d6	39	"	
49-54	28y/s	14d6	42	"	
55-60	30y/s	15d6	45	"	20-story building
61-68	32y/s	16d6	48	4	
69-76	34y/s	17d6	51	"	
77-84	36y/s	18d6	54	"	
85-92	38y/s	19d6	57	"	
93-100	40y/s	20d6	60	"	Statue of Liberty
101-110	42y/s	21d6	63	5	
111-120	44y/s	22d6	66	"	Giant Redwood tree
121-130	46y/s	23d6	69	"	
131-140	48y/s	24d6	72	"	
141-150	50y/s	25d6	75	"	
151-162	52y/s	26d6	78	6	
163-174	54y/s	27d6	81	"	
175-186	56y/s	28d6	84	"	
187-198	58y/s	29d6	87	"	
199-210	60y/s *	30d6	90	"	Terminal velocity.*

* *Terminal velocity (maximum velocity when falling). Increase time by 1 second for each additional 60 yards (or fraction) fallen, but do not increase damage. For objects other than falling objects (e.g., thrown objects, vehicles, etc.), add +1d6 for each additional 2m/s of velocity.*

Electricity

Electrical hazards come in many forms, including stun guns, downed power lines, and electric security fences. The *Electricity Damage Table* gives damage values for various electrical hazards based on relative voltage. A character can make a HLT attribute roll to apply the character's TGH to the damage. If that Character is not grounded or is otherwise insulated from the current, the character automatically receives 2x the character's TGH to resist the damage.



Electricity Damage Table

Type	Examples	Damage	TN
Jolt	Car battery, stun gun	1d6 Sp/L	10
Low voltage	Fuse box, electrical socket	2d6 Sp/L	15
Med. Voltage	Industrial transformer, electric fence	6d6 Sp/L	15
High voltage	Power line, electric chair, lightning	12d6 Sp/L	20

Heat Dangers

Heat deals non-lethal damage that cannot be recovered until the character gets cooled off (reaches shade, survives until nightfall, gets doused in water, is targeted by *endure elements*, and so forth). Once rendered unconscious through the accumulation of non-lethal damage, the character begins to take lethal damage at the same rate.

A character in very hot conditions (above 90° F, or 32° C) must make a HLT attribute roll each hour (TN 12, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of Sp/S damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a –3 penalty on their rolls. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this attribute roll equal to one-half his Survival skill score (round down) and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking lethal damage (1d6 Sp/L per hour).

In severe heat (above 110° F, or 43° C), a character must make a HLT attribute roll once every 30 minutes (TN 12, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of Sp/S damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a –3 penalty on their rolls. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this attribute roll equal to one-half his Survival skill score (round down) and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking

lethal damage (1d6 points per each 30-minute period).

A character that takes any stunning damage from heat exposure now suffers from heatstroke and is fatigued.

These penalties end when the character recovers the stunning damage she took from the heat.

Extreme heat (air temperature over 140° F or 60° C, fire, boiling water, lava) deals P/L damage. Breathing air in these temperatures deals 1d6 points of damage per minute (no attribute roll to prevent this). In addition, a character must make a HLT attribute roll every 5 minutes (TN 12, +1 per previous check) or take 2 points of Sp/S damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a –3 penalty on their rolls. In addition, those wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very hot metal are affected as if caught in a forest fire (see *Forest Fires*, above).

Boiling water deals 1d6 points of scalding P/S damage, unless the character is fully immersed, in which case it deals 5d6 points of P/S damage per turn of exposure.

Smoke Effects

A character that breathes heavy smoke must make a HLT attribute roll each turn (TN 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that turn choking and coughing. A character that chokes for 2 consecutive turns takes 1d6 points of Sp/S damage.

Smoke obscures vision, giving concealment to characters within it.

MAPS AND FIGURES

Keeping track of where all of the player characters and bad guys are can be a little difficult. This is especially true if there are a lot of bad guys for the characters to deal with.



Using figures and maps makes things much easier, and can add a great visual element to the game. It's much easier to look at a map and see where your character is than to try to remember from turn to turn.

Figures

You can use pretty much anything you like for figures. Hobby stores sell metal or plastic miniatures, or you can use ordinary toys, or printable paper miniatures, or whatever random objects you have on hand. Put as much or as little time, effort, and money into this as you think is worthwhile.

Maps

A map can be as simple as a piece of paper with buildings and trees drawn on it, or even a bare tabletop with erasers and tissue boxes set on it to represent buildings and trees and such.

We recommend using a scale of one inch to represent one yard on your map (hex maps can be very useful for this, and can be used in con-

junction with the Vehicle Movement and Combat section of the **Rules of Play** chapter. You can use a ruler to measure the distance or just let the GM estimate the distance.

If you need help drawing your maps, you can ask a friend who draws well. The map doesn't have to be perfect. As long as everyone can tell a building from a tree, you're all set.

You can also buy preprinted maps, like posters, for different games at your local hobby store. Some use hexes while others use grids or squares. They may be of different scales, but as long as the GM and the players agree on the scale (how much distance each square or hex represents) they will work fine.

Another option is to use a vinyl hex or grid mat. This is a vinyl or plastic rollout mat with hexes or squares printed on it. These mats are available with different sizes of squares or hexes. We recommend a mat with 1-inch-wide hexes on it.

The great thing about these vinyl mats is that you can write on them with water-based colored markers and then wipe them off with a wet paper towel when you're done with your map. Note: don't use a "dry erase" marker, as these will permanently mark your mat!

WEAPONS

Weapon Attributes

Each weapon has several attributes that describe and rate its performance within the rules.

The attributes that describe melee weapons are Damage (abbreviated "Dmg"), Type, Size, Initiative modifier (abbreviated as "Init"—note that this is not the same as the INI derived attribute for characters), Accuracy modifier (abbreviated "Acc"), Strength minimum (abbreviated "STR"— note that this is not the same as the STR derived attribute for characters), Weight (abbreviated "Wt"), Cost, and Notes.

The attributes that describe ranged weapons are Damage (abbreviated "Dmg"), Type, Size, Accuracy modifier (abbreviated "Acc"), Strength minimum (abbreviated "STR Min"— note that this is not the same as the STR derived attribute for characters), Maximum effective range (abbreviated "Max"), Rate of fire (abbreviated "RoF"), Ammunition capacity (abbreviated "Amm"), Weight (abbreviated "Wt"), Cost, and Notes.

Damage (Dmg)

The damage rating for the weapon indicates the number of dice of damage the weapon inflicts when used by a character with STR equal to the minimum STR score required for the weapon.

Ray's character, Spike, has a STR of 3. Spike picks up a chain during a fight. The chain has a damage rating of 3d6 and a STR minimum of 3. Because Spike's STR is equal to the minimum STR required for the chain, Spike will inflict 3d6 when he strikes an opponent.

GMs wishing to use the "flat rate" method of determining damage can convert the listed weapon damage by multiplying the number of dice times 3 and then adding any bonuses

Spike normally does 3d6 of damage with his chain. To convert the damage to flat rate damage, Ray simply multiplies the number of dice times three. Spike does 9 points of damage when using the flat rate method.

Characters with more STR than the listed minimum strength for the a weapon will do extra damage with that weapon. Characters with less STR than the listed minimum strength for a weapon may do less damage with that weapon. (See *STR Min*, page 76).

Type

This describes the type of damage that the weapon inflicts. The letter before the slash represents:

B = Blunt (TGH & armor apply)
P = Penetrating (only armor applies)
Sp = Special (TGH and armor may not apply; see notes).

Sample Weapon Lists

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Dmg	Type	Size	Init	Acc	STR Min	Wt	Notes
Ax, battle	4d6	P/L	M	-2	-1	5	20	
Ax, hand	2d6	P/L	M	0	0	3	2	
Bat, aluminum	3d6	B/L	M	-1	0	3	2	
Bat, wood	3d6	B/L	M	-1	0	3	4	
Baton, police	2d6	B/L	M	0	0	2	1	
Bayonet	2d6	P/L	M	-2	0	3	.1	Adds to rifle weight
Bokken	3d6	B/L	M	0	0	2	2	
Broadsword	4d6	P/L	M	-1	0	4	12	
Cane sword	2d6	P/L	M	0	0	3	.1	
Chain	3d6	B/L	M/L	-2	-1	3	2	
Club	3d6	B/L	M	-1	0	3	2	Tree limb, improvised weapon
Club, great/war	5d6	B/L	M	-2	-1	5	16	Japanese tetsubô
Fencing foil	2d6	P/L	M	0	0	3	1	
Flail	3d6	P/L	M	-1	-1	3	10	
Glaive	5d6	P/L	L	-2	-1	5	12	Japanese naginata
Halberd	4d6	P/L	L	-2	-1	4	10	Japanese ôno
Katana	4d6	P/L	M	0	0	3	3	Samurai long sword
Kick	Special	B/S	M	0	0	0	0	Does dmg for STR+1 (see STR Table)
Knife	1d6	P/L	S	0	0	2	.5	
Lance	3d6	B/L	L	-2	-1	4	20	
Long sword	3d6	P/L	M	0	0	3	6	
Mace	3d6	B/L	M	0	0	3	16	
Nunchaku	3d6	B/L	M	0	0	3	2	
Pike	4d6	P/L	L	-2	-1	3	8	
Punch	Special	B/S	S	0	0	0	0	Does damage based on STR (see STR Table)
Rapier	3d6	P/L	M	0	0	3	6	
Sai/Jitte	2d6	B/L	M	0	0	2	.5	+2 to Bind Weapon/Disarm
Shinai	2d6	B/S	M	0	0	3	1.5	
Short sword	2d6	P/L	S	0	0	3	4	Gladius
Spear	3d6	P/L	L	-1	0	3	6	
Staff, short	2d6	B/L	M	0	0	2	2	Japanese jô, cane
Staff, three-section	3d6	B/L	M/L	-1	-1	3	6	
Staff, quarter	3d6	B/L	L	-1	0	3	2	Japanese bô
Two-handed sword	5d6	P/L	M	-1	-1	4	14	Claymore, Japanese nodachi
Wakizashi	3d6	P/L	M	0	0	3	2	Japanese short sword
Whip	1d6	B/L	L	-2	-1	3	1	

High-Tech/Sci-fi Melee Weapons

Weapon	Dmg	Type	Size	Init	Acc	STR Min	Wt	Notes
Energy sword	5d6	P/L	M	+1	-2	2	1	All weight in handle; difficult to wield
Stun baton	4d6	B/S	M	0	0	2	1	
Vibro-ax	5d6	P/L	M	-1	-1	4	12	
Vibro-knife	2d6	P/L	S	+1	0	2	.5	Tree limb, improvised weapon
Vibro-sword	4d6	P/L	M	0	0	3	8	

Simple Missile Weapons

Weapon	Dmg	Type	Acc	Rmod	STR Min	Max	RoF	Amm	Wt	Notes
Atlatl	3d6	P/L	-2	0	3	x5	1/2	1	2	
Bola	3d6	B/L	-2	0	3	x5	—	1	.5	
Boomerang	3d6	B/L	-2	0	3	x10	—	1	1	
Compound bow	4d6	P/L	0	+2	3	x20	1/2	1	4	
Crossbow, small	2d6	P/L	0	+2	3	50	1/3	1	4	
Crossbow, heavy	3d6	P/L	-1	+1	4	50	1/4	1	7	
Knife	1d6	P/L	0	0	3	x5	1/2	1	.25	
Longbow	4d6	P/L	0	+2	4	150	1/2	1	6	
Short bow	3d6	P/L	0	+2	3	100	1/2	1	4	
Shuriken	1d6	P/L	0	0	3	x5	1	1	.1	
Sling	2d6	B/L	-1	+1	3	100	1/3	1	.25	
Slingshot	1d6	B/L	0	+2	2	25	1	1	.25	
Speargun	4d6	P/L	0	+2	3	50	1/4	1	6	Stats for use out of water.

The letter after the slash represents:

S = Stunning damage
L = Lethal damage
Sp = Special damage (see notes for effect).

For example, "P/L" indicates the weapon does penetrating lethal damage, so armor but not TGH is subtracted from the damage before applying it to the character's LIF.

See *Damage* for more information about types and forms of damage and their effects in the game.

Size

Each weapon has an "optimal distance." This is the distance that the user must be from his op-

Modern Small Arms

Weapon	Dmg	Type	Acc	Rmod	STR Min	Max	RoF	Amm	Wt	Notes
Pistols (by caliber)										
.25 ACP semi-auto	1d6	P/L	-1	+1	2	50	4	6	1	SA
.22 short semi-auto	1d6	P/L	-1	+2	2	50	4	6	1	SA
.32 ACP snub-nose	2d6	P/L	-1	+1	3	50	3	6	2	RD
.32 ACP revolver	2d6	P/L	0	+2	3	50	3	6	2	RD
.22 LR semi-auto	2d6	P/L	-1	+1	2	50	4	12	2	SA
9mm short	2d6+2	P/L	0	+2	3	50	4	6	3	SA
.45 ACP (1865)	3d6+1	P/L	0	+2	3	50	2	6	4	Peacemaker, RS
.45 ACP (1980)	3d6+1	P/L	0	+2	3	50	4	7	4	M-1911A1, SA
9mm Para	3d6+1	P/L	0	+2	3	50	4	15	4	SA
.357 Mag. snub-nose	4d6	P/L	-1	+1	3	50	3	6	3	RD
.357 Mag. 6” barrel	4d6	P/L	0	+2	3	50	3	6	4	RD
10mm Auto	4d6	P/L	0	+2	3	50	4	10	4	SA
.41 Mag. snub-nose	4d6+1	P/L	-1	+1	4	50	3	6	4	RD
.41 Mag. 6” barrel	5d6	P/L	0	+2	4	50	3	6	5	RD
.44 Mag. 6” barrel	5d6	P/L	0	+2	4	50	3	6	5	RD
.50 Desert Eagle	5d6+2	P/L	0	+2	5	50	4	10	6	SA
Rifles(by caliber)										
.22 carbine	2d6	P/L	+1	+3	3	200	4	10	3	SA
9mm short	2d6+2	P/L	+1	+3	3	200	4	5	2	SA
12 gauge slug	7d6	P/L	+1	+4	5	100	2	5	6	PA; 5 or 8-rd magazine.
.30 carbine	5d6	P/L	+1	+3	4	200	4	5	6	BA or LA
5.56mm M-4	5d6+2	P/L	+1	+3	4	200	4:20	30	6	SA/AF/AB
5.56mm M-16A2	5d6+2	P/L	+1	+4	4	500	4:20	30	7	SA/AF/AB
7.62x39mm NATO	7d6	P/L	+1	+4	4	600	4:20	30	8	SA/AF/AB; FN-FAL
.50 cal. rifle	9d6	P/L	+1	+4	6	1000	3	5	12	SA; Barrett M82A1

Sci-fi Small Arms

Weapon	Dmg	Type	Acc	Rmod	STR Min	Max	RoF	Amm	Wt	Notes
Blaster pistol	4d6	P/L	0	+2	2	100	1	30	2	
Blaster carbine	6d6	P/L	+1	+3	3	200	1:5	40	4	
Blaster rifle	8d6	P/L	+1	+4	5	400	1	30	8	
Holdout pistol	3d6	P/L	-1	+1	2	50	1	20	1	
Laser pistol	4d6	P/L	0	+2	3	100	1	25	2	
Laser rifle	6d6	P/L	+1	+4	4	500	1	50	6	
Needler pistol	3d6	P/L	0	+2	3	50	1	20	2	AP

ponent in order to effectively and properly wield the weapon.

The optimal distance is 1 yard for short weapons (such as knives, short swords, punches and grappling maneuvers), 2 yards for medium weapons (such as swords, clubs and kicks), and 3 yardss for long weapons (such as most pole-arms).

When both characters are fighting with the same sized weapons, neither character receives a bonus, even if they are at the optimal distance for their weapon.

When characters are using weapons of different sizes, however, the character with the longer weapon receives a +3 INI and +3 DEF bonus. If the opponent successfully strikes with the shorter weapon, then the bonus is reversed, to simulate that the character with the shorter weapon "got inside" the other's defenses to his own optimal distance. If the character with the longer weapon retreats back to his optimal striking distance, he regains the Ability and respective bonuses.

Jim's character is a gladiator fighting in the coliseum. He is using a spear and his opponent is using a short sword. Because Jim's spear is a Long weapon, his weapon's optimal distance is 3 yards, while his opponent's is 1 meter because he is using a Short weapon. As long as Jim's character remains 3 yards away from his opponent, he will receive a +3 bonus to both his INI and his DEF. If his opponent successfully strike Jim's character, however, that means he has slipped into his own optimal distance—1 meter—and gains the +3 bonus to his own INI and DEF, and Jim loses the bonuses.

Initiative Modifier (Init)

Some weapons are bulkier and more awkward to wield than others, and some are smaller or better balanced and easier to use. To reflect these differences in weapon design, weight and balance, each weapon has a base Initiative Modifier (abbreviated "Init"). This modifier is applied as a temporary modifier to the INI score of the character using the weapon. The Initiative Modifier may be a positive number (e.g., +1), a negative number (e.g., -1), or zero.

If the character stops using the weapon the modifier no longer applies. If the character switches to a different weapon, then the new weapon's Initiative Modifier is used.

The Initiative Modifier is in addition to any INI modifiers for STR (see *STR Minimum*, below) or any other INI modifiers that may be available in your game, such as from supernatural abilities, special traits, and so on.

Accuracy (Acc)

Accuracy reflects the inherent accuracy of the weapon. The Accuracy modifier (abbreviated "Acc") is added to the character's skill roll (not the TN) when using the weapon.

Heavy Weapons & Misc

Weapon	Dmg	Type	Acc	Rmod	STR Min	Max	RoF	Amm	Wt	Notes
Machine-guns (by caliber)										
7.62mm Light MG										
mounted	5d6+2	P/L	+2	+5	N/A	1000	20	100	30	Bipod/tripod; AF; M-60
carried	5d6+2	P/L	+1	+4	4	1000	20	100	18	Carried; AF; M-60
.50 cal. MG	9d6	P/L	+2	+5	Crew	1000	20	100	60	AF, mounted; M-2
Cannons										
Field cannon, small	12d6	B/L	+1	+3	Crew	1000	1/10	1	2000	"6-pounder" (18th cent.)
Field cannon, medium	15d6	B/L	+1	+3	Crew	1000	1/10	1	2000	"12-pounder" (19th cent.)
155mm	18d6	P/L	+2	+5	Crew	22 km	1/4	1	7154	M198 Howitzer
Ship's gun, 16-in.	24d6	P/L	+3	+8	Crew	50 km	1/20	1	—	Ship's guns
Support Weapons										
Flame-thrower	4d6	B/L	+2	+2	4	40	1	50	64	M2-2
Grenade, frag.	6d6	P/L	0	0	3	STRx5	1/2	—	1	M33A1, M57; EX
Grenade, tear gas	6d6	Sp/Sp	0	0	3	STRx5	1/2	—	1	M47 (CS); EX
Grenade, stun	6d6	B/S	0	0	3	STRx5	1/2	—	1	"flash-bang"; EX
M1 Rocket Launch.	10d6	P/L	+1	+3	4	110	1/5	1	12	WWII Bazooka
M72A2 LAW	10d6	P/L	+1	+2	2	350	1	—	7	Disposable weapon; EX
Mortar, 81mm	12d6	P/L	+1	+4	Crew	1000	1/2	1	36	EX
RPG	10d6	P/L	+1	+3	3	100	1/4	1	12	Rocket-propelled grenade; RPG-7; EX

Gail is playing Elissa Longstreet, a spy for the Colonial Army, in a game set in the U.S. Revolutionary War. Elissa has a Black Powder Weapons skill of 5. During the game she is spotted trying to sneak through British-held territory. As two armed British soldiers approach her, she draws a musket pistol she had hidden in her bag and fires at one of the soldiers. Because black powder weapons are inherently less accurate than modern guns, they have an Acc of –1. When making a skill roll for Elissa to hit the British soldier, Gail subtracts 1 from her character's skill of 5, making her effective score a 4.

Range Modifier (RMod)

The Range Modifier reflects the inherent accuracy of the weapon at longer ranges. The Range Modifier (abbreviated "RMod") is a bonus usable only to offset or cancel negative modifiers due to range. For example, a Range Modifier of +2 means that a character using the weapon treats a –4 penalty for distance as only a –2 penalty. A weapon's Range Modifier may not decrease modifiers for distance below 0.

OPEN ANIME

Weapon	Cal.	Dmg	Type	Acc	Rmod	STR	Max	RoF	Amm	Wt	Cost	Notes
Machine-guns (by caliber)												
1862 Gatling gun	.40	4d6+2	P/L	0	+1	4	400	5:30	100	76	$1500	AF
1862 Gatling gun	.58	5d6	P/L	0	+1	4	500	5:30	100	76	$1500	AF
1879 Gatling gun	1-in.	7d6	P/L	0	+2	4	800	5:30	100	80	$1600	AF
Cannons												
3-in. Ordnance rifle	—	10d6	B/L	0	+2	Crew	1700	1/6	1	1,500	—	"Rodman"
6-lb. field gun	—	12d6	B/L	0	+2	Crew	1400	1/10	1	800	—	1841 model
12-lb. siege gun	—	14d6	B/L	0	+3	Crew	1400	1/10	1	1,100	—	1857 model
12-lb. Mtn. howitz.	—	14d6	B/L	0	+3	Crew	800	1/10	1	400	—	1860 model
20-lb. Parrot	—	16d6	B/L	0	+4	Crew	1800	1/10	1	1,600	—	1861 model
24-lb. siege gun	—	16d6	B/L	0	+4	Crew	1200	1/10	1	1,200	—	1845 model
32-lb. Seacoast gun	—	18d6	B/L	0	+4	Crew	8 km	1/10	1	6,800		1845 model
Explosives												
Dynamite, 1 stick	—	8d6	B/L	0	0	3	STRx10	1	—	1	$4	EX
2 sticks	—	10d6	B/L	0	0	3	STRx10	1	—	2	$8	EX
4 sticks	—	12d6	B/L	0	0	3	STRx5	1	—	4	$16	EX
8 sticks	—	14d6	B/L	0	0	3	STRx5	1	—	8	$32	EX
12 sticks	—	15d6	B/L	0	0	3	STRx3	1	—	12	$48	EX
16 sticks	—	16d6	B/L	0	0	3	STRx3	1	—	16	$54	EX
Nitroglycer-ine, vial	—	8d6	B/L	0	0	—	STRx5	1	—	1	$3	EX
Powder, canister	—	10d6	B/L	0	0	—	STRx3	1	—	1	??	EX
Powder, keg	—	14d6	B/L	0	0	—	—	1	—	7	??	EX
Powder, barrel	—	18d6	B/L	0	0	—	—	1	—	80	??	EX

STR Minimum (STR Min)

Most weapons have a minimum STR score. This is the minimum STR score required to wield the weapon effectively. Large, bulky or unbalanced weapons will have a higher STR minimum than small, balanced weapons. A weapon with "Crew" listed in the STR Min. column

2015

requires two or more people working together to operate the weapon, and no bonus or penalty is afforded regardless of their STR scores.

If a character has a STR score lower than the listed STR minimum for the weapon he is using, the character will incur a penalty to both INI and to any skill rolls made for using the weapon. For every point below the STR minimum, the character suffers a -1 INI and -1 to all skill rolls involving that weapon. In the case of melee weapons and bows, the character also does 1d6 less than the listed damage for the weapon.

These penalties are in addition to any initiative (Init) and accuracy (Acc) modifiers listed for the weapon. If damage for a melee weapon is reduced to "0d6" due to insufficient STR, then the character cannot wield the weapon well enough to inflict damage with it in a fight.

Bob has a STR 4, REF 5, and Machine-guns 5. Bob picks up a B.A.G. 92 machine-gun that has ACC -2, Init. -1, and STR Min 6. Bob's STR is 4 (2 less than the listed STR Min of 6), so he incurs a -2 to his Initiative and to his skill rolls. The total modifier to his skill rolls is -4, and the total modifier to his Initiative is -3. Bob's skill roll formula would look like this: REF (5) + Skill (5) + ACC (-2) + STR penalty (-2) + 3d6... or 3d6 + 6.

If a character has a STR score higher than the listed STR minimum for a melee weapon he is using, the character does extra damage. For every point of STR the character possesses above the listed STR minimum of the weapon, the character does an extra 1d6 of damage, up to a total maximum of twice the listed damage for the weapon. Having a high STR does not allow a character to do extra damage with a bow, crossbow, firearm or energy weapon.

Bob's machine gun has run out of ammo, but the bad guys are still coming, so Bob pulls out his trusty fighting knife. A knife has a listed STR Min of 2 and a base damage of 1d6. Because Bob's STR of 4 is two points above a STR Min of 2, Bob can inflict as much as +2d6 damage when he hits with the weapon. Unfortunately for Bob, 3d6 is more than two times the base damage for a knife, so Bob does only 2d6 points of damage with the knife. But that's still better than normal damage, and Bob's feeling pretty mean…

Maximum Effective Range (Max)

Maximum effective range (abbreviated "Max") is the maximum range at which a ranged weapon, such as a bow or firearm, can reasonably hit a target at which it is aimed. While weapons can fire a projectile (e.g., an arrow or bullet) beyond the listed maximum effective range, the chances of hitting a target at this range becomes a matter of sheer luck moreso than skill. As a result, shots beyond Max range are not allowed. This distance is in yards.

Rate of Fire (RoF)

A weapon's rate of fire (abbreviated "RoF") indicates how often a ranged weapon may be fired and how many rounds are expended each turn. A whole number indicates the maximum number of rounds that may be fired per turn. A fraction indicates the number of turns required to reload the weapon between shots (e.g., "1/3" means the weapon can be fired once every three turns). More than one number separated by a colon indicates the weapon is capable of multiple rates of fire (e.g., 3:20 indicates the weapon is capable of firing either 3 shots per turn or 20 shots per turn). In such cases the player selects which rate of fire to use at the beginning of his character's action.

Ammunition (Amm)

Ammunition capacity (abbreviated "Amm") indicates how many rounds of ammunition or are contained in a ranged weapon or in an attached supply, such as a battery or magazine.

Simple missile weapons, such as crossbows and slings, have an Amm. Rating of 1 because they can't "hold ammo" (they can only fire a single arrow or stone that is loaded and readied for use).

OPEN ANIME

Weight (Wt)

The weight of the weapon, listed in pounds.

If you are not keeping track of the weight of equipment or other items carried by the characters in your game, then you can ignore this number.

Notes

Notes contain additional information about a weapon, such as examples of the type of weapon, special effects, and special uses of or exceptions to the basic rules.

The following annotations are used in the core rules:

AB: Auto-burst (the weapon may be fired using the autofire rules for Burst only; no Stream or Spray attacks are allowed with this weapon)

AF: Autofire (the weapon may be fired using the rules for autofire)

AP: Armor piercing (on a successful attack using this weapon, the AV of the target is halved before subtracting it from the damage caused by the attack)

BA: Bolt action

EX: Explosion (attacks using this weapon are made using the rules for Explosions)

PA: Pump action

LA: Lever action

SA: Semi-automatic

RD: Revolver, double-action

RS: Revolver, single-action

Extensions and Variants may include special rules that apply to weapons. These will be listed under "Notes" for weapons that use rules presented in those Extensions and Variants.

Steve is running a sci-fi game in which needler pistols are able to penetrate armor better than most weapons. Steve decides that the "armor piercing" ability effectively halves the armor value of the target, and notes "AP" for needlers on the weapon list under "Notes."

ARMOR

Armor Attributes

Like weapons, armor has several attributes that describe its performance within the rules. These are not the same kinds of attributes that characters have, but they serve a similar function.

The attributes that describe armor are Armor Value (AV), Locations covered (Loc), Strength minimum (abbreviated "STR Min"), Weight (abbreviated "Wt"), Cost, and Notes.

Armor Value (AV)

The Armor Value indicates the amount of points of protection that the armor affords. Each point of AV reduces damage inflicted upon the character by 1 point. For example, an AV of 10 would reduce a 16 point attack to a 6 point attack. The armor's AV protects from all forms of damage unless otherwise noted in the description (e.g., chain mail is flexible and does not protect as well against Blunt and piercing attacks as it does cutting attacks).

Locations Covered (Loc)

The numeric body locations (from the *Random Hit location Table*, on page 94) that the armor protects. The AV of the armor is applied to any attacks that strike one of the protected areas.

If the GM is not using Hit Locations in your game, you can ignore these numbers.

STR Minimum (STR Min)

The minimum STR score required to move about and fight unencumbered by the armor. Armor that is rigid, heavy and/or restricts air flow will have a higher STR Min than armor that is less cumbersome, allows air to circulate around the wearer's body (to "breathe" and release heat) and doesn't restrict the wearer's range of motion.

If a character has a STR score lower than the listed STR minimum for the armor he is wearing, the character will incur a penalty to his REF. For

2017

Armor List

Item	AV	Loc	STR Min	Wt.	Notes
Clothing, light	1	Varies	0	2	Typical spring/summer garb
Clothing, heavy	2	Varies	1	8	Typical fall/winter garb
Brigandine	5	7-15	4	8	½ AV vs. Blunt damage
Chainmail	6	3, 5-15	5	20	½ AV vs. Blunt damage
Football helmet	4	3-4	2	4	American football (e.g., NFL)
Football pads	4	7-8, 10-11, 13-15	4	16	American football (e.g., NFL)
Helmet, kevlar	7	3-4	2	2	Military/police helmet
Leather	3	7-15	3	4	½ AV vs. Blunt damage
Modern body armor					"Bullet proof vest"
Level IIA	5	7-12	3	2	½ AV vs. pointed weapons
Level II	6	7-12	3	2	½ AV vs. pointed weapons
Level IIIA	7	7-12	3	3	½ AV vs. pointed weapons
Level III	8	7-12	4	3	½ AV vs. pointed weapons
Tactical	9	6-13	5	4	½ AV vs. pointed weapons
Trauma plate	10	13	2	1	
Plate armor, full	9	3-18	8	60	½ AV vs. Blunt damage
Plate armor, partial					
plate sections	8	3-4,7-13	6	40	½ AV vs. Blunt damage
chain sections	6	5-6,14-18	—	—	½ AV vs. Blunt damage
Samurai armor	7	3-18	5		½ AV vs. Blunt damage
Space suit, modern	6	3-18	5	250	20th century., includes 7 hrs life support
Space suit, future	8	3-18	3	50	Sci-fi, includes 24 hrs life support
Trooper armor	10	3-18	3	12	Sci-fi; ½ AV vs. Blunt damage

every point below the STR minimum, the character suffers a -1 to REF and MOV. This temporary reduction in REF also affects the character's INI, and of course any REF-based skill rolls.

Bob has a STR 4 and REF 5. Bob puts on a suit of full samurai armor, which has a STR Min of 4. Because Bob's STR is 1 less than the STR Min of the armor, Bob suffers a temporary –1 to his REF and MOV for as long as he wears the armor.

If a character has a STR score higher than the listed STR minimum there is no bonus.

Weight (Wt)

The weight of the armor, listed in pounds. If you are not keeping track of the weight of equipment or other items carried by the characters in your game, then you can ignore this

OPEN ANIME

number.

Cost

Normally the cost of the armor will be listed here, in the currency appropriate to the setting and era in which your game is set. We have not provided prices for the armor in this book because it would be impossible to list accurate prices for all settings. GMs are encouraged to create prices for armor in their game if they so choose. Prices appropriate to a particular setting, and in the proper currency for that setting, will be published in other products.

Notes

Notes contain additional information about the armor, such as "1/2 AV vs. Blunt damage."

AV of Common Materials

	Thickness				
	10mm	20mm	50mm	150mm	1m
Material	**(.4")**	**(.8")**	**(2")**	**(6")**	**(1.3 yd)**
Aluminum alloy	14	28	70	210	1400
Bronze	10	20	50	150	1000
Cement	2	4	10	30	200
Glass	1	2	5	15	100
Plexiglas, anti-ballistic	12	24	60	180	1200
Plexiglas, standard	2	4	10	30	200
Steel, tempered	26	52	130	390	2600
Steel, mild	18	36	90	270	1800
Stone	2	4	10	30	200
Wood, heavy	2	4	10	30	200
Wood, soft	1	2	5	15	100

INANIMATE OBJECTS

Eventually there will come a time when the GM or one of the players will want to know whether an attack can penetrate some material, whether it be a cinder block wall, a door, or even the side of a tank.

