

GURPS® LITE FOR WWII

An Introduction
to Roleplaying

**STEVE
JACKSON
GAMES**

What is **GURPS**?

GURPS stands for “Generic Universal RolePlaying System,” the RPG from which these rules are condensed. Why is it called that? Well . . .

“*Generic.*” **GURPS** starts with simple rules, and builds up to as much *optional* detail as you like. This abridged version presents the “core rules” that most GMs start with.

“*Universal.*” The basic rules system is designed to emphasize realism; therefore, it can fit *any* situation – fantasy or historical; past, present, or future.

“*RolePlaying.*” This is not just a “hack-and-slash” game. The rules are written to make true roleplaying possible – and to encourage it. **GURPS** is a game in which you take on the persona of another character and pretend, for a little while, to *be* that person.

“*System.*” Over 150 different books have been published for **GURPS**, in eight different languages (so far). It is one of the recognized standards for roleplaying, worldwide.

About **GURPS Lite**

This is the boiled-down “essence” of **GURPS**: all the fundamental rules, but not the options and embellishments that often confuse new players. Once you’re comfortable with these rules, you can pick up the **GURPS Basic Set** and jump right into the action. Experienced GMs will, we hope, find this a valuable tool for introducing new players to the game.

Materials Needed for Play

To play, you will need these rules, three six-sided dice, pencils, and scratch paper.

GLOSSARY

Like any hobby, gaming has a jargon. To help you understand the concepts and terms used in **GURPS** and other *roleplaying games*, we’ll start with a few definitions:

Roleplaying Game (RPG): A game in which a *Game Master* guides several players through an *adventure* in which they play the parts of imaginary individuals, or *characters*, in a fictional or historical *game world*. **GURPS** is a roleplaying game.

Game Master (GM): The referee, who chooses the *adventure*, talks the players through it, and judges the results.

Character: Any being (person, animal, whatever) played by the GM or a player in a RPG.

Non-player Character (NPC): Any character played by the GM. The GM may control many characters, major and minor.

Player Character (PC): Any character played by one of the players. Typically, each player controls a single character.



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Statistics (Stats): Numbers rating a character’s abilities, used to determine what each one can and cannot do. See p. 177.

Party: A group of PCs taking part in an *adventure*.

Game World: A background for play and setting for an *adventure* – for example, Earth during World War II.

Adventure: The basic “unit” of play in a RPG, sometimes called a *scenario*. A RPG is never over until the players want to end it, but a single adventure will have a beginning and an end. It may last through several sessions of play, or be done in a single evening.

Encounter: One “scene” of an adventure; a meeting between the PCs and one or more NPCs.

Campaign: A continuing series of adventures. A campaign will usually have a continuing cast of PCs, and the same GM (or team of GMs).

BASIC TRAINING



GURPS uses six-sided dice only. To figure combat damage (and several other things), the “dice+adds” system is used. If a weapon does “7d+1” damage, this is shorthand for “roll seven dice and add 1 to the total.” Likewise, “3d-1” means “roll three dice and subtract 1 from the total.” If you see just “6d,” that means “roll six dice.” For really huge numbers, dice can be multiplied; for instance, “6d×2” means “roll six dice and multiply by 2.”

GURPS Lite has only three basic “game mechanics”: *success* rolls, *reaction* rolls, and *damage* rolls.

SUCCESS ROLLS

A “success roll” is a die roll made when you need to “test” one of your skills or abilities. Sometimes you roll; sometimes the GM rolls for you. For instance, you might test, or *roll against*, your Strength (ST) to stop a heavy door from closing.

Roll 3 dice and add them together for a success roll. If your roll is *less than* or *equal to* the skill or ability you are testing, you succeeded. Otherwise, you failed. For example, if you are rolling against Strength, and your ST level is 12, a roll of 12 or less succeeds. Thus, the higher the stat you are rolling against, the easier it is to make the roll.

When the GM Rolls

Normally, the player rolls dice for his own character. There are two exceptions:

1. In a situation in which the character shouldn’t be able to tell whether he has succeeded – especially when he is trying to get information. The GM rolls in secret. If the roll succeeds, the GM gives the player true information. If the roll fails, the GM lies or gives no information at all.

2. In a situation in which the player simply shouldn’t know what’s going on. This includes most Sense rolls (see pp. 196-197). The GM should simply roll in secret and inform the player of any consequences of which his character would be aware.

Modifiers and Effective Skill

Sometimes you will have *modifiers* (*bonuses* or *penalties*) to a roll. For instance, if you were trying to stop a *very heavy* door from closing, you might have to roll against Strength at a penalty of -2 (or ST-2, for short) because the door is heavy. In that case, with a Strength of 12, you would need to roll a 10 or less to succeed.

Likewise, for an especially easy task, you would get a bonus to your attempt. You might roll “Animal Handling+4” to make friends with a very friendly dog. If your skill were 12, a roll of 16 or less would succeed.

Your *effective skill* for a given task is your *basic skill* (your actual level in that skill) plus or minus any appropriate modifiers. In the example above, your basic skill is 12 but your effective skill is 16. You may not attempt to roll if your *effective skill* is less than 3, unless you are attempting a defense roll (see p. 199).

Critical Success and Failure

A *critical success* is an especially good result on a skill roll; a *critical hit* is a critical success scored on an attack (see p. 199). You score a critical success as follows:

- ⊕ A roll of 3 or 4 is always a critical success.
- ⊕ A roll of 5 is a critical success if your effective skill is 15+.
- ⊕ A roll of 6 is a critical success if your effective skill is 16+.

The GM determines what happens when you roll a critical success. This is always something good; the better the roll, the better the “bonus” he gives you.

A *critical failure* is an especially bad result on a skill roll. You score a critical failure as follows:

- ⊖ A roll of 18 is always a critical failure.
- ⊖ A roll of 17 is an ordinary failure if your effective skill is 16 or better, and a critical failure if your effective skill is under 16.
- ⊖ Any roll of 10 greater than your effective skill is a critical failure. That is, 16 on a skill of 6, 15 on a skill of 5, and so on.

The GM determines what happens on a critical failure. It’s always something bad; the worse the roll, the worse the result.

Automatic Success

Some things are totally trivial. No roll is required when common sense says that both failure and critical success are impossible; however, if there is any chance of failure, a roll is required. Finding your corner store requires no roll. Hitting a target at point-blank range, even for an experienced soldier, does – after all, even the most meticulously maintained rifle can misfire due to bad ammunition or bad luck.

Repeated Attempts

Sometimes, you have only one chance to do something; other times, you can try over and over until you succeed. Occasionally, you will not know whether you succeeded or failed until it’s too late to try again. Finally, there will be times when you are injured by failure but can afford to fail a few times. The GM can use common sense to distinguish among these, according to the situation in which the characters find themselves, but as a rule:

- ⊕ If the first failure kills them (or destroys the object of the attempt), that’s that.
- ⊕ If a failure causes damage of some kind, assess the damage and let them try again after a “reasonable” time passes.
- ⊕ If a failure causes no damage, let them try again after a reasonable time, at a -1 penalty for each attempt after the first.

Contests of Skill

At times, two characters will need to compare their relative skills to settle a competition. A *Contest of Skill* is a quick way to resolve the situation without playing it out in detail. When a Contest of Skill is called for, both characters make their success rolls in the appropriate skill. Any appropriate modifiers are used.

There are two types of Contest:

A *Quick Contest* is usually over in a second; e.g., two people grabbing for the same weapon. Each character makes his skill roll. If one succeeds and the other fails, the winner is obvious. If both succeed (or fail), the winner is the one who succeeded by the most, or failed by the least. A tie means nobody won.

A *Regular Contest* may take some time; e.g., arm wrestling. Each character tries his skill roll. If one succeeds and the other fails, the winner is obvious. If both succeed or both fail, the characters’ relative positions are unchanged and they may try again.

The time each attempt takes will depend on the activity, and is up to the GM to determine. In a combat situation, each attempt takes one second. In a library-research scenario, with the fate of the world hanging on who finds a certain obscure reference first, each attempt could represent days of time.

If both characters have a very high skill, the Contest could go on indefinitely. Therefore, shorten it as follows: if both skills are over 14, reduce the higher one to 14, and subtract the same amount from the lower one.

Eventually, one character will make his roll and the other one will miss. At this point, the one who made his roll is the winner of the Contest.

REACTION ROLLS

A “reaction roll” is a roll made by the GM to determine how his NPCs react to the PCs. This roll is always optional, and the GM may predetermine reactions instead; however, it’s often more fun to let the dice control the reactions.

To check reactions, the GM rolls 3 dice and consults the *Reaction Table* (below). The higher his roll, the better the NPCs will react, and the better treatment they will give the PCs.

Reaction rolls are typically made in potential combat situations, during commercial transactions, in response to requests for aid or information, and to determine the attitude and loyalty of NPC hirelings.

Reaction Modifiers

A *reaction bonus* is a factor that makes the NPCs more friendly; a *reaction penalty* is something that will make them less friendly. There are several types of reaction modifiers:

First, many PCs will have *personal* modifiers for appearance, social standing, etc. that add to (or subtract from) reaction rolls.

As well, the *situation* can result in a reaction modifier. Offering someone a bad business deal, or trying to convince someone not to attack you when you’re badly outnumbered, might give you a penalty. Offering a good deal, or dealing with an old and trusted hireling, could give a bonus. This is left up to the GM.

CHARACTERS

Creating a character is the first part of the game, and one of the most important. The whole idea of roleplaying is to take the part of another person – a “character” that you create.

GURPS lets you decide exactly what kind of hero that you will become.

The usual way to create a character is to *design* him, just as though he were a character in a story you were writing. Start by deciding what type of person you want to be. You can take your inspiration from a fictional hero or heroine – or create your new “self” from the ground up. Once you have some idea what sort of person you want to play, it’s time to bring him to life!

Character Stories: A “character story” is the history of a game character, written by the person who plays that character. This is a great aid to roleplaying. You might even want to write the story first (or at least some of it), and *then* work out your character’s actual stats. A story can really help bring your character to life. You don’t have to do it – but it’s recommended.

Finally, *appropriate behavior* by the players should always influence reaction rolls. A good approach should be worth a +1 modifier – or more! – while a wholly inappropriate approach might give a -1 or -2 penalty on the reaction roll.

Reaction Table

Roll 3 dice and apply any reaction modifiers.

0 or less: *Disastrous.* The NPC *hates* the characters and will act in their worst interest. Nothing is out of the question: assault, betrayal, and ignoring a life-or-death plea are all possible.

1 to 3: *Very Bad.* The NPC dislikes the characters and will act against them if it’s convenient to do so: attacking, offering grossly unfair terms in a transaction, and so on.

4 to 6: *Bad.* The NPC cares nothing for the characters and will act against them (as above), if he can profit by doing so.

7 to 9: *Poor.* The NPC is unimpressed. He may make threats, demand a huge bribe before offering aid, or something similar.

10 to 12: *Neutral.* The NPC ignores the characters as much as possible. He is totally uninterested. Transactions will go smoothly and routinely, as long as protocol is observed.

13 to 15: *Good.* The NPC likes the characters and will be helpful within everyday limits. Reasonable requests will be granted.

16 to 18: *Very Good.* The NPC thinks highly of the characters and will be quite helpful and friendly, freely offering aid and favorable terms in most things.

19 or better: *Excellent.* The NPC is extremely impressed by the characters, and will act in their best interests at all times, within the limits of his own ability – perhaps even risking his life, wealth, or reputation.

DAMAGE ROLLS

A “damage roll” is a roll made in a fight to see how much harm you did to your foe. Many things can affect the final damage done by an injury: armor protects the wearer, certain weapons can do extra damage if they get through the armor, and some “critical hits” bypass the damage roll altogether. All of these things are explained under *Combat* (see pp. 198-203).



If you write the story down, you should show it to the GM, but not necessarily to the other players. After all, your character probably has some secrets, even from his friends.

CHARACTER POINTS

When you create a character, the GM will give you a certain number of *character points* to “spend” on your character’s abilities. See *Starting Points* (p. 62) for some recommended point totals. These rules assume heroic characters built with 100 points; most ordinary people have only 25 points.

The following sections describe things you can spend your character points on. Positive traits (e.g., great strength, wealth, above-average appearance, and skills) *cost* points in proportion to their value. Negative traits (e.g., weakness, bad sight, poverty, and fear of heights) *give* you extra points that can be used to buy more positive traits.

ATTRIBUTES

Four numbers called “attributes” are used to define your basic abilities:

Strength (ST), a measure of “brawn” or physical muscle.

Dexterity (DX), a measure of agility and coordination.

Intelligence (IQ), a measure of brainpower, alertness, adaptability, and general background experience.

Health (HT), a measure of energy and vitality. HT also stands for “hits” – the amount of physical damage a character can take. When you have taken “hits” equal to your Health score, you soon fall unconscious. Further injury can kill you.

An attribute of 1 is the lowest score permitted for a human. There is *no* upper limit to any score. For each attribute, a score of 10 represents the human average; anything from 8 to 12 is in the range considered “normal.” Scores above 16 are definitely unusual; scores above 20 are superhuman!

The four attributes are considered equally valuable. The point cost for beginning attributes is given in the table, below. Note that a score of 10 in any attribute is *free*, since 10 is “average.” Scores below 10 have a negative cost – in effect, they “give you back” some points!

Character Point Costs

Level	Point Cost	Level	Point Cost	Level	Point Cost
1	-80	7	-20	13	30
2	-70	8	-15	14	45
3	-60	9	-10	15	60
4	-50	10	0	16	80
5	-40	11	10	17	100
6	-30	12	20	18	125
				+1	+25

IMAGE AND LOOKS

This section addresses your character’s *intrinsic* “social” traits: appearance, manner, and bearing. Traits with positive point values (e.g., above-average Appearance, Voice) are considered *advantages* (p. 182). Those with negative values (e.g., below-average appearance, Odious Personal Habits) are treated as *disadvantages* (p. 183), and obey all the usual rules for disadvantages. Still others (e.g., height and weight, handedness) merely add “color.”

Appearance Variable

You are free to set the physical appearance of your character in any way you like. However, outstanding good (or bad) looks are considered an advantage (or disadvantage). Good looks cost points; bad looks give you bonus points to spend elsewhere. Reaction-roll modifiers due to Appearance apply only to people who can see you.

Hideous Appearance: Any sort of disgusting looks you specify: hunchback, severe skin disease, wall-eye . . . preferably several things at once. -4 on reaction rolls. -20 points.

Ugly Appearance: As above, but not so bad – maybe only stringy hair and snaggle teeth. -2 on reaction rolls. -10 points.

Unattractive Appearance: You just look vaguely unappealing. -1 on reaction rolls. -5 points.

Average Appearance: No bonuses or penalties of any type; you can blend easily into a crowd. No point cost or bonus.

Attractive Appearance: You may not enter beauty contests, but you’re definitely good-looking. +1 on all reaction rolls. 5 points.

Handsome (or Beautiful) Appearance: You could enter beauty contests! +2 on reaction rolls made by the same sex; +4 on reaction rolls made by the opposite sex. 15 points.

Very Handsome (or Beautiful) Appearance: You *do* enter beauty contests, and you win. +2 on reaction rolls made by the same sex; +6 (!) on reaction rolls by opposite sex. 25 points.

Charisma 5 points/level

This is the natural ability to impress and lead others. Anyone can acquire a semblance of charisma by good looks, good manners, and intelligence – but *real* charisma works independently of these things, and you either have it or you don’t. It affects all reaction rolls made by humans (but not beasts). 5 points per +1 reaction bonus.

Handedness No point cost

Decide whether you are right- or left-handed. These rules assume you are right-handed unless you decide otherwise or pay the points to be ambidextrous. If you decide to be left-handed, and combat damage is rolled to your right hand, it happens to your left instead. There is no point bonus or penalty for being left-handed.

Whenever you try to do anything significant (fire a pistol, forge a letter, etc.) with your “off” hand, you will be at a -4 penalty. This does not apply to things you *normally* do with your off hand.

Ambidexterity 10 points

You can use both hands with equal skill. You do not suffer the -4 penalty for using an “off hand” like most people do, and can fight (or act) with either hand (though not necessarily both at once). Should some accident befall one of your arms or hands, assume it is the left one.

Height and Weight No point cost

Players are free to select height and weight for their characters, within reason. The table below can be used to determine “average” height and weight. Average height is based on your ST score. Weight, in turn, is based on your height. As much as 6” variation in height and 40 lbs. variation in weight is believable, but anyone with a better-than-average Appearance should have a weight within 20% of “average” for his height.

Height and Weight Table

ST	Height	Weight	ST	Height	Weight
–	5’2” or less	120 lbs.	10	5’9”	150 lbs.
–	5’3”	130 lbs.	11	5’10”	155 lbs.
5–	5’4”	130 lbs.	12	5’11”	160 lbs.
6	5’5”	135 lbs.	13	6’	165 lbs.
7	5’6”	135 lbs.	14	6’1”	170 lbs.
8	5’7”	140 lbs.	15	6’2”	180 lbs.
9	5’8”	145 lbs.	16+	6’3”	190 lbs.

For each inch of height over 6’3”, add 10 lbs. to average weight. This table assumes a male. For a female, subtract 2” from average height and 10 lbs. from average weight. Weight is always determined after height.

Fat -5/-10/-20 points

You are unusually heavy.

Overweight: Determine weight normally for ST, and then increase it by 30%. Being overweight carries a reaction penalty of -1 among health-conscious societies and in areas where food is in especially short supply. -5 points.

