



core

2ND EDITION

Foreword

x6 is a universal system for pen-and-paper roleplaying games. This core edition presents the basic game mechanics comprising the x6 system, along with a basic selection of character abilities and equipment that would suit a contemporary game setting. With some work, the information presented here can be adapted to suit a science fiction, fantasy, horror or almost any other roleplaying genre.

This 2nd edition is an amalgamation of x6 and another generic system, Multi10. The core resolution mechanics of the first edition have been retained and enhanced, while most of the character building and combat systems have been imported from Multi10. The result should be a capable game system with a decent amount of character customisation and fast combat.

While you are reading through x6 core, you may notice the occasional spelling mistake, syntax error, rogue

comma or just plain nonsense. Please consider that English is a second language for me. Although I've taken every effort possible to ensure that most of the material presented here makes sense, the document is probably not error-free.

Which brings me to the point of feedback. If you spot any spelling mistakes or grammar inconsistencies, please consider dropping me a line by using the contact form at x6system.net or by writing to george@x6system.net. I would also like to hear your experiences while using x6 and any thoughts or suggestions you have on how it could become better. Your feedback will be extremely helpful while designing future expansions.

Kind regards,

George

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Mechanics

Rolling dice

Dice are traditionally used in roleplaying games to decide whether actions with an uncertain outcome succeed or fail. Most of the actions your character will undertake will be simple and automatically successful. You don't have to roll dice to walk down the street, drive to the mall or operate a computer. Dice are reserved for dramatic actions with a reasonable chance of failure. Running on ice while avoiding gunfire, taking a high-speed turn to shake off a pursuing car or hacking into a secure computer system are tasks that call for dice to be rolled. Ultimately, the Gamemaster is responsible for deciding which actions deserve dice.

Any dice used are of the classic six-sided type and you may use several of them together in many occasions. Do not add them together! Instead,

- Any die scoring 5 or 6 contributes 2 "successes".
- Any die scoring 3 or 4 contributes 1 "success".
- Any die scoring 1 or 2 fails and doesn't contribute anything.

Total the number of successes scored by your dice. The more you have, the more likely you are to succeed in what you were trying to do.

Greydice

Sometimes you will be asked to roll one or more greydice. Despite their name, these dice don't have to be grey, but they must be easily distinguishable from normal dice. They are much less effective than standard dice; a greydie scores one success on a roll of 5, two successes on a roll of 6 and fails with any other score.

Fate dice

Before you roll dice, pick one of them to be the test's fate die (if only one die is rolled, it is by definition the fate die). The fate die should be of a distinct colour or size and is used to represent the vagaries of fate. Although it acts as any other die by scoring successes, a result of 1 or 6 has additional effects.

- If the fate die scores 1, then one success is immediately cancelled. If this causes you to fail a task, you fumble and suffer any negative consequences the Gamemaster considers appropriate (for example, activating an alarm if you were trying

to disable a security device). A fumble doubles the failure margin of a test.

- If the fate die scores 6, you have the option of rolling an additional fate die. Although this can be used to score extra successes and, with luck, pull off seemingly impossible feats, it can prove unpredictable and you are always entitled to decline rolling it. If you do roll it, you have to abide with its result, even if you score a 1!

Tests

When you roll dice to check if an action succeeds or fails, you are said to be making a test. Your character's capabilities, as measured by his skills and attributes, will influence the test decisively by determining how many dice you get to roll.

DIVISIONS

Sometimes (not often) the rules will ask you to divide numbers. Always round all fractions down unless otherwise specified. For example, 2.3, 2.5 and 2.9 all become 2.

Your goal during a test is to score at least as many successes as the task's difficulty level (abbreviated DF). Simple tasks may have DF 1, requiring only one success to be rolled, but harder endeavours may demand several.

Some actions may not have a DF. In this case, the more successes you roll, the better you'll perform.

Burning successes

If you score more successes than what you needed to complete the task, you are rewarded for your exceptional performance with the ability to "burn" (that is, spend) those extra successes in order to receive certain benefits. *If a test had DF 3 and you scored 5 successes, you would have 2 extra successes to burn.*

The benefits you can receive by burning successes will vary according to the task. You might do more damage with an attack or the Gamemaster may allow you to complete a task in less time than usual.

Failure margins

Sometimes you may want to know how badly you've

DIFFICULTY LEVELS

Many specific situations, especially combat actions, have their own rules about calculating the DF for a test. However, it is safe to assume that for the great majority of the actions you will attempt, the Gamemaster is going to have to “eyeball” their relative difficulty and assign an appropriate DF. Not every possible situation can be covered by specific rules, but the following difficulty levels can serve as a guideline.

COMPLEXITY	DF
Easy	1
Normal	2
Challenging	3
Tough	4
Expert	5
Gruesome	6
Phenomenal	7
Epic	8

failed at a task. The failure margin of a task is found by subtracting any successes scored from the DF. *If an action had DF 5 and you only scored 2 successes, your failure margin would be 5-2=3.*

If a test fumbles, its failure margin is doubled.

Repeated attempts

The DF of a failed task increases by 1 every time it is attempted again in the same scene. This applies mainly to static tasks where circumstances remain pretty much the same throughout the scene (trying to pick the lock of a door, for example). The DF will reset back to the original if the circumstances of the test change significantly (like if a friend gives you a set of expert lock-picking tools).

This rule does not apply to actions in fluid, constantly changing environments, like most combat tasks.

Modifiers

Special circumstances may make a test easier or harder and are represented by modifiers.

- Positive modifiers (bonuses) add bonus dice to your test. These are always normal dice, never greydice.
- Negative modifiers (penalties) cancel successes rolled on your test.

Bonuses and penalties cancel each other out. For example, a -2 penalty and a +3 bonus applied on the same test will simply result in a +1 bonus.

Influenced tests

A test can be limited, boosted or influenced by other ability ratings or factors. For example, having a high Science skill may be beneficial when trying to disarm a bomb (normally a function of the Demolitions skill) with an electronic detonator, while a low Dexterity attribute may be detrimental in shooting a gun with the Firearms skill.

- A test **limited** by a factor will suffer if that factor's rating is lower than your dice; for every point of difference one die is converted to a greydie. *If you have Firearms 4 and Dexterity 1, you will roll 1 standard die and 3 greydice to shoot that gun.*
- A test **boosted** by a factor will benefit if that factor's rating is higher than your dice; for every point of difference you roll an additional greydie. *If you have Demolitions 2 and Science 3, you will roll 2 standard dice and 1 greydie to disarm the bomb.*
- A test that is **influenced** by a factor is both boosted and limited. You will benefit if the factor's rating is higher than your dice, but suffer if it's lower.

These provisions do not affect bonus dice derived from modifiers, which are not taken into account (all bonus dice are rolled as normal dice).

Tests may be boosted or limited by several factors, but the effects are not cumulative. Simply pick the lowest among limiting factors or the highest rating among boosting factors.

Conflict

Opposed tests are used when your action is directly resisted by another character or force. *If you are involved in an arm wrestling contest, your Strength attribute will be opposed by the opponent's Strength. Or, you can throw a punch with your Melee skill while the opponent tries to avoid it with his Dexterity.*

In an opposed test, both characters roll dice and the one scoring the highest number of successes wins, although his successes are reduced by those of his opponent. If both characters score the same number of successes, the result is a draw (the test can be repeated until there is a clear winner if a tie would be unreasonable for the situation at hand). *So, if you try to punch an opponent and score 5 successes, while your target*

dodges with Dexterity and scores 3 successes, you would have successfully struck him with 2 overall successes. While your target didn't manage to completely evade your blow, he at least lessened its impact.

Cooperation

A group of characters may increase their chance of succeeding in a common goal by combining their efforts. The character with the most available dice leads the effort and makes the test to resolve the task. Every helper also makes an individual test against half the DF and adds a bonus die to the leader's test if successful, or just a greydie if he fails (fumbled rolls may hamper the effort, inflicting a -1 penalty to the leader's test). The nature of the task determines how many people can practically assist the leader.

Characters

Building your character

Once you've decided what you want your character to be, it is time to decide what he's going to be able to do. This is determined by the character's various abilities, like his attributes and skills. You can purchase such abilities by using a pool of points given to your character during the character creation process.

Character abilities are divided in three sections: attributes, skills and assets.

You need to decide on the priority given to each of those abilities, which will determine how many points you have available to spend. Each section begins at priority grade 3, which will provide a well-rounded character. However, you may decide to favour some aspects of your character over others. You can choose to increase the priority of a section by reducing that of another (*you may decide to reduce the priority of Attributes to 1 in order to increase the priority of Skills and Assets to 4*). Keep in mind that a priority cannot be reduced below grade 1 or increased beyond grade 5.

After you prioritise the three sections of character abilities, you receive points accordingly to spend on them.

Attributes

This section provides points which are used to determine your attributes. Each point spent in an attribute will increase its rating by one, except from rating 5 which requires 2 points to purchase. Each of your six attributes must have a rating of 1 at least. No attribute may be raised above 5.

Instead of spending a point to raise an attribute, you can convert it into 5 levels worth of attribute specialties.

Skills

This section provides points which are used to determine your skills. Each point spent in a skill will increase its rating by one, except from rating 5 which requires 2 points to purchase. No skill may be raised

above 5.

Instead of spending a point to raise a skill, you can convert it into 5 levels worth of skill specialties.

Assets

Assets present an interesting problem. Each of them can be purchased using the points from that section's priority, but they cannot be improved with experience later in the game. Unlike other abilities, the choices you make for assets during character creation will be more or less permanent, so spend your points wisely and make sure you get almost everything you want your character to have.

Wrapping up

At the end of character creation, you must ensure that each of your six attributes has a rating of at least 1. Skills and disciplines do not have minimum ratings.

Experience

Your character does not remain the same throughout the game. His capabilities improve as he takes on any challenges presented by the story. Whether he succeeds or fails in pursuing his goals, the effort taken augments his talents and makes him seasoned. This learning process is simulated by experience points.

At the end of each game session, the Gamemaster will reward players with a number of experience points. The exact amount awarded is up to the Gamemaster, but here are some guidelines:

- +1 experience for each player simply for participating in the game.
- +1 experience for each player if the group faced difficult circumstances or strong adversaries.
- +1 experience for players who portrayed their characters reasonably well, staying true to their concept and personality.
- +1 experience for players who did something

PRIORITY	1	2	3	4	5
ATTRIBUTES	10	13	16	19	22
SKILLS	5	10	15	20	25
ASSETS	0	2	4	6	8

particularly entertaining, whether funny or dramatic, that enhanced the gaming experience for the whole group.

- +1 experience for players who came up with a smart plan to solve a problem or defeat an adversary.
- +1 to +5 experience for each player when they complete a chapter, depending on how well they fared in accomplishing their goals.

