GAME ENGINE MANUAL

For the GEM System and Scrolls of Virtue
Revised Edition

WELCOME

Welcome to the second major version of the Game Engine Manual. It's been an interesting road so far. Response to the game has been great, much more than I expected. I want to start off by thanking everyone who wrote to me about the game, and thank them again for their kind words.

In the two years since GEM was first put together, I've been making a number of small and subtle changes. There've been some requests that were put in, and some streamlining of things that were a bit clunky before. Most of these things were subtle and minor, but they started to build up. After so long, it became obvious that a slight revamp of the system was needed.

If you've played the earlier version of the GEM, you'll instantly notice that several things are missing from this version. Most of the Game Master material has been moved to a new book, the *Gem Cutter's Guide*. Most players won't need that information right away, and Game Masters can reference that material much easier in a separate book.

There are some rules missing, notably the sample extensions found in the older book. Back when GEM was first made, *Elemental Reign* and *Live Wire* hadn't come together yet, so a starting point was needed for what those books now cover. A lot of players, though, felt that including large sections on everything from magic to cybernetics detracted from the basic rules of the game. They too, have been moved.

That brings us to the basic rules. What's changed here? Frankly, not much was. Many bits of confusion have been cleared up. Sections have been rewritten, and some examples have been added. Extraneous rules have been removed, and the details streamlined a bit. What remains is a more slender and more accessible Player's Guide to the GEM system.

I hope that everyone who starts the GEM off with this new version enjoys it as much as I have had with making it. I'm looking forward to the next two years. As always, your comments, suggestions, and even criticisms are welcome.

I want to again thank my play-testers, who are now getting too numerous to list by name here. I also especially want to thank my wife, Shayna, and my daughters Jennifer and Mina, for letting me work so much on this pet project of mine. I'm very thankful for a loving and supportive family. Without them, this would have never been possible.

Lastly, I want to thank my father for showing me that through determination and perseverance, anything you want to accomplish can be accomplished.

Sincerely
Neale Davidson

INTRODUCTION TO ROLE-PLAYING

If you're reading this, then you have an interest in role-playing games. This can be an exciting and fulfilling hobby, and we hope that you find as much enjoyment from it as we have. We would also like to thank you for picking up the Game Engine Manual, or GEM.

The Game Engine Manual is, and isn't, a complete role-playing game. In this book are the basic rules for a role-playing system, including character generation, training, combat, and improving characters. Don't worry if these terms aren't familiar, they soon will be.

Role-playing is a form of interactive-storytelling. The Game Master serves as the narrator of the story. The other players act out the parts of the characters in that story.

Unlike most stories, however, the role-playing story isn't written before the game begins. The story unfolds with the imaginations and decisions of the players. The player decides the critical actions of the character, not a script.

Of course, each character does have some limits on her abilities. A player simply cannot go wild with the character's actions and let her own imagination run away with the story. Something needs to reign in the fancies. That's where the rules and the rulebook come in.

This rulebook serves as a guide to keep reality, or a form of reality, in check while the game is being played. If a character tries to hit another, for example, the rules will say if the attacker hit and how hard if he did. It's the job of the Game Master to decide what rules apply in what situation.

THE GAME MASTER

The Game Master is one of the players of the group. He has a couple of fairly important jobs that sets her apart from the others at the table.

The first is to present the other characters, the 'party' with the challenges and situations that they're going to face. She keeps tract of the villains, adversaries, and the entire fantasy world that the characters interact with.

Her other job is to ensure the game goes smoothly for everyone involved. To do that, the Game Master is the authority in each campaign in how the rules are interpreted. If there's doubt about how something within the game, the Game Master makes the final decision in how to proceed.

The Game Master should be the person in the group most familiar with the rules, and most comfortable in talking to all the other players present. She's part lawyer, part judge, and mostly diplomat. If she does her job right, everyone has a good time.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

The massive volumes of books, buckets of dice, and hundreds of pewter miniatures used in gaming may intimidate many newcomers. Take heed, these are not necessary! A typical role-playing game needs only a few basic things.

Paper and Pencils: Paper and pencils are required in this game because players will be keeping track of a lot of information about character, and will want to write it down. This information is placed on a Character Sheet. Game Masters will have even more things to keep track of as they run game sessions.

Dice. While gaming rules differ, almost all of them have one thing in common, dice. In this game, we use only one type of dice, the six-sided dice found in most board and casino dice games. Dice are referred to as 'D,' usually proceeded with a number. A '2D' roll would be two dice rolled and added together.

Example: Jon's player is told to roll three dice. In this game, that means to take three standard six-sided dice and add them together. Jon's dice shows a three, two, and a six, totaling out to eleven.

Also, though it doesn't come up too often, any time that the rules say to divide, the result is usually rounded down to the nearest whole number. This is to keep the math as simple as possible.

The Rules: Most players won't need too many rulebooks, usually no more than one or two. These rules usually the basic rulebook and any extensions needed for the current campaign.

Imagination: This is the most important part of any role-playing game. The first step in creating a character is to think about what type of character you wish to portray. Will you play a man or woman? Will he (or she) be a human, or one of the many races of the world? Role-playing is acting, as said before. To create a fun character, you will need to fill in his quirks, likes, dislikes, and skills.

USING THIS BOOK

Not every player is going to need to read, much less memorize every bit of this book. Still, everyone should go through it once to see how the games unfold and what goes into playing them.

The Players: This chapter discusses the role of the player in the game, and how characters are created. It goes into detail about character statistics and natural abilities.

Skills and Training: Characters can improve their abilities through the use of experience points. This chapter explains the basics in improving skills and buying special abilities.

The Method: This chapter contains the basic rules for playing a character, including feat rolls and combat. Every player should be familiar with the topics discussed in here.

Skills: This chapter provides a long list of sample skills, broken down into different technology levels. The Game Master can pick and choose what skills are appropriate for his campaign.

Equipment: This is a sampling of various forms of equipment through the ages. A casual listing covering everything from weapons and armor to clothing and gadgets can be found here.

THE PLAYERS

Of course, games cannot be played without players. The player's part within any role-playing game is to act out the role and life of a character within a setting.

The player's job, at the root, is to control the actions of a character in the Game Master's setting. Usually, this is as easy as free-form storytelling. Each player will simply state what she desires her character to do, and the character attempts to do it.

There are, however, limits to the abilities of characters in a setting. Each character will have different degrees of strength, intelligence, and power. To find what these limits are, a player will first have to generate her character.

THE CHARACTER

The character is the playing piece of the game. It is one of many roles played within each setting. Role-playing characters are like the characters in a book, they're the heroes of the story, and are the ones that interact with the world around them. What makes a role-playing game different from a book, however, is that a player is in direct in control of that character. The player makes the decisions, not a script.

A player will have to solve the challenges that her character will face. She will have to use her wits in controlling her character during the head of battle. The player determines if the character's love life, becomes tempted by darkness, learns magic, and how the character lives or dies.

Characters do have limits, however, just like players do in real life. These limits come in the form of a character description, which will be written down on a blank piece of paper, which will be the character sheet. On this sheet, the player will write down all the character's important information, such as her strength, her skills, how healthy she is, character history, and more.

STATISTICS

Every character, at her basest level, can be defined with eight basic statistics. These statistics give an idea of the physical and mental abilities of that character, such as how strong she is, how smart she is, whether she is attractive, or how hard it takes to get her sick.

Strength: This is simply how strong a character is. A character with a low strength score is a scrawny weakling, and one with a high score is a muscle-bound weight lifter.

Endurance: This measures a character's physical fitness and general health. A character with a low endurance will get tired easily and will be prone to disease. A high endurance character almost never gets sick.

Dexterity: This is a character's coordination. Someone with a low dexterity is clumsy and heavy-handed, while someone with a high dexterity score is very agile and skilled with his hands.

Comeliness: This is how good-looking your character is. Characters with a low comeliness are simply ugly, maybe even hideous. Characters with a high comeliness are beautiful and turn heads everywhere.

Intelligence is your character's raw book smarts, and how quickly he learns. Characters with a low reason tend to be, well, stupid. Those with high reason can master calculus, verbose literary works, and understand several languages.

Willpower: is simply how firmly in control your character is of his mind. Characters with a low willpower can be manipulated quite easily while characters with a high willpower are noted for being particularly stubborn.

Perception is your character's ability to notice detail with his senses. Characters with high perceptions can see well, hear well, and smell faint scents. Those with low perceptions, on average, have weaker senses and cannot see or hear as well as others.

Charisma is a measure of how charming a character can be. It also states how well he is able to sway others, or be noted from his words and mannerisms. Charismatic characters can sway violent crowds, while those with low charisma scores tend to be quite rude in any social setting.

STATISTIC VALUES

Every statistic is given a value, usually from one to ten, which indicates how good that particular character is in that area. For instance, a character with a ten in Intelligence is very smart, while a

character with a two in Strength is very weak. Players will need to determine these values by either assigning values to them or by rolling dice.

Random Rolls. If you're on your first character, or if you want to make one quickly, you may want to simply roll your character's statistics with dice. For random statistics, roll 1d and add two to the result. Place this value for one of your statistics and repeat this step until all of your statistics are filled. Each statistic should now have a value between three and eight, giving an average spread character.

Example: This character is going to be randomly rolled. Eight six sided dice are rolled, getting a 6, 4, 4, 6, 3, 6, 6, and a 5. Already, this character is likely going to be very powerful. Adding two to each roll, and then assigning the numbers to statistics, we get a character with a Strength of 8, Endurance of 6, Dexterity of 6, Comeliness of 8, Intelligence of 5, Willpower of 8, Perception of 8, and Charisma of 7.

Point Placement. This method allows you to customize how your character is going to take shape. Start with 45 points, and spread them out through all twelve statistics. No statistic can have less than a two, and no single statistic can be more than a ten.

Example: This character is getting a point spread of 45 points. It's easiest to start by spreading them evenly, such as given them all fours, and then use the remaining points to build up desired statistics. This character winds up with Strength of 6, Endurance of 5, Dexterity of 8, Comeliness of 5, Intelligence of 5, Willpower of 5, Perception of 6, and Charisma of 5.

Setting-Specific Methods: Note that some settings and campaigns will allow for characters with extraordinary statistics. Ultra-heroes, for instance, commonly would have strength scores in the twenties or even higher. If the statistics needed in a campaign are different than the standard rules presented here, players should follow the rules of the campaign.

Game Master Fiat. There will be some occasions, as well, where the Game Master decides that she wants all characters to be generated in a certain manner. She may want to shift statistics a certain way or she may want to assign character statistics to different players. The Game Master has the final call when making this decision.

What the Numbers Mean. Now that each of these statistics has values, it's time to explain what they really mean. What does a 'three strength' mean when looking at the real world? Exactly how smart is an intelligence of ten?

Statistic	1-3	4-6	7-8
Strength	Weak	Average	Strong
Endurance	Frail	Average	Athletic
Dexterity	Clumsy	Average	Nimble
Comeliness	Ugly	Average	Attractive
Intelligence	Dense	Average	Skilled
Willpower	Soft	Average	Stubborn
Perception	Myopic	Average	Observant
Charisma	Irritating	Average	Affable

Statistic	9-10	11-14	15+
Strength	Powerful	Ogre	Titanic
Endurance	Stolid	Fortified	Impervious
Dexterity	Gymnast	Darting	Lightning
Comeliness	Beautiful	Gorgeous	Captivating
Intelligence	Brilliant	Genius	Oracle
Willpower	Iron Will	Steel-mind	Adamant
Perception	Keen	Astute	Omniscient
Charisma	Inspiring	Commanding	Mesmerizing

To get an idea of a character's relative power in each of his statistics, a player can refer to the statistic chart on this page. This is only meant to get an idea of a character's relative raw power. A player shouldn't become distressed if she sees an aspect of her character described in less-than-flattering terms.

SECONDARY STATISTICS

Your character's also has two other, secondary, statistics that measure different forms of fatigue. Health and Mana are determined from the sum of a character's other related statistics.

Health: This statistic, basically, is how resilient your character is when taking damage such as sword hits and dagger cuts. The starting value for your character's Health is found by adding your character's Endurance, Strength, and Dexterity scores together. This is your character's Maximum Health. Your character's running Health can fluctuate greatly, but will almost never be above this limit and will hopefully not go below zero.

Example: Amir is finding his current health. He adds his Endurance of six, Strength of five, and Dexterity or seven together, giving him a maximum health of eighteen.

