LORE

Lightweight Omnipotent Roleplaying Engine
By Gregory Weir

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Introduction

Welcome to the LORE core rulebook. LORE stands for Lightweight Omnipotent Roleplaying Engine, and it was made out of the desire for something better. I've played a lot of roleplaying games, but I haven't found one that's perfect for me. So I wrote one. Here's an explanation of what LORE is.

Lightweight

LORE is designed to be quick and easy to use. You don't have to add up character points or manage big pools of dice. Character creation is simple and quick, but still allows a lot of choice and personalization. Dice rolls are fast and fun. Combat, if it comes up, is straightforward and dynamic. I tried to cut out the boring parts of gaming and leave what everyone actually wants to do.

Omnipotent

This is a nice way of saying "generic." LORE isn't designed for any one setting or genre. The same system can be used to make and play characters from a fantasy world, a science fiction universe, or modern day. If this book doesn't have everything you want for your character, it's easy to make new character options that let you play anything you can imagine.

Roleplaying

A roleplaying game is one in which a group of players works together to make a story. In this case, each player controls a player character, and there's a Game Master who controls the rest of the game world. LORE focuses on the *characters*, not numbers or points or treasure. It's designed to encourage players to play roles, not to just roll the dice.

Engine

LORE isn't a game on its own. It's an engine, a tool that helps the GM and the players make a game. It doesn't try to tell you how to play or what sort of story you should tell. It just offers you ways to tell your story through the LORE rules. In the end, it's up to you.

I hope that LORE fills a gap in your roleplaying life. If it makes your gaming easier, more fun, or deeper, then I've done my job as a designer. If you have any comments or questions, please e-mail me at Gregory.Weir@gmail.com.

- Gregory Weir

LORE Summary

Characters Have:

- Three attributes: Mind, Body, and Charm.
- Traits that give special abilities or disadvantages.
- Skills and Specialties that represent expertise. Skills aren't ranked; you either have them or you don't.
- Quirks that let you re-roll once per scene.
- Earned experience points that can buy new attribute points, traits, skills, and quirks.

To Roll the Dice:

- Roll two six-sided dice and add them together.
- Two ones mean an interesting failure. The player gets to describe what went especially wrong.
- If you roll doubles, re-roll and add the new total to the old one. Keep rolling if you get doubles again.
- Add a base attribute and the number of relevant skills you have.
- Compare the total to a target number. If it meets or exceeds the target, the roll succeeds.

Combat Rules:

- Most characters have five health points.
- Initiative proceeds from lowest to highest, but higher-initiative characters can interrupt lower-initiative characters.
- To attack, roll a normal skill roll against the target's Defense. The target gets to pick whether he's Dodging, Parrying, or taking it on his Armor.
- Armor can also reduce damage.

Modern Setting:

- This book contains specific rules for a modern-day campaign, with:
- A simple Wealth system for buying items.
- An optional Facility system for campaigns that need a base of operations.

Additional Modules:

- New books will add new rules and options.

Basics

Characters

Each LORE character is defined by three basic **abilities**: Mind, Body, and Charm. A score of 0 is human average; positive or negative scores represent above- or below-average individuals.

Characters also have **traits**. Traits are special qualities or abilities of the player, and can be good or bad. There are four kinds of traits: from best to worst, they are **superlative traits**, **positive traits**, **negative traits**, and **crippling traits**.

Beyond a character's abilities and qualities, a character also has knowledge. **Skills** represent what a character knows how to do, through practice, training or study: anything from nuclear physics to hockey. A character does not have a "rank" in a skill; they either know the skill or not. To be higher-skilled in an area, a character must specialize.

Finally, characters have **quirks**. Quirks are interesting things about the character that usually have no major effect... except in very specific situations. If a quirk does apply, it lets the player re-roll one roll! You only get one re-roll of this kind per scene.

A suggested Heroic starting character will have ability scores that add up to 4. The character will have one superlative trait, two positive traits, one negative trait, and ten skills. Finally, the character can have up to five quirks. However, the GM may choose a different character build method.

Rolling Dice

When you want to do something in LORE, you make a roll, add bonuses, and try to make the total meet or exceed a target number.

To make a roll, you **roll two six-sided dice** (2d6) and **add them together** to get a result.

If you roll snake eyes (two ones), you've gotten an **interesting failure**. An interesting failure means that you automatically fail the roll, but you (the player) get to narrate an interesting way in which you failed.

On the other hand, if you roll **doubles** (two of the same number, except for ones), roll again and add the result to your first roll. If you roll doubles again, add the total and roll again, and continue until you don't get doubles. Rolling snake eyes on a re-roll does not trigger an additional re-roll, but it also doesn't result in an interesting failure. This rolling process (2d6, re-roll and add doubles) is called a LORE roll.

The LORE Roll

Roll two six-sided dice. Add them up. If you get:

Snake Eyes

It's an interesting failure! The player describes what exactly went especially wrong.

Doubles

Re-roll and add new result. If you get doubles again, keep re-rolling!

Once you have made your roll, add your bonuses. To calculate your bonuses, take the Attribute that best applies to the roll and add 1 for every relevant skill your character has. Your final result would be:

2d6 (roll again for doubles) + appropriate attribute + number of applicable skills

If this result is greater than or equal to the **target number**, abbreviated **TN**, you have had a **success**. If it exceeds the target number by 10 or more, you have achieved a **critical success**. You (the player) get to narrate a way in which your attempt was especially effective.

Target numbers can vary widely. A good rule of thumb is that if a target number is 6 more than the bonus to the roll, the character has roughly a two-thirds chance of success. Some examples are below.

TN	Difficulty
3	Easy. A child could do it. Why is the GM making you roll?
6	The average, unskilled human could do this most of the time.
8	A bit challenging, like parallel parking; it helps to have some skill or talent.
10	Tricky unless you have the proper training, like drawing a recognizable picture of someone.
12	Hard, like picking a lock. Possible with skill, tools, and a lot of luck.
14+	Impossible for the layperson unless you're really lucky, like surgery or singing opera.

Taking 6

Any time you would otherwise make a LORE roll, you may instead assume that the roll had a result of 6. This is called "**taking 6**," and it helps to speed up the game as well as avoid failure at easy tasks. Normally, the only time that you cannot take 6 is on a contested roll or on an attack roll. For more on attack rolls, see the Combat module. Other modules may place additional restrictions on when you can take 6.

Contested Rolls

To represent two characters competing at a task, make a contested roll. Instead of using a target number, each player makes a roll and adds their bonuses. Whoever rolls higher wins. If the two players tie, then they tie in the game. Often, there isn't a clear winner of a competition. If a real winner is required, re-roll until there is one.

Often, characters will have a contested roll where a character is trying to affect the other with one type of roll, and the other is trying to resist with a different type of roll. In this case, the "offensive" roll is said to be **opposed by** the "defensive" roll.

If one person rolls 10 or more higher than the other, they get a critical success as usual and may narrate an especially effective victory. You may not "take 6" on contested rolls.

Resisting Social Influence

A character who is being influenced or persuaded by another person can choose to resist. Social rolls which do not involve falsehood are opposed by a **social resistance** roll. A social resistance roll gets bonuses from the defending character's Mind and Charm, to represent the ability to spot flaws in the person's argument and the ability to catch hidden social cues. A social resistance roll can also be modified by some traits. The final roll is:

LORE Roll + Mind + Charm + Modifiers

If a character tries to affect a large group of similar people, the social resistance roll uses the statistics of a typical member of the crowd.

If a character is not trying to influence another, but is simply trying to trick him, then the roll is opposed by a Charm-based roll with bonuses from the Empathy skill and its specialties.

Time

Time in the LORE rules is kept deliberately vague. If it is important to the game, the GM may keep track of in-character time in arbitrary detail. However, most LORE rules use one of three time units: the turn, the scene, and the session.

The turn is a small segment of time in which a single complicated action can be taken. During a turn, a character could throw a ball, dive under a table, or run across a room and slam into someone. Turns are usually only important in situations where order of actions is vital, such as combat. Outside of these situations, turns should be ignored.

A scene is a large segment of time, consisting of one continuous sequence of events. The GM makes the final decision of when a scene begins or ends. Generally, if characters travel from one place to another, or if a dramatic event concludes, then a new scene has begun.

A session is a single, real-world, out-of-character game session, from when the players arrive to when everyone packs up. It is assumed to be 3-5 hours. If a session is especially long, like an 8 hour all-day marathon game, the GM should pick a stopping point (or two, if necessary) part of the way through to serve as the beginning of a new game session.

Modules

LORE is designed to be used with modules, which are supplementary documents that provide new settings, rules, and statistics for play.

This book effectively contains two modules: the combat system, which is optional and has its traits and skills separate from the basic ones, and the modern setting, which uses rules that do not apply to other campaigns.

Characters

Characters have four sets of statistics: Attributes, Traits, Skills, and Quirks. Attributes represent the basic strength of the character's mind, body, and charm. Traits represent negative or positive aspects of the character, such as special abilities or disadvantages. Skills represent things the character knows how to do. Quirks represent small aspects of the character's nature or personality that make her a richer person.

Attributes

There are three attributes: Mind, Body, and Charm. These attributes are very general for the purposes of simplicity and ease of play. To make a finer distinction of a character's abilities, add traits to the character. For example, to be strong but slow, take a high Body and the Not So Quick trait.

Attributes vary in value from -5 to +5. 0 is the score of an average human being. Attributes cannot go outside of this range.

Mind

How mentally able a character is in general. This is the primary attribute that governs intelligence, wisdom, and determination.

A -5 in this attribute means a character is very dull-witted, incapable of complex thought. A +5 is a world-class genius.

Body

How physically fit a character is in general. This is the primary attribute that governs strength, agility, and physical fortitude.

A -5 in this attribute means a character can barely move. A +5 indicates an Olympic-level body.

Charm

How socially adept a character is in general. This is the primary attribute that governs charisma, empathy, and conversational aptitude.

A -5 in this attribute means a character is hopeless in social situations, unable to function. A +5 is at home in any gathering.

Traits

Traits are special qualities that separate a character from the average person. They can be aspects of their personality or appearance, magic powers, or secret histories.

Some traits make a character more able. They could be natural talent, special abilities, or a useful background. These are called positive traits. A beneficial trait which is especially rare and useful is called a superlative trait.

Other traits limit a character's ability. They may be character flaws or weaknesses, but they may also be special responsibilities or behavioral requirements. These are called negative traits. A detrimental trait that is particularly rare and difficult to overcome is called a crippling trait.

Traits generally provide a modifier to a wide range of rolls, provide a unique character background, or represent a specific ability or vulnerability of a character.

Skills

Skills represent knowledge, training, or experience of a character. Characters don't have skills at different levels. Instead, a character acquires specialty skills that represent more specific ability in an area of the parent skill. To choose a specialty skill, a character must first have the parent skill.

When rolling for an action, each relevant skill a character has gives a +1 to the result of the roll. Some actions can't be done at all without a certain skill.

Quirks

Quirks are qualities that deepen a character by adding roleplaying flavor that doesn't usually affect rolls or abilities. For example, a character may be very religious, or dislike a certain thing. However, once in a while a quirk becomes relevant in a situation.

If a quirk applies to a situation requiring a LORE roll, the player can re-roll that LORE roll. The player must keep the second result. For instance, if a character has a quirk of being very religious, but fails a roll to resist temptation in exchange for renouncing their faith, the player can re-roll that LORE roll and keep the second result. This is the case even if the quirk would not be helpful under the circumstances; just being unique is enough to offer a different, possibly better, perspective.

A player can only re-roll because of a quirk once per scene, no matter how many quirks a character has.

Creating Characters: The Slot Method

The recommended method for building characters is the slot method, which allows for quick, easy, and balanced character creation with a minimum of arithmetic. Here's how it works:

1. Pick attributes, which must add up to a certain total. A character with Mind +3, Body -1, and Charm +2 would have an ability total of 4.
2. The character's trait slots are filled. Choose a certain number of each kind of trait.
3. Fill skill slots. A slot can be used for a specialty skill if the character has already put the parent skill in a slot.
4. Finally, choose quirks up to a certain maximum number.

Many campaigns will be well-served by a Heroic Characters. Heroic characters are better than the average person, and have something special about them that makes them well-suited for adventure.

Heroic characters have the following slot layout:

Attribute Total: **4**

Trait Slots: **1 Superlative**

3 Positive

2 Negative

Skill Slots: **15 Skills**

Quirks: **Up to 5**

Note that the Heroic character does not start with any Crippling traits. This is because these traits are, well, crippling, and beginning heroes rarely have a completely glaring flaw.

There are other possible slot layouts, depending on the sort of character being built. The GM decides which slot layout the players will use. In order for all player characters to be about the same strength, each player should use the same slot layout. The following table lists some slot layouts that may prove useful.

Recommended Slot Layouts

Character Type	Attribute Total	Superlative Slots	Positive Slots	Negative Slots	Crippling Slots	Skill Slots	Quirk Maximum
Heroic *Better than a normal person; prepared for adventure.*	4	1	3	2	0	15	5
Competent *Good at what they do, but nothing extraordinary.*	3	0	2	1	0	10	3
Average *Some people are not destined to do anything amazing.*	1	0	1	1	0	5	2
Inadequate *For some, everyday life is a dangerous adventure.*	0	0	0	1	0	2	1
Troubled *At times, only the damaged have the strength to prevail.*	4	1	3	3	1	15	5
Superheroic *With great power comes a fatal weakness.*	6	3	4	2	1	15	5
Epic *A group such as this appears once in a millennium.*	6	2	5	2	0	20	5
Divine *The gods are powerful and strange, with stranger problems.*	10	5	8	2	2	30	5

Other Quality Lists

The traits, skills, and quirks in the following sections are not the only ones available. There are other places you can look for character creation choices:

Combat Qualities

The Combat section contains a number of combat-specific traits and skills for campaigns which are expected to contain enough combat to make them useful.

It also introduces combat-specific qualities such as Health and Initiative Modifier that all characters have.

Modern Setting Qualities

The Modern Setting section contains traits that represent wealth, so that characters can be rich or poor. It also contains a section on Facilities. While not applying to individual characters, Facilities can be built for all player characters to share.

Other Sourcebooks

Other books will provide new settings and rules that may require new traits and skills.

Qualities from all of these sources may, with GM permission, be selected for a starting character.

Universal Qualities

In a campaign where the party is composed of police officers, every character would have the Authority positive trait. Likewise, a group of physicists can be assumed to have the Science skill. If a trait or skill is present for the whole party, the GM may that trait or skill a **universal quality**. Universal qualities are "free;" that is, characters have them automatically without using up a slot. This allows greater variation of character for situations where all player characters are similar in some way. This does mean that the player characters are a bit more or less powerful than other characters built using the same slot layout without the universal quality.

Universal qualities are especially useful where all player characters are members of an organization or all have a certain supernatural power.

Advancing Characters

As a character becomes more experienced, she gains **experience points** (or XP) which can be used to purchase additional abilities. The GM may put restrictions on the sort of things players may purchase for their characters; it may not make sense for a character to suddenly gain a new ability.

Because an attribute score of +5 is so unusual, it costs 10 extra XP to increase an attribute from +4 to +5. The following are the point costs for enhancing characters' abilities with experience points:

	XP Cost
+1 to an attribute score up to +4:	10 points
+1 to an attribute score to reach +5:	20 points
New superlative trait:	15 points
New positive trait:	5 points
Upgrade positive trait to its corresponding superlative trait:	10 points
New skill:	3 points

Upgrading traits is a special case. By spending 10 points, a character can lose a positive trait and add an associated superlative trait. This replaces the positive trait with the superlative one to represent a talent becoming stronger. Note that the cost for the positive trait plus the upgrade is 15 points, which would be the total cost of the superlative trait if bought on its own. A character can't have both a positive trait and its corresponding superlative trait at the same time.

Creating New Qualities

If a player wants a certain trait, skill, or quirk which is not listed in a LORE book, she can create a new quality with the GM's permission. The new quality should be described in detail, with clear explanation of when it does or does not apply. With the GM's help, the player should decide what sort of quality she is creating. It's a good idea to look at existing qualities to make sure the new one is roughly equally useful. Some guidelines:

Superlative Trait

Should be an innate ability or circumstance that can provide a clear benefit in most situations. Superlative traits which provide a bonus to rolls should provide a +4, and should apply to a common situation, but not to every roll the character makes (or even every roll with a certain base attribute).

Positive Trait

Should be an innate ability or circumstance that provides a reasonable benefit in certain situations. Positive traits which provide a bonus to rolls should

provide a +2, and should apply to an uncommon (but not incredibly rare) situation.

Negative Trait

Should be a minor disadvantage that comes up relatively infrequently. Negative traits which cause a penalty to rolls should cause a -2, and should apply to an uncommon (but not incredibly rare) situation.

Crippling Trait

Should be a major disadvantage that heavily impacts the character's life, but does not make her completely ineffective. Crippling traits which cause a penalty to rolls should cause a -4, and should apply to a common situation, but not to every roll the character makes (or even every roll with a certain base attribute).

Skill

Should represent knowledge or experience possessed by the character which helps with performing a specific task. If possible, new skills should be specialty skills underneath an existing general skill unless an appropriate general skill cannot be found.

Quirk

A quirk represents a unique aspect of a character's personality which does not usually cause a benefit or a disadvantage. It should be relatively minor, and should not provide any sort of mechanical advantage.

Alternate System: Point-Buy

Characters may alternatively be built via a point-buy method. They start with a certain number of experience points, discussed in the previous section, and spend those points as if they were earned through play. They may also gain extra experience points by taking negative or crippling traits and assigning quirks.

Experience point costs are listed in the previous section. Characters gain extra experience points for selecting detrimental traits and quirks, as described below:

	XP Gain
Negative trait	5 points
Crippling trait	15 points
Quirk	1 point

Characters do not receive extra experience points

for detrimental traits or quirks gained after play begins.

The recommended point value for a starting character is 100 points. An unremarkable person would have a value of 50 points, and an amazing or very experienced character might have a value of 150 points or more. Generally speaking, two characters with the same point value are of equal capabilities, although their specialties might vary greatly. One might be a skilled swordsman, and the other an expert computer programmer.

If a character has points left over after character creation, they may begin the campaign with experience points that can be spent later.

Traits

The following is the base module of traits; more are included in the appendices to support combat and the modern setting.

Superlative Traits

Boundless Endurance

Nothing seems to tire or discourage this character. When a normal person would have collapsed, she keeps going.