Using experience points

Experience points may be used to improve almost any aspect of your character (except from assets). The amount you need to spend to improve an ability is based on the new rating you want to achieve for an attribute or skill, or the level of a new specialty you want to purchase. Improvement for attributes, skills and disciplines happens in 1-point steps. You cannot jump from rating 1 to rating 3 without going through rating 2 first. A given ability may only be improved by one point per session.

The maximum rating you can improve an ability to using experience points is usually 5.

EXPERIENCE COSTS

Raise attribute	New rating x4
Raise skill	New rating x2
New specialty	Level x1

You don't have to spend all the experience points you receive at each session. You can save them up for later use if you want to. Remember however, that experience points cannot be used during the game; the end of a session is the only opportunity you get to spend them.

Abilities

Character abilities form an extensive set of traits measuring your capabilities in various fields of expertise. Your abilities will determine what your character can do and, to a large extent, who your character is.

Attributes

Attributes are the basic building blocks of every character. Each of the six attributes measures your prowess or gift in a basic capability. Attributes are measured using a rating, which usually ranges from 1 to 5. They cannot fall below 1, whereas ratings over 5 are almost superhuman and only attainable temporarily with bonuses or permanently under certain conditions.

Attribute tests

Testing an attribute is generally used for broad tasks that are not covered by a corresponding skill. *Forcing open a door would require you to use your Strength, while solving a puzzle would call upon your Reason;* there is no Puzzle-solving or Kicking doors down skill. To make an attribute test, simply roll a number of dice equal to its rating.

Strength

Strength measures your physical build, muscle power and stamina. It is important for performing tasks relying on physical might, as well as for resisting physical punishment and fatigue.

FAST HEALING is a level 3 specialty that allows you to double your Strength rating when determining how quickly your wounds lose their severity.

RESILIENCE is a level 3 specialty that provides a +1

bonus to tests made to survive critical wounds. You can purchase it a second time as a level 4 specialty.

STRONG is a level 2 specialty that allows you, once per session, to re-roll all failed dice of a test involving Strength (either an attribute test or a test influenced by Strength). It can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session, but it cannot be used more than once to affect the same test.

TOUGHNESS is a level 3 specialty that increases all 3 of your Wound thresholds by 5 points. It may be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty and a third time as a level 5 specialty.

VITALITY is a level 2 specialty that adds a +1 bonus to all tests made to resist the effects of toxins or disease. It can be purchased a second time as a level 3 specialty.

Dexterity

Dexterity measures your agility, reflexes, manual fitness and hand-eye coordination; in short, anything that has to do with motion. It is important for a wide variety of tasks, from performing surgery to being accurate with weapons.

ARMOUR TRAINING is a level 2 specialty that decreases the sprinting penalty inflicted by cumbersome armour by 3 metres and the Athletics and dodge penalty by 1.

ARTS & CRAFTS is a competency that allows you to develop a talent in a particular visual art or craft (like painting, embroidery or pottery). You need to purchase a separate specialty to cover each new art or craft.

EVADE is a level 3 specialty that increases your Defence pool by one point. This point however, can only be used to take the dodge defensive action. You can purchase Evade a second time as a level 4 specialty and a third time as a level 5 specialty.

LEGERDEMAIN is a competency that allows you to perform sleight of hand tricks involving manual dexterity and misdirection. These may include common “magic” tricks, but also criminal activities like pick-pocketing. A legerdemain test is usually opposed by the onlookers’ Perception.

LIGHTNING REFLEXES is a level 3 specialty that provides a +1 bonus to Initiative tests and adds a greydie to dodge tests as well as any tests made to avoid being surprised. It can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty.

CARRYING AND LIFTING WEIGHTS

You can automatically lift up to Strength x 25 kilos over your head for a short amount of time. A Willpower test is required to lift more, with DF 1 per 10 kilos over the limit (e.g. 1 for +10 kilos, 2 for +20 kilos and so on).

You can comfortably carry around up to Strength x 10 kilos. Exceeding this causes fatigue, starting from 1 fatigue per 30 minutes for +10 kilos, increasing to 1 fatigue per 10 minutes for +20 kilos and finally 1 fatigue per minute for +30 kilos.

LITHE is a level 2 specialty that allows you, once per session, to re-roll all failed dice of a test involving Dexterity (either an attribute test or a test influenced by Dexterity). It can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session, but it cannot be used more than once to affect the same test.

LOCK-PICKING is a competency that allows you to open a mechanical lock using suitable instruments. A -1 penalty is inflicted to your test when using an improvised lockpick (like a hairpin).

QUICK DRAW is a level 2 specialty that allows you to draw a sheathed or holstered weapon as part of an attack action with it instead of as a separate action.

QUICK RELOAD is a level 2 specialty that allows you to double your speed when reloading a firearm. *A light pistol usually requiring 2 phases to reload will only take one phase. A hunting rifle can be loaded with 2 rounds per phase, but this specialty will boost the rate to 4 rounds per phase.*

Reason

Reason measures your ability to solve problems based

on logic and deduction. It is important for many academic and scientific tasks.

INTELLIGENT is a level 2 specialty that allows you, once per session, to re-roll all failed dice of a test involving Reason (either an attribute test or a test influenced by Reason). It can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session, but it cannot be used more than once to affect the same test.

METICULOUS is a level 3 specialty that allows you to add a +1 bonus to any test made to resolve a lengthy task (taking 3 hours or more) at the cost of doubling the time required to complete it. When this option is selected, extra successes cannot be burned to reduce the time required.

PERFECT MEMORY is a level 3 specialty that allows you to memorise long texts or strings of number with perfect accuracy, or recall with great clarity images and sounds you have experienced, however fleetingly, in the past. A Reason attribute test may be required, at the Gamemaster's discretion, to perform memory feats of extraordinary magnitude (for example, memorise a 30-digit number by reading it once). This specialty can

SPECIALTIES

Almost any ability, whether attribute or skill, can be improved by the addition of specialties. Specialties improve or extend the function of other abilities. They can make your Strength attribute protect you better from injury or increase your dice for a skill test under certain circumstances.

Specialties are rated by their level, which shows approximately how powerful they are. To add a specialty to an ability, the ability must have a rating at least equal to the specialty's level. Many specialties also have other requirements you must meet before taking them. They cannot be purchased more than once, unless their description states otherwise.

In many cases using specialties is automatically successful and instantaneous. Many of them are simply active all the time and do not require any conscious effort to gain their benefits. If a specialty needs some kind of action or test to be activated, this will be mentioned in its description.

Competencies

Competencies are a special category of specialties that expand the usefulness of a skill or attribute and the things it can accomplish. For example, the Surgery competency expands your Medicine skill by adding the option of performing surgical procedures. A competency starts as a level 2 specialty and tasks related to it

are handled by a skill or attribute test, influenced by the competency's level. A competency can be purchased several times to increase its effective level, with the second time purchased as a level 3 specialty, the third as a level 4 specialty and the fourth and fifth as a level 5 specialty. Often, competencies will be limited to a specific subject, requiring you to purchase separate specialties for different subjects of the same group (*Arts & crafts requires a separate specialty for each different art or craft you want to pursue*).

If you don't have a particular competency, you can usually just make a normal skill test. Because of the 0-level competency influencing the test however, all of your dice will be greydice.

Competencies can be used to influence other tests in the same way as skills and attributes can. Don't be afraid to experiment with them!

Aptitudes

Aptitudes are specialties that improve an ability's rating by 1 in certain cases; some aptitudes can affect several abilities. The first aptitude purchased for an ability is a level 2 specialty; each additional aptitude for that ability is purchased at +1 level, to a maximum of level 5 (the second aptitude is a level 3 specialty, the third a level 4 specialty and so on). An ability can only be affected by one aptitude at a time.

be purchased again as a level 4 specialty to gain a +2 bonus to any tests required for its use.

Intuition

Intuition measures your ability to understand things based on instinct and other unseen qualities rather than evidence or logical conclusions. It is important for a wide variety of tasks, especially ones based on observation and guessing.

CONSISTENT PERFORMER is a level 2 specialty that allows you, once per session, to ignore the negative effects of rolling 1 on the fate die of a test (no success is taken away and the test can't fumble). It can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session.

SIXTH SENSE is a level 3 specialty that doubles the successes you score on tests to avoid being surprised.

SMART is a level 2 specialty that allows you, once per session, to re-roll all failed dice of a test involving Intuition (either an attribute test or a test influenced by Intuition). It can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session, but it cannot be used more than once to affect the same test.

Willpower

Willpower measures your mental strength and determination. It is important for determining how well you cope with injury and fatigue and will also affect many other tasks that depend on determination.

DRIVEN is a level 2 specialty that allows you, once per session, to re-roll all failed dice of a test involving Willpower (either an attribute test or a test influenced by Willpower). It can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session, but it cannot be used more than once to affect the same test.

HIGH ACHIEVER is a level 4 specialty that allows you,

THE POWER OF WILL

At its most basic level, Willpower represents sheer determination to succeed despite the odds. As such, it may have an impact on almost any action a character attempts.

During each session of play, you have a pool of "free dice" equal to your Willpower rating that you can choose to add to any attribute or skill test you attempt. Adding one die costs one point from the pool, while adding 2 dice costs 3 points; no more than 2 dice can be added to a single test. Willpower dice must be added to a test before you roll; you have to muster your inner strength before you commit to an action.

once per session when the fate die of a test scores 6, to roll 2 additional standard dice instead of a new fate die. It can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session, but it cannot be used more than once for the same test.

STAYING POWER is a level 4 specialty that increases your Critical wound threshold by 10.

Charisma

Charisma measures your ability to interact with other people. It is not a mere measure of physical appearance and in many cases may not be related to sexual appeal at all. Charisma may manifest as persuasiveness, personal magnetism, allure or leadership skills, and is important for tasks relying on influencing other people.

BLACK MARKETEER is a level 3 specialty that allows you to roll an additional die for any Network test related to securing an illicit, restricted or otherwise rare item. If it is purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty, your Network rating is not reduced by the first such test per week.

INSPIRING is a level 4 specialty that allows you, once per session, to add a +1 bonus to one test attempted by a friend, as long as you are close enough to encourage him. This specialty can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session, although it cannot be used more than once to affect the same test.

MAGNETIC PERSONALITY is a level 4 specialty that grants you a certain magnetic quality which attracts attention without much effort. You will generally stand out in any social function you attend and other people will tend to be at least curious enough to meet you.

SOCIAL DYNAMICS is a level 3 specialty that allows you to quickly identify the most important participants in a social gathering (or other similar social environment) just by looking around and getting the "feel" of the place.