Mana: This statistic represents the mental power your character can muster, and how much mental trauma your character can take. The starting value

for your character's Mana is found by adding your character's Intelligence, Willpower and Perception scores together. This is your character's Maximum Mana power.

Example: Amir is now finding his total available mana. He adds his Intelligence of four, his Willpower of three, and his Perception of eight together, giving him a maximum mana of fifteen.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Once your character has his skills, you will want to flesh out the character by adding a bit of history and color to him. This is largely up to the player's imagination, but keep in mind the background of the game and what would be reasonable to a Game Master.

Family History: The best way to start fleshing out your character's background is to start with the family. Were his parents in the nobility and did they get along with him? Are they alive? Were there any brother or sisters out there? What are they doing now?

Example: Melissa, a skilled computer programmer, was a privileged child, growing up in a well-off family in good neighborhoods. She never questioned how her family acquired their funds, until she found some of her father's files.

Friends and Enemies: You may also want to give your character a few close friends and threatening enemies to liven up life a bit. Is the enemy powerful and likely to hunt your character down? Is your character's friend also your teacher or mentor who needs him from time to time?

Example: Melissa was caught. Her father's closest advisor was a ruthless man named Terrace. Terrace knew enough to keep his distance, but he also knew that Melissa was a potentially dangerous threat. He would act subtly, and she would have to protect her life.

Romance. Simply put, is your character now, or has he even been in love? Romantic interests, both past-and-present, add a good amount of detail into your character's life. Is that long-lost love going to return someday? Did an enemy harm him or her? Is your character's love one-sided or forbidden by some arrangement?

Example: She met him in a moment of desperation. His bravery for the sake of a stranger more than impressed her, it infatuated her. James's quick action with his rifle took care of Terrace's current threat, but now Melissa found herself drawn to this stranger.

Dramatic Event: Normal, rational, sane people aren't the types to risk their lives and livelihoods week-to-week, even if the profits are great. What happened to your character to make him want to adventure? Is he instead forced to adventure? Does he have an end-goal in mind?

Example: Melissa's protection was over. Her father lied before her, bleeding from the temple. A well-placed bullet ended his life. Melissa knew that if she didn't start to strike back, that it could end hers as well.

Description: A character's physical description can play a major role in adding color. Does the character have any notable scars? Is her red hair shining and curly? Is she a tall, shapely person? Look at your statistics, particularly Comeliness, Strength, and Endurance to help decide what the character could look like.

Example: Melissa carries a dark expression on her dark tanned skin. Her black hair drapes loosely across her face. Black eyes peer into the room, piercing everything. Though small, at only one and a third meters, her stance commands attention.

Personality: Finally, once you've gotten some major goings on, decide on a basic personality for your character. Is he a rude snob? Is he brave and daring, sometimes to the point of being foolhardy? Is he a sniveling coward? These are the kinds of things that make role-playing a character fun and rewarding.

Example: Melissa was once affable and charming, but the death of her father has scarred her terribly. Now she is a dark, quiet figure, constantly more concerned about striking against Terrace and his minions. She has little other interest, except for her well-hidden infatuation with the renegade gang-member, James.

SKILLS AND TRAINING

Even though the statistics and advantages a character may possess can give a great idea for the basics of a character, it doesn't say much for the special talents a character has learned or picked up through his adventures. This is the role for the skills for a character.

Skill and other improvements are purchased through experience points, which is a measure of how much the character has improved over her career.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

As a character grows and matures, she will gain experience. The more a character lives through, the better she will be in handling future situations. For most role-playing games, each time a character makes it through a tough spot, or completes an adventure, she is rewarded with experience points. These points, in turn, are used to increase skills and statistics, making the character stronger.

Each character sheet should have a place marked on it that states how many remaining experience points a character possesses. This number will change often as characters will spend these points for improvements.

Spending Experience. When experience points are spent, they are permanently removed from the character. This doesn't mean that the character is somehow less experienced than before, it's just that now that experience has been applied to improving the character's ability somehow.

Example: James has twenty experience points, and wants to improve a skill. Improving the skill costs nine of those points, leaving him with eleven.

Gaining Experience. There are a number of methods used for gaining experience. A character can gain experience by completing adventures, performing daring feats, or by the character's player remembering to bring snacks to the game. When The Game Master awards experience points to the character, that amount is added to the character's running total.

Example: James, who has eleven experience points, has just completed a long adventure. The Game Master awards James twenty more experience, raising his total to thirty-three.

STARTING EXPERIENCE

Most campaigns will give a moderate amount of experience to characters when they are first created. This enables a character to begin picking up skills right away, making her useful to a campaign the moment she's played.

Generally, a new character should receive fifty experience points for customizing her abilities. This amount will vary, of course, on the needs of the GM and the particular campaign. Ultra-heroes, for instance, will want a large amount of experience for their incredible powers. A primitive setting, however, may require a small amount of experience, to keep the characters simple.

Campaign	Starting Experience Points
Unskilled	25
Normal	50
Heroic	100
Ultra-Heroic	250

Unskilled: This level of starting experience is appropriate for those campaigns where everyone is uneducated, such as primitive-age campaigns.

Normal: This level works for most campaigns, and assumes some level of education, and perhaps even a tad of adventuring experience. These characters are ripe for new adventures and challenges.

Example: Melissa is a new character. Her campaign is in the normal range of experience and so the Game Master assigns her fifty XP.

Heroic: These characters have a good amount of experience, and are ready to take on major powers and small forces all by themselves. This is recommended for martial arts and high-action campaigns.

Ultra-Heroic: This level of experience should be reserved for very powerful starting characters, such as ultra-heroes, or great creatures. This can occur in high-powered, high-fantasy campaigns.

LEARNING SKILLS

Skills, as well as other abilities, are improved by spending experience points. The more experience used into improving a skill, the better a character is at performing it.

Every skill has a base cost, generally ranging from one point to five points. The base cost is a way of telling how difficult a skill is to learn. The higher the base cost, the more difficult that skill is to master, and more experience is needed to improve it.

To purchase a level of the skill, a player needs to multiply the next level of the skill times the base cost of that skill. The result is the amount of experience required to raise that skill to the next level.

Skill descriptions do not formally list the base cost of each skill, but instead give a more descriptive qualifier. The table below compares the difficulty of each skill with its actual base cost.

Difficulty	Base Cost
Trivial	1 XP
Easy	2 XP
Average	3 XP
Difficult	4 XP
Hard	5 XP

Example: James is gaining an acting skill, and wishes to raise it to level three from level two. Acting is an average skill, giving it a base cost of three. He then multiplies that number by three, the next level of the skill for him. To raise the skill, he needs to spend nine experience points.

When purchasing more than one level of a skill, keep in mind that each level of the skill must be purchased separately. The quick way to do this is to add each wanted skill level, up to the new desired level, the multiply that result by the base cost. This will give the experience total required for the increase.

Example: James is gaining a magic skill, which is listed at average, and wishes to develop it to level three. Since it is an average skill ,it has a base cost of three. He adds the levels that he's purchasing together (1 + 2 + 3 = 6) and then multiplies that by three, giving him an eighteen experience cost.

MAXIMUM SKILL LEVELS

In general, skills and abilities are capped at level ten. This doesn't always need to be the case, however. When a normal feat roll topping out with a statistic of ten, and a skill of ten, even difficult rolls have an excellent shot at success. Normal people will not normally get that level of skill; adventurers will rarely get it; some ultra-heroes might.

Example: Our dark knight has a dodge skill at level ten. He has accumulated 44 experience points and wants to increase his skill to level eleven. This isn't allowed in 'mortal' campaigns, but since he's an ultra hero, the can go ahead and bump up the skill.

IMPROVING STATISTICS

Statistics can be raised with a base cost of ten. For instance, raising Strength from six to seven would require seventy experience points. This is done fairly rarely, and it becomes much less expensive to buy a number of skills with experience than to try to raise a high statistic.

Example: Melissa is raising her strength from six to seven. All statistics have a base cost of ten, making the needed experience to get stronger a heavy price of seventy.

KARMA

Some characters always seem to have luck go their way. Sometimes, people will call it fate, other times, it's simply luck. The truth, however, is that the characters have good karma.

Karma allows a character a second chance at trying a task, in case she would have normally failed. Each point of karma a character has allows the player to re-roll any single failed feat. If this doesn't make sense yet, don't worry, it is explained in greater detail later.

A character can purchase karma as if it were a trivial skill, with a base cost of one experience point. The first point of karma would cost one point, the second would cost two, and so on. Normally, characters may not possess more than ten points of karma at once.

Example: James wishes to store up a little luck for his next endeavor and purchases two points of karma. This will cost him a total of three experience points.

Characters created by the Game Master, usually, cannot possess karma, unless that character specifically possesses the luck advantage, or other ability that grants karma.

THE METHOD

"When push comes to shove, it's best to be able to push harder and not get shoved at all."

Any story and game revolves around a conflict. Resolving this conflict is the job of the game system and the Game Master. The Game Master uses the rules to determine who succeeds and fails at what they try, including beating up an enemy, picking locks, or any other task involving chance.

THE RULE OF THE LAND

It should be made clear that the Game Master has a few basic jobs. The first is to entertain her players. The second job is to arbitrate the rules. In this vein, the Game Master is, in a sort, the leader of the game session.

Knowing the Rules. Every player should know the very basics of the rules, particularly those rules that directly pertain to their characters. The Game Master, however, needs to be mildly familiar with all the rules in her setting. The Game Master doesn't need to memorize every obscure reference, just enough to know how things should work and get a feel for running the game sessions.

The Game Master is the one who will tell the other players what to roll and when, as well as set up encounters, assign experience, and other system-specific duties. Obviously, Game Masters should have some idea of what they're doing. In effect, the Game Master, along with the rules here, tells the other players how to play the game.

This doesn't mean the Game Master tells players what their characters are going to do, just basically how well they do in their attempts, by determining how the rules apply to each situation.

Game Master's Authority. There are occasions that the rules here won't cover a specific instance. It's the Game Master's job to use the rules as best that she can, and also to determine how events that occur outside the scope of the rules should occur. When the Game Master decides upon an action, that decision is considered 'reality' for the purposes of the game.

Example: A pilot is making a very unusual maneuver, trying to cut around an enemy fighter just right to bring his weapons to bear. These rules don't have specifics in handling maneuvers, so the Game Master decides that the pilot needs to make both a difficult Piloting roll and a hard Gunnery roll to pull of the stunt.

It may also happen that the Game Master may rule against the player's liking. Sometimes, the Game Master might even be wrong. These matters should not be addressed during the course of the game, however, as rules-arguments disrupt the game for everyone else. If the ruling is a major problem, discuss the situation after the game, quietly, to determine how things can be handled better for the next time.

FEAT ROLLS

Skills are used to enhance your ability to perform certain actions. Most of the time, your character will be able to do most everyday things without encountering any difficulties. But occasionally, a problem may come up that isn't covered by everyday situations, such as calming a wild animal or dodging spell-fire. These types of situations involve making a Skill Roll.

First, the GM will inform you which of your character's statistics will be the most appropriate to use in performing the action. Next, the GM will inform the player of any skill directly relating to the task at hand. The player adds that skill to his character's appropriate statistic.

Example: James has entered an ancient shrine, and is trying to determine the nature of the shrine, and which religion built it. James is using his Religion skill, tied to his intelligence.

The Feat Roll comes when the Game Masters tells the player to roll a number of dice. The more difficult the intended task, the more dice are needed. If the result from the roll is less than or equal to the amount figured from the statistic plus the skill level, then the feat succeeds, otherwise, the feat fails.

Example: The Game Master informs James' player that the shrine is very old, and would be difficult to determine more about it. The Game Master tells James' player to roll three dice. The player does, getting a twelve. His combined Intelligence statistic and religion skill is a fifteen. James figures out what religion is responsible for the shrine.

Determining Difficulty. When the Game Master tells players how many dice that they need to roll, she is assigning a difficulty to the intended feat. As stated before, the more dice that need to be rolled the more difficult the task at hand becomes.

The Game Master will assign anywhere from no die, which is trivial, to nine dice for inhuman feats for ultra-powerful characters. Most settings and campaigns should probably top out feat rolls to hard rolls, or four dice.

Example: Steel-jaw is attempted to crack open a chain with his teeth. The Game Master decides that this is an amazing feat, if it is pulled off, and assigns seven dice for the feat roll. Normal humans wouldn't even get the chance for the attempt.