This character ignores fatigue, pain, and lack of sleep. Maybe she is incapable of feeling the effects, or maybe she's just good at ignoring them. Either way, the character can always keep going, keep fighting, or stay awake a little bit longer. In combat, the character ignores damage penalties, but can still fall unconscious or die (see the Combat module). Elsewhere, it's incredibly difficult to make her physically or mentally tired to the point where she is penalized. She ignores any penalties due to this sort of circumstance.

The character probably has to sleep at some point, just not *now*. The GM may decide that, because she has been up for days, she begins feeling the effects of fatigue. However, this should be a rare event.

Deductive Mind

"The solution is elementary."

This character is skilled at figuring out enigmas, mysteries, and confusing situations. He gets a +4 to any Mind rolls that attempt to piece together clues or resolve a question about a specific past event or present situation.

Additionally, the character may "search for clues" once per session. When presented with a mystery, the character must go to the scene of the crime, or be in the subject person's presence, or otherwise directly examine the evidence. The GM must then come up with a clue that sheds light on the situation and describe it to the player, with no roll necessary. A character may only search for clues once in each gameplay session.

Engaging Presence

Somehow, it's hard just to look away.

This character has an appearance, force of will, or way of speaking that is difficult to resist. All Charm rolls made to influence or affect people who are in the character's presence are at a +4. This bonus does not apply when the other people are out of eye contact or

viewing the character through a camera.

People may recover from Engaging Presence once the character leaves. With the character absent, an influenced subject can no longer explain why the character was so easy to believe. At the GM's option, if the Charm roll succeeded by less than 4, the subject recovers at the end of the scene and takes action to correct the situation. For example, a security guard who was convinced to let the character past may call in report about a suspicious person on the premises.

Extra Skilled

With sufficient experience or training, a person can learn quite a bit.

The player of this character can select five additional skills. The character knows these skills as if they were selected at character creation or bought with experience points. Note that this trait costs the same number of points as the skills it provides, so it is most useful at character creation.

Lucky

This character is strangely lucky. Often, when it seems he is about to fail, something happens to help him succeed.

Three times per session, the player of this character may choose to re-roll a single LORE roll he has made that he does not like the result of. The player may choose to take the second roll's result in place of the first. If so, something unexpected occurs in-character to cause the second result to take place. If the player chooses to take the first result, nothing unusual happens and the action resolves as it normally would.

Only one Lucky re-roll may be used on a single action; the player cannot repeatedly re-roll the same roll. Lucky re-rolls can, however, be used even if a roll has already been rerolled due to a quirk.

Muscle Mimic

"I just need to see how it's done."

This character has an extraordinary ability to imitate other peoples' physical actions. If a character sees a person successfully perform an action or activity, this character gets a +4 on her own attempts to perform that same thing for the rest of the scene. She can even perform actions that would normally require she know a specific skill or specialty. At the end of the scene, she loses the bonus.

This bonus only applies to one specific activity. If the character watches a person replace a brake pad, she does not get a bonus to any other kind of car

maintenance. The activity also must have a significant physical component. A muscle mimic can imitate someone flying a helicopter or forging a sword, but not someone giving a speech or working a calculus problem. A muscle mimic may only have a bonus to a single activity at a time. If she gains a new bonus, she loses the old one.

A character with both Muscle Mimic and Perfect Memory can make the +4 bonus last indefinitely and may have any number of bonuses active at once. The player of such a character should keep a specific list of what activities a character knows how to mimic.

Perfect Memory

This character has the ability to remember anything she sees or hears. Any detail, no matter how small, is cataloged and filed away in her memory.

If a situation ever arises where a player wishes to know a detail from a previous event, even if the character was not paying attention, the GM should inform the player of that detail. The GM should also inform the player if the character recognizes something that she has seen before. A character with Perfect Memory can remember a telephone number from the sound of it being dialed or realize that the strange person waiting on the street corner is the same one that was on the news last year.

A character with Perfect Memory must have observed the event in question. She cannot remember the combination to a lock she did not see being opened, or necessarily recognize a face that was previously disguised.

This character is also good at picking up bits of trivia. She is at a +4 to any rolls involving "general-purpose" knowledge, even if she does not have a related skill.

The Extra Knowledgeable positive trait can be upgraded to the Perfect Memory superlative trait.

Position of Power

Every society has people who are a cut above the rest, and have control over everyone else.

This character is in a position of true power: a general, national senator, or group leader. As long as society tolerates his place in power, he can do things that would be impossible or illegal for the average person. Depending on the sort of position, the character may be able to make major laws, demand tribute, or even sentence people to death. However, the power only lasts as long as society lets it. If the character is sufficiently cruel or irresponsible, he will be removed from power. There are always more people on the bottom than there are on top.

In a social situation where the character's Power is relevant to helping him get his way, he receives a +4 to all appropriate rolls. Many requests, however, will be automatically granted.

The Authority positive trait may be upgraded to the Position of Power superlative trait.

Valuable Ally

If you know the right people, anything is possible.

This character has a very competent colleague, mentor, or friend who will help the character when in need. The player picks the type of character, and the GM may either build it or allow the player to do so. This character typically uses the Heroic slot layout or, if point-buy character creation is being used, is based on 100 points. If player characters are built on something other than the Heroic layout (or 100 points), the GM should make the Ally of an equivalent power to that of the original character. Allies have the benefit of being able to be quite specialized, since they only are required in specific circumstances.

An Ally does not automatically help a character. Allies have lives and work, too, and can only help when they are available. However, Allies are dedicated to the character, and will help when they can. Likewise, while an Ally can be angered or hurt, they will rarely abandon the character entirely. Generally, the GM should limit the use of an Ally to one scene per session.

The Associate positive trait may be upgraded to the Valuable Ally superlative trait.

Positive Traits

Positive Body Traits

Extra Strong

"You want me to carry that for you?"

This character is stronger than most. For any rolls related to physical strength, such as lifting heavy objects or shoving someone aside, this character gets a +2.

Extra Quick

"Hey, guys! Try to keep up, all right?"

This character is faster than most when it comes to movement and reaction. For any rolls related to quickness, this character gets a +2. If the complex combat system from the Combat module is being used, this character also gets a +1 to initiative.

Extra Coordinated

"Watch me hit that bottle way over there."

This character is more coordinated than most. For any rolls related to coordination, such as graceful movement or fine manipulation, this character gets a +2.

Positive Mind Traits

Extra Knowledgeable

"Actually, I think I remember how this works."

This character is better at absorbing facts than most, or has had the opportunity of a more detailed education. For any rolls related to recalling information or knowing facts, this character gets a +2.

The Extra Knowledgeable positive trait can be upgraded to the Perfect Memory superlative trait. This upgrade represents a honing of the mind to an even more impressive extent.

Extra Aware

"Wait... that branch has been broken. I think we're on the right trail."

This character is better at noticing things than most. For any rolls related to noticing the unusual or avoiding surprise, this character gets a +2.

Extra Composed

"Excitement and emotion aren't appropriate at a time like this."

This character is better at keeping their cool than most. For any rolls related to resisting strong emotion or concentrating, this character gets a +2.

Positive Charm Traits

Extra Attractive

"No, I just naturally look this good."

This character is more good-looking than most. For any rolls related to first impressions or physical attraction, this character gets a +2.

Extra Convincing

"Come on, who are you gonna trust? Him or me?"

This character is more easily believed than most. For any rolls related to convincing someone to do something or making someone believe lies, this character gets a +2.

Extra Empathetic

"Something's bothering you. I can tell."

This character is better at recognizing others' emotions and thoughts than most. For any rolls related to discovering falsehood or evaluating moods, this character gets a +2.

Positive Talent Traits

Acute Sense

"Do the rest of you hear that?"

One of this character's five senses is far more acute than the average person's. Pick one sense from the following: Sight, Smell, Sound, Touch, and Taste. For any rolls related to the use of that sense, this character gets a +2.

Animal Magnet

Some people just have a knack for little furry creatures.

This character gets along well with animals. She receives a +2 to all rolls involving befriending, controlling, or understanding non-sentient animal life.

Positive Social Traits

Associate

It pays to know someone in the proper place, even if they're not anyone important.

This character has a friend, coworker, or acquaintance that she can call on when in need. The player picks the type of character, and the GM may either build it or allow the player to do so. This character typically uses the Competent slot layout or, if point-buy character creation is being used, is based on 65 points. If player characters are built on something other than the Heroic layout (or 100 points), the GM may decide that the Associate is built using a different layout or point total. However, Associates are always less powerful than the original

character.

An Associate does not automatically help a character. Associates have lives and work, too, and must be convinced to help through roleplaying or coercion. It is possible to alienate an Associate and lose this trait. Generally, the GM should limit the use of an Associate to one scene per session.

The Associate trait may be upgraded to the Valuable Ally superlative trait. This upgrade may represent the Associate gaining in status or ability, or a more powerful Ally who is connected to the Associate. In the latter case, it is highly recommended that the new Ally possess the old Associate as a positive trait, to make up for this character's loss of the Associate in the upgrade.

Authority

Some people take on responsibilities that give them control over the rest.

This character is in a position of authority: a law enforcement officer, a soldier, or a minor politician. This grants him certain advantages. It may be the ability to carry a weapon and make arrests, or the power to pass certain laws and get free lunches. It may just mean that he can use his position to influence other people. This is not the power of life or death over the common person, and it comes with limits and responsibilities.

In a social situation where the character's Authority is relevant to helping him get his way, he receives a +2 to all appropriate rolls.

The Authority trait may be upgraded to the Position of Power superlative trait. This upgrade represents a promotion or increase in rank or status.

Famous

Everyone wants their moment in the limelight.

This character's name is well-known to a lot of people, and this is a good thing. She is often able to influence those who have heard of her, and people want to be seen with her to be indirectly famous themselves. She is not an international celebrity, but some people may recognize her face, and they will almost definitely remember hearing of her if it is pointed out. This character gets a +2 to all social rolls where her fame is received favorably by the person she's interacting with.

Some characters are famous for a specific reason, and get no additional bonus from this trait. For example, a person with the Position of Power superlative trait should not take Famous, as their Position already grants them advantages. Additionally, someone who is famous in a bad way should take the Infamous negative trait. It is possible to be both Famous and Infamous; a person can be well-received by one group and loathed by another.

Group Member

There are often great benefits to being part of an organization.

This character is the member of a group, with moderate benefits from their membership. They may be the employee of a corporation which protects its own, or the member of a trade guild. Not all members of all groups get the Group Member trait; some companies could care less about their workers, and an undistinguished craftsman might not be able to get assistance when she needs it. The group benefits are not automatic; the character must go through proper channels to take advantage of them. Likewise, a character can always be dismissed from a group if they act in a way inconsistent with the group's beliefs and goals.

Group Member is often associated with a Facility, as described in the Modern Setting section.

Strong-Willed

You can't fool this person any of the time.

This character is resistant to social influence. She gets a +2 to all social resistance rolls and rolls to detect falsehood.

Negative Traits

Negative Mind Traits

Not So Knowledgeable

"I think I missed that day in class."

This character doesn't have a knack for memorizing facts, or isn't very educated. For any rolls related to recalling information or knowing facts, this character gets a -2.

Not So Aware

"Wait, what just happened?"

This character is easily distracted or unobservant. For any rolls related to noticing the unusual or avoiding surprise, this character gets a -2.

Not So Composed

"Oh, crap! We're all doomed!"

This character is more prone to acting on emotion than most. For any rolls related to resisting strong emotion or concentrating, this character gets a -2.

Negative Body Traits

Not So Strong

"Man, this suitcase is heavy!"

This character is weaker than most. For any rolls related to physical strength, such as lifting heavy objects or shoving someone aside, this character gets a -2.

Not So Quick

"Hey, guys, wait up!"

This character is slower on its feet than most. For any rolls related to quickness, this character gets a -2. If the Combat module is being used, this character also gets a -2 to Initiative.

Not So Coordinated

"Ow! Who put this chair here?"

This character is less coordinated than most. For any rolls related to coordination, such as graceful movement or fine manipulation, this character gets a -2.

Negative Charm Traits

Not So Attractive

"We can't all be beauty queens."

This character isn't very good-looking. For any rolls related to first impressions or physical attraction, this character gets a -2.

Not So Convincing

"Uh, yeah, that's it. That's just how it, um,
happened."

This character is, for some reason, not very believable. For any rolls related to convincing someone to do something or making someone believe lies, this character gets a -2.

Not So Empathetic

"Wait... you mean she was hitting on me?"

This character is not very perceptive of others' emotions and thoughts. For any rolls related to discovering falsehood or evaluating moods, this character gets a -2.

Negative Disability Traits

Allergy

It shows up when you least expect it.

There is some substance – pollen, peanuts, cat dander – that provokes a strong physical response from you. It's not life-threatening, but if you encounter it, you're sufficiently congested or otherwise ill-feeling that you are at a -2 to all rolls. The player should decide exactly what the character is allergic to.

In addition to situations which inevitably contain an allergen (gardens have pollen, Thai restaurants cook with peanuts), the GM can also make a roll for each scene in which an allergen *might* appear. This is a TN 3 roll with no bonuses. If this roll fails, the allergy is present.

Chronic Illness

As long as you get your treatments, everything is fine.

This character suffers from a long-standing illness that is under control. In normal situations, there's no major health risk, as long as he gets regular medication or treatments. Depending on the illness, the character gets a -2 to rolls involving either extended physical exertion or stressful social situations.

If the character is unable to get regular treatments, for whatever reason, for an entire month, he is at a -2 to *all* rolls until the treatments resume.

Impaired Sense

"Sorry. You'll have to speak up. I'm a bit hard of hearing."

One of this character's five senses is impaired compared to the average person's. Pick one sense from the following: Sight, Smell, Sound, Touch, and Taste. For any rolls related to the use of that sense, this character gets a -2.

Poor eyesight that completely compensated for with glasses or poor hearing that is fixed by a hearing aid does not grant a penalty, and is not represented by this trait. These things are better represented by quirks.

Mute

Communication is only partly verbal.

This character is unable to speak aloud. He can, however, communicate through gestures, writing, and sign language. He is able to hear and understand others' speech as normal. In a situation where someone else speaks sign language and can interpret, this character suffers very little. In the absence of an interpreter, the character can communicate, albeit slowly, through writing. However, if no writing implements are available, or if the other characters are illiterate, he must communicate through gesture using the skill Performance Art (Gesture). This roll is either Mind- or Charm- based, whichever is higher.

Sign language is a language like any other, and can be learned by taking the Language skill. However, a Mute character is assumed to know a common variety of sign language in addition to his native verbal language.

One Arm

People with missing limbs can do what other people can, with a few exceptions.

This character is missing a hand or arm. A combination of prostheses and learning to compensate for the hand make it so that she can function just as well as a full-bodied person most of the time. However, there are certain things, such as carrying large awkward objects or tying shoes, that are much more difficult.

If technology is not advanced enough in the game setting to provide a prosthesis, this character cannot do tasks that require two hands, although creativity and perseverance can help somewhat. If technology is sufficient to make a useful prosthesis, this character is just at a -4 to those tasks (or a -2 if the character has a clever way to compensate). In a near-future setting, prostheses may be advanced enough that the prosthetic hand is as good as a biological one. In this case, a character should take the missing hand as a quirk instead of this negative trait.

Negative Personality Traits

Antisocial

Some people just don't care about other people.

This character doesn't see other people as real or important. He may be perfectly capable of identifying and understanding their feelings, but he doesn't particularly care about them. He has little respect for others' rights or the laws of society. Whenever he must appear to care about someone or support society's rules, he must pretend (make a contested Charm roll, modified by appropriate skills). He is at a -2 to any action which requires him to display real emotion or true sympathy. Additionally, if a normal character learns about this character's beliefs, this character is at a -2 to all social rolls involving that character.

Code of Behavior

Sometimes, you have to do what's right, not what's convenient.

This character has some sort of code that she feels obligated to follow. She will not be willing to violate this code except in very extreme cases. Examples of this are a code of chivalry, a sense of duty, or a dedication to a dark ideal. The character is at a -4 to perform any actions that violate her code of behavior. This probably does not seem like a negative thing in the eyes of the character, but it does limit her options in some situations.

Delusion

"No, it's true! I've figured it all out!"

This character holds some false belief that is strange enough to have negative repercussions, but not so strange that it qualifies as an insanity. He may believe in a complex government conspiracy, in the power of magic, or in space aliens. Even in campaigns where these things are real, he has the details all wrong. He is also not afraid to tell people about his beliefs. The character is at a -2 to any social rolls involving people who are aware of his beliefs.

Habit

"I'm awful without my daily cup of coffee."

This character has some easy-to-satisfy habit, such as addition to nicotine, nibbling of the fingernails, or humming to herself. It can also represent a dependence on having a lucky charm or security blanket. This habit is not usually a problem beyond being a mild annoyance to bystanders, but if a situation arises where the character must resist it, she is at a -2 to all rolls until she can resume the habit.

A severe Habit is represented by the crippling trait Addiction.

Pacifist

Pacifism is the belief that there is always an alternative to violence, given enough effort.

This character is opposed to adversarial behavior. He will only use violence in self-defense or the defense of another person, and he will always try to find a non-violent solution to any problem. He is also more willing to compromise his own desires in the interest of preventing conflict, whether violent or not. He is at a -4 to any roll which is an aggressive act, such as attacking a person who has not attacked first.

Phobia

Snakes trigger a primal response in some people, a fear left over from more primitive times.

This character is irrationally afraid of a specific stimulus, such as spiders, bugs, heights, or closed spaces. If it is necessary for her to brave this stimulus, she must make a Mind roll with a target number of 10 to force herself to approach the trigger for her phobia. The trigger for the phobia must be relatively common but not ubiquitous to qualify for this trait. Fear of danger or of death are not phobias; they are rational or instinctual fears.

Shy

"..."

This character is very nervous around people she has not met before, and is often quiet even among friends. If it is necessary for her to force herself to speak with a stranger, she must make a Mind roll with a target number of 10 to do so. This is essentially a Phobia of talking to strangers.

Negative Social Traits

Dependent

"You'll always take care of me, won't you, Daddy?"

This character has someone he must take care of. He has a child, an ill relative, or a contractual responsibility to someone's safety. If he is derelict in his duties, he faces guilt, legal consequences, or great personal losses. The dependent can be an NPC or another player. Generally speaking, a dependent should be less powerful or equal in abilities to the character. There is the very real risk that the safety and happiness of the dependent will conflict with the character's other goals.

The dependent is not generally useful to the character in any worthwhile way. A character who is a direct benefit to a character and who is not as reliant on the character would be represented by the Associate trait.