SUAVE is a level 2 specialty that allows you, once per session, to re-roll all failed dice of a test involving Charisma (either an attribute test or a test influenced by Charisma). It can be purchased several times, each time providing an additional use per session, but it cannot be used more than once to affect the same test.

Skills

Skills represent most of the knowledge and talents acquired during a character's life. They are less broad in scope than attributes, but also more numerous. Similar to attributes, they are measured using a rating that maxes out at 5. Unlike attributes however, skills can

have zero rating. Characters with rating 0 in a skill have no training, but may still be able to use it unless it cannot be used untrained. Rating 5 represents the pinnacle of training and knowledge. Ratings over 5 are possible only through temporary bonuses or under very specific circumstances.

Characters have access to a modest selection of skills broad enough to cover the most important tasks undertaken during the game. It would be impossible to codify every single aspect of human knowledge and achievement, so the skill list presented here is far from comprehensive. If you would like your character to have training in a field not covered by the skill list, you should discuss with the Gamemaster the possibility of creating a new skill (or perhaps a competency attached to an existing skill).

Skill tests

Skills are not entirely independent, so they have to be paired with attributes to be used. Before you test a skill, combine the skill with the most appropriate attribute for its current use. *Firing a gun requires hand-eye coordination, so you would pair Firearms with Dexterity. Hacking a computer would require you to combine Computers with Reason.* Skills may be combined with different attributes depending on how they're used. *Whereas Dexterity is the most appropriate attribute for firing a gun, Intuition would be more suitable to combine with Firearms when trying to identify a particular handgun model.*

To make the actual skill test simply roll a number of dice equal to the skill's rating, influenced by the combined attribute.

■ Using skills you don't have

If you have zero rating in a skill but still want to use it, you can simply roll a number of greydice equal to the rating of the combined attribute. However, some skills cannot be used untrained.

Athletics

Athletics is used to perform any task relying on focused and graceful motions. This includes climbing, swimming, gymnastics, throwing objects and balancing on slippery or narrow surfaces. Depending on the task at hand, Athletics will be usually combined with either Strength or Dexterity.

CATAPULT is a level 3 specialty that adds +2 to Strength when determining your maximum throwing distance (usually Strength x 10 for handheld objects). It can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty.

ENDURANCE is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to Strength when determining the effects of fatigue. You can purchase it a second time as a level 4 specialty.

HURLER is an aptitude improving Athletics when it is used to attack with a thrown weapon.

LIFTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to Strength when determining how much weight you can lift or carry. It can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty.

SPORTSMAN is an aptitude improving Athletics when related to a specific sport of your choice. This specialty may be purchased separately to cover additional sports.

SPRINTER is a level 2 specialty that adds 2 metres to your movement rate when sprinting. It can be purchased a second time as a level 3 specialty and a third time as a level 4 specialty.

SUPERB REFLEXES is an aptitude improving Dexterity for any dodge tests you attempt.

Business

Business is used for any task related to business and finance. It helps with setting up and running a business, marketing your enterprise, keeping accounts, and managing and investing your income. It is usually combined with Reason or Intuition.

ACCOUNTING is a competency that provides knowledge of accounting principles and training in preparing and auditing business accounts.

BORN SALESMAN is an aptitude improving Business, Etiquette or Persuasion when related to a business deal (including haggling and trading).

BUSINESS GURU is a level 3 specialty that doubles your annual income (as determined by the Wealth asset). It can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty to triple your income and a fourth level as a level 5 specialty to quadruple it.

Computers

Computers is used for any task related to operating computers, such as using professional software or programming; simple tasks like browsing the Internet or using an office software suite don't really require this skill. It is usually combined with Reason and cannot be used untrained. Repairing or otherwise manipulating the electronic components of a computer is handled using the Engineering competency of the Science skill.

ELECTRONICS WHIZ is a level 3 specialty that allows you to repair and modify computers and similar electronic devices using your Computers skill combine

with Reason. A -1 penalty is applied to all such tests. Additionally, the specialty provides a +1 bonus to tests using the Engineering competency of the Science skill related to such devices.

HACKER is a competency that allows you to infiltrate secure computer systems.

SEARCH-FU is an aptitude improving Investigation when used to research information (as long as you have access to the Internet).

Demolitions

Demolitions is used to work with explosives, including planting or disarming bombs and making homebrew explosives. It is usually combined with Reason and cannot be used untrained.

BIG BANG is a level 4 specialty that adds +2 to the power of a bomb you've made or an explosive charge you've set.

DOOMSDAY CHEMIST is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any explosive substance you make.

FORENSIC DEMOLITIONS is a competency used to examine an explosion site for useful clues, such as the type and strength of the explosive used or the manufacture of the detonator.

Drive

Drive is used to operate ground vehicles, like cars or motorcycles. It is usually combined with Dexterity.

CAR EXPERT is an aptitude improving Drive when operating a car. It can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty to turn the bonus greydie to a normal die.

HGV EXPERT is an aptitude improving Drive when operating a heavy ground vehicle (truck, crane etc.).

MECHANIC is a level 3 specialty that allows you to repair and modify vehicles using your Drive skill combined with Reason. A -1 penalty is applied to all such tests. Additionally, the specialty provides a +1 bonus to tests using the Engineering competency of the Science skill related to vehicles.

MILITARY VEHICLE EXPERT is an aptitude improving Drive when operating a tracked military vehicle (tank, armoured personnel carrier etc.).

MOTORCYCLE EXPERT is an aptitude improving Drive when operating a motorcycle.

Education

Education is used for any task involving academic

knowledge and is a catch-all skill for anything you may have learnt in school, college, university or simply from reading books and newspapers. Subjects covered by Education are very diverse, ranging from history to geography to art and culture. It is usually combined with Reason.

ANTHROPOLOGIST is an aptitude improving Education for tasks related to knowledge of cultures.

FACTS AND QUOTES is an aptitude improving Persuasion when used to debate subjects that may benefit from your encyclopaedic knowledge.

FIRST AID TRAINING is a level 2 specialty that allows you to offer urgent medical attention to someone dying from a critical wound as if you had the Medicine skill. Tests to successfully stabilise the injured character use Education combined with Reason, but suffer a -1 penalty.

HISTORY BUFF is an aptitude improving Education for tasks related to history.

KNOW-IT-ALL is a level 4 specialty that allows you to use Education to boost any skill test combined with Reason. Additionally, you are able to use any skill that you don't have, even those that cannot normally be used untrained.

LAW is a competency providing knowledge of the law and its associated statutes and procedures. A character with this competency may not necessarily be an accredited lawyer, but will know enough about legal matters to use them to his advantage or represent himself before a court.

LINGUISTICS is a level 2 specialty that gives you a basic understanding in a specific language other than your native one. With this specialty, you are able to speak using short sentences (albeit with a very distinct accent) and read simple material. If you purchase the specialty a second time for the same language, you get a very decent level of control over the language that will be sufficient for most tasks and you speak with just a slight accent. When you purchase the specialty for a third time as a level 3 specialty, you can use the language as well as any educated native speaker and without any distinguishable accent. Each foreign language you wish to speak requires a separate specialty.

Empathy

Empathy is used to understand the emotional and psychological state of other people. Although it does not provide mind-reading capabilities, it may be useful in approaching people, especially those under duress or stress. It can also allow you to detect if things are amiss when interacting with someone and may protect against being conned or deceived. It is usually com-

bined with Intuition.

COLD READ is a level 3 specialty that allows you to detect the general emotional state of a person you're conversing with. A successful DF 2 test will reveal the subject's state of mind with an one-word description (e.g. calm, confident, confused, scared), but this will not work on people attempting to conceal their true state of mind. This specialty can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty to allow you to use it on people attempting to suppress or conceal their emotional state; any test made in this case is opposed by the subject's Willpower.

MANIPULATIVE is an aptitude improving Etiquette and Persuasion tests targeting a person currently in a fragile emotional state (*for example, mourning, in shock or scared*).

Etiquette

Etiquette is used for tasks involving interaction with other people, whether they are friendly conversations or intense business meetings. It enables you to make the most out of such opportunities, making a positive impression and avoiding embarrassment. It is usually combined with Charisma.

PEOPLE PERSON is a level 3 specialty that enables you to automatically make a generally positive impact on people you meet and socialise with. Unless you make an obvious blunder or if they have a reason to dislike or suspect you, people will generally regard you as open, friendly and interesting.

WELL-CONNECTED is a level 3 specialty that adds a +1 bonus to all Network tests. Additionally, whenever you use Network to research information, it will provide one more bonus greydie.

Firearms

Firearms is used to attack with pistols, rifles, machine guns, or any other kind of firearm. It is usually combined with Dexterity.

FIERCE SHOT is a level 4 specialty that also requires Dexterity 4 and Powerful shot. It adds +1 to your weapon's damage multiplier whenever you use Powerful shot.

HANDGUN EXPERT is an aptitude improving Firearms when using a handgun.

HANDGUN MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any handgun you use.

POWERFUL SHOT is a level 3 specialty that also requires Dexterity 3. You can use it once per battle when you've made a successful attack with a firearm to roll a die and increase your weapon's Power based on its re-

sult (1-2: +1 Power, 3-4:+2 Power, 5:+3 Power, 6:+4 Power). Powerful shot may be purchased multiple times, each time allowing you to use it once more per battle, but never more than once for the same attack.

RAPID FIRE is a level 3 specialty that also requires Dexterity 3. You can use it once per battle to reduce the time required to fire a weapon by one phase. *For example, aimed fire would only require one phase, while snap fire would only need a single phase.* When you perform quick fire, you get to make two attacks in the same phase. Rapid fire may be purchased multiple times, each time allowing you to use it once more per battle, but never more than once for the same attack.

RECOIL CONTROL is a level 2 specialty that reduces a firearm's Strength requirement by 1 (to a minimum of 0). It can be purchased a second time as a level 3 specialty.

RIFLE EXPERT is an aptitude improving Firearms when using a rifle.

RIFLE MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any rifle you use.

SHARPSHOOTER is a level 3 specialty that also requires Perception 3. You can use it once per battle when attacking with a firearm to triple its Range for that attack (when using the aimed fire action, the Range increases by 4 times in total). It may be purchased multiple times, each time allowing you to use it once more per battle, but never more than once for the same attack.

SHOTGUN EXPERT is an aptitude improving Firearms when using a shotgun.

SHOTGUN MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any shotgun you use.

SMG EXPERT is an aptitude improving Firearms when using a submachine gun.

SMG MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any submachine gun you use.

Investigation

Investigation is used for tasks involving the gathering of information or combining clues to solve a mystery. It is usually combined with Intuition (or Charisma if you gather information by interviewing other people).

ALL-SEEING is an aptitude improving Perception when used to detect concealed details in your surroundings.