While living creatures have LIF points, non-living things have Hits. Hits work just like LIF points do, except that an object that has its Hits reduced to 0 doesn't "die" (the object isn't alive in the first place). Instead, when an object's Hits are reduced to 0, the object is presumed destroyed. "Destroyed" can mean several things, depending on the nature of the object and the GM's judgment. A "destroyed" vehicle becomes inoperable, a window is broken, a brick is broken, a wooden door is broken down, and so on.

When an object has sustained damage equal to twice its Hits, it is demolished, and is beyond repair. A "demolished" vehicle is crushed flat, a window is shattered, a brick is pulverized, a wooden door is splintered, and so on.

Realistic Values

The table below lists the Hits required to penetrate or break for some common materials that may be encountered in games of various genres. GMs wanting to apply an AV to an item (e.g., in order to keep track of cumulative damage) should split the number evenly between AV and Hits. For example, a two-inch-thick aluminum plate is listed as having 210 Hits. The plate could be treated as having an AV of 105 and 105 Hits.

Object AV/Hits Table

Material or Object	AV	Hits
Doors		
Airlock door	24	21
City gates, small, wood	15	30
City gates, large, wood	24	60+
Interior wood door	6	9
Interior starship door	18	12
Exterior wood door	12	9
Metal fire door	15	15
Safe door	30	9
Vault door, small	45	24
Vault door, large	48	27
Furniture		
Bookcase, small	9	12
Bookcase, large	12	18
Bookcase full of books	12	24
Card catalog, wood	12	21
Chair, standard	9	9
Chair, high-back, leather	9	12
Chamber pot	6	6
Computer, personal	6	6
Computer, mainframe	9	15
Desk, small	9	12
Desk, large wooden	12	18
Desk, large metal	15	24
Filing cabinet, small metal	12	12
Filing cabinet, large metal	15	18
Furniture, light wood	9	9
Furniture, heavy wood	12	15
Furniture, plastic	6	9
Furniture, steel-reinforced	15	15
Glass	2	3
Glass, reinforced	6	3
Hearth/fireplace	15	30
Lamp post, breakaway	15	9
Mantel	9	9
Painting, small framed	6	3
Painting, large framed	9	3
Picnic table	9	21
Planter, large	9	9-18
Stanchion, metal	9	6
Stanchion, plastic	3	2
Table, medium	9	12
Table, large	12	15
Turnstile	15	12
Washbasin (sink)	9	9
Locks		
House doorknob lock	9	6
Deadbolt lock	12	9
Magnetic lock	15	9
Padlock	12	9
Machinery		
Camera, surveillance	9	3
Copier, large	18	24
Escalator	27	24
Fax machine	6	6
Fire extinguisher	12	12
Hand cart, metal	12	6
Machinery, very light/small	9	6
Machinery, light	15	12
Machinery, medium	21	18
Machinery, heavy	27	24
Metal detector, hand-held	3	6
Metal detector, walk-thru	12	9
Monitor, video	6	9
Printer, desktop	9	6
Spacesuit	6	9
Telephone	6	6
Typewriter, electric	6	6
Typewriter, manual	6	9
VCR/DVD player	9	6
Vending machine	18	18
Water fountain, metal	9	9
X-Ray machine	18	18

Outdoor Items, Miscellaneous		
Awning	9	3
Boulder	15	29
Bridge, small (1.6 ktons)	27	21
Bridge, large (100 ktons)	27	27
Bushes	6	6
Cobblestone, single	12	12
Dirt, per cubic meter	0	30
Flagpole, breakaway	12	6
I beam, per 2m length	27	24
Manhole cover	27	15
Mannequin	9	9
Porta-potty	9	12
Railroad tracks	12	15
Stone, per cubic meter	15	57
Telephone pole	15	15
Trees		
Small tree, less than 2m	12	15
Medium tree, less than 15m	15	24
Large tree, 15m or more	15	33
Vehicles		
Armored car	24	54
Automobile	9	45
Bicycle	9	6
Cart, small	9	24
Cart, large	12	36
Chariot	12	24
Helicopter	9	52
Hovercraft	15	52
Jetpack/EVU	12	12
Motorcycle	9	33
Plane, light	9	39
Plane, twin engine	9	45
Plane, multi-engine	9	54
Railroad car	18	45
Spaceship, capsule	30	30
Spaceship, medium	30	60-120
Spaceship, large	45	90-240
Submarine	30	60
Tank (front armor)	60	60
Tank (side/top armor)	48	—
Tank (bottom armor)	42	—
Truck or bus	12	51
Wagon, covered	9	36
Walls and Fences		
Armored wall	39	21
Barbed wire	15	6
Brick wall	15	9
Concrete wall	18	15
Home interior wall	9	9
Home exterior wall	12	9
Office interior wall	9	9
Office cubicle wall	9	6
Reinforced concrete wall	24	15
Spaceship interior wall	24	18
Vehicle gate arm, wooden	6	6
Wire fence	18	9
Wooden wall	12	9
Weapons		
Heavy weapon	18	24-27
Pistol	12	6-12
Rifle	12	15-21
Sword	12	12-18
Very large heavy weapon	18	36
Miscellaneous		
Barrel	9	18
Control console, per 2m	12	12
Drum, 55-gallon steel	12	18
Crate, small wooden	9	6
Crate, large wooden (23m)	12	21

Obviously if a listed item does not appear or even exist in your game setting you can ignore it.

Cinematic Values

For GMs wanting the AV and Hits values for items in Cinematic styled games (such as superheroes), use the optional AV/Hits table below.

Games with an anime or superhero theme should use these values, as they will provide a more powerful feel to the game, allowing the characters to have a greater affect on the world around them than if using the realistic armor values of substances, as listed in the table above.

ACTION POINTS

Action Points (abbreviated as AP) allow player characters (and important NPCs) to receive bonuses when performing dramatic or heroic actions (see *Using Skills*). By using Action Points, players can have their characters pull off amazing stunts and heroic feats, such as jumping off of a cliff, avoiding an explosion, or even dodging a gunshot or arrow! Rather than relying on a random chance as dictated by the dice, players can create their character's successes when they need them most!

All starting characters begin play with four Action Points. A character can gain more Action Points by attempting dramatic and heroic actions. Players can be awarded additional Action Points by the GM at any time during a game. Generally, Action Points are awarded for attempting dramatic and heroic actions. GMs can also award additional Action Points for role-playing and anything else they deem appropriate. Action Points are not the only award that players will receive. There are improvements to be purchased and Disabilities to be eliminated using Experience Points as well (see *Experience Points*).

A character can save Action Points from one game session to the next, but never more than 3. If a character has more than 3 Action Points but does not use them by the end of the game session, they are lost. GMs should not be stingy with Action Points, and players should use them as often as possible, especially in cinematic style games.

When To Use Action Points

Dramatic or Heroic Actions

Action Points may be used for any dramatic or heroic action with GM's permission.

A dramatic action is any action or moment in the game that is especially exciting, tense, suspenseful, or is very important to the story. Think of it in terms of an action movie; if something happens that scares you, has you on the edge of your seat, makes you want to jump up and yell, "Yes!" or clap really loud, it was probably a dramatic moment in the movie.

Examples of dramatic moments include jumping from a high-rise office window to a helicopter hovering outside, an escaped prisoner of war narrowly avoiding enemy soldiers who are searching for him, a showdown or duel between two long-time rivals or arch enemies, and disarming a nuclear warhead with seconds to spare.

After the Dice Are Rolled

Action Points may be used after the dice have been rolled but must be used before the GM describes the outcome of the events for that turn. A player may not use more Action Points in a single game session than the character has, and no more than three Action Points can be used with any single action or skill roll.

Action Point Counters

Especially if Action Points are being used a lot, it can be annoying to constantly be scribbling a character's current AP total on the character sheet. One way to simplify things is to use some

kind of physical counters to keep track of them; the "flat marbles" used for some card games and such are ideal, but pretty much anything will do. For a weird bit of atmosphere, most anyone who comes back from a trip to Japan will probably return with a handful of the little aluminum 1-yen coins.

Borrowing Action Points (Optional)

Usually if a character is out of Action Points he or she can't do any of the things that AP are usually spent on. However if the GM allows, players may "borrow" Action Points at suitably dramatic moments. That is to say, if it's important enough to the story, a character that doesn't have enough AP can start taking negative AP to be paid back later. This can be done for any of the purposes noted above, as well as "Epiphany" character development (see below).

If a character has a negative AP total, he cannot use any more Action Points – unless it is once again a suitably dramatic moment and the GM wants to let him borrow more. The AP given out normally will go towards eliminating the debt, until the character gets back to zero or more AP.

The Bad Karma Option: One option for clearing out a debt of Action Points more quickly is to treat it as a sort of "karmic debt" and have the GM expend the negative points as though they were positive Action Points for the character's enemies or to hinder the character's rolls at critical moments.

WHAT ACTION POINTS DO

Action Points may be used in one of several ways to enhance a character's performance in a game.

A player may use up to three available *Action Points* in any single turn. These may be split up and used on different actions, events or dice rolls, as long as they all take place in the same turn.

Mighty Blow

Rather than rolling the damage dice on any successful hit or damaging attack, you can elect to declare a Mighty Blow, at the cost of 1 Action Point. A Mighty Blow adds a +5 Damage Bonus.



This includes any bonus damage, such as that for Massive Damage. Any melee weapon acquired through purchases or gaming always shatters irreparably when used to deliver a Mighty Blow.

Pushing It

At a cost of one Action Point, you may double your ranks in any one Ability, for a duration of one turn only. The Ability chosen must be one which could reasonably be increased through sheer effort of will and determination. Almost all Abilities are fine for this, but those that rely on external objects, such as Item of Power, or most types of Armor, will usually be vetoed by the GM.

Improve Defense

Once per turn the character can spend an Action Point to increase the Defense score by five (5) points. This bonus lasts until the beginning of your next action.

Inspiration

The character can spend an Action Point to receive a sudden burst of insight or inspiration in the form of a hint, clue, or bit of help from the GM. It might be a way out of the villain's fiendish deathtrap, a vital clue for solving a mystery, or an idea about the villain's weakness. It's up to the GM exactly how much benefit that the character gets from the inspiration.

Destiny

You can at any time spend one or more Action Points, with the agreement of the GM, to alter the world in some minor way. Essentially, this allows you the player to have some input into the story, over and above the actions of your character. This change must be one that is plausible, minor, and not overwhelmingly beneficial to the player characters. It may assist them to accomplish their goals, but they must still achieve those goals by their own efforts, not simply by spending Action Points!

For example, a character captured and imprisoned by an archenemy might spend a Action Point to have a chance at escape — a comrade or sympathizer smuggling in a dagger, or a drunken guard falling asleep nearby, or the discovery of a loose chunk of granite with which to smash open chains. It does not allow for escape to be handed to him or her on a plate by a sorcerer magically putting all the guards to sleep and bursting the door open.

Another option for this use of a fate point is to alter your own character in some minor way, by revealing a new facet to his or her past. This might include knowing a language that he or she did not know before, which is useful in his current situation — or having a contact in the area based on previous dealings in the region.



One good use of Destiny is when the players are at a dead end in an adventure — perhaps they have missed some crucial clue, or failed to puzzle out where to go next. A single Action Point in

OPEN ANIME

this case is usually enough for the GM to offer some kind of in-game hint. Preferably, this will not be so blatant as to have a friendly non-player character tell them the answer outright. Other methods of giving out background information should be used, perhaps taking a hint from comics or movies. For example, a dream or vision could reveal the past history of creatures and places crucial to the plot; or an ancient scroll could be uncovered that, with a Decipher Script check and a bit of logic, could provide a hint as to where to look next.

The GM will be more likely to accept proposed uses of Destiny which could plausibly relate to a character's own future destiny, as reflected by his or her declared goals.

Boost a Skill Check

Each Action Point used to boost a Skill Check adds a bonus of +5 to the roll.

Nicholas is playing in a gritty superhero game. His character, Dark Justice, is facing two gunmen in a shopping mall. One of the gunmen turns and fires his gun into the crowd. Nicholas wants to protect the innocent bystanders, so he tells the GM "Dark Justice is going to throw his mini-shield to hit the gun and knock it upward, so that no one gets hit." The GM considers the action and decides that Nicholas needs to make an Extreme Throwing Skill Check (TN 27). Dark Justice has REF of 7 and his Throwing skill is +5, for a total of 12. Nicholas rolls 3d6 and gets 14, for a total of 26. Ordinarily Nicholas would have failed the roll. But Nicholas decides to spend an Action Point. The GM allows it because it is a dramatic moment in the adventure. Nicholas spends one AP and adds 5 to his roll, making his new total 31, turning the failed attempt into a successful one. Dark Justice thwarts the evil gunman's plans and saves the innocents! Nicholas then marks off one Action Point from his character sheet, and the game continues.

Should the GM deem it appropriate, using Action Points to fulfill a heroic or important plot or goal may be reason enough to award an additional Action Point!

Boost a Control Roll

Action Points may also be used to add to the Control Roll of a Disability, but only with GM's permission (see *Control Rolls*, page xx). Each Action Point used to boost a Control Roll adds a bonus of +5 and is calculated the same as the Skill Check boost.

Tim's character has the Psychological Impairment (Claustrophobia) at the 2 CP level. During a game, Tim's character enters an elevator. Because psychological Disabilities kick in automatically, the GM tells Tim that his character begins to experience extreme anxiety and that Tim must make a Control Roll to avoid mild panic and the accompanying +6 TN to all his Skill Checks. The Control Roll is 10 for a Hardship, so Tim rolls 3d6 and gets an 8. Failure! But Tim tells the GM that he really needs to make this roll and spends an Action Point to boost the roll. Tim adds 5 to his roll, making it a 13, turning the failed roll into a successful one. Tim's character gains his composure and is able to control his phobia for the elevator ride.

Boost an Attribute

Each Action Point spent will temporarily increase a primary attribute by 1, or a derived attribute by 5.

Attributes increased in this way do not also increase derived attributes, although this may be used to increase the attribute for use with a Skill Check.

This increase lasts for the duration of one "event" within the game, not merely one Skill Check.

Ryan is playing Louisiana Smith, an archaeologist and explorer, in a pulp adventure game. In the game, Louisiana has just recovered a stolen artifact from a Nazi camp. As he sneaks through the camp, he comes face to face with a big, tough Nazi soldier who is guarding a Flying Wing airplane that Louisiana needs to escape. Louisiana's STR is only 3, he will do only 1d6+2 damage when Louisiana punches his opponent. Ryan knows he'll have to do more, because this guard is very big. Ryan spends one Action Point to increase his STR to 4 for one turn. Now, if Louisiana connects with a

punch he will do 2d6 damage! His increased STR does not increase any of his Derived Attributes, such as his TGH, however. The GM determines that a fist fight is an "event" and allows Louisiana to keep his STR at 4 for the duration of the fight. Whether Louisiana wins or loses, however, once the fight is over his STR will return to 3.

Reduce Damage

Each Action Point spent reduces the damage bonus from a single attack or event by 5 points. If the damage is effectively reduced to less than 0, treat it as 0 points of damage. This can simulate a "stroke of luck" in which an attack completely misses the character, a glancing blow, a miracle, or any other explanation agreed upon by the player and the GM.

During the fight with the Nazi soldier, Louisiana gets hit with a haymaker punch for 17 points of damage! Louisiana's TGH is only 3, so he will suffer 14 points of damage from the punch. Because this exceeds half his LIF, Louisiana will be knocked unconscious! Ryan decides to spend his last remaining Action Point to reduce the damage of the attack. By spending an Action Point, the damage is reduced from 14 to 9 points. Louisiana reels from the blow but he is still up and fighting!

Buy an Opportunity

The GM is the person who sets the scene in a role-playing game, describing the environment and the people, items, animals and plants it contains. However Action Points can allow a player to ask the GM for a certain item or event to exist in the scene that provides the character with an opportunity they did not have before.

Such an opportunity could be to have a useful item just be within reach during a fight, for example a fire extinguisher or pair of scissors. Or it could be to have a certain event occur that favors the character, for example, when pursuing an enemy who has just made off in a car the player could request a taxi to be just pulling up so he can leap in and shout "Follow that car!"

The GM should determine exactly how many Action Points must be spent in order to gain the opportunity, for simple things one Action Point is enough, but for events that could completely turn the tables on an opponent, two, three or even more Action Points would be required. The GM can, at any time, refuse any request by a player to buy an opportunity. Any items or events requested should be appropriate for the current environment, for example whilst having a fight in a restaurant kitchen it is very reasonable for a knife to be within easy reach, but not for a handgun!

Move Outside The Box

Sometimes the dramatic moment of the story requires "action" from the character that goes outside of his normal capabilities. Typically, it will be a situation where the character needs a skill that he does not have, after all a character can not be prepared for every situation no matter how many skills he purchases. This use of Action Points is usually only appropriate in very cinematic campaigns, and with the permission of the GM. Moving outside the box requires **at least** two Action Points be spent, and perhaps more at the judgment of the GM. Regardless, though, of how many Action Points are spent, the course of action that the player wishes the character to undertake *must* be something within the realm of the capabilities, and does not add any new Abilities or Skills to the character.

Star watched as the needle punctured Angel's chest. She knew that she didn't have time to waste, Angel would die if someone didn't do something and quickly. Star grabs Angel and rushes him to the medical facilities in the headquarters. She remembers those surgeries that she observed in college, and Star never forgets a single detail. The scalpel doesn't even shake in her hand when she starts the first cut…

Gaining More Action Points

When you spend an Action Point, it is gone forever. It does not recover with time, and you can not use Character Point or Experience Points to purchase more.

Each time your character accomplishes a major goal, either personally or as part of an adventuring party, he or she gains from 1 to 2 Action Points, always at the discretion of the GM. Usually this will occur only at the successful conclusion of an adventure. An entirely unsuccessful adventure will tend to mean you do not gain any Action Points as a result.

Gaining Action Points

Characters can gain Action Points during the game. When a character fulfills one of the following criteria, the GM should award an Action Point to the character. GMs should not be stingy with Action Points, and players should use them as often as possible, especially in cinematic style games. For guidelines on how many Action Points to award in a game session, see the next section.

When to Award an Action Point

Dramatic or Heroic Actions

The GM should award one Action Point for any particularly dramatic and heroic action attempted by the characters during the game, whether it is successful or not (see *Dramatic or Heroic Actions*).

Meet a Goal

If a character manages to fulfill the "in-game goal" for his character, he should receive an Action Point. The fulfillment of the goal must be in a way that logically fits into the current adventure or story.

Louisiana Smith narrowly defeats the Nazi guard in a tough fist fight and climbs aboard the Flying Wing to escape with the artifact he came for. The GM decides that defeating the guard so that Louisiana could use the plane to escape with the artifact is a worthy goal and awards an Action Point to Ryan. Ryan notes the new Action Point on his character sheet.

Memorable Game Moments

GMs can award Action Points to players for especially good role-playing. Any time a player performs a particularly memorable "moment" within the game, portraying his or her character, or does something to improve or propel the story or that entertains the rest of the group in a significant way (GM's discretion), that player deserves an Action Point.

The young Samurai Tateno towered over Hideo, his older, more experienced foe. The older man looked up from his broken sword with wet eyes. "You have shamed me with your skills." "No," replied Tateno, "you have shamed yourself with your lack of them." Turning his back, Tateno walks quietly away, refusing to give Hideo even the death of a Warrior.

Give the GM a Plot Hook

If a player manages to role-play some aspect of his or her character in a way that allows the GM to work it into the main plot of the adventure—especially if it allows the GM to make a "complication" for the PCs out of it—the player should receive an Action Point. Many Disabilities provide great plot hooks for the GM, such as Dependent, Enemy and Secret.

Nicholas's character, Dark Justice, hands over two recently captured gunmen to the police. As the last assailant is placed in a squad car, Nicholas tells the GM that Dark Justice uses his communicator to call his fiancé Nancy's apartment. "He's already running late for their dinner date," Nicholas says, "but he knows she will understand." The GM decides that this is a

great opportunity to add a new twist to the story! The GM tells Nicholas that the voice on the other end of the phone is definitely not Nancy. "Good evening," came the voice of Cyrus, Dark Justice's arch enemy. "I am afraid the young lady has made other plans…"

Other Circumstances

GMs can create additional circumstances under which a character gains an Action Point, and some published products will include additional guidelines for awarding Action Points, based on the setting or genre. For example, in a pulp adventure game, characters might gain an Action Point for incorporating their character's "tag line" into normal dialogue during the course of the adventure, for role-playing a scene exceptionally well and in-character, or any situation in the game that the GM feels is deserving of an Action Point award to one or more of the players.

How Many AP to Award

The GM should carefully consider how many Action Points to give out to any single character in a game session, however. Because characters cannot save more than three Action Points from one game session to the next, players will likely spend them freely. If a GM awards 10 Action Points to a character in a single game session, that's effectively the same as giving the player five "automatic successes" to use during the adventure. This is perfectly acceptable, if this is what the GM wants, but it also diminishes the usefulness of points spent on each character's attributes and skills, and some players may feel cheated.

As a guideline, GMs should award an average of one Action Point to each character in *Realistic* level games, 2 Action Points to each character in *Cinematic* level games, and 3 or more Action Points to each character in *Extreme* level games.

Mike is running an anime-style, Extreme *level game. Because the game is based on anime, the action is at times over the top, so Mike wants his players to use Action Points frequently in his game. Mike decides that he will award an average of 5 Action Points to each player in his game each game session.*

A player can save Action Points from one game to the next, but never more than 3. If a character has more than 3 AP but doesn't use them during the game, the extra points are lost.

Optional Rules

Mind Combat

Mind combat is a special type of conflict that uses the Telepathy Ability to forcibly invade another's mind. Most telepaths make mental attacks using the Special Attack Ability with the Mind Attack Ability. This mental conflict, however, is a clashing of two psyches, each struggling to subdue the other — it is akin to two people getting into a mental fist fight. Mental combat can become lethal if either person begins tearing down neural pathways, erasing memories, or destroying brain cells. Physical strength does not play a role in this battle, only the power of the mind. Each turn of mind combat covers the same amount of time as one turn of physical combat.

Mind combat can only be carried out once mental contact has been established, usually using the Telepathy Ability. Once two minds have touched, the initiator of the contact may withdraw at any time. Alternatively, physical damage to the initiator or perhaps use of an appropriate Item of Power can break the contact. For the target to break unwanted mind contact, the player cannot initiate any other actions for one round and must make a successful Willpower save against a TN of 15 plus the attacker's Telepathy Ability Rank. If the check is successful, the aggressor is forced from the character's mind and the mind combat ends immediately.



If any character in mental contact forfeits all physical actions for the round, he or she can attack through mind combat. A successful attack requires the player to make a successful Will check against a TN of 12 plus any bonuses from Mind Shield or other appropriate abilities. The GM has the option of modifying the TN should the attack be particularly easy or difficult.

The psychic damage of a successful attack is equal to the attacker's Ranks in the Telepathy Ability. The damage is removed from the target's Life points. However there is no actual damage that occurs to the target, this "damage" is purely for the purposes of determining the mental "status" of the target. If a character is ever reduced to or below zero Life points while in mind combat, his or her mind has been broken and is now at the mercy of the opponent. The victor can end the character's life, search through memories, plant powerful suggestions, erase thoughts, or simply render the character unconscious. Any changes to a character's mind (other than death) will remain until reversed by another character skilled in the Telepathy Ability. The GM should decide exactly how this must be accomplished. Role-playing a character whose mind has been altered is challenging but can also be very rewarding when played with consistency.

A telepath who wishes to alter a target's mind after winning a mind combat battle must spend a great deal of time to alter it. Minor changes such as removing unimportant memories or implanting unessential false memories can take a couple of hours. Massive changes, such as instilling (or removing) a prejudice or phobia, rebuilding a large portion of the target's memories, or similar large scale remodelling should take days to complete. Characters may rush the procedure, if pressed, but there is a risk of the alteration failing over time. The target may notice a gap in his or her memory and question what happened, or a personality adjustment (new phobia, for example) may weaken over time. If the character wishes to perform a change quickly, the character may perform minor changes in a matter of rounds while the character can accomplish massive changes in about an hour.

When a character attempts to alter a target's mind, he or she must make a Psychology Skill check against a TN appropriate for the extent of the change; 12 for minor changes, 18 for major changes, 24+ for massive changes. The GM may increase the TN further if the alteration is particularly severe or drastic. The character's margin of success determines how long the modification lasts, measured in years if the character took his or her time with the procedure or measured in days if the character rushed things. GMs should

make this Skill check secretly and not inform the player of the result unless it is a failure — he or she will not know how long the change will hold, only that it has occurred or not.

The Mind Shield Ability provides a bonus to the character's attempt to resist mind combat and mental alterations, as well as Armor against mind combat damage.

Vehicle Movement and Combat

For simply traveling from point to point, the vehicle used is largely a matter of personal style and finances. Skill checks are only required in extraordinary circumstances. These rules are primarily focused on ground vehicles—cars, trucks, and light military vehicles. The rules can be modified for boats, heavier armored vehicles, and aircraft.

All vehicles have the statistics listed below:

MB: A vehicle's Maneuver Bonus reflects its size, maneuverability, and the general difficulty to hit in combat. DEF is a modifier to the driver's Driving skill.

Hits: Vehicles have Hits much like people have LIF. Attacks against the vehicle cause normal damage, and when a vehicle runs out of Hits, it is effectively destroyed (see the *Core Rules* for more information).

AV: In addition to Hits, vehicles also have an Armor Value rating.

Speed: The listed Speed is the vehicle's cruising speed in miles per hour (see *Movement* below).

Hexes: This is an abstract measure of distance, for use by those using 1-inch hex maps for mapping out movement in games. A hex is 1 yard across.

Characters in Vehicles

A character in a vehicle fills one of several possible roles, which determines what the character can do.

Driver: The driver of the vehicle controls its movement. Most vehicles have only one position from where the vehicle can be driven, so the person seated there is the driver. Driving a vehicle is, at a minimum, a move action, which means that the driver may be able to do something else with his or her attack action. There can be only one driver in a vehicle at one time.

Copilot: A copilot can help the driver by taking an aid another action. The copilot must be seated in a location where he or she can see the road and advise the driver (in a car, this generally means the front passenger seat). Aiding the driver is a move action, leaving the copilot with an attack action each round to do something else. A vehicle can have only one copilot at a time.

Gunner: Some vehicles have built-in weapons. If such a weapon is controlled from a location other than the driver's position, a character can man that position and become the gunner. A vehicle can have as many gunners as it has gunner positions.

Passenger: All other personnel aboard the vehicle are considered passengers. Passengers have no specific role in the vehicle's operation, but may be able to fire weapons from the vehicle or take other actions.

Vehicle Sizes

Vehicles use the same size categories as characters and creatures, as shown on Table: Vehicle Sizes. The vehicle's size modifier applies to its initiative modifier, maneuver modifier, and Defense. (The size modifier is already included in the vehicle statistics on Table: Vehicles)

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Vehicle Size	Size Modifier	Size Scale*	Examples
Colossal	–8	5	Yacht, semi with trailer
Gargantuan	–4	4	Tank, limousine
Huge	–2	3	Luxury car, SUV, armored car
Large	–1	2	Economy car, Harley
Medium-size	+0	1	Racing bike, dirt bike

*Size Scale: This column refers to the number used in the Size column in the Sample Vehicles Table below.

Facing and Firing Arcs

Unlike with characters, when dealing with vehicles, the vehicle's facing (the direction it's pointing) is important. Facing indicates the direction in which the vehicle is traveling (assuming it's not moving in reverse). It can also determine which weapons aboard the vehicle can be brought to bear on a target.

A weapon built into a vehicle can by mounted to fire in one of four directions—forward, aft (rear), right, or left—or be built into a partial or full turret. A partial turret lets a weapon fire into three adjacent fire arcs (such as forward, left, and right), while a full turret lets it fire in any direction. For vehicles with weapons, a weapon's arc of fire is given in the vehicle's description.

Getting Started

Most vehicles can be entered with a Move Action and started with an Action. An exception is noted in a vehicle's description when it applies.

Driving a Vehicle

Driving a vehicle is a move action, taken by the vehicle's driver. During his or her move action, the driver moves the vehicle a number of hexes that falls within its speed category. The driver can attempt maneuvers to change the vehicle's course or speed. These maneuvers can be attempted at any point along the vehicle's route. The driver can choose to use his or her attack action to attempt additional maneuvers.

The two kinds of vehicle movement are simple maneuvers and stunts.

Simple Maneuvers: A simple maneuver, such as a 45-degree turn, is easy to perform. Each is a free action and can be taken as many times as the driver likes while he or she moves the vehicle. However, simple maneuvers do cost movement—so a vehicle that makes a lot of simple maneuvers will not get as far as one going in a straight line. Simple maneuvers do not require the driver to make skill checks.

Extreme Maneuvers: Extreme Maneuvers are difficult and sometimes daring maneuvers that enable a driver to change his or her vehicle's speed or heading more radically than a simple maneuver allows. An Extreme Maneuver is a move action. It can be taken as part of a move action to control the vehicle, and a second stunt can be attempted in lieu of the driver's attack action. Extreme Maneuvers always require Driving Skill checks.

Initiative

There are two options for determining initiative in vehicle combat. First, is individual initiative just as in normal combat, where each character rolls separately. This is probably the best method if most or all characters are aboard the same vehicle, but it can result in a lot of delayed or readied actions as passengers wait for drivers to perform maneuvers. An alternative is to roll initiative for each vehicle, using the vehicle's initiative modifier. This is particularly appropriate when characters are in separate vehicles, since it

allows everyone aboard the same vehicle to act more or less simultaneously.

Speed

For the purposes of combat, vehicles move on their driver's Initiative (INI). Any passengers act on their own Initiative.

The listed Speed of each vehicle is its base score, *Cruising* speed of the vehicle.

Cautious speed is half or less of cruising speed.

High speed is up to twice the vehicle's cruising speed.

Top speed is up to four times the vehicle's cruising speed.

Once a vehicle starts moving, it moves at the same speed each turn (on its driver's Initiative) unless the driver changes the speed. The driver can increase or decrease a vehicle's speed by one category per turn.

Reverse

The maximum speed a vehicle can move in reverse is cruising speed. While moving in reverse, all penalties to Driving checks are doubled.

Turning

Unless otherwise stated, a vehicle may only be turned *up to* a total of 60 degrees in a single turn without performing a maneuver (see below). The GM must decide just how picky he wants to be about turning. Going down a windy road with multiple turns requires a Skill check in itself, so don't get picky about turning.

Bogging

Certain types of terrain (as noted on the *Driving Conditions* table below) may cause a vehicle to bog down and become stuck. Whenever a driver fails a Skill check when driving on any of these surfaces, he must make a second roll (TN 15). If this roll is failed, the vehicle bogs down.

The driver can attempt to free the vehicle on subsequent actions by making another Skill check against the same TN. Should he roll a 1 or less, the vehicle is stuck and cannot be freed without the help of another vehicle or some serious coaxing.

Skill Checks

A driver usually doesn't have to make a Driving Skill check unless something happens that might cause an accident. Specifically the operator must make a Skill check when he suffers damage or performs a repeated or extreme maneuver.



Damage To Vehicle or Driver

Whenever an attack damages the vehicle or its the driver, the driver must attempt a Skill check (TN 18).

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Repeated Maneuvers

Zipping over rough ground or through a forest is called a "repeated maneuver." If this must be done in a stressful situation (such as being shot at), the driver must make a Skill check (TN 15, or more if the obstacles are really tricky), plus or minus any relevant modifiers.

Simple Maneuvers

During a vehicle's movement, the driver can perform any one of the following maneuvers.