Infamous

When your misdeeds are on the front page of a major newspaper, life becomes more difficult.

This character's name is well-known to a lot of people... in a bad way. Maybe she committed some crime or was involved in a scandal. Maybe her reputation is undeserved. Regardless, when she is recognized, some people react negatively. She is not an international celebrity, but some people may recognize her face, and they will almost definitely remember hearing of her if it is pointed out. This character gets a -2 to all social rolls where her infamy is received poorly by the person she's interacting with.

Someone who is famous in a good way should take the Famous positive trait. It is possible to be both Famous and Infamous; a person can be well-received by one group and loathed by another.

Crippling Traits

Addiction

Some substances get a hold on a person that never really goes away.

This character has an addiction to some substance or activity that is difficult or illegal to acquire. Alternately, she has a habit so strong that it is an overriding obsession. When she is able to satisfy the compulsion, she functions relatively normally. However, the behavior or drug may be immediately offensive, disturbing, or get the character in trouble with the law. If the character is unable to satisfy her addiction, she is at a -4 to all rolls until she can get her fix, and she will do just about anything to fulfill the urge.

Addiction is a severe version of the negative trait Habit.

Cursed

It's not good to be superstitious, but something is definitely wrong around you.

This character might be clumsy or inept, or there might be creepier forces at work. Regardless, she gets interesting failures on LORE rolls where the dice total to 3, in addition to the normal interesting failures on snake eyes.

Hallucinations

"They're all over me!"

This character sees, hears, or otherwise experiences things that aren't real. They may be imaginary, or they may be unpleasant memories flashing back. He usually is aware that he is prone to hallucinations, but when they manifest, they are perfectly real and he can't tell the difference between them and reality until afterward. The player should choose a single common trigger for the hallucinations. Stress, the smell of smoke, or getting hurt are some possible triggers. The GM decides exactly when a hallucination manifests and what it depicts.

Less Skilled

Some people have trouble learning from their experiences.

This character starts with five fewer skills at character creation. This trait may only be selected at character creation and when using the slot system.

Non-Confrontational

"Okay. Whatever you say."

This character is morally opposed to all conflict, or lacks the self-image to stand up for herself. She will never argue or even disagree with another person, even to her own detriment. She cannot even make a roll to try and confront someone. While she will not refuse to engage in combat if told to, she is at a -4 to all rolls while in combat. The only time this character gets her way is when everyone around her wants her to.

Non-Confrontational is a severe version of the negative trait Pacifist.

Restricted Movement

Our society often doesn't account for people with disabilities.

Due to body type, physical disability, or age, this character has trouble doing activities that require gross physical movement. She is at a -4 to all Body rolls that involve moving quickly, applying physical strength, or using stamina. She has no penalty to other physical rolls like fine hand-eye coordination. Depending on the origin of the restriction, there may be some activities that are simply impossible.

Socially Unaware

"I don't understand why everyone's always so angry at me!"

This character doesn't understand how people work, or doesn't pick up on social cues. He is at a -4 to all Charm rolls which involve understanding peoples' emotions, dealing with strangers, or any humor other than the patently absurd. This character suffers no penalties for calm, rational discussions, creating or performing art, or writing persuasively.

Wanted

In a way, it's flattering to have a bounty on your head.

The character is suspected of a crime, and law enforcement is actively seeking to apprehend him. Perhaps he is guilty; maybe it's an unjust accusation. Either way, police and maybe even bounty hunters are looking for him, and the consequences for capture are severe: incarceration and a long trial if he's lucky, and a quick but painful death if he's not. Usually, his face will be distributed to the community, and he will need to be very careful that he is not reported.

Alternately, the character may be on the run from some organization that is not publicly seeking him out. Organized crime or shady government agencies may want him captured or dead, but don't want the public to know. He still must be careful, though, as anyone could be working for his pursuers.

Skills

Characters have skills, which are sets of knowledge or experience that allow them to perform certain tasks. Skills do not have levels; a character either has a skill or it doesn't. Increasing skill in an area is represented by taking specialty skills, which are skills that depend on other skills. For example, a person who tinkers with cars in their free time and is rather good at it would have the skill of Mechanics with the specialty of Automotive Maintenance and Repair. An experienced mechanic might have additional sub-specialties of Automotive Engine Repair, Automotive Transmission Repair, and Automotive Brake Repair. Specialties are sometimes referred to by their parent skill combined with the specialty, as in "Athletics (Baseball)."

There are some tasks that cannot be performed without the appropriate skill. Lock picking is a complicated task that requires the Lock Picking skill. Running, on the other hand, can be done without training. Having the skill only lets a character run faster and longer. If a skill is required for its appropriate actions, it will be noted in the skill description.

Skills provide bonuses to a character's rolls. For each appropriate skill possessed by a character, the character receives a +1 to their rolls for actions involving that skill. Multiple skills can be combined for a roll; a character who is sneaking into a house can combine Stealth, Criminal Arts, and Criminal Arts (Burglary).

As an example, the mechanic mentioned above would get a +3 when repairing car engines, while she would only get a +1 for fixing a steam locomotive.

Skills, whether specialty or not, cost 3 experience points each. To buy a specialty skill, you must first have purchased its "parent" skill.

Some skills that are used on other people have "opposed rolls." When attempting to use the skill, the two players or the player and the GM should make a contested roll. If the "defender" wins, the action fails. If the original actor wins, the action succeeds.

A failed skill roll can often be retried. Sometimes this just requires extra time, as in the case of a purely mechanical task like picking a lock. Sometimes, subsequent attempts are harder. If a task is physically tiring, like trying to push over a heavy object, or relies on mental cleverness, like trying to find a hidden item, each additional attempt is at a cumulative -1 to represent exhaustion or the character's increasing lack of new ideas. Other rolls simply can't be immediately retried. If a character tries to jump between two buildings and fails, she falls, possibly getting hurt, and must get back on top of the building to try again.

More Specific Specialties

Players should feel free to come up with new specialties that apply to more specific situations than the ones below. A carpenter who works extensively at cabinetry could pick a sub-specialty Craft (Carpentry (Cabinetry)).

The GM should be generous in allowing new specialties, as long as they are as specific or more specific than the ones below. The specialty Animal Handling (Horses) is a good choice; Animal Handling (Earth Animals) is likely to be too general unless the campaign is in a space-faring setting.

The skills and specialties below are the ones in the base module. Some of the skills are only appropriate in a modern setting. The GM should monitor the skills selected by players to ensure that they are appropriate to the setting. Additional setting and rules books may introduce new skills and specialties.

There are a lot of skills and specialties in this section, but the table on the next page provides a quick summary of the available options to help make picking a skill faster and easier.

Animal Handling

With Animal Handling, a character can work with, train, and control animals. It may be attempted unskilled. Most Animal Handling rolls are based on Charm.

Ride Animal

This skill allows a character to ride an animal such as a horse or other mountable creature. Riding rolls are based on Body. Even an unskilled character may ride an animal that has been bred and trained for a rider without a roll if circumstances are calm. Riding rolls are only required when attempting something risky, such as riding into combat, performing tricks, or riding a mount that is untrained, not bred to be a mount, or both.

Skill	Described Specialties
Animal Handling	*Ride Animal, Train Animal*
Athletics	*Acrobatics, Balance, Climbing, Running, Sports, Swimming, Throwing*
Computers	*Office Applications, Systems Administration, Programming, Security, Gaming, Databases*
Craft	*Blacksmithing, Carpentry, Jewelry-making, Leather-working, Pottery, Sewing*
Criminal Arts	*Assassination, Black Markets, Burglary, Confidence Scheming, Fencing, Forgery, Lock Picking, Pickpocketing, Safe Cracking, Security Systems, Smuggling*
Electronics	*Computer Hardware, Electronic Diagnostics, Motors, Optical Drives, Power Distribution, Radio*
Empathy	*Detect Emotion, Detect Lies*
Engineering	*Biological Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering*
Investigation	*Forensics, Interrogation, Pursuit, Searching, Surveillance*
Language	*(one skill for each language)*
Literature	*Drama, Fiction, Journalism, Literary Analysis, Poetry*
Mechanics	*Internal Combustion, Jet Engines, Mill Machinery, Steam Power, Watchmaking*
Medicine	*First Aid, General Practice, Pathology, Pharmaceuticals, Surgery, Veterinary Medicine*
Music	*Instrument, Musical Composition, Music Theory, Singing*
Performance Arts	*Acting, Dancing*
Persuasion	*Intimidation, Fast-Talk, Inspiration, Seduction, Marketing, Fraternization, Oratory*
Research	*Historical Research, Law Research, Library Science, Medical Literature, Scientific Literature*
Science	*Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Geology, Physics*
Stealth	*Camouflage, Crowds, Hiding, Tailing*
Subterfuge	*Circumlocution, Disguise, Impersonation, Lying, Poker Face*
Teaching	*Adult Education, Childhood Education, Mentoring*
Vehicle Operation	*Airplanes, Automobiles, Boating, Chases, Motorcycles, Off-Road, Stunts*
Visual Arts	*Drawing, Painting, Photography, Sculpture*
Wilderness Survival	*Fire-making, Fishing, Hunting, Shelter, Tracking*

Train Animal

This skill allows an animal to be trained to perform a certain task. This includes teaching obedience to pets, teaching mounts to bear riders, and any animal to perform tricks. Train Animal rolls are based on Charm.

Athletics

This skill covers all forms of pure physical movement that are not dedicated to a specific task. Athletics may be attempted unskilled. All Athletics rolls are based on Body.

Acrobatics

This specialty skill represents skill at performing physical stunts such as gymnastics. It also allows a character to land safely from falls and avoid danger in many ways. It may provide bonuses to Dodge Defense in combat.

Balance

This specialty skill represents skill at keeping one's balance on precarious surfaces or in unstable situations.

Climbing

This specialty skill represents skill at climbing surfaces that are too steep to ascend by walking normally, as well as things like ropes and ladders.

Running

This specialty skill represents training in running on foot. It applies to any attempt to run quickly or for long distances.

Sports (Baseball, Football, etc.)

This specialty skill represents training at a specific sport. Characters must purchase each sport individually; they may not simply purchase a skill called "Sports."

Swimming

This specialty skill represents skill at swimming under difficult circumstances. In most campaigns, it can be assumed that most characters can stay afloat, but this skill is used for when difficult swimming must be accomplished.

Throwing

This specialty skill represents skill at throwing things. It applies to throwing accuracy and distance. In combination with the Combat module, this skill can be used with thrown weapons in place of the Ranged Weapons (Thrown Weapons) specialty.

Computers

This skill represents experience using computers. Most people can use a computer without this skill; characters with it have spent enough time to become familiar with computers' interface and capabilities. All Computers rolls are Mind-based.

Office Applications

This specialty represents experience with standard office suites. It governs the use of word processors, spreadsheets, and presentation software.

Systems Administration

Characters with this specialty are skilled at maintaining a large system composed of many computers, like a company intranet. It helps with maintaining the security of servers and networks, configuring large groups of computers to work together, and administering computers remotely.

Programming

The Programming specialty helps characters to make their own computer programs by writing code or using a drag-and-drop interface. Programs take a long time to write; even the most basic programing task takes hours, and an entire application generally requires days of work at the least, and possibly years.

Security

This specialty helps with securing computers against attack from external systems, as well as breaking into computers via the Internet. Security applies to "hacking" into computers, and to blocking someone trying to crack a computer's security.

Gaming

This specialty represents skill and familiarity with computer and video games. A character with this skill is comfortable using a game pad, and can easily navigate three-dimensional simulated spaces.

Databases

This specialty provides expertise in computer databases and other long-term, constant-access data storage technologies. It applies to attempts to set up, modify, and access databases through programmed applications or by communicating directly with a database through queries.

Craft

The Craft skill represents ability at constructing useful and/or attractive physical objects. It is distinct from Visual Arts in that its products are usually intended to be used, if only by being worn, while the products of Visual Arts exist only for display purposes. Craft rolls are usually based on Mind, unless they are specifically based on physical coordination, in which case Body may be used.

Blacksmithing

Blacksmithing is the skill of working iron, steel, and non-precious metals. It helps to make of nails, horseshoes, and medieval weapons.

Carpentry

Carpentry is the skill of making things out of wood. Furniture, buildings, and containers are some of the many things made by carpenters.

Jewelry-making

Jewelry-making is the craft of creating decorative accessories from precious or attractive metals and minerals. A person with the Jewelry-making specialty skill may use it to identify and estimate the price of cut and uncut gemstones and minerals. Difficulty is 10 for an easily-recognized gem such as diamond or a distinctive metal such as copper, 12 for harder-to-recognize materials such as ores and uncut gems, and 14 for obscure ores and rare gems.

Leather-working

Leather-working is the skill of making tools and clothing out of leather. Shoes are the most common product of a leather-worker.

Pottery

Pottery is the skill of making vessels and tools out of clay and ceramics. Pots, cups, and oil lamps are some things made by potters.

Sewing

Sewing is the craft of making useful items out of sewn cloth. It is primarily used to make clothes and linens.

Criminal Arts

Committing crimes is easier than most people think. This skill represents an understanding of the fundamentals of criminal achievement: how to avoid appearing suspicious, what flaws exist in typical attempts at security, and how to avoid leaving traces of one's presence.

Assassination

This is the skill of killing someone without being detected. It applies to any rolls related to faking an accident, killing from a hidden location, or cleaning up the crime scene to eliminate evidence and suspicion. The actual attack can be carried out using combat skills, but everything surrounding the death is assisted by Assassination. Assassination is based on Mind and is opposed by Investigation (Forensics).

Black Markets

This skill helps a character to buy things which cannot be obtained legally, or to find expensive, stolen items for cheap. The target number depends on the rarity of the item. Getting a cheap (stolen) TV is TN 8, buying illegal drugs is TN 10, and finding explosives or illegal assault weapons is TN 12.

When using the Wealth system from the modern setting section, a success on this skill can allow a character to buy an item that would normally be restricted, to buy an unrestricted Luxury item as if it were Standard, or an unrestricted Standard item as if it were Cheap.

Burglary

Burglary is the technique of entering a building or area by bypassing physical security. It helps characters force open windows, get into air vents, break doors and locks, or slip in undetected. It is based on Body.

Confidence Scheming

This is the art of planning and executing con artistry, such as pyramid schemes, 419 frauds, and "snake oil" sales. It helps a character develop a unique scheme, avoid getting caught, and convince a mark to go along with it. This specialty is often used in tandem with the Subterfuge skill. It is based on Charm and can be opposed by Investigation (Financial) or Empathy (Detect Lies), depending on the use of the skill.

Fencing

Fencing, in the criminal context, is the art of selling illicitly-obtained goods. It governs finding buyers for an item and convincing them to buy it without the usual guarantees of ownership. Fencing is based on Mind when used to find a fence, and based on Charm when interacting with a fence.

Forgery

Forgery is the skill of producing false documents, like checks and identification cards. Modern forgers use computers and expensive reproduction equipment, which can grant a bonus to the roll. At the same time, authentic documents have more complex anti-forgery features, which gives a penalty. Forgery is opposed by Investigation (Forensics) or Investigation (Financial), depending on the specific use. To successfully use a forged document, the Subterfuge skill and it specialties may be necessary.

Lock Picking

Lock picking is the skill of opening a lock without breaking it or using the associated key. Without a proper set of lock picks, any lock picking attempt is at a -2. Lock Picking is based

on Body, and target numbers range from 10 for a basic lock all the way to 16 for a maximum security lock. A character may pick a lock without leaving any signs of the attempt by taking a -2 to her roll.

Pickpocketing

This is the skill of removing an item from a person's possession without them noticing it's gone. Pickpocketing is based on Body and opposed by a Mind roll. If the pickpocket loses the contested roll, the victim notices the attempt. Circumstances determine whether the thief manages to get the item in the process.

Safe Cracking

This specialty governs the opening of armored safes. It helps characters open combination locks by listening to the tumblers and also to disable safes using drills and other tools that bypass or destroy the locking mechanism. Safes are inherently hard to open; target numbers start at 14 and go up from there. Safe Cracking is based on Mind.

Security Systems

Characters with this specialty are especially knowledgeable about electronic security systems, including alarms, sensors, and surveillance systems. This helps with any roll involving finding, disabling, avoiding, or bypassing these systems. It is usually based on Mind, but can be based on Body if the roll involves actual physical prowess, like crawling past laser sensors. Target numbers for this skill range from 10 to 18 depending on the complexity and subtlety of the security system.

Smuggling

This specialty governs the transportation of items through borders, checkpoints, and searches without them being discovered. This can be as simple as hiding a knife from a frisk search or as elaborate as building hidden cargo holds into a boat to transport large amounts of drugs. It is based on Mind and is opposed by Investigation (Search).

Electronics

Electronics governs the use, design, and repair of electronic and electrical devices. Most people can use a consumer DVD player or calculator, but without some skill in Electronics, it's tough to fix one that's broken, or to build one from scratch. The general skill represents basic knowledge of circuitry and electronic components as well as experience using complicated electronic devices. Electronics rolls are Mind-based.

Computer Hardware

Characters with the Computer Hardware specialty are experienced and knowledgeable about computer motherboards, power supplies, expansion cards, and peripherals. This skill helps them to diagnose hardware problems with a computer and replace the appropriate part. It also allows characters to build computers from parts.

Electronic Diagnostics

This specialty governs the use of multimeters, oscilloscopes, and signal generators to analyze and diagnose electronic systems. It can be used to identify a problem or to figure out how a device functions.

Motors

Electric motors are used in many household devices. This skill governs the repair of washers, dryers, garbage disposals, and other devices which depend heavily on electric motors to function.

Optical Drives

DVD, CD, and other optical drives and devices require a working understanding of lasers and very precise motors. This skill assists in their maintenance and repair. Note that optical drives are complex enough that it's impractical to build one without a manufacturing facility.

Power Distribution

This specialty governs large-scale electrical distribution systems, including wall sockets, lighting, power transformers, and power lines.

Radio

Characters with the Radio specialty are trained in the setup, maintenance, and repair of radio receivers and broadcasting devices. This skill can even be used to construct a radio from scratch.

Empathy

A character with the Empathy skill has training or experience in determining other characters' mental and emotional states by physical and verbal cues. This makes it easier to determine how someone is feeling and whether someone is lying. Empathy rolls

are based on Charm.

Detect Emotion

A character with this skill can better detect signals of hidden emotions. If another character tries to conceal their emotions, a character makes a contested Detect Emotion roll.