DIRT DIGGER is an aptitude improving Persuasion when used to blackmail or intimidate someone who you have recently researched with an Investigation test.

FORENSIC SCIENCE is a competency used to examine a crime scene, gathering clues in order to understand what took place.

Medicine

Medicine is used to diagnose and treat medical problems, as well as care for injuries. It is usually combined with Reason and cannot be used untrained.

EMERGENCY MEDICINE is an aptitude improving Medicine when used to resuscitate a character dying from a critical wound.

FORENSIC PATHOLOGY is a competency used to perform autopsies on corpses. Relying on the Medicine skill instead of the specialised training of this competency to determine the cause of a person's death and gather other useful information is possible but unreliable; the DF of a test is doubled.

PROFESSIONAL STATUS is a level 3 specialty that provides the coveted status of an expert in a particular medical field of your choice (for example, cardiology, endocrinology or oncology). You gain you the attention and respect of the scientific and academic world on a local level (usually your state of residence). A +1 bonus is applied to all Etiquette and Persuasion tests involving your chosen field and people who recognise your status (usually other doctors, but could also be politicians, bureaucrats or pharmaceutical company managers who have frequent dealings with the medical world). Furthermore, a +2 bonus is applied on Network tests relating to your field of expertise. This specialty can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty to improve your recognition to national level, and a third time as a level 5 specialty to gain international recognition.

SURGERY is a competency that allows you to perform surgical operations. Skill tests for surgery are usually influenced by Dexterity.

TRAUMA SPECIALIST is a level 2 specialty that adds +2 to your Medicine rating when determining how quickly people under your care recover from their wounds. It can be purchased a second time as a level 3 specialty and a third time as a level 4 specialty.

Melee

Melee is used to attack in hand-to-hand combat, whether bare-handed or using an appropriate weapon (like a knife or club). It is usually combined with Dexterity.

AXE EXPERT is an aptitude improving Melee when used to attack or block with an axe.

AXE MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the

damage multiplier of any axe you use.

BLADE EXPERT is an aptitude improving Melee when used to attack or block with a blade.

BLADE MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any blade you use.

BLUDGEON EXPERT is an aptitude improving Melee when used to attack or block with a bludgeon.

BLUDGEON MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any bludgeon you use.

BRAWL EXPERT is an aptitude improving Melee when used to attack or block with your bare hands.

BRAWL MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any unarmed strike you attempt..

DECEITFUL FIGHTING is a level 3 specialty that also requires Intuition 3. You can use it once per battle to gain one of two possible benefits when attempting the feint action. You can either get a +1 bonus to your feint test (Melee combined with Intuition), or you can choose to increase the penalty suffered by the target should the feint be successful by -2. Deceitful fighting may be purchased multiple times, each time allowing you to use it once more per battle, but never more than once for the same feint.

FIERCE STRIKE is a level 4 specialty that also requires Strength 4 and Powerful strike. It adds +1 to your attack's damage multiplier when you use Powerful strike.

HEAVY HITTER is a level 2 specialty that adds +1 to your Strength when determining the power of a Strength-dependent melee weapon. It can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty.

MELEE DEFENCE is a level 3 specialty that also requires Dexterity 3. It increases your Defence pool by one point. This point however, can only be used to take the block defensive action. You can purchase Melee defence a second time as a level 4 specialty and a third time as a level 5 specialty.

POWERFUL STRIKE is a level 3 specialty that also requires Dexterity 3. You can use it once per battle when you've made a successful close combat to roll a die and increase your weapon's Power based on its result (1-2: +1 Power, 3-4:+2 Power, 5:+3 Power, 6:+4 Power). Powerful strike may be purchased multiple times, each time allowing you to use it once more per battle, but never more than once for the same attack.

STRONG GRIP is a level 2 specialty that reduces a melee weapon's Strength requirement by 1 (to a minimum of 0). It can be purchased a second time as a level 3 specialty.

SWIFT STRIKE is a level 3 specialty that also requires Dexterity 3. You can use it once per battle to reduce the

time required to attack in close combat by one phase. Thus, a precise attack would need a single phase instead of 2 phases. If you perform the standard one-phase attack, you can actually make two attacks in a single phase. You may also choose to feint as part of your attack action instead of taking a separate action. Swift strike may be purchased multiple times, each time allowing you to use it once more per battle, but never more than once for the same attack.

SWORD EXPERT is an aptitude improving Melee when used to attack or block with a sword.

SWORD MASTER is a level 3 specialty that adds +1 to the damage multiplier of any sword you use.

Perception

Perception is used for tasks involving one of your senses, for example to observe a tiny detail, listen to the footsteps of someone trying to sneak past you, or search for a hidden object. It is usually combined with Intuition.

COMBAT AWARENESS is a level 3 specialty that allows you to regroup as a 2-phase action (instead of the 3-phase action it normally is). It can be purchased a second time as a level 5 specialty to reduce the time required to regroup to just a single phase.

MARKSMAN is a level 3 specialty that adds a +1 bonus to any attack test made with the aimed fire action.

TRACK is a competency that allows you to skilfully observe tracks and other signs useful in following your quarry.

X-RAY is an aptitude improving Perception tests made to find concealed details in a scene (hidden items, secret doors and the like).

Persuasion

Persuasion is used to convince a person or group of people to accept an argument or suggestion, or to follow a particular course of action. It is not mind control and will usually fail if your suggestion is harmful to the subjects or simply outrageous. Persuasion may also be used to deceive people by fast-talking or misinformation. It is usually combined with Charisma.

SKILLED DEBATER is a level 2 specialty that allows you to combine your Persuasion skill with either your Reason or Charisma (whichever is higher) when debating a subject. When purchased a second time as a level 3 specialty, it will force any opponents in the debate to use the lowest of Reason or Charisma for their tests, unless they have this specialty as well.

TEAM LEADER is a level 3 specialty that increases the benefits of cooperating when you are part of the team

(not necessarily the one making the final test). Every character assisting (including you, if you are in an assisting role) doubles the dice he contributes when he scores 6 on his fate die. Team leader can be purchased again as a level 4 specialty to gain its benefit on a roll of 5 or 6 on the fate die. The effects of this specialty are not cumulative when more than one character in the team has it.

Pilot

Pilot is used to operate airborne vehicles, like aeroplanes or helicopters. It is usually combined with Dexterity and cannot be used untrained.

FIGHTER JET EXPERT is an aptitude improving Pilot when operating fighter jets.

HELICOPTER EXPERT is an aptitude improving Pilot when operating helicopters.

LARGE AIRCRAFT EXPERT is an aptitude improving Pilot when operating large aircrafts (anything larger than a 16-seater).

SMALL AIRCRAFT EXPERT is an aptitude improving Pilot when operating small aircrafts (up to a 16-seater).

Politics

Politics is used to understand the balance of power in a political institution and manipulate it towards your ends. It is usually combined with Intuition for tasks depending on analysis, decision-making and wits, or with Charisma for tasks relying on leadership and public-speaking.

BUREAUCRATIC KNOWLEDGE is a level 2 specialty that allows you to use your Politics skill to expedite an application or request to a state agency or large corporate administration. A successful DF 3 Politics test will double the speed with which your matter is handled. Bureaucratic knowledge may also be of use in other cases where knowing your way through the maze of bureaucracy can be advantageous.

FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES is a level 4 specialty that allows you to create a “temporary” ally. Once per story, you can make a Politics test (combined with Charisma) and spend any successes scored on the Ally asset; the ally’s assistance lasts until the end of the current story. Make a note of the ally you’ve used: each attempt to create a similar ally in future stories suffers a –1 cumulative penalty (*if you’ve created a senator ally, any attempts to create a new ally in a legislative body will be penalised, but it will be ok to come up with an ally in a law enforcement agency*).

POWER DYNAMICS is a level 3 specialty that allows you to understand the power structure and identify the

key people in a political body or government agency simply by being around. The time required to acquire this intimate knowledge depends on the size and complexity of the organisation and may range from days to months.

SPIN DOCTOR is an aptitude improving Etiquette, Persuasion or Politics for tasks based on lying or deceit.

Science

Science is used for any task related to physical or theoretical sciences, such as mathematics, physics or chemistry. It is usually combined with Reason and cannot be used untrained.

ENGINEERING is a competency that allows you to use your scientific knowledge for practical applications in a specific field of expertise (for example, chemical engineering, civil engineering, electronics, genetic engineering, mechanics or material science), including building, repairing and modifying structures and devices. You have to purchase a separate competency for each new field of expertise you want to pursue as an engineer.

LEADING AUTHORITY is a level 4 specialty that provides the coveted status of an expert in a particular field of your choice (for example, climate science, agriculture or energy science). You gain you the attention and respect of the scientific and academic world on a local level (usually within your state of residence). A +1 bonus is applied to all Etiquette and Persuasion tests involving your chosen field and people who recognise your status (usually other scientists, but could also be politicians, bureaucrats or industrialists who have frequent dealings with the world of science). Furthermore, a +2 bonus is applied on Network tests relating to your field of expertise. This specialty can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty to improve your recognition to national level, and a third time as a level 5 specialty to gain international recognition.

Stealth

Stealth is used when you want to avoid detection and can help you hide out of sight, sneak past someone or stalk your quarry without being noticed. It is usually combined with Dexterity and opposed by an observer's Perception skill.

HUNTING GROUNDS is an aptitude improving Stealth in a specific environment of your choice (e.g. urban, forest, jungle, arctic, mountain). This specialty may be purchased separately to cover additional environments.

SNEAK ATTACK is a level 3 specialty that increases the

damage of any attacks you make while stealthy. If an attack against an opponent that hasn't detected you is successful, add the result of one die or your Stealth rating (*whichever is lower*) to the attack's power. You must be within 10 metres of the target to gain this benefit with a ranged weapon. Sneak attack can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty to increase the range limit to 30 metres. When purchased a third time as a level 5 specialty, it allows you to roll 2 dice and pick the best result for the attack's power bonus.

STALKER is a level 3 specialty that inflicts a -1 penalty to the Perception tests of casual observers (for example, bystanders or guards on duty but not on alert) made to spot you, as long as you score 3 or more successes on your Stealth test. It can be purchased a second time as a level 4 specialty to apply this penalty to people actively looking for you.

Assets

Assets are character traits that measure things like your character's possessions or influence within society. They do not make your character more skilled or powerful as an individual, but are nevertheless extremely useful when dealing with people or institutions. Unlike other attributes, like skills or attributes, assets are picked during character creation and cannot be directly modified afterwards through experience. They may still improve (or worsen) as a result of circumstances and your actions in the game. *For example, it is possible to gain a new Ally if you befriend someone willing to help your cause as much as it is possible to have your Network rating reduced if your actions damage your contacts.* Whether an event is significant enough to have a lasting impact on your assets is something determined by the Gamemaster.