45-Degree Turn

Any vehicle can make a simple 45-degree turn as part of its movement. The vehicle must move forward at least a number of hexes equal to its speed (shown on **Table: Sample Vehicles**) before it can turn. Making a 45-degree turn costs 1 hex of movement.

Sideslip

A driver might wish to move to the side without changing the vehicle's facing, for instance to change lanes. This simple maneuver, called a sideslip, allows a vehicle to avoid obstacles or weave in and out of traffic without changing facing. A sideslip moves a vehicle 1 hex forward and 1 hex to the right or left, and costs 3 hexes of movement.

Extreme Maneuvers

Attempting any of the following maneuvers requires a Skill check. See the *Extreme Maneuvers Table*, below, for the TN of each maneuver.

Bootlegger Turn

The vehicle moves forward half its speed and turns between 90 and 180 degrees.

Brake Hard

A driver may decelerate by more than one speed category per turn, coming to a dead stop from a Sprint (or equivalent). This increases the TN of the maneuver by 6.

Drive with Knees

The character can react instantly to drive his car with his knees so that he can use both hands in combat. This requires a successful Driving skill roll (TN 15), which is made at the start of the character's turn. If the character fails, he can only use one hand this turn because he needs to use his other hand to control the car. Alternately, the GM may allow the driver to perform an action using both hands but the driver automatically loses control of the car at the end of the turn.

Extreme Turn

The vehicle moves at High speed and turns up to 120 degrees (i.e., up to 2 hex facings on a hex map. This maneuver may not be attempted by trains.

Jump

A driver can attempt to jump his or her vehicle across a gap in his or her path.

To make a jump, the vehicle must move in a straight line a number of hexes equal to its speed. If the vehicle doesn't have enough movement left to clear the gap, it must complete the jump at the start of its next turn.

The TN for a jump depends on the width of the gap, modified by the vehicle's speed category.

On a failed check, the vehicle fails to clear the gap, and instead falls into it (or collides with the far side). Determine damage as for a collision (see Collisions and Ramming).

Gap Width	TN
1–3 ft. (ditch)	15
4–8 ft. (culvert)	18
8–15 ft. (creek, small ravine)	21
16–25 ft. (narrow road, small pond)	27
26–40 ft. (wide road, small river)	30

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Vehicle Speed Category	TN Modifier
Slow speed	+10
Cruising speed	+5
High speed	+0
Maximum speed	–5

A shallow gap (1 to 3 feet deep) is equivalent to a Medium-size object; the vehicle may be able to avoid taking collision damage from the failed jump by treating the far side as a hazard and then continue moving (see Avoid Hazard, above).

A moderately deep gap (4 to 10 feet deep) is equivalent to a Huge object. The vehicle can only drive out of the gap if the walls are not too steep.

A deeper gap (11 feet or deeper) is equivalent to a Colossal object. The vehicle can only drive out of the gap if the walls are not too steep.

If the gap is filled with water, the vehicle takes only half damage from the collision with the ground. However, if the water is too deep or the bottom is too soft (GM's discretion), the vehicle might not be able to move.

Move and Act

If the driver wishes to make an action of his own (such as firing a weapon) while driving at Cruising or High speed, he may attempt a Skill check (TN 15 at high speed and 18 at top speed). Failure indicates the action cannot be taken, while failure by 6 points or more causes a loss of control as a failed maneuver (see below).

Ram

Intentionally hitting an obstacle requires the driver to make a Driving Skill check versus a TN equal to the target's DEF (medium to large-sized stationary objects are automatically hit). See *Wrecks* for details.

Regain Control

Whenever a driver loses control of his vehicle, he must perform this maneuver on his next action if he wishes to regain control of the vehicle. The driver may not perform any other vehicle maneuver until he has succeeded at regaining control (though he or she could jump off of the vehicle, taking damage as per the Falling/Velocity rules in the *Core Rules*). The vehicle continues to move at its current speed and direction until control is regained.

Failed Maneuvers

Failing a Skill check while maneuvering can be a bad thing. At the very least, it means that the attempted maneuver failed. If the driver failed by more than 6 points, it can also mean that his vehicle goes out of control.

Whenever a Skill check to perform a maneuver fails, consult the *Failed Maneuver Table* to see what ill consequences may occur, if any. Note that some of the maneuver descriptions specify the effects of a failed roll. In these cases, these effects supersede effects from the table. The effects from the table are:

Minor Slip: The vehicle goes slightly out of control and moves erratically. The driver suffers a -3 penalty to Teamster or Drive rolls related to operating the vehicle until he regains control.

Slip: The vehicle slides, moving 1 meter to the right or left (determined by the GM) for every 10 yards it traveled this turn (round down). If this brings it into contact with another object, a wreck occurs (see *Wrecks*, below). This continues each turn until the driver regains control.

Skid: The vehicle goes into a skid, moving 2 yards right or left for every 10 yards it moved this turn. If this brings it into contact with another object, a wreck occurs (see *Wrecks*, below). This continues until the driver regains control. If the driver does not regain control within two turns, the vehicle flips over at the end of the second turn (see *Flip*, below).

Spin/Tracked: A wheeled vehicle goes completely out of control, spinning wildly. It moves half its current speed in a random direction each turn until the driver regains control or it collides with another object.

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A tracked vehicle throws a track and comes to a stop. The vehicle may no longer move, but it may still perform the Turn in Place maneuver.

Collisions and Ramming

A collision occurs when a vehicle strikes another vehicle or a solid object. Generally, when a vehicle collides with a creature or other moving vehicle, the target can attempt a Reflexes Check (TN 15) to reduce the damage by half.

Resolving Collisions

The base damage dealt by a vehicle collision depends on the speed and size of the objects involved. Use the highest speed and the smallest size of the two colliding objects and refer to Table: Collision Damage.

Collision Damage

Highest Speed	Damage Die Type
Slow speed	1d6
Cruising speed	2d6
High speed	4d6
Maximum speed	6d6

Collision Multiplier

Smallest Object or Creature Size	Multiplier
Colossal	x20
Gargantuan	x16
Huge	x12
Large	x8
Medium-size	x4
Small	x2
Tiny	x1
Smaller than Tiny	x1/4

After finding the base damage, determine the collision's damage multiplier based on how the colliding vehicle struck the other vehicle or object. (For vehicles moving in reverse, consider the back end to be the vehicle's "front" for determining the collision multiplier.) Consult Table: Collision Direction for a multiplier.

Once the damage has been determined, apply it to both vehicles (or objects or creatures) involved in the collision. Both vehicles reduce their speed by two speed categories. If the colliding vehicle moved the minimum number of hexes for its new speed category before the collision, it ends its movement immediately. If not, it pushes the other vehicle or object aside, if possible, and continues until it has moved the minimum number of hexes for its new speed category.

Collision Direction

Colliding Vehicle's Target	Multiplier
A stationary object	x 1
A moving vehicle, striking head-on or	
45 degrees from head-on	x 2
A moving vehicle, striking perpendicular	x 1
A moving vehicle, striking from the rear or	
45 degrees from the rear	x 1/2
A vehicle being sideswiped (see Sideswipe)	x 1/4

The driver of the vehicle that caused the collision must immediately make a Driving check (TN 15) or lose control of the vehicle (see Losing Control, below). The driver of the other vehicle must succeed on a Driving check (TN 15) at the beginning of his or her next action or lose control of his or her vehicle.

Wrecks

When a vehicle hits something, both it and whatever it hits take 1d6 B/L damage for every 6 yards of velocity it was traveling when the

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impact occurs. Subtract the vehicle's AV from damage before subtracting the damage from the vehicle's Hits.

All passengers on or in the vehicle suffer an amount of B/L damage equal to one half of the damage caused by the collision.

For example, a vehicle that last moved at 40 feet per turn would inflict/take 2d6 of damage.

Speed is relative, so a vehicle that hits a wall causes damage as above. If the vehicle hits a moving target coming directly at it, combine both vehicles' speeds to determine the relative velocity.

Speed Modifiers

Speed	Skill	DEF
Stationary	+2	0
Cautious Speed	+2	0
Cruising Speed	0	+1
High Speed	-2	+2
Top Speed	-4	+4

Maneuvers

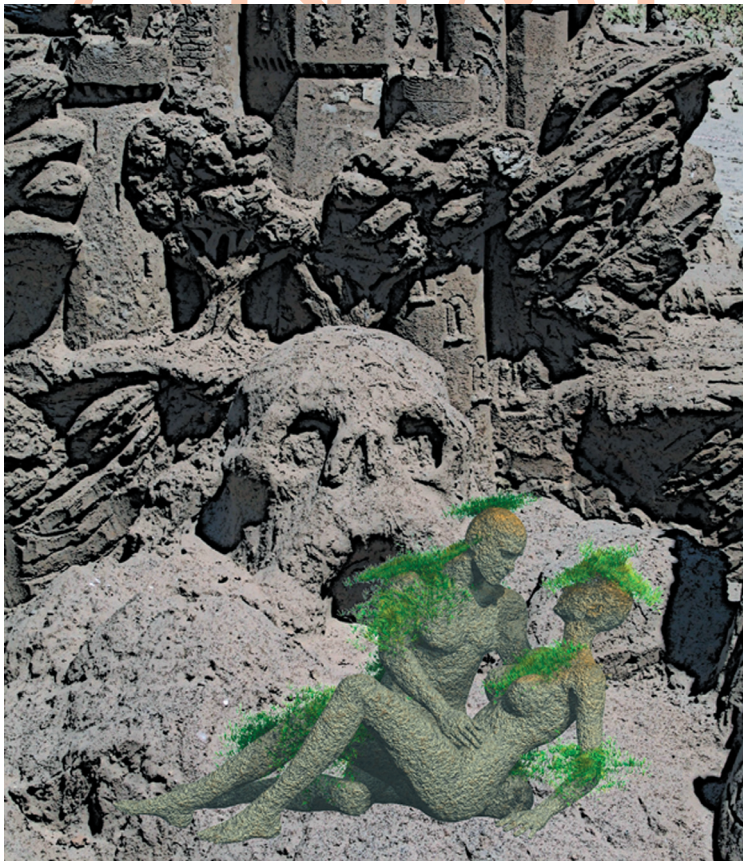
Maneuver	TN
Battle Damage	21
Extreme Turn	18
Move and Act	18
Regain Control	15
Brake Hard	+6

Fighting from Vehicles

The following rules provide a further framework for combat involving vehicles.

Vehicle Combat Actions

Actions during vehicle combat are handled the same way as actions during personal combat. In general, a character can take two move actions, or one move action and one attack action in a round.



Move Actions: Changing position within a vehicle is usually a move action, especially if the character has to trade places with another character. If the character's movement is short and unobstructed, the character can do it as the equivalent of a 5-foot step. Otherwise, it requires a move action.

Attack Actions: Anyone aboard a vehicle can make an attack with a personal weapon, and drivers and gunners can make attacks with any vehicle-mounted weapons controlled from their positions.

Crew Quality

Rather than force the GM to create, or remember, statistics for everyone aboard a vehicle, vehicle statistics include a general "crew quality" descriptor. This indicates a typical crew's aptitude with the vehicle's systems.

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Table: Vehicle Crew Quality shows the five levels of crew quality for GM-controlled vehicle crews, along with the appropriate check modifier. Use the check modifier for all skill checks related to the operation of the vehicle (including Driving and Repair checks). Use the attack bonus for all attack rolls performed by the crew. For quick reference, Table: Crewed Vehicles shows the typical crew quality, and the crew's total initiative and maneuver modifiers, for the vehicles covered in this book.

This by no means restricts the GM from creating unique vehicles where the crew's statistics are included, or from using GM characters' abilities when they drive or attack from vehicles. It's merely a shortcut to save time if the GM doesn't have particular characters behind the wheel.

Vehicle Crew Quality

Crew Quality	Check Modifier	Attack Bonus
Untrained	–4	–2
Normal	+2	+0
Skilled	+4	+2
Expert	+8	+4
Ace	+12	+8/+3

Attack Options

Firing a vehicle's weapon requires an attack action and uses the driver's or gunner's ranged attack modifier.

A driver with 5 or more ranks in the Driving skill gains a +2 synergy bonus when firing vehicle-mounted weapons while driving.

Some military vehicles are equipped with fire-control computers. These systems grant equipment bonuses on attack rolls with the vehicle-mounted weapons to which they apply.

Driving Defensively: Just as in melee combat, one can fight defensively while driving a vehicle, which grants a +2 dodge bonus to the vehicle's Defense and applies a –4 penalty on attack rolls made by occupants of the vehicle.

Total Defense: A driver can choose the total defense, action which grants a +4 dodge bonus to Defense but does not allow the driver to attack (gunners or passengers take a –8 penalty on attack rolls). These modifiers last until the driver's next round of actions.

Gunners or passengers, however, can take full attack actions, since they don't have to use a move action (except, perhaps, to change positions in the vehicle). In general, taking a full attack action is useful only if a character has a base attack bonus high enough to get multiple attacks. A passenger can make multiple attacks with his or her own weapon. A gunner can make multiple attacks with one or more weapons controlled from his or her position.

Targeting Occupants

An attack made against a vehicle uses the vehicle's Defense, modified by its speed category. Attackers can choose instead to target specific vehicle occupants.

An attack against a vehicle occupant is made like any other attack. Remember, however, that a character in a vehicle gains bonuses to Defense from both the vehicle's speed and any cover it provides.

Cover

When a character fires from a vehicle, objects or other vehicles in the way can provide cover for the target (see Cover in Combat pg. 180).

Damaging Vehicles

All vehicles have Life points, which are roughly equivalent to a character's Life points. Like most inanimate objects, vehicles also have hardness. Whenever a vehicle takes damage, subtract the vehicle's hardness from the damage dealt.

When a vehicle is reduced to 0 Life points, it is disabled. Although it might be repairable, it ceases functioning. A vehicle that is disabled

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while moving drops one speed category each round until it comes to a stop. The driver cannot attempt any maneuvers except a 45-degree turn.

Unlike characters, vehicles don't "die" when they reach –10 Life points. Instead, a vehicle is destroyed when it loses Life points equal to twice its full normal total. A destroyed vehicle cannot be repaired.

Energy Attacks: Vehicles are treated as objects when subjected to energy attacks.

Exploding Vehicles: If the attack that disables a vehicle deals damage equal to half its full normal Life points or more, the vehicle explodes after 1d6 rounds. This explosion deals 30d6 points of damage to everyone within the vehicle (Reflexes Check, TN 20, for half damage), and half that much to everyone and everything within 30 feet of the explosion (Reflexes Check, TN 15, for half damage).

Damage to Vehicle Occupants

When a vehicle takes damage from a collision, its occupants may take damage as well. The base amount of damage depends on the cover offered by the vehicle.

Cover	Damage
None	Same as damage taken by vehicle
One-quarter	One-half damage taken by vehicle
One-half	One-quarter damage taken by vehicle
Three-quarters or more	None

Each of the occupants may make a Reflex check (TN 15) to take half damage.

Repairing Damage

Repairing damage to a vehicle takes a full hour of work, a mechanical tool kit, and a garage or some other suitable facility. (Without the tool kit, a character takes a –4 penalty on his or her Repair check.) At the end of the hour, make a Repair check (TN 20). Success restores 4d6 Life points. If damage remains, the character may continue to make repairs for as many hours as it takes to restore all of the vehicle's Life points.

Driving Condition Modifiers

Obstruction	Skill	MOV
Moderate undergrowth	-2	x3/4
Thick undergrowth	-4	x1/2
Narrow streets	-4	x1/2

Surface	Skill	MOV
Mud*	-4	x1/2
Ice	-6	x1/2
Light Snow*	-2	x3/4
Heavy Snow*	-4	x1/2
Paved Road	0	x1
Rutted Road	-2	x1/2
Steep Slope	-2	x1/2
Plowed Field*	-2	x3/4
Cratered Field	-2	x3/4
Rocky	-4	x1/2
Visibility	**Skill**	**MOV**
Darkness	-4	x1
Fog	-4	x1
*The vehicle may become bogged down.		

Failed Maneuvers

Failed By	Effect	Penalty
1-2	Minor Slip	-1
3-4	Slip	-3
5	Skid	-6
6+	Spin/Tracked	-9

Sample Vehicles

Along with their specialized weaponry, many modern era characters use rigged and modified vehicles. Additionally, many international organizations use high tech vehicles in their quests to keep their interests safe.

This section describes the standard vehicles likely to appear in a modern-day game. Some vehicles are suitable for use as personal vehicles by characters, while a desperate individual may commandeer others (such as a city bus) when no better transportation is available. This section concentrates on general types that are in common use, rather than providing individual statistics for specific models. All costs are approximate US dollar (USD) values, which can vary greatly.

Each vehicle counts as a major item of Personal Gear, with the exception of the motor scooter and ultra-light (minor Personal Gear). These basic templates can be modified using the Customizing Vehicles guidelines. Using the customization options, the vehicle can be further modified to match the character's personal vision (adding options such as supercharged engines or armored glass windows) with each option normally considered to be as a minor Personal Gear.

Speed is the cruising speed of the vehicle in miles per hour. Pickup trucks, sport/utility vehicles, and dirt bikes move at half speed off-road. Other non-military ground vehicles are road-bound and can move a maximum of one-quarter speed off road.

MB represents the maneuverability bonus of the vehicle, a modifier to the Driving or Piloting skill of the Driver/Pilot.

Size is a relative measure of the vehicle's mass and volume. "1" means the vehicle is about the size of a motorcycle — you could drive it through a house's door, or stow it in the back of a van (weighs up to 1000 lbs.). "2" means it is about the size of a car or pickup truck, and you can park it in a normal garage (weighs 1-5 tons). "3" means it is the size of a large truck (uses multiple parking spaces, often masses 6-10+ tons when loaded). "4" means it is even larger, such as a big tractor-trailer combination that might haul 20+ tons.

People is how many people the vehicle is designed to seat, including the driver or pilot.

Cargo is how many tons or pounds of cargo the vehicle can typically carry without suffering movement penalties. An ** indicates that the cargo area can be converted into passenger space at a ratio of 5 people per ton.

Armor is the number of damage points that the Armor stops. An * indicates that the Armor only protects the vehicle, not the driver or passengers.

Hits indicate how much damage the vehicle can sustain before it ceases to function. The vehicle is not necessarily destroyed when its Life points are reduced to zero — it has merely sustained enough damage to shut the engine down, hinder the control systems, or in some other way prevent the vehicle from working. For rules on destroying a vehicle, see Breaking Objects.

No range is listed, since all vehicles except the ultra-light can operate for 3-10 hours before requiring refueling. The ultra-light's endurance is under one hour. Oversized vehicles (trucks, big rigs, busses) usually burn diesel fuel, while most other vehicles use gasoline.

Automobile

The basic motor vehicle of the 20th century. Automobiles have four wheels and are normally powered by a gasoline internal combustion engine. Standard features on modern vehicles include headlights, seat belts, air bags, and air conditioning.

Passenger Car

An ordinary compact or mid-sized automobile. Cars are available in coupe (two doors, often with a hatch back and extra cargo space), sedan (four door), or station wagon (extra room in back, but reduced rear visibility for driver) body styles. Year 2004 cost: $12,000+ USD.

Sample Vehicles

Vehicle	Speed	MB	Size	People	Cargo	AV	Hits	Skill
Automobiles								
Compact Car	40	-	2	4	200 lbs.	8	50	Drive (Car)
Passenger Car	40	-	2	5	400 lbs.	10	60	Drive (Car)
Pickup Truck	40	-	2	3	1 ton	12	70	Drive (Car)
Race Car	75	+1	1	1	-	10	60	Drive (Car)
Sports Car	50	-	2	2	400 lbs.	8	50	Drive (Car)
Sport/Utility	40	-	2	6	400 lbs.	12	70	Drive (Car)
Stretched Limousine	40	-1	2	6	1000 lbs.	10	60	Drive (Car)
Van	38	-1	3	2	1 ton **	14	80	Drive (Van)
Motorcycles								
Dirt Bike	35	+1	1	2	-	6*	40	Drive (Motorcycle)
Scooter	30	+1	0	1	50 lbs.	4*	30	Drive (Motorcycle)
Motorbike	45	+1	1	2	100 lbs.	6*	40	Drive (Motorcycle)
Oversized Vehicles								
Big Rig	38	-2	4	2	10 ton	20	110	Drive (Big Rig)
Bus	30	-2	4	30-50	1 ton	17	100	Drive (Big Rig)
Heavy Truck	38	-1	3	2	5 tons	16	90	Drive (Van)
Helicopters								
Combat Helicopter	75	+1	4	2	2 tons	20	80	Piloting (Helicopter)
Light Helicopter	50	+1	2	3	500 lbs.	8	50	Piloting (Helicopter)
Utility Helicopter	50	-	3	2	2 tons **	14	80	Piloting (Helicopter)

Dirt Bike

A motorbike designed for off-road operations. Dirt bikes include the Off-Road Suspension option at no extra cost. Year 2004 cost: $4,000+ USD.

Oversized Vehicle

A big ground vehicle with six or more wheels, usually powered by a diesel engine rather than gasoline engine (diesel fuel is cheaper, and less flammable). Standard features include headlights, seat belts, airbags, and air conditioning.

Big Rig

An 18-wheel tractor-trailer combination, with a powerful tractor cab designed to tow a big trailer. With trailer, a big rig may be 20 yards long. Pick one of these options for the cargo area: flat bed (open cargo), van (enclosed cargo), refrigerated ("reefer"), tanker. If the trailer is unhooked from the "fifth wheel" (this takes at least two turns outside the vehicle to do this), the rig's speed can increase by 10-20 mph. Year 2004 cost: $60,000+ USD.

Bus

A city, school, or excursion bus. In action series, these usually make their appearance when someone hijacks or plants a bomb on them. A typical bus seats 35-45 people (with plenty of standing and cargo room) and is about 10-15 yards long. Year 2004 cost: $50,000+ USD.

Heavy Truck

A large truck, bigger than an ordinary van. Pick one of these options for the cargo area: flat bed (open cargo), van (enclosed cargo), refrigerated ("reefer"), tanker. A heavy truck may also be a cement mixer, dump truck, street cleaner, fire engine, etc. Year 2004 cost: $30,000+ USD.

Helicopter

A rotary winged vehicle. Modern helicopters are usually powered by a gas turbine engine, and require a pilot's license to operate. They have a horizontal main rotor that provides lift and (by tilting the helicopter) propulsion, and a small vertical tail rotor to act as a stabilizer. A helicopter is capable of executing vertical takeoffs or landings, and hovering. Standard features include landing lights (treat as headlights), seat belts, and often air conditioning.

Combat Helicopter

A devastatingly offensive helicopter (such as the AH-1W Super Cobra), typically used in battle against combat forces and either very powerful or very large monster threats. A combat helicopter counts as three major Gadgets. Year 2004 cost: $10,000,000+ USD.

Light Helicopter

A small helicopter that can carry a couple of people. This is a typical news or police helicopter. Year 2004 cost: $100,000+ USD.

Utility Helicopter

A larger helicopter that is often a civilian version of a military troop-carrying model. These choppers are designed to carry a dozen people or a decent cargo load. Helicopters of this sort are often used as air ambulances. Year 2004 cost: $1,000,000+ USD.

Airplane

An airplane relies on wings for lift and a propeller or jet engine for propulsion. It requires a smooth, flat runway for takeoffs and landings. While airborne it must maintain a minimum speed (usually about 1/10 its maximum speed) to avoid stalling. Standard features include landing lights (treat as headlights), seatbelts, emergency parachutes, and often air conditioning.

Light Airplane

A single-engine propeller-driven passenger airplane, capable of operating out of grass strips or landing on a smooth stretch of highway if necessary. Light aircraft are a favorite of drug runners. Use Pilot (Light Plane) Skill. Year 2004 cost: $100,000+ USD.

Heavy Airplane

A large plane, often with two or four engines, which is used primarily to transport large numbers of people or cargo. Heavy airplanes often require longer runways in order to take off or

OPEN ANIME

land. A heavy airplane counts as two major Personal Gear. Year 2004 cost: $10,000,000+ USD.

Combat Jet

Military jets and bombers (such as the F/A-18 Hornet or B-2 Spirit) are incredibly powerful machines used to assist ground assaults or carry out missions alone. A combat jet counts as four major Gadgets. Year 2004 cost: $50,000,000+ USD (sometimes exceeding $1 Billion USD).

Ultra-Light

A small one-man powered hang-glider that is used mainly for recreation. Counts as a minor Personal Gear. Year 2004 cost: $10,000+ USD.

Speed Boat

Boat designs come in a variety of shapes, depending on their desired function. Speed boats have sleek hull designs and powerful engines in order to travel at high speeds. Standard features include a VHF radio (treat as a CB radio), convertible tops, running lights, and lifejackets.

Recreational Speed Boat

A medium-sized powerboat, usually with an outboard engine. These boats are often used for water-skiing. Year 2004 cost: $10,000+ USD.

Offshore Racer

These large race boats, usually measuring between 10 and 18 yards in length, are used in offshore racing. Smugglers often utilize these sleek, fast boats to transport illegal goods. Year 2004 cost: $80,000+ USD.

Military Ground Vehicles

When battling against foreign incursions or giant monsters, the army will come to the rescue with their awesome firepower. Unfortunately, sometimes even that is not enough.

Armored Personnel Carrier (APC)

A lightly armored, full-tracked, air-transportable personnel carrier designed to carry and protect personnel and certain types of cargo. Year 2004 cost: $500,000+ USD.

Heavy Tank

Heavy tanks (such as the M1 Abrams) are the backbone of military forces. They provide strong mobile firepower while providing heavy protection for its crew in almost any environment. Year 2004 cost: $4,000,000+ USD.

Customizing Vehicles

Options can be added to different types of vehicles to enhance performance or give them additional capabilities. Unless otherwise noted, each accessory counts as one minor Personal Gear and can only be taken once.

Note that Engine Rebuild, Turbocharger, and Big Engine have approximately the same effect in game terms. A super fast vehicle may have all three options assigned, however.

Some vehicles possess super technology, which grants them abilities beyond those outlined below. These abilities are covered using the Item of Power Attribute. Creating a vehicle such as this not only requires minor and major Personal Gear for the base abilities of the vehicle plus any modifications but also requires a Rank in Item of Power sufficient to purchase the Attribute(s) granted by the super technology.

Airfoils

An aerodynamic feature (airdams, spoilers, etc.) that improves traction by increasing the downward force on a car. Gives a +1 bonus to any Drive (Car) Skill check at speeds over 100 mph. Airfoils are available for any automobile and some exceptionally fast boats.

Armor

The vehicle is retro-fitted with armored panels, Kevlar inserts, and bullet proof glass on the windows. Each time the armor is assigned, the extra weight reduces top speed by 10 mph but increases the vehicle's Armor Value by 3. Armor is available for any vehicle except an ultra-light aircraft.

Big Engine

An upgraded engine, such as a big V8 in a passenger car, or a V12 in a sports car. The engine often differentiates an ordinary passenger car from a luxury model, or a basic sports car from a racer. A big engine adds 20 mph to the top speed of any vehicle.

Burglar Alarm

If a door, trunk, or window is opened without the proper key, an alarm will sound to alert (and annoy) everyone in the vicinity. Defeating the alarm requires an appropriate Skill check against a TN of 21. Marginal failure means the thief realizes he or she cannot disarm it while a worse failure means will trigger the alarm.

Citizen's Band (CB) Radio

With a range of a few miles, truckers favor CBs for exchanging information on road conditions, speed traps, and general gossip. Unlike a personal cell phone, a CB broadcasts to everyone in the area — it is not useful for private communication, but is great for distress calls. A similar option can be taken for taxi dispatcher radios. A CB radio can be installed in any vehicle.

Consumer Electronics

These electronic gadgets include small TV sets, a vehicular computer, fax machines, etc. A cassette or CD player in a car can be considered a fairly mundane item. Electronics can be added to any vehicle, provided the size seems reasonable.

Convertible Top

The vehicle with this option has a removable or retractable plastic, fiberglass, or fabric top. Removing the top gives a better view and nice breeze, but also means that the driver and passengers are now "partially exposed," and are at the mercy of the weather. Exposed occupants are also completely unprotected from overhead attacks and can be attacked (bypassing vehicle Armor/Life points) more easily from the side or rear (-4 attack check penalty to ignore the car's Armor). On the plus side, those occupants can also fire out of the vehicle without any difficulty, and jump in or out more easily. This feature is available for automobiles; recreational speed boats and most offshore racers automatically possess this option.

Door Mount

This option is a post and bracket for mounting a light or heavy machine gun out a helicopter's or van's open side door.

Electronic Countermeasures

This advanced defense system enables the vehicle to avoid detection by radar and other sensors. Any attempt to mechanically detect the vehicle (except through the basic senses such as sight or hearing) incurs a -6 penalty.

Engine Rebuild

A rebuild is major custom upgrade to the engine, rather than just simply increasing its size. In a car, this may involve removing and completely cleaning the existing system (including "hot tanking" the engine block in a chemical bath to remove grime), then adding various modifications (known as "blueprinting"). Other engine "buzz-words" include forged dome pistons, tunable fuel injection, strengthened rods and bearings, adjustable or hot cam socket, tubular headers, custom intake manifolds, big valves, and a bored-out throttle body. This option adds 20 mph to the top speed of any vehicle.

Furnishings

Furnishings include a mini-bar, mini-fridge, kitchenette, chemical toilet, bunk bed, etc. For larger furnishings (kitchenette, bunks, etc.) each one added also requires replacing one or two seats, depending on the size. Furnishings can be added to any vehicle with Size 2 or more.

Global Positioning System (GPS)

This option uses satellite systems to provide precise navigational coordinators, which prevents the driver from becoming lost. Naturally, it is still possible to miss a turn through human error. A GPS can be added to any vehicle.

Hidden Cargo Space

This space is often used in vehicles that are designed to smuggle goods across borders or past highway patrols. Up to 10% of the vehicle's cargo capacity can be considered "hidden" under fake panels and bogus fixtures. Hidden space can be added to any vehicle with cargo capacity.

Improved Brakes

This option includes high quality brakes, drag chutes, or spiked tires that allow the vehicle to stop faster than normal. Those breaks provide a +2 bonus to Driving Skill checks on any maneuver where sudden, sharp deceleration is

important. Improved breaks can be added to any ground-based vehicle.

Improved Shocks

Some vehicles have high quality or adjustable shock absorbers or springs, which provide an extra +1 bonus to Driving Skill checks in any circumstance where the suspension would be important (such as crossing over obstacles).

Lights and Siren

Any vehicle can be fitted with a noisy siren and flashing lights. This option can also provide a powerful spot search light.

Luxury Interior

Fine Corinthean leather upholstery, lots of chrome, extra head room, or other items on a vehicle are a sure way to impress someone special. A plethora of luxury options are available for most vehicles.

Manual Transmission

There are two types of transmissions: manual and automatic. An automatic transmission is assumed to be standard issue for automobiles (but not other vehicles), and means that the gear mechanism changes by itself. In a manual transmission, the driver must shift the gears on his or her own, usually with a stick and the clutch pedal. In the case of automobiles, a manual transmission gives an additional -1 penalty to characters who are trying to do something else while they drive, such as shoot a gun. If, however, a vehicle with an automatic transmission and one with a manual transmission are competing in a race, the GM should give any driver who has both the Driving Skill and a manual transmission an extra +1 bonus to reflect the greater speed control the manual transmission provides. This is a mundane option for automobiles.



Nitrous Oxide Tank

This option adds a nitrous oxide tank and push-button injection system. Nitrous oxide ("laughing gas") can be injected into the engine, which releases more free oxygen and improves cylinder pressures and engine temperature. This action allows extra fuel to be burned in a more controlled fashion, resulting in a quick power boost for a short sprint. A single injection adds 30 mph to speed and +2 to Initiative on any turn it is used. A tank can be used for up to five turns before depleting the nitrous oxide bottle. This performance enhancer is available for any vehicle except helicopters.