The table below is a brief, narrative, description of each level of difficulty for a feat. For instance, if a Game Master decides something is average difficulty, the table informs her that two dice are required. Feats of incredible daring would require six dice. Anything that would require more than nine dice should be considered nigh impossible, even for ultra-powerful characters.

Dice	Difficulty	Dice	Difficulty
0	Trivial	5	Exceptional
1	Easy	6	Incredible
2	Average	7	Amazing
3	Difficult	8	Spectacular
4	Hard	9	Inhuman

Modifiers: Sometimes, extenuating circumstances will increase or decrease the difficulty of a typical feat. These variations on a task are modifiers. If a Game Master determines that something unusual is affecting the chances to succeed a given task, he may add or subtract dice as needed to make the feat more in-line to the situation.

Example: Normally, attacking someone with a melee weapon is considered an easy feat. The target, however, is moving incredibly fast. The Game Master decides to modify the to-hit roll by two dice, increasing the difficulty from easy to difficult, requiring the player to roll four dice instead of two.

Defaulting: Many skills can be defaulted. That is, a character can attempt the skill with only using the statistic. Others, such as most of the Intelligence-based skills, require at least some specific knowledge of the skill to perform it. Any exceptions are given in the skill's description. The Game Master, of course, can feel free to allow or disallow defaulting in certain situations as he sees fit.

Example: Melissa is taking a shot with her bow at a target. She is unskilled with a bow, but since anyone could, at least, make an attempt, the Game Master decides that she can make the roll without the skill.

Example: Julia is attempting to identify several unusual plants. The Game Master decides that Julia needs the botany skill to perform this task, and cannot use the default on the feat roll. Since Julia does not have the needed skill, she automatically fails the task.

SKILL CONTESTS

Sometimes, two or more characters will be attempting the same skill in a contest. One person is pitting his skill against another. The winner of the contest is whichever character either wins the feat roll by more, or loses by less.

Example: Sam and Amir are at a table, playing the old game of checkers. Sam has an intelligence of six and a Checkers skill of four. On a two-die roll, he gets an eight, making it by two. His opponent has an intelligence of five, but has a checkers skill of six. He also rolls an eight, but makes his roll by three. The opponent wins in a close match.

In event of a tie, the involved parties should either roll again, or give the victory to the character with the person who has the highest statistic plus skill total.

Example: If both players above had made their rolls by three, the higher skilled player would win the game. In this case, Sam's opponent would win, since his Intelligence added to his checkers skill is one point higher than Sam's total.

THE ATTACK ROLL

An attack roll, also called a 'to-hit' roll, is basically a feat roll made when one person is attempting to cause harm to another. The attack roll is at the heart of any combat system, and all players should become intimately familiar with how it works.

Melee Attacks. A melee attack is simply taking a weapon and hitting something nearby with it. A character, in general, will want to succeed an

average feat roll against his strength statistic plus appropriate weapon skill to succeed a melee attack. If the roll succeeds, the weapon, if there is one, strikes successfully and the results are determined. If the roll fails, the attacker missed.

Example: James wants to strike an opponent with his scimitar. He has strength of nine and a Scimitar weapon skill of five. He only needs to roll two dice, and easily succeeds, striking his opponent. (Note that this example means that James will always succeed a typical attack.)

Ranged Attacks. A ranged attack is basically throwing or shooting something at a target. If an attacker can see his intended target, and the target is within range of the chosen weapon, the attacker can make a ranged attack.

The attack roll succeeds for ranged weaponry if it is under the character's dexterity plus any appropriate weapon skill. Most attacks within the effective range of a weapon are considered average (two-dice) attacks.

Example: Melissa is using a rifle to fend off a few wolves moving on her position. She has a clear line of sight on them, and the wolves are well within the range given for the rifle. She attempts to roll two dice under her combined dexterity statistic and her rifle skill.

Effects of Range. With ranged attacks, the ability to hit the target relies mostly on how close the attacker is to it. The closer a target is, the larger it appears, and therefore the easier it is to hit.

Targets within half the effective range of a weapon are generally considered easy targets, and require only one die to hit them normally. This is considered 'short-range'.

Example: The listed range for a crossbow is fifty meters. Any target within half that range, or twenty-five meters, is considered a short-range target and is easy to hit.

Targets between the effective range of a weapon, and twice that range, are considered to be at 'long-range', and are difficult to hit. These targets require three dice to hit them normally.

Example: The crossbow can hit targets beyond its effective range of fifty meters. Between fifty and one hundred meters, targets are said to be at long-range, and are difficult to hit. Most weapon reaches don't extend beyond long-range.

A select few weapons, mostly energy weapons, have an 'extreme-range', where the weapon cannot normally be aimed with any accuracy. Extreme-range for these weapons extends to four times the weapon's normal effective range, and requires a hard roll, or four dice, for an attack.

Lastly, some ranged attacks are more difficult because they are too close. These are point-blank attacks, where the ranged weapon isn't too effective because the target is actually interfering with the aim. These attacks start at average difficulty.

The table below is provided to be an easy reference for basic attack difficulties based on range. Keep in mind that other circumstances may make the attacks harder than normal.

Range	To-Hit Dice
Melee, Point Blank	2d
Short Range	1d
Medium Range	2d
Long Range	3d
Extreme Range	4d

Effects of Line of Sight. Most attacks require a line of sight on the target. This means that the attacker has to have a clear view of at least part of what he is shooting at.

Cover blocks line of sight, making someone considerably harder to hit. Depending on the amount of cover, attack rolls to-hit can be made more difficult or simply made impossible.

Small Cover occurs when the target partially blocks himself with a thick object, like a small shield, broken chair, or shrubs. Hitting targets in small cover adds one dice of difficulty on attacks.

Example: Thomas is attempting to nail some criminals with a rifle. One of the criminals hides behind an overturned filing cabinet, partially covering himself from ranged attacks. Thomas finds his attack roll one die more difficult than before.

A more effective cover is heavy cover, where the target hides half his body behind something large, revealing only enough to use a weapon and to see the attacker. Heavy cover makes attack rolls two

dice more difficult than normal. This is offered by large shields, trees, or building cover,

Example: Thomas's target runs behind a large tree, covering most of his body from the incoming energy fire. Thomas's difficulty goes from partial cover to heavy cover, and his attack rolls go up one die.

Full cover is where the target is completely blocked by something and cannot be seen. Attack rolls against someone in full cover are impossible.

Example: Thomas's target, runs like crazy behind a building and doesn't bother to give himself possible attacks. Thomas has lost line-of-sight at this point, and can no longer attack.

Effects of Weapon Accuracy. Some weapons feel very well weighted when in-hand, and are very accurate when used in combat. Other weapons are awkward and more difficult to use. This feel of a weapon is its accuracy, and it modifies, subtly, the attack rolls of that weapon.

When attacking with a weapon, add the accuracy of the weapon to the statistic plus skill required. This gives a 'corrected' target number to roll under when trying to hit the target.

Example: Dan is attacking a target with his long sword. He has strength of six and a long sword skill of four, giving him a ten so far. Sadly, the weapon is not accurate, with a minus two rating. The corrected number is an eight, worsening his odds.

Weapon Accuracy should be considered an optional rule, which means that it should be used if everyone is comfortable with it. If the group would rather not add to the complexity of the combat, then feel free to ignore this rule.

Effects of Size. Large targets are, of course, much easier to hit than smaller ones. Every time an opponent doubles the size of the attacker, the attack is one level easier. Every time the opponent halves the size of the attacker, the attack is one level harder.

Example: A centaur is attacking a human. Since the centaur is twice the size of the human, the centaur must roll an additional dice on his attack. The human has it easier, rolling one less dice than normal.

EVADING ATTACKS

Most characters will go to great lengths to avoid getting hurt. In combat, the most effective ways are to evade incoming attacks. This can be done with dodging or evading.

DODGING

An important skill in combat is the ability to get away from incoming attacks. This is called 'dodging'. A character can try to dodge one attack every combat round. This dodge comes at the cost of negating the character's next action during this combat.

Example: James is running from a skilled archer. He declares that he is attempting to dodge the first incoming arrow attack.

The Basic Dodge: A dodge roll is a dexterity feat. The dodge roll is made before the incoming attack is rolled. The difficulty of the dodge roll is based on the speed and style of the incoming attack. The chart below lists the various types of incoming attacks, and how difficult they normally are to dodge.

Attack	Dodge Roll
Slow Traps	Easy
Melee Attacks	Average
Thrown Weapons	Difficult
Arrows, Bolts	Hard
Projectiles, Bullets	Amazing
Energy Weapons	Inhuman

If the dodge succeeds, the attack will miss, regardless of the attacker's attack roll. If the dodge fails, the attacker still must make his attack-roll, and may still hit or miss.

Example: Jon is engaged in heavy combat against a swordsman and a knife-thrower. The swordsman declares that he is going to attack. Jon states, quickly, that he is going to dodge, and then succeeds an average dodge feat. The swordsman's first attack automatically misses. However, the swordsman's second attack, and the knife-thrower's attacks are handled normally.

Anticipating a Dodge: The only way for an attacker to make a dodge more difficult is to focus his own attack. Doing this increases the difficulty of the attack by one dice, but also makes a countering dodge one level more difficult.

Example: Jon's opponent is getting tired of his constant dodging, so is now going to attempt to anticipate Jon's movements. Doing this raises his attack roll by one dice. When Jon attempts to dodge these attacks, however, he does so with a one-die penalty.

Evading Combat: Another form of dodge allows defender to break out of melee combat with his opponent. Not only does the defender move out of the immediate attack, but also out of melee range for that round. Turning a normal dodge into an evade raises the difficulty of the dodge roll by one level.

Example: Jon sees that his opponent is getting more determined to kill him. He therefore decides to make a break for it on the next attack. As his dodge action, he opts to evade. The normal dodge is two dice for a melee attack. The effort the attacker is placing in anticipating Jon's move raises this to three dice. The evasion maneuver Jon is attempting raises this to four dice. Jon barely manages the roll, but leaps away from his attacker, out of melee combat, where he can safely run.

PARRYING

Parrying is a type of defense-move that deflects incoming blows. A character may attempt to parry a single incoming melee attack per combat round. The parrying weapon must be the same size as the opponent's weapon, or larger. Usually, the act of parrying negates the character's next available action on his round.

Example: James is attempting to parry an incoming attack from a cutlass. His scimitar is larger than the cutlass, so the parrying is allowed. James will sacrifice one of his attacks during the next round, however.

A character can parry immediately after the attacker succeeds his attack feat roll. The parrying character then rolls his attack roll, at one die more difficult than normal, to parry away the incoming weapon. If the roll is successful, the blade is parried away, and the attack negated.

Example: Jon is again fighting the swordsman. The swordsman succeeds his first attack, to which Jon declares that he is going to parry. Jon rolls three dice for his parry feat roll and succeeds. The swordsman's first attack is effectively negated.

Disarming. This type of attack is used for removing an opponent's weapon. A character can disarm someone by attempting to parry one level more difficult than normal. If this maneuver succeeds, the weapon is thrown several meters away from its owner.

Example: A brigand, who uses a cutlass, is attacking James. James attempts to disarm with his own cutlass, and rolls four dice, barely making the roll. The first attack is not only parried, but also disarmed by James. The loose weapon flies randomly to the side.

Full Defense: When a character commits both a dodging and parrying action in one round, he's going for full defense. There is no special penalty for doing both, except that the maneuvering character looses all of his actions on his next round.

Example: Jon has just dodged and parried in a single combat round. Now that Jon's actual turn has come around, he's go no actions left to him. He skips this turn and will have to wait for the next go-around.

SPECIALIZED ATTACKS

Many times, a simple attack will not be enough. Characters will often try what they consider to be unique methods of attack. These attacks stray, a little, outside of the normal rules, but are easily handled.

Off-hand rule: Most characters prefer the use of one hand to the other. Characters are generally either 'right-handed' or 'left-handed'. If a character is performing a delicate task with his off-hand, such as using a weapon, that task is one die more difficult than normal.

Example: James has been wounded in his right hand, and is forced to use his left hand for the rest of combat. Instead of rolling average feats for his attacks, the feats are now difficult.

Characters who have taken the 'ambidextrous' advantage do not need to worry about this rule.

Two Weapon Fighting. Some characters will adopt the use of two melee weapons in combat, one in each hand. This is a difficult style, but the added ability for parries and attacks makes the difficulty worth the effort for some.