Fat: Determine weight normally for ST, and then increase it by 50%. This gives -1 on *all* reaction rolls; HT may not be greater than 15. -10 points.

Extremely Fat: Determine weight normally, and then *double* it. This gives -2 on all reaction rolls; HT may not be greater than 13. -20 points.

In all three cases, the extra weight counts as encumbrance (p. 194) that you cannot get rid of. (*Exception:* this does not count against you when swimming.) If you are Fat or Extremely Fat, normal clothes and body armor will not fit you, and you will be at -3 to Disguise, or to Shadowing if you are trying to follow someone in a crowd. The GM may assess additional penalties in cramped quarters (tanks, submarines, etc.). Fat people get +5 to their Swimming roll (+2 if merely Overweight).

Skinny -5 points

You are notably underweight. After figuring your height, take “average” weight for that height and cut it by 1/3. You may not take Handsome or Very Handsome appearance, and your HT may not be more than 14. Normal clothes and body armor will not fit you, and you will be at -2 to Disguise, or to Shadowing if you are trying to follow someone in a crowd.

Odious Personal Habits -5/-10/-15 points

You behave, some or all of the time, in a fashion repugnant to others. The worse your behavior, the more bonus points you receive. Specify the behavior when the character is first created, and work the bonus out with the GM. Body odor might be worth -5 points, spitting on the floor would be worth -10 points; -15-point habits are left to the imagination of those depraved enough to want them. For each -5 points your habit is worth, subtract 1 from all reaction rolls made by someone in a position to notice it.

Voice 10 points

You have a naturally clear, resonant, and attractive voice. You get a permanent +2 bonus on the Bard (or Public Speaking) skill, and on the following Influence Skills (p. 189): Diplomacy, Savoir-Faire, and Sex Appeal. You also get a +2 on any reaction roll made by someone who can hear your voice.

SOCIAL STANDING

This section contains rules for defining your character’s *extrinsic* social traits – his place in society. As for *Image and Looks*, above, traits with positive point values are advantages, while those with negative values are disadvantages. Most of these traits only have significance within the character’s own society.

Clerical Investment 5 points/level

This is the social/political advantage of being invested as a cleric of your religion. It represents your status and influence within the church. You have a number of powers and privileges that a layman lacks, including a +1 reaction bonus *per level of rank* from followers of your religion and those who respect your faith. You will be addressed by a title – Father, Rabbi, Reverend – and may perform ceremonies such as marriage and last rites. Most ordinary clerics will have 5 points in this advantage.

Duty Variable

You have a significant responsibility toward others, and are personally committed to that responsibility. A Duty typically reflects your obligations as a member of an intelligence agency,

a military or police force, or a similar organization. By definition, a Duty is imposed from outside. The GM rolls at the beginning of each adventure to see if each character will be “called to duty” in that adventure. The point cost of a Duty depends on the frequency with which it is demanded (all rolls are on three dice):

Almost all the time (roll of 15 or less): -15 points.

Quite often (roll of 12 or less): -10 points.

Fairly often (roll of 9 or less): -5 points.

Occasionally (roll of 6 or less): -2 points.

To be significant, a Duty should be dangerous. An ordinary job is not a Duty. If a Duty does not require you to risk your life, at least occasionally, reduce its value by 5 points, which negates those less frequent than “quite often.”

On the other hand, an *Extremely Hazardous Duty*, where you are “on duty” all the time and risk death or serious injury, is worth -20 points. This is typical of front-line fighters in total war.

See p. 64 for more detail on military Duties.

Legal Enforcement Powers 5/10/15 points

You are an officer of the law, with all the accompanying rights, powers, and restrictions. In some jurisdictions, this amounts to a license to kill; in others, it’s little more than the right to carry a badge and write parking tickets.

The point cost is determined by the rights and privileges of the character’s branch of law enforcement. Generally, a policeman with local jurisdiction, the ability to arrest suspected criminals, the right to perform searches with an appropriate warrant, and *possibly* the right to carry a concealed weapon, has 5 points’ worth of Legal Enforcement Powers.

Someone with national or international jurisdiction, *or* not obligated to respect the civil rights of others, *or* free to engage in covert investigations, *or* able to kill with relative impunity, has 10 points’ worth of Legal Enforcement Powers.

An officer with three or more of the above abilities has 15 points of Legal Enforcement Powers.

Legal Enforcement Powers usually go hand-in-hand with an appropriate Duty disadvantage (above), and a Reputation (see below), which may be an advantage, a disadvantage, or both.

Military Rank 5 points/level of Rank

Military Rank reflects your position in a military organization. Each level of Rank gives authority over those of lower Rank – regardless of personal ability. Typically, enlisted men have Rank 0, NCOs have Rank 1-2, and officers have Rank 3+. Generals or the equivalent are Rank 7 or 8 (the maximum level of Rank). The title associated with a given level of Rank depends on the organization; see *Sample GURPS Military Ranks* (p. 63) for examples.

Military Rank gives a Status bonus, which need *not* be paid for separately; see *Status* (p. 66) for more information. Military Rank almost always involves a significant Duty (see above).

Reputation Variable

Some people are so well-known that their reputation actually becomes an advantage or a disadvantage. For game purposes, reputation affects the *reaction rolls* made by NPCs. The details of your reputation are entirely up to you; you can be known for bravery, ferocity, or whatever you want. If you have a reputation, your name or your face, or possibly the military decorations pinned to your uniform (see *Reputation (Medals)*, p. 63), will be enough to trigger a “reputation roll” to see if the people you meet have heard of you. Roll once for each person or small group you meet. For a large group, the GM may roll more than once if he likes.

There are three components to your reputation: *Type of Reputation*, *People Affected*, and *Frequency of Recognition*.

Type of Reputation affects the reaction modifier that you get from people who recognize you. For every +1 bonus to a reaction roll (up to +4), the cost is 5 points. For every -1 penalty (up to -4), the cost is -5 points.

People Affected modifies the value of your reputation. The larger the “affected class” (people who might have heard of you), the more your reputation is worth, as follows:

Everyone you will meet in your campaign: use listed value.

Large class of people (e.g., all people of a particular nationality, profession, or religion): 1/2 value (round down).

Small class of people (e.g., everyone from a specific town, every officer who fought in a particular battle): 1/3 value (round down).

If the class of people affected is so small that, in the GM’s opinion, you would not meet even one in the average adventure, your reputation doesn’t count at all.

Frequency of Recognition also modifies the value of your reputation. The more often you are recognized by members of the “affected class,” the more important that reputation is (all rolls are on three dice):

All the time: no modifier.

Sometimes (roll of 10 or less): 1/2 value, rounded down.

Occasionally (roll of 7 or less): 1/3 value, rounded down.

Social Stigma -5/-10/-15 points

You are of an ethnicity or sex your culture considers inferior. The “stigma” must be obvious to anyone who sees you; otherwise, it’s a Reputation. The point bonus depends on the reaction penalty:

Second-class citizen (e.g., a woman in many societies, a non-Aryan Western European in the Third Reich): -5 points. -1 on all reaction rolls except from others of your own kind.

Valuable property (e.g., a woman in WWII-era Japan): -10 points. This usually takes the form of limited freedom or lack of intellectual respect.

Minority group (e.g., a black or Hispanic person in WWII-era U.S.A., a Slav in the Third Reich): -10 points. -2 on all reaction rolls made by anyone except your own kind, but +2 on rolls made by your own kind.

Outsider, outlaw, or barbarian (e.g., any non-Japanese in Japan during WWII): -15 points. This only applies if the “barbarian” is outside his own culture. You get -3 on all reaction rolls, but +3 from your own kind when met outside your home culture.

Anyone who takes a Social Stigma disadvantage must be bound by it . . . roleplay the difficulties it causes!

Status 5 points/level of Status

Status is an indication of your *class* in society. Anyone can determine your Status by looking your dress and your bearing. If you have very high Status, your *face* may be easily recognized.

Status is measured in “social levels,” ranging from -2 (hobo, refugee) to 8 (absolute dictator, divine emperor); the meaning of specific Status levels is given on the *Status/Cost of Living Table* (p. 66). The point cost is 5 points per level of Status; e.g., Status 5 costs 25 points, while Status -3 is a *disadvantage* worth -15 points.

High Status: High Status means you are a member of the ruling class in your culture. As a result, others in your culture (only) defer to you. High Status carries various privileges; these are up to the GM. Because of the relationship between Status and Wealth (see below), a Wealth level of Wealthy or above lets you pay 5 fewer points for high Status. In effect, you get one level of Status free. Military Rank can also give a Status bonus; see p. 63 and p. 179.

Low Status: You are a servant, criminal, or slave. Note that this is not the same thing as a Social Stigma (p. 180).

Status as a Reaction Modifier: When a reaction roll is made, the *difference* between the Status of the characters involved can affect the reaction. *Higher Status usually gives you a bonus.* If you have Status 3, for instance, those of Status 1 would react to you at +2. *Negative Status usually gives a penalty.* If your Status is negative, those of higher Status will react badly to you. Take the difference between your Status and the NPC’s as a reaction penalty, but no worse than -4. *Lower Status may give a penalty.* If you are dealing with an NPC who is basically friendly, your Status won’t matter (as long as it’s positive). But if the NPC is neutral or already angry, lower Status makes it worse.

WEALTH

Wealth governs how much money you start play with, how much money you earn per game month (though this depends on your specific job, too), and how much time you must spend earning your living. All characters get the “standard” starting wealth unless they paid extra character points for high wealth (the Wealth advantage) or took the disadvantage of low wealth (the Poverty disadvantage); “wealth levels” are explained below. Characters with a “settled” lifestyle should put 80% of their starting wealth into home, clothing, etc., leaving only 20% for “adventuring” gear.

GURPS uses a \$ sign to indicate money, regardless of the specific currency. Standard starting wealth is \$1,500 (1,500 U.S. dollars) during World War 2. For more on how wealth works in this era, see *Wealth* (p. 63).

Wealth Levels Variable

Dead Broke: You have no job, no source of income, no money, and no property other than the clothes on your back. Either you are unable to work, or there are no jobs. -25 points.

Poor: Starting wealth is only 1/5 the standard starting wealth. You spend 50 hours per week at your job. Some jobs are not available to you, and no job you find will pay you very well. -15 points.

Struggling: Your starting wealth is only 1/2 the standard starting wealth. You spend 40 hours per week at your job. Most jobs are open to you, but you don’t earn much. -10 points.

Average: You have the standard starting wealth. You spend 40 hours per week at your job. No point cost or bonus.

Comfortable: You work for a living, but your lifestyle is better than average. You spend 40 hours per week at your job. Your starting wealth is twice the standard starting wealth. 10 points.

Wealthy: Your starting wealth is 5 times the standard starting wealth; you live very well. Your job takes only 20 hours per week. This level of wealth, and higher ones, may not be chosen without the GM’s permission! 20 points.

Very Wealthy: Your starting wealth is 20 times the standard starting wealth. You spend only 10 hours a week looking after business (this is hardly a “job”). 30 points.

Filthy Rich: Your starting wealth is 100 times the standard starting wealth. You spend 10 hours a week on business. You can buy almost anything you want without considering the cost. 50 points.

Multimillionaire: Once you have purchased Filthy Rich, you may buy additional levels of Wealth. Each level increases your wealth by a factor of ten (e.g., the first level would increase total wealth to 1,000 times standard starting wealth). Each level also grants a free level of Status, to a maximum bonus of +2 over the free level already given for high Wealth. 25 points per level.

FRIENDS AND FOES

Many characters have NPCs who are especially well or ill disposed toward them. Powerful friends you can call upon in times of need are an *advantage*; weaker friends you must defend are a *disadvantage*, as are powerful enemies.

Frequency of Appearance: When a character has friends or enemies like this, the GM rolls dice once per adventure to see if they will get involved. The chance on three dice of a powerful friend showing up or otherwise aiding you, or of a weaker friend or an enemy somehow complicating your life, is called his *frequency of appearance*. This adjusts the NPC's value as an advantage or disadvantage, after all other factors have been considered, as follows:

Appears almost all the time (roll of 15 or less): triple cost.

Appears quite often (roll of 12 or less): double cost.

Appears fairly often (roll of 9 or less): listed cost.

Appears rarely (roll of 6 or less): half cost (round up).

A Note on Power Level: The rules below all assume 100-point PCs; in a more (or less) powerful game, adjust the point values of these NPCs by the same amount.

Dependents

Variable

An NPC for whom you are responsible is a *Dependent*, and is considered a disadvantage. This may be your child, sidekick, spouse, or anyone else you feel an obligation to look after. If your Dependent is in trouble and you don't go to his aid immediately, the GM can deny you bonus character points (see p. 194) for "acting out of character." Furthermore, you can never get any character points for a play session in which your Dependent is killed or badly hurt.

The Dependent is created just like any other character, but instead of the 100 points used to create a PC, you use 50 points or less. A Dependent built with 0 or fewer points is worth -16 points, one who is built with 1 to 25 points is worth -12 points, and one built with 26 to 50 points is worth -6 points. A Dependent built with 50+ points is not worth any bonus points.

The more important the Dependent is to you, the more points he is worth. For an employer or acquaintance to whom you may weigh risks in a rational fashion, *halve* the values above. For a friend you must *always* protect, unless something even more important is on the line, use the values above. For a loved one whose safety always comes first, *double* the values above.

Finally, pick a frequency of appearance (see above) that fits the "story" behind the Dependent.

No character may ever earn points for more than two Dependents at once.

Allies

Variable

Allies are loyal comrades who are competent enough to accompany you on adventures. Having an Ally is an advantage. An Ally is an NPC, and should be played as such. Allies are usually agreeable to the suggestions of their PCs, but they are not puppets. As well, a PC should receive no character points for any play session in which he betrays, attacks, or unnecessarily endangers his Ally.

An Ally character is created just as though he were a PC. An Ally built on 51-75 points is worth no points, but must be protected like a Dependent. An Ally built on 76-100 points costs 5 points, while one built on 101-150 points costs 10 points. An Ally built on over 50 points more than his PC is actually a *Patron* (see below).

An Ally who has special abilities – for instance, political power out of proportion to his point value – may cost an extra 5 to 10 points, at the GM's discretion.

As for a Dependent, pick a frequency of appearance that fits the "story" behind the Ally.

Note that NPC Allies must all pay the points to have their PC as an Ally. For a 100-point PC, this will cost 5 points.

Patrons

Variable

The most powerful NPC friends are known as *Patrons*. Like Allies, Patrons are NPCs, created initially by the player but controlled by the GM. A Patron may be an advisor, protector, or employer (but you can have a job without having a Patron; a Patron is more than an ordinary boss – see *Patrons*, p. 63). Unlike an Ally, a Patron does not adventure with a PC. Instead, the Patron offers advice, knowledge, equipment, influence, etc.

The point value of a Patron depends on his (or its) power. A single powerful individual (created with at least 150 points), or a group with assets of at least 1,000 times standard starting wealth, is worth 10 points. An extremely powerful individual (created with at least 200 points), or a reasonably powerful organization (assets equivalent to at least 10,000 times standard starting wealth), is worth 15 points. A very powerful organization (assets equivalent to at least a million times standard starting wealth) is worth 25 points. A national government or giant multi-national organization (net worth basically incalculable) is worth 30 points.

If a Patron supplies useful equipment, that increases the point value if you can use the equipment for your own purposes. In most cases, this adds 5 points to a Patron's cost. If the equipment is worth more than the standard starting wealth of the campaign, it adds 10 points.

Like an Ally, a Patron who has special abilities may cost an extra 5 to 10 points, at the GM's discretion.

Finally, pick an appropriate frequency of appearance.

Enemies

Variable

An NPC or organization that is working against you, or just trying to kill you, is an *Enemy*. You are responsible for determining the nature of your Enemy when you first create your character, and must explain to the GM why this Enemy is after you. The GM always has the right to veto your choice of Enemy if it seems silly or would be too hard to fit into the campaign.

To be worth points as an Enemy, your nemesis must be personal, not simply a common foe of everyone around you. If you are a soldier, the opposing forces in wartime do not qualify as Enemies: you are no more their target than anyone else fighting on your side. However, a crazed enemy sniper obsessed with killing you personally (for whatever reason) *would* be a legitimate Enemy.

The point value of an Enemy is governed by his (or its) strength: the more powerful the Enemy, the more points he (or it) is worth as a disadvantage. A single above-average individual (created with 50 points) is worth -5 points. A single very formidable individual (created with 100 points), or a group of 3 to 5 "average" 25-point people, is worth -10 points. A medium-sized group (6 to 20 people) is worth -20 points. A large group (20 to 1,000 people), or a medium-sized group that includes some formidable or superhuman individuals, is worth -30 points. An entire government or some other utterly formidable group is worth -40 points.

Once you know the base point value of the Enemy, pick an appropriate frequency of appearance.

Since too many Enemies can disrupt a game, no character may take more than two Enemies, or total more than 60 points bonus from Enemies.

ADVANTAGES

Advantages are innate abilities. In general, a character may only be given advantages when he is first created. After that, there is no way to gain or “earn” them without the GM’s special permission.

Each advantage has a cost in character points. For some advantages, this is fixed. Others are bought in levels, at a certain point cost for each level. A character may have as many advantages as he can afford. Many advantages referred to in *Character Templates* (p. 68) are not listed here. These appear in *GURPS Basic Set* or *Compendium I*. Those solely using *GURPS Lite* should choose from the advantages listed below.