Off-Road Suspension

A raised suspension and special tires allow the vehicle to drive cross-country at two-thirds of the on-road top speed. The extra suspension weight also means -5 mph to road speed. For airplanes, this option corresponds to Rough-Field Landing Gear that lets the aircraft land without a proper runway. Off-road suspension is available for any ground vehicle or light aircraft.

Police-Band Radio

This radio allows the driver to listen to, and communicate on, police and emergency frequencies. If the cops find one of these in a vehicle, they may be a little suspicious, however. This radio is available for any vehicle.

Pontoons

Pontoons allow an aircraft to land in, or take off from, water. The extra air drag reduces the aircraft's top speed by 5 mph. Pontoons are available for any helicopter or light airplane.

Radar Detector

A detector can warn the driver if a police radar trap is within a few miles. Recent models also detect police laser scanners.

Rocket Engine

The vehicle is outfitted with a rocket engine (either replacing propellers for an airplane or as a booster rocket for ground vehicles). The engine drastically increases the speed of the vehicle by an additional 100 mph but the expensive modification counts as a major Personal Gear. Additionally, for ground based vehicles, the driver incurs a -2 penalty on all Driving Skill checks while the rocket booster is activated.

Rotating License Plate

With a flick of a switch, the license plate can flip to reveal an alternative identity for a vehicle. This illegal modification is available for any automobile or oversized ground vehicle.

Sidecar

Sidecars are attached to motorcycles, allowing an extra person to ride. This option reduces the top speed by 10 mph. A motorbike sidecar requires three turns to attach or detach.

Slick Tires

A vehicle may be outfitted with flat racing tires (no grooves) for better traction. Slicks give a +1 bonus to any Driving checks on smooth, dry tracks, but unfortunately have a poor grip on wet roads: an additional -2 penalty is assigned to any penalties suffered by a vehicle for the weather conditions. Slicks are available for any ground vehicle.

Smoke Screen/Oil Slick

This option releases smoke behind the vehicle, obscuring view in a cloud about 10 yards in diameter. The screen will last for 1-6 turns depending on the wind. Alternatively, it could act as an oil slick, which creates a slippery area that hampers the control of any vehicle driving through it. A driver may avoid the oil slick if he or she spots it in time. At GM's option, a character caught in a smoke screen/oil slick might be required to make a successful Driving Skill check to avoid an accident. A fully charged smoke screen/oil slick is good for three turns of use, and is available for any automobile or oversized ground vehicle.

Special Tires or Puncture-Resistant

Tires may be designed with various special abilities. These include solid puncture-resistant tires that run while flat (halve penalties for losing a tire) or special snow tires (reduce or negate any penalties that the GM may assign for maneuvering on snow or ice). Any ground based vehicle can be equipped with special tires.

Stretchers and Medical Equipment

This option differentiates ambulances from regular vehicles. Each stretcher replaces two seats for passenger capacity purposes. Medical equipment can be added to any van or utility helicopter.

Stripped

These vehicles are carefully stripped down to improve their power to weight ratio. In a car, this might mean removing glass from side windows (replacing them with nets), taking out the headlights, stripping out the doors (the driver will now climb through the window), modifying the seats, and otherwise removing items that are required for regular driving but unnecessary or unsafe for a high-speed race. Stripping a vehicle will add 20 mph to top speed if the vehicle is still "street legal" or 30 mph if enough stuff is removed so that the vehicle no longer meets minimum safety standards. All vehicles, except an ultra-light, can be stripped.

Sun Roof

A sun roof is an open hatch in the top of the vehicle, which can be added to any car or van. Characters who lean out the opening can be attacked, but receive a benefit for partial cover (-4 penalty to the attacker's check). A sun roof is available for any automobile or oversized ground vehicle.

Supercharger

A supercharger is designed to increase an engine's power. The supercharger uses a belt-and-pulley mechanism linked to an engine's crankshaft. It functions by forcing extra air and fuel into the engine's combustion chambers. A supercharger adds 20 mph to top speed and the extra acceleration gives a +2 Initiative bonus. Superchargers count as two minor Personal Gear, and are available for any vehicle except a helicopter or ultra-light.

Tow Winch

A winch allows the vehicle to tow other vehicles of equal or smaller size (similar to pulling a trailer — see Trailer below). A winch is available for any pickup truck or oversized ground vehicle.

Trailer

A trailer lets the vehicle tow extra cargo. A typical trailer is designed for a car or van and can hold a half-ton (for a car-sized trailer) or 1-2 tons (for a larger trailer). The vehicle's top speed will be reduced by 25 mph and it will have a -4 initiative penalty while towing the trailer. Trailers can be added to any automobile or oversized vehicle.

Turbocharger

This device uses the engine's exhaust stream to drive an air compressor, which increases the engine's power output. This extra power adds 20 mph to top speed, but there is no extra initiative bonus, due to "turbo lag" — the delay it takes for the turbocharger to respond. Turbochargers are available for any vehicle except a helicopter or ultra-light.

Weapon Mount - Light

A weapon mount is a bracket or pintle for mounting a light or heavy machine gun on the vehicle's roof, deck, or the underside of a wing.

Weapon Mount - Heavy

This mount is used for mounting heavy weapons such as rockets.

STANDOFFS

It happens all the time in anime. Two enemies face off, neither daring to make a move. Sweat drips down their brows, and the tense music rises to a crescendo. A single dry leaf drifts down, and in one perfect instant they fly at each other. They land opposite each other. One sheathes his sword and rises to his feet. The other falls to the ground and the battle is ended. A standoff is similar to a shootout (see Gunplay on p. 64), but can potentially be used with *any* type of combat.

Face Off

A proper standoff always starts with a test of wills. The two combatants make a contested Concentration skill roll; the winner decides whether to add +1 to his INI, +2 to his skill roll, or +3 to damage for this standoff. This continues until one of the characters decides he or she has had enough and wants to attack, but a character cannot more than double his skill level or INI, or add more points of bonus damage than the maximum damage of his attack.

Draw!

When the time comes to fight, the two characters each make an initiative roll as usual, and they both make their normal attack skill rolls as a contested roll. If the character who won the initiative wins the attack roll too, he takes no damage and his opponent takes full damage. If the character who lost the initiative wins the attack roll, he hits his opponent as usual, but takes normal damage (i.e., without any bonuses from the face off) from his opponent's attack. It's possible to defend, but this requires that the character have either Multiple Actions or that he abort his attack.

CINEMATIC OPTIONS

Using Rules, Not Using Rules

In any medium of expression, there are different tools that can be used, and when and how they are used is at least as important as which ones. The *rules* of a roleplaying game are one of those tools that a GM can take advantage, just as any good manga artist knows how to take advantage of things like panel layouts and the fact that a reader is confronted with something new upon turning a page[1].

Rule Zero

The idea that the story of the game is more important than any of its rules has been stated many times in different games. The idea of creatively *not* using the rules is something we call "**Rule Zero**," and it can be stated simply as "**If a rule bugs you, don't use it.**"

Fudging

The most obvious example of this is "fudging." Part of the problem with leaving the results of something in the game's story to some dice is that they're random. This sounds obvious, but anyone who plays RPGs for any length of time can tell you that one of the things about randomness is that the most unlikely results *do* pop up from time to time, usually when its inconvenient – kind of like real life, only more so. If the GM feels that the result of a die roll is just too *wrong* for what's going on in the game, she can tweak or ignore it; this is "fudging." This works best when the players don't have any way to know what's happening; in the case of Fudge the GM doesn't need to tell the players what the TN (or an opponent's AT) is when they roll, so they can only guess if a player character's AT is really sufficient for the task at hand.

Being Clever

While it's trendy to regard the rules as an "enemy of drama," a crafty GM can use them to his or her advantage. Making the players roll dice for something calls attention to it; normally it means that there's something at stake and a possibility of success or failure hangs in the balance. A favorite of some GMs is the unexplained perception check; nothing else sets players on edge quite so much as being told to make a sight roll for no apparent reason and wondering whether their character failed to notice something critical. If the GM *doesn't want to call attention to these kinds of things, he or she will have to either make those kinds of rolls a regular thing in the game or do them herself in secret.*

While not letting the players know what TN they have to beat is good for fudging, purposely letting them know is good for making the players think twice about what they're doing, and maybe even try a different plan of attack that would be more feasible. With an actual opponent, hearing that they've failed is one thing, but hearing that an attempt has been beaten by some stratospheric amount can make even the most foolhardy players reconsider whether they should even be anywhere near that kind of conflict. Likewise, specifically stating that a bonus or penalty is being given to a roll and why calls attention to what's going on, and can add a concrete manifestation to what might otherwise be nothing more than squishy flavor text.

[1] In virtually any manga there are parts where something is about to happen in the last panel of a page, then you turn the page and BAM!, a full page is taken up by something dramatic or surprising.

Applicability of Traits

Traits are not the only thing a GM should be thinking about when it comes to whether or not a character can pull off a given action. A character's background and general character concept are an obvious key concern. While a futuristic mecha pilot makes use of his Operations skill to operate his giant robot's radio, a tinker from a medieval fantasy world uses Operations to manage semaphores and courier pigeons, and neither one would have the faintest idea what to do with the other's tools in spite of using the same skill.

This is doubly important for instances where a character is using just a base attribute. A hacker's high Intellect helps him dance past computer security and is likely to be a great help when it comes to unfamiliar tech stuff, but he'll probably be totally lost when it comes to making any sense out of a wizard's trusty Necronomicon – just as lost as the equally brilliant wizard would be around the hacker's bleeding-edge computer rig.

In this way, the GM can adjust Target Numbers and at times outright disallow certain actions. No matter how smart a character might be, there are going to be certain things he just doesn't know, and no amount of luck with the dice will change it. Other times a lack of familiarity will make things more difficult, and sometimes familiarity can lower the difficulty of a task.

Methods and Madness

"Methods and Madness" is a more extreme version of the Unusual Applications of Skills rule. The idea is that the GM will sometimes let characters use what would normally be wildly inappropriate attributes a given skill based on how the character is going about performing an action, or better yet his or her underlying motivation. This is a rule that's best used sparingly, so that attributes other than the ones a character is good at will still be meaningful in the game.

Example: Suppose there are three sisters, who are looking forward to their little brother coming back from a trip to America. Since mom is away on a business trip, it falls to them to make dinner, so they divide up what needs to be done as best they can.

The oldest sister is the intelligent bookworm, and she decides to cook by bringing her incredible intellect to bear on the problem at hand. She goes on the internet, finds a recipe for curry rice, and follows the directions with an exacting precision that's usually reserved for chemistry experiments. So the GM lets her roll on INT + Cooking.

The middle sister is a tomboy karate expert, whose experience with cooking is mostly limited to watching those cool cooking shows where the chef's knives have a way of blurring as he chops things. So, she decides to make a salad, using her superior martial prowess to chop and artfully arrange vegetables into a salad. For her it'll be a roll on REF + Cooking.

The youngest sister doesn't have much in the way of stereotypical specialties, but she really loves her brother and wants to do something really special for him. So with all her heart she bakes a cake, hoping that her feelings will be enough to carry her through. In a campaign using the Soul Group attributes (see p. 19) the GM would let her use the HRT (Heart) attribute, but otherwise WIL will do in a pinch.

Brother and father aren't sure what to make of the curry that's poured out of beakers, the fresh salad without any dressing (oops!) or the chocolate cake that's shaped kind of weird, but it all tastes great.

Roll Types and Personification

One of the stranger things that can be done with action resolution is to play with the type of roll an action is treated as. On a very simple level, what might seem to be an opposed roll could be treated as an unopposed one because

the human target isn't in a position to actively resist. An obvious example is trying to shoot an unaware target from a distance; the shot could be difficult and have a high TN, but until the victim is aware and in a position to actually do something, it can be considered an unopposed action.

On the other hand, sometimes changing the type of roll can be just plain fun. Inanimate objects that a character interacts with can potentially be personified. If a character is dealing with a troublesome soda machine, it doesn't necessarily have to be a simple TN. Perhaps the soda machine is making a roll on 3d6, plus its Annoyingness attribute, plus its Malfunction skill.[2] In this way what might've been a brief encounter becomes an epic struggle, until our hero either enjoys liquid refreshment or gives up, exhausted.

Cinematic Modifiers

"Cinematic modifiers" are bonuses and penalties to rolls based on stuff other than the usual realistic factors like poor lighting, heavy winds, etc. How often these are used and how big the modifiers should be really depends on the tone of the campaign in question. In a really melodramatic over-the-top game where the characters are constantly making speeches and crying about stuff, a GM could opt to throw around +5 Motivational Modifiers left and right, while in a more restrained campaign cinematic modifiers might just be an occasional +1 or –1.

Motivational Modifiers: Anime characters have a way of doing the impossible when they're sufficiently motivated. While players can give themselves a boost of +5 by spending an Action Point, motivational modifiers let the GM directly reward a player for roleplaying a character's desperate desire to accomplish the task at hand.

Cool Factor: Especially for a game that's more about action than story, it pays to give players positive modifiers coming up with cooler, more over the top ways of doing things. Failing that, cool factor can be an excuse to reduce or eliminate more realistic negative modifiers.

Dramatic Modifiers: The GM may opt to apply modifiers depending on how dramatically appropriate or inappropriate a particular action is. For example, if a player character tries to take out the villain prematurely and in the midst of a dramatic speech in a particularly melodramatic campaign, there could be a hefty penalty.

Thematic Modifiers: Thematic modifiers are a little trickier; essentially, characters are rewarded for taking actions that support the intended underlying themes of the campaign, and penalized for actions that strongly go against those themes. Like Dramatic Modifiers, the GM must be careful not to abuse these types of modifiers.

Keeping Your Cool

Anime characters often have a hard time staying calm; it's just one of those things. On the other hand, a gamer experiencing something through the medium of a roleplaying game has a relatively easy time staying calm. While it's best not to let rolls take the place of roleplaying, players might need reminding once in a while, and this is where some dice rolls can be of use. In *Open Anime you can use the Cool derived attribute for this purpose.*

A brave warrior might have no problem facing a terrible dragon, yet be terrified of saying "I love you" to a pretty girl – after all, the worst the dragon can do is kill him. Depending on the circumstances the GM might opt to let players make skill rolls instead, combining an attribute

[2] Obviously these are special character raits only available to NPC vending machines. At least until the vending machine spatbook comes out. Then the author of that book will have to be shot.

with the character's level in a skill like Communication, Focus, Social, etc.

The trick here is to use the results as a guideline for roleplaying rather than a replacement for it. If keeping calm around the princess a is Challenging (TN 18) task and the player only rolls a 10, a good roleplayer can have a lot of fun using that serious failure as a cue to kick off a really entertaining scene where the brave knight makes himself look like a complete idiot in front of her.

Comedic Damage

In a truly silly campaign, Open Anime's usual system for handling damage and healing is too complicated and deadly. The Comedic Damage option makes for fights that are shorter but in the final analysis completely non-lethal. While it's possible to run an entire campaign using only Comedic Damage, for semi-serious anime it would be more appropriate to shift between the Heroic and Comedic rules depending on the tone of the scene in question.

All characters have a Secondary Attribute called Bonk (BNK), which is calculated as (HLT x 2) + WIL. Whenever a character takes damage, that damage is subtracted from his or her BNK, and when it runs out the character is "bonked," temporarily incapacitated. Bonked characters will recover automatically during the next scene (though they might show up charred or with bandages and such). However, at any time a character can spend an Action Point to restore his or her BNK back to full.

Inanimate objects, including vehicles and robots that aren't characters get blown up much more easily. Hits are halved, and armor is completely ignored.



Heroic Damage

"Heroic" damage is another option for handling injuries, representing a midpoint between the standard rules and Comedic Damage. When using Heroic Damage rules, damage and LIF points are used normally, except that the effects of losing lots of LIF points are handled a bit differently.

- At any time a character can spend an Action Point to ignore penalties from wounds for one round, or three Action Points to ignore penalties until he or she takes damage again. A character that's lost all LIF points and is thus incapacitated can likewise spend Action Points to act normally.
- A character that has taken a Critical or Fatal wound or that has been incapacitated by losing all of his or her LIF points can make a WIL roll once per round (without penalties from wounds) to crawl along the ground or gasp out a few words.

- Characters will not die no matter how many LIF points they've lost, unless they've been incapacitated and someone then deliberately tries to kill them. To succeed, a deathblow has to inflict damage greater than the victim's HLT attribute.
- For healing, ignore the rules for Stabilization, make Treatment optional, and always use the Cinematic recovery rate

EXTRAS

In not only anime but Hong Kong action movies and plenty of other media there's a certain class of forgettable bad guys who seem destined to fall like so many autumn leaves when the heroes come blazing through. In Hong Kong movies they're called "mooks," and elsewhere they've been called things like Faceless Minions and Generic Ninjas. For the purposes of Open Anime we'll call them Extras. If having hordes of bad guys get mowed down by the heroes isn't appropriate to your campaign, just don't use these rules; build minor bad guys as regular NPCs with lower point totals. The rules for Extras can also be used for minor bystanders and good guys, allowing major villains to wreak havoc on them with ease.

Extras are distinguished from normal characters by the fact if an Extra takes any damage, he or she is incapacitated. Extras can still defend themselves, and will have Toughness and possibly armor to let them resist damage, but an Extra who loses even a single Life point is out of the fight. What happens to a downed Extra depends on the flavor of the campaign and for that matter the Extra in question. If the tone is light, they'll probably just be knocked out, while in a darker setting they could die. Messily.

Action Points and Extras: Given how easy they are to kill, the GM may decide to allow player character to automatically defeat a single Extra by spending an Action Point. The only requirement is that the player must describe the Extra's defeat in an entertaining way.

Flunkies as Extras: Characters with the Flunkies Ability can have those flunkies be treated as Extras if desired. If so, the number of flunkies granted by the Ability is doubled.

EPIPHANY

While anime characters can and often do improve their abilities gradually over time, as often as not things are more dramatic than that. When backed into a corner, a character can sometimes reach an epiphany that allows him to move beyond his current limitations and rise to the occasion. From the perspective of an RPG campaign, this takes the form of the GM rewarding the player for exceptional roleplaying.

An "epiphany" is a hard-won moment of realization, when whatever hurdle the character was facing is suddenly and dramatically overcome. This could be something as grand as a warrior seeing at long last that his greatest strength comes from his will to live and his desire to be with his friends and thereby mastering a fighting technique based on that strength (obtaining a new high level Special Attack power). Or it could be something as simple and special as a girl overcoming her shyness (removing the Disability, Psychological Limitation: Shy) while looking into the eyes of the boy she loves.

When a character has an Epiphany the player may spend EP immediately (rather than doing so between game sessions like usual). If the character doesn't have enough EP saved, the GM may allow them to trade Action Points on a 1-to-1 basis to make up the difference. In these instances, the GM should consider allowing players to borrow Action Points (see p. 207), since the drama of the moment is far more important that the bookkeeping.

GM Advice

ADVENTURES

Letting Go

In this section we go on at great length about how to put a story together. It bears repeating that it's vital to remember that a roleplaying game is entertainment for a group. Even if it might sometimes be frustrating for the GM, the players *really* need to be able to change the course of events with their own decisions.

The Value of Denial

In any form of storytelling there is an element of denial. On a basic level there has to be some kind of conflict in order for there to be a story in the first place. Player characters might want to defeat the main bad guy and get the girl right away, but it doesn't work that way – and hopefully the players themselves know better. Stories, music, and other forms of sequential art are based on creating tension and then releasing it, and the greater the tension the more powerful the release.

In professional wrestling the audience wants their fan favorite to win back the title belt, but he invariably has a mountain set between him and his goal. In part it's because he's willing and able to climb that mountain – in spite of the blood, sweat, and tears that will be required – that the fans love him so much. And when he finally does climb the mountain and holds the gold skyward, the audience is more likely to shed tears of joy along with him than for some stranger who got an easy victory. In anime it's the same; more than once series has been about a hero fighting to rescue his captive love interest from a seemingly invincible villain. In both cases the trick is to "give the people what they want," but not when they think they want it (i.e., not right away). Make them want it more and more until they can barely stand it, then drop the bomb and watch the fireworks.

The anime hero has to keep traveling, gaining power and facing the henchmen and lieutenants of his nemesis before reaching the final, decisive battle. The former champion has to keep fighting in spite of all the dirty tricks and cheap shots from the cheater who stole his title to reach his moment of shining triumph. We all like to think that the good guy will win in the end, but in a good story there are always a few moments where that hope seems to be shattered. As a GM, even if you have no intention whatsoever of killing any of the player characters, you still need to make them worry or there won't be much tension.

The same goes for the flashy stuff that's typical of anime – the supreme attacks, the most powerful characters, the super-mecha – and for much the same reason. If it becomes too common or easy, it loses its impact. There are a few fans that will get excited about seeing the Super Buster Beam take out the bad guy week after week[1], but for most people it'll become stale in a hurry. But seeing the Super Buster Beam used for the first time (or better yet, the first and last time) in a moment of desperate and courageous sacrifice will get a lot of people on the edges of their seats. Granted, the standards will vary from one campaign to the next, but you need to have somewhere to go. If the hero can easily blow up a mountain at the beginning of the series, there's a certain expectation that by the end of the series he'll need enough power to take out a small galaxy. It pays to hold back at least a little bit, and then let the really cool stuff come in when it needs to.

Creating Drama

It's a very broad generalization, but anime can be described as cinematic and melodramatic. **Cin-**

[1] Not to mention the question of why the heroes are using anything other than the Super Buster Beam in combat if nothing else ever actually works…

ematic has become kind of a buzzword in the RPG industry, but it refers to over the top action. "Cinematic" is about ignoring what should be possible in real life in favor of what looks cool. In the world of literature, **melodramatic is something of a dirty word, seen as emphasizing emotions to the point where it becomes overdone and cheap. However in most forms of Japanese narrative – and live-action dramas in particular – pushing the emotions is just how things are done.**

For RPG purposes, both are partly a matter of attitude. To make things more cinematic, players need to be more ambitious and flashy in how they do things. For more melodrama, the way they roleplay needs to be more emotional, with more interpersonal conflicts. The GM can back this up by having the NPCs follow suit, and by setting Target Numbers and such so that cinematic actions can happen in the game.

In anime a lot of the most amazing scenes come from a combination of these two elements. The hero's passion lends him strength that he wouldn't have otherwise to accomplish something incredible at his most desperate moment. Not a few anime reach a climax on just such a note, making it clear that the permissiveness of cinematic style and melodrama are cumulative.

On the other hand there needs to be a limit; like anything else if emotional stuff is overused it can lose its impact. There's a limit to how much both the players and the story can take, and this is a perfect example of how less is more. Melodrama is arguably a defining trait of anime, but even in anime it's better used as a seasoning than as a main dish. It partly depends on the tone you're after, and of course the tastes of the players, but generally speaking using melodrama and passion in the game works best when it's saved for the most critical moments possible.

Reflecting this in actual game terms is a matter of using game mechanics to underscore when the heroes are doing something exceptional. Many game systems give player characters special points that can be used to bolster their chances of success; in Open Anime these are called Action Points (see p. 207 for full details), and they can easily be taken to represent what happens when an anime character uses his capacity for either taking advantage of cinematic "loopholes" or for translating his convictions into a greater chance of success.

Another option is for the GM to make use of modifiers; most systems allow for a character's chances of success to be altered by ambushes, distractions, lighting, fear, etc., and there's no reason that positive modifiers can't be used in this way too. Just as a PC might get a +2 situation bonus for attacking an opponent from behind, he could get a +4 "My Girlfriend Is In Danger And I Have To Help Her!" bonus. This is a little different from fudging in that the GM is deliberately making it clear to the



player what factors are helping the character succeed. See Cinematic Modifiers (p. 232) for more details.

The *Other* Kind of Drama

While we talk a lot about fudging for the benefit of the story, that isn't the only way to make things dramatic. Too much fudging can lead to railroading[2], until the players reach a point where they always know whether their characters will succeed or fail, live or die. As elsewhere, in roleplaying games a lot of tension comes from when the players really don't know whether their characters are going to succeed or even survive. In many ways this is the traditional approach to roleplaying games in the first place.

From the GM's point of view, giving this kind of freedom – both to the players and to the dice – can cause headaches sometimes, but dealing with it is ultimately simply a matter of being flexible and learning to take what you're given and turn it into something compelling[3].

A lot of that comes from simply ensuring that things have consequences. If one of the player characters manages to get killed somehow, perhaps the others could find a way to bring him back – for a price. The wizened old holy man who can perform such miracles might live off in the faraway and dangerous mountains, or he might be close but require a quest, whether because he needs ingredients for his Resurrection Potion or because he wants compensation for performing such an incredible feat. Or perhaps they must find an item that is difficult and dangerous to find, or even one whose acquisition represents a moral dilemma. Do we really want to bring our friend back if it requires sacrificing the last of the holy thunderbirds? Or maybe bringing him back will be easy, but will have unforeseen consequences, whether as a direct result of his journey to and from the other side or from others seeking the character out in the hopes of finding a similar miracle for someone they care about?

As a GM it may be difficult to fully develop a good plot twist on the fly, but it's in the nature of an RPG campaign that there's time between sessions that can be used to plan out how any given random event will have larger consequences. Not a few writers will take two or more loose ends and combine them into one fascinating plot twist later on.

Villains

Major villains should be given just as much attention in development as heroes; both groups have a part in making the story more interesting, and in particular their motivations need to be taken into account. While there are plenty of anime villains with a "HAHA! Because I'm EVIL!" kind of attitude, the really compelling and memorable villains are more complex than that. Indeed, many fall into the Faustian archetype of an antagonist who is certain that the end he is pursuing justifies the terrible means.

However, an NPC doesn't have to be diametrically opposed to the PCs in order to be an antagonist. An antagonist can be a rival – someone in the same field with a tendency towards one-upmanship – or simply an annoyance.

[2] "Railroading" in the context of an RPG refers to when a GM forces the players to follow a certain path and plot, sometimes even to the point where the players are more like helpers in the "Game" Master's spoken novel than players in something resembling a game. Using RPGs as a medium of storytelling is often fun and compelling, but like any good idea it can be implemented very, very badly sometimes.

[3] Believe it or not, writers run into this too; even when they're all contained in one person's head, character's can be surprisingly difficult to control at times.

There are many different types of villains; what follows is a brief look at the major archetypes, as determined by basic motivation. Villains may be fall into archetypes of evil warlords, fiendish wizards, bloodthirsty fighters, etc., or they may be warped variations of what would otherwise be a perfectly normal concept for a PC.

Dangerous Friend

Sometimes someone who wants to help the heroes out finds that he has to do so in a way that, for all intents and purposes, makes him become their enemy for a time. A Dangerous Friend may be a real friend and an enemy in secret.

Desperate Rival

He has something to prove, someone he has to defeat, and he'll do it at any cost. Some Desperate Rivals resort to cheating or find technicalities, while others are willing to throw away their lives for victory. Our heroes might be able to help her find redemption, but it won't be easy.

Inhuman Menace

Not all villains can be said to have any real motivations; some beings simply seek to cause chaos and death. The Inhuman Menace may be a thoroughly inhuman creature, or he may be a man driven to madness and bloodlust.

Misguided Visionary

He carries deep sorrow within her and wants to make the world a better place, no matter what the cost. The Misguided Visionary may well destroy the world when he hoped to build a new one, seeing the error of his ways only upon his defeat.

Evil Visionary

He has a vision, but it is one of a regime of the survival of the fittest, a world he – as the strongest – can rule through brutality and terror.

Power-Hungry Fiend

He wants power for the sake of being powerful. The idea of holding the lives of others in his hand, of ruling over everything he lays his eyes on, fills him with desire.

Destroyer

Whether because of madness or the suffering he's known in life, he wants to destroy everything. He likely cannot be reasoned with at all, so strong is his craving for oblivion.

Reluctant Foe

Some enemies don't wish to be, but for whatever reason fate has put them on the "wrong" side.

Bringer of Vengeance

At some point some terrible wrong was committed – so he believes – and it has become his task to take revenge at any cost. He may be mistaken about the wrongdoing, or he may be correct but taking a far too extreme approach.

The Power Behind The Power

Sometimes what the audience assumes to be the main villain isn't the main villain at all. He might be answering to a higher power, or perhaps her ambitious S.O. is really in charge.

Roleplaying the Villains

How you handle the villains is critical in establishing the tone and feel of the campaign. A common theme among most of the archetypes mentioned above is shortsightedness; it's very common to have villains that, if they could just be made to understand, could be normal people, maybe even allies. It's *never* that easy though.

Building Them Up

A tricky, but important part of handling bad guys is making them appear to the audience (players) to be sufficiently powerful and villainous. A villain needs to be doing bad stuff, and she needs to be successful at it now and then, whether it's stealing lunch money or blowing up a planet. A villain doesn't necessarily need godlike power, but if she's

thwarted every step of the way it's kind of hard to be appropriately intimidated or impressed. Heroes can't be everywhere or know everything, so any villain worth her salt should be able to get some dastardly deeds in while the PCs are busy elsewhere. However, defeating them head-on can potentially do a lot more to make a villain appear properly villainous than news from afar.

It helps if the villain can "win" conversations too. Players often find it too easy to verbally cut down any bad guy who comes their way, and it really does diminish the villain's image. It's easy for players to do this partly because they're at a gaming table rather than confronting whatever Dark Lord the GM has devised face to face. It can help if the villain can make insults from the PCs have dire consequences, whether because of a threat of violent retribution or because the villain holds more subtle power over them, but it helps even more if the players simply let the GM build up a villain verbally, saving some of their choice lines for their glorious moment of triumph.

Fiendish Plans (Villainous Clichés)

Bad guys often have all sorts of tricks up their fiendish sleeves; what follows are some of the more common schemes they use.

Copies

Given the power to do so, a lot of villains love making clones or other copies of people, whether the heroes themselves or people close to them. Copies can be clones, robots, or something stranger, but equipping them with powers far beyond those of the original is not at all out of the question.

Hostages

Taking hostages is a time-honored tradition of villains everywhere in every medium and genre that has villains. A captured ally or loved one, whose life the villain holds in the palm of his hand, can deter the heroes, or even make them willingly walk towards their own doom.

The Lieutenant

No villain is an island. Any main boss will have a few powerful right-hand men who will in turn lead the faceless minions and eventually face the heroes in the hopes of impressing their boss. The lieutenants will often have some spiffy name to be called as a group, and most of them will be thoroughly loyal to their master, who has shown them kindness and given them purpose (though there's often at least one who is just waiting for a chance to become the new boss, but is in for a nasty surprise when he makes his move).

Mind Control

This one is an old standby of anime. Villains *love* taking control of either one of the heroes or one of their friends for diabolical purposes. A mind controlled character will likely be commanded to fight or even kill his friends, which in turn leads to a desperate battle as the heroes try to get him to snap out of it even as he attacks them without mercy.

Secret Identity

Some villains can't help but want to get a first-hand look at their foes, and adopting a secret identity is an ideal way to do just that. Furthermore, once the disguised villain has ingratiated herself to the heroes, she'll be in an ideal position to ambush them… Of course, more than one villain has wound up having second thoughts after experiencing the kindness her enemies are capable of.

Supporting Characters

Even with the good guys and bad guys figured out, it pays not to neglect the supporting cast, whether they're to become vital to the story or merely colorful background scenery. Most player characters will suggest at least a few NPCs – family members, a significant other, pets, friends, enemies, etc. – not to mention those that will naturally populate the game world. Supporting characters may be less important to the campaign, but it pays to invest them with at least a little bit of life. Often times giving an NPC just a touch of personality,

however cliché it might be ("Chie is a bookworm with coke-bottle glasses") is enough to give players the impression of a full-blow character, just as developing some details for a handful of students in a class of thirty can create an impression of a class full of thirty individuals, even if there are really only four or five.

The more screen time an NPC gets, the more development he or she needs – but it's important to be wary of giving an NPC too much time in the limelight. The best recurring NPCs are often those that play off of player characters; they get rounded out by interacting with other characters over the course of the game, and in terms of taking part in the action they're more likely to stay subordinate to the player characters like they should be.