Detect Lies

A character with this skill is especially good at recognizing the subtle clues that another person is lying. This skill is used in contested rolls when another person is trying to make a character believe something that the speaker knows is not true.

Engineering

Engineering is the practice of creating functional designs that make use of scientific and technological concepts. An engineer is well-versed in the design process, and can design a functioning system in a specific field. Engineering is specialized enough that it requires a specialty skill to be at all useful. A character cannot make any Engineering rolls in a field where she does not have a specialty. The only exception is managing an Engineering project; in a pinch, an engineer can serve as a project manager without specialization. All Engineering rolls are Mind-based.

Any but the most simple engineering designs require complex fabrication facilities to construct. Only very basic devices and products can be produced by an engineer working alone.

Biological Engineering

Characters with Biological Engineering can develop new breeds of animals, plants, and other organisms that are more useful for a specific purpose. They can also design artificial systems like implants that can work together with natural, organic systems.

Chemical Engineering

This specialty governs the production of chemicals; specifically, it allows a character to design a process by which raw materials and chemicals can be converted into another, more useful set of chemicals.

Civil Engineering

Civil Engineering allows characters to design large structures like bridges, canals, dams, and buildings. It also governs sanitation and water distribution systems.

Computer Engineering

This specialty governs the design of microprocessors and other integrated circuits. A computer engineer designs chips and assembly languages that form the building blocks of computers.

Electrical Engineering

This specialty governs the design of large-scale power distribution systems and smaller electrical and electronic devices. An electrical engineer can design a device that will perform a task within specific power and size constraints.

Mechanical Engineering

Mechanical engineering is the design of mechanical systems. A character with this specialty can design machines and engines.

Investigation

Investigation is the skill of discovering things that are lost or hidden. It is used heavily by law enforcement agencies. The base skill represents an applied knowledge of sociology that helps characters guess how a person would behave who was trying to hide information, and how to determine if a set of data doesn't make sense.

Investigation rolls are usually Mind-based.

Forensics

Forensics, short for "forensic science," is the science of examining crime scenes and evidence. It allows an investigator to look over evidence and places and determine exactly what happened. Forensics is not just useful at a crime scene; it can apply to any situation where a character wants to figure out past events.

Interrogation

This specialty represents skill at getting information out of a suspect, prisoner, or other person. It involves psychological manipulation, attention to contradictions, and patience. The skill Empathy (Detect Lies) is often useful in an interrogation. Interrogation rolls are Charm-based.

Pursuit

This specialty governs following people who do not want to be followed. It does not represent skill at outrunning a fleeing perpetrator (although it would help the Athletics (Running) roll in that

case), but instead represents skill at knowing where a fugitive is likely to go, and how to find traces of her path in hotel registries, financial records, and so on.

In some situations, the Stealth (Tailing) specialty will help Pursuit rolls.

Searching

This specialty is used to find hidden or lost items in a place or on a person. Searching works best with systematic examination of the entire space, but this specialty can also be used for quick searches that hit only the most probable locations.

Surveillance

Surveillance is the art of monitoring people without their knowledge. This skill governs the placement of bugging devices, staying hidden while monitoring them, and understanding furtive double-talk.

Language (English, French, etc.)

Characters are assumed to be fluent in their native language. Additional languages are bought like skills. A single skill represents a single language, and is understood to represent conversational fluency. Language rolls are only made if a character's grasp of advanced vocabulary or grammar is in question. Language rolls are based on Mind.

Literature

The Literature skill represents a familiarity with the basics of expression and communication using the written word. It extends to the analysis and creation of literary works. A Literature roll is Mind-based when the intent of the roll is analysis of technique or clear communication, and is Charm-based when the intent of the roll is to understand or convey emotion.

Drama

Drama governs the analysis and creation of compositions which are intended to be performed by actors for an audience.

Fiction

Fiction governs the analysis and creation of compositions, not written in verse, which present a narrative that is not factual.

Journalism

Journalism is the skill of conveying factual information in a useful way.

Literary Analysis

Literary Analysis governs the analysis of literary works, including examining them for meaning and subtext, placing them within a wider literary context, and writing papers about literary works.

Poetry

The Poetry specialty skill governs the analysis and creation of compositions written in verse, where the sound or structure of the text is as important as the meaning.

Mechanics

This skill governs the use, design, and maintenance of mechanical devices that move or do work, like clocks, automobiles, and windmills. It is heavily dependent on the technology of the setting; a Victorian mechanic would not know how to maintain a jet engine, and a modern Air Force mechanic would be useless with a steam locomotive. However, mechanical systems share the same basic properties, and maintaining them takes similar knowledge. A science fiction setting might have more advanced mechanical skills for the technicians that maintain starship engines or hover cars.

Most mechanical tasks cannot be attempted without the appropriate specialty skill. At the GM's discretion, simple tasks may be possible with the Mechanics skill and no relevant specialties.

Internal Combustion

This is the skill of maintaining piston-based internal combustion engines, such as those in modern cars and small boats.

Jet Engines

The Jet Engines skill allows a mechanic to maintain and repair engines powered by a gas turbine, such as those used by jet airplanes.

Mill Machinery

This skill governs the workings of large mills and factories driven by a single, powerful energy source, such as a windmill, watermill, or horse mill. Any large-scale system using gears and shafts can be maintained with this skill.

Steam Power

This is the skill of maintaining steam engines and boilers, as used in old trains and machinery.

Watchmaking

Watchmakers must have a knowledge of springs, gears, friction, and timing, and be able to miniaturize the devices needed in a watch. A watchmaker would also be skilled at designing and maintaining large clocks.

Medicine

This skill represents training and experience in treating and preventing injuries, illnesses, and disorders of people and animals.

Medicine is a complex discipline, and is highly dependent on technology. If the necessary tools are not available and must be improvised, the target number for a Medicine roll increases by 4. The setting of the campaign also has an enormous effect on what is possible. The more primitive the character's society is, the more difficult all medical rolls are. The table on this page describes the modifier to the target number at a certain point in medical advancement, as well as the approximate year that each advancement was made in Western history.

Medical rolls are based on Mind.

First Aid

First Aid is the skill of first response to illness or injury. It usually consists of immediate treatment via bandages and antibiotics. CPR is included when needed. The target number of a First Aid roll is 10 for average injuries, but can become as high as 16 for very traumatic issues.

General Practice

This skill represents training and experience in general medicine. This is the discipline practiced by the typical family doctor. It is generally focused on diagnosis and simple treatment; a general practitioner will refer any difficult-to-treat cases to a specialist. A general practitioner typically deals in preventative medicine and the treatment of minor injuries and commonplace infectious diseases.

Pathology

Pathology is the study of disease and injury. A pathologist can examine an unwell person or corpse and determine what illness or injury is afflicting them. Autopsies are helped by the Pathology specialty.

Pharmaceuticals

This specialty represents understanding of

Medical advancement developed	Approx. year	TN modifier
Only basic bandages exist	Prehistory	+12
Medicinal herbs discovered	Prehistory	+10
Medicine emerged as a rational discipline	420 BCE	+8
Contagion of disease understood	1000 CE	+6
Anatomy analyzed in detail	1500 CE	+4
Vaccination discovered	1800 CE	+2
Sterile practices discovered	1850 CE	+1
Antibiotics discovered	1925 CE	+0
Organ transplantation developed	1960 CE	-1
CPR becomes widespread	1970 CE	-2
Advanced imaging techniques invented	1985 CE	-3
Genomes sequenced	2000 CE	-4
Future developments	2000+ CE	?

modern drugs, their administration, and proper dosage. A character with this specialty is less likely to administer an accidental overdose, and will know the minimum amount of a drug that will have the desired effect.

Surgery

Surgery is a medical specialty that involves operating upon a patient by using instruments to treat medical problems in relatively invasive ways. It often involves anesthesia, suturing, and incision. Surgery rolls have a target number of 12 for the most trivial operations, but can increase to 20 or higher for involved, risky, specialized procedures.

Veterinary Medicine

This skill governs medical practice on non-human, non-sentient animals, including training on their unique anatomies and the procedures required for diagnosing and treating a non-sentient patient.

Music

This skill represents basic training or inborn ability in the musical arts, with simple understanding of notes, rhythm, and pitch. Most Music rolls are Mind-based, except when a character is using Music to sway an audience's emotions.

Instrument (Flute, Trumpet, etc.)

This is a set of skills. For each instrument a character can play, they must take an appropriate instrument skill. With GM permission, a character may take a single skill representing a range of instruments; the flute and the piccolo are not very different, for instance. Without the appropriate instrument skill, a character cannot successfully play an instrument well. Many instruments can't even be convinced to make a sound without this skill.

Musical Composition

This skill represents training or ability in writing works of music that are pleasing to the ear and have an intended effect on an audience.

Music Theory

This skill represents an understanding of the theory behind music: keys, types of rhythms, and what makes a composition aesthetically interesting. Characters without this specialty may have an intuitive understanding of these concepts, but this specialty helps them to use common terminology and discuss music in a technical way.

Singing

This skill applies to musical performance with one's voice. Singing rolls are Charm-based.

Performance Arts

The performance arts are forms of artistic expression involving live or recorded performances for an audience. Most Performance Arts rolls are Charm-based, although they may be Body-based if the task is physically intensive.

Acting

Acting is the skill of portraying a character other than oneself on stage or screen. Acting does not typically apply to a situation in which a person is trying to deceive another; that action is governed by the Subterfuge skill. However, if a person is attempting to convince another that they are a different person altogether by behaving like that different person, the GM may decide that Acting applies.

Dancing

Dancing is the skill of moving one's body in an aesthetically meaningful way, usually to the accompaniment of music. Dancing rolls are Body-based.

Persuasion

Persuasion is the art of getting another person to think or act how you want them to. The basic skill represents an understanding of how people think and can be influenced.

Persuasion rolls are all Charm-based. They are opposed by the target's social resistance roll (Mind + Charm).

Intimidation

This specialty governs persuasion by fear. Intimidation involves indirect or direct threats, posturing, and confidence to convince the target that if they don't cooperate there will be negative consequences.

Physical intimidation rolls may get bonuses from a high Body attribute or the Extra Strong trait.

Fast-Talk

Characters with Fast-Talk are good at manipulating people by speaking quickly and confidently while not actually saying much of anything. People who sound authoritative and sure of themselves can get others to go along with them. Fast-Talk is usually a temporary measure, though; given a few moments to think over what you actually said, characters are likely to realize that they've been had.

Inspiration

The Inspiration specialty helps to persuade people to do things they are too afraid or insecure to do. It does help attempts to get people to go against their natures; it only helps make a target do what they want to do but don't have the nerve for.

Seduction

Seduction is the skill of making someone romantically or sexually attracted to you. The goal of seduction may be to have sex with a target, or it may be to make them think you'll have sex with them if they go along with what you're requesting. Sex may not be involved at all;

seduction can be of a platonic or chaste romantic nature. The Extra Attractive and Not So Attractive traits always affect Seduction rolls, and a character will suffer a large penalty if the target's sexual orientation means that the two are a bad match.

Marketing

This specialty governs persuading people to buy a product or like an organization. Marketing often involves associating an unexciting item, like toilet paper, with a positive idea, like teddy bears. Marketing is used to sell a product to a reluctant audience or to improve the reputation of a person or group.

Fraternization

Fraternization is the skill of being friendly. This specialty helps a character to get their way by acting likable and by making the target feel like they have something in common. It also helps a character fit in in a situation where he might otherwise stand out.

Oratory

This skill governs speech-making. It helps a character speak to an audience and persuade them to the speaker's point of view. Oratory depends in part on the psychology of crowds, so it does not apply to individuals or groups smaller than about five.

Research

Research allows a character to find information in records, journals, books, and databases. There are special techniques to finding, organizing, and evaluating information, and this skill will help a character determine where information is and whether it is credible.

A professional in an academic field is expected to have this skill, but a surprising number do not. The Science, Law, Medicine, and similar skills govern personal knowledge and experience, not the ability to research others' results.

Some fields, such as science, also use the term "research" to refer to the process of discovering new information. The Research skill, however, only applies to discovering existing information in the literature.

Most Research rolls are Mind-based.

Historical Research

This skill governs the research of historical information. Historical Research is used when a character is trying to find out from records what happened on a certain day in the past or find information on the life of a certain person.

Law Research

This specialty helps characters to search the legal record for judicial precedents, relevant laws, and loopholes that are useful in legal disputes, negotiations, court cases, or contract writing.

Library Science

Library Science is the science of research itself. A character with this specialty is especially fluent in how libraries and other information sources are organized, and what sources to use to find information on a certain topic. Library Science will not help a character interpret or associate information, but it is incredibly useful in finding raw information at a library or online.

Medical Literature

This skill governs research into medical journals and reference works in order to find information on disease, injury, physiology, or psychology.

Scientific Literature

This skill helps with the location, understanding, and interpretation of scientific articles. A character with this specialty would be good at determining if a fact is supported by the scientific record, and if a study was performed with the proper scientific rigor.

Science

Science is a method for examining how the world works via rational observation and systematic processes. A character skilled in science is able to make new scientific discoveries as well as recall established scientific fact. Science before a certain point in the development of civilization was considered an offshoot of theology or philosophy, but this skill applies to the understanding of natural processes absent of divine or metaphysical influence. A character from a setting with a premodern level of technology may take this skill. Skill in science is not absent from any sentient culture; it is merely rarer in some.

If a discovery or development has not yet become well-known to the scientific community in the setting

of a game, a character may not simply know it because of the Science skill. They must discover it for themselves... and the scientific fact of some settings may differ from the real world's!

Astronomy

Astronomy is the study of space, celestial bodies, and the universe beyond our planet. In some cultures, astronomy might be a part of the study of astrology, but astronomy deals with observable truths, not mysticism. In some fantasy settings, astrology might actually be useful, but it would be a separate skill.

Biology

Biology is the study of life and its processes. A biologist can identify life forms and classify them in taxonomies. Depending on the level of technology, the biologist may be familiar with the basic building blocks of life. Biology is not as applied of a science as medicine, but it can be useful in a pinch. Any medicine roll may be attempted as a biology roll instead, but the target number is four greater than it would be otherwise.

Chemistry

Chemistry is the study of the structure of matter and the interactions of materials. A chemist is familiar with chemical reactions and processes. In some cultures, chemistry might be a part of the study of alchemy, but chemistry deals with observable truths, not magic. In some fantasy settings, alchemy might actually be useful beyond what we would call chemistry, but it would be a separate skill.

Geology

Geology is the study of minerals and the formation of the earth. A geologist may be familiar with the structure of planets, mineral formations, and precious or useful minerals. A person with the Geology specialty skill may use it to identify and estimate the price of cut and uncut gemstones and minerals. Difficulty is 10 for an easily-recognized gem such as diamond or a distinctive metal such as copper, 12 for harder-to-recognize materials such as ores and uncut gems, and 14 for obscure ores and rare gems.

Physics

Physics studies the motion of matter and the structure of spacetime. A physicist is familiar with the fundamentals of motion, the nature of atoms, or theories of gravity and relativity.

Stealth

Stealth is the skill of remaining undetected. It requires a character to move in a way that does not attract attention and to position herself in shadows and other places where she can be concealed.

Stealth rolls are usually Body-based.

Camouflage

This specialty governs the design, application, and use of coloration and form that breaks up a person or object's silhouette. The most well-known camouflage is the sort that keeps a person or animal hidden in foliage, but simply wearing mottled gray and covering any shiny or angular spots can help conceal a person.

Rolls for applying camouflage to a person or object are Mind-based. Rolls for moving while camouflaged are Body-based.

Crowds

The Crowds specialty helps a user to remain unseen by a specific target or group of targets while in a crowded space. Moving with the flow of traffic, remaining inconspicuous, and not making eye contact can make a character much harder to spot.

Hiding

Hiding helps a character find a specific place where he can't easily be seen. Shadows, obstacles, and mist or fog can all provide bonuses to Hiding rolls.

Tailing

This is the skill of following a person or object without being spotted. It involves placing yourself in inconspicuous spots, changing your appearance periodically so that you're harder to recognize, and working with a team of tails.

Subterfuge

This skill represents training or ability in misleading others. This can be done through the direct telling of lies, the use of half-truths or omission, or merely phrasing sentences a certain way or using misleading body language. All Subterfuge rolls are Charm-based.

Most Subterfuge rolls are contested rolls against an opponent's Empathy skill (and certain specialties). If the impression one is trying to give is especially unlikely, there is a penalty to the character using

Subterfuge. For example, if Jane claims that she found the victim's wallet lying on the street, she may be at no penalty to her roll. If she claims aliens put it in her purse, she's looking at a penalty of -10.

Circumlocution

Meaning "talking around" a subject, Circumlocution is avoiding a topic while communicating without the listener realizing that facts are being omitted. Circumlocution can be opposed by a number of skills, depending on the nature of the information being avoided.

Disguise

This skill helps a character modify the appearance of themselves or another in order to deceive an observer. It involves the use of makeup, clothing, and prostheses to make a person appear as they are not. The Disguise specialty skill is distinct from the Impersonation specialty skill; the former is rolled beforehand to modify appearance, and the latter is rolled during the impersonation to behave appropriately. Disguise is opposed by Investigation (Observation).

Impersonation

This skill helps a character pretend to be someone they are not. It involves the use of body language, mimicry of voice and movement, and quick thinking to convince another that a character is someone else. The Disguise specialty skill is distinct from the Impersonate specialty skill; the former is rolled beforehand to modify appearance, and the latter is rolled during the impersonation to behave appropriately. Impersonation is opposed by Empathy (Detect Lies).

Lying

This skill governs the verbal telling of untruths without another realizing it. Much of this skill is focused on keeping a straight face. Lying is opposed by Empathy (Detect Lies).

Poker Face

This skill involves the hiding of emotion or thought. It is used whenever a person tries to keep what they are thinking or feeling from showing in their body language. Poker Face is opposed by Empathy (Detect Emotion).

Teaching

Teaching is the skill of enabling a student or group of students to learn. It requires an understanding of how people absorb information, a variety of techniques to make lessons clear and interesting, and a certain amount of disciplinary skill. Teaching rolls are Charm-based.

Adult Education

This specialty applies to college lectures, professional development seminars, and remedial classroom lessons for adults. Adults can generally focus better than children, and there are unlikely to be disciplinary problems in the classroom, but older brains are less flexible, and have more trouble incorporating new information.

Childhood Education

This specialty governs teaching from birth to approximately age 18. Children and adolescents lack the impulse control and attention span of adults, so a high level of discipline needs to be enforced along with techniques to help the students engage with the material.