Absolute Direction 5 points

You always know which way is north, and you can always retrace a path you have followed within the past month. This ability *does* work underground or underwater. Gives a +3 bonus on your Navigation and Orienteering skills.

Absolute Timing 5 points

You have an accurate mental clock. You always know what time it is, down to the second, unless you have been knocked unconscious by drugs or injury. You can measure elapsed time with equal accuracy. Sleep does not interfere with this, and you can wake up at a predetermined time if you choose. Changes of time zone also have no effect.

Acute Sense(s) 2 points/level

You have better-than-average senses. *Acute Hearing* gives you a bonus to your IQ whenever you must roll to hear something, or when the GM rolls for you. *Acute Taste/Smell* gives you a bonus when rolling to notice a taste or smell. *Acute Vision* gives you a bonus when rolling to see something. Each acute sense is a separate advantage, and costs 2 points per +1 bonus to your roll. E.g., Acute Hearing +6 costs 12 points.

Alertness 5 points/level

A general bonus to *any* Sense roll (pp. 196-197), or when the GM rolls against your IQ to see if you notice something. This advantage can be combined with Acute Senses. Costs 5 points per +1 bonus to your roll.

Animal Empathy 5 points

You get +2 on any reaction roll by a wild animal, and +4 from a tame one. You also get a +4 bonus on Animal Handling, Riding, Teamster, and other “animal” skill rolls. You may never kill an animal without a very good reason, and you should try to prevent others from doing so. Note that killing for food is perfectly acceptable, and in a hunting situation you will get a +3 bonus to find game.

Combat Reflexes 15 points

You have extraordinary reactions and are very rarely surprised for more than a moment. You get a +1 to any Active Defense in combat (see p. 199). You never “freeze up” in a surprise situation, and you get a +6 on any IQ roll to wake up or to recover from surprise or a mental “stun” (see p. 203).

Common Sense 10 points

Any time you start to do something that the GM feels is *stupid*, he rolls against your IQ. A successful roll means he must warn you, “Hadn’t you better think about that?” This advantage allows an impulsive *player* to take the part of a thoughtful character.

Danger Sense 15 points

You can’t depend on it, but sometimes you get this prickly feeling right at the back of your neck, and you know something’s wrong . . . If you have Danger Sense, the GM rolls once against your IQ, secretly, in any situation involving an ambush, impending disaster, or similar hazard. A successful roll means you get a warning that something’s wrong. A roll of 3 or 4 means you get a little detail as to the nature of the danger.

Daredevil 15 points

Fortune seems to smile on you when you take risks. Any time you take an unnecessary risk (GM’s option) you get a +1 to all skill rolls. Furthermore, you may re-roll any critical failure that occurs while you are engaged in high-risk behavior. *Example:* If you’re fired upon from a window across the street, you don’t get this bonus if you crouch behind a wall and return fire from cover, but you *do* get it if you vault over the wall and charge, screaming!

Disease Resistant/ Immunity to Disease 5/10 points

Your body naturally resists disease organisms. This protects you against bacterial, viral, and fungal infections, but not parasites (e.g., tapeworms).

Disease Resistant: You get +8 to HT to avoid catching any disease. 5 points.

Immunity to Disease: You *never* catch any infection or disease, even if you are forcibly injected with it! You must start with a HT of 12 or better to take Immunity to Disease, but the advantage will remain if your HT is later reduced below 12. 10 points.

Double-Jointed 5 points

Your body is unusually flexible. You get a +3 on any Climbing or Escape roll, or on any Mechanic roll (to reach into an engine, of course)!

Empathy 15 points

You have a “feeling” for people. When you first meet someone, or when you are reunited after an absence, you may request the GM to roll against your IQ. He will then tell you what you “feel” about that person. (A failed roll means the GM may lie to you.) This talent, when it works, is excellent for spotting impostors and determining the true loyalties of NPCs. You can also use it to determine whether someone is lying . . . not what the truth really is, but just whether they are being honest with you.

Fearlessness 2 points/level

You are extremely brave. Your level of Fearlessness adds to your Will when you roll Fright Checks (see p. 197) or resist the Intimidation skill (p. 189). Costs 2 points per +1 bonus to your roll.

Fit/Very Fit 5/15 points

You are in peak condition for someone of your HT.

Fit: You lose fatigue points (see p. 205) to exertion, heat, etc. at the normal rate, but recover them at twice the normal rate. You also get +1 on all HT rolls. 5 points.

Very Fit: You lose fatigue *half* as quickly and regain it twice as quickly as normal. You also get +2 on all HT rolls. 15 points.

Hard to Kill 5 points/level

You are incredibly difficult to kill. Your level of Hard to Kill adds to HT rolls to avoid death when you are wounded to -HT or worse (see p. 203). Costs 5 points per +1 bonus to your roll.

High Pain Threshold 10 points

You are as susceptible to injury as anyone else, but you don't *feel* it as much. If you are hurt in combat, you are not stunned and do not have a "shock" penalty (p. 203) on your next turn. (*Exception*: a head blow can still stun you.) If you are tortured physically, you are at a +3 to resist. The GM may let you roll at +3 to ignore pain in other situations.

Language Talent 2 points/level

You pick up languages quickly. Whenever you learn any Language skill (see p. 191), add your level of Language Talent to IQ.

Less Sleep 3 points/level

You can stay awake and alert for longer than most people. For you, a full night's sleep is 8 hours minus your level of this advantage, to a maximum of five levels (3 hours' sleep). A half-night's sleep is half this amount. This helps you avoid the fatigue penalty for missed sleep; see *Fatigue* (p. 205).

Literacy 0 points

You can read and write any language you know (see *Languages*, p. 191), limited only by your skill in that language. This is the norm on 20th-century Earth, and has no point cost. *Illiteracy* is a disadvantage, however; see p. 186.

Luck 15/30/60 points

This allows creation of the kind of hero who defies the odds.

Luck: Once per hour of play, you may re-roll a single bad die roll twice (this must be the last roll you made) and take the best of the three rolls! If the GM is rolling (e.g., to see if you notice something), you may tell him you are using your Luck, and he must roll three times and give you the best result. *15 points*.

Extraordinary Luck: Works the same way, but it is usable every 30 minutes instead of every hour. *30 points*.

Ridiculous Luck: Usable every 10 minutes! *60 points*.

Your Luck only applies on rolls for your character to try to do something, OR on outside events that affect you or your whole party, OR when you are being attacked (in which case you may make the attacker roll three times and take the *worst* roll!).

Luck cannot be shared. If Strong Sam is trying to kick open a door, Lucky Lou can't stand behind him and transfer his Luck. He'll have to kick that door himself.

Once you use your Luck, you must wait an hour of real time (30 minutes for Extraordinary Luck, 10 minutes for Ridiculous Luck) before using it again. You cannot use Luck at 11:58 and then again at 12:01. And Luck cannot be saved up. You cannot play for hours without using Luck and then use it several times in a row!

Musical Ability 1 point/level

You have a natural talent with music and musical instruments. You get a permanent +1 to all Musical Instrument skills per level of Musical Ability. Costs 1 point for each +1 bonus.

Night Vision 10 points

Your eyes adapt rapidly to the darkness. You cannot see in *total* darkness – but if you have any light at all, you can see fairly well. Whenever the GM exacts a penalty because of darkness, except for total darkness, this penalty does not apply to you.

Rapid/Very Rapid Healing 5/15 points

You recover rapidly from all kinds of wounds. These advantages are only available if your basic HT is 10 or above.

Rapid Healing: Whenever you roll to recover lost HT (p. 204), or when you roll to see if you can get over a crippling injury (p. 203), you get +5 to your effective HT. This ability does not help you get over stunning or similar incapacities. *5 points*.

Very Rapid Healing: As above, but when recovering lost HT, a successful HT roll heals *two* hits, not one. *15 points*.

Resistant to Poison 5 points

Poison affects you less. You get +3 to HT to resist its effects.

Single-Minded 5 points

When you put your mind to something, you *concentrate!* You get a +3 bonus when working on lengthy tasks, but you may ignore other important tasks while obsessed (make a Will roll to avoid this). Roll at -5 to *notice* interruptions.

Strong Will 4 points/level

You have much more "willpower" than the average person. Your level of Strong Will is added to your IQ when you make a Will roll (p. 197) for *any* reason, including any attempt to resist brainwashing, distraction, intimidation, seduction, or torture. However, Strong Will does not help against combat shock and the like. In questionable cases, the GM's ruling is law. Costs 4 points per +1 bonus.

Toughness 10/25 points

Your skin and flesh are tougher than the average human's. Your body itself has a "Damage Resistance" (DR) score (see p. 200). This DR is treated just like the DR from armor: you subtract it from the damage done by any attack *before* you multiply the damage done by a cutting or impaling weapon.

Toughness does not let your skin "turn" weapons. They still break the skin, even draw blood, but you're not *hurt*. If a poisoned weapon breaks your skin, the poison will do normal damage. Costs 10 points for DR 1, or 25 points for DR 2. DR 3+ is not possible.

DISADVANTAGES

These are problems acquired before the character first comes into play. As a rule, a character may only be given disadvantages when he is created.

Each disadvantage has a *negative* cost in character points – the worse the disadvantage, the higher this cost. Thus, disadvantages give you extra character points, which will let you improve your character in other ways. Besides, imperfections make your character more interesting and realistic, and add to the fun of roleplaying. Certain disadvantages may be "bought off" later on by spending points equal to the value of the disadvantage; see p. 194.

Some disadvantages referred to under *Character Templates* (p. 69) do not appear below. These are from *GURPS Basic Set* and *Compendium I*. When solely using *GURPS Lite*, choose from among the disadvantages described below.

"Good" Disadvantages: Within the framework of the game, several virtues, such as Honesty and Truthfulness, are treated as "disadvantages" because they limit your freedom of action. For instance, a Truthful person will have trouble lying, even for a good cause. This means that if you want a wholly heroic character, you don't have to take any "character flaws" at all. You can get points by choosing only those disadvantages that are actually virtuous!

Limiting Disadvantages: The GM should be careful how many disadvantages he allows players to take; too many disadvantages can turn your game into a circus.

A suggested limit: disadvantages should not total more than -40 points. Negative social traits (bad Reputation, below-average Appearance, Status, and wealth, etc.), Dependents, Enemies, and points gained by reducing an attribute to less than 8 count against this limit. However, if only a single severe disadvantage is taken, it may have *any* cost.

Mental Problems: Many mental disadvantages let the afflicted character make IQ or Will rolls to avoid their bad effects. In these cases, any roll of 14 or over *still fails*. Otherwise, very smart or strong-willed people would be almost immune to their own bad habits – which isn't the way life works!

Addiction (Tobacco) -5 points

If you go without tobacco for a full day, it has a negative effect on your mood. Every morning afterward, make a HT roll at -5, modified by Strong/Weak Will. If you succeed, you can function normally. If you fail, you are anxious, irritable, and restless for the day. You have -1 on tasks that require concentration (GM's decision), and suffer a -1 on reaction rolls made by those who have to tolerate your grumbling. If you manage to get a smoke, these penalties disappear and you no longer have to make a daily HT roll – until the *next* time you are deprived of tobacco for a day.

Bad Sight -10/-25 points

You may be either nearsighted or farsighted – your choice.

If you are nearsighted, you cannot read small print more than a foot away, or signs at more than about 10 yards. When using a weapon, you are at -2 to your skill rolls.

If you are farsighted, you cannot read a book except with great difficulty (triple the normal time), and you are at -3 DX on any close manual labor.

Glasses will compensate totally for Bad Sight *while they are worn*; however, they can be lost or damaged while adventuring! For characters who start play with glasses, Bad Sight is worth only -10 points. For characters who must do without (due to shortages, lack of skilled optometrists, etc.), Bad Sight is worth -25 points.

Bad Temper -10 points

In any stressful situation, you must make a Will roll. A failed roll means you lose your temper, and must insult, attack, or otherwise act against the cause of the stress.

Bloodlust -10 points

You want to see your foes *dead*. This only applies to “legitimate” enemies, such as enemy troops. You must make a Will roll to accept a surrender, avoid a sentry instead of attacking him, take a prisoner, etc. If you fail, you attempt to kill your foe – even if that means compromising stealth, using up scarce ammunition, or violating orders. You will never forget that a foe is a foe.

Bully -10 points

You like to push people around when you can get away with it. Depending on your personality and position, this may include physical attacks, intellectual harassment, or social “cutting.” Make a Will roll to avoid gross bullying when you know you shouldn't – but to roleplay your character properly, you should bully anybody you can. Nobody likes a bully – others react to you at a -2.

Callous -6 points

You are not necessarily *cruel*, but you care little about the pain of others. You ignore lost, crying children and push aside beggars. You get -2 on all rolls made for social interaction. This

includes Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Leadership, and Sex Appeal skills, and any other roll the GM feels would be affected.

Chummy -5 points

You work well with others and seek out company. When you are alone, you are unhappy and distracted, and suffer a -1 penalty to your mental skills. NPCs with this disadvantage will always react to the PCs at +2.

Code of Honor -5/-10/-15 points

You take pride in a set of principles which you follow at all times. Codes of Honor differ, but all require (by their own standards) “brave” and “honorable” behavior. A Code of Honor may also be called “pride,” “machismo,” or “face.” Under any name, it is the willingness to risk death rather than be thought dishonorable . . . whatever that means. Only one who truly follows the Code may get points for it as a disadvantage.

A Code of Honor is a disadvantage because it will often require dangerous (if not reckless) behavior. Furthermore, an honorable person can often be forced into unfair situations, because his foes know he is honorable.

The point value of a specific Code varies, depending on just how much trouble it gets its followers into, and how arbitrary and irrational its requirements are. As a general rule, an informal Code that applies only among one's peers is worth -5 points; a formal Code that applies only among peers, or an informal one that applies all the time, is worth -10 points; and a formal Code of conduct that applies all the time, or which requires suicide if broken, is worth -15 points. The GM has the final word! See p. 64 for generic military Codes of Honor.

Compulsive Behavior -5 to -15 points

You have a habit (usually a vice) that you feel compelled to indulge on a daily basis. You waste a good deal of your time indulging your habit. Examples of Compulsive Behavior include gambling, attraction to another person, arguing, or even fighting.

In general, a Will roll is required if the player wants his character to avoid the compulsion in a specific instance (or for a specific day). Note that it is very bad roleplaying to attempt to avoid the compulsion often! The point value of the disadvantage depends on what the behavior is, how much money it costs, and how much trouble it is likely to get the PC into. The GM is the final judge.

Cowardice -10 points

You are extremely careful about your physical well-being. Any time you are called on to risk physical danger, you must roll against Will. If there is a risk of death, the roll is at a -5. If you fail the roll, you must refuse to endanger yourself – unless you are threatened with *greater* danger! Soldiers, police, and the like will react to you at -2 once they know you are a coward.

Fanaticism -15 points

You believe so strongly in a country, organization, political philosophy, or religion that you put it ahead of *everything* else. You might even be willing to die for it! If the object of your fanaticism demands obedience to a certain code of behavior or loyalty to a leader, you will give this willingly and unquestioningly. You *must* roleplay your fanaticism.

Greed -15 points

You lust for wealth. Any time riches are offered – as payment for fair work, gains from adventure, spoils of crime, or just bait –

you must make a Will roll to avoid temptation. The GM may modify this roll if the money involved is small relative to your own wealth. Small amounts of money will not tempt a rich character (much), but a *poor* character will have to roll at -5 or even more if a rich prize is in the offing. *Honest* characters (see below) roll at +5 to resist a shady deal and +10 to resist outright crime, but almost any greedy character will eventually do something that is illegal.

Gullibility -10 points

You believe everything you hear. In order *not* to believe a lie – or an improbable truth – you must roll against IQ. The GM should modify this roll for the plausibility of the story; an outlandish story would give no penalty, but a believable lie would give -3 if you are familiar with the subject matter, -6 if you are not. You are also at -3 on Merchant rolls, or in any situation in which your credulity might be exploited.

Hard of Hearing -10 points

You are not deaf, but you have some hearing loss. You are at -4 to IQ on any Hearing roll (so your roll is IQ-4, rather than IQ). You are at -4 to your Language skill roll (p. 191) for any situation where you must understand someone (if you are the one talking, this disadvantage doesn't affect you).

Hidebound -5 points

You find it very hard to come up with an original thought. You get -2 on all rolls made for tasks that require invention or creativity (GM's decision).

Honesty -10 points

You *must* obey the law, and do your best to get others to do so as well. You are compulsive about it; this is essentially another type of *Code of Honor* (see p. 184). This is a disadvantage, because it will often limit your options! Faced with unreasonable laws, you must roll against IQ to see the “need” to break them, and against Will to avoid turning yourself in afterward! If you ever behave dishonestly, the GM may penalize you for bad roleplaying.

You are allowed to lie if it does not involve breaking the law. *Truthfulness* (p. 186) is a separate disadvantage.

Impulsiveness -10 points

You hate talk and debate. You prefer action! When you are alone, you will act first and think later. In a group, when your friends want to stop and discuss something, you should put in your two cents' worth quickly – if at all – and then do *something*. Roleplay it! If it is absolutely necessary to wait and ponder, you must make a Will roll to do so.

Intolerance -5/-10 points

You dislike people who are different from you, reacting to them at -3. On a “good” or better reaction, you will force yourself to tolerate them, coldly but civilly. On a “neutral” reaction, you will tolerate their presence, but you will be openly disdainful. On a worse reaction, you will walk out on them, drive them off, attack them, or something similar. Members of the disliked group will sense your intolerance and return the favor, reacting to you at -1 to -5.