ANIME COMBAT

Combat tends to be a major point in most RPGs, and it isn't exactly rare in anime either. However, when striving to achieve an anime feel, combat needs to be examined carefully; in anime combat may or may not be frequent, but it's invariably important. When all's said and done, most any game mechanics for combat can be used – the attitude of those concerned is a far more important factor.

Gamers often pursue RPG combat with a strategy that, if stripped down to its core, can be read as "win as effectively and quickly as possible." It might seem silly to approach combat any other way, but this approach is reasonable, sensible, and logical – in short, everything that an enraged anime character is not. Anime battles tend to either be so unimportant that they get minimal screen-time, or vitally important to the plot. A really important battle is much more than a fight; it's a metaphor for whatever deeper conflict exists between the combatants.

There are certain times when combat becomes very important and detailed. In anime, battles can often serve as a means of introducing new elements into the story, such as new characters (not necessarily villains though) or other unknowns. Combat should also be emphasized when it's going to be dangerous, whether because of superior foes or an ambush or something else.

Ending Combat

RPG players tend to get accustomed to combat ending when one side or the other has all their hit points depleted (or whatever game mechanic leads to incapacitation through damage). While it's true that an unconscious character isn't going to be doing any more fighting, there are other ways for a fight to end.

Another Objective: A battle doesn't have to be for the sake of disabling one's foes. Not a few anime heroes have entered into battle solely for the purpose of buying time for a friend to rescue a hostage, deactivate a bomb, escape, or even simply to arrive and start the battle in earnest.

Domination: For some characters, simply fighting enough to show one's dominance over the competition is sufficient. After all, if the opposition is weak enough that victory is a foregone conclusion, what's the point? More than one overpowering villain (or rival) has towered over a hero and said, "Come back to me when you're stronger."

Outside Interference: Sometimes circumstances change, making it impractical or even impossible to continue a fight. A street fight will end pretty quickly when police sirens sound, and a quarrel between two soldiers will halt the instant a superior officer enters the room if they know what's good for them. Now and then circumstances will abruptly give two combatants a common enemy too powerful to ignore.

Running Away: Smart characters know when to cut their losses and leave the scene, whether simply out of self-preservation or because they have another objective far more important than winning the fight. Cowardly characters just leave the scene any time they can if it's a fight scene.

Unable To Fight: A character doesn't have to be knocked out to be rendered unable to continue fighting. Lack of ammunition or magical energy, a broken weapon, or even a broken limb – any of these could leave a character at enough of a disad-

vantage that any hope of victory is extinguished. Sometimes this is a cue to surrender or run away, and other times an opponent will let the fight end once the challenge is gone.

SYMBOLISM AND SIGHT GAGS

Anime is full of certain sight gags and bizarre comedic symbolism; most anime fans are conversant with these, but a short guide is provided here anyway. These things are, of course, not treated as "real" per se, except when things get exceptionally silly and something like having a character grab a sweat drop and drink it or bash another character over the head with the thing will help. Anime also uses a lot of very powerful symbolism from Japanese culture, so understanding the significance of these metaphors will help you understand what the creator is trying to convey.

Bigsweat/Sweat Drops: A character that is exceptionally nervous, whether because of danger or just being in an absurd or potentially embarrassing situation, will usually have a large drop of sweat/water appear on their head.

Bulging Veins: Angry characters usually get weird bulging veins in their foreheads. This being anime, these sometimes can show up through a character's hair. *Really* angry character can have multiple bulging veins.

Cherry Blossoms: The significance of cherry blossoms (*sakura*) in Japanese culture is immense. During the spring the blossoms bloom for only a few weeks, then rain down from the trees. This is a powerful symbol of the Japanese concept of "*mono no aware*," which roughly translates as "the 'ah'-ness of things" – the idea that the truest beauty exists in the shortest moments. To the samurai, this was a symbol of their own lives, spent striving to serve and seek perfection, and inevitably ending like everything else. The beauty of cherry blossoms is so highly regarded that there is a long-running tradition of *hanami* ("flower viewing") parties, though depending on how cultured the participants are, the activities pursued among the falling cherry blossoms can range from dignified haiku contests to an excuse to go to the park and get drunk.

Dramatic Backdrops/Glowing Auras: A character that's really determined about something will sometimes do a brief display to demonstrate this to the audience. The most common displays are a dramatic backdrop ("The Great Wave Off Kanagawa", depicting Mt. Fuji and a tidal wave is a favorite), or having the character surrounded by a hazy, glowing aura (usually yellow, sometimes blue, or red if they're also incredibly angry).

Fireflies: Fireflies (*hotaru* in Japanese) are a common sight in the summer. They're regarded as something fun to watch on a warm summer evening, but they're also symbolic of the souls of the dead.

Head Flower: Not the most common sight gag but still a fun one, when a character is spacing out or being just plain dumb, a flower might sprout from his head. Characters that permanently have a flower or two on their heads are serious airheads. Dirt for brains maybe?

Hitodama: The *hitodama* is a glowing, ghostly light that continually burns with a dull blue flame. The sight of these lost souls is an ill omen; they're often used as a sight gag (showing that a character is really depressed and/or morbid), but more traditional superstition says that a person who has the misfortune to see a *hitodama* is doomed to die very soon.

Nosebleeds: Male virgins in anime tend to have spontaneous nosebleeds whenever they're aroused – the severity of the nosebleed varies with the degree of arousal, ranging from a small trickle to an intense spray. Men who've lost their virginity are generally exempt from this phenomenon, as are girls of all ages.

Turning To Stone: A character that is *truly* dumbfounded—absolutely flabbergasted—can turn to stone, which shortly thereafter breaks apart. The more shocked the character is, the finer the broken pieces are, until at the farthest extreme all that's left is a pile of powder, which blows away.

THE TOY BOX

Usually a roleplaying game consists of a bunch of friends sitting around a table talking and rolling dice as needed, but you can always take things a little bit further if you want. This section examines some things in the "gamer's toy box," ways you can add a little something extra to the game.

Acting

You don't have to be an aspiring actor to play a roleplaying game (though if you happen to be one, it definitely helps), but it pays to put a little bit of acting into your characters. This is especially true of a GM who has lots of talking NPCs to handle at once. Characters have different backgrounds and personalities, and that gives them different speech patterns and mannerisms. Adopting a funny voice might be overdoing it, but playing with a character's choice of words and tone of voice so that they reflect who they're supposed to be can add a lot to the performance. Likewise, a little pantomiming – representing the character's gestures – can be a big help too.



Music

Bringing music to the gaming table can add a lot to the atmosphere of the game. It can also be a distraction to everyone involved, particularly the GM as he or she fiddles with some music player. Here as everywhere else a bit of planning can save a lot of headache and less is more, but when you get used to using music while role-playing, it can become so natural that its absence seems glaring.

Sometimes it's fun to start off each session by playing a "theme song" for the campaign, but it pays to choose wisely considering how many times everyone will be hearing it. Music can also be integrated into the game itself. If the player characters turn a corner and see a girl singing in the moonlight, playing the song can be a lot more evocative than trying to describe it. Combat on the other hand is kind of tricky; even if it's going fast and furious for RPG combat, it's still like molasses compared to the pacing of a fight in an anime. It's also important not to get too attached to how a piece of music would set the pacing of a scene; for a GM it can be far too easy to wind up choreographing a scene to music in his or her head that should be left up to the players.

What kind of music you use is a matter of personal taste, but not clashing too much with the tastes of the other members of the group is a good idea. Soundtracks from movies, games, and anime can be a goldmine, but nearly any kind of music could work if used properly. The songs that work best for gaming tend to be those that have one clearly recognizable mood and pacing, or whose movements are simple.

In this respect a lot of rock and pop music is difficult to use; a song might be fine right up until it gets to the bridge, or the song's intro could be very different from the rest. On the other hand songs that the players know too well can often be distracting, especially if the song calls to mind something particularly jarring to their immersion in the game. Having a collection of various tracks and listening to them a lot will help a GM have something ready to pull out when a scene that suggest some music pops up spontaneously.

The choice of music can also be artistic. With a diverse enough library it's possible to pick and choose songs with specific themes or that use particular types of instruments to better create a sound that evokes whatever mood and feel the GM is after. This can be especially effective in a campaign where the player characters journey from place to place, since different locales can be given a distinct musical feel along with the imagery and NPCs used to build it up in the players' minds.

There are countless kinds of music players out there – CD, mp3, Mini-Disc, etc. – but for a game session the important thing is that the GM can bring up the desired tracks when he or she wants to with minimal disruption of the game.

Props and Visual Aids

Sometimes it's nice to be able to just give the players something real and physical related to the game. Maps are by far the most common in role-playing games, whether a scroll showing the way to buried treasure or an illustration of who and what is where during a battle. Enterprising GMs can also throw in things like letters and other documents, giving the player something on real paper to represent something found in the game. Taking it a step further you can use some kind of prop – whether something from the dealers room at the last anime convention or some interesting trinket from a corner of the local Goodwill – to represent a particularly significant item in the game.

Miniatures are another nifty way to bring a visual element into the game. You don't need detailed movement rules to benefit from having little figures to illustrate where things are positioned. For that matter miniatures don't have to be the little pewter things; if you're basing your campaign off of an anime series, capsule toys, plastic figures, or even plushies from that show could be a great visual aid, whether to put on the map or just to set in front of each player to show who's who. Some of the smaller capsule toys are even of about the same scale as typical gaming miniatures.

Yum-Yums

When all else fails, give the players candy. Seriously. Go buy a bag of Halloween-style candy and give them candy whenever they do something cool.

CAMPAIGN SEEDS

This section presents several "seeds" for settings and campaigns. They cover a variety of genres, and each one explains the general concept, setting, format, and plot of a possible *Open Anime campaign. They vary a bit in the level of detail, especially where the ideas for player characters are concerned, but all of them will require some fleshing out.*

For more some more detailed campaign ideas, see the **Sample Campaigns** section that follows.

Ani-Rangers

Genre: Gonzo "Amerime"/Fandom Parody/Urban Fantasy/Modern Powers

Concept: Anime fans find themselves able to perceive another layer of reality where anime is real.

Player Characters: The PCs are community college students and members of their school's anime club, who've stumbled upon the "Gift." It's suggested that characters be conceived as broad stereotypes to give them room to be funny, and then fleshed out enough to give them room for serious storytelling too.

Inspiration: *American Gods* (novel by Neil Gaiman), *Changeling: The Dreaming* (RPG), *Cool World* (movie), *Genshiken* (manga/anime), *Gold*

Digger (comic), *Invader Zim* (cartoon), *Ninja High School* (comic), *Yumeria* (anime)

There are those who find watching anime to be something akin to a magical experience, a much-needed escape from a banal reality, and then there are those for whom the "magical" quality of anime is something very literal. It's in the nature of the world that things people believe in will take on a kind of reality, even if it's only a fleeting, phantom one. In ancient times there were tales of gods and heroes and demons, and there was no such thing as "fiction." People may have forgotten how to truly believe in these things, but the world they live in has not. In this age men's beliefs are ruled by a mixture of science and Christianity, and all else is relegated to phantom realms of fiction. But there are those who have the Gift, who can see the world with different eyes. The Gifted see into the realm they wish to see; they can draw power from it, but they can also be harmed by it.

"Kichigai Anime" is a small anime club at the local community college, a group of friends who use the club as an excuse to hang out and watch anime together after class. Five of them are about to learn that the world is not entirely as it seems, and they're going to have a hard time convincing anyone (possibly even themselves) that they haven't all gone completely insane. These five have the Gift, and as anime fans they start seeing the world in terms of anime. It's as though people and creatures made from the stuff of anime and manga are lurking everywhere, and only they have the power to perceive them.

What begins as a nuisance turns into a struggle when they're attacked by a mysterious masked man. A talking cat offers them the power to fight back, giving them items of power that amplify their specific interests into superhuman abilities in the anime realm. The five of them become known in this hidden world as the "Ani-Rangers," otaku heroes who fight any evil that comes their way. Battles against the masked man and his minions follow them wherever they go.

Things escalate when they go on a road trip to an anime convention, but the fight can only truly be ended in one place: Tokyo. There they learn that the other Gifted otaku have been preparing for the upcoming battle for a long time, and the Ani-Rangers represent a ray of hope that had been lacking. On that fateful night the Space Battleship will be sent into battle, and the world will be changed forever.

Centurion

Genre: Mecha/Modern Military/Sci-Fi

Concept: In the midst of a massive alien invasion of Earth, researchers struggle to complete the powered armor that could turn the tide.

Player Characters: Soldiers chosen as test pilots for the new experimental powered armor.

Inspiration: *Full Metal Panic* (anime), *Gasaraki* (anime), *Halo* (video game), *She, The Ultimate Weapon* (anime/manga), *Starship Troopers* (novel by Robert Heinlein)

It's been so long since the last time there was a *real* war – a war where people and homes are threatened – that we've forgotten what it's like. Fighting for our survival isn't a long-term goal to be debated anymore; it's something we have to do today, or not at all. Earth faces a threat from beyond the stars, aliens who are all too much like us, including our aggression. But their aim is occupation. If they'd only wanted to wipe us out they could've done so in a heartbeat from orbit, just as we've had our scorched earth solutions available for decades. Earth is valuable to them, but it's even more valuable to us, because we have nowhere else to go.

These aliens, the *Athren*, look nearly human. It's their technology that gives them the edge over human troops. Humanity has numbers, but there's now a frenzy to move technology ahead as fast as possible, and to integrate discoveries from the Athren weapons that have been recovered before it's too late. No amount of funding is too great, and no promising avenue of research can be ignored. On a tiny island in the Pacific, a research facility has been working on a powered armor design that might just be able to let a human soldier go toe-to-toe with an Athren power-suit elite. The Centurion armor is a blend of human and Athren technology, and it's nearly ready.



The problem is that a small squad of Athren elites has arrived on that island to investigate. If they can be captured or defeated, the spare parts would let the project be completed that much more quickly, but if the enemy reports back that powered armor are being developed here, the island will be wiped off the face of the earth. For these soldiers, it'll be their first time seeing the enemy up close, and what they'll learn about the aliens and their powered armor could break them.

Death Walks

Genre: Modern Powers/Horror

Concept: The Chosen of Death must fight against those who would disrupt the balance of Life and Death.

Player Characters: The players are the "Chosen of Death," people given the ability to see into the Realm of the Dead and wield incredible special powers there. At least one should awaken to his or her powers over the course of the first few sessions.

Inspiration: *Aquarian Age* (anime), *Bleach* (manga/anime), *Exalted: The Abyssals* (RPG), *Reaper Man* (novel by Terry Pratchett), *Yu Yu Hakusho* (anime)

The Chosen of Death are those born with the power to see and influence the Realm of the Dead while still living. The Realm overlaps the whole of the material world, yet is normally invisible to living beings. Over time the Chosen have come to see themselves as stewards, charged with a sacred duty to protect the Balance. Strayed ghosts must be sent on their way to the Next World, chimeras that arise from the ether must be dealt with, and mortals foolish enough to meddle must be stopped.

Among the Chosen, the lucky ones are those that are born with their power active; awakening to it later in life is more common, and often far more traumatic, especially in this age of skepticism. The Covenant of the Chosen has become exceptionally good at finding and recruiting the newly awakened of their kind and training them in the proper use of their powers; as the campaign begins one (or more) of the player characters is about to awaken.

Whether the timing of this turns out to be a blessing or a curse remains to be seen; the Mishima Corporation has begun some kind of experiments that, in the opinion of the high-ranking Chosen, need to be stopped as soon as possible. This isn't going to be a simple operation though; in fact the first raid is disastrous, as it seems that the facility is entirely too ready to confront the Chosen. Some believe that the chairman is seeking immortality, but his true aims are more sinister and far-reaching than anyone realizes. In the chaos that follows, a new recruit might turn out to be the key to stopping the madman's plans.

Kuchiyose Masters

Genre: Pet Monsters/Ninjas

Concept: A clan of ninjas that specializes in summoning magic sends its newest generation of ninjas out to learn the ways of the world.

Player Characters: The PCs are a group of young ninjas; all of them know a small amount of ninja magic, including the ability to summon at least one supernatural creature.

Inspiration: *Cardcaptor Sakura* (manga/anime), *Digimon* (anime), *My-HiME* (anime), *Naruto* (manga/anime), *Pokémon* (anime/video game), *Samurai Shodown* (video game)

The Akazuki ninja clan is known for producing ninjas who are unparalleled masters of the summoning technique (*kuchiyose no jutsu*). By ancient blood oaths they have forged ties with countless supernatural creatures – not merely the standard supernatural frogs (formidable though they are), but even the likes of the ghost-cats and kitsune, whom no other ninjas have ever been able to summon.

It is the tradition of the Akazuki clan that before a ninja is recognized as a *Genin* (low-ranking full ninja) he or she must go on a journey, making alliances with various creatures along the way and learning how to summon them. This year yet another small band of bright-eyed Akazuki neonates makes ready to depart from the village and seek their fortunes. One is recognized as a genius, and has made a pact with a fire dragon. Another is lagging behind and has only a foul-mouthed young frog to help him out, but all are determined to return to the village as true ninjas.

On the eve of their departure, disaster strikes. The Hazuki clan attacks the village in force, intent on razing everything to the ground. These young heroes are thrust out into the world in the hopes that if things go badly something of the Akazuki will remain in the world. However they quickly learn that it isn't only among the Hazuki clan that the name of Akazuki has become reviled, and revealing their true origins becomes more and more dangerous as they unravel the truth behind the attack on the village.

Magical Angels

Genre: Magical Girls

Concept: The audience witnesses as a team of magical girls falls apart, or nearly so.

Player Characters: The PCs are a somewhat dysfunctional group of magical girls who, at the start of the campaign, have just recruited a new member.

Inspiration: *Legend of the New Snow White Pretear* (anime), *Magical Project S* (anime), *Planet Guardian* (manga), *Pretty Sammy* (anime), *Revolutionary Girl Utena* (anime), *Sailor Moon* (anime/manga), *Wedding Peach* (anime)

At Sakurai Middle School there are four girls whom everyone admires. Chie is the foursome's smart, stylish, and charismatic leader. Ayase is the cool, athletic one, Ayumi is the cute one, and Koyuki is the genius. Kaori, who had just transferred to the school, was someone everyone overlooked. No one even bothered to tease her, much less become friends. Until one day she was invited to spend the afternoon with Chie's group at Ayumi's mansion.

There they gave her a test, to determine her magical potential. She not only passed, but overloaded and destroyed the gem they used to test her. On that day she was asked to join them, to become the fifth Magical Angel and protect the town from the *youma* (monsters) sent by the Dark Queen. It was as though all of Kaori's potential as a person was taken up by her magic.

Being suddenly brought into Chie's group instantly makes Kaori a Somebody at school, but being a Magical Angel isn't so simple as it seems. Kaori's overwhelming power is hard to control, and for the first time the Magical Angels have to contend with the possibility of causing real collateral damage. This in turn helps expose to Kaori the cracks in the group's façade of perfect friendship and teamwork. More importantly, Kaori starts to suspect that there is – or *was* – some kind of connection between Chie and the Dark Queen.

What Chie knows too well yet has told no one is that Magical Angels who lose their desire to protect can fall into the Dark Change, becoming a powerful force of destruction. And Kaori is much closer to this than anyone suspects.

Magic Shop

Genre: Comedy/Sword and Sorcery Fantasy
Concept: Everyday weirdness at a shop that sells magical items.

Player Characters: The PCs are a mixture of specialists and retired or previously unemployed adventurers.

Inspiration: *Are You Being Served?* (British sitcom), *Dragon Half* (anime), *Okage: Shaodw King* (video game), *Ruin Explorers* (anime), *Slayers* (anime)

In the trade city of Calent there is a part of town known as the Wizard's Quarter; here all manner of wizards live, and all manner of shops offer magical services and wares. Most people know better than to venture into this part of town, but there are always those who must. One of the older shops, Yi's Magic Shoppe, was recently inherited by the latest generation of the Yi family, Thomas Yi. He is young and naïve and has lots of modern ideas.

The players take on the role of people who work in the shop. They have to contend with not only customers, who range from old wizards to young adventurers to the occasional evil necromancer, but also vicious competition from other shops in the neighborhood and Yi's radical and sometimes stupid ideas. As if that weren't enough, the sewers of the magical district have been known to spew strange Things, some of which could be a threat to the whole city. Even if they're not paid for it, the player characters sometimes wind up being the first line of defense.

Matsuri

Genre: Horror/Supernatural Action
Concept: Shrine maidens use their spiritual powers to protect their hometown from disaster.

Player Characters: Some miko (shrine maidens) who are also sisters make up the core of the group, and they should all have some kind of spiritual powers. They can be joined by friendly supernatural creatures.

Inspiration: *Asagiri no Miko* (anime), *Blue Seed* (anime), *Gakkou no Kaidan* (anime)

The Sakuraba Shrine is well-known for its eternally blossoming cherry trees, and for the spiritual powers of the shrine maidens the family has produced for generations. This is a big part of why the neighborhood's summer *matsuri* (festival) attracts people from all over Japan.

But this year will be different. Two months before the grandmother and matriarch of the family has announced that this year's matsuri would be canceled, giving no explanation no matter how much anyone pleaded. With their mother out of town, the youngest daughters are under a lot of pressure from the whole town to figure out what's going on.

Trying to investigate under Grandma's nose is hard enough, but finding the root of the problem proves to be the easy part. The festival is part of a contract with the spirits that reside near the town, and local redevelopment has upturned many of the old seals and markers. Unless something is done, the festival would let loose all of the demons and restless spirits. And the town is increasingly leaning towards holding the festival, with or without the old woman's permission.

Luckily these miko won't be totally alone in their fight; there are those spirits that prefer to be at peace with humans. Some are naturally good, some are misfits, and a few have their own agenda…

Rune Gear

Genre: Sword and Sorcery Fantasy/Mecha
Concept: A party of heroes is sent on a quest to find the magical "mecha" that could save the kingdom.

Player Characters: The PCs are a group of adventurers and heroes.

Inspiration: *Escaflowne* (anime/manga), *Iron Kingdoms* (RPG), *Magic Knight Rayearth* (manga/anime), *Robot Carnival* (anime), *Scrapped Princess* (anime), *Skies of Arcadia* (video game), *Wheel of Time* (novels by Robert Jordan)

War has come. The Third Empire's invasion fleet has begun carving up the entire continent with the ferocity of a summer brushfire. As its neighbors to the north fall like leaves the kingdom of Araneus

survives, but it's only a matter of time before the imperial legions sweep over the hills. Surrender is not an option; news from the north is that those countries crushed under the heel of the empire are torn asunder, their people enslaved and their warriors slain to make way for settlers from the empire.

Unwilling to watch his kingdom perish, the King has gathered the greatest heroes in the land and beseeched them to undertake a quest, to follow ancient legends and old maps to a weapon of a bygone era, a machine of incredible power, an artifact known as the Rune Gear.

The journey is long and dangerous, carrying our heroes through occupied lands. They're followed by elite warriors of the empire, and hounded by imperial soldiers as they follow the trail of clues. But finding the legendary Rune Gear – a machine as tall as a mountain that walks like a man – is only the beginning. It's not simply a magic spell to be pointed at a target, but a means of fighting the battle. Our heroes will become the Rune Gear's crew, fighting to protect their homeland even as they struggle to learn how to operate it and to unlock its deeper mysteries, the direst of which is the fact that it isn't the only one of its kind in the world.

Typhoon Academy

Genre: High School Martial Arts

Concept: New students at a high school dedicated to the martial arts find that they've created a stir and are surrounded on all sides by enemies.

Player Characters: Teenage martial artists.

Inspiration: *Ikki Tousen* (manga/anime), *Rival Schools* (video game), *Samurai Girl: Real Bout High School* (manga/anime), *Tenjou Tenge* (manga/anime), *Volcano High School* (Korean live-action movie)

While it wouldn't be accurate to say that *everyone* at Typhoon Academy is a martial artist, this island-based private school certainly has a lot of them. Battles are a part of everyday life here, and most of the teachers are skilled enough to quell all but the most powerful of students should the need arise. The reason is simple; Typhoon Academy was created as an environment where the martial arts could be rarefied and perfected.

With the new school year comes an influx of new students, and with the hopes of recruiting new club members for the yearly tournament. *Every* club has at least one or two fighters among the ranks because every club is required to have at least one member enter the tournament.

This year there are two newcomers – a brother and sister – who are wanted by practically every club, and to make matters worse they've inadvertently become entangled in the conflict between the kendo club and the karate club, *and* attracted the ire of the Morality Club.

It's going to be a long year, but everyone expects the tournament will be spectacular.

Variable Galaxy Task Force Lovely Delta

Genre: Space Opera

Concept: Five animal girls are made part of a government-sponsored team of galactic "superheroes."

Player Characters: A team of "animal hybrid" girls who've been recruited and trained for a new Variable Galaxy Task Force.

Inspiration: *Animal Magnetism* (PC game by Gainax), *Galaxy Fraulein Yuna* (anime), *Martian Successor Nadesico* (anime), *Vandread* (anime)

It's only been a few years since the Genetic Heritage Civil Rights Act was passed by the United Galactic Confederation senate. Before then, all genetically engineered life forms were considered nothing more than property. "Animal hybrids," made from human stock but given obvious animal traits to distinguish them, were by far the most common of these genetically engineered slaves, and they became a common "possession" in average households. Often emotionally stunted, and raised to be little more than humanoid pets and servants, these animal hybrids suddenly became UGC citizens.

As always, true equality will come some time after legal equality. But as a gesture towards greater understanding, the UGC military has begun a program to recruit animal hybrids into some of the elite Variable Galaxy Task Force units. The VGTF

Airplanes								
Light Airplane	88	+1	2	4	500 lbs.	8	50	Piloting (Light Airplane)
Heavy Airplane	75	-3	5	4	40 tons **	22	120	Piloting (Heavy Airplane)
Ultra-Light	25	+1	1	1	-	4*	30	Piloting (Light Airplane)
Speed Boats								
Off-shore Racer	45	-	3	6	1000 lbs.	14	80	Boating (Small Boat)
Recreational Boat	20	+1	2	3-4	200 lbs.	8	50	Boating (Small Boat)
Military Ground Vehicles								
APC	70	18	4	13	2 tons	40	120	Driving (Tank)
Heavy Tank	20	-2	4	4	2 tons	60	200	Driving (Tank)

For an expensive luxury car, add custom options such as Big Engine and Luxury Interior.

Sub-Compact Car

A small, somewhat cramped passenger car. It seats four, but with a lot less comfort than a comparable mid-sized vehicle. It is easier to park, but not as robust. Year 2004 cost: $10,000+ USD.

Pickup Truck or Sport/Utility Vehicle

A light truck with cab seating (2-3 people), off-road suspension, and four-wheel drive and either an open cargo bed (pickup truck) or extra passenger capacity (sport/utility vehicle). Year 2004 cost: $20,000+ USD.

Race Car

A dedicated race car (such as a Formula 1 racer or funny car) with an aerodynamic body, a single seat, and very powerful engine. Such a vehicle is not "street legal." Race cars are "hangar queens" that require periodic maintenance every few hours just to keep their finely tuned engines and transmissions in working order. Year 2004 cost: $100,000+ USD.

Sports Car

A car with good aerodynamics, a powerful engine, and superior transmission and suspension. Some sports cars carry two people, while others sacrifice already-meager cargo space to carry an extra person or two in cramped back seats. Year 2004 cost: $50,000+ USD.

Stretched Limousine

An oversized passenger car. It will usually have a number of posh features, such as a luxury interior. Year 2004 cost: $50,000+ USD.

Van

A light panel truck or mini-van, with one or two big rear doors and sliding side doors. Use this template with appropriate customization for ambulances. Year 2004 cost: $15,000+ USD.

Motorcycle

A two-wheeled bike powered by a gasoline engine. Standard features include headlights and rear-view mirrors.

Motorbike

A big bike with a reasonably powerful engine. A second person can usually be carried without much difficulty. Year 2004 cost: $3,000+ USD.

Scooter

A small bike with an anemic engine. Scooters are suitable for a single rider only. A minor gadget. Year 2004 cost: $2,000+ USD.

squads are in effect "superheroes," outfitted with the best equipment available, sent on a variety of missions, and shown off as public figures. This is the story of the first all-hybrid VGTF unit, as well as one of the few all-female ones, Lovely Delta. Although they seem thoroughly incompatible as teammates, these girls were chosen from among tens of thousands of candidates by Primus, the UGC's central computer core.

Carol is a shy, feminine bunny girl. **Harumi** is a super-genius panda girl, but astoundingly lazy; she loves sleeping more than anything. **Princess** is a cheerful puppy-girl; since the laws changed she left behind her loving former owner to try and make her own way in the world, though they still keep in touch. **Neko-59** is a brooding catgirl who's still trying to cope with the abuse of her former owner; she especially resents Princess. **Raven** is a bird-girl, the only one originally intended for military service; she was a scout, using her ability to fly for reconnaissance, and she takes it upon herself to help Neko-59 heal her inner wounds.

Wonderland Outlaws

Genre: Surreal Fantasy/Gun Action

Concept: Modern-day adventurers come to an old mansion that only appears once every 50 years, and become trapped in the surreal and deadly world within.

Player Characters: A group of modern-day adventurers and thrill-seekers. They can later be joined by similar people from other eras.

Inspiration: *American McGee's Alice* (PC game), *Gungrave* (video game), *Hellsing* (anime), *Noir* (anime), *Trigun* (anime/manga)

They say the mansion only appears once every 30 years, and that on that night demons go prowling in the dark of its grounds. That spot is on an empty field, but now it's surrounded by a prosperous city. That plot of land remains barren because every attempt at building something there for the past 180 years has ended in some random calamity. It's a curiosity, spoken of in whispers by those who still believe in such things.

The date of the next appearance of the mansion has come, and so have a group of adventurers. They gathered via the internet, from far and wide, and many are meeting face-to-face for the first time on this fateful night. An ex-marine, a dilettante, a game hunter, a thrill-seeker, all arrive at this place hoping to unlock its secrets, hoping to find adventure.

Then mansion, ornate and decrepit and ark, does appear at the appointed hour. Getting in is the easy part; getting out could be fatal. Our heroes have until dawn before a new day dawns in the mansion – thirty years later. There are others like them here, but from bygone eras, men with primitive weapons who've endured dark nights in the mansion.

The layout of this place seems fluid, the corridors mazelike, and the madmen and monsters that stalk those halls are deadly. Perhaps this night will be different from the six that have preceded it; perhaps those who enter will escape, alive. But to do that they'll have to unravel the secrets of the Baroness and her minions…

Sample Campaigns

This section is similar to the Game Seeds above, but taken a step further. Each of the three sample campaigns includes a setting, a full group of pre-generated player characters, and some episode ideas. These aren't meant to be comprehensive in any meaningful way, but the three are based in diverse genres, and each shows off some of the different things you can do with the system.

They also show off three different degrees of "character-centric" settings. *Tokyo Peacekeepers* is more like a standard RPG setting, where the player characters are small fish in a big pond, at least to start off with. *UFO Fist* has player characters that are of an uncommon breed, and are very likely to become major players. And finally, *Coven* has a very specific group of player characters, and significant portions of the setting directly related to them.

What you do with the contents of this section is your choice; it merely be some reading material, or it could be the basis of a campaign, or it could be modified beyond recognition for whatever purpose you want.

Coven

Genre: Modern Gothic Occult

Concept: Three young witches have trouble fitting into small town life, but have to save the day when all hell breaks loose in their new home.

Player Characters: A group of teenage witches.

Inspiration: *Courtney Crumrin* (comic), *Fullmetal Alchemist* (anime/manga), *Mage: The Ascension* (RPG), *Magic Users Club* (anime), *Serenity Rose* (comic), *Stardust* (novel, by Neil Gaiman), *Wee Free Men* (novel, by Terry Pratchett; also *Hat Full of Sky*)

In this day and age witches are exceedingly rare; there are perhaps a hundred of them in the entire world. Which makes it that much more odd that three witching families now live in the same little town in the middle of nowhere, in the inauspiciously named town of Hell's Gate. The Norris family has lived in the town for years, but now Ms. Graham and her daughter have moved into town, as have Robin Blake and her guardian. The three families have each come to the town for very different reasons, but now it looks as though something has happened that hasn't occurred in a long time. Each of the three families has a 16-year-old daughter, and they've become friends.