Picking assets during character creation is something that will have to be closely monitored by the Gamemaster to make sure it fits well with a character's concept and with the game the Gamemaster intends to run. Any particularly powerful choice should be vetted by the Gamemaster first to see if it's compatible with the story elements.

Ally (1-6 points)

This asset provides you with a friend in a useful position that shares some common goals or beliefs and will be willing to assist you from time to time, as long as you don't exploit his friendship and don't ask for anything that would seriously jeopardise him.

- One point gets you a minor ally, like a police sergeant.
- 2 points will provide you with an influential ally,

for example a city councillor.

- For 3 points, your ally is a powerful figure, such as a senator.

It is possible to get an organisation (or at least part of it) as an ally, but this costs twice as much as for an individual. This asset can be purchased multiple times if you want to have more than one ally.

Authority (2-6 points)

This asset entrenches you in a position of authority, usually legislative, judicial, law enforcement or in the military.

- 2 points get you a minor but useful position, such as being a police lieutenant.
- 4 points provide you with major authority like that of a senior judge or regional director of a law enforcement agency.
- 6 points will give you a powerful position, perhaps being a congressman or assistant secretary in a government department.

The downside to all the perks and influence offered by a position of authority is that your life and actions will face more public scrutiny, which could make things difficult for you in certain situations.

Network (1-5 points)

This asset gives you a network of sources and contacts you've managed to build over time that can provide mostly reliable information as well as other services. When using your network to research and gather information, you get a bonus greydie per Network rating point for your Investigation tests. If you want to call on your network for a service (such as getting in touch with people having the expertise you require, securing restricted items or procuring forged documents) you have to make a Network test, influenced by Charisma, with the DF depending on how major the service is. Every time you use your network (whether the outcome is favourable or not), its rating is reduced by one point. Your full rating is restored at the beginning of each new story. Note that your contacts expect to be compensated for their trouble and their services usually do not come cheap.

Wealth (2-6 points)

This asset will provide you with an annual income of \$80K at the cost of 2 points. You are assumed to be working and taking care of your business when not actively participating in the story. Investing 4 points in this asset gives you an income of \$250K, while 6 points will increase this to \$1M per annum.

Characters with no points in this asset have to make ends meet with \$25K per annum.

Action

Phases

Phases are used to break down a frantic action sequence, *for example a battle or chase*, into small, manageable chunks. Each phase only lasts a couple of seconds in the game world and gives a chance to combatants to take their actions in an orderly fashion. When a phase ends, a new one immediately begins and this process is repeated until the end of the action scene.

Phases can be handy when determining how long some game effects last. An effect with a duration counted in phases lasts from the Initiative count at which it was activated until just before the same Initiative count that many phases later.

A security guard has found Steven trespassing and attempts to subdue him with a stun gun. He has Initiative 6 and successfully strikes Steven in the second phase of your confrontation, stunning him for 10 phases. This means that Steven will remain stunned until just before Initiative 20 of the 12th phase of combat.

Surprise

When combat begins, some of the participants may not be aware of the opposition, for example if they are ambushed. Such combatants are said to be surprised. They make an Initiative test as normal, but they cannot take any actions or move during the first phase of combat. Surprised characters also begin combat with no Defence pool (but can use the guard action after the first phase to get their normal Defence pool back).

The Gamemaster may call for a test to determine if someone is surprised or not at the beginning of combat. Although the specifics depend on the circumstances, most such tests use the Perception skill.

Multi-phase actions

During a phase, each combatant is able to take one action at his Initiative score, assuming it is simple enough to be accomplished within the 2-second span of a phase. Many of the things you will want to undertake may actually take more than a single phase to complete. While completing a multi-phase action, you cannot take any more actions.

Because many actions will take more than one phase to complete, some things will always be quicker than oth-

INITIATIVE

The order in which combatants take their actions during a phase is determined by their Initiative score. Simply put, characters with high Initiative will be able to act before those with lower scores. Initiative depends on quickness, but also on awareness of the battlefield. Each character participating in the action sequence makes an Initiative test at the beginning by rolling Perception (influenced by Intuition) with no DF and multiplying the successes scored by his Dexterity rating. The result becomes the character's Initiative.

Your Initiative score remains pretty much constant throughout combat, unless affected by special conditions. The only way to get a new Initiative score is to take a regroup action.

During a phase, combatants take their actions in order of Initiative. Those with the highest scores go first, followed by characters with lower scores. When two combatants have the same Initiative score, their actions are resolved simultaneously.

Delaying

Sometimes it may be useful to sit tight and see how things pan out before committing yourself to a course of action. You may delay your action by forfeiting to act on your Initiative score. You can choose to act at any point later in the phase, but doing so will lower your Initiative score for the rest of the combat. So, if you begin the phase with Initiative 10 and you decide to take your action at Initiative 6, your Initiative will become 6 for the rest of the scene (or until you use the regroup action).

While delaying, it is possible to take an action to interrupt someone else's intended action. If someone bursts through the door with gun in hand, you might attempt to attack first before he has a chance to open fire. You have to beat your opponent in an opposed Dexterity test (influenced by Intuition) to manage to put in your action before he can react. If he wins, he takes his action before yours. On a tie, both actions happen simultaneously.

ers, something you'll have to take into account when coming up with a battle plan. *If your intention is to run 20 metres and beat your opponents into submission*

with a baseball bat before they can gun you down, well, that is probably not going to happen.

If you change your mind about completing a multi-phase action, you can abort it on your next Initiative count and start taking a new action instead.

If Michael wants to carefully aim and fire his sniper rifle, he will need to take a 3-phase action to gain the full benefits of its telescopic sight. This means that he will not be able to do anything else on the first two phases, while on the third phase he'll fire the rifle at his Initiative score. Michael could of course pull off a very quick shot in a single phase, but it wouldn't be nearly as accurate.

Free actions

Some very simple things will hardly take any time or attention to do. Such things include speaking a short sentence, pushing a button or opening a door. You can undertake such simple actions along with your regular action during a phase. The Gamemaster can limit the amount of free actions you can take during a phase if he feels that they are disrupting the concentration required by your regular action.

Movement

Movement in combat is not an action by itself, but something you can combine with other actions. You can even move in phases in which you don't take another action or during multi-phase actions, unless your intended action prohibits movement (*for example, when you're trying to disarm an IED*). As with actions, you get the chance to move when your Initiative count is due (unless you wish to delay by reducing your Initiative).

Certain actions requiring finesse and/or stability may be penalised by movement. Movement penalties are cumulative when they concern multi-phase actions. For example, if you aim with a rifle for 3 phases and you run for the first 2 phases (-2 penalty per phase), while on the 3rd phase you walk (-1 movement penalty), your attack test will suffer a -5 movement penalty.

Movement can make you harder to hit, giving you a bonus to dodge tests against ranged attacks. This bonus lasts for one phase (usually until you get the chance to act again).

- WALKING is the most basic movement mode. While it only allows you to cover 2 metres per phase, it is only associated with a -1 movement penalty. Walking doesn't provide a defence bonus.
- RUNNING can be used to cover up to 6 metres

per phase, but inflicts a -2 movement penalty to certain actions. It provides a +1 bonus to dodge tests against ranged attacks. Running tends to consume a lot of energy, so you gain a fatigue point for every phase spent running.

- SPRINTING is used when you want to move very fast, but is not compatible with some actions (like aimed fire). It allows you to cover up to 10 + Dexterity + Athletics metres per phase and provides a +2 bonus to dodge tests against ranged attacks, but also inflicts a -3 movement penalty. Sprinting can exhaust you very quickly; you gain 3 points of fatigue per phase sprinting. Before you can sprint, you have to build up some speed; you can only sprint if you were at least running in the previous phase.

Combat actions

It would be futile to try to catalogue and analyse every possible action a character can attempt in combat, since the possibilities are practically endless. This collection of basic combat actions covers the most common tasks attempted in combat and can be used as a guideline on how to manage situations that crop up when a player wants to attempt something not detailed here.

■ Attack in close combat (1+ phases)

A Melee test (influenced by Dexterity) is used to attack an opponent using your bare hands or a suitable close combat weapon (such as a knife or club). Naturally, you must very close to your target, usually within an arm's reach, to attempt such an attack. The DF is 1 if your target is unarmed, or 2 if he is wielding a close combat weapon himself. Unlike ranged weapons, close combat attacks do not suffer penalties from movement.

CHARGE: If you sprint for at least 3 metres before making a close combat attack, you gain a +1 bonus to your attack test from the momentum gained.

CLOSING IN: You can close in on an enemy within melee range to get locked in close combat with him. This offers some tactical advantage, especially if your opponent is armed with a ranged weapon, but can turn into a disadvantage if things don't go your way and you need to make a run for it.

To close in, you can either take a 1-phase action and win an opposed Melee test, or burn 1 attack success after a successful Melee attack test against him. Once locked in close combat, neither of you can easily move away unless using a 1-phase action and winning an opposed Melee test to withdraw. If either you or your opponent try to break off by simply moving away, the oth-

ATTACK TEST MODIFIERS

CONDITION	MODIFIER
Attacker is prone	-1 to close combat attacks
Target is prone	+1 to close combat attacks, -1 to ranged attacks
Target is locked in close combat with a friendly	-1 to ranged attacks
Low visibility (night, fog)	-1 to ranged attacks
Very low visibility (darkness, heavy fog)	-2 to ranged attacks, -1 to close combat attacks
No visibility	-4
Target is under partial cover	-1 to ranged attacks

er side can spend 1 Defence point to make a reactive Melee attack with a +2 bonus.

While locked in close combat, ranged attacks become difficult. All Firearms test are limited by Melee (essentially trying to break your gun free) and suffer a -1 penalty (-2 for 2-handed weapons). Throwing attacks are impossible. Furthermore, the target can use the block defensive action instead of dodge to resist a ranged attack.

A ranged attack by an outsider aimed at a target locked in close combat with you has a chance of hitting you. First, the attack test suffers a -1 penalty. If the target successfully dodges the attack, it actually strikes you unless you dodge as well and score more successes than your opponent.

FEINT (1 PHASE): You can feint as a 1-phase action to mislead your target into opening up his defences. A feint requires you to win in a resisted Melee test (influenced by Intuition). If you are successful, your opponent suffers a -1 penalty to defensive action tests against your next close combat attack (if made within the next phase). This penalty increases to -2 if you burn 2 or more successes.

PRECISE ATTACK (2 PHASES): You can take 2 phases to perform a precise attack that can deal greater damage to the target. If the attack is successful, the fate die used to calculate its Power gives a minimum value of 4 (that is, add +4 Power even if you've scored lower on the fate die).