Point value depends on the group affected. Intolerance of *anyone* not of your ethnic background is worth -10 points, as is intolerance of anyone who does not share your religion. Intolerance of one particular ethnic or religious group you routinely encounter is worth -5 points. Intolerance of a group you will rarely encounter is treated as a -1-point quirk (see p. 187).

Jealousy -10 points

You have an automatic bad reaction toward anyone who seems smarter, more attractive, or better-off than you! You will resist any plan proposed by a “rival,” and will *hate* it if someone else is in the limelight. If an NPC is Jealous, the GM will apply from -2 to -4 to his reaction rolls toward the victim(s) of his jealousy.

Lame -15/-25/-35 points

You have some degree of impaired mobility. The point bonus depends on the damage, as follows:

Crippled Leg: You have one bad leg; your Move and Dodge (see p. 194) are reduced by 3. You suffer a -3 penalty to use any physical skill that requires walking or running. This definitely includes all hand weapon and unarmed combat skills (missile weapon ability is unimpaired). -15 points.

One Leg: You have lost a leg. You have a -6 penalty on any physical skill that requires the use of your legs. You cannot run; using crutches or a peg leg, you have a maximum Move of 2. (Otherwise, you cannot walk at all.) If you have access to prosthetics, you can reduce the effect to that of a crippled leg, but you must buy off the point difference in some way. -25 points.

Legless or Paraplegic: You are confined to a wheelchair or wheeled platform. If you power it with your own hands, its Speed is 1/4 your ST, rounded down. The GM should assess all reasonable penalties for this handicap; e.g., you cannot pass through narrow doors, navigate staircases or steep curbs, fight effectively (except with guns), and so on. If you have to fight with a hand weapon, you will be at -6 to skill. -35 points.

Laziness -10 points

You are violently averse to physical labor. Your chances of getting a raise or promotion in *any* job are halved. If you are self-employed, your weekly income is halved. You must avoid work – especially hard work – at all costs. Roleplay it!

Miserliness -10 points

Like *Greed* (pp. 184-185), except that you are more concerned with holding on to what you already have. You may be both greedy *and* miserly! You must make a Will roll any time you are called on to spend money, and you must always hunt for the best deal possible. If the expenditure is large, the Will roll may be at a -5 (or even greater) penalty. A failed roll means you will refuse to spend the money – or, if the money absolutely *must* be spent, you should haggle and complain interminably.

One Arm -20 points

You have lost an arm (or were born without it). It is assumed that you lost the left arm if you are right-handed, or vice versa. You cannot use any two-handed weapon (such as a rifle) or do anything requiring two arms. Anything requiring only one hand can be done without penalty. In borderline cases, it is best to allow the character to attempt the action at a -4 DX penalty, or try a quick reality check if possible!

One Eye -15 points

You have only one good eye; you may wear a glass eye, or cover the missing eye with a patch. You suffer a -1 DX penalty on combat and anything involving hand-eye coordination, and a -3 to use ranged weapons or to drive any vehicle faster than a horse and buggy. You will also suffer a -1 on any reaction roll. *Exception:* If you have Charisma, or are Handsome or Very Handsome, the patch just looks romantic, and does not affect reaction rolls.

Overconfidence -10 points

You think you are far more powerful, intelligent, and competent than you really are, and you should act that way. Any time (in the GM's opinion) you show too much caution, you must roll against IQ. A failed roll means you can't be cautious . . . you must go ahead as though able to handle the situation. An overconfident character will get +2 on all reaction rolls from the young or naive (they believe he's as good as he says he is), but -2 from experienced NPCs. This requires roleplaying. An overconfident person may be proud and boastful, or just quietly determined – but play it up!

Pacifism -15 points

You are opposed to violence. There are two different forms:

Self-Defense Only: You will only fight to defend yourself or those in your care, using only as much force as may be necessary (no pre-emptive strikes allowed!). You must do your best to discourage others from starting fights. -15 points.

Cannot Kill: You may fight freely, and even *start* a fight, but you may never do anything that seems likely to kill. This includes abandoning a wounded foe to die. You must do your best to keep your companions from killing, too. If you kill someone (or feel responsible for a death), you suffer a nervous breakdown. Roll 3 dice and be totally morose and useless (roleplay it!) for that many days. During this time, you must make a Will roll to offer any sort of violence toward *anyone*, for *any* reason. -15 points.

Phobias Variable

A “phobia” is a fear of a specific item or circumstance. Many fears are reasonable, but a phobia is an unreasonable, unreasoning, morbid fear. The more common an object or situation, the greater the point value of a fear of it.

If you have a phobia, you may temporarily master it by making a successful Fright Check (see p. 197), but the fear persists. Even if you master a phobia, you will be at -2 IQ and -2 DX while the cause is present, and you must roll again every 10 minutes to see if the fear overcomes you. If you fail the Fright Check to overcome a phobia, you will react badly, rolling on the table on p. 197.

If you are threatened with the feared object, you must immediately roll a Fright Check at +4; if enemies actually inflict the feared object on you, you must roll an unmodified Fright Check. If the roll is failed, you break down, but you do not necessarily talk.

Some common phobias: blood (hemophobia; -10 points); darkness (scotophobia; -15 points); dead bodies (necrophobia; -10 points); enclosed spaces (claustrophobia; -15 points); fire (pyrophobia; -5 points); heights (acrophobia; -10 points); loud noises (brontophobia; -10 points); open spaces (agoraphobia; -10 points); strange and unknown things (xenophobia; -15 points); weapons (hoplophobia; -20 points).

Post-Combat Shakes -5 points

You are shaken and sickened by combat, but only *after* it's over. As soon as all your enemies are dead or incapacitated, you must make a Fright Check (see p. 197), and you must roleplay the results. The GM may put penalties on your Fright Check roll if the combat was particularly dangerous or gruesome.

Primitive -5 points per Tech Level

You are from a culture with a lower Tech Level (see p. 205) than that of the campaign. You have no knowledge (or default skill) relating to equipment above your own TL. You can start only with skills or equipment from your own culture.

You may not acquire Mental skills relating to high-tech equipment until you buy off this disadvantage. Physical skills (driving, weaponry, etc.) may be acquired at no penalty if you find a teacher. The value of this disadvantage is -5 points for each TL by which your native TL is less than that of the campaign.

Secret -5/-10/-20/-30 points

A Secret is an aspect of your life that you must keep hidden. The GM rolls three dice before every adventure. On a 6 or less, your Secret appears. It is not automatically made public; you will have the chance to keep the Secret from being revealed, although this might mean caving in to blackmail, stealing the incriminating evidence, silencing someone who knows the Secret, etc.

If you succeed, you get to keep your Secret. The solution, however, is only temporary; the Secret will appear again and again until you finally buy it off.

If you fail, your Secret is made public. Immediately replace the Secret disadvantage with new disadvantages worth *twice* as many points as the Secret itself! The disadvantages acquired must be appropriate to the Secret, and should be determined with the GM's assistance. Secrets usually turn into Enemies, bad Reputations, or Social Stigmas, or reduce your Status or Wealth (going from Filthy Rich to Very Wealthy is effectively a -20-point disadvantage).

The point value of a Secret depends on the consequences should it be revealed: serious embarrassment (-5 points), utter rejection by society (-10 points), imprisonment or exile (-20 points), or possible death (-30 points).

Semi-Literacy/Illiteracy -5/-10 points

Semi-Literacy: You can understand simple, everyday words, and may read and write slowly, but complex words, written poetry, and so on are beyond you. -5 points.

Illiteracy: You cannot read or write *at all*. -10 points.

Sense of Duty -5/-10/-15/-20 points

You suffer from a self-imposed feeling of duty. If you feel a sense of duty toward someone, you will never betray him, abandon him when he's in trouble, or even let him suffer or go hungry if you can help. If you are known to have a sense of duty, others tend to trust you in a dangerous situation (+2 on reaction rolls in such circumstances). If you have a sense of duty, and go against it by acting against the interests of those you are supposed to feel duty toward, the GM will penalize you for bad roleplaying.

The player defines the sense of duty's group and the GM sets its point value. *Examples:* only toward close friends and companions (-5 points), toward a nation or other large group (-10 points), toward everyone you know personally (-10 points), toward all humanity (-15 points), toward every living being (-20 points).

Stubbornness -5 points

You always want your own way. Make yourself generally hard to get along with – roleplay it! Your friends may have to make a lot of Fast-Talk rolls to get you to go along with perfectly reasonable plans. Others react to you at -1.

Truthfulness -5 points

You hate to tell a lie – or you're just bad at it. To keep silent about an uncomfortable truth (lying by omission), you must make a Will roll. To actually *tell* a falsehood, you must make a Will roll at a -5 penalty! A failed roll means you blurt out the truth, or stumble so much that your lie is obvious.

Vow -1/-5/-10/-15 points

You have sworn an oath to do (or not do) something. You take this oath seriously. If you didn't, it would not be a disadvantage. The precise value of a Vow is up to the GM, but should be directly related to the inconvenience it causes the character. A *Trivial Vow*, such as "Never drink alcohol," is a -1-point *quirk* (see below). A *Minor Vow*, such as vegetarianism, is worth -5 points. A *Major Vow*, such as, "Use no firearms," is worth -10 points. A *Great Vow*, such as "Never refuse any request for aid," is worth -15 points.

Weak Will -8 points/level

You are easily persuaded, frightened, bullied, coerced, tempted, etc. For every level taken, you have -1 to IQ whenever you make a Will roll (p. 197). This includes attempts to resist distraction, seduction, torture, etc. Weak Will also affects Fright Checks, and all attempts to avoid giving in to mental problems.

A character cannot have both Strong Will and Weak Will.

Workaholic -5 points

You tend to drive yourself past your limits. You will always work at least half again as long as a normal working day. This often results in missed sleep (see *Fatigue*, p. 205). Most people regard you with respect at first (+1 to reaction rolls), but you will eventually meet with a -1 or -2 reaction, especially from friends and loved ones who rarely get to spend time with you.

Youth -2 to -6 points

You are 1 to 3 years "legally underage," at -2 points per year. You suffer a -2 reaction roll whenever you try to deal with others as an adult; they may like you, but they do not fully respect you. You may also be barred from buying alcohol, joining the army, voting, etc. You *must* keep track of time, and "buy off" this disadvantage when you reach "legal age" (usually 18).

QUIRKS

A "quirk" is a minor personality trait, not necessarily a disadvantage, just something unique about your character. For instance, a major trait like Greed is a disadvantage. But if you insist on being paid in U.S. dollars, even in Britain, that's a quirk.

You may take up to five "quirks" at -1 point each. These *do not* count against the maximum disadvantage points in your campaign.

A quirk *must* be something that can be roleplayed, or that will cause others to react to you in a significant way. If you take the quirk "dislikes heights," but blithely climb trees and cliffs whenever you need to, the GM will penalize you for bad roleplaying. Beliefs, goals, strong likes and dislikes . . . these *might* be quirks: "Likes jazz" is not a quirk but "Talks constantly about jazz" can be. Don't choose a quirk you aren't willing to play!

SKILLS

A "skill" is a particular kind of knowledge. Karate, auto mechanics, and the English language are all skills.

Each of your skills is represented by a number called a *skill level*; the higher the number, the greater the skill. When you try to do something, you or the GM will roll 3 dice against the appropriate skill, modified as the GM sees fit for the situation. If the number you roll is *less than or equal to* your (modified) score for that skill, you succeed, but a roll of 17 or 18 is an automatic failure.

Certain skills differ at different *Tech Levels* ("TL" for short). Such skills are designated by /TL. See p. 205 for more on TLs.

Learning Skills

To learn or improve a skill, you must spend character points. Skills are divided into *mental* and *physical*. The tables below show the point cost to learn each skill.

The first column shows the skill level you are trying to attain, *relative to the controlling attribute*. This is usually DX for physical skills and IQ for mental ones; exceptions are noted in individual skill descriptions. If your DX is 12, then a level of "DX-1" would be 11, "DX" would be 12, "DX+1" would be 13, and so on.

The remaining columns show the point costs to learn skills of different *difficulties* – *Easy*, *Average*, *Hard*, and *Very Hard* – at that level. Harder skills cost more character points to learn!

Physical Skills

<i>Your Final Skill Level</i>	<i>Difficulty of Skill</i>		
	<i>Easy</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Hard</i>
DX-3	–	–	1/2 point
DX-2	–	1/2 point	1 point
DX-1	1/2 point	1 point	2 points
DX	1 point	2 points	4 points
DX+1	2 points	4 points	8 points
DX+2	4 points	8 points	16 points
DX+3	8 points	16 points	24 points
DX+4	16 points	24 points	32 points

Mental Skills

<i>Your Final Skill Level</i>	<i>Difficulty of Skill</i>			
	<i>Easy</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Hard</i>	<i>Very Hard</i>
IQ-4	–	–	–	1/2 point
IQ-3	–	–	1/2 point	1 point
IQ-2	–	1/2 point	1 point	2 points
IQ-1	1/2 point	1 point	2 points	4 points
IQ	1 point	2 points	4 points	8 points
IQ+1	2 points	4 points	6 points	12 points
IQ+2	4 points	6 points	8 points	16 points

Further increases follow the same progressions: 8 additional points per level for physical skills, 4 per level for Very Hard mental skills, 2 per level for other mental skills.

Limit on Beginning Skills

The *maximum* number of character points a starting character can spend on skills is equal to twice his age. For instance, an 18-year-old could apply no more than 36 points to skills. This limit does not apply to skills added after a character is created.

Skill Defaults

Most skills have a "default level." This is the level at which you perform the skill *without training*. Nobody can know every skill; a default roll can save your life. A skill has a default level if it is something that everybody can do . . . a little bit.

For instance, the "default" for Camouflage is IQ-4. If your IQ is 11, and you have to conceal yourself, you can do it on a roll of 7 or less. Why? Because 11 minus 4 is 7, so 7 is your "default" skill at Camouflage. You smear dirt on your face like the hero in a dime novel you once read . . . and sometimes it works!

Some skills (especially Very Hard ones) have *no* default.



List of Skills

The listing for each skill gives the following information:

Name. The name of the skill. If the skill varies at different Tech Levels, this will also be shown – e.g., “Armoury/TL.”

Type. The variety of skill (mental or physical) and its difficulty (Easy, Average, Hard, or Very Hard). Sometimes abbreviated; e.g., “M/A” for “Mental/Average.”

Defaults. The attribute(s) to which the skill defaults if the skill itself is not known – e.g., “DX-6”. If there is more than one possible default, use the one that gives the highest default level.

Description. A brief description of what the skill is used for and when (or how often) to roll. The GM should permit routine tasks to be performed on a straight skill roll; more or less difficult tasks, or adverse or favorable conditions, will result in modifiers to skill – set at the GM’s discretion.

You will not find all the skills mentioned under *Character Templates* (pp. 72-85) on this list. The missing skills appear in *GURPS Basic Set* and *Compendium I*. Those with only *GURPS Lite* should choose a suitable alternative from the list below.

See pp. 65-66 for the core military-operations skills.

Acrobatics (Physical/Hard) DX-6

The ability to perform acrobatic and gymnastic stunts, roll, take falls, etc. A separate skill roll is required for each trick you attempt.

Acting (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to counterfeit moods, emotions, and voices, and to lie convincingly over a period of time. Roll a Quick Contest versus the IQ of each person you wish to fool.

Administration (Mental/Average) IQ-6

The skill of running a large organization, be it a business or a military unit. A skill roll will let you deal with a bureaucracy quickly and efficiently.

Animal Handling (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

The ability to train and work with all types of animals. Daily rolls are required when training an animal.

Area Knowledge (Mental/Easy) IQ-4 for area residents only

The skill of familiarity with the people, politics, and geography of a given area. Roll for each piece of knowledge required.

Armoury/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to build and repair weapons. Each class of weapons – e.g., artillery, small arms, and vehicular weapons – requires its own Armoury skill.

Aviation/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The skill of familiarity with aircraft procedures (but *not* flying the plane; use Piloting for that). A skill roll will let you file a flight plan, refuel a plane, understand the lingo used by airmen, etc.

Bard (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to speak extemporaneously and to tell stories. Also called *Public Speaking*. Roll once per speech or story.

Boxing (Physical/Average) No default

Formal training in fisticuffs. When you punch, roll against Boxing skill to hit, and add 1/5 your skill (round down) to dam-

age. You may use your bare hands to parry attacks at 2/3 your Boxing skill; you parry kicks at -2, non-thrusting weapons at -3.

Brawling (Physical/Easy) No default

The skill of unscientific unarmed combat. Roll against Brawling to hit with a punch, or Brawling-2 to hit with a kick, and add 1/10 your skill (round down) to damage. You may parry *bare-handed* attacks at 2/3 skill.

Camouflage (Mental/Easy) IQ-4

The ability to use natural material or paints to disguise yourself, your equipment, your position, etc. Roll once per person, vehicle, or position hidden.

Carousing (Physical/Average) HT-4

The skill of drinking, partying, etc. A successful skill roll gives you +2 reaction rolls in such circumstances; a failed roll gives you -2 instead. This skill is based on HT, not DX.

Carpentry (Mental/Easy) IQ-4 or DX-4

The ability to build things out of wood, given the right tools. Roll once per hour of work.