Hell's Gate is about to become the only town in the world that's home to a coven. It wasn't a moment too soon.

Tone and Themes

Coven is meant to be lighthearted and sometimes bitingly sarcastic, becoming heartrendingly tragic and dark every now and then. One of the important themes of *Coven* is sin. To these witches it's not just a violation of seemingly petty rules out of someone else's book, but a feeling of deep guilt and shame for having knowingly done something terribly wrong. This definition of sin is juxtaposed with the outside world's view of witches, and with acts that are very deliberately malicious and cruel. Maybe having the conscience necessary to feel guilty is enough. Or maybe not.

Setting

Hell's Gate is a little town in the middle of nowhere. Where exactly that might be is left up to your imagination, but the setting is written with the assumption that it's somewhere in the middle of the US. The town was originally built around a quicksilver (mercury) mine, but today the local economy is equal parts farming and tourist trap, with a handful semi-wealthy people who moved there seeking peace and quiet.

It's a small town and for the most part a tightly-knit community, the kind of town where a trip to the store can take three hours on account of having to stop and talk to everyone along the way. The Norrises, a family of witches, have lived in the town

for nearly twenty years now, and are considered a part of the community in every way possible. It's only recently, with the arrival of two more witching families that the mayor has once again started thinking that maybe the witches might attract more people to the town.

Witches and Witchcraft

Witches are a rare breed born with the power to work magic. The power tends to be hereditary, but it can show up randomly in families who've never showed any trace of it, and fail to appear among families who've produced witches for generations. They're rare though; it's believed that there are less than a hundred in the world. Men can be witches too by the way, though women tend to be more likely to have the power. Some of the male witches prefer to be called "warlocks," but many witches seem to view the word as having a negative connotation

Magic is a very personal, creative act; some witches have compared it to writing or painting in that it's a kind of creative struggle to stay inspired, complaining that they get "witch's block" every now and then. Spells are always an act of will that bends reality in some way. Formulas, recipes, and incantations are mostly just window dressing; seen as an artist, a witch's paints are her thoughts and her canvass is the world around her.

In game terms, witchcraft is represented by the Sorcery Ability. A newly awakened witch will usually have this Ability at a rank of at least 2, and those who've received some training and/or practice will typically have a Rank of 3-5. Witches are capable of just about anything, but spells that "bend" reality, spells that alter what's already there, are much easier to pull off than spells that create something from nothing or that really flagrantly break reality's rules. The intention behind a witch's spell is important too; the Relevant Attribute for a witch's Sorcery Ability is whichever Soul Group Attribute best describes the intention behind the spell.

However, witchcraft can also have consequences. Things can go out of control sometimes, and the results can be dangerous. Thus witch characters must also have the Backlash Disability at 2 CP (this can be upped to the 3 CP version if desired, but cannot be lowered). When a backlash occurs, it's as though the cosmos decides to unleash some kind of poetic justice on the witch. Whatever she wanted the spell to do, something different happens, something that will have unfortunate consequences for her. Sometimes this means the witch is afflicted with her own spell or it does the opposite of what it was supposed to do. Other times it just works far too well. GMs should be creative and a little vicious about handling backlashes.



Witches do not generally have Magical Restrictions, unless these are a psychological crutch of some kind. Magical items (Item of Power) are somewhat rare and usually at least a little bit unpredictable. A witch may have a Place of Power though, and these pop up in the most unlikely places. A few will also have a familiar (use the Servant Ability) in the form of a sentient, talking animal.

The other side of witchcraft is something that has nothing to do with using magic. Even witches who've gone bad – sometimes *especially* witches who've gone bad – know that just understanding people can accomplish wonders that magic could never hope to. There's a saying among witches that making someone believe they've been cursed when they haven't is more effective than actually cursing someone who won't believe they've been cursed. There are many witches who completely miss this important facet of witchcraft, more so in this day and age than in the past. The bad witches who do get it have been to practically own entire towns without casting a single spell. The good witches who have this talent… actually sometimes they do practically the same thing, only they're nicer about it.

The older, wiser witches tend to see themselves as shepherds of whatever community they reside in. The heart of witchcraft, they contend, is simply caring for people, no matter how stupid or thoughtless they might be sometimes.

The Hidden World

There have always been two worlds, the physical world in which mankind exists, and the Hidden World. Even the most foolhardy of witches know better than to try to enter the Hidden World. It's the place where all of mankind's thoughts and dreams go in the waking hours, and as the face of mankind has changed it became steadily more and more dangerous. Angels and demons, ghosts and faeries, all these things reside there, waiting to get out.

In ancient times there were rules. Mortal men were bound by superstitions and the guidance of the Wise to stay away from those places where the wall between the two words was thin. The inhabitants of the Hidden World were bound by the laws of their own kind, by oaths sword to their own lords. Today mankind has forgotten too much; even among witches there are those who are ignorant of the Hidden World. The Hidden World has become full of creatures of chaos and nightmare that have no respect for the old ways. Those witches who know of the danger do what little they can to protect an unknowing mankind.

The truth about the town of Hell's Gate is only remembered in superstitions about the abandoned quicksilver mine in the hills. The town was once one of those places that was home to a festival where inhabitants of the two worlds could meet under a truce and trade in the wonders of their respective worlds. As time is measured by mortals this festival happens once every hundred and eleven years, and naturally the appointed time is approaching. Only this time there won't be a festival; unless something is done, the gate will be thrown wide open and the town will be in grave danger.

Player Characters

Coven is a High-Powered setting, but since the Soul Attribute Group is being used and all of the player character will have to shell out for Sorcery, characters get 80 CP instead of 60.

Sally, Valerie, and Robin are a threesome, the classic "maiden, mother, and crone" triple-goddess expressed in more modern terms, though calling Robin a you-know-what to her face would get you a swift kick in the you-know-where. Following this cliché is hardly necessary; Coven has clichés to spare. Other witch characters are pretty simple to create; just follow the guidelines in the Witches and Witchcraft section above.

Other types of player characters are a little trickier, if only because they need to be able to play a significant role alongside such powerful and versatile characters as the witches. Supernatural creatures capable of blending in with humans are one route to go; the coven could perhaps become friends with a vampire, werewolf, demon, or something stranger. The result would be a character with less versatility, but potentially a lot more muscle. Characters that use other types of special powers are a possibility too; what with everything else going on, the witches wouldn't be terribly shocked to find a psychic living in the neighborhood.

Less powerful characters would probably be making themselves useful with things like knowledge, stealth, and information gathering. Scholars of the occult, paranormal investigators, or just really sneaky, foolhardy classmates, could all be fun char-

acters. For that matter what seems to be a normal kid putting his or her nose where it doesn't belong could turn out to be a witch whose powers haven't awakened just yet (Unknown Superhuman Power anyone?).

Robin

Concept: An anti-social girl who's struggling with her identity as a witch, and trying to be a better person along the way.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 3, REF 5, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 6, WIL 7, PSN 5, FCS 8, HRT 2

Derived Attributes: DEF 15, INI 6, TGH 6, LIF 29, EP 86, MOV 9

Skills: Arcane Concentration 5, Arcane Knowledge 3, Art (Drawing) 4, Awareness 4, Concentration 4, Intuition 3, Power Usage (Sorcery) 3, Spellcraft 4, Stealth 2, Swimming 2, Writing 2

Abilities: Energy Bonus 4 (12 CP), Place of Power 2 (2 CP), Sixth Sense 1 (Sense Magic; 1 CP), Sorcery 4 (24 CP)

Defects: Backlash 2, Psychological Impairment (Highly Unsocial) 2, Unique Disability: Temperamental "Artistic" Magic 1

Appearance: Robin is a teenaged girl with short black hair streaked with red, and intense violet eyes.

Profile: Robin Blake is the daughter of a witch and a writer, both of whom died when she was only six years old. Since then she's been raised by her last remaining relative, her second cousin, a man named Rob Vasquez who has mostly just left her to her own devices while he worked long hours at his programming job. Over Robin's objections he recently decided to move to Hell's Gate and telecommute. The house the two of them live in is massive, and located on the edge of town, a little too close to the old quicksilver mines for some peoples' tastes.

Robin had a great-grandmother who she only met once. The old woman was a witch who lived in a tiny village in the middle of nowhere in Scotland, the kind of witch who's a mother and grandmother to everyone in town. On their first and last meeting the old crone told Robin that she had no right to be a witch until she learned how to care for people, and how to *not* use magic. At the time a younger and (in her own opinion) more stupid Robin told off her great-grandmother. A few moths later the old woman passed away.

Robin has always had trouble dealing with people. She isn't shy per se; she just tends to find being around people really annoying, and likes being alone. There isn't any malice behind it (though when she finally does get angry it's very scary to see), but rather an indifference that's neutral in intent and sometimes exceedingly cruel in effect. She started hanging out with Sally and Valerie mainly because they're fellow witches, and because Valerie sort of insisted. At first she didn't consider them to be friends per se, but they've been growing on her. She's starting to understand what her great-grandmother was talking about, and that she doesn't have to change into something she hates in order to achieve it.

Magic: For her, magic is even more of a creative urge than for most witches. She's incapable of conforming to other people's ideas about magic, to the point where she can't participate in magical rituals; in this respect she's a weak link in the coven. Her spells *have* to be unique, bearing some mark that makes it clear that they're hers, and tend to fail outright if they're too "conventional." For example, she's never been able to throw fireballs, but once she mustered a hail of razorblades.

Sally

Concept: A magical robot girl who feels smothered by her mother/creator.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 9, REF 5, HLT 8, PRE 3, INT 4, WIL 4, PSN 4, FCS 4, HRT 6

Derived Attributes: DEF 15, INI 5, TGH 7, LIF 32, EP 46, MOV 14

Skills: Arcane Concentration 3, Arcane Knowledge 1, Awareness 6, Benchthumping 4, Deduction 3, Jump 4, Power Usage (Sorcery) 2, Repair 1, Spellcraft 2

Abilities: Armor 2 (8 CP; 8 points of protection), Energy Bonus 2 (6 CP), Enhanced Strength 1 (4 CP), Sixth Sense 1 (Sense Magic; 1 CP), Sorcery 3 (24 CP), Special Defense 4 (Doesn't Breathe, Doesn't Eat; 4 CP)

Defects: Backlash 3, Marked 2, Nemesis (Overbearing Mother) 2, Sensory Impairment (no sense of taste or smell) 2, Special Requirement (Must Be Wound Up) 2, Unique Defect: Extremely Heavy 1, Unskilled 2

Appearance: Sally has short purple hair done up in pigtails, and black eyes like lenses. Her skin is made of a pale, rubbery plastic; her face is very detailed and natural-looking, but the joints of her arms, legs, and fingers are all obviously artificial. There's also a hole in her back for winding her up. She tries to wear the most normal clothes possible.

Profile: Sally Graham is unique. She's the "daughter" of Ursula Graham, a witch who's unusual in that she grew up, went to college, became a mechanical engineer, and *then* had her powers awaken. Ursula's fascination with technology let her do something very few witches have done before: combine magic with technology. Sally is a robot; her body is a strange blend of clockwork, electronics, and magic. Even her mother/creator isn't entirely sure about all of Sally's inner workings, but the result is a pretty girl who just wants to lead a normal life and make friends.

There are two things in the way of the happiness Sally wants. Well, three actually. First, her body is well made and attractive, but it's also obviously artificial. Everyone knows she's a robot or something, and that alone would be enough to make most of her classmates avoid her. But there's the second point: Sally can use magic. To her this is a double-edged sword; it distances her even further from her classmates, but she's also been told that it's proof that she has a real soul inside of her somewhere. The other young witches have accepted her as a friend, probably more openly than most adult witches would.

Finally, Sally's relationship with her mother isn't what it could be. Ms. Graham is constantly fussing over her daughter's body, wanting to make small adjustments and always working on some improvement or other, and she has a way of being overbearing and insensitive about it, intruding on Sally's life at inopportune moments and unintentionally reminding the poor girl that she's not really human.

Mrs. Graham harbors a secret that she's too ashamed to tell anyone. Sally's soul once belonged to a real flesh-and-blood girl, her original daughter. In her early days as a witch Ursula ignored the warnings of her mentor, and attempted things that are forbidden. She can't bear the thought of losing her daughter a second time. Usually she just comes off as an extremely overprotective "mother," but she lives in fear of the day Sally remembers what happened. Ursula hides it well, but she'd dying on the inside from the shame.

Sally's Body: Sally's mechanical body is actually very durable, strong, and fast. Although her mother tends to overdo it, Sally does need a certain amount of maintenance to keep her body at full efficiency. When properly sealed, Sally's body is waterproof, and can even go underwater (provided it's not too deep or for too long) without problems, though she sinks like a rock on account of weighing over three hundred pounds. Getting water (or much of anything else) inside of her internal compartments would be very bad; Sally's motor functions would malfunction and she'd become paralyzed, necessitating major repairs.

She also needs to periodically be wound up in order to keep going, though she can last for days at a time when fully wound. Ursula has devised a machine that can do the winding automatically in about half an hour, which is good because doing it manually with they key she made takes nearly three hours, and using improvised tools would take even longer. For reasons Ursula doesn't understand, using magic tends to unwind Sally's master spring much more quickly than normal activity.

Sally doesn't eat; if she tried it would clog up her vocal unit. She also doesn't have a sense of smell or taste.

When she cries, she cries oil.

Magic: Although she's technically a witch, Sally tends to avoid using magic if she can help it. She isn't as skilled at it as her friends, and when her spells fail they're more likely to go bad than those of Robin and Valerie. (Note that she has Backlash 3). When she does cast spells it's usually out of desperation, and their effects seem to be determined as much by her subconscious as by her intentions.

Valerie

Concept: A tirelessly cheerful witch who's starting to feel like she can't live up to her parents' image of her.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 2, REF 4, HLT 4, PRE 4, INT 3, WIL 4, PSN 5, FCS 2, HRT 7

Derived Attributes: DEF 14, INI 4, TGH 3, LIF 20, EP 64, MOV 7

Skills: Arcane Concentration 4, Arcane Knowledge 6, Area Knowledge (Hell's Gate) 4, Conversation 2, Cooking 3 (+2 for Baking), First Aid 2, Hobby (Fantasy Literature) 2, Power Usage (Sorcery) 3, Spellcraft 5

Abilities: Energy Bonus 3 (9 CP), Sixth Sense 1 (Sense Magic; 1 CP), Sorcery 5 (40 CP)

Defects: Backlash 2, Easily Distracted (Friends) 1, Skeleton in the Closet 2

Appearance: Of the three witch girls Valerie is the only one who's ever been seen wearing a pointy hat; that should give you some idea of her dress sense. She has medium-length brown hair and bright blue eyes, and wears lots of purple. She also likes to wear dresses (preferably but not necessarily purple), and tends to avoid wearing black unless she's doing something she considers particularly "witchy."

Profile: Valerie Norris is by far the most cheerful witch in town, and one of the most cheerful people around in general. She dresses mostly in purple, and her school supplies tend to involve lots of rainbows and unicorns. She always sees the good in her friends, and heaps on praise and hugs any chance she gets. Although she's not the cheerful simpleton that some people mistake her for, her sunny disposition *isn't* a mask. She's just naturally caring and enthusiastic, and people are often caught off guard when she does get genuinely angry or upset.

She's the daughter of Wendy and Richard Norris, a pair of witches who've lived in Hell's Gate for the past 20 years. Her parents are loving and kind, and the only ones of their kind who've managed to gain real acceptance from the community. Valerie, by virtue of her good nature and her parents' prestige, is also well-liked. It puts her in kind of an awkward position though; everyone expects her to be perfect, and Sally and Robin are getting tired of hearing people ask, "Why can't you be more like Valerie?"



For a while now she's been feeling like her least little mistake is a black mark that diminishes her worth in the eyes of her parents, like she has to hide even her tiniest faults. The worst was the fire three years ago. No one has figured out that it happened because Valerie lost her temper, and she's terrified that some day someone will learn the truth.

Magic: Valerie's magic is pretty powerful – some say it's her breeding – but her control isn't perfect, especially when she's upset. More so than any of her friends she goes in for stereotypical witch magic. She rides broomsticks to fly, brews stuff in bubbling cauldrons, and so on. Her specialty is enchanted cooking; she enjoys cooking in general and especially baking, and has a way of adding magic to it, sometimes unintentionally.

Non-Player Characters

What follows is a sampling of possible NPCs to inhabit Hell's Gate. The town's population is relatively small, but certainly big enough that new NPCs can be made up as needed.

Classmates

Aiden: If there's one thing all three of the witches can agree on, it's that Aiden is a jerk. Unfortunately he's also a charismatic jerk, so they constantly get to see him breaking girls' hearts and generally doing stuff that's really messed up. The witches are a bit divided as to what (if anything) they should do about him. He seems to like playing with fire though, because he has a habit of badmouthing them, even when they're in the room. There really is a decent human being somewhere in there, but it's pretty deeply buried at the moment.

Evangelina: Witches tend to have mixed feelings about people who go around dressing in black, wearing black lipstick, and calling themselves "witches" without actually having the talent. They make for a good distraction, but they're also annoying and embarrassing. "Evangelina," a.k.a. Kate Brown, just sort of decided one day that she wanted to become a "witch" and set about going goth. She owns more occult jewelry and books than all three of the witches put together, and is constantly trying *way* too hard to get into their good graces.

Naomi: Naomi Preston is easily the biggest bookworm in the school, possibly in the whole town. She always seems to be carrying a foot-high stack of books, and she reads *fast* too. Although she likes fantasy novels, she reads a bit of nearly everything. Naomi is the #1 patron of both the school and public library, and owns a library's worth of books in her own house as well. While she's extremely intelligent, she's also severely lacking in social skills, and has a warped sense of other people's personal space. Even so, she's become kind-of sort-of friends with both Robin and Valerie through recommending and lending books. Naomi probably could be made to look attractive, but she wears frumpy clothes and has long bangs hanging in her face and dons coke-bottle glasses to see over any distance. She's terrified of fire.

Rick: He's the captain of the football team, and even though he's probably the best player in town, he's starting to think that he won't have what it takes to get into the pros. He's going through kind of a difficult time, and his friends on the team don't really get it, so he's feeling really tempted to go talk to the girl who's lived next door his entire life – Valerie. He's basically a good guy, but every now and then he lets peer pressure get to him and does something pretty messed up.

Teachers

Mr. Day: Mr. Day both teaches Health classes and is the school's guidance counselor. He generally comes off as being a little too nice and gentle, but there are certain things he just won't let go. One of those is teens having sex, and another is witchcraft. If he learns of a student has become involved in either one (most students have figured out that they shouldn't tell him about those kinds of things) he'll be relentless with sarcastic remarks, in the hopes of shaming the student back onto the correct path. Having three genuine witches in his class is proving to be more than he can handle.

Mr. Hoffmann: This old, mostly bald man with coke-bottle glasses teaches English at Hell's Gate High. The students like him because between his

rambling lectures, multiple-choice tests, and occasional naps, his class is incredibly easy. Everyone assumes he's just a senile old coot, but in reality he pays attention a lot more than anyone realizes and uses everyone's image of him to his advantage now and then.

Mrs. Valencia: For the girls, P.E. class is presided over by Mrs. Valencia, a good-natured, bear-like woman who usually just wants her students to succeed. The three witches are a bit problematic though. Valerie actually puts in a good effort even though she's lacking in physical strength, but for Sally exercise is actually pretty meaningless (and she has the strength to dead lift around 1500 pounds), and Robin is of the opinion that P.E. as a school subject is inherently stupid. With Sally she's been forced to limit the girl's participation just to keep from having equipment destroyed, and forcing Robin to do something she doesn't want to do is an ill-advised proposition at best.

Mrs. Watkins: Were it not for the fact that there are already three witches in the school, people would be tempted to (metaphorically) describe Mrs. Watkins as "a witch." She's exactly what you wouldn't expect from an art teacher, burdening her students with a heavy load of homework and criticizing their artwork into oblivion. A lot of the students are hoping she'll retire soon, but then their parents were hoping the same thing. Needless to say, things are going to get… interesting… when Robin takes her class.

Hidden World Creatures

Clockwork Dolls: Clockwork mechanisms and the curious "automata" created using that technology made a considerable impact on the human consciousness. There are whole stretches of the Hidden World that are composed of clockwork – great clock-cities with mechanical creatures attending each gear and axle. One variety of such clockwork creatures are these dolls. They're human in shape and size, but obviously mechanical, and there's something terribly soulless in their glass eyes. They have no desire to be human, and they intend to take Sally (and perhaps others besides) back to their home and make her more like them.

Redcap: These goblins are hateful, cruel creatures that love to spill blood. They have many sharp teeth and carry crude spiked clubs and wicked, wicked knives with which to "bring on the red" as they say. Their name comes from how they like to wear caps dyed red with blood, but they have other abilities that let them twist reality apart (i.e., the Sorcery ability).

Static Monster: The "static monster" is an incorporeal creature seemingly made of white noise. It's usually content to inhabit a TV or radio and make it unable to show anything other than static (even if the TV is one of the newer models that's supposed to turn the screen blue when there's just static), but it loves big TVs, so the moment it finds big enough flat screen plasma TV, it'll be in heaven. When threatened it can attack with powerful blasts of static electricity, and if it feels it's in mortal danger it might try to draw its attackers into a part of the Hidden World that's been shaped by television.

Unicorn: The classic fantastic single-horned horse of myth finds its way into Hell's Gate one day (see *Rainbow and Unicorn*, below). It's a magnificent, beautiful animal, with a coat that gleams like mother-of-pearl and a long horn that sparkles like a diamond. It's also a fickle creature that will only allow itself to be approached by virgins, and in fact has a pretty nasty temper in general. It's not the strongest of creatures, but it can run like the wind and its horn can easily pierce flesh, human or otherwise.

Episode Ideas

Coven is set up with a mixture of investigation and social interaction in mind; the characters are powerful, but they aren't particularly designed for combat. "Battles" in *Coven* should be short and either anticlimactic or messy.

Rainbow and Unicorn: Rumors abound of a white horse running around the edge of town, but the men who went to hunt it came back with stab wounds. Valerie is convinced that it has to be a unicorn, and as more and more people get attacked it

seems like the unicorn – a beast that, if the myths are true, only allows virgins to come near it – is going to be causing as much embarrassment as injury.

Media Exposure: A news crew from the nearest city has come hoping to get a scoop on the existence of a real witch coven here in Hell's Gate. You just know this isn't going to go well; the reporter on the story won't take no for an answer, Valerie is excited about being on TV, Robin is totally against being on TV, and the whole town is whipped up into a gossiping frenzy. It's hard to say what kind of report will wind up being broadcast, but it's sure to be an… *interesting* show to watch.



Inspection: Mrs. Dragonsbane of the American Witchcraft Association has come to Hell's Gate to do an audit of the town's witches, and she isn't happy with what she sees. She noses into *everything*, questioning everyone in sight, as though she's trying as hard as she can to find something wrong. She insists on being allowed to see Sally's inner workings, and is looking to get to the bottom of the fire that burned the old school gym to the ground a few years ago. But is she really what she seems, or does she have something to hide herself?

Awakening: Calvin Daniels is an altogether unremarkable guy. He's not stupid, but he's no genius either. He's not a loner, but he's not really popular either. About the only thing that really calls attention to him is the fact that his parents are the only ones in town who really despise witches, even the Norrises. But the Daniels family has a dirty little secret; Calvin's great-great-great grandmother was a witch, one who was burned at the stake by her own son. And now, generations later, the old blood is awakening in Calvin.

Broken Doll: It was a stupid prank and no real harm was meant by it, but very serious harm was done. Sally's master spring got pulled out and her insides flooded with pool water. As her mother struggles desperately to fix her, Sally is paralyzed, attached to a motor that keeps her running, barely. Ms. Graham is too afraid of her little secret coming out to ask anyone for help, even though it's becoming increasingly apparent that she needs it, and soon.

Tokyo Peacekeepers

Genre: Cyberpunk Action

Concept: In Neo-Tokyo of the 21st Century order is kept not by the police who serve only the elite, but mercenaries called "peacekeepers."

Player Characters: A team of peacekeepers.

Inspiration: *AD Police* (anime), *Blade Runner* (movie), *Bubblegum Crisis* (anime), *Burst Angel* (anime), *Cyberpunk 2020* (RPG), *The Fifth Element* (movie)

It's the year 2049. Tokyo is now the most populous city in the world thanks to new building materials that have allowed buildings to go further upwards than ever before. Millions live in this vast sprawl, the rich in shining palaces that touch the sky, the poor in what amount to tiny cells in the lower levels, and the poorest in the darkness of ground level. Some have likened Tokyo to a parasite; the city has a way of drawing people in – not only from the whole of Japan but from all over the world – and not letting go.

Amid the shining towers peace and order are usually the norm; the conditions most people live in force them to trust their neighbors, if only to leave them alone. When problems do arise, the police are worse than useless, mere thugs that serve the rich and harass the poor. When small problems arise, people deal with them on their own as best they can. When big problems arise, you call a peacekeeper. Peacekeepers are mercenaries and vigilantes who serve the good of the public. Some charge fees, some do it out of principles or for fun, and a few have gone bad.

Tokyo

An International City

At the dawn of the 21st Century, Japan was heading towards a crisis. The causes were many and varied, but the simple fact was that the death and birth rates were both dropping. Projections showed that if the existing trends continued, by the year 2050 nearly 60% of the nation's declining population would consist of the elderly. The government has been doing everything possible to encourage its citizens to have more children, to reduce the considerable psychological and financial burden of raising children in Japan.

By 2020, it was clear that these efforts, though met with some success, wouldn't be enough. In order for Japan to survive as a nation the government reversed one of its most long-standing policies, allowing foreigners to immigrate and eventually obtain full Japanese citizenship. The newly formed immigration offices were almost immediately inundated with workers, especially from Southeast Asia, seeking to find new lives and new prosperity in Japan as many before them had done in coming to America.

The tide has been stemmed somewhat since then, but Japan as a nation is still struggling to make these newcomers a part of its revised identity. The resulting Japanese society is more prosperous but also more stratified than ever before. Tokyo is the epicenter of immigration in Japan, and nearly half of the millions of immigrants who've come to Japan in the past 29 years live there. The rich among the Japanese have fought tooth and nail to maintain their superiority. The foreigners remain poor for the most part, but have managed to carve out their own niches and neighborhoods in the city. Vietnamese nail salons, Indian engineers, Chinese restaurants, and so forth all abound, and all are being made part of a new Japanese-speaking society. There are already adult second-generation immigrants who speak very little of their parents' languages, for whom Japanese is a first language and Tokyo is home.

Police and Peacekeepers

Over the past 30 years or so, Tokyo's police have gradually transformed from teams of polite men and women in crisp uniforms wielding stern language, to brutal armored soldiers with assault rifles. The local government now regards the lower levels as a warren of criminals, and as such the police tend towards extremes of abandoning an area or turning it into a war zone. Most people know better than to mess with the police; unless an individual officer happens to be in the mood for taking bribes, any trouble caused with one cop is likely to bring down

dozens more. The trouble this can cause for a whole neighborhood is enough to shame most people into behaving while the cops are around.

It's partly because of this distrust that there's so much demand for peacekeepers. They come in every shape and size, but it's become the custom in Tokyo to always offer up some kind of reward when a peacekeeper helps out, even if it's nothing more than a bit of food or a cold beer. There are a wide range of peacekeepers, ranging from some guy around the corner who has a pistol to small corporations with hundreds of employees. New peacekeepers have to fight each other for online job postings, or just take whatever comes to hand locally, while a seasoned peacekeeper with a good reputation can expect jobs to come to him. There are no special licenses for peacekeepers, though some of the toys they like to use require special permits. The police like it this way since it makes it easier for them to haul in a peacekeeper that bothers them whenever they feel like it.

Some communities, especially the more close-knit ones, work out a system where everyone pays a certain amount per month, which goes into a general account used to hire peacekeepers whenever a significant problem arises. There are even peacekeeping outfits and insurance companies that have tried offering services with monthly billing, to varying degrees of success.

Technology

Building Materials

New super-light, super-strong materials have made it possible to construct safe 200+ storey buildings relatively cheaply. The polymer that's largely responsible for this is also used to make furniture and other everyday items, so apartments usually have a set weight limit, one that's easy to stay under provided a tenant doesn't insist on keeping around too much in the way of old wooden furniture or paper books.

Computers

The notion of a computer as a single discrete unit you can own has eroded somewhat. For most people in Tokyo a terminal unit that connects to the public network lets them do everything they'd ever want to do on a computer. It takes exceptionally specialized, high-powered, or secretive computing needs for an independent computer to be truly necessary, much less cost-effective. Citizens have a certain level of access for free – around 2030 it was ruled to be a right, under the Japanese constitution's provision for a minimum level of "cultured" lifestyle for its citizens – and more power, storage capacity, etc. can be leased relatively cheaply.

The public nets in Japan are also surprisingly secure. There are other countries where it's said that only fools would use the public nets, but the Japanese government maintains a very sophisticated "fractal AI" security system that is constantly evolving to counter every possible security breach. In this day and age most illicit access happens between private networks; a typical hacker needs to be able to make a physical connection, so most have some kind of partner who specializes in penetrating physical defenses with a cable or portable transceiver in hand.

Most people carry some kind of "chatter box," basically a pub.net enabled cell phone, which gives them full access to the public networks wherever they go. Home terminals by and large exist for the purpose of providing a more comfortable interface.

Virtual reality hasn't really caught on, except for certain specialized applications, notably in medicine (for surgery) and in the military. This is partly because the neural interface technology that came onto the market a few years ago turned out to cause serious neural problems and pose an acute risk of brain cancer to users. Animal experimentation is continuing to devise a safer neural interface technology, but there are still a few who use such devices anyway.

Cybernetics

There's been a growing trend towards cloned body replacements over mechanical ones. It's rare to see someone needing replacements for damaged limbs, so most cyborgs got that way for augmentation purposes. Obviously artificial parts are much cheaper, but realistic replacements are what's trendy. At the furthest extreme, though it costs a fortune, is total body replacement. Some do this to become superhuman, some to be able to put their brains in a "perfect" body, and a few even see it as an avenue to having a sex change.

"Full conversion" cyborgs retain only their brains, which can be kept alive with a fairly cheap nutrient delivery system and oxygen filter. A cyborg's real problems tend to be psychological, especially among those who are obviously artificial. The loss of humanity tends to lead to anti-social disorders and a pronounced loss of empathy.

On the other hand, many people have small implants to help them out on a day-to-day basis. Among these are things like internal air filters, tracking beacons, and internal chatter boxes (which in game terms could be bought as Features), as well as artificial eyes with optical enhancement or specialized forms of vision (Heightened Senses). For news reporters it's become very common for them to have at least one artificial eye and ear, which are tied to an implanted recording device.

Androids

Androids are relatively common, though AI is still pretty limited, to the point where they can't be called sentient. On the other hand they're a popular (if expensive) form for computers to take, both among the few hobbyists who still own full personal computers and the more eccentric terminal users. Physically, androids can be very realistic – so much so that they're legally required to have distinguishing characteristics that make their artificial natures readily apparent. Some are made to look obviously mechanical or given unnatural skin tones (pure white being the most common), but it's far more trendy for them to be mostly human-like except for some obviously artificial "accessory" features.

A typical android is about 50% lighter than a human of the same size, due to the lightweight materials used, and has rechargeable power cells that can last as long as 2 days with minimal activity, or as little as 6 hours with excessive activity. Although they more or less have a full range of human motion, androids are usually weak and slow, incapable of any substantial displays of strength or agility. Adding such capabilities is certainly possible, but very expensive.

Androids can be loaded with a variety of software. Programs and online services intended for normal computers/terminals may require at a minimum a display screen to be attached, but there are many android-specific programs for things like language translation, household chores, navigation, etc. Owners who prize their androids often install some defensive software, allowing an android to dodge and take cover when danger appears, but offensive software is very tightly regulated and requires special licensing to use legally.