Using two weapons always increases the ability to hit with the main weapon by one level, generally raising the attack from an average to a difficult roll. The second weapon is used for parrying. The advantage here is that the character may parry an incoming blow without expending an action in combat.

Example: James is carrying a long and short sword. His main weapon is the short sword, which he uses for his attacks. He uses the long sword to parry. During his turn, James is attacking with his long sword. The target has a shield, which raises the difficulty of the feat roll from average to difficult. The two-weapon style James is using raises the roll again from difficult to hard. James must roll four dice under his weapon skill and strength to succeed in his attack.

Another, but exceedingly difficult, option is to use both weapons to attack in the same round. A simultaneous strike begins with the two-handed style penalty, added to a possible off-hand penalty, for the secondary weapon, added to a single-die penalty for a dual strike. In simpler terms, striking with the main weapon is two levels more difficult, and striking with the secondary weapon is generally three levels more difficult.

Example: A famed warrior uses a long sword and short sword. He has strength of nine, a long sword skill of nine, and a short sword skill of nine. He declares that he is attempting a dual strike. His primary weapon starts at difficult, but the opponent is wearing a shield, making the roll, so far, hard. The dual-strike raises the hard roll to an exceptional roll. Since the warrior is ambidextrous, he has no off-hand, making both rolls exceptional. He rolls five dice for his long sword attack, getting a fifteen, and succeeding. He then rolls five dice for his short sword attack, getting a twenty, which misses. He then rolls damage for the long-sword attack.

Called Shots. A called shot is when a character is taking specific aim at a specific part of a target. Instead of hitting a bus, for instance, the character is shooting for the tire. Effectively, the character is now going for a new target that happens to be a part of the old one.

At the least, a called shot will increase the difficulty of an attack by one level. The smaller the new target is in relation to the whole body, the more difficult the feat becomes. Also, sometimes, a specific part of a target may be moving faster, or be better protected, than other parts. This would also make the called shot more difficult to accomplish.

Example: Jon is shooting at a bus, but decides instead to go after the tires. His roll would have been average, but since the tires are so much smaller than the bus, the Game Master declares that shooting the tires would be a hard feat.

A called shot should never be used to outright kill an opponent. This is one thing that certain players might use to gain an unfair amount of power in a combat. It should be clear that such actions are well out of the spirit of the game.

Example: Jon is very angry with his opponent, and attempts a called-shot with his pistol on the opponent's eye. This is clearly out of the spirit of the game. Even if such a thing were allowed, the called shot would be, at least, three dice harder than normal to work, and there is still no increase in damage to the overall target, though the eye itself will suffer the full force of the blow.

Switching Targets. Sometimes, a character will want to attack two different targets within the same combat round. Changing targets adds an additional die of difficulty for the attack on the second target.

Example: Two creatures cover Rich. He attacks the first one as normal, requiring an average feat roll. He then switches targets to the remaining creature, but his attack roll is increased from average to difficult.

Shooting Into Melee. There are occasions where a character may need to shoot at a target that is within a group of people. Hopefully, she won't miss, because if she does, there is a good chance that she'll manage to nail someone else.

If the character misses the target, she will then need to fail a second to-hit roll. If the roll succeeds instead, one of the other possible targets nearby, chosen at random, is hit with the attack.

Example: Melissa is firing a crossbow into a crowd, hoping to save her friend from a mob. She fires at one of the mob members, and misses. She rolls a second time, this time making the roll. The Game Master rolls to see who takes the arrow, and chooses Melissa's friend. Melissa accidentally strikes her own friend.

Grappling. A grappling or entangling move is when one opponent attempts to restrain the other. He uses his own strength or something to bind the victim, and keep him held.

Grapple feats are made with normal attack feats. No damage is scored on a successful hit, however. Instead, the victim must make strength feat in order to break out of the entanglement. The difficulty of the feat is determined either by the material binding the person, or by the strength of the attacker.

Materials: For a solid material, consider that normal ropes would be difficult to break, and chain to be exceptional. From here, a Game Master can determine the relative strengths of other materials.

Personal Restraint: Every five points of strength (rounded up) increase the difficulty of a hold by one. A character with strength of six, for instance, would require a victim to succeed an average, or two-die, roll to escape.

Example: James has Thomas in a tight hold. James has strength of nine, requiring Thomas to succeed an average Strength feat in order to free himself.

Other unusual circumstances. Of course, characters and their players will come up with many different and unique fighting styles to try to subdue or defeat their opponent. A Game Master should simply consider how difficult such feats would be, how such feats would be modified, and assign needed dice appropriately.

AREAS OF EFFECT

When damage, or other effects, are applied, it may cover an area, strike a single target, or go through a straight line. Everything caught by the effect is said to be in the 'area-of-effect'.

Touch-Based. This describes when the attacker must physically touch the intended target for an effect to occur. This usually, but not always, involves rolling a bare-hands or melee feat roll.

Example: A wizard is attempting to cast a spell on a target. The spell description states that it is a touched-based spell. The wizard must roll a barehanded attack on his target and successfully strike for the spell to be successful.

Line-Of-Sight: This is, basically, an unobstructed view from the attacker to the intended target. Nearly all ranged attacks require at least a partial line-of -sight. Cover can partially obscure line-of-sight, making some attacks difficult.

Example: James is using a scanning beam over a clearing. The beam can identify anything within line-of-sight of the holder. So long as the beam can physically 'see' something, it is a valid target.

Range. As described before, most weapons and other effects have a maximum range of effect. The range is simply the distance the attacker is to his target. If the range to the target is greater than the range of the effect, the target is completely safe.

Example: A laser with a maximum effective range of 200 meters is shooting Jacob. He is standing at 210 meters away, and cannot be hit unless his opponent closes the distance between them.

Area of Effect: If an effect covers an area, it is said to have an area-of-effect. Most of the time, this term applies to a sphere, going out a certain range from the center. Basically, if someone is anywhere within the listed range of the effect, within the sphere, he is affected.

Example: Melissa casts a fireball. The center of the fireball is placed twenty meters away, and the fireball itself explodes ten meters from the center. Everyone and everything less than ten meters from the center of the fireball is consumed in flames.

Tight Spread: A tight spread covers a thirty-degree arc, one hour on a clock, out to a specified range, affecting everything within. The area of effect forms a cone.

Example: James is firing a machine-gun, which affects a tight spread up to 50 meters. Everyone within a thirty-degree arc, up to the given range, suffers from the machine gun's firepower.

Wide Spread: This is similar to a tight spread, only that it affects a ninety-degree arc, or three hours on an analog clock. The area of effect has the shape of a wide cone.

Example: James is firing the same machine-gun into a wide arc. The arc goes out to fifty meters again, but covers a fill ninety-degree arc, effecting everyone within. The wide arc attack, however, is less powerful than the tight arc, and causes less damage.

Effects of Cover on Area of Effect. It is possible for cover to reduce the amount of damage a character takes from an area-of-effect attack. Small cover will reduce one dice of the effect. Heavy cover will reduce two dice from the effect. Full cover will completely block the effects of the attack to the target.

Example: Jon is hiding behind a brick barrier, giving him heavy cover. A machine-gun operator is firing a wide spread, which includes Jon in its wake. While damage from the machine gun is normally two dice for this type of spread, Jon's cover effectively negates the incoming attack.

DAMAGE AND ILL-EFFECTS

If a character spends a good deal of time in combat, inevitably, she's going to be getting into a world of hurt. Damage is the unfortunate result of getting sliced by a weapon, and occurs whenever a character gets hurt.

Types of Damage. An important thing to note about damage is that it can occur in many different varieties. How things can cause damage is sometimes just as important as how much damage has been caused.

Blunt. Hammers, clubs, and fists often deliver this type of damage. Blunt damage occurs when an object is used to bash and bruise an opponent.

Edged. Weapons with edges, such as swords and knifes, delivered edged damage. Edged damage occurs when a weapon slices into a target, cutting into it.

Energy: Energy damage can be delivered through electric shock or laser fire. It occurs when a high amount of energy is delivered to instantly burn into a target.

Flame. Damage from burning can occur through any open contact with flame or intense heat. Flame damage occurs as the target becomes singed.

Piercing. This type of damage can be delivered through spears or bullets, and occurs when a weapon bores into a target, drilling a whole into it.

Other: There are, of course, many other types of damage that can befall a character, but the ones listed above will suit most purposes within the game.

Bare Handed Damage. When a character attacks someone with her fist, she is attempting to cause some amount of damage. When using bare hands, the amount of damage delivered on a successful blow is equal to one-forth that character's strength, rounded up. Barehanded damage is considered blunt damage.

Example: Ryan has strength of five. Whenever Ryan is forced to fight barehanded, he will cause two points of blunt damage to those he's facing. This is considered Ryan's base damage.

Melee Weapons. Weapons add, tremendously, to barehanded damage. The amount of damage a weapon causes is equal to the character's barehanded damage, plus the indicated damage for the weapon. The type of damaged suffered is from the weapon.

Example: Ryan uses daggers. When he strikes someone successfully with one, he causes his barehanded damage, plus the dagger's damage in an Edged attack. For Ryan, this is two points, plus one dice from the dagger.

Ranged Attacks. Ranged weapons, such as guns and bows, do not enjoy the minor benefit of bare-hand damage. Instead, the damage listed for each weapon is the fill amount that the weapon is capable of causing.

Example: Ryan is opting to throw his dagger instead of stabbing with it. The dagger, now a ranged weapon, will strike with the one dice of piercing damage indicated, but gain nothing from Ryan's strength.

Suffering Damage. Most, but not all damaged will wound a character's health. Eventually, he could suffer enough damage that he will possibly go unconscious, or even die from his various wounds and injuries.

When damage occurs, and makes its way through armor and any other defenses, a character will temporarily lose that amount of damage from his current health. This is referred to as 'taking damage'.

Example: Jon has been hit with fifteen points of edged damage with a scimitar. He is not wearing armor, and subtracts fifteen points from his current health of twenty, leaving him with five points.

A quick glance at the weapons in this book reveals that most can cause a character a world of hurt in a single blow. Other weapons are capable of slaughtering a person outright. A wise character would think about armor and defense skills. Even wiser characters might consider staying out of combat outright.

Going Unconscious. Once a character has expended his health, he begins taking damage directly to his Endurance statistic. During this time, the character is incapable of action. She is lying unconscious and very likely near death.

Example: Jon's health is down to six points. He then suffers another blow of twelve points. The first six points zero out Jon's health. The remaining three lower Jon's endurance from seven points to four. Jon immediately falls unconscious and has suffered a severe wound.

Death: Once a character hits zero endurance, that character is dead. No amount of recovery is possible. Game Masters should tend to not let this happen often, but players should not get too discouraged when it does. A character is simply part of the game. When it dies, the player should simply make a new one.

Example: With Jon already down to four endurance, his opponent maliciously decides to finish him off, striking for another ten points of edged damage. Taking the damage, Jon loses his remaining endurance, and dies from this last and fatal wound.

Mana and Willpower damage. Some attacks can be more mental in nature, and strike at a character's mana instead of his health. This sort of damage works in the same manner as physical damage, but is instead applied to a character's running mana. Once this mana is expended, damage is taken from willpower. If a character has expended all his willpower, he dies.

Example: A spell has been launched at Ronald to damage his mana. Nine points of mana damage are applied to him. Ronald has no defense against this, and lowers his running mana from its maximum of fifteen to six.

VEHICLE SCALE DAMAGE

In combat against vehicles, meka, and emplacements, the sheer volumes of damage get to be very difficult to measure. To simplify things, the game can use a shortcut. Vehicle scale damage is basically ten times normal damage. Every ten points of normal-scale damage equals one point of vehicle damage, rounded down.

Example: Max is shoot at a car with a high-powered rifle. His first shot causes twelve points of normal damage, which equals one point of vehicle damage. His second shot scores nine points of normal damage, which unfortunately drops to no vehicle damage.

Heavy weapons often list their damage as 'dV', which means 'dice of vehicle damage', usually followed by a damage type. Heavy armors will also use 'V' to denote that they resist on a vehicle-damage scale.

Example: The car that Sam is shooting at has an armor against piercing weapons of 2V. This means that it would require at least thirty points of normal damage, or three points of vehicle damage, to penetrate.

DAMAGE REDUCTION

With such a large amount of incoming damage, it's only natural that most characters are going want to protect themselves and reduce at least some of the hurting. This is the role of armor.