■ Block (defensive action)

This action allows you to block an incoming attack made with bare hands or a close combat weapon. Its success is judged by a Melee test (influenced by Dexterity). You get a +1 bonus when blocking a bare-handed attack with a close combat weapon and a -1 penalty if you try to block a weapon while you're un-

armed.

■ Dodge (defensive action)

This action allows you to move out of harm's way and can be used to defend against both close combat and ranged attacks. Its success is determined by a Dexterity test. A -1 penalty is applied when trying to dodge fire-

DEFENSIVE ACTIONS

Defensive actions, like block or dodge, allow you to evade enemy attacks. They are not considered regular actions and can be taken at any time during a phase, even before your Initiative. Defensive actions may be used in addition to your normal actions for that phase. However, you cannot take any defensive action if you are immobilised, unconscious or otherwise helpless.

In order to use a defensive action, you have to spend a point from your Defence pool. This has to be declared before the attacker rolls his dice. Every combatant starts combat with a Defence pool equal to his Dexterity. Surprised characters however, start with no Defence pool. You can take as many defensive actions as your Defence pool allows during a phase, but only one against a single attack. If you exhaust your Defence pool, you can use the guard action to recover your used points.

When using a defensive action, you have to make a test to determine its effectiveness. The successes scored on the defensive test become the DF for the attacker's test made to hit you, unless you score less than the basic DF of the attack.

If Claudia scores 3 successes on a Block test, the sword-wielding maniac she's facing will have DF 3 to hit her. If she doesn't score any successes he will still have DF 1, which is the base DF for a close combat attack.

arms attacks or any other high-velocity projectiles or energy attacks.

■ **Fire a gun (1+ phases)**

If you are armed with a firearm or other ranged weapon, you can use it to perform quick fire, snap fire or aimed fire. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages, but basically the longer your attack takes, the more accurate it will be. Guns attack by rolling Firearms (influenced by Dexterity), while thrown weapons use Athletics (influenced by Dexterity). All such attacks always suffer movement penalties.

RANGED ATTACK DF	
Up to 3 metres away	1
Up to weapon's Range	2
Up to weapon's Range x 2	3
Up to weapon's Range x 3	4
...and so on	

QUICK FIRE (1 PHASE): This is a quick but poorly aimed shot at the target. Quick fire takes only one phase to complete, but halves the Range of your weapon.

SNAP FIRE (2 PHASES): Snap fire involves more aiming than quick fire without spending a lot of time to optimise accuracy. It does not modify the weapon's Range.

AIMED FIRE (3 PHASES): Aimed fire takes a long time to complete and may not be very suited for close engagements, but provides maximum accuracy. Your weapon's Range is doubled for the attack. Additionally, if the attack is successful the fate die used to calculate its Power gives a minimum value of 4 (that is, add +4 Power even if you've scored lower on the fate die). You cannot sprint while performing aimed fire.

On the third phase of aimed fire, you can continue to aim instead of firing. For every extra phase spent aiming you add a +1 bonus to your attack test when you finally shoot, up to a maximum bonus equal to your Perception rating.

■ **Grapple (1 phase)**

This action allows you to grab hold of a target within arm's reach in an attempt to immobilise him. It requires you to win an opposed Melee test (influenced by Strength); the target may choose to take a dodge defensive action to resist with a dodge test instead. Grabbing a target armed with a close combat weapon suffers a -1 penalty. If you succeed, the target is held immobile.

You may use further one-phase actions to squeeze or strangle, making a DF 1 Melee attack test (influenced by Strength) with a +2 bonus to inflict your normal unarmed attack damage (the target may resist these attacks with the block defensive action). You are also able to move while grabbing the target at half your usual movement rate (you cannot run or sprint while holding him). The target may attempt to break free as a one-phase action; this calls for a new opposed Melee test.

■ **Guard (1 phase)**

You hold your ground and evaluate your opponents as well as your defences, recovering all used Defence pool points. You cannot move at all while taking this action.

■ **Knockdown (1 phase)**

You can rush an opponent in an attempt to knock him down using your body weight. This calls for a resisted Melee test (influenced by Strength); if you win your target falls down and suffers the damage of an unarmed strike (however, you can only increase the damage inflicted by burning 2 successes per +1 multiplier). You get a +1 bonus to your test if you sprinted for at least 3 metres prior to your attack. Your target gets a +1 bonus to his test if he is armed with a close combat weapon.

■ **Regroup (3 phases)**

You pause to evaluate the combat situation and formulate new plans. At the end of the action you may make a test to generate a new Initiative score, which will be used from the next phase. Note that you may end up getting a lower Initiative score than the one you already have; the chaos of combat can lead to grave errors of judgement!

You cannot move while taking this action.

Special cases

■ **Extras**

Action scenes with lots of supporting characters involved may slow down the game considerably. To work around this, you may use the Extras rules for henchmen, grunts, goons or any other minor characters present in an action scene.

Like their movie counterparts, extras screw up often and are easily disabled.

An extra doesn't reroll his fate die and automatically fails any test where the fate die rolled 1.

An extra is taken out of action if he suffers a serious or worse wound. He might get killed, knocked out, or otherwise disabled depending on the attack.

■ Explosives

Explosive weapons attack an entire area rather than a single target. This makes them considerably more dangerous and difficult to avoid.

Explosives deal their damage to everyone close enough. Their damage multiplier is generally reduced as one moves further from the centre of the explosion. For example, an explosive charge may have -1 damage multiplier per 5 metres away from the epicentre. Those caught within an explosion cannot avoid the attack altogether, but can use the dodge defensive action to minimise (or even negate) the damage inflicted by diving for cover or dropping to the ground. Every success scored on the dodge test will reduce the damage multiplier of the explosive by 1. Enclosed spaces with little cover may inflict a -1 or -2 penalty to dodge tests.

Explosive weapons that are thrown or shot (like grenades) use the appropriate skills to attack, with their power being equal to the skill rating plus the fate die, just like for a normal weapon. Extra attack successes can be burned to increase the damage multiplier. If the attack test fails to beat the usual DF for ranged attacks, the explosive will still go off but its damage multiplier is halved.

Stationary explosives (like mines, booby traps or demolition charges) roll 1 die and use the number scored to determine their power. If you have the Demolitions skill and take time to set an explosive charge, it "attacks" with your skill when it goes off. Make a DF 1 skill test and add your skill rating and fate die to the explosive's power; extra attack successes can be burned to increase the multiplier.

■ Melee reach

Some close combat weapons have a Reach score, indicating that their relative length may provide a benefit or a drawback in some cases.

When you first meet an opponent in close combat, the longer weapon will usually have the advantage (being able to strike while keeping the enemy at bay). If your weapon has higher Reach than your opponent's, you gain a +1 bonus to Melee skill tests against him (attack tests, block tests, closing in or withdrawing, basically any Melee skill test that involves him in some way). This bonus lasts until the opponent scores a successful Melee attack hit against you. The balance of combat shifts and now your opponent takes ownership of the Reach bonus: he has managed to bypass your longer

weapon and now his shorter instrument has the advantage. The process continues, with the Reach bonus applying to the last combatant managing to score a hit.

Weapons with Reach 3 or higher are long enough to be unwieldy in cramped environments. At the Gamemaster's discretion they can suffer a -1 penalty in addition to losing all Reach benefits when used in narrow tunnels, cluttered rooms or similar surroundings.

■ Rate of fire

Firearms can possibly have different modes of fire, depending on their make and type. These are summarised by their ROF characteristic.

- ROF "M" means that the weapon uses a pump, bolt, lever or any other sort of action that must be operated manually after a shot before they can fire again. This requires a 1-phase action, but may be combined with an attack action in the same phase by taking a -1 penalty to the attack test.
- ROF "S" means that the weapon fires a single shot after the trigger is pressed.
- A ROF of +1 or higher indicates that the weapon is capable of automatic fire. You can choose how much of the weapon's ROF to use prior to an attack; each +1 used will provide a +1 attack bonus, but also consumes 3 rounds of ammo and increases the weapon's Strength requirement by 1 due to the increased recoil.
- A +2 or higher ROF weapon can be used for spray attacks, targeting multiple enemies in a single attack action. You can attack a number of targets up to the ROF used, but all targets have to be within a 3-metres radius. If you use more ROF than the number of targets attacked, the excess points are added as an attack bonus. A single attack test is made to resolve all shots and the results are applied to each target separately. Spray attacks cannot be performed as aimed fire.

■ Strength-dependent weapons

Most (but not all) melee weapons, like swords and bludgeons, depend on the user's physical strength to inflict harm. When calculating the power of an attack by such a weapon, add the average of the attacker's Strength and Melee rating instead of just the Melee rating itself.

John has Strength 4 and Melee 2. When attacking with a baseball bat he adds 3 (average of 4 and 2) to its power. Even though he's not very skilled at swinging, his great strength gives him an advantage.

A few close combat weapons do not depend on physical strength (for example, a stun baton relies on its electrical charge) and thus only add the user's skill rating to their power.

■ Superior position

In some cases you may be able to get the drop on someone and be able to threaten him from a clearly superior position, for example with your gun trained on his head and ready to fire, or with a blade next to his throat. If you were to attack someone at such a huge disadvantage, the target would be unable to take a defensive action and your attack would be automatically successful (even if no successes are scored) unless the attack test is fumbled. Furthermore, any extra successes spent to improve damage will increase both the multiplier and the power of the attack.

It is possible (but also very dangerous) for someone at such a grave situation to try to disengage. Initiative is meaningless in such cases, since the armed and ready character can usually act more quickly than his vulnerable opponent. Make an opposed Dexterity test (influenced by Perception, and/or Strength if trying to escape from a melee lock).

- If the character with the advantage wins, he can immediately make an attack against the vulnerable character as detailed above. His opponent has failed to disengage, so if he survives he has to attempt again with another opposed Dexterity test.
- If there is a tie or the vulnerable character wins, the character with the advantage can immediately make an attack against him. He gets a +1 attack bonus and the increased damage effect as above, but his attack is no longer an automatic success and the target can resist it with a defensive action. After the attack is resolved, the vulnerable character has successfully disengaged; the attacker loses his advantage and normal combat ensues.
- If the vulnerable character wins by scoring twice as many successes as his opponent or more, the character with the advantage doesn't get an immediate attack against him and also loses any advantage over him. Normal combat follows.

Claudia has cornered a gang member at a dead-end alley. With her gun pointing at him at close distance, she orders him to drop to the ground. Refusing to comply, the gangster tries to pull out his gun instead. Claudia is a bit slow to react and scores 3 successes on her Dexterity test, while the gangster scores 5. He manages to pull out his gun, but Claudia still has a momentary advantage over him and takes a shot with

a +1 bonus. The gangster tries to dodge but fails, with Claudia scoring 2 successes over what she needed to hit. She burns both extra successes for damage, thus gaining +2 power and +2 to the damage multiplier. If the gangster survives the shot, they will both roll for Initiative and he may get the chance to return fire.