And in case you're wondering, yes, some androids are used for sex. Talking about it is considered something of a faux pas though, especially among the native Japanese who are supposed to be doing everything possible to increase their birth rate.

In game terms, a basic android counts as a Major Item of Personal Gear. It will have a 14 CP to distribute among the six attributes and 10 SP to buy skills, though none of these can go above 3. Androids are assumed to have a wireless modem for accessing the public nets (though these can be disabled if desired), and can have up to three Ranks of the Features Ability. More advanced androids can be purchased using the Servant Ability instead.

Transportation

Tokyo's vast, towering urban sprawl helped make it one of the first cities in the world to widely adopt "aircars," small personal flying vehicles. The sheer amount of vertical movement many people

Sample Vehicles

Vehicle	Speed	MB	Size	People	Cargo	AV	Hits	Skill
Compact Aircar	90	+1	2	4	160 lbs.	8	40	Driving (Aircar)
Passenger Aircar	85	+0	2	5	300 lbs.	10	50	Driving (Aircar)
Airtruck	80	-1	3	3	1,200 lbs.**	12	60	Driving (Aircar)

need has created a very real need for this kind of vehicle. Unless it's been illegally modified, an aircar has an automatic guidance system. Although most people just punch in their destination and sit back, most aircars have a secondary manual control system, albeit one designed to make it next to impossible to commit a traffic violation.

Driving a full-manual aircar takes significantly more training, so the licenses are deliberately made to be difficult to obtain. Only police officers commonly have full-manual aircars, though there are a few peacekeepers and such who can afford the fees (and there's that Blue Lightning taxi company). The rest are modified illegally, and they're more common in the lower levels. Illegal modifications are difficult to pull off simply because aircars tap into the public networks (with their fractal security) for navigational data, and the secondary data the cars transmit would have to be very carefully faked.

In game terms, a typical aircar counts as one major item of Personal Gear. Below are stats for some typical types of aircars.

While aircars are relatively affordable, Japan's famous railway system is still very much alive and well, and is routinely used by commuters as well as long-distance travelers. Excepting the lines that run into truly abysmal neighborhoods, Japan Rail is an astonishingly reliable computer-controlled transportation system. In many areas people start to get annoyed if their train is 30 seconds late. Most of the JR lines run entirely at the same height, and most of the larger stations have express elevators that let passengers change levels quickly.

Weapons

In *Tokyo Peacekeepers* laser weapons are still too expensive to be practical, but new advances in firearms have more than done their part to ensure that weapons have become deadlier.

Firearms: Basic firearms haven't changed all that much, except that they've become cheaper, lighter, and have less recoil. For all firearms, reduce the STR Minimum by 1 (to a minimum of 2), and reduce the weight and cost by 25%.

Sample Weapons

Weapon	Dmg	Type	Acc	Rmod	STR Min	Max	RoF	Amm	Wt.	Notes
Gyrojet Derringer	7d6	P/L	0	+1	2	300	1	1	1	PA
Gyrojet Pistol	7d6	P/L	0	+2	3	300	2	4	3	PA
Gyrojet Rifle	7d6	P/L	0	+2	3	300	2	12	4	SA

Sample Armor

Item	AV	Loc	STR Min	Wt.	Notes
Armored Coat	6	6-15	1	2	½ AV vs. Blunt damage
Armored Jumpsuit	5	5-17	1	1	½ AV vs. Blunt damage
Full-Body Armor, Heavy	10	3-18	3	6	
Full-Body Armor, Light	8	3-18	3	5	
Police Riot Armor	11	3-18	3	10	
Torso Armor, Heavy	10	7-12	3	4	
Torso Armor, Light	8	7-12	3	3	

Gyrojet Weapons: One of the more deadly personal weapons available right now is the gyrojet; it fires small self-propelled, spin-stabilized rounds that hit with a *lot* of force, and unlike conventional firearms, explosive rounds are relatively safe to use. Gyrojet rounds are relatively large (a little smaller than shotgun shells) though, so payloads are relatively small. Explosive rounds inflict an additional 1d6 damage and are treated as P/L explosive attacks (see p. 185).

Needlers: These weapons fire long, thin metal darts that can pierce flesh and potentially cause shorts in electrical systems. They're also a popular weapon for assassins because the needles can easily be coated with poison or other substances. Stats for a needler pistol can be found on p. 201 of *Open Anime*.

Shockblades: Smaller batteries and weird experimentation have led to the creation of "shockblades," melee weapons that can release a powerful electric as they strike. Any weapon with a metallic blade can be converted into a shockblade, though swords are the most popular in Tokyo. Such a weapon costs an extra $200 or so. If a shockblade damages the target (i.e. if it penetrates the armor), it delivers a secondary shock that inflicts 2d6 B/S damage.

Armor

The advances in plastics that have led to new building materials have also allowed for the creation of body armor durable enough to deflect bullets yet still light enough for an average person to wear. Riot police wear a distinctive full-body armor that makes them damn hard to take down, and among Tokyo's peacekeepers and other warriors armor has become as much a fashion statement as a practicality. Those with the money to spare will often pay a little extra for the latest cool-looking design, while others will pay exorbitant prices to have designers put together a one-of-a-kind custom armor.

Player Characters

These sample player characters are for one possible *Tokyo Peacekeepers campaign. The back story is that an ad was posted for a new startup peacekeeping outfit called "Shijin Peacekeeping Co., Ltd." Those who responded were surprised to find that the head of the fledgling company was being headed by an Indian man named Arvinder. A few of the candidates walked out in disgust after finding out, but most knew better than to pass up the good salary and benefits he was offering. The player characters are those he settled on to be his team; at present they're the only peacekeepers on staff, and they're all strangers to one another.*

For this campaign the power level will be High (64 CP, 32 SP, Max. 8), though for other campaigns in this setting Average or Very High power levels aren't out of the question. There aren't any special powers per se, though characters can have "Talents" (see p. 165), and Items of Power to represent particularly powerful equipment.

Akemi

Concept: Cute girl with a chaingun.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 3, REF 6, HLT 4, PRE 5, INT 4, WIL 5

Derived Attributes: DEF 19, INI 5, TGH 4, LIF 36, EP 5, MOV 10

Skills: Acrobatics 2, Bluff 3, Computers 4, Cooking 1 (+2 for Curry), First Aid 3, Hobby: Baseball 2, Intuition 3, Machine Guns 6, Missile Launchers 3, Pistols 3, Rifles 3, Stealth 5, Style 2, Throwing 5, Unarmed Combat: Karate 4

Abilities: Damn Healthy! 2 (4 CP), Defense Combat Mastery 3 (6 CP), Divine Relationship 5 (5 CP), Highly Skilled 2 (2 CP), Item of Power: Chaingun 8 (24 CP; See below)), Personal Gear 1 (2 CP)

Chaingun: Akemi's chaingun has the following Abilities:

Flight: Skimmer/Hovercraft 2 (4 CP)

Features 2 (2 CP; Tracking Device, ID lock – prevents others from using it unless Akemi enters a special code)

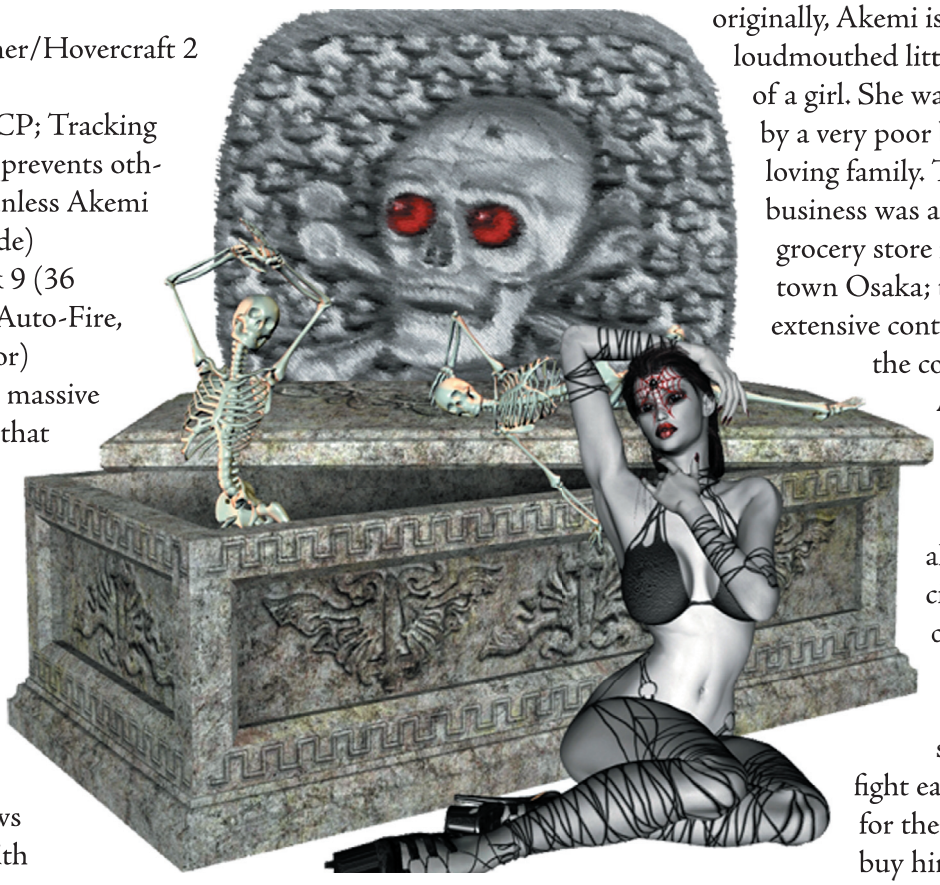
Special Attack 9 (36 CP; 5d6 damage, Auto-Fire, Penetrating: Armor)

This thing is a massive piece of hardware that she "inherited" from her dead brother. Ordinarily it would require a STR of 6 or more to wield it, but Akemi had a hover system installed that allows her to handle it with relative ease, and even to ride on it in a pinch! The Special Attack ability of the chaingun doesn't limit the shots only because the Limited Shots Drawback cuts the number of shots down to six or less. The chaingun carries a ridiculous amount of ammo, but it will eventually run out; we'll assume it takes about 30 auto-fire attacks to empty out the ammunition. Reloading is time consuming and requires hundreds of belt-fed rounds.

Personal Gear: 9mm Short Pistol, Fragmentation Grenades, Light Body Armor

Defects: Psychological Impairment: Short-Tempered 2

Appearance: Akemi has white hair (dyed) done up in two pigtails, and deep brown eyes. She's a slim girl, only about 16 or 17 years old, but she wields a massive chaingun that's supported by a hover unit and equipped with considerable recoil suppressors. She prefers to wear white with some pink highlights – lightweight battle armor when she's expecting trouble, and short dresses and the like when she isn't.



Profile: Hailing from Osaka originally, Akemi is a spunky, loudmouthed little tiger of a girl. She was raised by a very poor but very loving family. The family business was and still is a grocery store in downtown Osaka; through extensive contact with the community Akemi's father has become known all over the city as Sen-chan, and people will sometimes fight each other for the chance to buy him a drink.

She also has three older brothers, all of whom have always looked out for her. The oldest of the three is getting ready to take over the family business when dad retires – people are already starting to call him "Sen-chan 2." The middle brother is a baseball player, currently off in America, though you wouldn't think it from how often the father talks about him. The youngest brother went into the Self-Defense Forces for a while, but after finishing his tour of duty he went to Tokyo to become a peacekeeper.

Although Akemi dearly loves her parents and all three of her brothers, it was the youngest, Daisuke, that she was closest to. When they found out that he'd been double-crossed by his "partners" and killed, apparently by someone with yakuza connections, she took it really hard. The whole family was angry and grieved, but it was Akemi who vowed to take revenge. She took up her brother's chaingun (albeit with some modifications so that she could actually use it) and headed for Tokyo.

All through the bullet train ride she'd been imagining herself barging into some boardroom full of evil men in suits, gunning them down, and returning home triumphant. But it's never that simple, is it? On the first day she learned the hard way why she was better off investigating quietly when she nearly got killed. Until such time as she can get her revenge, she's been discretely poking around, while working part-time jobs to pay for an apartment and other expenses. She hasn't gotten much closer to her goal in the past few months, but now that she's gotten a job as a peacekeeper, she's sure the money and contacts she'll be making will help out a lot.

Akemi is still pretty inexperienced and a bit impulsive, but she's also naturally self-assured and street-smart. When she does something wrong it's usually more because of ignorance than stupidity, and she learns fast from her mistakes. She speaks Japanese in a really thick Osaka accent, to the point where non-native speakers (like Mike and Sarah) have a hard time understanding her.

Unbeknownst to her, pictures of Akemi have started circulating around the net. She's starting to have quite a fan following, even though most of her fans don't believe or don't know that she's actually a real person.

Kazuma

Concept: Cool guy with a sword.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 5, REF 7, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 5, WIL 7

Derived Attributes: DEF 19, INI 6, TGH 6, LIF 29, EP 6, MOV 12

Skills: Computers 3, Drive 5, Jump 2, Language: English 4, Intrigue 3, Negotiation 3, Persuasion 5, Pistol 4, Politics 2, Rifle 4, Sense Motive 3, Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Style 4, Swords 6, Unarmed Combat: Aikido 4

Abilities: Attack Combat Mastery 2 (6 CP), Combat Technique 6 (6 CP; Block Ranged Attacks, Judge Opponent, Leap Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting), Defense Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Divine Relationship 2 (2 CP), Extra Actions 1 (8 CP), Features 1 (1 CP; cybernetic eye with recording feature), Heightened Awareness 2 (2 CP), Heightened Senses 3 (3 CP; thermal imaging, infrared, and night vision in cybereye), Highly Skilled 4 (4 CP), Personal Gear 2 (4 CP), Special Movement 1 (1 CP; Cat-Like), Wealth 1 (3 CP)

Personal Gear: .45 ACP Pistol, Aircar, Armored Coat, Fragmentation Grenades, Light Torso Armor, Shockblade Katana

Defects: Girl Magnet 2, Nemesis: Triads 2

Appearance: Tall and lithe, Kazuma likes to dress stylishly. Usually this means slacks, a button-up shirt, and a long coat, dark blue to match his hair, but he's not averse to wearing armor (typically just a bulletproof vest though) when he deems it necessary.

Profile: Kazuma is the only Tokyo native of the group, and also the most cool-headed. His roots can be traced back through a long line of kendo champions, and before that samurai, but in this generation his parents *really* took the government's public service announcements on having more children to heart. A wealthy, traditional family like his

would usually impose lots of obligations and guilt on its members, but being the second youngest of *seven* children did a lot to dilute the experience for Kazuma. Since he has no chance of inheriting much of anything, or of being the one to carry on the family's dojo, he's mostly been left to his own devices – perhaps more so than he'd like. His parents have always concentrated on the two oldest children, and Kazuma was a lone wolf from an early age.

He excelled at swordsmanship, but of course not enough to attract his parents' attention, not with his older siblings being such geniuses. He worked hard on his own, and actually managed to get into Tokyo University – where again he was overshadowed by his older siblings. He had some success investing in the stock market, but he was just plain bored with it all. On a whim he decided to become a peacekeeper, and spent a small fortune on an antique katana and had a shockblade conversion done (something his father probably would've hated). He quickly found that in spite of the danger and long hours and everything he *loved* it. It was an exciting way of life, and for a change people showed him gratitude and women showed interest in him (rather than asking to be introduced to his older brother).

It wasn't all good, of course; a peacekeeper naturally runs into some very bad people, and for a solo operation like his the danger can be considerable. In Kazuma's case, he unknowingly went up against a team of men from one of the Triads – the Chinese mafia, which has been slowly muscling its way into Japan for years now. Keeping a cool head (as usual) he methodically took out his enemies one by one. The battle ended when he found himself facing one well-dressed young man who made the mistake of fighting a shockblade with a steel pipe. Kazuma couldn't have known that he'd killed the boss' youngest and favorite son, but then it's going to take some time for them to figure out what the hell happened and pick up his trail.

Kazuma is cool and calculating to the point where it can be irritating. He's too used to working alone, and has a way of ordering people around and expecting them to follow his instructions perfectly. He doesn't deal with his own failures very well.

Mike

Concept: Big lug.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 7, REF 4, HLT 6, PRE 3, INT 4, WIL 6 (30)

Derived Attributes: DEF 14, INI 4, TGH 7, LIF 57, EP 6, MOV 10

Skills: Cooking 2, Drive 4, First Aid 5, Fish and Game 3, Gunplay 5, Instrument: Guitar 3, Language: Japanese 3, Language: Korean 3, Pistols 5, Rifles 5, Shotguns 6, Throwing 5, Unarmed Combat: Brawling 6

Abilities: Attack Combat Mastery 2 (6 CP), Damn Healthy! 4 (8 CP), Enhanced Strength 2 (8 CP), Highly Skilled 3 (3 CP), Massive Damage 1 (5 CP), Personal Gear 2 (4 CP), Rejuvenation 3 (3 CP; when someone close to him is in danger)

Personal Gear: 12 gauge shotgun, 5.56mm M16A2, Aircar, Heavy Body Armor, Knife, Stun Grenades

Defects: Part of Body (Enhanced Strength is only in right arm) 2, Significant Other (wife) 1

Appearance: A tall man built like a bear, with short black hair and brown eyes. His right arm is a prosthetic; he refuses to tell anyone how it happened.

Profile: When the local economy in his hometown in Alaska went into the toilet, Mike did his best to get by. At first he managed to become a police deputy, but before long even the police force had to make cutbacks and he had to make do with unemployment and crap jobs. After two years he'd had enough. He decided it was time for a big change, and he finally settled on moving to Tokyo, where the economy was supposedly booming from an influx of foreign capital and labor.

Japan isn't quite the land of milk and honey that some make it out to be, but Mike still found a lot more opportunities once he was in Tokyo. Since arriving he's worked as a bouncer, a dock worker, and an armed guard – and found himself a wife along the way – before finding his calling as a peacekeeper. His wife, a slim Korean woman, doesn't entirely approve of his line of work, but seldom argues the point.

Mike is amiable and soft-spoken, but he can be a real terror when he does get mad. In particular he highly values the people close to him, and seeing them hurt – especially when it's for no particular reason – always riles him up. Anyone who messes with his wife is going to be in for a nasty surprise when he gets to them.

Sarah

Concept: Crazy gunslinger chick.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 4, REF 7, HLT 6, PRE 5, INT 4, WIL 6

Derived Attributes: DEF 17, INI 6, TGH 5, LIF 35, EP 6, MOV 12

Skills: Bluff 3, Criminology 3, Dancing 2, Drive 4, Gunplay 5, Language: Japanese 2, Jump 2, Persuasion 5, Pistols 7, Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Throwing 5, Tracking 5, Unarmed Combat: Brawling 5

Abilities: Attack Combat Mastery 2 (6 CP), Combat Technique 8 (8 CP; Accuracy, Ambidextrous, Blind-Shoot, Far Shot, Judge Opponent, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw, Weapons Encyclopedia), Damn Healthy! 1 (2 CP), Heightened Awareness 3 (3 CP), Highly Skilled 3 (3 CP), Massive Damage 1 (5 CP), Personal Gear 2 (4 CP), Rejuvenation 4 (4 CP; when someone calls her a coward)

Personal Gear: Armored Jumpsuit, Desert Eagle, Fragmentation Grenades, Gyrojet Pistol, Night Vision Goggles

Defects: Ism ("crazy American chick no one can understand") 1, Psychological Impairment: Impulsive 2

Appearance: A tall, athletic redhead with bright blue eyes and a wicked grin. Sarah likes to wear bright red most of the time, and is almost always packing heat – a Desert Eagle with armor piercing rounds on one side and a gyrojet pistol with explosive rounds on the other.

Profile: Texas isn't quite like your average Japanese citizen imagines it. The big cities like Houston and Dallas have their own kind of urban sprawl, though the police are trustworthy for the most part, working like a well-oiled machine to keep the city clean at all levels. There aren't any peacekeepers, but there are quite a few bounty hunters. Among those were Sarah and Chuck MacDougal, a young married couple that took down quite a few of the Lone Star State's worst criminals.

Their bounty hunting career – and their marriage – came to an end when Chuck went bad. He got greedy, took a job from some bad people, and did some very bad things. When Sarah found out, she knew she had to be the one to bring him in; anyone else would probably get killed by her hubby's sniping skills. After the trial, she took the reward money and bought herself a plane ticket to the other side of the world.

She'd originally been aiming for a simple, quiet life in Tokyo, but she found she just couldn't stand by when folks were in trouble. It took a little while for her to catch on to the fact that people were getting insulted when she refused rewards for helping them, but she found the extra income really useful, and before long she found herself being hired on by Shijin. Even though she now has a steady job as a peacekeeper, she doesn't mind doing "freebies" on her own when they pop up.

While Sarah has no intentions of getting back together with her ex-husband, she's considering eventually moving back to Texas. It's her home, and she's already getting tired of people giving her crap because they can't understand her when she speaks Japanese with a Texas drawl. For the time being she's content to enjoy her current lifestyle to the

fullest, and she relishes hearing people call her "that psycho redhead."

Adventure Seeds

The Ripper: Some nutcase is going around killing (or is that destroying?) female androids in the area. He seems to be good at breaking into people's homes, and then cuts them open and fries the motherboard, taking particular care to thoroughly destroy the core memory. The android owners are getting pretty freaked out, so they pooled their money to hire some peacekeepers to deal with the problem. This killer is difficult to track, but the deeper our heroes get into the investigation the more they begin to suspect that he's actually hoping to catch a *particular* android. And they may have just stumbled on that android, abandoned in a pile of trash. She contains a very high-powered server with massive storage capacity, but her core memory is fragmented. She only remembers that her designation is Koyuki NSK-G7. It's hard to pin down what exactly, but there's something odd about her…

The Great Pudding Caper: Someone hijacked a truck carrying a shipment of pudding. No, seriously. It was the good kind too, so there was over $20,000 worth in there, and the owner wants it back. Is there some hidden agenda here, some strange device or secret information hidden in those little plastic cartons? Or… is it just that this guy really likes pudding?

Family War Zone: There's a certain section of Akihabara (a part of Tokyo known for stores with electronics goods) where half of everything is owned by the Asakawa family and the other half is owned by the Nakamura family. They've been fiercely competing for over 20 years, ever since Hideo Asakawa and Jack Nakamura opened up little hold in the wall electronics stores next door each other. Now they each have around 20 stores in the area; every time one opens up a particular kind of store, the other has to match it and try to offer the same goods at lower prices. The Asakawa family's newly opened arcade was vandalized, and within hours Hideo was on the phone demanding that a peacekeeper team come and get to the bottom of it. Our heroes are going to have their work cut out for them; the Asakawas are unlikely to believe any explanation that doesn't put the Nakamuras at fault, the Nakamuras are going to be tight-lipped about the whole thing, and neither side is going to be shy about reaching for their guns if it comes to that.



Snowball: The team has been hired by a man who wants them to retrieve his kidnapped pet cat. He's received a ransom note, but the amount they want is more than he could ever hope to pay, and certainly more than the cat is worth. Are these kidnappers off their rocker, or is there more to this kitty than meets the eye?

Bad Cop, Worse Cop: Peggy Nguyen saw something that she wasn't supposed to see – a police officer killing an innocent man. If she testifies in court, a corrupt police officer stands a good chance of being sent to jail or maybe even executed. If she's going to live that long, this harmless housewife is going to need some protection. Peacekeepers are hired to keep her

safe, but fending off the police won't be an easy task…

Grand Theft Aircar: Some criminals get points for sheer audacity, even if they might get marked down for stupidity. One of those is a guy who's been jacking aircars. Apparently he's been finding ledges that overhang traffic lanes and jumping. The drivers of the cars he jacks are usually kicked out, with the predictable unfortunate consequences. What he does with the cars afterwards is a mystery, but people are starting to get worried, and they want him stopped.

UFO Fist

Genre: Sci-Fi/Modern Martial Arts

Concept: Street fighters from Tokyo wind up being the first and only line of defense against an alien invasion.

Player Characters: A group of street fighters from Tokyo. This isn't a world where people use energy blasts or anything; special powers come in along with the aliens…

Inspiration: *Air Gear* (manga), *Air Master* (anime/manga), *Bleach* (anime/manga), *FLCL* (anime), *Invader Zim* (cartoon), *Jet Set Radio* (video game), *The King of Fighters* (video game), *Parasyte* (manga)

Most people don't necessarily think of street fighting when they think of Tokyo, but the back streets of Japan's capitol are home to countless fighters, endlessly seeking to prove who is the strongest. Their battles are only known to the world in whispers, but the greatest are among the most powerful warriors Earth has ever produced.

Perhaps that's why those back alleyways were chosen as a refuge by the alien creatures known as the Zil. They came fleeing the Sim, a race of monstrous conquerors that have destroyed their homeworld and remain intent on wiping them out. The Zil are symbiotes, and must attach themselves to an appropriate host, one with a strong life force. The Derkhan with which they shared their homeworld are extinct, so a new race of hosts had to be found. Using their inherent esper abilities to travel through hyperspace, they found themselves at the closes source of suitable hosts.

The Zil have already made an impact on the street fighting scene, introducing strange new powers. However, now the Sim are coming to finish what they started. They intend to wipe out the remaining Zil, and then move on to subjugating earth once no one can block their passage through hyperspace.

Our heroes are a group of street fighters who've taken on Zil symbiotes just as the Sim start arriving. It's a bizarre mix of tragically hip Tokyo style, melodramatic martial arts, and weird sci-fi.

Soundtrack

Music can go a long way towards creating the kind of atmosphere that *UFO Fist* is shooting for. You can use whatever you want of course, but our recommendation is to go for an "indie" sound (whatever the hell that means), with lots of rock, punk, and hip hop music. It doesn't have to be in Japanese, but that certainly wouldn't hurt. *Definitely no pop music though, Japanese or otherwise.*

Anyway, below are some suggestions for artists that would fit in well with the setting's general groove. It's not even close to being comprehensive of course, and since some of them are Japanese it may take some hunting to find them.

Bad Religion

Cibo Matto

Hide With Spread Beaver

Millencollin

Orange Range

The Pillows (including the FLCL soundtrack)

Shakka Zombie

Street Fighters

UFO Fist isn't really about ring champions or guys who hang around a dojo perfecting their skills. The street fighters here are people who have a talent for something that the world doesn't really need

anymore, who fight for the same reason a writer writes or a painter paints – it's a need that just rises up on its own, regardless of whether or not there's any profit to be had. They fight when they can, when school or a day job permit, and sometimes even when those things should come first.

They also aren't likely to conform to anyone's ideas about what a martial art is supposed to be. In the absence of teachers telling them what's right or wrong to use, those who rise to the top are often the innovators. They blend elements of different styles together, and often use their own interests to derive new ways of fighting that no one would've ever expected.

Although there are those who believe in *ki* as a concept, you won't see any of the fighters in *UFO Fist* throwing energy blasts around. Their abilities can be exceptional and even superhuman, but they're ultimately grounded in things a real person could do.

The Zil

In its original state, a Zil appears as a gelatinous sphere about six inches in diameter, colored with a swirling mix of red and black. It can only move by rolling or jumping around, or occasionally by teleporting. The Zil are sentient, but too alien to communicate clearly with humans. The bonding process begins with the Zil physically entering the prospective host's body; they can enter through the skin in a matter of seconds. Humans undergoing bonding will experience hallucinations, nausea, fainting, and in some cases paranoia, for a few days while the Zil spreads out through the body and makes the necessary neural connections.

After about four days the bond is functional, and after about eight days it becomes permanent. A bonded Zil can communicate mentally with its host, though they can seldom intimate any but the most basic, primal emotions. It's possible that in time a Zil will come to better understand human thought, as they once had to do with the Derkhan, but it'll take time.

When a bonded Zil symbiote is hidden, it's virtually invisible. The host's vital signs and brainwaves will fluctuate a little, but it takes a close examination to detect this, and experience with Zil symbiotes to recognize the signs. On the other hand an active Zil is very conspicuous. The ways in which they manifest vary, but they can create new appendages, add armor or natural weapons, and even reinforce the human body, adding strength and durability. Each Zil "solidifies" its manifestation, based on images drawn from the host's mind, the first time it manifests. As a result some seem grotesquely alive, while others appear more artificial.

A human character with a Zil symbiote should take the Alternate Form (Full-Powered Form) Ability, and purchase Abilities that reflect the enhancements the symbiote provides. Below are some examples of possible symbiote powers and how they're represented in game terms:

- **Arm Blade:** A few symbiotes manifest sharp blades made of some kind of bone or chitin along the outer edge of the forearms. Natural Weapons 1 (1 CP; Arm Blade – treat as Claws/Spikes). Pretty much any form of Natural Weapons is fair game for symbiotes.
- **Armor Plating:** Not a few symbiotes will cover their hosts in some kind of protective armor plating. This is represented with the Armor Ability, usually at a rank of 1 to 3.
- **Enhanced Leg Muscles:** Enhanced Strength 1 (4 CP), with Part of Body (Legs Only; 1 CP), plus Jumping, and optionally Massive Damage (2 CP version; damage bonus applies to kicks and other attacks made with legs).
- **Melee Weapon:** Some symbiotes manifest some kind of melee weapon. This is usually physically attached to the user, even it it's only by a thin thread. These can be purchased as Special Attacks; the Melee Drawback is a must, but apart from that nearly anything is possible. See the stats for Setsuna and Shizka below for two examples.
- **Mighty:** Symbiotes can simply increase a host's overall muscle mass, though there's usually something unnatural about the way the character looks in that form. Treat this as a combination of Enhanced Strength and

Massive Damage (for hand-to-hand attacks only).

- **Power Arm:** A favorite is the "power arm," which gives a character one massive, armor-plated arm that can smash foes to bits. Armor 1 (4 CP) and Enhanced Strength 1 (4 CP), both with the 2 CP version of Part of Body, plus Massive Damage 2 (only attacks made with the power arm; 4 CP).
- **Scorpion Tail:** Natural Weapons 1 (1 CP; Tail Striker). Optionally, add a Special Attack with Melee and possibly Burning or Drain Body to represent poison.
- **Second Head:** One of the more grotesque things a symbiote can add is a second head. These never look *quite* right, and always have some kind of unnatural features. What exactly the extra head does varies, but possible Abilities include Enhanced Intellect, Enhanced Will, Heightened Awareness, Heightened Senses, etc.
- **Spine Armor:** Spine armor makes a character resemble a porcupine, making him or her very difficult to attack in hand-to-hand. Treat this as a combination of Armor 1 (4 CP) and Special Attack 3 (12 CP, or 3 CP as a secondary attack; 1d6 damage, Aura)
- **Wings (Large):** A very few symbiotes create such large wings that the host is actually made able to fly, or at least glide. Use the Flight Ability at Rank 1 or 2.
- **Wings (Small):** Smaller wings are unlikely to allow flight, but still have their uses.

Invasion

As the story begins, it's only been a week or two since the Zil started arriving on Earth, and only a handful have come. As word gets back to the homeworld that a new planet has been found with potential hosts more and more Zil will start showing up, and since the first few Zil to find hosts did so in Tokyo, the city will be home to a lot more before long.

However, a second "invasion" will come hot on its heels, as the Sim start appearing all over Tokyo.

Player Characters

Unlike a typical RPG campaign, the heroes of *UFO Fist* aren't necessarily on good terms with each other. They're people who come together because they have a common condition, and because they're forced to by circumstances. The power level is Very High (80 CP and 40 SP), and all of the player characters should have Zil symbiotes. For an extra bit of fighting game flavor, all of them should have at least one NPC fighter as a Nemesis.