Reducing Damage. Armor reduces the amount of incoming damage being directed to a character. When an armor reduces damage, it lowers the strength of an attack based on the rating of the armor for the appropriate damage type.

Example: A cutlass strikes Emir for seven points of edged damage. Emir's ceramic armor is listed as reducing six points of edged damage. The weapon, after cutting through the armor, leaves only one point of damage to get through to Emir's hide.

Layering Armor. Some characters will attempt to one type of armor upon another to try to increase their defense. While this will reduce a greater amount of incoming damage, each set of layered armor makes any and all Dexterity related tasks one dice more difficult, and slows up the character's movement by ten meters per round. Every two sets of layered armor makes any and all Strength related tasks two dice more difficult.

Example: Bob thinks he's an armadillo and layers two sets of leather armor on his hide. While the reduction of both armors is cumulative, all his Strength and Dexterity-related tasks are one die more difficult. He's simply too encumbered by his armor.

SPECIAL-CASE EFFECTS

Sometimes, certain attacks will not strike to inflict normal damage. Sometimes, they can cause stuns, shocks, or be serious enough to count as a severe wound.

Stun. Stunning is a type of attack where the victim is unable to act for a number of rounds. He is aware and conscious, but simply unable to focus on his next action.

Example: Jennifer is able to stun an opponent for a few rounds by rolling two sixes in her damage. The opponent staggers back and can take no action other than gathering his wits together. At the end of the two rounds, the opponent can act normally.

Daze. This is a less severe form of a stun. The victim of this attack is able to defend himself, using shields and other defensive skills, but is otherwise unable to act for a few rounds.

Example: James has managed to cast a spell to daze an opponent for two rounds. The opponent staggers back and is dazed. He is unable to concentrate on anything except blocking incoming attacks and defend himself.

Shock. This is the most severe form of a stun. Shock will totally immobilize a character, making him unaware and prone for a number of rounds.

Example: While failing to disarm a trap, Ryan is covered in a magical blast that shocks him for two rounds. Ryan is prone and unable to move for the duration, as if he were unconscious. He's taken no damage, however, and can act normally at the end of the two rounds.

Critical Hits. When a weapon strikes heavily, a target can become stunned for awhile. Each die of most weapon damage that results in a six may stun the target for one round. For blunt weapons, the target would be dazed instead.

Example: Ryan hits an opponent with a cutlass and rolls two sixes and a three for damage. The opponent may be stunned for two rounds, and still suffers the fifteen points of edged damage.

A target can avoid this effect by succeeding an average endurance roll. If the target succeeds, he is merely dazed, but still suffers from the attack as normal.

Example: Ryan's opponent needs to roll an average endurance roll, rolling a nine, well above his endurance of five. The opponent is stunned for the next two rounds.

Severe Wounds. *(Optional Rule)* Sometimes, after a severe amount of damage, endurance loss, or as a special effect from an attack, the GM may rule that a character has suffered a severe wound. A severe wound includes anything including heavy tissue damage. A torn arm, punctured lung, or burnt eye could be considered a severe wound. These wounds can be treated with the appropriate tools and skills, so long as they're around. Severe wounds that go untreated could result in the loss of a limb, permanent endurance or strength loss.

Example: Jon has been engaged in combat against a creature with a nasty biting attack. On one attack, the creature causes eighteen points of piercing damage into Jon. The Game Master has Jon try an average Endurance roll, which Jon fails. The Game Master then indicates that Jon's arm has been torn. If Jon survives to recover, the arm is weakened, and any strength-related task tried with that arm is one die more difficult.

Falling Damage. When characters get knocked over a cliff they're going to take some substantial damage. Every two meters of a fall will cause one dice of blunt damage to the character on impact.

Example: Mike has been tossed off a twenty-meter roof to ground below. This will cause a large amount of damage to Mike, ten dice worth. Mike's player rolls the ten dice, and gets an eighteen, reducing Mike's running health to three. He luckily survives the fall, but is not decent shape. On average, the fall would have outright killed him.

Unique Effects. A number of things, such as magic spells and ultra-powers, will have their own effects assigned to them. These unique abilities will have the rules for handling their effects supplied with them.

THE COMBAT ROUND

Combat is a very chaotic time, and very difficult to be kept track of. Characters are scurrying around, attacking creatures and each-other, making many feat rolls very quickly. To make sense of this, when the flow of the game goes into combat, time is broken into combat rounds.

A combat round, from the character's point of view, lasts around fifteen seconds. In the real world, however, combat rounds can take quite a bit longer. During this time, the Game Master will ask all the players their planner actions, determine the actions of her own characters and creatures, and determine what worked, what happened, and what failed.

What's Possible in One Round. When things break down into combat, the actions that a character can perform are limited to what's possible in a single round. Usually, a character can perform two actions during a single combat round.

For its part, an action is something that the character attempts that takes very little time. Some possible actions are listed below.

- ⇒ Attack an opponent
- ⇒ Dodge
- ⇒ Switch weapons
- ⇒ Open a chest
- ⇒ Maneuver a vehicle
- ⇒ Trip an alarm
- ⇒ Move ½ total movement
- ⇒ Dive for Cover

Example: Melissa is engaged in combat, and gets two actions per round. On this particular round, she decides to move half of her maximum movement, and then attack an enemy close to her new position.

Multi-Round Actions. Some things that a character will attempt will take more than one combat round, such as starting a stubborn car, or searching for a particular item in a pack. A character will simply spend several rounds doing the same task until he's done.

Example: James desperately is searching for a program in a computer system while his allies are fighting off armed criminals. The Game Master informs James's player that the task will require three rounds before its complete. The rest of James's group will have to keep in combat without him for those three rounds, until James can do something else or stops looking for the program.

Negligible Time: Some actions don't really affect the course of a combat, and do not require any real length of time to accomplish. They also do not affect the character's ability to perform any of his own regular actions. These minor actions can be performed as needed, on that character's turn, without impacting any other part of the game. Examples of these actions follow.

- ⇒ Shout warnings.
- ⇒ Look around.
- ⇒ Drop excess gear.

Example: Melissa wants to get her bearings in the combat she's fallen into. She 'looks around', and her player asks the Game Master to describe the situation to her, which he does. This action, though it requires time for the Game Master, doesn't require any time on the part of the character, leaving Melissa with her two actions for this round.

COMBAT SEQUENCE

Keeping things organized in combat can be a little difficult. A Game Master has to organize who gets to attack whom and when. For this, the combat round is broken down into a few parts.

Every round starts with initiative, which determines which faction gets to attack first. Then, the side that wins initiative states and performs their actions. Lastly, the side that loses initiative performs their actions. When the round is complete, the cycle starts over again.

- ⇒ Initiative
- ⇒ Winner performs actions
- ⇒ Loser performs actions
- ⇒ Start a new round

Initiative: Each faction in the combat chooses one member to roll for initiative. That member rolls two dice. Whichever faction gets the highest roll goes first, followed by the next highest, and so on. If two or more factions are tied, re-roll only them.

Example: Melissa's group of warriors is about to engage a group of monsters. The Game Master rolls for his monsters, getting a nine for initiative. Melissa rolls for her party, and gets a twelve. Melissa's party gains the initiative.

Surprise. Sometimes, one group may clearly have the drop on another before engaging into combat. In these cases, the Game Master either modifies the initiative rolls, or outright gives the initiative to one faction without a roll.

Example: Melissa's group is now rounding a corner right into a pack of waiting monsters. The group has stepped right into a trap, so the Game Master declares that the monsters have initiative.

Modifiers to initiative occur when a situation might make it a little easier for one group to attack another. Here, the Game Master adds a small amount to the dice roll for each side.

Example: A group of monsters is standing up an above a group of heroes within a pit. The monsters have a slight advantage in attacking, and gain a two-point bonus for their initiative.

Delaying Initiative. If a character or group that has initiative wishes instead to go last or later in the round, they simply state that they are going to delay their action until someone else has had theirs. A character may only delay once per round.

Example: Jon and Melissa are engaged against a creature. Jon wins initiative over Melissa, but announces that he's going to let Melissa have her actions first. After Melissa takes her actions, Jon then performs his.

Taking Actions. During their part of the combat round, each character may take their actions. There is an endless number of actions possible for characters, as these rules have already pointed out. When each character completes her actions, her part of the combat round ends.

Example: Melissa has two actions for this turn. Her first is to move near her intended target. Her second is to take a slice out of it with her long sword. When she's done, the combat round goes to the next person in the order of initiative.

MOVEMENT

With a round being about ten seconds in length, it's logical to assume that a normal character can move about anywhere he needs to within those seconds. Sprinters and runners, after all, can cover huge distances in Olympic contests.

In a perfect world, a typical character can move fairly quickly, about fifteen kilometers per hour. People give out quicker than that, however, and some sprinters can hit closer to twenty meters per hour for very short periods of time.

Long- Distance Movement. A typical character, in the course of one hour, can move at ten kilometers. There are a number of factors that can affect this speed, however. Weather, terrain, and even the character's own limitations and abilities can alter this overland movement rate.

Example: Melissa is a typical human moving over hilly ground to approach a small settlement. The weather is drizzling, and the ground is less than ideal for travel. The Game Master declares that her movement rate overland is dropped to five kilometers per hour.

Movement in Melee: For a full combat round, a typical character can move up to twenty-five meters. Full movement will, of course, either pre-empt or make harder any other actions that the character may take that for that round.

Example: James is rushing headlong into combat, and runs twenty-five meters closer to his target during this round. On the way, he is also attempting to fire his pistol at the target. The attack feat is made one level more difficult because James is running as he is firing.

Half-Movement: Many times in combat, a character will wish to move up to a target before attacking, or move only a partial bit of their total movement. If a character wishes to move only one-half of his normal movement, he only expends one action. Typical characters can move up to twelve meters for half-movement.

Example: James is ten meters away from his target. For his first action, he will close to within melee range, moving those ten meters. James uses his second action to attack his target.

Retreat. *(Optional Rule)* Sometimes in combat, it is advisable for a character to back away from an opponent and break from combat. In more simple terms, retreat. There are two ways to accomplish a retreat. The simplest is to use only one action to move away from the opponent. This is considered a careful-retreat.

The other option is more dangerous. The character expends his full movement to back away from the attacker. While this certainly gives the character a good amount of distance between himself and the opponent at the end of the round, it also makes the character prone to an attack of opportunity.

The opponent can get a single, free, melee attack if someone engaged with him breaks and runs. The attack is determined normally, and happens before the character begins his retreat.

Example: In well over her head, Melissa decides to run from a hydra. She turns to retreat. Seeing the opportunity, the hydra takes one last swing before Melissa bails out, hitting her, but not killing her. Melissa then runs her full movement away from the hydra, breaking into full retreat..

Swimming. Characters may occasionally find themselves in the water. Fortunately, even basic swimming can be accomplished without a great deal of, or any skill. Without any impediments, a typical character can swim on the water at a rate of ten meters per round.

Someone who isn't skilled at swimming is not guaranteed to drown when she steps into the ocean for the first time. On the other hand, tumbling down rapids in a rainstorm is going to be a challenge for even the most experienced swimmer. Difficult situations would require Endurance feats, aided by appropriate skills or abilities.

Example: Melissa is afraid of swimming, having taken the phobia at a level of two. When thrown in water, she cannot concentrate enough on swimming and begins to flail around helplessly. Every round, the Game Master tells her player to roll an average check against her Endurance or begin to drown. Each round she makes it, she can try to swim to shore. She fails right off, and begins to go under. If she isn't saved soon, she will drown.

HEALING

Once damage is delivered, the first thing on a person's mind is how soon are they going to be able to rest it off. Damage hurts, after all, and every point of damage a person takes brings him one point closer to death.

People do heal, fortunately, and characters are no exception. Health lost to damage can be grained through healing and rest. Health cannot be gained beyond the maximum health of a character, however.

Recovering Health. With a full night's rest, and unaided with medicine or special magic or skills, a character can recover lost health equal to her Endurance statistic.

Example: After a long battle, Melissa's running health has dropped to a dangerously low number of three. After a night's rest, however, her Endurance of six brings her running health to a slightly more comfortable nine.

Recovering Mana. Mana can degrade and be spent in a number of ways. A full night's unaided rest, however, can recover that mana equal to the Willpower statistics of the character.

Example: Jon has cast far too many spells during the day, and dropped his running mana down to one point. After a night's rest, his Willpower of nine brings that low total back up to a ten.