Climbing (Physical/Average) DX-5 or ST-5

The ability to climb mountains, ropes, the sides of buildings, trees, etc. Roll once to start a climb; long climbs may require more rolls. See p. 195.

Cooking (Mental/Easy) IQ-4

The ability to prepare a pleasing meal from basic ingredients. Roll once per meal.

Criminology/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-4

The study of crime and the criminal mind. Roll to find and interpret clues, guess how criminals might behave, etc.

Demolition/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to blow things up with explosives. A Demolition roll is necessary whenever you use explosives.

Diagnosis/TL (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

The ability to tell what is wrong with a sick or injured person, or what killed a dead person. Roll once per diagnosis.

Disguise (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to make yourself look like someone else. Roll a Quick Contest of Skills (Disguise vs. IQ) for each person (or group) that your disguise must fool.

Electronics/TL (Mental/Hard) No default

The ability to design and build electronic apparatus. A successful roll will let you identify the purpose of a strange device, diagnose a glitch, perform a repair, or design a new system. A separate Electronics skill is needed for each class of equipment (communications, sensors, etc.).

Electronics Operation/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to use electronic gear. No skill roll is required for normal, everyday use of equipment – only for emergency situations. Each type of equipment (communications, sensors, etc.) requires its own Electronics Operation skill.

Engineer/TL (Mental/Hard) No default

The ability to design and build complex machinery. A successful roll lets you identify the purpose of strange machinery, diagnose a problem, perform a repair, or design new machinery. A separate Engineer skill is needed for each field of engineering (civil, combat, vehicles, etc.).

Escape (Physical/Hard) DX-6

The ability to get free from ropes, handcuffs, and similar bonds. The first attempt to escape takes one minute; each subsequent attempt takes 10 minutes.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal/TL (Mental/Hard) No default

The ability to defuse and dispose of unexploded grenades, mines, bombs, etc. The GM should assign significant penalties for distractions. Critical failure does not automatically mean an explosion; the GM should be creative.

First Aid/TL (Mental/Easy) IQ-5

The ability to patch up an injury in the field (see p. 204). Roll once per injury.

Forensics/TL (Mental/Hard) No default

The general science of “laboratory” criminology. Roll to analyze each piece of physical evidence.

Forgery/TL (Mental/Hard) IQ-6 or DX-8

The ability to produce fake passports, identity papers, or similar documents. Roll once per forgery.

Forward Observer/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The skill of directing artillery fire onto a target and matching ordnance to target for best effect. See *Indirect-Fire Weapons* (p. 202) for game effects.

Freight Handling (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to load and unload cargo efficiently. A successful skill roll will reduce the time required for such tasks by 25%.

Gambling (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The skill of playing games of chance. A successful Gambling roll can tell you if a game is rigged, identify a fellow gambler in a group of strangers, or “estimate the odds” in a tricky situation.

Gunner/TL (Physical/Average) DX-5

The ability to fire emplaced, vehicular, or tripod-mounted heavy weapons. Each type of weapon requires its own Gunner skill. Options are bombs (aircraft bombs), cannon (artillery, naval guns, and tank guns used for *direct fire*), machine gun (heavy automatic weapons), mortar (artillery or naval guns used for *indirect fire*), rocket launcher (ground and aerial rocket tubes), and torpedo (ship- or submarine-launched torpedoes). Add 1 to Gunner skill for an IQ of 10-11, and 2 for an IQ of 12+.

Guns/TL (Physical/Easy) DX-4

The ability to fire 20th-century small arms. Each type of weapon requires its own Guns skill. Options are pistol (revolvers and semi-automatic handguns), rifle (semi-automatic rifles), light automatic weapon (automatic rifles and submachine guns), shotgun (unrifled long arms), flamethrower (flaming-liquid projec-

tors), and grenade launcher (rifle grenades and actual grenade launchers). Add 1 to Guns skill for an IQ of 10-11, or 2 for an IQ of 12+.

Hand Weapon (Physical/Varies) Defaults vary

Each class of hand weapons requires a separate physical skill; roll against this skill when attacking. Most hand weapons may also *parry* (p. 200), done at 1/2 skill unless noted. Assume P/E weapon skills default to DX-4 and P/A ones default to DX-5. Skills include:

Axe/Mace (P/A): Any short or middle-sized, unbalanced, one-handed weapon, such as an entrenching tool or a hatchet.

Blackjack (P/E): A blackjack or sap. May not parry.

Broadsword (P/A): Any 2- to 4-foot, balanced, one-handed weapon, such as the cavalry saber carried by some American and European officers.

Fencing (P/A): Smallswords and “hangers.” Parry is 2/3 Fencing skill, not 1/2. Your encumbrance must be light or less to use Fencing.

Katana (P/A): The longsword carried by Japanese officers. Increase damage by 1 when swinging it two-handed. Parry is 2/3 Katana skill when using it in two hands and at no more than light encumbrance, 1/2 skill otherwise.

Knife (P/E): Any fighting knife or short, unfixed bayonet.

Shortsword (P/A): Any 1' to 2' balanced, one-handed weapon, such as a billy club, a machete, or an unfixed Japanese bayonet.

Spear (P/A): Any sort of fixed bayonet.

Two-Handed Axe/Mace (P/A): Any long, unbalanced, two-handed weapon, such as a shovel, or a heavy rifle or machine gun gripped by the barrel.

Hiking (Physical/Average) No Default

This skill is training for endurance walking, hiking, marching, etc., and includes knowledge of how best to carry a pack. See *Hiking* (p. 195) for game effects. This skill is based on HT, not DX.

Holdout (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The skill of concealing items on your person or the persons of others, or finding such hidden items. Roll once per item.

Humanities (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

Each academic “humanities” or “arts” subject (such as History, Literature, Philosophy, or Theology) is a separate Mental/Hard skill that defaults to IQ-6. Roll versus skill to recall references, perform critical analysis, etc.

Influence Skills (Mental/Varies) Defaults vary

There are several ways to influence others; each is a separate *influence skill*. A successful roll will result in a “good” reaction from an NPC. Failure results in a “bad” reaction (except for Diplomacy, which is always safe). To actually coerce or manipulate an NPC, you must win a Quick Contest of your skill versus his Will. Methods of influencing others include:

Diplomacy (M/H): Negotiation and compromise. Defaults to IQ-6.

Fast-Talk (M/A): Lies and deception. Defaults to IQ-5.

Intimidation (M/A): Threats and violence. Defaults to ST-5.

Savoir-Faire (M/E): Manners and etiquette. Mainly useful in “high society” situations. Defaults to IQ-4.

Savoir-Faire (Military) (M/E): Finer points of military protocol and how to work the “old boys” network. Defaults to IQ-4.

Sex Appeal (M/A; based on HT, not IQ): Vamping and seduction, usually of the opposite sex. Defaults to HT-3.

Streetwise (M/A): Contacts and (usually) subtle intimidation. Only useful in "street" and criminal situations. Defaults to IQ-5.

Intelligence Analysis/TL
(Mental/Hard) IQ-6

The skill of interpreting intelligence reports and analyzing raw reconnaissance data. On successful roll, the GM might grant you additional information about enemy actions, provided the original data was reliable.

Interrogation (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to question a prisoner. To do so, you must win a Contest of Skills: your Interrogation skill vs. the prisoner's Will.

Judo (Physical/Hard) No default

Formal training in locks and throws. If you have empty hands and no more than light encumbrance, you may parry attacks (even weapons) at 2/3 skill. On the turn after a successful parry, you may attempt to throw your opponent. This counts as an attack, and is rolled against Judo skill. If your foe does not dodge or parry, he is thrown to the ground.

Jumping (Physical/Easy) No default

The trained ability to use your strength to its best advantage when you jump (see p. 195). Roll once per jump.

Karate (Physical/Hard) No default

The skill of *trained* punching and kicking. When you punch or kick, use Karate skill rather than DX to determine the odds of hitting, and add 1/5 of your skill level (round down) to damage. You may also parry attacks (even weapons) at 2/3 skill. Your encumbrance must be light or less to use Karate.

Law (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

A successful Law roll lets you remember, deduce, or figure out the answer to a question about the law. An actual trial is handled as a Quick Contest of Law skills.

Leadership (Mental/Average) ST-5

The ability to coordinate a group in a dangerous or stressful situation. Roll to lead NPCs into a dangerous situation (e.g., combat).

Lockpicking/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to open locks without the key or combination. Each attempt to open a lock requires one minute and a skill roll; cracking a safe may take considerably longer!

Masonry (Physical/Easy) IQ-3

The ability to build things out of brick or stone, given the right tools. Roll once per hour of work.

Mathematics (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

Formal training in higher mathematics. A successful skill roll will let you answer just about any mathematical question.

Mechanic/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to diagnose and fix ordinary mechanical problems. Roll once per diagnosis or repair. Each type of machine (gasoline engine, ocean-going vessel, etc.) requires its own Mechanic skill.

Merchant (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to act as a "trader," buying and selling merchandise. A successful skill roll lets you judge the value of common goods, locate markets, and so on.

Meteorology/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The study of the weather and the ability to predict it, given the appropriate instruments. Roll once per prediction.

Musical Instrument
(Mental/Hard) No default

The ability to play a musical instrument. Each instrument is a separate version of this skill. Roll once per performance.

Natural Sciences (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

Each specialty (such as Botany, Chemistry, Geology, Physics, or Zoology) is a separate Mental/Hard skill that defaults to IQ-6. Roll versus skill to recall general knowledge within the field, analyze data, perform lab work, and so on.

Naturalist (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

A general knowledge of animals and plants, and of nature in its various forms. Roll to identify plants, animals, etc.

Navigation/TL (Mental/Hard) No default

The ability to find position by the stars, ocean currents, etc. Whether you are on land, at sea, or in the air, a successful roll will tell you where you are.

NBC Warfare/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

Expertise with the protective gear used in nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) warfare environments. At TL6, a skill roll is required to check, repair, or quickly don the gas masks and ponchos used to protect against poison gas.

Orienteering/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to find position on the ground using landmarks, a compass, and a map. Orienteering rolls are -1 to -10 (GM's discretion) in an unfamiliar area.

Parachuting (Physical/Easy) DX-4 or IQ-6

The ability to survive a parachute jump. Failure means a slight drift off course or some dropped gear. A critical failure is potentially fatal! A second roll is required to dodge trees, avoid injury, etc. in a rough landing zone.

Photography/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to use a camera competently, use a darkroom, and so on. Roll once per roll of film shot or developed.

Physician/TL (Mental/Hard) IQ-7

The general professional ability to aid the sick, prescribe drugs and care, etc. This is the skill to use if the GM requires a single roll to test general medical competence or knowledge.

Pickpocket (Physical/Hard) DX-6

The ability to steal a small object (purse, knife, etc.) from someone's person. Roll once per theft; if the target is alert, treat this as a Quick Contest vs. the target's IQ.

Research (Mental/Average) IQ-5

A successful roll in an appropriate place of research will let you find a useful piece of data, if that information is to be found.

Riding (Physical/Average) DX-5

The skill of riding a beast. A different version of this skill must be learned for each animal type. Roll once when the beast is first mounted and again any time a difficult situation is encountered.

Running (Physical/Hard) No default

This skill is based on HT, not DX. It represents training in sprints and long-distance running. If you have studied this skill, divide your skill level by 8 (don't round down) and add the result to your Speed for the purpose of calculating your Move score (this affects land movement only). See p. 194 for details.

Sailor/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The skill of familiarity with shipboard procedures (but *not* steering the ship; use Shiphandling for that). A skill roll will let you avoid the danger zones aboard a ship, identify different types of buoys and beacons, understand nautical terminology, etc.

Scrounging (Mental/Easy) IQ-4

The ability to find or salvage useful items. A successful skill roll will locate the item desired, if the GM rules one exists to be found.

Seamanship/TL (Mental/Easy) IQ-4

The ability to crew a large seagoing vessel. It covers putting out fires, swabbing decks, operating pumps and cranes, and other menial tasks aboard ship.

Shadowing (Mental/Average) IQ-6

The ability to follow another person through a crowd without being noticed. Roll a Quick Contest of Skill every 10 minutes: your Shadowing vs. the subject's Vision roll. If you lose, you lose the target – or he spots you!

Shiphandling/TL (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

The ability to manage the operation of a large ship, directing the crew in the tasks necessary to control its speed and direction. On naval vessels, at least one person with Shiphandling skill (the "watch officer") is duty at all times.

Skiing (Physical/Hard) DX-6

The ability to ski. This skill replaces Hiking skill (p. 189) when traveling cross-country on skis.

Social Sciences (Mental/Hard) IQ-6

Each "social science" (e.g., Anthropology, Archaeology, Psychology, or Sociology) is a separate Mental/Hard skill that defaults to IQ-6. Roll versus skill to recall general knowledge within the field, identify traits that characterize an individual, culture, or society (as applicable), and so on.

Stealth (Physical/Average) IQ-5 or DX-5

The ability to hide and to move silently. Roll a Quick Contest of Skills between your Stealth and the Hearing roll of anyone you're trying to hide from.

Survival (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to "live off the land," find food and water, avoid hazards, build shelter, etc. A different Survival skill is required for each type of terrain. Roll once per day in a wilderness situation.

Swimming (Physical/Easy) ST-5 or DX-4

This skill is used both for swimming and for saving a drowning victim. Roll once per swim, dive, or lifesaving attempt. See p. 196.

Teaching (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to instruct others. The GM may require one or more skill rolls to teach another character a skill.

Teamster (Mental/Average) No default

The skill of driving teams of animals, such as gun teams. The GM may require regular Teamster rolls to move quickly or over broken terrain without injury to man or beast.

Telegraphy (Mental/Easy) No default

The ability to send and receive Morse code at (3 × Telegraphy) words per minute, to a maximum of 75 wpm.

Throwing (Physical/Hard) No default

The ability to throw whatever you can pick up. It helps both accuracy (roll against Throwing skill to throw anything you can lift) and distance (add 1/6 of Throwing skill to ST when determining distance). Roll once per throw. See pp. 200-201.

Thrown Weapon (Physical/Easy) DX-4

The ability to throw any one type of *throwable* weapon. This skill is different for each type of weapon: Axe Throwing, Knife Throwing, etc.

Tracking (Mental/Average) IQ-5

The ability to follow a man or animal by its tracks. Make one Tracking roll to pick up the trail, and one further roll for every 5 minutes of travel.

Traps/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5 or DX-5

The skill of building and avoiding traps and detection devices. Roll to build, detect, disarm, or reset a trap.

Vehicle Skills

(Physical/Varies) Defaults vary

Each class of vehicle requires its own operation skill. Roll once to get under way and again each time a hazard is encountered; failure indicates lost time, or an accident. Vehicle skills default to DX at -4 (Easy), -5 (Average), or -6 (Hard); *motor* vehicles also default to IQ, at similar penalties. Available types include *Bicycling (P/E)*, *Boating (P/A)* (for rowboats and sailboats), *Driving (P/A)* (separate versions for cars, tanks, trucks, etc.), *Motorcycle (P/E)*, *Piloting (P/A)* (separate versions for light and heavy propeller craft, jets, and gliders), and *Powerboat (P/A)* (for motorboats).

Languages

Languages are treated as skills. The *Language Talent* advantage (p. 183), makes it easier to learn languages.

Language Skills (Mental/Varies) No default

Each language is a separate skill. Your native language skill starts out equal to IQ, and costs only 1 point per level to improve. Other languages improve like any other skill. Difficulty varies:

Easy: Pidgins and the like.

Average: Most languages – French, German, Japanese, etc.

Hard: A rare few languages, such as Basque or Navajo.

Any conversation depending on a language not native to all parties requires a roll against skill to understand or be understood.

Gesture (Mental/Easy) IQ-4

The ability to communicate through simple, improvised hand signals. Roll once to communicate each *general* concept.

EQUIPMENT

Now you need to decide what equipment you have. Usually, the GM sets a reasonable cost and weight for each item of equipment requested by a player. Weapons and armor are a special case, however, since their use involves more intricate game mechanics. This section will give you enough information to let you choose your combat gear intelligently.

A Note on Buying Things: You start with money equal to standard starting wealth, modified by your wealth level (see p. 180). The GM will supply equipment lists that give cost, weight, and other information about important items (pp. 87-90), and give you a ruling about anything else you request. Subtract the price of each item you buy from your starting wealth to determine how much money you have left. In a military campaign, equipment will often be *issued*. This means you do not have to pay for it; however, it does not really belong to you, and can always be taken away.

Armor

Armor protects you in two ways. Its *passive defense* (PD) adds to your defense roll. Its *damage resistance* (DR) absorbs damage when you get hit. In both cases, higher numbers are better.

Armor Stats

For each type of armor on p. 87, the following is listed:

General Description: The item's name and how it is used. **GURPS Lite** does not include a system for assessing damage to specific body parts, but use common sense – for instance, a helmet would help against a falling brick, while a vest would not.

Passive Defense (PD): Adds to your defense roll, and represents the fact that some attacks will bounce off the armor. Armor PD normally ranges from 1 to 6.

Damage Resistance (DR): The amount of protection the item gives, in terms of hits subtracted from an attack that strikes you; e.g., if you are hit while wearing DR 3 armor, and the attacker rolls 9 points of damage, only 6 will affect you.

Weight: In pounds. This adds to your total *encumbrance* (see *Speed, Encumbrance, and Move*, p. 194).

Cost: The price of the armor in \$.