Ena

Concept: The world's youngest Women's Pro-Wrestling Champion.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 7, REF 5, HLT 6, PRE 7, INT 3, WIL 5

Derived Attributes: DEF 15 (16), INI 4, TGH 6, LIF 41, EP 6, MOV 12

Skills: Acrobatics 4, Acting 3, Bluff 6, Cooking 4, Drive 5, Intuition 5, Jump 3, Persuasion 5, Society (Street Fighters) 5, Unarmed Combat (Wrestling) 8

Abilities: Alternate Form: Full-Powered Form 3 (27 CP), Attack Combat Mastery 2 (6 CP), Combat Technique 2 (2 CP; Judge Opponent, Lightning Reflexes), Damn Healthy! 2 (4 CP), Special Attack: Rainbow Claw 5 (4d6 damage, Incapacitating, Melee, Stoppable, Stun, 20 CP)

Alternate Form: Enhanced Reflexes 1 (4 CP), Enhanced Strength 2 (8 CP), Extra Arms 2 (2 CP), Extra Actions 1 (8 CP), Jumping 2 (2 CP), Natural Weapons: Tiger Claws 1 (1 CP), Special Attack: Omni-Claw 5 (7d6, Melee, 5 CP)

Defects: Easily Distracted (anything wrestling-related) 2, Famous 2, Nemesis: Rock Masters 2, Psychological Limitation: Code of Honor 2, Psychological Limitation: Overconfident 2

Appearance: A solidly built 19-year-old Japanese girl with short black hair. In the ring and whenever possible in a fight, Ena wears a wrestling

singlet, gloves, boots, and her "Rainbow Tiger" mask. The rest of the times she just wears a T-shirt and jeans. When her symbiote manifests, she becomes more muscular, she manifests her Rainbow Tiger mask as a part of her body, and she sprouts claws on the fingers of all four hands.

Profile: Little Ena Tanaka used to be a delicate crybaby. When other kids teased her, pulled her hair, it was her good friend "Hacchan" who came to her rescue. When Hacchan moved away she felt lost, and the vultures came in for the kill. On one fateful day when she'd been cornered and her long hair mercilessly cut, something snapped. In the blink of an eye the little lamb became a fierce little tiger cub. With both her parents gone much of the time, she looked to the TV for role models, and found them in women's pro wrestling.

At the age of 12 she started sneaking out to attend live wrestling events, and at the age of 15 she started sneaking out to *participate* in live wrestling events. It didn't take long for her parents to notice Ena's bruises and falling grades, and for a time they tried to forbid her from having anything to do with wrestling. However in high school she secretly joined the school's wrestling club, where she found a mentor and a harsh trainer in a senior named Nanami Takamiya. Takamiya saw Ena's tremendous potential, but also saw that this young contender was too concerned with the flash of professional wrestling and not enough with the real technical skill of the sport. The training regimen was ruthless, and it led to a tense confrontation between Takamiya and Ena's mother. In the end, Takamiya blurted out that she was certain that Ena would surpass her one day, and Ena's mother said she'd only let Ena continue wrestling if she could win a match. Mentor and student faced off, and Takamiya fought seriously. Ena's victory came with a flash of inspiration, devising a new submission hold that accomplished the impossible, making Takamiya tap out.

After graduating from high school, a stronger, tougher, wiser Ena returned to the world of pro-wrestling in the guise of Rainbow Mask, also known as the Rainbow Tiger. In less than a year her "Rainbow Claw" finishing maneuver became widely known and feared, and she felled the champion and took the title belt for her own.

Ena knows better than anyone that professional wrestling is a form of entertainment and not a sport, but when she holds a microphone and talks about standing up for justice, she really means it. Should a situation arise, she won't hesitate to stand up for what she believes is right, and it's drawn her into some serious fights. Not only that, but she's been known



to seek out matches among the street fighters of Tokyo, and she's become pretty well-known among that crowd. More recently she tangled with a man known as Rock Masters, a fellow pro-wrestler and a monstrous specimen. He broke her arm – he'd been hoping to permanently paralyze her, but she narrowly avoided his finishing move – and she broke his nose.

Ena is unusual among the street fighters in that she really strongly resents and distrusts her Zil symbiote. She's of the opinion that she got where she is by her own strength, and won't resort to "cheating" for any reason. Unfortunately for her, Rock Masters won't hesitate to use his own symbiote to the fullest extent possible, just as he never hesitated to use any underhanded tactics available to him. In all likelihood circumstances will force her to learn to use her symbiote just to stay alive once he comes looking for her.

Friends and Enemies: Ever since their first encounter in the ring, Ena and Rock Masters have utterly despised each other. The one time she fought Hayato something about him distracted her enough to cause her to lose the match, so although she doesn't hate him, she's intent on facing one more time, and winning.

Hayato

Concept: A young man who wants to be a hero, but has a long way to go.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 7, REF 7, HLT 7, PRE 3, INT 4, WIL 5

Derived Attributes: DEF 19, INI 5, TGH 6, LIF 44, EP 6, MOV 14

Skills: Acrobatics 5, Awareness 6, Bluff 2, First Aid 2, Flexible Weapons 4, Intuition 4, Jump 5, Society: Streetwise 2, Swimming 3, Unarmed Combat (Karate) 7

Abilities: Alternate Form: Full-Powered Form 4 (36 CP), Armor 1 (4 CP), Attack Combat Mastery 2 (6 CP), Damn Healthy! 2 (4 CP), Defense Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Rejuvenation 2 (2 CP; when he has someone important to him to protect)

Alternate Form: Combat Technique 1 (1 CP; Judge Opponent), Enhanced Strength 1 (4 CP), Enhanced Will 3 (9 CP), Extra Actions 1 (8 CP), Massive Damage 2 (10 CP), Natural Weapons 2 (2 CP; two arm blades), Special Defense 2 (2 CP; immune to fear/intimidation), Speed 1 (4 CP)

Defects: Involuntary Mental Change (becomes almost emotionless when symbiote is active and for a while after) 2, Nemesis: Ayako (unwanted love interest) 1, Nemesis: Ryo 2, Psychological Impairment (must protect those who are weaker than him) 2

Appearance: Hayato is a tall high school guy with short, unruly hair. He usually wears his school uniform, with the jacket open, but he adds a headband and fingerless gloves when he's ready for a real fight. When his symbiote manifests, his eyes turn pure black, blades emerge along his forearms, and odd black designs like some kind of tribal tattoos cover the right side of his body.

Profile: Hayato's earliest memories are of protecting a girl who lived in his neighborhood from bullies, and since then he's always done his best to protect those weaker than him. He's also taken karate classes from a very early age, as is the tradition of his family, giving him the strength to stand up for what he believes in. Unless it pits him against his older sister; she's a natural genius of hand-to-hand combat and he's scarcely able to lay a finger on her. Luckily she's been off in America going to college for a couple years now.

However his life isn't really a happy one. In middle school even though he was always helping people everyone became afraid of him. He'd been hoping that when he started high school things would turn around, but on the first day he wound up getting into an epic fight with Ryo, which only ended because Goro intervened and put at stop to it. As far as he's concerned, that one fight forever dashed any chances of his finding a girlfriend for the foreseeable future. The girls are always polite to him, but will use any excuse to get away from him in case another fight happens. And especially now that Goro's been expelled and Ryo is running amok, that

fear isn't at all unjustified. The only girl that's actually somewhat interested in him is Ayako, a female delinquent who seems to be intent on attacking him with her yo-yo whenever possible.

Hayato got into street fighting because it helps him cope. During a fight the whole world seems to fade into the background, leaving only the flow of attack and defense, the thrill of combat. But then the other day his "sanctuary" got invaded when he found that Hinata was a street fighter as well as an idol singer. Now he's so smitten he can't think straight, and all he can think of to do is to try and become stronger.

A Zil, sensing his strong desire, has taken him on as a host, but the symbiote's manifestation is a little confused since it was trying to interpret his own confused desires. When his symbiote manifests he becomes much more powerful, but it also alters his brain chemistry, dampening his emotions down to almost nothing, an effect that lingers for a while even after he physically reverts to normal.

Friends and Enemies: Through a strange set of circumstances, Hayato becomes friends with UFO Red, whom he sees as something of a mentor with regard to being a hero. He has a crush on Hinata, not knowing that she won't return his feelings no matter what he does. He and Shizuka happen to be classmates (with Midori as their homeroom teacher no less), but they don't really know each other.

Setsuna

Concept: A sword-wielding schoolgirl, whose symbiote manifests as a giant, evil-looking sword.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 4, REF 8, HLT 5, PRE 7, INT 5, WIL 7

Derived Attributes: DEF 20 (21), INI 7, TGH 6, LIF 29, EP 6, MOV 13

Skills: Acrobatics 3, Awareness 4, Conversation 3, First Aid 4, Instruction 4, Instrument: Violin 5, Jump 2, Knowledge: History of Kenjutsu and Kendo 4, Language: English 3, Philosophy 2, Singing 2, Swimming 2, Swords 6, Writing 3

Abilities: Alternate Form: Full-Powered Form 3 (27 CP), Combat Technique 4 (4 CP; Dodge, Judge Opponent, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw), Defense Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Flunkies 4 (Kendo Club members; 8 CP), Personal Gear 1 (2 CP), Special Movement 2 (2 CP; Cat-Like, Zen Direction), Wealth 1 (3 CP)

Personal Gear: A katana; this is of the "wash pole" concealable type, where the sheath and hilt are made of plain-looking wood. In a pinch the sheath can be used as a blunt weapon (same stats as a police baton). She also has a cell phone.

Alternate Form: Attack Combat Mastery 1 (3 CP), Damn Healthy! 3 (6 CP), Defense Combat Master 1 (2 CP), Power Defense: Bio-Murasame 3 (3 CP), Special Attack: Demon Sword "Bio-Murasame" 4 (16 CP, 4d6 damage, Drain Soul, Melee)

- It's not clear why exactly (Chidori's theory is that it excretes some kind of neurotoxin or hallucinogen), but those who are struck by the Bio-Murasame tend to exhibit symptoms of paranoia, and complain of seeing eyes watching them and feeling things crawling under their skin. Hence, the Special Attack has Soul Drain. (Isn't flavor text *neat*?)
- We've opted to give Setsuna's Alternate Form a few levels of the Damn Healthy! Ability. This could be handled a few different ways, but for Setsuna we've ruled that each time she activates the Alternate Form the player will roll 6d6 to see how many LIF points she gains. Damage will be subtracted from these extra LIF points first, and then from Setsuna's own. The symbiote's extra LIF will stay damaged until at least 24 hours have passed.

Defects: Nemesis (annoying fan club at school) 1, Nemesis: Chizuru 2, Significant Other: Chidori 1

Appearance: Setsuna has long, straight hair and an average build. She usually wears her school uniform, which is navy blue and has a double-breasted blazer, but wears a standard hakama and gi

for kendo practice, and formal attire at home. When her symbiote manifests, she finds herself holding a massive, evil-looking katana; it's nearly as long as she is tall, and it blade seems to be made of some kind of bonelike material, but with spikes and eyeballs down its length. Although it's hard to see, the sword is actually adhered to her right hand.

Profile: Setsuna Mishima comes from the wealthy family that heads the Mishima Financial Group, and attends a top-notch all-girls high school where she's the captain of the kendo team, and to many the idol of the school. While some might choose to take advantage of receiving all this attention, Setsuna is a very serious person and mostly just wants to succeed and make her parents proud. She works hard at her kendo, and uses it to protect those around her from danger. She also does *ikebana* (flower arrangement), and enjoys French literature.

In spire of all the adulation – or more likely because of it – Setsuna only really has one classmate she can truly call a friend. Chidori is a quirky, pigtailed, bespectacled girl that Setsuna has known since elementary school. Wherever Setsuna goes, Chidori is seldom far behind, even if it puts her in danger once in a while. She comes off as being silly and unfocused – to the point where many people wonder why the hell Setsuna puts up with her – but in reality she's a very good friend and a shrewd person. While Setsuna periodically finds herself defending Chidori with her sword, in her own way Chidori protects her best friend – from threats that are best dealt with using words rather than swords.

Setsuna has never deliberately engaged in street fights, but they seem to have a way of finding her. More often than not it's because of someone causing trouble for her classmates, but in the case of Chizuru it's because of trouble caused *by* one of her classmates. Setsuna doesn't really understand why Chizuru has some kind of weird vendetta against her, but seldom pays it any mind.

The Zil that Setsuna now hosts originally materialized in Chidori's bedroom; Chidori called her over to do something about it, and it became a part of her. Outwardly it manifests as a big evil-looking sword, which Chidori persistently calls the "Bio-Murasame" for some reason, even if Setsuna herself refuses to. (And to her irritation the name is catching on). She's noticed that when she wields the sword there's something else a little different about her, but she hasn't yet figured out what exactly.



Friends and Enemies: Chizuru considers Setsuna her most hated enemy, and will stop at nothing to defeat and humiliate her. Setsuna would simply rather Chizuru left her alone, but her family might have other ideas about how things should be handled. Chidori is constantly at Setsuna's side, and always supports her.

Shizuka

Concept: A Gothic Lolita pres-

sure-point master, whose symbiote appears as horns, bat like black wings, claws, and a massive, evil-looking scythe.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 3, REF 7, HLT 4, PRE 6, INT 5, WIL 7

Derived Attributes: DEF 19, INI 6, TGH 5, LIF 26, EP 46, MOV 11

Skills: Acrobatics 2, Awareness 4, Concentration 4, Craft: Sewing 3, Hobby: Gothic Literature and Poetry 3, Intuition 3, Jump 2, Language: English 4, Philosophy 2, Style 5, Unarmed Combat: Jujutsu 6, Writing 3

Abilities: Alternate Form: Full-Powered Form 3 (27 CP), Art of Distraction 4 (4 CP), Combat Technique 2 (2 CP; Ambidextrous, Block Ranged Attacks), Defense Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Energy Bonus 2 (6 CP), Sorcery 4 (Limited; 16 CP)

- Shizuka's "Sorcery" Ability is used to represent her pressure-point mastery. Any effects created with in have to be delivered by touch (and in combat that requires a successful Unarmed Combat roll), and they have to consist of something that could semi-plausibly be achieve by manipulating the human nervous system. Thus she can potentially do things like cause paralysis in limbs, blindness, or possibly certain moods. The duration of these effects is left up to the GM's discretion, but generally speaking they rarely last more than a few minutes.

Alternate Form: Attack Combat Mastery 1 (3 CP), Combat Technique 1 (1 CP; Leap Attack), Highly Skilled 2 (2 CP; Power Usage: Black Scythe 5, Unarmed Combat: Strikers 5), Jumping 5 (5 CP), Massive Damage 2 (10 CP), Natural Weapons 1 (1 CP; Claws), Special Attack: Black Scythe 2 (8 CP, 4d6 damage, Melee)

Defects: Easily Distracted (spooky stuff – but it has to be in good taste) 1, Famous 1, Ism ("a little girl shouldn't get involved with big bad street fighters") 2, Nemesis: Hinata 2, Phobia (water) 1

Appearance: Slim and pale, Shizuka keeps her hair in two curly pigtails tied with black ribbons. In school she bows to the rules and wears the standard uniform, but otherwise she dons frilly black dresses. Only a couple of opponents have realized that this serves a double purpose by hiding her foot movements. When her symbiote manifests she sprouts devil wings and horns, claws, and a big evil-looking black scythe.

Profile: The gothic lolita style that's become trendy in Japan is a sort of girly, frilly take on goth style. For Shizuka, "gothic lolita" isn't a trend so much as a description of how she dresses normally. She lives with her sickly twin brother in a dilapidated, spooky mansion that looks like it was imported to Japan from one of Edgar Allan Poe's stories, and has a black cat that follows her everywhere. Her family took a turn for the spooky during the Meiji Era (in the mid-1800s) when the head of the family took a strong interest in Western literature, became a famous writer and poet, and committed suicide.

Shizuka is unusual in that she naturally fell in line with this ancestor's tastes, and yet also took an interest in the family's much older tradition of Jujutsu and pressure point techniques. Although she looks a bit frail and sickly, Shizuka can move unbelievably fast, and is adept at hitting pressure points and trapping opponents in joint locks; more than one foe has admitted defeat while she twisted his pinky.

She hadn't planned to become a street fighter; it just sort of happened one night when she decided to go out and check out the gothic club scene and had a confrontation with Hinata, who was enraged that one of her favorite clubs had suddenly gone over to the "dark side" while she was away on tour. Since then Shizuka has been unwillingly propelled to the forefront of the scene, and is regarded by many as a heroine. This has in turned earned her challenges from all sorts of street fighters. A lot of the time she feels she'd rather just go home and read depressing poetry instead, but she feels a sense of responsibility to the people who look up to her, even if the considers a lot of them to be idiots.

Shizuka is the only host so far to immediately intuit that the Zil are sentient beings. Although

she isn't as close to understanding her symbiote's thoughts as Ryuji, she's trying harder, and is probably more on the right track. Since becoming a host, she often seems to withdraw even more than usual,

Friends and Enemies: Shizuka doesn't hold a grudge, but Hinata does, and will take any opportunity to defeat or at least humiliate her. Shizuka is also one of the few people to ever face Ryuji without batting an eye, and the only person so far to ever criticize his poetry (though it *was* constructive criticism) and live to tell about it. Hayato is in the same class as her in high school, but they've never really spoken.

Takumi

Concept: A hip-hop inline skater turned martial artist.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 4, REF 8, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 5, WIL 5

Derived Attributes: DEF 20, INI 7, TGH 5, LIF 32, EP 5, MOV 13

Skills: Acrobatics 5, Awareness 3, Area Knowledge: Central Tokyo 5, Bluff 3, Computers 5 (+2 for Music/Remixing), Conversation 4, Dancing 6, Electronics 1, Hobby: Dance Music 4, Instrument: Keyboard 2, Intuition 3, Jump 5, Persuasion 3 (+2 to Taunt Opponents), Professional: DJ 5, Society: Streetwise 2, Sport: Inline Skating 7, Unarmed Combat: Karate 6

Abilities: Alternate Form: Full-Powered Form 3 (27 CP), Art of Distraction 5 (5 CP), Damn Healthy! 1 (2 CP), Defense Combat Mastery 2 (4 CP), Divine Relationship 5 (5 CP), Highly Skilled 5 (5 CP), Jumping 3 (3 CP), Personal Gear 1 (2 CP), Special Movement 1 (1 CP; Cat-Like)

Alternate Form: Armor 1 (4 CP), Attack Combat Mastery 1 (3 CP), Displacement 3 (9 CP), Enhanced Sense 3 (3 CP; Enhanced Hearing +4, Infrared Vision, Radio Reception), Natural Weapons 1 (1 CP; Arm Blades – treat as claws), Special Movement 2 (2 CP; Light-Footed, Natural Inline Skates), Speed 2 (8 CP)

Personal Gear: Laptop computer, inline skates, mp3 player.

Defects: Famous 1, Nemesis: Ryuji 1

Appearance: A tall, slender guy, usually dressed in a raglan T-shirt, black jeans, and a pair of inline skates. He's almost always listening to a tiny mp3 player that hangs around his neck on a lanyard. When his symbiote manifests it creates a pair of oversized inline skates that look like they're made of black insect chitin, adds sharp fins to his forearms, and causes him to sprout a pair of antennas and gemlike insectoid "sunglasses" covering his eyes.

Profile: Inline skaters aren't all that common in Tokyo, so Takumi's persistence in using his blades to get around his usual haunts in Harajuku and Shinjuku has made him a local "celebrity" of sorts. Or at least everyone knows he's "that skating guy" – they even broadcast a brief interview with him on a local radio station. He's extremely adept at rollerblading and doing tricks – owing in part to having done some gymnastics and karate when he was younger – but it was relatively recently that he started combining all three skills into his own style of street fighting.

Although some people find him kind of annoying – he never seems to be able to stop moving, wisecracking, or listening to his mp3 player – Takumi is basically a good-natured guy, if a bit of an anarchist. He got into street fighting originally because of an incident about a year ago where he was in front of Ryuji in line for a midnight release of a new CD. When it turned out that Takumi had gotten the last copy of the CD, Ryuji just snapped (well, more than usual), doing some impromptu poetry before launching an attack on him. Onlookers who knew of Ryuji were outright shocked that he'd been beaten by the skating guy, and stories of the fight are still following the two of them around to this day.

Since then, Takumi kept getting drawn more and more into the world of street fighting. At first it was just that he kept finding challengers, but after a while he realized that he finds fighting to be really *fun*. That realization has made him much more mo-

tivated to fight, though his attitude during matches tends to annoy if not infuriate his opponents.

He first encountered what would become his Zil symbiote because it materialized in a dance club owned by a friend of his (where Takumi is an occasional DJ). The two of them started at it, prodded it, yelled at it, played music for it… and finally gave up on it. And then it followed Takumi home, hid in his refrigerator for a while, and *finally* decided to take him on as a host. Takumi suspects that the appearance of his manifested symbiote somehow drew on his memories of a show called *Gold Biker* that he watched when he was little. Although he doesn't like to show it off needlessly, he's taking the whole thing in stride.

Friends and Enemies: Ryuji still holds a grudge against Takumi. You can tell because Ryuji has been seen curled up into a ball muttering his name over and over. Although they're not friends per se, he's acquainted with Shizuka through the club scene.

Notable NPCs

- **Ayako:** Girls can become delinquents too, and one of these is Ayako. She wears the classic overly-long pleated skirt and has funny hair, and probably through sheer determination has learned to (somewhat) effectively use a yo-yo in combat. She's still in high school, though her grades are mostly abysmal, and intends to stay there because she's in love with Hayato. Unfortunately she doesn't really know how to express her feelings, so she comes off as though she's either insane or just wants to pick fights with him. Or maybe both.
- **Chizuru:** Chizuru Saionji is the daughter of an extremely wealthy family, and loves being the center of attention. That's probably why when she entered an exclusive all-girls high school only to find that Setsuna Mishima – whose family has had a long-standing rivalry with hers – she very nearly snapped. She decided to take up martial arts – and in doing so one-up Setsuna by learning to fight *without* a weapon – and began training furiously. After nearly a year and going through four different teachers, she's emerged as a surprisingly effective fighter, having combined bits and pieces of different styles into her own "Saionji-jutsu" fighting style. She promptly set out to enter into street fights, accompanied by her three lackeys, only to find Setsuna was an obstacle to her there too. Now that she's learned that Setsuna has a Zil symbiote, she desperately wants one of her own.
- **Goro:** A former classmate of Hayato's until he was kicked out of school (for something that wasn't his fault), Goro is very much the stereotypical "*banchou*," a leader to the local delinquents with a definite sense of honor. He even goes so far as to wear a school uniform with a long coat, and geta/wooden sandals, and wields a shinai, or failing that a 2x4. Since being kicked out of school, Goro has been working part-time jobs and getting into street fights, trying to find the right way to refine himself into the true man he wants to be. Something about him makes him unsuitable for hosting a Zil, but his iron determination won't let him back down from any fight.
- **Hideo:** This tall, slender man in a suit might seem totally out of place among street fighters, but he's actually a frighteningly effective martial artist. His style of fighting is extremely calculating, and he has a habit of telling opponents the (low) percentage chance they have of beating him. In reality he works of the Mishima Financial Group, and was assigned to keep an eye on Setsuna. He has been instructed to avoid letting her find out the nature of his mission, but overly dangerous opponents have a way of falling prey to him before they have a chance to fight Setsuna. Once he was forced to fight her in order to maintain his cover, and he deliberately lost to her. Hideo doesn't have a symbiote, and he's dangerous enough without one.
- **Hinata:** A trendsetter who kicked off the "fighting idol" phenomenon, Hinata Kasuk-

abe is equally talented in singing and martial arts, and loves the adoration and praise of others. She jealously guards her little kingdom, and is merciless towards her competition. The fact that she was unable to defeat Shizuka just plain pisses her off, and she's been training non-stop for the day when she'll take on the little goth girl. Acquiring a Zil symbiote – which causes her to sprout white feathered wings and silvery armor when it manifests – has only made her that much more determined to take down her rival.

- **Ivan:** A Russian immigrant, Ivan mostly just wants to work hard and earn money to send back home to his parents. Unfortunately, remaining in Japan on a fake visa has caused him to get entangled in the affairs of the yakuza, forcing him to put the SAMBO wrestling skills he learned back in Russia to good use. Although he's basically a good-natured guy, he has no problem with breaking bones should it prove necessary. He still doesn't know what to think of his Zil symbiote, but manifesting armor that can deflect bullets definitely has its uses.
- **Midori:** Midori Asamiya is an English teacher at the same high school where Hayato and Shizuka attend; she's a boisterous, irresponsible teacher, and always on the lookout for potential husband material. She's also been practicing Shaolin Kung Fu since she was eight years old, and her obsession with kung fu movies is probably what led her Zil symbiote to manifest in such a way as to make her look like a Qin Dynasty soldier (albeit with scantier armor than they probably had back then), and a gigantic spear. Midori collects and uses the strangest, most exotic Chinese melee weapons imaginable, and her collection even includes a number of one-of-a-kind pieces.
- **Rock Masters:** The man known as Rock Masters to the world is half-Japanese, and one of the biggest, most monstrous specimens the pro-wrestling world has ever produced, yet frighteningly dexterous in spite of his bulk. He's also surprisingly smart, though what brains he has he mostly uses to come up with ways to cheat and mangle his way to victory. Whenever someone successfully stands up to him, he always takes is personally and won't stop until he's ended their fighting career personally. His current vendetta is against Ena. Receiving a symbiote has only made him more dangerous, as he's now capable of manifesting rock-hard armor and (as if he needed it) enhanced strength.
- **Ryo:** Formerly one of Goro's underlings, in the absence of the leader he resented Ryo went bad in a big way. He's taken control of the school's delinquents, and has them terrorizing the other students. His biggest obstacle by far is Hayato, who on many occasions has stood up to protect the innocent in the school. Ryo is intent on finding a way to get rid of Hayato so his takeover of the school can be made complete. So far he hasn't yet run afoul of Midori or Shizuka, and when he does he'll probably bite off more than he can chew.
- **Ryuji:** Ryuji is, well, insane. He also writes bad poetry with excessive end-line rhyming and no enjambment whatsoever (but surprisingly good meter), which he likes to read aloud before he begins a fight. His style of fighting could be described as "brawling" if one is being generous, but mostly he just flails around with a mixture of viciousness and animal cunning. Adding a Zil symbiote to his arsenal has only made him more dangerous – and crazier. He's started complaining about hearing voices, and he might actually be closer to understanding the Zil than anyone else. His symbiote manifests as six tentacles with stingers on the ends and an ugly demon mask.
- **UFO Red:** No one knows who "UFO Red" really is, since he's never been seen without his symbiote activated. Apparently he (assuming it really is a *he* in there) is a huge

fan of sentai TV shows (i.e., the original Japanese version of *Power Rangers*) and wanted more than anything to become a Red Ranger. Rumors abound that he might be just a kid, or perhaps a tired salaryman who's gone completely insane. What's certain is that this masked man in red spandex, a tinted helmet, and a long red scarf, is a formidable fighter and always stands up for justice.

The Sim

The Sim start arriving on Earth a few weeks after the first wave of Zil. Like the Zil, they're capable of teleportation across vast distances (their basic notion of space and distance is different from ours), but doing so is very draining and difficult. Unlike the Zil, the Sim are independent beings rather than symbiotes. However, Sim are also highly developed telepaths; they're incapable of not picking up the thoughts of living things around them, and have a limited sense of individuality. This telepathy is two-way however, and both within their own minds and in the perceptions of other beings around them they naturally assimilate into their surroundings. Thus while a Sim actually looks like a paper-white, hairless humanoid creature with long arms that have two elbows apiece and three-fingered hands, they naturally pick up what people would normally expect to see and broadcast it back at them telepathically. This process isn't perfect, so while a person confronting a Sim is highly unlikely to realize that the guy in front of them is a hideous alien, the Sim will probably come off as an idiot or madman.

There are two things that make the Sim a problematic existence. First, they're carnivores. They're not too terribly picky about what kind of meat they eat, just so long as it's fresh (i.e., still alive). The only orifice on a Sim's head is a barely visible horizontal line of a mouth, but this opens up to reveal a massive maw full of razor-sharp teeth. Secondly, the presence of a Zil disrupts their telepathy. To a Sim, picking up the thoughts of a Zil is like suddenly hearing a very loud, continuous noise that leaves a painful ringing in the ears for a while after. Most Sim utterly despise the Zil – that hatred was enough to convince them to travel across the reaches of space after all – and will savagely attack any that they encounter

The presence of the Sim on Earth is extremely dangerous. An average Sim will try to eat at least one person per day, and it'll be entirely too good at preventing people from even realizing what's happening until it's too late. The Zil and their hosts, being both cut off from the Sim's telepathic broadcasts and equipped to fight them, are Earth's best defense against this alien menace.

Below are stats for an average Sim. There's little variation between individuals; there are some stronger and weaker Sim, whose attributes and skills can be a few points higher or lower, but compared to humans they're severely lacking in individuality.

Attributes: Body, Mind, Passion, Focus, Combat

Derived Attributes: LIF, MOV, COOL, DEF, INI, TGH, PER

Skills:

Attributes: STR 7, REF 5, HLT 6, PRE 3, INT 4, WIL 5 (30)

Derived Attributes: DEF 15, INI 5, TGH 6, LIF 28+4d6, EP 6, MOV 12

Skills: Acrobatics 4, Awareness 4, Climbing 4, Jump 6, Unarmed Combat: Brawling 5

Abilities: Armor 1 (4 CP), Damn Healthy! 2 (4 CP), Elasticity 2 (4 CP; arms), Extra Actions 1 (8 CP), Jumping 4 (4 CP), Natural Weapons 1 (1 CP; Jaws), Regeneration 1 (4 CP), Telepathy 2 (6 CP), Unique Ability: Psychic Disguise 2 (8 CP)

Defects: Blind Fury 2, Permanent (telepathy is always on) 2

Adventure Seeds

UFO Fist is intended to be done in the style of a fighting anime, which means that battles will be frequent and involved. Especially early on, the campaign is meant to be more player-led, with entire sessions devoted to the player characters messing around trying to train and get along.

Gathering of Legendary Heroes Parts 1 and 2: Hayato receives an invitation to a massive all-Japan street fighting tournament. Rumors have been flying

around about this event, and everyone is saying that if you get invited *someone* thinks you're a top-class fighter. The catch? Entrants have to be teams of five for elimination-style matches. UFO Red turns him down on the grounds that he has to remain Hayato's mentor, so he's forced to start asking people he doesn't really know (you know, like the other player characters). Along the way he and those he's gathered keep getting dragged into fights as he inadvertently tries to bring deadly enemies together.

Training Regimen: "Team Hayato" (a name they'll no doubt argue over and possibly change) has a few months to prepare for the big tournament, but the intervening time won't be boring. We begin with them having some practice matches, in the hopes that they'll learn each other's strengths and weaknesses, and maybe provide each other with some pointers. But first they start arguing about where to train – Ema will probably prefer somewhere with a wrestling ring, Setsuna's family has a dojo, Takumi will be more comfortable out on the street, and Shizuka just has a low tolerance for people arguing over stuff that isn't important. This is going to take some time.

Strange Bedfellows: When Chizuru found out that Setsuna was going to be on Hayato's team entering the tournament she was furious. She immediately made arrangements to enter the tournament, and collected her four best flunkies to be teammates. Through an odd set of circumstances "Team Chizuru" came across Ryuji, who immediately beat up her four flunkies and then proceeded to compose a poem in honor of the "Black Porphyria." For the time being it seems like Ryuji has decided that he's going to be her willing servant. Although this is problematic for her in more ways than one, she's found herself a powerful ally, and more will follow (Team Chizuru will eventually also include Hinata, Rock Masters, and Ryo). For the time being they set out to make Hayato and his teammates miserable any way they can, starting with hiring random flunkies to attack them at inopportune times.

First Strike: Our heroes are starting to notice that here and there a few familiar faces have disappeared from around Harajuku, but efforts at investigating turn up nothing. Then out of the blue they come across a Sim working as a short-order cook at a local ramen restaurant. Dealing with the thing is going to be a major challenge though, partly because no one else is going to believe that that new cook is actually a hideous, carnivorous, psychic alien. And once they do, they're going to learn the hard way that these guys sometimes like to operate in numbers.

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