■ Two weapons

You can hold two sufficiently small weapons (like knives or pistols) in both hands and attempt to use both in the same attack action, as long as they are both using the same attack skill (e.g. they can both be ranged weapons using the Firearms skill). Attacking with both weapons at the same time would require you to make a separate attack test for each, splitting your available dice between them. *For example, if you had 3 dice and 1 greydie available, you could choose to roll 2 dice for one attack test and 1 die and the greydie for the other, or any other possible combination. Furthermore, both attacks will suffer a -1 penalty if they are directed at different targets.*

■ Weapon Strength requirement

Some weapons may be large, heavy or produce too much recoil when fired. Such weapons usually have a high minimum Strength requirement in order to use effectively. If the user's Strength is not high enough to meet the weapon's minimum, he suffers a -1 penalty per point of difference to all skill tests with the weapon. *For example, a character with Strength 2 trying to wield a heavy sword with 4 Strength requirement would suffer a -2 penalty.*

Damage

Anytime an attack is successful, damage is inflicted on the target. Damage may also come about as the result of traps or certain hazards, such as falling from a height or getting trapped inside a burning building. Damage is calculated by using the simple formula of Power x Damage multiplier.

An attack's Power is equal to the skill rating used to perform the attack plus the number scored on the fate die of the attack test (if you rolled more than one fate die, simply use the highest number produced). The damage multiplier depends on the weapon used for the attack.

Well-placed attacks will generally be more dangerous. You can burn extra attack test successes to increase the damage multiplier of the weapon used.

Emily's light pistol does x4 damage. She takes a shot with it at an advancing thug and her Firearms rating is

DAMAGE OVERVIEW

WOUND THRESHOLDS

Minor wound threshold = Strength x 5

Serious wound threshold = Strength x 10

Critical wound threshold = (Strength + Willpower) x 10

WOUND EFFECTS

Minor wound: No effect. Additional minor wounds over Strength x 3 converted to serious wounds.

Serious wound: Cannot sprint. -1 penalty to all actions per 2 serious wounds. Additional serious wounds over Strength x 2 converted to critical wounds.

Critical wound: Strength test (boosted by Willpower) to survive. -1 penalty to all actions per critical wound, cannot run/sprint. Additional critical wounds over Strength will kill you.

2. She rolls 3 extra successes over what she needed to hit the thug and her fate die reads 5. If she burn all 3 extra successes for damage, the pistol's damage multiplier increases to 7 and the shot's Power is 2 (her Firearm rating) + 5 (the number scored on the fate die) = 7. Emily hits for $7 \times 7 = 49$ points of damage. Ouch.

The effects of damage on a character depend on several factors. Body strength and endurance is one of them; a strong character will be more likely to shrug off damage. Willpower is also important because it represents, among other things, "staying power" and the will to survive. Characters with high Willpower stand a better chance at surviving grave injuries.

You have a Minor wound threshold equal to Strength times 5, a Serious wound threshold equal to your Strength times 10 and a Critical wound threshold equal to 10 times the sum of your Strength and Willpower. These are compared to the damage you've suffered by an attack to determine its effects on you.

- Damage that is less than your Minor wound threshold has no significant effect.
- Damage that matches or exceeds your Minor wound threshold but is less than your Serious wound threshold will only inflict a minor wound on you.
- Damage that matched or exceeds your Serious wound threshold but is less than your Critical wound threshold will inflict a serious wound on you.
- If the damage is equal or higher than your Critical wound threshold, you suffer a critical wound and may die.

Please note: Damage from different attacks is not added together! The game doesn't have a "hit point" or "health left" mechanic where damage adds up until the character is disabled or dead. The damage received from multiple attacks is compared to your wound thresholds individually, with each one causing a separate wound.

MINOR WOUNDS are marginally inconvenient. They don't inflict any penalties, but you can only tolerate a number of them equal to 3 times your Strength. Any additional minor wounds over that limit are converted to serious wounds.

SERIOUS WOUNDS are debilitating and dangerous. The first serious wound you suffer makes you unable to sprint. For every 2 serious wounds you accumulate, you also suffer a -1 penalty to all tests related to actions. You can have a number of serious wounds equal to twice your Strength at any time; any additional serious wounds over that limit are converted to critical wounds (such critical wounds do not trigger a survival test).

CRITICAL WOUNDS are extremely serious and very likely to prove lethal. When you suffer a critical wound, you have to succeed in a Strength test (boosted by Willpower) to survive it. The DF for this test is 1 per 10 points of damage of the attack that caused the wound. If the test is failed but you manage to score a number of successes at least equal to half the DF, you are incapacitated (perhaps not completely unconscious but certainly unable to move or take any kind of action) and will die in a number of minutes equal to your Strength + Willpower, unless you get urgent medical attention. A roll of 6 on the fate die of the survival test increases this period of grace to Strength + Willpower hours.

Even if you succeed in the test and survive, each critical wound inflicts a -1 penalty to all tests related to actions and makes running or sprinting impossible. Your body can put up with a number of critical wounds up to your Strength at most; any extra critical wounds will immediately kill you.

ARMOUR

Body armour and similar forms of personal protection reduce the damage multiplier of incoming attacks. *For example, a 2-point armour would reduce the damage of a light pistol from x4 to x2.* If the multiplier is reduced to 0, the armour absorbs all damage and no harm comes to the wearer.

Heavy armour decreases speed and flexibility. Weapons with superior penetrating ability will ignore a portion of the target's armour, reducing its effective protection.

Subdual damage

Some attacks may be used to deal subdual damage, which is much less dangerous than normal damage and better suited when you want to take someone down alive.

Subdual damage works like normal damage in most respects, but its effects are fleeting. Minor subdual wounds vanish after one minute, serious subdual wounds are erased after 10 minutes and critical subdual wounds will only remain in play for one hour. Most importantly, subdual wounds will never kill someone outright. Failing the survival test for a critical subdual wound will only render a character unconscious for one minute per failure margin. However, a character can still die from subdual damage if he receives more critical wounds than his Strength; excessive beatings can prove lethal for any character.

■ Stunning attacks

Some attacks, for example electrical shocks, can leave you stunned. While stunned, your movement rate is halved, you cannot run or sprint and you suffer a -2 penalty to all actions. Stunning attacks do not add up together: the -2 penalty will remain the same, although a new attack may extend the duration of the effects.

Once a stunning effect's duration lapses, you become dazed for an equal amount of time, having a -1 action penalty and being unable to sprint.

Recovering from injury

Natural healing is a gradual process. Each wound you suffer starts with a Severity score depending on its grievousness.

WOUND SEVERITY	
Light	3
Serious	10
Critical	30

At the beginning of each new day, reduce the severity of all wounds by the character's Strength rating. Once a wound drops to 0 severity, it improves by one grade. A critical wound turns to a serious wound (with 10 severity), a serious wound becomes a minor wound (with 3 severity), and a minor wound is erased.

Medical assistance

People under the care of a medical professional recover

more quickly. A character with the Medicine skill can add its rating to the Strength of someone under his care when determining how quickly wounds lose their Severity. With multiple patients, the character has to split his Medicine rating between them as he sees fit. However, the carer's Medicine rating is halved outside of a hospital or any other well-organised medical facility.

Urgent medical attention can save the life of someone who lies incapacitated and dying after failing a survival test against a critical wound. This requires a successful Medicine test (influenced by Reason) against the same DF as the survival test. Each attempt to stabilise the dying character's condition takes one minute. Poor equipment penalises the test by -2.

Surgery may be used to heal serious or critical wounds, but requires the Surgery specialty and access to a well-equipped operating theatre. One hour and a successful surgery test versus DF 2 is required to convert one serious wound to a minor wound. A critical wound requires 3 hours and a DF 4 test to convert to a serious wound. A character is able to undergo his Strength times 3 in total hours of surgery per week.

Fatigue

Fatigue points are gained as the result of physical exertion or exposure to harsh environmental conditions (blistering heat or freezing cold). The effects of fatigue can be partially offset by your Strength and Willpower.

When the total fatigue you've accumulated exceeds your Strength times 10, you are winded. A winded character cannot sprint and suffers a -1 penalty to all actions. If your fatigue total grows to exceed 10 times your Strength + Willpower, you become exhausted. Exhausted characters cannot run or sprint and suffer a -2 penalty to all actions.

Finally, when your total fatigue exceeds twice your exhaustion threshold, you collapse unconscious from exertion. You will only be able to regain consciousness when fatigue falls below that threshold. If you continue taking fatigue, each 5 points will inflict a minor wound

FATIGUE OVERVIEW

Fatigue > Strength x 10: Winded. -1 penalty to all actions, cannot sprint.

Fatigue > (Strength + Willpower) x 10: Exhausted. -2 penalty to all actions, cannot run/sprint.

Fatigue > (Strength + Willpower) x 20: Unconscious. Every 5 additional fatigue inflicts a minor wound.

Recovery: Erase fatigue equal to your Strength per 10 minutes resting.

on you. Thus, continuous exertion will eventually kill you.

Fatigue is usually recovered by resting, although you will not be able to recover fatigue caused by environmental conditions, hunger or thirst until you address those problems. You erase a number of fatigue points equal to your Strength per 10 minutes of resting.

Hazards

■ Deprivation

A character that goes without food takes 5 fatigue points per day for the first 10 days, 10 fatigue per day for the next 10 days, 15 fatigue per day for the next 10 days, and so on.

If a character goes without water, he takes 10 fatigue points the first day, 20 the second day, 40 the third day, 80 the fourth day, and so on.

■ Electricity

Electrical shocks have a damage multiplier usually ranging from x4 to x12, depending on their intensity. Roll one die to find the shock's power. In addition to the damage suffered, you have to make a Strength test (DF equal to half the shock's damage multiplier) to avoid being stunned; failure stuns you for 10 phases per failure margin.

ELECTRICAL SOURCE	DAMAGE MULTIPLIER
Car battery	x4
Home plug	x6
Industrial battery	x8
Power lines	x10
Lightning strike	x12

■ Exposure

Exposure to the elements will cause fatigue. High heat or low temperature will usually cause 5 points of fatigue per hour. Severe conditions may inflict fatigue every 10 minutes, while extreme conditions will inflict every minute. Appropriate protection (like winter gear) may offset some of the fatigue, but any fatigue already gained cannot be recovered until you find shelter.

■ Falling

Falls inflict damage that ignores any armour you may be using. Falling damage starts with a x2 multiplier,

going up by 1 for every 3 metres fallen (*so, a 15-metre fall carries a x7 damage multiplier*). Roll 1 die to find the fall's power; for every 10 metres fallen roll an additional die and pick the highest-scoring die to determine power.