Mentoring

Mentoring is teaching "on the job." It is usually a one-on-one process, and involves working together on a task with the teacher showing the student how things are done. Mentoring requires a closer relationship than classroom teaching.

Vehicle Operation

This skill helps a character control vehicles. Specific vehicles require experience to operate. The campaign's setting may have one kind of vehicle that most people can operate (usually, automobiles). Characters can operate that vehicle without selecting this skill or that vehicle's specialty. All other kinds of vehicles require a character to select their specialty in order to operate them at all.

Other specialty skills govern specific situations, like stunts. These situations and maneuvers do not require a character to have the specialty to attempt.

Most vehicles can be operated in routine conditions without a roll. A roll is only required if a character wants to do something difficult or risky.

Vehicle Operation rolls are Mind-based unless the operation involves a decent amount of physical exertion (as with a bicycle), in which case they are Body-based.

Airplanes

This specialty allows a character to operate an airplane or glider. Most governments require strict licensing of pilots and demand that they file flight plans before taking off.

Automobiles

This is the skill of operating a car, truck, or similar vehicle. In modern society, characters can drive a car without this specialty.

Boating

Boating is the skill of controlling boats, ships, and other marine vessels.

Chases

This skill governs races and chases, where the goal is to keep up with or outrun other vehicles while avoiding crashes.

Motorcycles

Characters with this skill can control motorcycles, scooters, and similar vehicles.

Off-Road

Characters with this skill are good at operating vehicles off-road or in the absence of a smooth, flat surface.

Stunts

This specialty governs unusual maneuvers like jumps, sudden turns, and steering through narrow passages. When applied to airplane operation, it can be used to perform loops, barrel rolls, and similar maneuvers.

Visual Arts

This skill governs the basics of creating and evaluating works of static visual art. It involves training in the basics of form, line, color, perspective, and composition. Note that the fashion of the time governs the reception of an artistic piece; a medieval manuscript will not impress a modern art critic, while a cubist work would baffle a Renaissance realist. Additionally, success is hard to measure when it comes to art; therefore, Visual Arts rolls often do not have a target number; instead, the roll result represents the quality of the piece. A piece made with a result of 10 to 12 would be an acceptable work for many purposes, although a work could hardly be called a masterpiece if its quality is below 20. Visual Arts rolls are based on Mind if the main goal is to represent reality, and on Charm if the main goal is to evoke a feeling or promote an idea.

Drawing

This skill is used to create two-dimensional works of art using a stylus like a pen, pencil, or charcoal.

Painting

This skill is used to create two-dimensional works of art using liquid pigments.

Photography

Photography is the skill of using a film or digital camera to capture still, two-dimensional images. Photography can only be purchased by a character in a setting where cameras have been invented. If cameras are still primitive in the setting, the character may have a higher target number for their rolls.

Sculpture

Sculpture is the skill of creating three-dimensional works of art from a solid medium or from pieces.

Wilderness Survival

A character trained in Wilderness Survival can survive away from civilization. She is able to find food, build shelter, and defend herself by using natural resources. Most Wilderness Survival rolls are based on Mind.

Fire-Making

This specialty governs making fire from materials at hand. An experienced woodsperson can start a fire with only two sticks and some pine needles.

Fishing

Fishing is the ability to catch fish from a body of water using a hook and line, net, or spear.

Hunting

The Hunting skill helps a character to find and catch land-based (animal) game. It governs the stalking of prey and the act of avoiding detection. However, the killing of the prey is governed by an appropriate weapon skill, like Bow or Firearm. See the Combat module for more on weapons skills.

Shelter

This specialty helps a character to find or build shelter in a wild setting. It helps with rolls to build a lean-to, find a hospitable cave, or pitch a tent.

Tracking

Tracking is the ability to determine the path a creature has taken based on the disturbances it causes in the surrounding natural environment.

Quirks

Quirks are an aspect of a character's personality, history, or nature that make them deeper as a character. They may grant special abilities, but not in most situations. Heroic characters are limited to five quirks, and other slot layouts have different limits. In the point-buy system, taking a quirk causes a character to gain a single character point, and a character may have an unlimited number of quirks, subject to GM approval.

Quirks may also be traded out for new quirks to represent character development, with GM approval.

If a LORE roll somehow relates to a character's quirk, the player may choose to re-roll that roll once if she dislikes the first result. She must keep the second roll, even if it is lower than the first.

A quirk does not need to have a positive effect on a roll to allow a re-roll. For instance, a character with a Dislike of confrontation may re-roll a failed Persuasion (Intimidation) attempt. Quirk re-rolls simply represent the unique perspective that a person's personality can bring to a situation.

A player can only use quirks to re-roll once per scene. Once a player has rerolled due to a quirk, she cannot take advantage of any more quirk-related re-rolls in that scene.

Players are encouraged to create quirks that are not in this list. Most of the following quirks are vague; the player should decide what each quirk means specifically to her character and write that down beside the name of the quirk.

Each quirk below has an example condition that would allow a re-roll. These are by no means the only situations that would permit a re-roll for those quirks.

Absent-Minded

This character tends to let his mind wander. He's likely to get distracted or forget minor details. When it's important, he can be competent, but unless he's focusing, he tends to be a bit out of it.

A re-roll could occur when the character needs to focus or notice something unusual.

Accepting

This character is very willing to give others respect or the benefit of the doubt when others might disapprove. Given an uncomfortable confession or a dramatic revelation, this character is likely to accept it without criticism.

A re-roll could occur when the character is presented with an unusual social situation.

Cynic

This character is pessimistic or otherwise distrustful of human nature. It doesn't mean she's bad at interacting with people. She's just more likely to assume the worst motives in someone.

A re-roll could occur when the character is trying to decide if someone is being honest.

Dislike

This character has a strong dislike of an object, substance, food, or situation. This is not a phobia; the character just prefers not to partake of or interact with the subject of his dislike.

A re-roll could occur when the character encounters the target of his dislike.

Distinctive Appearance

This character has some aspect of their physiology that makes her easily described by the average person. It may be a unique scar or birthmark, a famous face, or an anatomical peculiarity that separates her from the general population. This can be inconvenient when the character is trying to stay under the radar, but it can be useful if she wishes to be easily recognized. It is perfectly acceptable for the feature to be easily hidden. A character from a race or species which is uncommon in the area of the campaign could take this quirk.

A re-roll could occur when a character notices the distinctive appearance.

Favorite Thing

The character has a specific thing that he likes a lot. It could be a food, a color, or an object. There's no compulsion involved; he simply enjoys his favorite thing.

A re-roll could occur when the character has an opportunity to encounter her favorite thing.

Former Career

This character has had a major career change, and is knowledgeable about two areas of expertise. A re-roll could occur when the character encounters something related to his old job.

Goal

This character has a personal goal that is separate from the goal of the party. It is not an obsession, just

something that the character would like to achieve or attain. This should be a long-term goal that takes many years to achieve. If the character somehow does achieve the goal, she loses this quirk.

A re-roll could occur when the character has a chance to make progress toward her goal.

Hobby

The character has a hobby that he enjoys doing in his spare time. He may or may not be good enough at it to justify purchasing a skill, but this quirk represents preference, not aptitude.

A re-roll could occur when the character has to do something related to his hobby.

Immigrant

The character isn't from around here. She has moved from further away than most people she knows. She may be from a different region, country, or from halfway around the world.

A re-roll could occur when the character encounters something unique about her current or former home.

Insecure

This character is sensitive about his flaws, real or imagined. He is more likely to take criticism personally, or to beat himself up over minor mistakes.

A re-roll could occur when the character has to perform a task while being watched by others.

Minor Habit

This character has something that she does a lot, like humming or chewing on her hair. She's able to stop at any time, and doesn't suffer from doing so, but she will tend to perform the habit unintentionally in situations where it does not cause trouble. A habit that is difficult to resist or give up is represented by the Habit negative trait.

A re-roll could occur when the character's mind is engaged in a complex activity that allows the habit.

Overconfident

This character has an inflated sense of self-importance. She thinks she's better than average, or is just very optimistic. Regardless, she's more likely to try risky things.

A re-roll could occur when the character tries something difficult or risky.

Past Trauma

This character has had something very unpleasant happen to him in the past. It doesn't hamper his ability to succeed, but it does help shape who he is.

A re-roll could occur when the character is reminded of the past trauma.

Personal Belief

This character has a certain strongly-held belief that is significant to her life. It may be religious faith, a personal philosophy, or a theory about human nature. This belief is not totally irrational or strange; that sort of belief is represented by the Delusion negative trait.

A re-roll could occur when the character's belief is challenged or reinforced.

Reminiscent

This character likes to relive the past through nostalgia or discussion of past events. She is able to deal with new situations, but she often interprets them in terms of past events.

A re-roll could occur when the character is reminded of a distinctive memory.

Social Ties

This character is connected to another character or group of characters somehow, through family, love, or friendship. The other character can be a player character or an NPC. The relationship is casual and carries no responsibilities either way. An acquaintance who relies heavily on the character is represented by the Dependent negative trait. An acquaintance who helps the player is represented by the Associate positive trait or the Valuable Ally superlative trait.

A character should not take this quirk for every friend or family member. Instead, he should take it once to represent all of his important social ties, although these ties should still be explicitly defined, as with all quirks.

A re-roll could occur when the character interacts with a social connection or does something that affects a relationship.

Trademark Clothing

This character always dresses a certain way, or in a certain color, or always has a certain hat. If it's necessary, the character will dress differently, but as long as he has the option, he will wear his trademark clothing.

A re-roll could occur when the character's appearance is a factor in a situation.

Game Mastering

Gaining Experience

Experience points should be provided to player characters at the end of each game session. A recommended amount would be from one to three points per session, and never more than five. Generally, characters should be given roughly equal amounts of experience, varying only by one or two points. This keeps player characters at roughly equal strength, and decreases resentment over "unfair" treatment.

The following things could provide experience points to players or characters which achieve them:

- 1 point for the player showing up on time to a game session
- 1 point for each character if the party achieves a major goal in the campaign
- 1 point for a player if she has a suggestion for how to improve the campaign or the GM's technique
- 1 point for a character who does something creative with her abilities
- 1 point for a player who can say something she or her character has learned during the session
- 1 point for the player who the players as a group vote had the best roleplaying technique during the session

At the GM's option, certain NPCs could gain experience at a similar rate to player characters, to keep them on equal footing (or ahead of the game).

Spending Experience

The game master should provide time either at the end of each session or the beginning of the next one for players to purchase new abilities for their characters. It is recommended that players may only purchase abilities that make sense for their characters to gain. For instance, a character shouldn't suddenly know a new skill unless they practiced a similar skill, made a discovery in that area, or received training. Likewise, many traits should have justification before they are purchased.

Generally, if a character has made several rolls in the past few sessions that would involve a skill or specialty, this would provide sufficient experience to justify purchasing that specialty. The only exception would be complex skills that require a great deal of training, like many Science and Engineering specialties.

	XP Cost
+1 to an attribute score up to +4:	10 points
+1 to an attribute score to reach +5:	20 points
New superlative trait:	15 points
New positive trait:	5 points
Upgrade positive trait to its corresponding superlative trait:	10 points
New skill:	3 points

Unusual Situations

This system is meant to be rather lightweight, which means that there simply aren't rules for many situations. If you come across a situation that isn't dealt with in this book – and you will – just wing it.

No roll may be required for many situations. In that case, you can allow something to automatically succeed or fail and describe the results without ever touching dice or consulting character sheets.

At other times, a roll will be required. Pick the most appropriate base statistic and possibly a candidate skill, and have the character roll. Pick a difficulty based on the situation: 6 is easy, 8 is a bit tricky, and 12 is hard. If you don't choose perfectly, it's no big deal. Few good campaigns rest on the result of a single improvised roll.

Don't be afraid to ask the players for advice. Often, they will have a skill that they think applies, or will remember past decisions better than you can. Just keep in mind that it is the GM's job to pass final verdict and resolve rules disputes.

Interesting Rolls

The LORE rules for interesting successes and failures allow players to choose what is interesting about the result. You should be as accepting as you are willing to be about these. Often, players can come up with better ideas than you.

Inevitably, there will be problems. If a player offers a result that will utterly disrupt the campaign, feel free to veto it. However, if you can see a way to incorporate the idea, even with modifications, you should do your best to go along with it.

Combat

Combat is not the focus of LORE, but it is a common occurrence in roleplaying games. This module provides traits, skills, and quirks applicable to combative characters, and provides a simple combat system that still allows for clever tactics.

Combat Statistics

Health

In the combat system, each character has a **health status**. For a normal character, this status is usually at Healthy, meaning that the character is able to act normally and is not bothered by any injuries. The lowest possible health status is Unconscious. Most characters have five health status levels before Unconscious. Characters who have the Extra Healthy positive trait have an extra health level called Extra Healthy. Characters with the Not So Healthy trait are never Healthy; their maximum health status is Fatigued. The health status sequence is as follows:

Health Status	Penalty to All Rolls
(Extra Healthy)	0
Healthy	0
Fatigued	0
Battered	-1
Injured	-2
Busted	-4
Unconscious	---

Each health status also has a wound penalty associated with it. This penalty is applied to any rolls made while at that health status. In other words, if a character is Injured, any roll her player makes is at a -2, in addition to any other modifiers it has. Wound penalties do not apply to the character's Defense score.

Different weapons do different amounts of damage. One point of damage lowers a character's health status one level. Three points of damage lower a character three health levels.

When a character reaches Unconscious due to an attack, he stops taking damage from that attack, but passes out wherever he is. An Unconscious character can be killed by taking any additional damage after the attack that knocked him unconscious.

Damage received out of combat should be assigned according to its severity. Stubbing your toe or cutting your hand are painful, but aren't really bad enough to lose a health point. Falling three meters or getting a nasty cut would count as one point of damage. More severe injuries, like getting hit by a car, would cause more damage. The GM should decide just how much.

Rules for healing are explained in the Healing section.

Health and Realism

In reality, most weapons will effectively disable a person after a single hit. In cinematic-style campaigns, this can be safely ignored, and characters can be described as fighting on through gashes and gunshot wounds. However, in a realistic campaign, health can instead represent a combination of fatigue and minor wounds. A hit that reduces a character to Fatigued was a near miss that shook him up, and a Battered blow was simply a graze. Using this approach, only an attack that reduces the player to Injured or Busted actually represents a hit in-character.

Initiative Bonus

Initiative determines the order in which characters act during combat. It represents a character's reaction speed, and is dependent on all basic attributes: Body for physical speed, Mind for quick thinking, and Charm for anticipating others' actions. The most common negative modifier is a movement penalty from armor. Additionally, some traits can modify a character's initiative. At the beginning of each combat, characters roll for their initiative for that combat, adding their initiative bonus. The equation for a character's initiative bonus is as follows:

$$\text{Initiative Bonus} = \text{Body} + \text{Mind} + \text{Charm} + \text{Modifiers}$$

Defense

A character's Defense represents the target number for an attacking character's attack roll. The average human has a Defense of 6. Defense is modified by Body and appropriate skills. If the attacker's attack roll is not equal to or greater than the defender's Defense, it misses and deals no damage. If it succeeds, it deals damage according to the attacker's

weapon and the defender's armor. Defense is not rolled. It is used as the target number for the attacker's roll.

Defense is decided by the following formula:

Defense = 6 + Body + Defense Skills

The defense skills used depend on the way in which the defender is avoiding the attack. There are three ways to defend: Armor Deflection, Dodging, and Parrying. Every time a character is attacked, her player may choose which of the three is being used, before the attack roll is made. Each type has advantages and disadvantages:

Armor Deflection

The character positions her armor so that the attack deals a glancing blow. Relevant skills are Armor Deflection and any specialty skills appropriate to the armor or shield the character is using. Additionally, the character adds her armor's Deflection rating to her defense. See the section on Armor for more details.

Dodging

The character moves out of the way of the attack. Relevant skills are Dodge and any specialty skills appropriate to the attack being made. If an attack fails when the defending character is using Dodge Defense, the character may immediately move, in addition to any movement she takes on her turn. This extra movement does not give the normal -2 penalty for moving during an action.

Parrying

The character uses her weapon to deflect the attacker's. This can only be done if both the attacker and the defender are using melee weapons. Relevant skills are Parry and any specialty skills appropriate to the defender's weapon. Melee Attack skills and specialties also apply to Parry Defense. Additionally, if an attack fails when the defending character is using Parry Defense, the character gets a +2 on her attack roll if she attacks her attacker on her next turn.

These defenses can only be used when a character is aware of an incoming attack. Characters can be surprised by hidden enemies, or their senses can be dulled by certain devices and techniques. A character who is unaware of an attack cannot defend herself. No defense skills apply to the first attack against an unaware character in a scene, making the character's defense 6 + Body. After that first attack, the character is assumed to be on her guard for the rest of the scene.

Combat Mechanics

This section describes the rules that govern combat. Characters proceed according to the combat sequence, acting and making attack rolls. This section also contains tables of weapons, armor, and shields.

Combat Summary

Before combat: Roll for initiative.

Each Round:
- Proceed with actions from lowest initiative to highest initiative.
- Characters with higher initiative may interrupt characters with lower initiative, but may still only act once in a round.

Each Turn:
- Make a single action and/or move.
- Moving while acting gives -2 to any rolls.
- One turn of movement can increase or decrease range by one level.

To Attack:
- Make a LORE roll + appropriate skills + weapon accuracy + modifiers.
- Target number is the defender's defense score.
- Ranged weapons are at a -2 beyond their effective range, and short range weapons cannot be used at Distant range.
- Melee weapons can only be used at melee range.

If the Attack Hits:
- Deal damage equal to the weapon's damage minus the defender's armor absorption value.
- A successful attack always does at least one point of damage.
- A critical hit can do an extra point of damage, hit a body part, or be interesting as usual.

If the Attack Misses:
- A dodging defender may make an extra movement
- A parrying defender gets a +2 to hit the attacker on their next turn.

Combat Sequence and Initiative

Combat takes place in turns. At the beginning of combat, each character makes a LORE roll and adds his initiative bonus to determine his initiative for the combat. If two or more characters tie their initiative rolls, they each make a LORE roll. A character with a higher result on this roll has a higher initiative. If this roll results in a tie, the tied characters roll again until the tie is resolved.

High initiatives are better because they allow a character to better understand and react to the events of a battle.