Weapons

The weapons you carry should be determined first by your skills, and then by your strength and budget. If you can't use it, don't buy it. Guns will work for anyone who knows how to use them. Hand weapons, such as clubs and swords, do more damage when wielded by a strong person.

Basic Weapon Damage

Basic damage is the impact damage a weapon does, before its point or cutting edge is considered. Your basic damage with hand weapons depends on your ST. Damage is shown as "dice+adds" (see p. 175). For example, "2d+1" means that you roll two dice and add 1 to the result. Thus, a roll of 7 would mean 8 hits of damage.

Types of Attack

There are two types of hand-weapon attack: *thrusting* and *swinging*. A swinging attack does more damage, because the weapon acts as a lever to multiply your ST. The table to the right shows how much basic damage each type of weapon does, according to the user's ST. The columns show the number of dice rolled to determine damage.



Damage Based on ST

ST	Thrusting	Swinging	ST	Thrusting	Swinging
4-	0	0	12	1d-1	1d+2
5	1d-5	1d-5	13	1d	2d-1
6	1d-4	1d-4	14	1d	2d
7	1d-3	1d-3	15	1d+1	2d+1
8	1d-3	1d-2	16	1d+1	2d+2
9	1d-2	1d-1	17	1d+2	3d-1
10	1d-2	1d	18	1d+2	3d
11	1d-1	1d+1	19	2d-1	3d+1

Damage Types and Damage Bonus

Weapons do three basic types of damage: *impaling*, *cutting*, and *crushing*.

✳ *Impaling* weapons are those that strike with a sharp point. When you hit with an impaling weapon, the damage that gets through DR is *doubled*.

✳ *Cutting* weapons strike with an edge. When you hit with a cutting weapon, all damage that gets through DR is *increased by 50%*, rounded down.

✳ *Crushing* weapons strike with a blunt surface. They score no bonus damage.

Bullets: In **GURPS**, bullets are treated as crushing attacks as opposed to impaling attacks. A bullet's ability to pierce armor and inflict massive damage is reflected by assigning firearms large numbers of damage dice.

Minimum Damage: If you hit with a cutting or impaling attack, or a bullet, you always get at least one hit of basic damage before DR is subtracted. Thus, if you strike with a knife for "1d-4" damage, and roll a 2, you still do 1 hit of damage. However, if you hit the foe with a crushing attack, you *can* do zero damage.

Maximum Damage: Some weapons, especially impaling weapons, can only do so much damage on any one blow, no matter how strong the user is.

Recording Weapon Stats

Damage is copied from the weapon tables. Certain hand weapons can be used in different ways. For instance, some swords can be swung for a cutting attack or thrust for an impaling attack. Before you strike with such a weapon, specify how you are attacking. To calculate hand-weapon damage, take your basic damage for that type of attack, and add the damage shown on the table for your weapon. If your ST is 10, your basic swinging damage is 1d; therefore, if a weapon does "sw+1," your damage with that weapon is 1d+1. Guns have a fixed damage number that does not depend on the user's ST.

Cost and *Weight* are copied directly from the *Weapon Tables* onto your character sheet.

Minimum Strength is the minimum ST required to use the weapon properly. You may still fight with a weapon if you are too weak for it, but for every point of ST by which you are too weak, you will be at -1 to your weapon skill.

Ranged Weapons Statistics: If you have a ranged weapon, copy the stats from the appropriate weapon table (thrown weapons are given here; guns appear on pp. 92-93). A number of specialized statistics are used for ranged combat; these are explained on pp. 200-201.

HAND WEAPON TABLE

Weapons are listed in groups, according to the skill required to use them. Weapons that can be used in two ways (for instance, a saber can either cut or impale) have two lines – one for each type of attack.

Type is the type of damage (p. 192) the weapon does.

Damage is the die roll (p. 192) for the damage done to the target.

Reach indicates the distance in yards at which the weapon can be used; *C* indicates a close-combat weapon. Reach is not used in *GURPS Lite*, but GMs may find it useful when judging what can and cannot be hit with a hand weapon.

Cost and *Weight* include the weight of a scabbard, sling, or other means of carrying the weapon, where applicable.

Min ST is “minimum strength.” If you are weaker than this, your skill is at -1 for every point of difference.

Weapon	Type	Damage	Reach	Cost	Weight	Min ST	Special Notes
AXE/MACE (DX-5)†							
Entrenching Tool	cut	sw+1	1	\$50	4 lbs.	12	1 turn to ready.
Hatchet	cut	sw	1	\$40	2 lbs.	7	Throwable. 1 turn to ready.
BLACKJACK (DX-4)							
Blackjack or Sap	cr	thr	C	\$20	1 lb.	7	May not parry.
BROADSWORD (DX-5)							
Cavalry Saber	cut imp	sw+1 thr+1	1 1	\$500	3 lbs.	9	
FENCING (DX-5) See p. 189 for fencing parry rules.							
Smallsword	imp	thr+1	1	\$400	1.5 lbs.	–	Maximum damage 1d+1.
KATANA (DX-5) See p. 189 for katana parry rules.							
Katana	cut cut imp	sw+1 sw+2 thr+1	1,2 1,2 1	\$650	5 lbs.	11	One-handed cut. Two-handed cut. Thrust.
KNIFE (DX-4)							
Bayonet or Knife	cut imp	sw-2 thr	C,1 C	\$40	1 lb.	–	Maximum damage 1d+2. Maximum damage 1d+2.
SHORTSWORD (DX-5)							
Billy Club	cr cr	sw thr	1 1	\$20	1 lb.	7	
Long Bayonet	cut imp	sw-1 thr	1 C,1	\$50	1.5 lbs.	7	
Machete	cut	sw+1	1	\$75	3 lbs.	10	A tool; -1 to hit as a weapon.
SPEAR (DX-5) Requires two hands.							
Fixed Bayonet	imp	thr+2	1	–	–	9	Bayonet, on a rifle.
Fixed Long Bayonet	imp	thr+3	1,2*	–	–	9	Long bayonet, on a rifle.
TWO-HANDED AXE/MACE (DX-5)† Requires two hands.							
Shovel	cr cut	sw+2 sw+2	1,2* 2*	\$30	6 lbs.	13	1 turn to ready. A tool; -1 to hit as a weapon. 1 turn to ready. -3 to hit with sharp edge.
Swung Rifle	cr	sw+2	1	–	–	12	1 turn to ready. A rifle used as a club.

* Must be *readied* for one turn to change from long to short grip or vice versa. † Becomes unready if used to parry.



THROWN WEAPON TABLE

Weapons are listed in groups, according to the skill required to use them. See pp. 200-201 for an explanation of SS, Acc, 1/2D, and Max; for now, simply note them on your character sheet.

Weapon	Type	Damage	SS	Acc	1/2D	Max	Cost	Weight	Min ST	Special Notes
AXE THROWING (DX-4)										
Hatchet	cut	sw	11	1	ST×1.5	ST×2.5	\$40	2 lbs.	7	
KNIFE THROWING (DX-4)										
Combat Knife	imp	thr	12	0	ST-2	ST+5	\$40	1 lb.	–	Max. dam. 1d+2.
DX-3 OR THROWING SKILL										
Hand Grenade	varies	varies	12	0	–	ST×3	varies	varies	–	See p. 201.



Speed, Encumbrance, and Move

Speed

Your *Speed* score (or *Basic Speed*) determines your reaction time and running speed. It is figured from your HT and DX, and shows how fast you can run without encumbrance (see below). An average person has a Speed of 5 – that is, with no encumbrance, he runs about 5 yards per second.

Add your HT and DX together. Divide the total by 4. The result is your Basic Speed score; don't round it off! For instance, if your Basic Speed is 5.25, your unencumbered movement is 5 yards per second. But there will be times when a 5.25 is better than a 5!

Encumbrance

Your *encumbrance* is the total weight you are carrying. Encumbrance reduces your combat movement rate. It also slows long-distance travel, and makes swimming and climbing more difficult; see *Physical Feat* (p. 195).

Your *encumbrance level* is a measure of that weight relative to your strength. A strong person can carry more than a weak one; therefore, the ratio of weight to strength determines encumbrance level, as follows:

Weight up to 2×ST: no encumbrance. You have no penalty.

Weight up to 4×ST: light encumbrance. Movement penalty of 1.

Weight up to 6×ST: medium encumbrance. Movement penalty of 2.

Weight up to 12×ST: heavy encumbrance. Movement penalty of 3.

Weight up to 20×ST: extra-heavy encumbrance. Movement penalty of 4. You cannot carry a weight more than 20 times your ST for more than a few feet at a time; 30 times ST is the absolute most you can carry.

Move

Your *Move* is the distance (in yards) you can actually run in one second. To find your Move, add up the total weight of all your possessions and find your encumbrance level. Now subtract your encumbrance penalty from your Speed score, and round down. The result is your Move score – always a whole number, never a fraction. Your Move controls:

1. How fast you can move. (If you have the Running skill, add 1/8 of your skill level to Basic Speed for this purpose only. Don't round off until the very end! Running doesn't affect your Speed score, but it will help your Move.)

2. When you move in combat.

3. Your Dodge defense (p. 199). This *active defense* is equal to your Move. The less weighted-down you are, the quicker you can dodge!

Your Move can never be reduced to 0 unless you are unconscious, unable to use your legs, or lifting over 30 times your ST.

CHARACTER IMPROVEMENT

At the end of each session, the GM may award *bonus character points* for good play; these are the same kind of points you used to create your character. "Good play" is anything that advances your mission or shows good roleplaying (including adherence to your disadvantages and quirks) – preferably both.

Bonus points are awarded separately to each character. A typical award is 1-3 points, with 5 points being the absolute upper limit for *amazing* play. Note that you get no points for a session in which your Dependent (p. 181) is killed, seriously wounded, or kidnapped and not recovered.

Bonus points are used to improve your character. Record them as "unspent" on your character sheet. You can spend them the same way as during character creation, with a few differences:

Attributes: To improve one of your attributes (ST, DX, IQ, or HT), you must spend character points equal to *twice* the beginning point-cost difference between the old score and the new one. E.g., to go from ST 10 (beginning cost 0) to ST 11 (beginning cost 10) would cost 20 points.

If you improve an attribute, all skills based on that attribute also go up by the same amount.

Advantages: Most advantages are inborn, and cannot be "bought" later on. Exceptions include Combat Reflexes and Literacy, which can be learned, and social advantages such as Military Rank, which can be earned. To add an advantage, you must pay the appropriate character points.

Buying Off Disadvantages: No character may get extra points by adding disadvantages after he is created, but you may *get rid* of most beginning disadvantages by "buying them off" with points equal to the bonus earned when the disadvantage was taken, as long as the player and GM agree on a *logical* explanation for this.

Adding and Improving Skills: Earned character points can be used to increase your skills or add new ones. Normally, these must be skills that, in the GM's opinion, were significantly used in the adventure in which those character points were earned. When you improve a skill, the cost is the difference between your current skill level and the cost of the new skill level.

BEASTS

Animals will often appear in games. The point value of such beings is irrelevant – the GM simply assigns abilities. A few notes:

Attributes: These have the same meaning for beasts as for humans, with one exception: for beasts, hit points need not be equal to HT. HT determines how hardy the beast is, but hit points are largely dependent on size, and very large or small creatures may have more or fewer hit points than HT.

Abilities and Skills: Most creatures have keen senses. The "generic" roll for an animal to sense something (sight, hearing, smell, taste) is 14, regardless of its IQ, although this may vary. Some animals also have the equivalent of skills; e.g., a bloodhound might have the Tracking skill at level 18!

PD and DR: Many creatures have a hide, shell, scales, or thick fat that protects like armor.

Attack Roll: To hit, an animal rolls against its DX; use the same modifiers as if a human were attacking.

Damage: Use the chart below; an animal's bite (or claw) damage depends on its ST. When a carnivore bites, this is treated as a *cutting* attack, figured at full ST. The bite of an herbivorous creature is a *crushing* attack, figured at *half* its actual ST. An animal bite – even from a carnivore – can do zero damage.

Animal Damage

ST	Damage	ST	Damage	ST	Damage
1-2	1d-5	16-20	1d	36-40	2d
3-5	1d-4	21-25	1d+1	41-45	2d+1
6-8	1d-3	26-30	1d+2	46-50	2d+2
9-11	1d-2	31-35	2d-1	51-53	3d-1
12-15	1d-1				and so on . . .

Basic Speed: Except in the case of loaded riding and draft animals, this will also be the creature's Move.

Dodge: This is the only active defense of most beasts. It is equal to half DX or half Move, whichever is better, up to a maximum of 10.

Encumbrance and Movement: Encumbrance for beasts works as it does for men: the level of encumbrance reduces the beast's Move score. The encumbrance table for four-footed creatures is different:

No encumbrance (up to 2×ST): Move is unaffected.

Light encumbrance (up to 6×ST): Move is reduced by 2.

Medium encumbrance (up to 10×ST): Move is reduced by 4. Few animals will carry greater than 10×ST on their backs!

Heavy encumbrance (up to 15×ST): Move is reduced by 6.

Extra-heavy encumbrance (up to 20×ST): Move is reduced by 8, but never to less than 2.

Maximum encumbrance (up to 30×ST): Move is reduced to 1. Only a very willing beast will attempt to move a load this heavy.

Riding and Draft Animals

Type	ST	DX	IQ	HT	Move	Cost	Wt. (lbs.)	Notes
Donkey	25	10	4	13	8	\$100	500	Too small to ride.
Small Mule	30	10	4	14	8	\$100	800	Too small to ride.
Saddle Horse	35	9	4	14	12	\$120	1,200	
Camel	40	9	4	15	10	\$150	1,400	Vicious.
Cavalry Horse	40	9	4	15	16	\$400	1,400	
Large Mule	40	10	4	14	9	\$200	1,400	
Draft Horse	60	9	4	16	12	\$200	2,000	
Ox	80	8	4	17	8	\$150	2,500+	

PLAYING THE GAME



We've seen the rules for creating and equipping characters. Now here's how to *do* things. Essentially, the GM describes a situation and asks each of the players what his character is doing. The players answer, and the GM tells them what happens next. At some point, the GM won't be certain that the characters can automatically do what the players say they are doing . . . "You're carrying *what* and jumping the trench?" . . . and the dice come out.

PHYSICAL FEATS

Climbing

To climb anything more difficult than a ladder, a Climbing roll is required. One roll is required to start the climb, with a further roll every five minutes; a failed roll means you fall. Modifiers to the roll depend on the difficulty of the climb; see the table below. Your encumbrance level is also subtracted from your Climbing skill.

Type of Climb	Modifier	Short Climb	Long Climb
Ladder going up	no roll	3 rungs/sec.	1 rung/sec.
Ladder going down	no roll	2 rungs/sec.	1 rung/sec.
Ordinary tree	+5	1 ft./sec.	1 ft./3 secs.
Ordinary mountain	0	1 ft./2 secs.	10 ft./min.
Vertical stone wall	-3	1 ft./5 secs.	4 ft./min.
Modern building	-3	1 ft./10 secs.	2 ft./min.
Rope, going up	-2	1 ft./sec.	20 ft./min.
Rope, going down			
(w/o equipment)	-1	2 ft./sec.	30 ft./min.
(w/equipment)	-1	12 ft./sec.	12 ft./sec.

Hiking

Distance traveled on foot in one day is a direct function of encumbrance. Under ideal travel conditions, a party in good shape may plan on traveling the following distances in one day's march:

No encumbrance: 50 miles.

Light encumbrance: 40 miles.

Medium encumbrance: 30 miles.

Heavy encumbrance: 20 miles.

Extra heavy encumbrance: 10 miles.

A successful Hiking roll before each *half-day's* march will increase these distances by 20%. When these rules result in different speeds for people traveling as a group, the entire party's speed is reduced to that of its slowest member.

Hiking skill works differently for large groups (20+ people) who train together regularly, such as military units. If the group includes at least one person with Leadership 12+ per 20 men, a single roll against the group's *average* Hiking skill is made. Success lets the entire group march 20% farther than the daily mileage of its most heavily encumbered member. On a failure, multiply the margin of failure by 10%; this percentage of the group is left behind (they may catch up at day's end, but this costs an extra 2 fatigue). Critical failure means the whole group was stalled.

Once ideal daily mileage is determined, modify it for terrain as follows:

Very Bad Terrain (deep snow, dense forest, jungle, mountains, soft sand, swamp): ×0.20.

Bad Terrain (broken ground, forest, steep hills, streams): ×0.50.

Average Terrain (light forest, rolling hills, solid ice): ×1.00.

Good Terrain (hard-packed desert, level plains): ×1.25.

Under most circumstances, roads count as "average" terrain, regardless of surrounding terrain. However, exceptionally poor roads will turn to mud in bad weather, becoming "very bad" terrain, while exceptionally good roads might count as "good" terrain in fine weather.

Whatever your daily mileage, you will spend about the same amount of time traveling. But the heavier your load and the worse the traveling conditions, the more slowly you will walk and the more frequently you will stop to rest.

Jumping

Usually, when you want to jump over something, the GM should say "OK, you jumped over it," and get on with play. In combat, jumping over an "ordinary" obstacle costs 1 extra yard of movement but is automatically successful. Only when the obstacle seems really significant should you resort to math to see if the character can actually make the jump!

The maximum distance you can jump is determined by your ST score, as follows:

High Jump: (3×ST)-10 inches. Add 2 feet to this if you have 4 yards for a running start.

Standing Broad Jump: (ST-3) feet.