Recovering Statistics. It takes a great deal of time to recover damaged Endurance and Willpower. When these statistics are damaged, a character is incapable of any action, and is very near death. With even minimal care, a severely injured character can recover one point of Endurance and one point of Willpower per night, until they are back to their original levels. Characters must first recover statistics before they can recover any Mana or Health.

Example: James has been badly beaten in combat, losing all of his sixteen health, and dropping his normal endurance of six down to one. With some care, James will spend five days recovering his Endurance. After that, he will require three more days to bring his Health back up to maximum.

COMMON SKILLS

"With knowledge comes power. With practice comes wisdom."

This section contains suggested skills for various campaigns. Of course, this list includes a great number of skills that shouldn't be included in every specific campaign. For instance, Alchemy probably shouldn't be in a cyber-punk campaign and Combat: Energy Weapons won't often appear in fantasy.

The Game Master can use this list to pick and choose which skills fit within her desired campaign. If there's a question on if a skill should be available, the decision is hers.

PRIMITIVE-AGE SKILLS

Primitive skills are those skills that require no special technology or advanced education. Science has not yet surfaced, and the scientific method does not even exist. Most primitive skills involve basic personable-skills, and some purely physical skills. Many of these skills still carry over to present day.

Acrobatics: *(Average Dexterity)* This skill enables a character to perform incredible acts of dexterity, such as flips, twists, and spins.

Acting. *(Average Charisma)* This is the ability of the character to act believably. Lying, doing a play, and setting a con are valid uses of this skill.

Agriculture: *(Trivial Intelligence)* This is the study of farming and planting. Characters with this skill know the growing seasons and how much to plant.

Alertness: *(Average Perception)* Characters with this skill try to notice things out of place, or sudden changes in their surroundings. This enables people with the 'sixth-sense' for trouble.

Animal Handling: *(Easy Intelligence)* This skill includes the feeding, grooming, and general proper care of animals. It also enables the handler to calm and pacify pack animals.

Animal Training: *(Average Presence)* This involves the training of any animal to perform certain labor, such as training a horse to take a rider, training oxen to pull, training lions not to bite, et cetera.

Begging. *(Easy Charisma)* This is the character's basic skill in panhandling. The better the skill, the more pathetic and needy the character can appear.

Boating. *(Average Strength)* This skill enables the character to pilot a rowing boat or small sailing boat effectively. This includes a general knowledge of small boats and how to use them.

Boxing. *(Average Strength)* Probably one of the oldest sports, a boxer is a person who learns to maximize his physical damage. On a punching attack, a boxer can add one point of blunt damage for every die he attempts on a Boxing feat. If he fails the roll, he scores no extra damage.

Brewing. *(Easy Intelligence)* This skill is for those people who mix and cook potions, stews, and ales. It applies to any liquid that needs to be cooked before being served.

Camouflage. *(Average Intelligence)* This is the skill of disguise someone to blend in with the background. This is useful for hiding in trees, desert sands, and other natural settings.

Combat: Bare Hands. *(Easy Strength)* This combat skill adds to a character's basic chance to hit with his hands and feet.

Combat: Melee. *(Average Strength)* This skill adds to your character's chance to hit with a single melee weapon. Each weapon skill is treated as a separate skill. For instance, a long sword skill and a mace skill are two different skills.

Cooking. *(Trivial Intelligence)* This is the basic ability to cook a fine meal from scratch. Basic knowledge of chef's techniques and ingredients are also known in this skill.

Curing. *(Average Intelligence)* This is the ability of the character to purge toxins from an infection or a poison from another character. The more stubborn the toxin, the harder the roll. This does not regain lost health.

Dancing. *(Easy Dexterity)* Characters with this skill know the latest dance styles and can aesthetically move their bodies with the music.

Direction Sense. *(Average Perception)* This is the uncanny ability to simply sense which way is north, or which way a person is facing.

Dodge. *(Difficult Dexterity)* This skill enables you character to dodge away from any single incoming attack per turn. Average rolls can dodge most melee attacks. Difficult rolls can dodge thrown weapon attacks. Hard rolls can dodge arrow attacks. Projectiles, such as bullets, would fall within the amazing range. Energy weapons, at the very least, would require an inhuman roll. Note that a character may only dodge one attack per round in this manner.

Falconry: *(Difficult Willpower)* This is the skill in training a falcon, or other bird-of-prey, into hunting, fetching, or performing other combat-related tasks.

Fishing. *(Trivial Intelligence)* This is the knowledge of proper fishing techniques and fishing centers. Basic knowledge of the fish themselves is also possible with this skill.

Foraging. *(Easy Intelligence)* This is the ability to find supplies in nature, such as suitable firewood, food, and other common supplies.

Fletcher: *(Average Intelligence)* Characters with this skill are able to hone and craft bolts and arrows. Usually, this isn't a difficult task, unless an unusual bolt or arrow type is being crafted

Gaming: *(Trivial Charisma)*. This is the basic skill of 'winning' at games of chance. In other words, it's partially the ability of the player to play the game, and partially the ability of the player to make his own odds.

Haggling. *(Easy Charisma)* This is the skill involved in negotiating for the best price. Charismatic souls can easily save a great deal of their coinage at the bargaining table.

Hiding. *(Average Perception)* This is the character's base ability to remain in one place and do his best not to be noticed.

Jumping. *(Trivial Strength)* This is the ability to leap over long distances or to jump carefully on a narrow ledge.

Knife Throwing. *(Difficult Dexterity)* This skill adds to a character's chance to hit with knife when it is thrown. This skilled is often used by showmen to impress crowds with their prowess.

Languages. *(Average Intelligence)* This skill enables the character to speak, read, and write a single languages to some degree. Each modern language is treated as a separate skill. Note that most primitive societies did not have a written form of their language. Illiterate societies require that this skill be learned separately for speaking and writing.

Local History. *(Trivial Intelligence)* The character with this skill knows many of the legends, folklore, and actual historical facts about his village and the surrounding area.

Meditation. *(Average Willpower)* This skill involves the proper channeling of internal energies. Successful rolls for meditation double the mana recovery of the character for the next night. Failed meditation will halve the recovery rate.

Mining. *(Easy Intelligence)* This is the ability to mine ore from inside a mine. This is also some basic knowledge of mining techniques, support structures, and mineral identification.

Musical Instrument. *(Average Dexterity)* The skill improves the bard's ability to play an instrument and to read music designed for that instrument.

Netting. *(Average Strength)* This skill raises the ability of a character to use a net effectively in trapping prey.

Observation: *(Easy Perception)* This is the ability to watch someone or something, noting locations of others, their gear and how they use it. This is an excellent skill for tactics.

Occultism: *(Average Intelligence)* This is the knowledge of the world of the occult, including its mysticism, rituals, and superstitions.

Philosophy: *(Average Intelligence)* A philosopher studies himself, his mind, and his existence, struggling to gain an understanding of the world around him and his place within it.

Poetry. *(Average Perception)* This is the ability to speak and write in verse. This is the skill to use for lyric-writing and love-sonnets.

Pottery. *(Average Intelligence)* This is the knowledge of creating tools and crafts from clay. Characters in this skill would know about ceramics, clay pots, and other crafts associated with pottery.

Religion: *(Easy Intelligence)* This is the knowledge of religious texts, tenants, and church structure for a

religion. This also includes knowledge of secular divisions.

Riding: Airborne: *(Difficult Strength)* This is the ability to ride a tamed, flying beast during maneuvers. The beast, of course, has to be big enough to carry the rider as a mount.

Riding: Land-based. *(Average Strength)* This is the ability to ride a tamed beast, such as a horse, during maneuvers. The character can also attempt to do fancy riding tricks, such as firing a bow, with this skill.

Ritual: *(Easy Intelligence)* This skill involves the knowledge of specific rituals, such as religious rites or magical. In some campaigns, the Game Master may require that this skill be purchased separately for each ritual that the character wishes to learn.

Roping. *(Easy Dexterity)* This is the character's skill at using a rope. The character can basically rope around things for swinging, capture, and so on with this skill.

Running. *(Easy Endurance)* This is the ability to run very fast over short distances, also known as sprinting, or the base ability to run long term at a good clip.

Seduction: *(Average Comeliness.)* This is the character's ability to make himself or herself more physically attractive to someone.

Singing. *(Trivial Charisma)* Characters with this skill can carry a tune all the way into a melody. A must-have skill for bard-type characters.

Snake Charming. *(Easy Intelligence)* This character can play soft music to mesmerize serpents and get them to sway rhythmically. Often used to impress crowds for coins.

Snares. *(Average Intelligence)* Characters with this skill are proficient in setting and disarming common traps, such as tripwires, snare ropes, and some pit traps.

Spelunking: *(Average Endurance)* This is the skill in climbing caves and walls with proper tools and equipment, such as repelling gear, spikes, and climbing boots.

Stealth: *(Difficult Dexterity)* This is the thief's ability to move around without being noticed, as well as the ability to sneak up upon someone without them seeing you.

Swimming. *(Trivial Endurance)* This is the ability to swim. Most people can swim to a limited degree, but those skilled in it can swim rough waters or for long periods.

Teaching. *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the ability to impart one's knowledge onto a student. A more effective teacher can, modestly, improve the time his student may learn a new skill.

Tracking. *(Easy Perception)* This is the skill at following trails and prey. The character with this skill can spot where something or someone has passed through, and can follow it.

Tumbling. *(Difficult Dexterity)* This skill enables the character to lessen the amount of damage from falls by one point per dice rolled under this skill.

Weather Sense. *(Average Perception)* This is the ability to sense changes in the weather, by scent, or by sight, or by the pain in the ankle, or however it could possibly manifest.

Weaving. *(Difficult Dexterity)* This skill enables the character to creature vivid tapestries and sewn arts from cloth and threat.

Wrestling. *(Average Strength)* This character is adept and holds, pins, and escapes in Greco-Roman style wresting. This skill adds to any feats involving wrestling moves, such as holding an opponent, or breaking free of a strong hold.

MEDIEVAL-AGE SKILLS

This age saw the arrival of structured knowledge, and the beginnings of science. Knowledge, however, was still very prone to leaps of logic, and only a select few employed the scientific method. Still, the age saw the rise of ranged weaponry and more advanced topics, particularly in map-making. Many of these skills are still in use, though some have been replaced with more formal studies.

Accounting. *(Average Intelligence)* This is the skill in balancing financial reports with reality. It is the skill is using complex mathematics and applying them to money.

Alchemy: *(Hard Intelligence)* This skill is the knowledge of combining materials to form other

materials in a mystical manner. Characters with this skill can create useful, or even magical, items out of certain materials.

Appraising. *(Average Perception)* This is the skill in knowing the value of an item or a stone by close examination.

Animal Lore: *(Average Intelligence)* Those versed in animal lore are likely to know what a creature is, and what it is capable of, upon sight. She will also know its mating and migratory habits, and anything else notable about the animal.

Architecture: *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the ability to design structures for aesthetic value. An architect can design a function and attractive structure.

Bard Lore. *(Average Intelligence)* The character that learns this skill learns about history through the songs and ballads of his culture. Of course, the character's knowledge of history tends to be very dramatic and exaggerated, due to the need to please an audience.

Blacksmithing: *(Difficult Strength)* This is the ability to forge metal into common tools and items. This is the skill used to make iron wagon treads, shoe horses, and so on.

Calligraphy: *(Average Dexterity.)* This is the art of fine lettering, such as that found on older Bibles and ancient parchments. Here, handwriting is considered a work of art.

Carpentry: *(Average Intelligence.)* The characters that take this skill are adept at constructing common buildings and other structures from wood and other materials.

Cartographer: *(Difficult Intelligence.)* This is the skill of maps and map keeping. Characters with this skill can both read and make sometimes-accurate maps of towns, regions, and anywhere else they know.

Combat: Ranged. *(Difficult Dexterity)* This skill adds to your character's chance to hit with a single type of bow or other ranged weapon. Each weapon skill is treated as a separate skill. For instance, a crossbow skill and a bow skill are considered two different skills.

Combat: Sporting. *(Average Strength)* This skill enables a character to perform well in a melee-related combat sport, such as stick fighting or fencing. Different weapon sports are treated as different skills. This skill does nothing for true combat, however.

Combat: Weapon Art. *(Difficult Dexterity)* A character with this skill is not only better at striking with a chosen melee weapon, but does so with an artistic style and grace. Their moves are sharper, cleaner, and often are thrilling to watch in combat. A character using this skill in melee uses his Dexterity to hit opponents instead of his Strength.