If you jump rather than being pushed, reduce the height fallen by your Athletics or Dexterity rating (whichever is higher) when calculating falling damage. On the other hand, if you fall head-first, triple the fall's power.

Falling on a soft surface halves the distance fallen for damage purposes. Falling in water quarters the distance fallen.

■ Fire

Flames inflict damage on every phase you are exposed to them. They have a damage multiplier usually ranging from x2 to x6, depending on their intensity. Roll a die to determine the fire's power. After the first phase of exposure fire damage ignores the effect of most personal armour (unless it has special heat-dispersion qualities), although most barriers and vehicles may still resist it for some time.

FIRE SOURCE	DAMAGE MULTIPLIER
Campfire	x2
Bonfire	x4
Chemical fire	x6

Fire will continue to affect a flammable object or character even after the original flames are put out, with the original damage being reduced by 10 points per phase until it dies out. For example, someone hit by 35 points of fire damage will take 25 damage on the second phase, 15 damage on the third phase and 5 damage on the fourth phase. This can only be avoided if the flames on the character or object are extinguished (usually by water or a fire extinguisher, although rolling on the ground or throwing sand or a blanket on the burning character may also put out flames with a successful Dexterity test, DF equal to the fire's damage multiplier).

■ Health threats

Threats to your health include disease and toxin. Each has its own unique effects on you.

COBRA VENOM is an injected toxin with strong neurotoxic effects that is found in snakes of the family, but may also be harvested for use with piercing weapons. A successful Strength test (boosted by Willpower) versus DF 6 allows you to resist any significant effects of the

venom. If this test gets a failure margin of 1-2, the venom takes effect 10 phases after exposure and inflicts a -2 penalty to all tests made to resolve actions as well as preventing you from running or sprinting. These effects last for 30 minutes, then the penalty drops to -1 for another 3 hours. Failing the test with a failure margin of 3+ causes the same effects as above, but after 5 minutes the penalty increases to -3 and after 10 minutes you pass out and begin to suffocate until you die.

FLU is a common airborne infectious disease. If you are exposed to the flu, you have to make a DF 4 Strength test (boosted by Willpower) one day after exposure to determine the severity of your symptoms. A successful test allows you to escape any significant symptoms. If you fail the test by a margin of 1-2, your Strength and Dexterity are reduced by 1 point for 3 days. If you fail the test by a margin of 3, your Strength and Dexterity are reduced for a week. If the test is failed by a margin of 4+, at the end you will have to pass a DF 2 Strength test (boosted by Willpower) or die from respiratory complications. More dangerous strains of the disease will increase the DF of the first and/or last Strength test.

HANTAVIRUS is a dangerous airborne infectious disease causing potentially fatal haemorrhagic fever. Exposure to hantavirus requires a DF 6 Strength test (boosted by Willpower) made 2 weeks after exposure to resist its symptoms. A successful test means that you make a speedy recovery without any noteworthy symptoms. If the test fails by a margin of 1-2, your Strength and Dexterity are reduced by 1 point for one week. If the test is failed by a margin of 3+, your Strength and Dexterity are reduced by 2 points instead and at the end of the week you have to pass a DF 4 Strength test (boosted by Willpower) to avoid death. If this second test is successful, the Strength and Dexterity penalty drops to -1 for another week before you make a full recovery.

NERVE GAS is an extremely dangerous airborne toxin. Exposure to it forces a DF 6 Strength test (boosted by Willpower). Wearing a gas mask provides a +1 bonus to the test, but only a full-body airtight suit will provide immunity against the gas. A successful test will allow you to ignore the danger of the gas, but a new test has to be made for every minute spent exposed to the gas. If the test fails by a margin of 1, you suffer a -2 penalty to all tests made to resolve actions as well as becoming unable to run or sprint. These effects lasts for 10 minutes, then the penalty drops to -1 for another hour. If the test fails by a margin of 2+, you suffer the same effects, plus at the end of the 3rd phase you pass out and begin to suffocate until you die.

TEAR GAS is a non-lethal airborne toxin causing irritation, commonly used in crowd control. Exposure to tear gas forces a DF 4 Strength test (boosted by Will-

power), although wearing a gas mask provides complete protection against it. A successful test allows you to ignore the effects of the gas, but a new test has to be made for every minute spent exposed. Failure inflicts a -1 penalty to all tests made to resolve actions if the test fails by a margin of 1-2, or a -2 penalty for greater failure. After leaving the affected area, this penalty is reduced by 1 point per minute until it vanishes.

■ Suffocation

You can hold your breath for a number of phases equal to your Strength times 5. Afterwards, you take 5 points of fatigue per phase until you can draw air or die from asphyxiation. If you engage in strenuous activity, you take 15 points of fatigue per phase.

Equipment

RANGED WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	RANGE	ROF	STRENGTH REQ	AMMO	WEIGHT
HANDGUNS						
Holdout pistol	x3	5 m	S	1	6	0.25 kg
Small pistol that can be concealed in a purse, pocket or ankle/thigh holster. Reloads in 2 phases.						
Light pistol	x4	10 m	S	2	15	0.5 kg
Standard issue for most law enforcement personnel and a popular civilian self-defence weapon. Reloads in 2 phases.						
Heavy pistol	x5	15 m	S	3	8	1 kg
Large, man-stopping handgun. Difficult to conceal. Reloads in 2 phases.						
Hand cannon	x6	20 m	S	4	6	1.5 kg
Huge hunting revolver. Pretty obvious even under heavy clothing. Reloads 2 rounds per phase.						
SUBMACHINE GUNS						
Machine pistol	x4	10 m	S or +3	1	20	0.75 kg
Compact automatic weapon, approximately the size of a light pistol. Reloads in 2 phases.						
SMG	x4	20 m	S or +3	1	30	2.5 kg
Automatic weapon designed for close quarters combat in urban areas. -1 attack penalty when held with one hand. Reloads in 2 phases.						
PDW	x3	30 m	S or +3	1	50	2.5 kg
Automatic weapon firing light rounds with good penetrating ability. Designed to arm vehicle crews, non-combat personnel and highly mobile squads. Reduces target's armour by 3. -1 attack penalty when held with one hand. Reloads in 2 phases.						
RIFLES						
Assault rifle	x5	50 m	S or +2	2	30	3 kg
Automatic, mid-range rifle that has become the main weapon of modern infantry. Two-handed. Reduces target's armour by 2. Reloads in 2 phases.						
Battle rifle	x6	60 m	S or +2	3	20	4 kg
Powerful automatic rifle that has been largely displaced by the assault rifle. Two-handed. Reduces target's armour by 2. Reloads in 2 phases.						
Hunting rifle	x7	80 m	M	3	5	3.5 kg
High-calibre bolt-action rifle mainly used for deer hunting. Two-handed. Reduces target's armour by 2. Reloads 2 rounds per phase.						
Sniper rifle	x8	100 m	M	4	6	6.5 kg
Powerful military-issue rifle with superior accuracy. Two-handed. Reduces target's armour by 2. Reloads 2 rounds per phase.						
Anti-materiel rifle	x8 (+2 power)	150 m	S	5	10	14 kg
Ultra high-powered rifle designed to defeat light vehicle armour. Two-handed. Reduces target's armour by 5. Reloads in 2 rounds.						
SHOTGUNS						
Pump shotgun	x3 (+3 power)	10 m	M	3	5	3.3 kg
Very common pump-action shotgun. Two-handed. +1 attack bonus for shots within its Range. Reloads 2 rounds per phase.						
Assault shotgun	x3 (+3 power)	10 m	S	3	8	4.4 kg
Police-issue semi-automatic shotgun for room clearance. Two-handed. +1 attack bonus for shots within its Range. Reloads 2 rounds per phase.						
Sawed-off shotgun	x3 (+3 power)	5 m	S	4	2	2 kg
Double-barreled shotgun with some of the barrel sawed-off to reduce overall length. Barely concealable under a heavy coat. -1 attack penalty when held with one hand. +1 attack bonus for shots within its Range. Both barrels may be discharged to gain a +1 attack bonus. Reloads one round per phase.						

CLOSE COMBAT WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	REACH	STRENGTH REQ	WEIGHT
BRAWL				
Unarmed strike	x1	0	0	N/A
A punch, kick, elbow thrust, headbutt or any other kind of bare-handed attack. May be used to inflict subdual instead of normal damage. Knocks the target prone if he suffers a serious or critical wound.				
CLUBS				
Baton	X2	1	1	0.5 kg
A medium-length club, such as a truncheon. May be used to inflict subdual instead of normal damage. Knocks the target prone if he suffers a serious or critical wound.				
Heavy club	x2 (+1 power)	2	2	1 kg
A large club, such as a baseball bat. -1 attack penalty when held with one hand. May be used to inflict subdual instead of normal damage. Knocks the target prone if he suffers a serious or critical wound.				
BLADES				
Knife	x3		0	0.1 kg
A small bladed weapon, such as a switchblade. -1 penalty to block tests (except against unarmed attacks).				
Long knife	x3 (+1 power)	1	1	0.3 kg
A combat dagger, hunting knife or large kitchen knife.				
SWORDS				
Longsword	x5	2	2	1.5 kg
Any kind of longsword-like weapon that can be wielded with one hand. +1 bonus to block tests.				
Greatsword	x6	3	4	2.5 kg
A large two-handed sword, such as the Scottish claymore. +1 bonus to block tests.				
AXES				
Axe	x5 (+1 power)	2	3	1.5 kg
A large, weighted axe. -1 attack penalty when held in one hand.				
EXPLOSIVES				
	DAMAGE			WEIGHT
Frag grenade	x6 (+2 power)			0.5 kg
-2 damage multiplier per 10 metres away				
Hand-thrown explosive with a fragmenting case. Reduces targets' armour by 2. Can be thrown using the Athletics skill with a Range of 10 metres and maximum throwing distance Strength x 10 metres.				
Satchel charge	x15 (+3 power)			9 kg
-3 damage multiplier per 10 metres away				
Demolitions charge using a satchel bag packed with high explosives and a wired or wireless detonator. Reduces targets' armour by 3. Uses the rules for stationary explosives.				

BODY ARMOUR

	ARMOUR RATING	WEIGHT
Duty vest	3	1 kg
Light bulletproof vest that can be concealed under a shirt or jacket.		
Heavy Kevlar vest	5	3 kg
Heavy armoured vest that has to be worn over clothing. Decreases sprinting speed by 3 metres and inflicts a -1 penalty to all Athletics and dodge tests.		
Assault armour	7	8 kg
Heavy Kevlar armour with the addition of rigid composite plates. Decreases sprinting speed by 6 metres and inflicts a -2 penalty to all Athletics and dodge tests.		

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