Running Broad Jump: As above, but add 1' for every yard of "takeoff" distance, up to double standing broad jump distance.

Jumping Skill: If you have this skill, you may *substitute* your skill level for ST in the height and distance formulas above.

Lifting and Moving Things

In general, the GM may let characters lift whatever they need to, without die rolls; but when very heavy weights are involved, a check against ST may be needed. ST also governs the maximum weight you can lift:

One-Handed Lift: 6×ST pounds.

Two-Handed Lift: 25×ST pounds.

Carry on Back: 30×ST pounds. Thus, you can carry more than you can lift by yourself. (Note that every *second* you carry more than 20×ST pounds, you lose one *fatigue* point; see p. 205.)

Shove and Knock Over: 25×ST pounds, or 50×ST pounds with a running start.

Shift Slightly: 100×ST pounds.

Drag: On a rough surface, you can drag only about as much as you can carry. If you are dragging something on a smooth, level surface, halve its effective weight.

Pull on Wheels: As for dragging, but divide effective weight by 10 for a two-wheeled cart or gun carriage, or by 20 for a four-wheeled conveyance. Halve effective weight again if it is being pulled on a good road.

Picking Things Up in Combat: In combat, a light item is picked up with the Ready maneuver, which takes 1 second. It takes 2 seconds to pick up a heavy item (weight in pounds greater than ST).

Running

In combat, running is just a series of Move maneuvers. Your running speed is equal to your Basic Speed score, plus Running skill bonus (p. 191), plus a one yard per second “sprint bonus” if you are running in a straight line for more than one turn. This is modified downward by encumbrance (p. 194).

When figuring *long-distance* speed (i.e., for runs of a few hundred yards, as opposed to combat movement), do *not* round down your Speed. A Basic Speed of 5.5 would let you run 65 yards in 10 seconds, if you were unencumbered.

Swimming

Swimming short distances, your Move is equal to 1/10 your Swimming skill (round down), minimum 1 yard per second. Over long distances, the number of yards you swim in 10 seconds equals your Swimming skill minus *twice* your encumbrance. Swimming long distances can cause fatigue – see p. 205.

Make a Swimming roll when you enter the water, and again every 5 minutes. Subtract *twice* your encumbrance level, and add 3 if you entered the water intentionally. Fat characters (pp. 177-178) get a bonus. If you fail this roll, lose 1 point of fatigue (p. 205) and roll again in 5 seconds, and so on until you reach ST 0 and drown, get rescued, or make the roll. If you recover, roll again in 1 minute. If you make that roll, go back to rolling every 5 minutes.

Swimming skill can be used to rescue a drowning person. Make a Swimming roll at -5, plus or minus the difference in ST between you and the person you are rescuing.

Throwing Things

Anything you can lift – i.e., anything with a weight of 25 × your ST or less – can be thrown. To hit a target, roll against DX-3 or Throwing skill. To lob something into a general area, roll against DX or Throwing. The distance you can throw an object depends on its weight and your ST. Find the weight nearest to that of the object on the table, then multiply the distance listed there by your ST to get the distance, in yards, that you can throw it.

Throwing Distance Table

Weight	Distance	Weight	Distance	Weight	Distance
1 lb. or less	3.5	7½ lbs.	1.0	40 lbs.	0.3
1½ lbs.	3.0	10 lbs.	0.8	50 lbs.	0.25
2 lbs.	2.5	15 lbs.	0.7	60 lbs.	0.2
3 lbs.	1.9	20 lbs.	0.6	80 lbs.	0.15
4 lbs.	1.5	25 lbs.	0.5	100 lbs.	0.1
5 lbs.	1.2	30 lbs.	0.4	200 lbs.	0.05

Throwing Skill: If you have the Throwing skill, divide it by 6 (round down) and add the result to your ST to determine how far you can throw something.

Throwing Things in Combat: Throwing an object during combat (whether as an attack or not) requires the Attack maneuver (p. 198). You must pick it up first, as described above. To see if you hit, roll against the Throwing skill or an appropriate Thrown Weapon skill. If something weighs more than 25 times your ST, forget the formula – you can’t throw it!

If you are hit by a (blunt) thrown object, the damage it does depends on its weight and the ST with which it was thrown.

Throwing Damage Table

ST	½ to 10 lbs.	10+ to 50 lbs.	50+ to 100 lbs.	over 100 lbs.
5-6	1d-5	1d-4	1d-5	–
7-8	1d-4	1d-3	1d-3	–
9-10	1d-3	1d-2	1d-2	1d-3
11-12	1d-2	1d-1	1d-1	1d-2
13-14	1d-1	1d	1d	1d
15-16	1d	1d+1	1d+2	1d+2
17-18	1d+1	1d+2	2d-2	2d-1
19-20	1d+2	2d-2	2d-1	2d

A fragile object (or a thrown character) will take the same amount of damage it inflicts. Roll damage separately for the thrown object and the target.

MENTAL FEATS

Several traits are based upon your character’s IQ attribute.

Sense Rolls

Sense rolls include Vision rolls, Hearing rolls, and Taste/Smell rolls. All Sense rolls are made against the character’s IQ. The Alertness advantage is a bonus to *all* Sense rolls.

Vision

To see something small or hidden, make a Vision roll with a bonus equal to your level of Acute Vision (if any). The GM may make this roll easier or harder for things that are more or less well hidden. Partial darkness can give from -1 to -9. A nearsighted person has -6 to Vision rolls for items farther away than 3 feet; a farsighted person has -6 on Vision rolls for things within 3 feet. Blind characters, or those in total darkness, can see nothing!

Hearing

To hear a faint sound, roll against IQ with a bonus equal to your level of Acute Hearing, if any; Hard of Hearing gives -4. The GM may make this roll easier or harder, depending on the loudness of the sound, surrounding noises, and so on. Once a sound is heard, a regular IQ roll may be required to *understand* its significance. Deaf characters can hear nothing!

Smelling and Tasting

These are two manifestations of the same sense. To notice an odor or a taste, roll vs. IQ with a bonus equal to your level of Acute Smell/Taste, if any. In some cases, the GM may require a separate IQ roll to *understand* the significance of a smell or taste.

Will Rolls

When someone is faced with a frightening situation, or needs to overcome a mental disadvantage, the GM should require a *Will roll*. Normally, Will is equal to IQ, so this is just an IQ roll. However, if the character has the Strong Will advantage or the Weak Will disadvantage, this is added to or subtracted from IQ.

On a successful Will roll, the character overcomes his fear, bad impulse, or whatever. On a failed roll, he is frightened or gives in to the "lower impulse," whatever that is. Any Will roll of 14 or over is an automatic failure (this does *not* apply to Will rolls made to resist Influence Skills!).

Furthermore, if someone has an IQ of more than 14, treat his IQ as only 14 *before* subtracting Weak Will. If you have an IQ of 14 or higher and 3 levels of Weak Will, your Will is only 11.

Fright Checks

A Fright Check is special type of Will roll made when something terrifying occurs (e.g., being shot at for the first time) or when someone stumbles onto a horrifying sight (e.g., evidence of genocide). The Fearlessness advantage adds to Will for this purpose, and Combat Reflexes gives +2 to Fright Checks.

Fright Checks are at -1 to -6 for especially violent or gruesome events (GM's decision). However, they are at +5 in the heat of battle; when fighting, you are usually too excited to be scared. (The +5 does *not* apply if combat is the *reason* for the Fright Check!)

When a character fails a Fright Check, roll 3 dice, *add the amount by which the Fright Check was missed*, and consult the table. Many results will give the victim a new quirk or mental disadvantage: the GM chooses a disadvantage related to the frightening event and applies it to the character, reducing his point value.



FRIGHT CHECK TABLE

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>4, 5 – Stunned for one turn, then recover automatically.</p> <p>6, 7 – Stunned for one turn. Every turn after that, roll vs. unmodified IQ to snap out of it.</p> <p>8, 9 – Stunned for one turn. Every turn after that, roll vs. Will, plus whatever bonuses or penalties you had on your original roll, to snap out of it.</p> <p>10 – As #8, 9, but stunned for 1d turns.</p> <p>11 – As #8, 9, but stunned for 2d turns.</p> <p>12 – Lose your lunch. Treat this as being stunned for 15 turns, then roll vs. HT each turn to recover.</p> <p>13 – Acquire a new quirk (p. 187).</p> <p>14, 15 – Take 1d of fatigue (p. 205), and 1d turns of stunning, as per #10 above.</p> <p>16 – Stunned for 1d turns, as per #10, and acquire a new quirk, as per #13.</p> <p>17 – Faint for 1d minutes, then roll vs. HT each minute to recover.</p> <p>18 – Faint as above, and roll vs. HT immediately. On a failed roll, take 1 hit of damage as you collapse.</p> <p>19 – Severe faint, lasting for 2d minutes; then roll vs. HT each minute to recover. Take 1 hit of injury.</p> <p>20 – Faint bordering on shock, lasting for 4d minutes. Also, take 1d fatigue.</p> <p>21 – Panic. Run around screaming, sit down and cry, or something else equally pointless for 1d minutes. Then, roll vs. unmodified IQ once per minute to snap out of it.</p> <p>22, 23 – Acquire a Phobia (p. 186) or other mental disadvantage worth -10 points.</p> <p>24, 25 – Major physical effect: hair turns white, you age five years overnight, you go partially deaf. In game terms, acquire -15 points worth of physical disadvantages (for this purpose, each year of age counts as -3 points).</p> <p>26, 27 – Faint for 1d minutes, as per #18, and acquire a new mental disadvantage, as per #22, 23.</p> | <p>28 – Light coma. You fall unconscious, rolling vs. HT every 30 minutes to recover. For 6 hours after you come to, all skill rolls and attribute checks are at -2.</p> <p>29 – Coma. As above, but unconscious for 1d hours. Then roll vs. HT; if the roll fails, remain in a coma for another 1d hours, and so on.</p> <p>30 – Catatonia. Stare into space for 1d days; then roll vs. HT. On a failed roll, remain catatonic for 1d more days, and so on. If you don't have medical care, lose 1 HT the first day, 2 the second, and so on. If you survive and awaken, all skill rolls and attribute checks are at -2 for as many days as the catatonia lasted.</p> <p>31 – Seizure. You lose control of your body, and fall to the ground in a fit lasting 1d minutes and costing 2d Fatigue. Also, roll vs. HT. On a failed roll, take 1d damage. On a critical failure, you lose 1 HT <i>permanently</i>.</p> <p>32 – Stricken. You fall to the ground, taking 2d damage in the form of a mild heart attack or stroke.</p> <p>33 – Total panic. You are out of control; you may do <i>anything</i> (the GM rolls 3d; the higher the roll, the more useless your reaction). For instance, you might jump off a cliff to avoid the monster. If you survive your first reaction, roll vs. IQ to come out of the panic. If you fail, the GM rolls for another panic reaction, and so on!</p> <p>34, 35 – Acquire a Phobia or other mental disadvantage worth -15 points.</p> <p>36 – Severe physical effect, as per #24, 25, but equivalent to -20 points of physical disadvantages.</p> <p>37 – Severe physical effect, as per #24, 25, but equivalent to -30 points of physical disadvantages.</p> <p>38, 39 – Coma, as per #29, and a mental disadvantage, as per #34, 35.</p> <p>40+ – As #39, above, but you also lose 1 point of IQ <i>permanently</i>. This automatically reduces all IQ-based skills by 1.</p> |
|---|---|

COMBAT

As violent and dangerous as it may be, combat is inevitable in a campaign set during a war. Here is a simple system for resolving small-unit conflicts:

Combat Turn Sequence

Characters act one at a time, until they have all taken a *turn*; then they start over. The *sequence* in which they act is as follows:

Before combat begins, compare the Move scores of all characters. The highest Move goes first, the second-highest Move score goes next, and so on. In case of ties, the highest *Basic Speed* goes first; here is where a 5.5 is better than a 5.25, for instance. If anyone is *still* tied, roll dice to see who goes first.

Your turn *starts* when you choose a maneuver, and *ends* when you choose your next maneuver – that is, after *all* other characters have acted once.

Each turn represents *one second* of real time.

Maneuvers

Start each turn by choosing any one of the following maneuvers. The maneuver you choose will also affect your defenses (see p. 199) if you are attacked before your next turn. You do not select a defense until you are actually attacked – but the maneuver you choose will govern the defenses you can use.

Move

Move, and do *nothing* else (except for a “free” action – see below). You may use any legal active defense.

Movement and special actions are wholly abstract; no gameboard is required. If a detail about movement is important (“How long will it take me to run across the clearing and reach cover?”), the GM decides. The number of yards you can run per second is equal to your Move score.

Change Position

Go from standing to prone, kneeling to standing, or any other position change. (It takes two turns to go from prone to standing: first you kneel, then you stand.) *Exception*: You can go from kneeling to standing, or vice versa, and attack on the same turn.

You can use any defense on the turn you change position. The following table summarizes the effects of various positions:

Table of Positions

Position	Attack	Defense
Standing	Normal	Normal
Crouching	-2	Ranged weapons -2 to hit; normal vs. others
Kneeling	-2	Ranged weapons -2 to hit; -2 to any active defense
Crawling	Cannot attack	Ranged weapons -4 to hit; -3 to any active defense
Sitting	-2	As for kneeling
Lying down	-4, except with gun	As for crawling

Ready

Ready any weapon or other item. A weapon is “unready” if it is holstered, sheathed, or slung; it takes one turn to take it out. It also takes one turn to toggle the safety switch on a gun, or to cock a fully automatic weapon. A hand grenade takes *two* turns to

ready: one to grab it and one to pull the pin. An unbalanced hand weapon, such as a swung shovel, becomes “unready” when you swing it; it must be readied again before each use!

Reloading a gun by changing magazines or inserting individual rounds also requires a Ready maneuver. This takes several turns. Reload times for specific firearms appear on p. 91.

You can parry with a hand weapon as soon as you have readied it – that is, on the same turn! You can also use any other legal active defense on the turn when you ready an item. *Exception*: If you are reloading a gun, your only defense is to dodge – and if you dodge, you lose the benefit of that turn of reloading.

Note that, even if you are ambidextrous, you cannot ready one weapon on the same turn you attack with another.

Aim

Aim a ready *ranged* weapon. You must name a specific target. Your attack is at -4 if you use a ranged weapon without aiming *unless* your effective skill is at least equal to the weapon’s *Snap Shot* number. If you aim for 1 turn, your attack is at your normal skill level plus the weapon’s *Accuracy* modifier. You may aim for up to 3 more turns, getting a further +1 bonus for each additional turn you aim. Guns get *another* +1 if they are braced (on a bipod, window sill, or the like) while aiming.

You can use any defense while aiming . . . but it spoils your aim and you lose all the accumulated benefits. If you are injured while aiming, you must make your Will roll or lose your aim.

Attack

Attack any foe with your ready weapon. The GM always has the option of ruling (for any reason having to do with the situation) that some combatants may not attack certain foes. If the battle is in extremely close quarters, long arms should only be allowed one shot each – then the fight will go to pistols, bayonets, knives, boots . . .

You may parry (with a ready hand weapon) or dodge on the same turn you attack.

All-Out Attack

Attack any foe with hands, feet, or a ready hand weapon. You have three choices:

1. Make two attacks against the same foe, if you have two ready weapons, or one weapon that does not have to be readied after use.
2. Make a single attack, at a +4 bonus to your skill!
3. Make one attack, at normal skill, doing +2 damage if you hit.

However, if you choose any form of All-Out Attack, you may make *no active defenses at all* until your next turn!

All-Out Defense

Defend yourself, doing nothing else this turn. If you fail your defense roll against any attack, you may try *another* (different) defense – in other words, you get two defense rolls, using two *different* active defenses vs. the same attack. You are limited to *two* parries per turn when you choose All-Out Defense, but you can’t parry twice with a weapon that becomes unready after a parry.

Long Action

This is a “generic” choice that allows for one second’s worth of *any* multi-second action (for instance, starting a vehicle or defusing a bomb). The GM decides how many turns each “long action” will take. As a rule, no defense except dodging is possible during a long action, but the GM can vary this as he sees fit. Any sort of defense may also interfere with whatever you are trying to do.

Free Actions

Things you can do during any maneuver, including talking, dropping a weapon or other object, and crouching down behind cover (not kneeling).

Making an Attack

If you choose the *Attack* or *All-Out Attack* maneuvers, you may try to hit a foe. You may attack any foe, unless the GM rules that attack is impossible for some reason.

You can only attack if your weapon is *ready*. A balanced hand weapon (e.g., a knife) is ready every turn. An unbalanced hand weapon (e.g., a hatchet) becomes unready when you swing it, so it can only be used every other turn. A gun is ready when it is loaded and in hand with the safety off.

Each attack is resolved by three die rolls. First is your *attack roll*. If this roll is successful, your attack was a good one. Now your *foe* must make a *defense roll* to see if he can defend against your attack. If he makes this roll, he is not hit. If he misses his defense roll, your attack struck home and you *roll for damage*.

Rolling to Attack

Your “attack roll” is a regular success roll. Figure your *effective skill* (your *basic skill* plus or minus any appropriate *modifiers*) with the weapon you are using. Applicable modifiers include:

Attacker is Crawling or Lying Down: -4, except with a gun.

Attacker is Crouching, Sitting, or Kneeling: -2.

Attacker is in a strange position (e.g., hanging upside down): -2 or more (GM’s decision).

Bad footing: -2 or more (GM’s option).

Bad light: -1 to -9 (GM’s decision); -10 for total darkness.