Cosmetics: *(Average Intelligence)* Characters with this skill are knowledgeable in using make-up, blush, and other cosmetics to improve the appearance of others, and himself.

Disguise. *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the ability of the character to use make-up and props to make a convincing disguise. Simple disguise, such as changing a wig and adding lip-gloss are simple rolls, while more complex and purposeful disguises are more difficult.

Etiquette: *(Average Charisma)* This is the character's ability to demonstrate proper manner in social situations.

Fashion. *(Average Comeliness)* This is the skill of knowing the right clothes to wear and look good while doing it.

Fast Talking: *(Difficult Charisma)* This is the ability to effectively and quickly con someone by talking fast and keeping their attention diverted.

First Aid. *(Easy Intelligence)* This enables the character to stop bleeding, prevent infection, and ease pain on an injured person. It does not bring back any lost health.

Forgery: *(Hard Perception)* This is the ability to duplicate handwriting or documents. Copying a signature could be an average task, while forging legal papers would be more difficult.

Heraldry: *(Average Intelligence)* Characters versed in heraldry can identify titles, kinship, and country from various symbols, emblems, and flags.

Herbal Lore: *(Average Intelligence.)* Those versed in herbal lore are likely to know what a plant is, and what it basically consists of, upon sight. The character will know basic medicinal uses, and if the plant is edible.

History: *(Average Intelligence)* This is a character's knowledge about the past. History, in general, will give a brief and general knowledge about all known history. This skill can also be taken as a specific-case skill, which would give a more detailed knowledge on that aspect of history.

Hobby: *(Average Intelligence)* The character with a specific case of this skill is adept at a particular hobby, such as ship-bottles, kite-flying, model-building, or stamp-collecting. The better his skill, the more he knows about it.

Illusion: *(Difficult Intelligence)* The clever ones with this skill are masters of the art of illusion, using sleight-of-hand and optical trickery to fool their audiences into seeing magical effects. In many societies, though, illusionists had to be very careful not to confuse themselves with true magicians.

Jewelry: *(Difficult Intelligence)* Characters with this skill are highly knowledgeable about gems, their worth, and how to cut them into jewelry. The better the skill, the more likely a person is to cut to a flawless gem.

Juggling. *(Average Dexterity)* Characters with this skill are very adept at throwing and catching items in their hands, usually, but not always, to the delight of their audience.

Law. *(Difficult Intelligence)* The character versed in law knows exactly what is legal and not legal in an area, and knows what punishments are appropriate for each crime.

Leather-working. *(Average Intelligence)* Characters skilled in this field can make armors, wallets, and other crafts from leather. The finer the quality, and larger the end product, the more difficult the feat.

Locksmith: *(Difficult Dexterity)* This is the nimble art of mechanical locks and involves both lock creation and lock picking.

Mountaineering. *(Average Dexterity)* This is the ability to climb large rocks, hills, and mountains. Characters in this skill know how to use proper footing, ropes, and other equipment to properly scale mountains.

Oratory: *(Average Charisma.)* This is the ability to speak in front of a large group with conviction. Characters with this skill are good at public speaking and addresses.

Pickpocket: *(Average Dexterity.)* This is the basic thieves' skill in robbing someone, picking their pockets, without being noticed.

Seamanship: *(Easy Intelligence.)* This is the basic knowledge of how to live on a ship, and what duties need to be performed, such as proper cleaning, names of the parts of the ship, and where the privy is located.

Showmanship: *(Trivial Charisma.)* This is the ability to whatever else the character does, only with style. The character knows how to manipulate and play his audience. Basically, this is the skill of 'hamming it up'.

Sports: *(Average Strength)* A character that learns a sport becomes proficient in that game. This skill should be purchased separate for each sport. Soccer and baseball, for instance, would be two separate sports.

Tailor. *(Average Perception)* This is the skill in creating fine suits and dresses from cloth. It can also be used to garnish or garish armors.

Teamster: *(Average Intelligence)* A teamster is a person skilled at handling a few animals to move a cart or stage. He has to know how get the animals to move with one-another, as well as keep them under control in tough situations.

Woodworking: *(Average Dexterity)* Characters with this skill are adept at the carving and shaping of wood to create crafts, weapons, and tools.

INDUSTRIAL-AGE SKILLS

When science began to be applied and respected, the industrial age spread throughout Europe and North America. Reason and study replaced superstition and ignorance, and mankind saw a wide growth of his knowledge. Myth and lore gave way to history and literature. Skills became more formal. Study became respected.

Anthropology: *(Average Intelligence)* This is the knowledge of the development, culture, and origins of a race. Characters with this skill will have a general working knowledge of sentient races.

Archaeology: *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the study of history through artifacts, ruins, and ancient texts. An archeologist will know the proper methods for learning about a culture's past.

Astronomy: *(Average Intelligence)* This is the basic knowledge of stars, planets, moons, and other space-borne bodies. It is a working knowledge of the basics about space.

Botany: *(Average Intelligence)* This is the character's knowledge of plant life. A character with this skill will know certain details of a planet after analysis, such as whether it's edible.

Chemistry: *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the knowledge of molecules, atoms, and how they bound to form different compounds. This is the modern, more scientific, equivalent of alchemy.

Combat: Projectile Weapons. *(Average Dexterity)* This skill adds to your character's chance to hit with a modern handgun or rifle, which are treated as different skills.

Demolition: *(Average Intelligence)* This skill imparts the knowledge of explosives and their proper placement onto structures to remove them somewhat safely and effectively.

Ecology: *(Difficult Intelligence)* Characters with this skill can determine the nature of the natural settings around him and make basic judgments on the life forms, terrain, and climate of the area. He can also determine the amount of damage caused from pollution.

Engineering. *(Hard Intelligence)* This skill is the knowledge of building large or complex structures, such as bridges or aqueducts. This includes being able to know the time needed for a project, and what materials and personnel is required.

Geology: *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the knowledge of tectonics, volcanic activity, and planetary structure. A geologist can identify minerals, know earthquake zones, and determine irregularities in the earth.

Gunnery: *(Average Perception)* Characters with this know how to properly fire large, mounted weapons, like those found on heavy ships, with some degree of accuracy. Some heavy guns will require this skill before a character can fire the weapon. Others are simple enough to not require this specialized knowledge.

Meteorology: *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the character's skill to determine weather patterns and to make educated guesses about near-future weather conditions.

Navigation: *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the ability to plot and stay on a course, be it on a sailing ship, mount, or on foot. This includes the ability to read, but not make, maps of various kinds.

Photography: *(Easy Perception)* Characters with this skill are adept at making pictures with dramatic style and flair. This includes the knowledge of development and photographic settings.

Surgery: *(Difficult Intelligence.)* This skill enables a doctor to perform operative procedures on a patient, ranging from toe-nail removal to heart-surgery. This skill applies to all surgery, but more difficult and involved procedures may not only be harder, but may require other skills as well as multiple feat rolls.

Vet Healing. *(Average Intelligence)* This is the skill for healing animals from damage. It works in much the same manner as the first aid for humans.

Zoology: *(Average Intelligence)* This is a better-versed version of animal lore. Characters with this skill have made it their study to know details about the animal kingdom and animal biology, including mating habits, evolution, migrations, and so on. A character may, at her option, specialize into types of animals, making feat rolls involving these animals simpler.

MODERN-AGE SKILLS

The modern age came about with the ability of mankind to completely, and irrevocably, destroy himself. This daunting thought thrust the world into new directions, and new power. Information and finance replaced military might as the measure of a country. Powers that once saw themselves supreme through their arsenals found themselves bankrupted and trembling to smaller and wealthier nations. Though many failed to realize it, education, knowledge, and wisdom, became the paramount mark of a man.

Computer Operations: *(Easy Intelligence.)* Those who learn this skill are able to perform the basic

functions of computer operations, such as running programs and using databases.

Computer Programming: *(Average Intelligence.)* This skill enables a person to get a computer to do what he wants, sometimes. The more complex the program, the more difficult the feat roll involved.

Driving: Automotive: *(Easy Dexterity)* Characters that need to drive a car, well, may take this skill to improve their driving prowess, and even allow them to perform stunts. Note that most contemporary campaigns will not require a character to have this skill in order to perform mundane driving.

Driving: Motorcycle: *(Average Dexterity)* This skill enables a person to ride and control a motorcycle. Characters learning it can perform stunts and possess riding prowess. Note that most contemporary campaigns will not require a character to possess this skill for mundane riding.

Electronics: *(Average Intelligence)* Those with knowledge in electronics know about circuits and hardware logic for machines, and can properly fix such things with the proper tools. This includes simple electronics as lamps, to complex integrated circuits found in computers.

Forensics: *(Difficult Intelligence)* Doctors who specialize in forensic medicine study how people have died, and are the experts in determining the cause of death of a poor soul. They are often the first to discover foul play.

Mechanic: *(Average Intelligence.)* This is a character's knowledge about complex and large machines, and his ability to fix them and keep them running. Skilled mechanics can even fine-tune their machines to run slightly better than their original designs.

Music Recording: *(Average Intelligence)* Characters that learn the art of recording know about mixing sounds and music for the best quality.

Optics: *(Average Intelligence)* A slightly more advanced version of Electronics, Optics make use of light-filled wires to transmit signals. Those who learn this technology understand the optical circuitry and how to properly connect and repair it.

Parachuting. *(Easy Dexterity)* A skill for the brave, parachuting involves jumping off of a flying craft, and controlling a descent with a parachute and wind gusts. Skilled parachutists must react well to land on their designated targets.

Pilot: Jet Aircraft. *(Difficult Perception)* While the basics in flying a prop aircraft and jet aircraft remain the same, the skill involved, as well as the pace, is much higher. Characters who take this skill have the needed knowledge in basic flight. Experts in Jet Aircraft are superb dog-fighters.

Pilot: Motorboat. *(Average Dexterity)* This skill applies to small motor-driven boats. Characters that need to pilot one well may take this skill to improve their driving prowess, and even allow them to perform stunts. Note that most contemporary campaigns will not require a character to have this skill in order to perform mundane boating.

Pilot: Prop Aircraft. *(Average Perception)* Characters with this skill have the necessary knowledge and skill to use any propeller-driver aircraft safely. Experts in the field can even perform stuns.

Pilot: Rotary-Wing Aircraft. *(Difficult Perception)* Characters with this skill know the basics needed when flying helicopters, gyrocopters, and other types of rotary-wing craft. Experts with this skill can perform daring stunts.

Programming. *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the skill in teaching a computer exactly what the programmer wants done. The more complex the program, the more time and skill is required to accomplish the programming work.

Video Production: *(Average Intelligence)* The character with this skill knows how to frame and produce entertaining, if not informative, video clips for television, movies, or video distribution.

CYBERNETIC-AGE SKILLS

Adventuring in the near future can be dangerous. New technologies push the edge of mankind's creative and destructive abilities. Those who master the skills of these new technologies are those who hold the true power.

Battle-Suit Operations: *(Average Intelligence)* Battle-suits are large machines that form armor around a pilot and act as a sort of weapons platform for special infantry. A character's ability to use these suits is based upon his knowledge of them.

Cybernetics: *(Difficult Intelligence)* This skill is the knowledge of connecting electronic gear directly to neural tissue, allowing for cybernetic gear for purposes of medicine, intelligence, and warfare.

Driving: Hovercraft: *(Average Dexterity)* Characters that need to drive hovercraft with some degree of skill can improve their driving prowess with this skill. Note that many Cybernetic-age campaigns will not require a character to have this skill in order to perform mundane driving.

Genetics: *(Difficult Intelligence.)* This study of nature is the knowledge of the gene-marks of creatures, and how to manipulate them to create specific traits. It also includes specific knowledge on evolution and genetic mutation.

Immersion Gaming: *(Trivial Willpower)* A character with this skill is better able to control himself and his environment in playing 'Immersion Games'. These games are a type of full-sensory virtual reality games.

Neurology: *(Hard Intelligence)* This is a character's knowledge of the nervous system, the brain, and how they work. Experts in this field can actually tap into correct nerve impulses for certain purposes.

Pilot: Meka. *(Average Dexterity)* This skill enables a pilot to learn and control the giant robots of Japanese animation. Stunts and critical situations add to the difficulty of feats. Some campaigns may not require this skill to perform very basic maneuvers.

Pilot: Rocketry. *(Hard Intelligence*) Characters with this skill know the basics in controlling and maintaining flight with rockets and early spacecraft, such as the space shuttle and satellite launchers.