Characters act in order from lowest initiative to highest initiative. However, any character who has not yet acted in a turn may interrupt the action of a character with lower initiative and act before him. If this makes the original action impossible, the lower-initiative character loses his action (he started to perform the action, but was interrupted before he could accomplish it). The lower-initiative character may not change his action in response to the interruption.

If a character interrupts another character to act, the interrupting character does not act again on her normal initiative in the same round. However, she acts as normal on the following round, using her original initiative.

This initiative sequence has two benefits. First, a quicker character can react to and prevent a slower character's action. Second, characters with better reaction time have the opportunity to act with full knowledge of other characters' actions, while slow characters must act without this knowledge.

The initiative sequence can be written out so that it is visible to all players, and tokens or marks can be used to record who has acted and whose initiative it currently is.

Simplified Initiative

Rolling initiative and allowing interruption of actions will be too much work and complexity for many campaigns. If this system seems too complicated, combat can simply progress clockwise around the table, with no interruption allowed and all NPCs acting on the GM's turn.

If that is a bit too simple, you can use the traditional system where highest initiative acts first, play proceeds in descending initiative order, and no interruptions of actions are allowed.

On Your Turn

Characters may take a single action (a single roll) in a turn, and may move at the same time. Moving during an action gives a -2 penalty to that action, and may not be possible to do during actions which require a character to be stationary. Characters may say speak freely during combat.

The following are examples of single actions that may be taken in a turn:

- Attacking with a weapon
- Drawing a weapon
- Reloading a weapon
- Retrieving an item from a bag
- Opening or closing a door
- Other simple actions

The length of a turn is deliberately vague. If it matters, a turn is very approximately five seconds long. Some actions, like picking a lock or repairing a car, may take longer than one round. The GM should either assign a number of turns that the character will need to spend on the action, or simply say that it will take longer than the entire combat and assume that character is busy unless the character decides to abort the action.

A character can move then act, or act then move. Characters cannot move, act, and move again, regardless of the distance moved.

Movement, Range, and Positioning

A map should be used to keep track of characters' positions relative to one another in the game world. Generally, common sense can be used for movement, with characters moving a realistic amount in each turn. However, with ranged weapons involved, range may become a factor. There are four ranges: Melee, Short, Long, and Distant.

Melee range is only a few feet between characters. It is the range at which melee weapons can be used. Ranged weapons can be used at melee range without penalty; it's easy enough to step back a few feet and fire.

Short range is easy throwing distance, but too far to strike with a melee weapon that does not have reach.

Long range is a comfortable range for most dedicated ranged weapons.

Distant range is far enough away that it is hard to hit with a bow or pistol, although rifles and weapons with scopes have no trouble.

It takes one turn of movement to change from one range to the next. That is, to close from Short range to Melee range takes one turn. To retreat from Melee range to Long range (two steps) takes two turns of movement.

Each ranged weapon has an **effective range**. At this range or closer, the weapon can be fired without penalty. At a range of one greater than its effective range, a ranged weapon is gives a -2 to attack rolls. Further than that and the weapon cannot be used. In other words, a short range weapon is at a -2 at Long range and cannot be used at Distant range, while a distant range weapon can be used at any range without penalty. A melee weapon can only be used at Melee range.

The range system is not particularly realistic, but it effectively simplifies a complicated factor of combat.

Attacking

A character attacks by making an attack roll. An attack roll's target number is equal to the defender's Defense score using whatever defense method she chooses. The attacker's roll is modified by the attacker's Body, his weapon's Accuracy, and any relevant skills for his weapon.

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Attack Roll = Body + Weapon Accuracy + Appropriate Skills + Modifiers

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If the attacker fails, the attack misses and does no damage, and the defender may be gain benefits based on her choice of defense. If the attacker succeeds, he does damage. The amount of damage dealt depends on the damage rating of the attacker's weapon and the absorption rating of the defender's armor. A successful attack always does at least one point of damage.

<div align="center">

Damage Dealt = Weapon's Damage Rating - Armor's Absorption Rating

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A critical success on the attacker's roll allows the attacker's player to choose one of the following options:

- The attacker may do twice the damage she would normally do with the attack, calculated after armor is taken into account.
- The attacker may hit a specific location of the

defender's body, doing normal damage.
- The attacker may narrate an interesting success as usual.

An attacker may take a penalty to their roll to target specific parts of an adversary. Example penalties for these locations is as follows, as well as the effect of success at these attacks:

Location	Penalty	Effect
A limb	-2	The defender is at a -2 to use that arm for the rest of the scene.
The head	-4	The defender skips her next turn.
Weak points in armor	-4	Ignore absorption rating of the defender's armor for this attack.

If a player wants to push an enemy to reposition her, he may make a Melee Attack (Unarmed) attack roll. This roll ignores Armor Deflection. If he succeeds at this roll, the target takes no damage and is instead pushed away (and is now at Short range). Depending on the circumstances, the target may have to make an Athletics (Balance) roll to stay on her feet.

Combat Example

Joe is a police officer responding to a convenience store robbery. He arrives and gets out of his car to find the perpetrator just leaving the store. They are at Long range, and each is carrying a pistol.

Joe rolls a higher initiative, so the criminal chooses his action first. The thief fires at Joe. Joe interrupts this action by ducking down behind his car. The shot hits the car harmlessly.

On the next turn, Joe decides to act first. He moves from behind the car and fires. The criminal chooses to dodge. Joe rolls a 6 on the dice, and adds his Body (+2), his pistol's Accuracy (+2), and his appropriate skills (Ranged Attack and Pistol). He subtracts 2 for firing a Short range weapon at Long range. His total roll is 10. The criminal's Dodge defense is 6 plus his Body (+1) and his Dodge skill, for a total of 8. Joe hits the criminal, and does his weapon's damage (2), which reduces the criminal to the Battered health level.

For the next round, assuming that the criminal does not surrender, he is at a -1 to all rolls due to his wounds.

Weapons

A weapon has two properties: damage and accuracy. The damage is the number of "hits" of damage the weapon does with a successful attack. The accuracy is the modifier the weapon provides to the attacker's attack roll.

Each weapon has a skill with which it is associated. A skill preceded with "Melee/" is a specialty of the Melee Attack skill. A skill preceded with "Ranged/" is a specialty of the Ranged Attack skill.

Ranged weapons have an extra property: effective range. A weapon can be fired without penalty at (or closer than) its effective range. It is at a -2 to hit at a range of one greater than its effective range. It cannot hit from further away than that. Some ranged weapons also have a clip size. A weapon with a clip size can fire that number of shots before it must be reloaded. Reloading takes an action. A weapon with no provided clip size can be fired each turn, indefinitely. A weapon with a clip size of "thrown" serves as its own ammunition, and must be recovered before it can be reused.

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Accuracy	Skill	Special properties
Fist	1	0	Melee (Unarmed)	Vulnerable
Dagger or knife	1	2	Melee (Knife)	Concealable
Club, baseball bat, or baton	1	4	Melee (Sword and Club)	
Sword	2	2	Melee (Sword and Club)	
Great sword	4	-2	Melee (Sword and Club)	Heavy, Two-Handed
Mace	2	1	Melee (Axe and Mace)	Crushing
Axe	3	0	Melee (Axe and Mace)	
Great axe	5	-4	Melee (Axe and Mace)	Heavy, Two-Handed
Spear or pike	1	2	Melee (Polearm)	Reach
Halberd	2	2	Melee (Polearm)	Reach, Two-Handed

Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Accuracy	Skill	Range	Clip Size	Special properties
Throwing knife	1	1	Ranged (Thrown Weapon)	Short	Thrown	
Throwing axe	2	-2	Ranged (Thrown Weapon)	Short	Thrown	
Short bow	1	0	Ranged (Bow)	Short		
Longbow	3	0	Ranged (Bow)	Long		Heavy
Crossbow	1	2	Ranged (Crossbow)	Long	1	
Muzzle-loader	2	2	Ranged (Long Arm)	Long	1	
Light Pistol	2	2	Ranged (Pistol)	Short	17	
Heavy Revolver	3	2	Ranged (Pistol)	Short	6	Heavy
Hunting Rifle	2	1	Ranged (Long Arm)	Long	6	Two-Handed
Shotgun	4	2	Ranged (Long Arm)	Melee	5	Two-Handed
Assault Rifle	2	1	Ranged (Long Arm)	Long	40	Automatic, Two-Handed
Sniper Rifle	2	2	Ranged (Long Arm)	Distant	5	Two-Handed
Grenade	5	0	Ranged (Thrown Weapon)	Short	Thrown	Delay Explosive

On the preceding page are statistics for selected weapons; stats for other weapons can be decided by comparison with these, subject to GM approval. Some weapons below require a certain level of technology, or may be obsolete in the setting of a given campaign. Many weapons are outlawed for use by the average person. The GM decides what weapons are available and what they cost; setting modules may offer suggestions.

Some weapons also have special properties. These properties are explained below.

Automatic:

This weapon can fire in normal, burst or fully automatic mode. Burst mode gives a +1 to damage, but uses 3 shots per attack instead of one. Fully automatic mode uses 20 shots per attack, but gives +2 to damage and either a +2 to accuracy or the ability to hit two targets with a single attack (roll separately to hit each one). The two targets must be close to each other in order to hit both in one attack. The GM decides whether they are close enough.

Concealable:

The character can choose to conceal this weapon from the view of others without making a roll. It will still turn up in physical searches of the character.

Crushing:

If this weapon hits a character wearing armor with an Absorption rating, it does an extra point of damage after the absorption value is subtracted. This represents the reduced effectiveness of armor on bludgeoning weapons.

Delay Explosive:

This weapon has a delay fuse built in to protect the safety of the user. It does not explode until just before the next move the attacker makes after the turn in which the weapon is thrown. The target of the attack may take a move action between the attack and the detonation to avoid all damage from the attack. The attack also affects all characters within Melee range of the defender unless they also move out of the blast radius. If the initial attack misses, the GM decides whether the explosive explodes harmlessly or accidentally threatens a character other than the defender.

Heavy:

To use this weapon, a character must have Body of at least 2, or Body of at least 0 and the Extra Strong trait. Without this requirement, all rolls with the weapon are at a -4, and the character's defense is at -2 while using the weapon.

Reach:

This weapon is longer than most, which makes it more difficult for attackers to get to a character. A character using this weapon has a +2 to defense.

Two-Handed:

A character may not use a shield while using this weapon.

Vulnerable:

A character using this weapon has a -2 to their own defense when attacked by a weapon which is not Vulnerable.

Creating New Weapons

The included weapons may not be appropriate for the setting of all campaigns. Alternately, you may want to use more elaborate weapons like rocket launchers or nunchaku. You should feel free to make your own weapons, but here are some guidelines to follow to make sure they are of appropriate strength.

First, consider the available weapons and see if there is one that is functionally equivalent to the weapon you want. A katana is impressive-sounding, but it's really just a sword. You can write "Katana" on your character sheet, but use the statistics for a normal sword.

If an existing weapon will not suffice, you can still use them for guidelines. You may decide that a Desert Eagle is like a light pistol, but more powerful and slightly less accurate. The Desert Eagle can have a 3 in damage and a 1 in accuracy, and be otherwise identical to the light pistol.

If you are making a weapon from scratch, consider the appropriate range of statistics. The average person has five health points, so a weapon that does five damage will take down an unarmored person in one hit. Likewise, an accuracy of two is the equivalent of two skills associated with that weapon. An especially accurate weapon should probably not do much damage, and an especially damaging weapons should be relatively inaccurate.

Finally, consider legality and price. A weapon that is substantially better than a normal one is likely to be restricted by the government for civilian use. Even if it isn't, it's likely to be more expensive and hard to find than a less powerful one.

Armor

Armor serves two purposes: to deflect attacks and to absorb attacks.

Deflecting attacks is a matter of skill; it involves taking the attack in the right way so that it glances off of the armor instead of penetrating it. Wearing armor allows a character to add her Armor skill bonuses to her Defense when she is using the Armor Deflection defense type. She can also add the Deflection rating of the armor to her Defense.

Armor also reduces the force of blows. Whenever a character takes damage in an area covered by armor, they reduce the amount of damage they would normally take by the armor's Absorption rating. Weapons marked as Crushing are especially effective against armor; they do an extra point of damage that is added after the Absorption rating is applied.

Some armor is bulkier than other armor. When a character performs a full-body movement, such as running or jumping, the character suffers a penalty to any rolls involved. The movement penalty also reduces characters' initiative bonuses. Movement penalties do not apply to Armor Deflection Defense, Parry Defense, or attack rolls, but do apply to Dodge Defense. Armor is designed for its wearer to fight in, but not to do acrobatics.

Armor has three properties:

- **Skill**: the skill used to deflect attacks with the armor.
- **Damage absorption**: the amount of damage the armor absorbs from any attack
- **Movement penalty**: the penalty a character has to any rolls involving full-body movement and initiative while wearing the armor.

The following is a table with some example armors. For more detailed information on armor, see an individual setting module. Some armors may not be available in a given setting.

Armor	Skill	Deflection	Absorption	Movement penalty
Padded cloth	Armor (Light Armor)	0	1	0
Leather armor	Armor (Light Armor)	2	1	-2
Chain mail	Armor (Medium Armor)	4	1	-4
Half plate	Armor (Heavy Armor)	2	2	-4
Full plate	Armor (Heavy Armor)	4	3	-8
Kevlar vest	Armor (Light Armor)	0	3	-2
Riot gear	Armor (Heavy Armor)	4	3	-4

Shields

Shields are devices that help a combatant deflect and block attacks. Their primary effect is to provide bonuses to a character's Defense. Shields allow a user to add the appropriate Shield skills to her Defense. Some shields provide a bonus to Defense of their own, by virtue of their size and durability. However, this bonus comes at the cost of reduced mobility. Like armor, some shields have a penalty to the user's movement-related rolls and initiative bonus. This penalty does not apply to Armor Deflection Defense, Parry Defense, or attack rolls.

Shield skills and shield Defense bonuses apply to all forms of Defense.

Below are some example shields with associated skills, Defense bonuses and movement penalties. Some shields may not be available in some settings.

Shield	Skill	Defense bonus	Movement penalty
Buckler	Shield (Small Shield)	0	0
Kite or heater shield	Shield (Small Shield)	2	-2
Tower Shield	Shield (Large Shield)	4	-4
Riot Shield	Shield (Large Shield)	4	-2

Special Combat Situations

To make combat interesting, the GM should insert special circumstances and situations that make each combat different from the next. Sometimes, if a combat is planned, this can be done by specifically designing the combat environment. Other times, the players will instigate an unexpected combat, and the GM will have to think on the fly.

Below are example circumstances and the effect they have on combat. Also see the Vehicular Conflict section in the Modern Setting chapter for optional rules handling car chases and similar conflicts.

Bad Weather

Heavy rain or snow limits visibility. Ranges of ranged weapons are reduced by one. A combatant in a warm, dry place with a view of the area has a definite advantage, and may be able to ignore this penalty.

Sheer Drops

A combat may occur on the edge of a cliff, on catwalks over a large space, or near a deep pit. Characters can try to push enemies with a Melee Attack (Unarmed) attack roll that ignores Armor Deflection. Success means that the target falls over the edge. To avoid instant death, PCs who are disabled in this way should be allowed to grab onto the edge or survive the fall and simply be absent from the combat for a number of rounds determined by the GM.

Dangerous Objects

Combats in factories, kitchens, or ruined areas are likely to have machinery, fires, or sharp debris in the combat area. Characters can be pushed into a hazard with an unarmed attack as described in the Attacking section.

Minor hazards should do 1 point of damage. Major hazards like fires or machinery could do 3. If a hazard is dangerous enough to kill a person quickly, the GM should consider having it knock victims unconscious instead, or eliminate them from the combat while they avoid death.

Destructible Surroundings

It's easy to provide characters with things in the environment that can be destroyed. Flimsy balconies, low-hanging signs, and top-heavy objects can all be used to a character's advantage. Objects have a defense of 6 (or less, if they are larger than human-sized).

Shadows and Hiding Spots

Providing a combat area with dark spaces or obscuring structures can allow characters to sneak up on or hide from opponents. A cluttered factory, a crowded parking lot, and a dense park all offer opportunities to use stealth and strategic movement.

Inaccessible Positions

The GM can include a second-floor window overlooking an area or a hard-to-access roof. It takes time and effort to get to or from these areas, but firearms and thrown weapons can reach both ways.

Public Places

Having people around can be interesting. In public spaces, fighting characters need to worry about innocent bystanders and calls to the police. Remember that gunfire is very loud, and is bound to attract attention in any but the most rough neighborhoods.

Healing

A character naturally heals 1 health level of damage in an in-game week without assistance.

Directly after combat, first aid can help with the severity of wounds. If a successful Medicine (First Aid) roll with a target number of (10 + the total number of health levels lost) is made directly after a combat in which a character is wounded, the wounded character immediately heals 1 health level of damage.

If a successful Medicine roll is made each day with a target number of (12 + the total number of health levels lost), a wounded character heals 1 health level of damage at the end of that day. Only one such roll is possible for each wounded character. This roll can be made by an NPC (if the character is in a hospital, for example).

A character can only heal until they have reached their maximum health level (usually "Healthy").

Note that this healing represents enough treatment so that the character is fully functioning. The actual cuts, breaks, and scrapes will take longer to fully heal. A character who has been stabbed and has recovered to "Healthy" in three days is probably still sporting a bandage, but is able to behave in such a way that it doesn't hamper her ability to act.

Depending on the setting, more powerful healing techniques may be available. These techniques are described in the module for that setting.

Combat Traits

The following are traits that apply specifically to combat. They may be selected at character creation just like the traits in the core rules.

Positive Traits

Extra Healthy

"Naah, it just scratched me."

This character can take an additional hit of damage, giving her an extra health level called Extra Healthy. This trait can only be taken once. For more information, see the Health section.

Focused Attack

They say some people can shoot the wings off of a fly.

This character's rolls for targeting a specific location on another character's body are reduced by two, to no penalty for a limb and -2 for the head or armor weak points.

Heavy Hitter

Muscles like steel bands.

Because of strength, speed, or focus, this character does an extra point of damage when using melee weapons or attacking unarmed. This damage is added to the attack before armor absorption is taken into account.

Increased Defense

If you get shot at enough, you learn how to get out of the way.

This character's Defense score increases by 2 points. This applies to all forms of Defense, including when the character is unaware.

Increased Initiative

Sometimes all that matters is who swings the first punch.

This character has an additional +2 modifier to his initiative bonus.

Negative Traits

Not So Healthy

"Guys... I don't think I'm doing too hot."