Robotics: *(Difficult Intelligence)* Characters with this skill know about the complexities of small worker machines, and how to route the electronic components from servos. Robotics requires knowledge of more delicate working parts, and operates on a slightly smaller scale.

HYPER-TECHNOLOGY-AGE SKILLS

The technology of the stars involves a number of new skills and sciences that go well beyond what we understand now. Those who learn these skills grasp technology currently only dreamed of.

Astrogation: *(Difficult Intelligence)* This is the skill of a character to plot and follow a course for interstellar travel. This skill is required for long range interplanetary or interstellar travel.

Combat: Energy Weapons: *(Average Dexterity)* This skill adds to a character's chance to hit with any single type of energy weapon. Each weapon skill is treated as a separate skill. For instance, a laser rifle skill and a electrical cannon skill are considered two different skills.

Combat: Particle Weapons. *(Average Dexterity)* Characters with this skill have a bonus to hit with any particle-based weapon, such as a rail-gun. Each weapon skill is treated as a separate skill. A rail gun and ion cannon would be two different skills.

Dimensional Physics. *(Hard Intelligence)* This is the science of alternative dimensions (such as hyperspace) and the changes in conventional physics when traveling to them.

Nanotechnology: *(Hard Intelligence)* A character with this possesses the knowledge of near-molecular-sized motors and electronics. These tiny 'nanites ' can be found in medicine, computers, and other places where such advanced technology can be used.

Pilot: Shuttlecraft: *(Difficult Intelligence)* A character with this skill knows the basics in piloting small starships and spaceships, such as fighters and personal transports. Experts in this skill can perform various stunts and press the limits of the ship's design.

Planetology: *(Average Intelligence)* This is the applied science of planets, their makeup, and general surface conditions. A planetologist is knowledgeable about general weather trends, gravity, atmosphere, and habitability.

Temporal Physics. *(Difficult Intelligence)* This character has studied the science of time, learning the methods of time manipulation, compression, and time travel.

Xenobiology: *(Difficult Intelligence)* Those who study this skill become versed in extra-terrestrial life forms. This field of biology opens up to many varied and unusual forms of life.

COMMON EQUIPMENT

A character needs equipment. Where would a warrior be without his sword and armor? Where would a pirate be without his ship? This appendix is filled with the most common forms of equipment that filtered down through the ages. It is, by no means, a complete list, but should suffice as a start for new campaigns.

The Game Master, of course, should decide what pieces of equipment are available in her setting or campaign. A Cutlass isn't a match for a machine gun, after all. Computers wouldn't normally exist in a primitive world.

CURRENCY

Most settings will have one, or more, forms of currency used by its population. Adventurers will accumulate a good amount of wealth for their trouble, and wind up spending most of their income on better equipment, weapons, and armor.

When characters are first generated, they will be given some starting equipment, and usually some amount of starting cash. The Game Master should get an amount that will be just enough to let the characters start their adventuring careers.

It's a good idea for a Game Master to set a price list for his setting, assigning fixed flat-market prices for the most common goods, and using them to determine the price of various other items.

The Game Master could use the common ratio of a night's hotel rates, a common meal, a common weapon, and a common armor to help determine prices.

Example: In some places, the average night's stay at a hotel is around $40. The average meal is about $5. A pistol would cost about $300, and a kevlar vest would cost about $750.

From this, the Game Master can get an idea of the proper prices for goods in her campaign. She should keep in mind that laws, rarity of materials, and ease of fabrication would also greatly influence prices for a particular item.

Example: In one campaign, the local sheriff prohibits the use of swords, making them very hard to come by. Because of the difficulty in obtaining and making the weapon, the normal price of 200 crown is jacked up to 500 crown while the law remains in effect.

MELEE WEAPONS

While simple weapons existed long before recorded history, the medieval-age saw the great incursion of many hand-to-hand weapons, most of which are still found in use in various places of the world today.

Weapon Name	Accuracy	Damage	Technology
Club	-2	2dB	Primitive
Dagger	0	1dE	Primitive
Axe	-1	2dE	Medieval
Cutlass	-1	2dE	Medieval
Long Sword	-2	3dE	Medieval
Mace	-1	2dB	Medieval
Quarter-staff	-1	2dB	Medieval
Scimitar	-2	3dE	Medieval
Short Sword	-1	2dE	Medieval
Whip	-1	1dE	Medieval
Chain	-2	2dE	Industrial
Energy-Knife	0	1dE, 1dEn	Cybernetics
Plasma-Knife	0	2dEn	Hyper-Tech

Axe. The axe is a large weapon, consisting of a heavy blade mounted on one-end of a shaft. The weapon is designed to carry its edge with a heavy force. The typical axe is about one-half meter in length, and would at least be hard to conceal on a person.

Chain: This is basically a chain of metal links which drape to a length of about one half meter. The chain can be used as a cutting weapon, similar to a whip, but with limited accuracy. It is more effecting as an entangling weapon, being about average to break out of when wrapped around a target.

Club. Probably the oldest weapon known to science, the club is simply a large object, such as a tree-branch, which serves as a quick and dirty way to smash someone over the head. It's not at all an accurate weapon, and used in more than primitive times only as a last resort.

Cutlass: The cutlass is a curved, thin blade with a long edge. It does decent damage and is relatively affordable. It can be concealed with some difficulty, but its long blade is longer than most joints.

Dagger: This is the common dagger, a small bladed weapon that is easily concealed. Daggers can be found nearly everywhere, and are carried by just about anyone. It's a mildly effective weapon, but nearly useless against armored opponents.

Energy Knife: The energy knife looks like any other dagger, and will strike as one when not charged. With a power-cell in its hilt, however, the blade of the knife can carry a sharp, damaging electrical charge to a target. Physically, the knife is no larger than a dagger and can be easily hidden.

Long Sword: The stock weapon of fantasy, the long sword did not actually see heavy use by more structured armies. Long Swords can be around one and a third meters in length with a straight blade. They can also deliver large amounts of damage. They were a bit unwieldy, however, and cannot be concealed.

Plasma-Knife: This high-tech weapon is a energy projection from a charged hilt. When it strikes, the shaped plasma burns into its target with energy. When not in use, the weapon is nothing more than a small handle, and therefore very easy to conceal.

Quarterstaff: This is a long pole, about a meter and one-half long and well weighted, designed to inflict blunt damage on a target. The weapons aren't easily hidden, but are not very intimidating upon first glance.

Scimitar: This is an extremely common weapon in middle-eastern society. The blade is long and curved, and capable of delivering a severe amount of damage. It could possibly be concealed, with difficulty.

Short Sword. Much of early history saw this simple sharp weapon in common use. The short sword is a straight, sharp, blade around one half meter in length, and very effective against light armors. It is possible to conceal the weapon with some skill.

Whip. A whip is a length of leather designed to inflict pain and entangle opponents. Those who suffer from a whip's sting take little damage, but suffer under a bitter pain. The whip, when entangled, is easy to break free from, but can allow the wielder to bring up some more serious weaponry.

RANGED WEAPONS

Delivering blows at range is always preferable to attacking up close. When the crossbow revolutionized warfare in medieval times, it was hailed as the 'weapon to end all wars'. Obviously, more modern ages and their weapons laid that dream to rest.

Weapon Name	Acc	Range	Dmg.	Technology
Dagger	0	10/20/40m	1dP	Primitive
Long Bow	-3	35/75/150m	3dP	Medieval
Pistol	0	50/100/200m	2dP	Industrial
Rifle	-1	75/150/300m	3dP	Industrial
Machine Pistol	-2	50/100/200m	4dP	Industrial
Laser Pistol	0	100/200/400m	3dEn	Hyper- Tech

Dagger: This is the exact same weapon as the melee weapon, only this time it's thrown. Thrown daggers are commonly used, though the prospect of losing a perfectly good melee weapon to a missed throw should be a note of caution.

Laser Pistol. This is the generic beam-gun of the future. A laser is a burning bolt of light-wave energy that scorches its way into its target. Lasers carry a powerful charge-clip, enabling the weapon to fire twenty shots before needing a recharge. These lasers can fire twice per round.

Long Bow. The long bow came into being with the strength of English oak trees and powerful Scottish archers. The bow is over one meter in length as has a massive range and large potential for damage. The bow uses regular arrows, which can be easily fashioned. The weapon cannot be concealed, and is fairly rare. Its inherent inaccuracy requires a great amount of skill to master.

Machine Pistol. This weapon is most powerful for its ability to affect both tight and wide spreads. With a normal shot, it affects one target at normal range. With a tight spread, it's range is cut by half and decreases one die in damage, but effects everything it its cone. With a wide spread, it's range is cut in half again, and the damage is reduce to two dice. Each burst from the pistol takes ten bullets, from a clip-box which can hold fifty.

Example: Keith is firing a machine gun at a single target. He fires ten shots, and rolls to-hit on the target, succeeding and scoring four dice of piercing damage. The next round, he widens his fire to a tight-spread. His targets are automatically hit, but his range is cut to 50 meters, and only causes three dice damage. The third round, he spreads his fire thinner, to a widespread, affecting only out to 25 meters, and causing only two dice of piercing damage.

Pistol. A pistol is the basic common handgun, designed to shoot bullets over a decent range. While there are, literally, hundreds of varieties of pistols in the real world, the generic pistol used here is the 9mm. The pistol can carry ten bullets in its clip, and can be fired once for each character's action.

Rifle. A rifle is, in a manner, a long version of a pistol, usually either capable of carrying stronger ammo, or firing to a longer range. The are thousands of rifle-types in the universe, but this is a generic .22 caliber rifle. The rifle carries a clip of ten shots, and can be fired once per character's action.

ARMOR

Short of not getting into combat in the first place, the best defense against incoming damage is armor. Armor stops blows and reduces damage, and has been around ever since the first weapon failed to cause harm.

Name	Edged	Piercing	Blunt	Energy	Technology
Leather	3	2	0	0	Primitive
Chain Mail	7	3	1	0	Medieval
Plate Mail	7	5	2	0	Medieval
Kevlar Jacket	2	6	2	0	Modern
Riot Suit	12	12	6	2	Modern
Defense Screen	12	12	12	6	Hyper- Tech

Chain Mail. The heaviest metal armor that is at all comfortable to wear, chain mail is a fair protector against most forms of damage. It is not easily hidden, however, and is costly. It was very prone to piercing damage, and fell out of use with the arrival of the crossbow.

Defense Screen. This hyper-technology device uses a field of energy to negate incoming attacks. It's very portable and expensive, and there is simply not much better protection against weaponry. A charge clip feeds the screen, and lasts two hours before needing a recharge.

Kevlar Jacket. Used most often by law-enforcement officials, the kevlar jacket is most effective against incoming bullets. It is a light, non-constraining jacket which hides fairly easily underneath normal clothes. It is only as expensive as the common pistol.

Leather. Leather armor is made from the tanned hides of cattle and sometimes from other herd animals. The armor is durable and light, but is most often used because it's both cheap and much more innocuous than the heavier armors.

Plate Mail. A powerful medieval armor, plate mail was very effective against swords and other edged weapon. Plate mail primarily consisted of chain, with plates added in the more vital areas. It was, however, expensive, and usually reserved for nobility. As with most medieval armors, plate mail saw its demise with the advent of gunpowder. It is a loud armor, and not easily-concealed.

Riot Suit. Certain law-enforcement officers to protect against large crowds of unruly people. This suit stops most types of damage. The Riot Suit is a thick suit of armor that cannot be concealed, but can effectively negate most melee weapons, and greatly curb the damage from bullets.

SHIELDS

In some battles, it's a good idea to carry around your own cover, in the form of a shield. While the use of shields has fallen into disfavor in modern times, shields were quite common early on.

Name	Cover	Technology
Buckler	Small	Primitive
Shield	Small	Primitive
Riot Shield	Heavy	Modern
Force Shield	Small	Hyper Tech

Buckler. A buckler is a small shield worn on the arm. It provides a small amount of protection, but is commonly used by most fighters for its affordability.

Force Shield. The hyper-tech shield drains a charge of energy from its power-cell, and blocks incoming attacks as if it were a small shield.

Riot Shield. Used by police forces and some militaries in modern times, the Riot Shield is a kevlar-laminated titanium shield designed to give the wearer protection against hostile, but poorly armed, opponents.

Shield. Larger and more expensive than the buckler, the shield does offer more protection than the smaller counterpart. Shields are common on dedicated warriors.