This character can take one fewer hits of damage. The character is never at the Healthy health level; even when fully healed, he is at Fatigued. For more information, see the Health section.

Decreased Defense

"Not in the face!"

This character's Defense score decreases by 2 points. This applies to all forms of Defense, including when the character is unaware.

Decreased Initiative

Slow reactions can cost you the fight.

This character has a -2 modifier to his initiative bonus.

Combat Skills

The following skills govern combat expertise. The specialties listed here are for wide categories of weapons, but to reflect increasing skill a player can specialize even further. A particularly accomplished swordsman might have Melee Attack, Sword and Club, and Rapier. He may even have a specialty in his personal weapon.

Attack Skills

Melee Attack

This skill governs close-range combat. It involves training in reading an opponent's movements and properly aiming a melee attack.

Axe and Mace

This specialty governs the use of medium-sized, unbalanced weapons like axes and maces.

Knife

This specialty governs the use of short, bladed weapons such as knives and daggers.

Polearm

This specialty governs the use of long pole weapons like spears and halberds.

Sword and Club

This specialty governs the use of medium-sized, balanced weapons like swords and clubs.

Unarmed

This specialty applies to unarmed attacks.

Ranged Attack

This skill governs the use of projectile and other ranged weapons. It involves training in "leading" an opponent and predicting the path of a shot.

Bow

This specialty governs the use of bows, elastic weapons which do not have stocks.

Crossbow

This specialty governs the use of crossbows, elastic weapons with stocks.

Long Arm

This specialty governs the use of longer firearms which are braced against the shoulder.

Pistol

This specialty governs the use of short firearms that can be held in one hand.

Thrown Weapon

This specialty governs the use of weapons that are thrown at a target.

Sniping

This specialty helps characters hit targets at Distant range.

Defense Skills

Armor Deflection

This skill assists a character to position themselves for an attack so that the blow is deflected by armor.

Light Armor

Helps characters deflect attacks while wearing light, flexible armor like studded leather. Light armor is weak, but it allows easy movement.

Medium Armor

Helps characters deflect attacks while wearing medium-weight, flexible armor like chain mail.

Heavy Armor

Helps characters deflect attacks while wearing heavy, stiff armor like plate mail. Heavy armor is strong enough to allow blows to hit it at a sharper angle than other armor.

Dodge

This skill helps characters dodge out of the way of attacks. If an attack fails when the defending character is using Dodge Defense, the defender may immediately make a movement without the normal penalty for moving in the same turn as another action.

Dodge Melee

Assists a character to avoid attacks made by melee weapons.

Dodge Ranged

Assists a character to anticipate and avoid ranged attacks. This is more about anticipating attacks than it is about dodging bullets.

Parry

This skill represents specialized training in parrying blows with a melee weapon. If an attack fails when the defending character is using Parry Defense, the defender gets a +2 bonus to attack if he attacks his attacker during the next turn.

Parry Heavy

This specialty represents expertise at parrying attacks from weapons with the Heavy, Crushing, or Two-Handed properties.

Parry Light

This specialty governs parrying attacks from weapons without the Heavy, Crushing, or Two-Handed properties.

Shield

This skill represents training in using shields to defend oneself. The Shield skill and its specialties provide a bonus to Defense if a character is using an appropriate shield.

Light Shield

This skill is used with small, light shields such as bucklers and kite shields.

Heavy Shield

This skill is used with large, heavy shields like tower shields.

The Modern Setting

The simplest setting for a roleplaying game is the modern day. Players are familiar with the rules and surroundings of the everyday world, and there is a wide range of campaign types available, from mystery to military to modern horror. This chapter provides rules for making and playing characters who come from the modern day, or from a setting of equivalent technology. Please note that this chapter is focused on a setting which is in a developed country, specifically the United States. Campaigns taking place elsewhere in the modern world may require adaptation.

Money and Commerce

In the modern developed world, money is handled very differently from the way it was hundreds of years ago. Most people have regular, stable jobs that provide a steady income. Additionally, a wide array of savings accounts, investments, loans and credit cards are available. Because of this, a person's level of wealth is not represented by their simple net worth, but instead as an economic bracket. By default, a LORE character has enough money to afford a decent apartment, regular meals, and the occasional expensive event or possession. If a character is more or less wealthy than this, she should take traits appropriate to her level of income. A character is considered Comfortable by default, and may take any one of the following traits, as allowed by their slot layout: Wealthy, Well-Off, Struggling, or Destitute.

Just as there are levels of income, there are levels of cost for items. Items can be Precious, Luxury, Standard, or Cheap.

This wealth level includes everyday expenses like food and clothing, and characters are assumed to have a home equivalent to that described in the entry for their Wealth trait. However, special items like laptops, vehicles, and weapons must be purchased specifically. Characters can easily buy products of a certain cost appropriate to their wealth. It is also possible to "stretch" and buy something that's a little out of reach at the cost of living a bit more frugally for a while. Buying things that are really out of a character's league requires loans, financing, and loss of savings that results in a long-term or even permanent drop on the economic ladder. The specific rules for this are discussed later, in the Items section.

Wealth Traits

The various levels of wealth that characters can take follow. Each level of wealth has an associated number of items a character can take at that level of wealth. Well-Off can be upgraded to Wealthy with 10 experience points, and both Struggling and Destitute can be bought off during play.

Wealthy (Superlative Trait)
"You like it? It's yours."

Wealthy characters have the world as their oyster. They have risen to the top of a successful business, made it rich on the stock market, or come from a long line of rich people. A Wealthy character can live where she wants, travel, and afford things that most people could only dream of.

A Wealthy character may possess a single Precious item, ten Luxury items, and any number of less expensive items at the beginning of play, subject to GM approval.

Well-Off (Positive Trait)
A combination of good circumstances and hard work can make life a whole lot easier.

A Well-Off character has a successful business, a high-level or management position as a professional, or a similar source of income. She has a large apartment or house, and can afford the latest trends and technology.

A Well-Off character may possess five Luxury items and any number of less expensive items at the beginning of play, subject to GM approval

Comfortable (No Trait)
Money isn't everything.

By default, a character is stable. He has a mid-level office position, is a manager at a retail store, or has a similar source of income. He has an average apartment or small house, and can afford the occasional luxury.

A Comfortable character may possess one Luxury item, five Standard items, and any number of Cheap items at the beginning of play, subject to GM approval.

Struggling (Negative Trait)
Some people have to clip coupons and go without comforts just to pay the bills.

A Struggling character has an okay job; maybe she waits tables at a restaurant, is a so-called "starving artist," or is a beginning teacher. The character can afford a small apartment or trailer of her own, or may

share a larger, rented residence. She has little money left over for luxuries.

A Struggling character may possess one Standard item and any number of Cheap items at the beginning of play, subject to GM approval.

Destitute (Crippling Trait)

"Things are tough right now, and the future isn't looking much better."

A character who is Destitute has no regular job, and no savings. He may depend upon the charity of others for food and lodging, or work the occasional day labor job. If he has a residence, he shares a small apartment or lives with relatives. He may actually be homeless. This character, unlike most, should keep track of the exact amount of money he gains during a campaign; this money is all he has.

A Destitute character may possess five Cheap items at the beginning of play.

Items

Items come in four price categories: Precious, Luxury, Standard, and Cheap. Most people can't dream of possessing Precious items like private jets, sports teams, and supercomputers. Luxury items are expensive, but can be bought by well-off folks. Standard items are big purchases that the average person would be able to buy. Cheap items are easily purchased by most people.

Depending on a character's Wealth, he will start with a certain number of items, as detailed in the entry for the appropriate trait or in the table below. If the table reads "Any," then that character may have any number of items in that cost category, subject to reason and GM approval.

Starting Items by Wealth

Wealth	Priceless Items	Luxury Items	Standard Items	Cheap Items
Wealthy	1	10	Any	Any
Well-Off		5	Any	Any
Comfortable		1	5	Any
Struggling			1	Any
Destitute				5

Some items are restricted, and cannot be purchased without the proper license. Players should be able to explain through back-story how their character got a restricted item.

In-Game Purchase Recovery Time by Wealth

Wealth	Priceless Items	Luxury Items	Standard Items	Cheap Items
Wealthy	1 month	None	None	None
Well-Off	Perm.	1 month	None	None
Comfortable		6 months	1 month	None
Struggling		Perm.	3 months	None
Destitute				1 week

Purchasing Items

If a character wishes to buy an item, she may have to make sacrifices. If a character buys something too expensive, she will effectively reduce her wealth temporarily until she recovers from the loss of money or the debts.

When a character wishes to purchase something, refer to the table above, based on the character's Wealth and the item's cost. If the entry is blank, the character cannot hope to afford that item. If the table says "None," then there is no penalty to buying that item. The character may purchase as many items of that category as she wants, within reason.

If the table has a period of time listed, then the character's wealth effectively drops one level for that time period after buying the item. A Wealthy person who buys a Priceless item becomes only Well-Off for one month. A Comfortable person who buys a Luxury item becomes Struggling for 6 months. The Destitute person is a special case; if she buys a Cheap item, she cannot buy *anything else* for the rest of the week, including food.

If the table entry reads "Perm.," then that item *permanently* reduces the character's Wealth by one step. In order to purchase the item, the character had to sell the trappings of their lifestyle or go into lifelong debt.

If a character's Wealth is temporarily reduced again before it has recovered, then it must recover in reverse order. A Wealthy person who buys a Priceless item followed by a Luxury item must wait one month to recover back to Well-Off before finishing the rest of his wait to return to Wealthy.

If a character's Wealth has been temporarily reduced, and he then buys something at his new Wealth which would permanently reduce his Wealth, he remains at the new, lower Wealth permanently. By spending extravagantly, he has managed to ruin any chance of recovering from the original reduction.

There are a few notable exceptions to the item purchasing rules. First, gifts from NPCs do not reduce a PC's Wealth. If a mysterious benefactor gives a character a helicopter, the character may keep it without reducing his Wealth. However, there are likely to be strings attached. PCs may give other PCs gifts, but the GM should monitor this closely to make sure it is not abused. A party consisting of three Struggling characters and one Wealthy character who showers them with Luxury items may be abusing the rule. It should be made clear that these characters are merely borrowing the items for the duration of a job, or perhaps disallowed outright. It's the GM's call.

Second, a character may acquire a specific amount of money during gameplay. She may earn a $10,000 reward or rob a bank for $1 million. Instead of figuring out what result this would have on the character's Wealth, the GM may decide to allow her to spend the money directly on items. In this case, the GM should estimate the real-world cost of the items to determine what the character can afford, and ignore the item purchasing and Wealth rules in the process.

Below is a table of various items and their costs. The GM may use these examples to determine the costs of other items. Note that items in some categories have a lower cost than their price would suggest. This reflects their perceived utility; a person is much more willing to pay (and maybe borrow) money for a car than for a computer. If an item is marked restricted, it usually requires a license or authorization to attain.

Item	Description	Cost
Extravagant Items		
Professional sports team	Control of a professional sports franchise.	Priceless
Private retreat	Second home on a private island, beach, or wilderness.	Priceless
Vehicles and Transportation		
Personal jet	Plane that can be used to fly between any two airports or airstrips.	Priceless
Private yacht	Boat with expansive living quarters and facilities.	Priceless
Sports car	Fast car. +4 on driving rolls involving speed or maneuverability.	Luxury
High-end SUV or truck	Very sturdy vehicle. +4 on driving rolls involving power or sturdiness.	Luxury
Plane ticket	Airplane ticket, domestic or international, to any commercial airport.	Standard
Sedan or compact car	Average car. +2 on driving rolls involving speed or maneuverability.	Standard
SUV or pickup truck	Sturdy vehicle. +2 on driving rolls involving power or sturdiness.	Standard
Motorcycle	+2 on speed or maneuverability, -2 on power or sturdiness.	Standard
Van	Big vehicle. No bonus, but it can carry a lot.	Standard
Bicycle	Normal, functional 10-speed. Nothing fancy.	Cheap
Bus pass	Includes unlimited rides. Need only be purchased once, not every month.	Cheap
Electronics		
High-end Desktop PC	Custom-built computer. +2 to any work requiring processing power.	Luxury
Laptop PC	Portable computer with decent speed; not top of the line.	Luxury
Basic PC	Cheap, off-the-shelf computer. Runs older games and most applications.	Standard
SLR camera	Digital or film camera with full set of lenses, including extreme zoom.	Luxury
Digital camera	Can hold hundreds of pictures on a removable memory card.	Standard
Disposable camera	Film-based, must be mailed-in to develop. Can't be reused.	Cheap
Multimedia smart phone	Phone with camera, music player, and internet browsing	Standard
Basic cell phone	Phone with voice and text capabilities, but no frills	Cheap

Item	Description	Cost
Tools		
Lock picks	A set of tools for picking locks. May be illegal without a locksmith license in some areas.	Cheap
Toolbox	A set of simple tools, including hammer, screwdrivers, wrenches, and pliers. Most Mechanics and some Craft rolls are impossible without tools.	Cheap
Mechanic's tools	A large assortments of tools for a specific Mechanics specialty. Gives +2 to all rolls for that specialty.	Standard
Art supplies	The required supplies to practice a Visual Art.	Cheap
Musical instrument	A decent-quality musical instrument.	Standard
Craft supplies	A large assortment of tools for a specific Crafts specialty. Gives +2 to all rolls for that specialty.	Standard
Electronic kit	A small portable electronics toolkit including multimeter and soldering iron. The bare minimum for most electronics repairs.	Cheap
Electronics workbench	Full electronics workbench with oscilloscope, signal generator, power supply, and soldering station. Gives +4 to all Electronics rolls.	Standard
Weapons		
Knife	May not be allowed in government buildings or public spaces.	Cheap
Bat / Police baton	May not be allowed in government buildings or public spaces.	Cheap
Sword	Combat-quality swords are hard to find, and are usually prohibited in public.	Luxury
Axe	Prohibited in most government buildings and public spaces.	Cheap
Crossbow	**Restricted.** Usually requires a permit to carry.	Standard
Light Pistol / Heavy Revolver	**Restricted.** May require a handgun permit.	Standard
Hunting Rifle / Shotgun	**Restricted.** Sometimes requires a license.	Standard
Assault Rifle / Sniper Rifle	**Restricted.** Requires a permit, and may be entirely illegal for civilian possession.	Luxury
Grenade	**Restricted.** Illegal for civilian possession.	Luxury
Armor		
Kevlar vest	Covers torso and can be hidden under thick clothing.	Luxury
Riot gear	Attainable through surplus sales and police auctions.	Standard
Services		
Instruction course	Private lessons, night school, or correspondence course. The GM may require this before purchasing certain skills during play.	Standard
Emergency room visit	A single visit to the emergency room, providing expert first aid and a stay of up to one day.	Cheap
Hospital stay	An extended stay in the hospital, up to one week.	Standard
Day laborers	A team of skilled laborers to help with a large project for three days.	Standard

Facilities

Characters have personal possessions, but in some campaigns they also have access to a communal facility. This can be a secret base, a house with supplies, or a place of business. In the case where a group of characters shares a facility, the GM can simply decide the required scale of the facility, and allow the players to design it themselves. Facilities are often separate from personal possessions because they are provided by the characters' employers. Soldiers have personal possessions, but they also have access to their army base. For this reason, facilities often go hand-in-hand with Group Member or Authority as a Universal Trait.

On the other hand, some rich characters could buy a facility on their own. A facility would always be a Luxury or Priceless item, and the details of exactly how big it is should be worked out with the GM. Additionally, the Facility system can be used by the GM to create NPC Facilities.

Facilities are designed using a slot system that is similar to character creation. Together with the GM, the players should decide the type of facility it is, the number of each kind of slot their facility will have, and then fill the slots to decide exactly what is contained in the facility.

The type of facility is up to the players and the GM. A fire station can be functionally identical to a large house, with the same capabilities. The only difference is a metaphorical coat of paint. What matters from a rules perspective is the slot selection.

There are four kinds of slots: Structures, Staff, Supplies, and Circumstances. Structures represent rooms and other parts of the facility, from helipads to swimming pools. Staff are NPCs attached to the facility as technicians or service staff. Supplies are collections of items which come with the facility. Circumstances are special properties of the facility that provide special utility. The GM will decide how many slots are available in each category, depending on the style of the campaign. Characters may even have multiple facilities, with different slot amounts in each facility.

The following table provides some possible choices for the number of available Structure slots, as well as descriptions of facilities that would have that number of slots. Some Structures use multiple slots due to their large size. Bathrooms, stairs, and elevators come free as appropriate to the Facility.

Structure Slot Values

Structure slots	Description
1 to 3	Small house or store, outfitted bomb shelter, office in a corporate park, tricked-out tractor trailer
4 to 7	Large house or store, farm, police station, floor of a skyscraper, large yacht
8 to 11	Mansion, outfitted warehouse, industrial park, marine research vessel, office building
12 to 15	Military base, secret underground complex, skyscraper, aircraft carrier

The number of Staff slots a Facility has is limited by its size. Generally, a facility should have no more Staff slots than it does Structure slots. However, a facility can certainly have fewer Staff than Structures. This simply means that some of the Structures do not require Staff or can be staffed by player characters. Each Staff type has an associated slot layout that can be used to determine specific statistics, if necessary. Unless living quarters are provided for Staff, they must go home at night and/or work in shifts.

The number of Supply slots a Facility has tends to match how well-funded it is. A single Supply slot represents a significant amount of money spent; it can be a vehicle or an entire crate of food. Some expensive items can use more than one Supply slot.

Supply Slot Values

Supply slots	Description
1 to 7	Small cache of supplies, basic equipment
8 to 15	Fully-stocked single-use facility, well-supplied office
16 to 24	Prepared for any circumstance, no expense spared

Circumstances are special properties of a Facility that represent intangible benefits based on location or design. Most Facilities have at least one Circumstance slot. A quite well-situated Facility might have three slots. It is recommended that five slots per Facility be the maximum. Note that some Circumstances only make sense for certain Facilities. A farm should not have the Mobile circumstance, and it is silly to have a legitimate place of business be Camouflaged.

Structures

Structure	Description
Bedrooms	Provides private rooms for two people or couples, or a shared room for eight.
Garage	Holds up to two road vehicles. Without a Garage, cars must be parked on the street.
Kitchen	Storage area for food, preparation area, and appliances to feed eight.
Storage Room	Space for supplies with heavy locked door (TN12 Criminal Arts (Lockpicking) roll to open).
Jail	Holding area or brig big enough for four, with locked doors, cots, and toilets.
Server Room	Cooled room with server racks sufficient to run a major website or intranet. Comes with servers, climate control system, and secured door.
Infirmary	Contains medical equipment that gives a +4 for all Medicine rolls, two beds, medical supplies, a desk and chair, and reference materials.
Laboratory	Equipped to provide a +4 to any one Science specialty. Contains equipment appropriate to that specialty. Allows analysis of samples or construction of models. Multiple Laboratories can be purchased for different specialties.
Repair Shop	Equipped to provide a +4 to any one Mechanics specialty, to allow the repair of one type of device. Contains equipment appropriate to that specialty and fabrication tools. Multiple Repair Shops can be purchased for different specialties.
Classroom	Contains desks or tables and chairs for 30 students, whiteboards, a projector or TV screen, and a computer. Provides a +4 to any Teaching rolls.
Safe Room	Sealed vault that protects six people in cramped quarters. The entrance is disguised (TN12 Investigation (Search) check to find it).
Reception Area	Entrance room with chairs, magazines, and video surveillance for customers or visitors.
Retail Space	Open room with shelving for products, advertisement space, and cash registers.
Gymnasium	Space that can be configured to support exercise or sporting practice. Comes with locker rooms and showers. **Requires 2 slots.**
Airstrip	Landing space and permits for airplane landings, with small control tower, fuel supply, and hangar space for two vehicles. **Requires 3 slots.**
Helipad	Landing space and proper permits for a single helicopter, with fuel station.
Dock	Mooring and storage space for two boats, with fuel station.
Offices	Office space for two, with desks, file storage, computers, private phone lines, and supplies.
Call Center	Large room with tiny cubicles providing stations for 20 call center employees.
Guard Post	Protected gate into the facility, with an optional elevated position for a spotter or sniper. Comes with floodlights, a concrete guard structure, a phone line to the rest of the facility, video surveillance, and a removable vehicle barrier (TN10 Drive check to break through in a car without destroying the car)
Spa	Space for six simultaneous guests, with baths, grooming stations, massage tables, and sauna.
Pool	Swimming pool with locker rooms and showers. **Requires 2 slots.**
Armory	Reinforced room providing easy, safe access to weapons, explosives, and armor.
Security Room	A room containing monitors for a security system. Comes with cameras for each room and hallway in the Facility. Must be monitored by Staff or a player to be effective.
Library	Collection of books providing +4 to Research.

Staff

Staff	Description	Layout
Administrative Assistant	Answers phones, staffs Reception Area or Office (if they are present), takes dictation, manages e-mail, files papers. Can be instructed to identify facility using false name. Can serve as a dispatcher for other staff.	Competent
Janitorial Staff	A person or group sufficient to keep the Facility clean, maintain lights and utilities, and lock up at night.	Average
Security Guards	A person or group sufficient to guard the Facility. Will staff Guard Post and Security Room, if they are present. Guards can be instructed to patrol the Facility and grounds 24 hours a day. Each guard is equipped with a light pistol. Guards are not authorized to leave the Facility on missions.	Average
Soldier	A single armed soldier, mercenary, or bodyguard who can guard the Facility and also accompany the PCs on missions or errands outside. Depending on the circumstances, may or may not be legally authorized to use deadly force, but the soldier is willing to fight for the group. Equipped with a Kevlar vest; a light pistol; and an assault rifle, shotgun, or sniper rifle.	Competent
Workers	Near-minimum-wage employees who can staff any number of the following structures: Reception Area, Kitchen, Retail Space, Call Center, Spa, Security Room.	Inadequate
Technicians	Enough trained technicians to staff any *one* of the following Structures: Garage, Repair Shop, Airstrip, Helipad. Multiple teams of Technicians can be selected at one slot per team.	Average
Scientists	Enough trained scientists, scholars, and/or lab assistants to staff any *one* Laboratory or Library. Multiple teams of Scientists can be selected at one slot per team.	Average
Driver/Pilot	A single driver, airplane pilot, or boat operator who can accompany the PCs on trips outside the Facility. The Staff member will drive through dangerous situations, but will not fight unless forced to do so by circumstances.	Competent
Doctor	A doctor who can staff an Infirmary, be on call, or accompany the PCs on trips outside the facility.	Competent

Supplies

Supply	Description
Basics	
Food Reserves	Sufficient canned and dried nonperishable food and water to supply the Facility's staff and the player characters for one year.
Electronics	
Radio Set	Short wave, citizen's band, and AM/FM radio setup with recording capabilities. Can broadcast short wave and CB, and receive all three bands. Works as a police scanner.
Desktop PCs	Ten mid-range desktop computers with full office software suite.
Laptop PCs	Five mid-range laptop computers with full office software suite and wireless cards.
Graphics Workstation	Top-of-the-line computer graphics workstation, with powerful computer and a full suite of photo and video editing software, 3D rendering software, and a digitizer unit. Gives +2 to all related rolls.

Supply	Description
Entertainment Center	Television, stereo, DVD player, a current-generation game console, and speakers.
Earpiece Radios	Ten two-way radios with earpiece and hidden lapel microphone. Range 1 km.
Armor and Protection	
Hazmat Suits	Ten hazardous materials suits, which protect from chemicals, airborne toxins, deadly gases, and mild radiation. They provide no armor protection. Comes with 50 radiation badges that turn dark to indicate hazardous levels of exposure.
Kevlar Vests	Ten Kevlar vests.
Riot Gear	Five sets of riot gear armor with riot shields.
Weapons	
Pistols	Twenty light pistols with an effectively unlimited ammunition supply.
Assault Rifles	Ten assault rifles with an effectively unlimited ammunition supply.
Shotguns	Ten shotguns with an effectively unlimited ammunition supply.
Hunting Rifles	Ten hunting rifles with an effectively unlimited ammunition supply.
Sniper Rifles	Five sniper rifles with an effectively unlimited ammunition supply.
Grenades	Twelve grenades with the capability to replenish the supply in one week.
Combat Knives	Twenty combat knives.
Police Batons	Twenty police batons.
Vehicles	
Sedan	High-end four-door sedan with room for five passengers (+2 to rolls involving speed or maneuverability).
Van	Van with sliding side door and room for eight passengers.
Sports car	Fast sports car with room for two passengers (+4 to rolls involving speed and maneuverability). **Requires two slots.**
SUV	High-end sport utility vehicle with room for five passengers (+4 to rolls involving power or sturdiness). **Requires two slots.**
Helicopter	Multipurpose utility helicopter with room for six passengers plus cargo. Pilot must have the Vehicle Operation (Helicopter) specialty. Can land on any flat, solid surface, but requires the Helipad Structure for refueling and maintenance. **Requires three slots.**
Business jet	Small airplane with room for twenty passengers. Pilot must have the Vehicle Operation (Airplane) specialty. The Facility must have the Airstrip Structure to support a business jet. **Requires four slots.**
Speedboat	Small, fast boat with room for five passengers (+2 to rolls involving speed or maneuverability).
Sailboat	Pleasure vessel with room for ten passengers and small cabin below deck.
Tools	
Intrusion kits	Five kits with lock picks, bolt cutters, and crowbars (+2 to Burglary and Lock Picking rolls)
Recording kit	A kit containing a high-quality digital video camera, a hi-fidelity portable sound recorder, portable lights, and a selection of microphones and lenses.

Supply	Description
Night vision goggles	Five pairs of night vision goggles that allow vision in near-total darkness.
Evidence kits	Five kits containing specimen jars, plastic bags with labels, fingerprinting kits, a black light, and blood-detecting luminol spray.

Circumstances

Circumstance	Description
Mobile	The Facility is located in a large boat, truck, or other vehicle. It can be moved from place to place. This places limits on the Facility's size; land vehicles rarely have more than two Structures, and the largest air vehicles have three or four. Ships can be almost unlimited in size, although they become slower and more expensive the larger they are.
Camouflaged	The Facility is disguised. All entrances and exits are unlabeled and discreet. Any Airstrip, Garage, Dock, or Helipad is disguised to be unnoticed by casual observers. The Facility is owned under a false name and has unlisted phone numbers.
Self-Sufficient	The Facility has its own power, water, and other utilities sufficient to last a month without normal utility delivery. It has a self-contained ventilation system that can provide air for 48 hours in case of gas or radiation attack. If the Facility is also Camouflaged, then the power and water system draw much less from the grid than they should, which disguises the Facility further.
Underground	The Facility is mostly underground, with only the entrance and certain structures above ground. This makes it much more difficult to access or destroy. Airstrips and Helipads must be above ground. Docks and Garages must have elevators, water locks, or ramps above ground. This Circumstance is often combined with Camouflaged and/or Self-Sufficient.
Fortified	The Facility has enhanced defenses to protect against attack. Walls and defensive positions provide a +2 to the Defense scores of any defenders, and there are enhanced barriers and security sensors around the perimeter.
Centrally Located	The Facility is in a highly-trafficked area. This is good for a place of business, and can be an excellent cover for covert operations, but it does mean that it is difficult to keep the Facility's existence a secret.
Government-Run	The Facility is operated, at least in part, by the government. Military bases and government research labs have this Circumstance. It puts limits on the sort of activities the Facility can be used for, but it does mean that any attacks or disasters will be resisted with the full force of the government.
Self-Destruct	The Facility is equipped with a self-destruct system that can be used in the case of an emergency to eliminate its usefulness and a great deal of the evidence. The name suggests a high-tech explosive device, but this can just as easily mean a jury-rigged system made from fuse cord and gas cans. Note that any facility can be destroyed with proper time and forethought. This Circumstance represents a prearranged, quick-acting system.

New Facility Features

The above is a large collection of possible choices, but it is not exhaustive. Players should come up with new options if they feel the need.

New Structures can be any sort of room or external construction that makes sense for a given Facility.

Structures that are especially large in size should require two or even three slots.

New Staff can be any sort of employee. No matter what the job involves, someone is willing to do it. Keep in mind that some jobs are illegal. In general, a single Staff slot can be filled with one Competent

person, 5-10 Average people, or any number of Inadequate people.

New Items can be anything the players imagine. Particularly expensive items should require two or more slots, and the number of items that comes in a single slot should depend on the items' cost and rarity.

New Circumstances can be anything that is an inherent part of the Facility, its layout, or its location.

The GM has final approval on all new Facility features.

Example Facilities

Below are some example facilities. The Players or the GM can use these as starting points for their own facilities.

Small Apartment
Structures:
- Bedrooms
- Kitchen

Supplies:
- Entertainment Center

Private Investigation Office
Structures:
- Offices
- Reception Area
- Storage Room

Staff:
- Administrative Assistant

Supplies:
- Earpiece Radios
- Kevlar Vests
- Pistols
- Sedan
- Intrusion Kits
- Recording Kit
- Evidence Kits

Circumstances:
- Centrally Located

Scientific Research RV
Structures:
- Bedrooms
- Laboratory

Staff:
- Driver

Supplies:
- Radio Set
- Laptop PCs
- Hazmat Suits

Circumstances:
- Mobile

Bookstore with Home on Second Floor
Structures:
- Bedrooms
- Kitchen
- Storage Room
- Retail Space
- Garage

Staff:
- Workers

Covert Operations Facility
Structures:
- Bedrooms
- Garage
- Kitchen
- Jail
- Infirmary
- Armory
- Security Room

Staff:
- Janitorial Staff
- Doctor
- Security Guards

Supplies
- Food Reserves
- Earpiece Radios
- Kevlar Vests
- Light Pistols
- Sniper Rifles
- Grenades
- Sports Car
- SUV
- Night Vision Goggles

Circumstances:
- Camouflaged
- Underground
- Self-Sufficient
- Fortified
- Government-Run
- Self-Destruct

Private Yacht
Structures:
- Bedrooms
- Kitchen
- Storage Room
- Helipad
- Spa

Staff:
- Workers
- Pilot

Supplies:
- Food Reserves
- Radio Set
- Helicopter

Circumstances:
- Mobile

Vehicular Conflict

Any action-packed campaign in a modern setting is going to contain a car chase or something similar. These conflicts are similar to combat, but they are different enough that they really need their own set of rules. This section provides a simple set of rules that will allow characters to involve vehicles in their adventures.

These rules are written with the assumption that automobiles are the vehicles being used, but they can apply to boats and planes almost as easily. Even riding animals can be used with these rules, although they should use the Animal Handling skill instead of Vehicle Operation.

The Basics

Vehicular conflict proceeds in rounds, just like regular combat. Roll initiative and proceed in the same order as combat. Each vehicle can be controlled on its driver's turn. If the driver takes an action other than controlling the vehicle, her vehicle continues in a straight line at the same speed it was traveling, and the driver is at a -2 to any Vehicle Operation checks for that turn.

Vehicles use the same ranges as normal combat: Melee, Short, Long, and Distant. Vehicles at Melee range are so close that they are in danger of crashing. They are considered to be even, with neither in front.

Each occupant of a vehicle is at Melee range with each other occupant. The occupants of any two vehicles are at the same range with each other as the two vehicles are. An occupant of a vehicle may not move during his turn except to change where in the vehicle he is sitting.

On their turns, passengers can act and attack as normal. If the driver of a vehicle falls unconscious, that vehicle is eliminated from the conflict.

The GM should use a map or diagram to indicate the positions of vehicles and their relative ranges. In particular, it should be clear which vehicle is in front and what the order of the vehicles in the conflict is.

During a vehicular conflict, the default assumption is that the participants are moving along a road or other path in the same direction and that they are maintaining the same position relative to each other.

Taking Action

Occupants of vehicles can attack from the vehicles

as normal. The driver, however, has special options. She can choose to maneuver the vehicle into a more advantageous position. This is done using a Vehicle Operation roll that is contested by any opponents' Vehicle Operation rolls.

Below are examples of maneuvers that can be taken. The players shouldn't see this as a menu of possible choices. Instead, they should do what would be appropriate for their characters, and the GM will decide which maneuver is being used in which situation.

Speed Up

The driver can attempt to increase the range between himself and any vehicles behind him, and decrease the range between himself and any vehicles ahead of him. The driver makes a Vehicle Operation check, modified by his vehicle's speed modifier, if any. This is contested by other drivers' own Vehicle Operation checks. If the original driver wins against a particular opponent, their ranges change by one in the appropriate direction. If the opponent wins, those two vehicles stay at the same range.

If the driver successfully Speeds Up against an opponent with whom he is at Melee range, they then become at Short range with the opponent behind the original driver.

If a driver successfully Speeds Up against an opponent with whom he is at Distant range, he has sped out of sight. The opponent is eliminated from the conflict.

Slow Down

The driver can attempt to decrease the range between himself and any vehicles behind him, and increase the range between himself and any vehicles ahead of him. The driver makes a Vehicle Operation check, modified by his vehicle's speed modifier, if any. This is contested by other drivers' own Vehicle Operation checks, modified by their vehicles' speeds. If the original driver wins against a particular opponent, their ranges change by one in the appropriate direction. If the opponent wins, those two vehicles stay at the same range.

If the driver successfully Slows Down against an opponent with whom he is at Melee range, they then become at Short range with the opponent in front of the original driver.

Ram

The driver can attempt to hit an opponent's vehicle

which is within Melee range. The driver makes a Vehicle Operation roll, modified by his vehicle's maneuverability. This is opposed by the opponent's Vehicle Operation, with the same modifications. If the opponent wins, he avoids the ram. If the driver succeeds, then the ram succeeds, and the drivers make another contested Vehicle Operation check, this time modified by the cars' sturdiness. The loser's car goes out of control and is eliminated from the conflict.

Stunt

The driver may try a stunt depending on the environment, like smashing through a barricade, jumping off of a ramp, or threading a tight space. The driver and all opponents behind him make Vehicle Operation checks, modified by their vehicles' maneuverability or power, whichever is most appropriate. Any opponents who win the contested roll successfully duplicate the stunt. Any who fail either crash or fall behind, and are eliminated from the conflict. If all opponents beat the original driver, then the original driver fails to pull off the stunt, and his car is eliminated from the conflict.

Barricade

A driver may try to barricade an opponent who is behind her and is at Long or Distant range. She pulls to a stop blocking the path, and the opponent (and all other vehicles which would be blocked) must make a contested Vehicle Operation check. The roll for the driver setting the barricade is modified by her vehicle's sturdiness. The rolls for the drivers being barricaded are modified by their vehicles' maneuverability. Any opponents which lose the opposed roll are forced to stop and are eliminated from the conflict. Any opponents which win are able to avoid the barricade, and end up ahead of the barricading driver, at Short range with her.

A barricading driver is not eliminated and can continue the conflict.

Getting Eliminated

If a vehicle is eliminated from the conflict due to a maneuver, it is generally stopped, disabled, or simply too far behind to matter. The GM decides exactly what happened based on the circumstances. If the eliminated vehicle was being chased, it has been caught; if it was chasing, it has lost any chance of catching its target. Unless circumstances suggest otherwise, the occupants of the vehicle are unharmed.

Sometimes, being eliminated from the conflict is a good thing, if the occupants of the vehicle didn't want to be participating and if no one is going to come after them due to the elimination.

New Participants

New vehicles can enter a conflict at any time, as determined by the GM, who must also decide where the new vehicles are relative to the other participants.

Example of Vehicular Conflict

Michael's car is being chased by car containing a group of criminals in an SUV. They begin the conflict with Michael ahead at Short range. Michael goes first.

Michael tries to Speed Up, but the SUV wins the opposed roll, so they stay at Short range. The SUV then tries to Speed Up itself, and it wins the opposed roll again. The cars close to Melee range.

At the beginning of the next turn, a police car enters the chase, its sirens blaring. It enters at Long range from the other two cars. Meanwhile, Michael decides to Ram the SUV. He wins the first contested roll, so he hits the SUV. They have a contest to decide who is eliminated, and Michael wins. The SUV is pushed off of the road and hits a light pole, eliminating it from the conflict.

In the next turn, the police car Speeds Up and wins the contest, closing to Short range with Michael. Michael doesn't want to explain all this, so he tries to Stunt by making a quick U-turn. He wins the contest, and the police car spins out, eliminated. Michael escapes and hurries home to recover.

Interesting Circumstances

The GM should make the conflict as interesting as possible by introducing interesting circumstances. These can be opportunities to Stunt, such as a possible ramp or a narrow side street. They could be opportunities for passengers to be creative, like a propane tank beside the road that can be shot at. They could even be deadlines, like an upcoming drop-off or escape route. In the case of a deadline, participants have to resolve the conflict in a certain number of turns or the conflict will be decided for them.

I recommend that the GM introduce a new interesting circumstance about every other round. These circumstances can be minor, but should be described in detail to make the conflict more interesting.

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