Blind: -6; blinded *suddenly*: -10.

Off-hand attack: -4 (no penalty if Ambidextrous).

One eye: -1 for hand-weapon attacks, -3 for ranged attacks.

ST under minimum ST for that weapon: -1 for each point of difference.

Wounds: Penalty equal to hits you took on the preceding turn. High Pain Threshold advantage eliminates this penalty.

See pp. 155 and 00 for additional modifiers for ranged attacks.

Now roll 3 dice. If your roll is *less than or equal to* your “effective” skill, you have rolled well enough to hit the foe, and he must roll to defend. Otherwise, you missed!

Critical Hits: No matter what your skill, a roll of 3 or 4 always hits, and is a *critical hit*. If your effective skill is 15, then any roll of 5 or less is a critical hit. If your effective skill is 16 or more, then any roll of 6 or less is a critical hit.

On a critical hit, the attack automatically hits home – your foe does *not* get a defense roll. As well, on an attack roll of 3, you do not roll for damage – your attack automatically does the *most* damage it could do. For instance, maximum damage for a 1d+2 attack would be 6+2, or 8 hits. Other critical hits bypass the defense roll, but roll normally for damage.

Automatic Misses: Regardless of skill, a roll of 17 or 18 always misses with any attack. A roll equal to or greater than the *Malfunction* number of a gun is likewise an automatic miss, and may also indicate a misfire; see p. 201.

Defense

If you make your attack roll, you have not (yet) actually struck your foe, unless you rolled a critical hit. You have made an attack that is *good enough* to hit him – *unless* he defends.

SETTLING RULES QUESTIONS

In any question of rules, the GM’s word is *law*. The GM decides which optional rules will be used, and settles any specific questions that come up. A good GM will always discuss important questions with the players before deciding – but a good player accepts the GM’s decision once it is made.

When a situation is not covered by the rules, there are several techniques that can be used:

Success rolls. Roll 3 dice to test a character’s strength, dexterity, skill, or whatever. Use a success roll when a question arises about someone’s ability to do some particular thing.

Random rolls. For a question like “Are the keys in the car?” a random roll is often best. The GM decides what the chances are, and rolls the dice, leaving the rest to fate.

Arbitrary fiat. You don’t have to use the dice at all. If there is only one “right” answer to fit the plot of the adventure – then that’s the answer.

Your foe’s defense is equal to the sum of his armor’s *passive* defense (PD), if any, and his *active* defense (Dodge or Parry). Passive defense always protects, but active defenses must be specifically chosen from those that are “legal” at the moment. This depends on the maneuver he chose on his last turn – see p. 198.

The defender rolls 3 dice. If his roll is *less than or equal to* his total defense, he dodged or parried your attack. Otherwise, his defense was ineffective and your attack struck home. If your attack hits your foe, you can roll for damage.

A defense roll of 3 or 4 is *always* successful – even if your total defense is only 1 or 2! A roll of 17 or 18 always fails.

Your foe does not get to attempt a defense roll if you rolled a critical hit against him.

Active Defense

There are two *active defenses* that can protect you against an attack. Each of these defenses is calculated in advance. When you are attacked, you may choose *one* active defense as part of your total defense roll. (If you took *All-Out Defense*, you may make *two* separate defense rolls, using different defenses.)

Your active defense depends on your situation, *especially* the maneuver you chose last turn. Some maneuvers limit the active defenses you can make. A stunned character’s active defense is at -4.

Sometimes you will have *no* active defense. A knife from behind, a sniper’s shot, random shrapnel, or an unexpected booby trap would be attacks against which no active defense is possible.

The Combat Reflexes advantage gives a +1 to each of your active defenses.

Dodging

Your Dodge defense is the same as your Move score (but *not* modified for Running skill). An *animal’s* Dodge score is half its Move or half its DX, whichever is better – up to a maximum of 10.

You may dodge *any* attack, except one that you did not know about! You may even make a Dodge roll against firearms attacks made by a foe you can see (this represents the effects of evasive action – you do not actually dodge bullets!). There is no limit to the number of times you may dodge in one turn.

Parrying

Hand weapons can be used for defense as well as offense. When you parry with a weapon, *half* your skill with that weapon (round down) counts as active defense. Thus, if you have a Broadsword skill of 20, you would have a Parry defense of 10 using a saber.

You cannot parry unless your weapon is *ready*. Parrying with an unbalanced weapon will make it “unready.” For instance, you can’t parry with a hatchet on the same turn you attacked with it; you have to re-ready it first. A parry won’t stop anything except a hand-weapon attack. If a weapon is used to parry anything of three or more times its own weight, it *breaks* on a roll of 1 or 2 on 1d! (The parry still counts if the weapon breaks, however.)

You may only parry one attack per turn, unless you have two weapons (in which case you may parry once with each) or you chose the *All-Out Defense* maneuver (in which case you may parry twice – or twice with each weapon, if you have more than one).

If you successfully parry a barehanded attack with a weapon, you may injure your attacker. Immediately roll against your own weapon skill (at -4 if your attacker used Judo or Karate). If you hit, your parry struck the attacker’s limb squarely; roll normal damage.

Some special parrying rules:

Fencing weapons, such as the smallsword, parry at 2/3 Fencing skill (round down), provided you are at no more than light encumbrance. Also, you may parry *twice* per turn, rather than just once. (An All-Out Defense will let you parry *any number* of times!)

Katanas parry at 2/3 Katana skill (round down) if wielded two-handed, provided you are at no more than light encumbrance.

Knives and equally small weapons are at -1 to parry *with*.

Rifles used in hand-to-hand combat parry at 1/2 Spear skill (when used to bayonet) or 1/2 Two-Handed Axe/Mace skill (when used to club). Roll 1d after every parry; on a 1, the gun is damaged. It will require repairs before it can fire again.

Thrown weapons may be parried, but at -1. Thrown knives and similar small, hurled weapons are parried at -2.

Passive Defense (PD)

If you are wearing armor, then you will also have a “passive” defense factor operating in your favor. Armor PD ranges from 1 to 6; see p. 87 for examples. Passive defense *always* protects you, even if you are unconscious or unaware of the attack. If you have any PD at all, a defense roll of 3 or 4 will succeed for you!

Weapon Damage

If an enemy fails his defense roll, you have hit him and may make a “damage roll.” This roll tells how much damage you did to your target. Your weapon (and, for hand weapons, your strength) determines the number of dice you roll for damage.

If the enemy is wearing armor, the armor’s Damage Resistance (DR) is subtracted from the damage you roll. The Toughness advantage may also provide DR, which works just like armor and which adds to that of any armor worn. If you roll enough damage to exceed your foe’s DR, you will injure him.

Injury

If the total damage you roll *exceeds* the Damage Resistance of your foe the excess hits are taken as damage. *Example:* Your sub-machine gun’s “Damage” statistic is 3d-1. You roll 3 dice, subtract 1, and get a 10. The target’s flak jacket gives 4 points of DR, so 6 points of damage get through, and the target takes 6 hits of damage. Remember that cutting and impaling attacks get bonus damage (see *Damage Types and Damage Bonus*, p. 192).

Effects of Injury

All injuries are assumed to be to the torso; specific hit locations are beyond the scope of *GURPS Lite*. Subtract the hits you take from your HT score. See pp. 203-204 for more details.

Shock: If you take a wound, your attack roll will be reduced (on your next turn only) by the number of hits you took. Wounds taken during the same turn are cumulative for this purpose. See p. 203.

Knockdown and Stunning: If you take a single wound that does damage of *more than half* of your *basic* HT score, you must roll against your *basic* HT. If you fail the roll, you are *knocked down!*

Whether or not you fall down, you are *stunned*. All active-defense rolls are at -4 until your next turn. At that time, you roll against your basic HT. A successful roll means you recover, and can act normally that turn and thereafter. A failed roll means you remain stunned, and continue to stand (or lie) there without making any maneuvers, and still take -4 on each active-defense roll!

Severe Wounds: If you are reduced to 3 *hit points or less*, your Move and Dodge scores are both cut in half (round down). Your wounds are slowing you!

Unconsciousness: If you take enough wounds to reduce your HT to *zero or less*, you are hanging on to consciousness by sheer willpower. At the beginning of each turn that your HT is zero or less, make a roll against *basic* HT, modified by Strong Will or Weak Will (if you have either). A successful roll means you can take your turn normally; a failed roll means you fall unconscious! Roll each turn, until you fail a roll and fall unconscious.

Death: If your HT goes fully negative (for example, -10 if your basic HT is 10), you risk death – see p. 203.

Ranged Weapons

Ranged weapons work like other weapons: make your attack roll, let your foe make his defense roll, and then roll for damage if you hit. Some additional rules and modifiers apply, however.

Direct-Fire Weapons

Direct-fire weapons (small arms, thrown knives, etc.) are fired in a straight line at a target you can see. Figure your attack roll by:

1. Starting with your base skill with the weapon. For guns, this is the Guns or Gunner skill for the firearm. For thrown weapons, this is either the general Throwing skill or the specific Thrown Weapon skill for the weapon (*not* the Hand Weapon skill for it).

2. Modifying for the target’s *speed and range* (handled as a single modifier) and *size*.

3. Modifying for the weapon’s *Accuracy*, if you have taken at least one turn to aim.

4. Applying situational modifiers (for cover, darkness, etc.).

5. Applying an extra -4 if you have not aimed and your modified skill is less than the Snap Shot number of the weapon.

The result is *effective skill*. A roll of this number, or less, is a hit.

Weapon Statistics

Any weapon that can be used for direct fire will have several specialized statistics. These numbers and their game effects are:

Snap Shot (SS): If you have aimed, ignore this statistic. If you have *not* aimed, your effective skill after all modifiers must *equal or exceed* SS, or you suffer an additional -4 “snap-shot” penalty.

Accuracy (Acc): If you have aimed for at least one turn, you may add this number to your effective skill. However, the bonus for Acc can never exceed your basic skill with the weapon.

Half-Damage Range (1/2D): The range, in yards, past which the weapon does only half normal damage. Roll normally and then

divide by 2 (round down). When firing at a target past 1/2D, you do not receive your weapon's Acc bonus, even if you have aimed!

Maximum Range (Max): The range, in yards, past which no direct-fire attack is possible with the weapon.

Situational Modifiers

In addition to the modifiers under *Rolling to Attack* (p. 199), the following situational modifiers apply to direct-fire attacks.

The target is . . .

Behind light cover (e.g., bushes): -2.

Behind moderate cover (e.g., a tree, a doorway): -3.

Behind someone else: -4.

Firing a weapon from a trench: -4.

Crouching, sitting, or kneeling: -2, -4 if behind cover.

Prone or crawling: -4, -7 if behind cover.

Moving forward evasively (at half Move): -1.

Moving evasively at the cost of forward progress (Move 1): -2.

The attacker is . . .

Walking (Move 1-2): -1.

Running (Move 3+): -2.

Speed/Range and Size Modifiers

All direct-fire attacks take modifiers for the target's speed and range (treated as one modifier), and for its size. These are determined from the chart below, as follows:

Speed/Range: Look up the *sum* of range to the target (in yards) and the target's speed (in yards per second) in the third column, and then read the modifier in the first column. Ignore speed (but not range) when attacking a human target.

Size: Look up the target's size in the third column, rounding up to the next larger size, and then read the modifier in the second column. Ignore size when attacking a human target.

Speed/Range and Size Table

Speed/ Range Modifier	Size Modifier	Linear Measurement	
		(size or range/speed)	Range/speed in mph
+2	-2	1 yd	2 mph
+1	-1	1½ yd	3 mph
0	0	2 yd	4.5 mph
-1	+1	3 yd	7 mph
-2	+2	4½ yd	10 mph
-3	+3	7 yd	15 mph
-4	+4	10 yd	20 mph
-5	+5	15 yd	30 mph
-6	+6	20 yd	45 mph
-7	+7	30 yd	70 mph
-8	+8	45 yd	100 mph
-9	+9	70 yd	150 mph
-10	+10	100 yd	200 mph
-11	+11	150 yd	300 mph
-12	+12	200 yd	450 mph
-13	+13	300 yd	700 mph
-14	+14	450 yd	1,000 mph
-15	+15	700 yd	1,500 mph
-16	+16	1,000 yd	2,000 mph
-17	+17	1,500 yd	3,000 mph
-18	+18	2,000 yd	4,500 mph
-19	+19	3,000 yd	7,000 mph
-20	+20	4,500 yd	10,000 mph

Grenades

Roll against Throwing skill or DX to lob a grenade, using the usual rules and modifiers. If you miss your attack roll, you missed your target by a number of yards equal to the amount by which you failed or half the distance to the target (round up), whichever is *less*. Roll 1d for direction: on a 1, it goes long; on a 2-5, it lands to one side; and on a 6, it falls short of the target.

Guns

Additional statistics are required for guns. These statistics, and their effects on game play, are as follows:

Malfunction (Malf): If the attack roll is equal to or greater than Malf, the gun malfunctions. (If Malf is "Crit" instead of a number, the gun will malfunction only on a critical failure; see p. 175.) This is an automatic miss. As well, the weapon jams or misfires: no shot is fired, and the gun will not fire again until cleared. To clear a weapon takes 2d turns and a successful roll against Armoury or the Guns or Gunner skill used to fire the weapon.

Rate of Fire (RoF): How often the weapon can fire each turn. RoF 1/2 means it can fire every other turn; a turn is required to operate the bolt. RoF 1 means it can fire once per turn. RoF 2~ or 3~ indicates a semi-automatic weapon that can fire two or three times per turn, requiring a separate attack roll each time. RoF 4 or more indicates an automatic weapon (see below).

Shots: The number of shots per magazine, ammunition belt, etc. When you have fired this many shots, you must stop to reload.

Recoil (Rcl): If a gun is fired more than once, in the same turn or on consecutive turns, without pausing for one turn between shots, this penalty is subtracted from the *second* and subsequent shots. Double Rcl if your ST is below the "ST" listed for the weapon. Automatic weapons use Rcl differently; see below.

Shotguns

The wide spread of shot gives +1 to hit, but roll each die of damage individually and apply it to DR separately.

Automatic Weapons

Automatic weapons, such as machine guns, use the *Guns* rules except as follows. They will fire for as long as the trigger is held. The shots fired by one trigger pull are a *burst*. The Rate of Fire (RoF) for an automatic weapon is the number of rounds it fires *each turn*. It is rare for all rounds in a burst to hit the target. To simulate this, the burst is divided into *groups* of 4 shots (if RoF does not divide evenly by four, any remaining shots form a group of 1, 2, or 3 shots). A separate roll to hit is made for each group.

The table below shows the number of shots that hit, depending on the success of the roll. Even failure by 1 can result in a hit!

A critical hit with a group is a hit with all the rounds. Treat one round in the group as a critical hit, the remainder as normal hits.

Rounds in Group	Roll Made by						
	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5+
1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
3	1	1	1	1	2	2	3
4	1	2	2	3	3	3	4



Recoil: In automatic fire, apply Rcl as a penalty to effective skill on the attack roll for the *first* group, and again on the roll for each four-round group or partial group after the first. E.g., for a weapon with RoF 9 and Rcl -3, the first 4 rounds are at -3, the second 4 at -6, and the final round at -9. This penalty continues to increase, even in subsequent turns, until the firer stops shooting for one full turn.

Defense Against Direct-Fire Weapons

Thrown Weapons: The target of a thrown weapon (hurled knife, lobbed grenade, etc.) may dodge or parry.

Guns: The target of a gun may only dodge; he may not parry.

Automatic Weapons: As for other guns, but the target rolls against Dodge for each *group*, regardless of how many rounds it contains. Success means the entire group misses him; failure means the entire group hits him. Roll damage separately for each round that hits and apply DR separately against each round.

Indirect-Fire Weapons

Indirect-fire weapons are fired in a ballistic arc over obstacles such as hills. The target is an *area*; i.e., a patch of ground or water.

Figure your attack roll by:

1. Starting with your Gunner skill with the weapon.
2. Modifying for the *range* to the target area. Use the *Speed/Range and Size Table*, but *don't* apply speed or size modifiers.
3. Applying situational modifiers (for observed fire, etc.).

The result is your *effective skill*. This can be (and often will be) a negative number. Once you have calculated effective skill, make an attack roll. On a failure, note the margin of failure. Look this up in the “Speed/Range” column of the *Speed/Range and Size Table*, then read across to the “Linear Measurement” column. This is the distance by which the attack missed, to a maximum of 1/10 the range to the target. Roll 1d for direction: on a 1, it goes long; on a 2-5, it lands to one side; and on a 6, it falls short of the target.

On a success, the round came in over the target area. If there is a building, vehicle, or person there, the round will strike it from above. Explosive damage from indirect fire is normal, but kinetic-type damage (e.g., crushing damage of bullets) is halved.

Weapon Statistics

Indirect fire is always aimed, if only at map coordinates, making SS irrelevant. It is always treated as being beyond 1/2D range, regardless of actual range, so there is never an Accuracy bonus. The only statistics that really matter for indirect fire are minimum and indirect-fire range. Indirect-fire range is listed for weapons normally used in this role; otherwise it can be calculated on p. 142. If applicable, minimum range will be listed, too.

Situational Modifiers

Modifiers for cover, darkness, etc. *do not apply* to indirect-fire attacks. Instead, use these modifiers:

Firing “blind” at a set of coordinates: -15.

Observed fire: -5, plus a bonus equal to observer’s margin of success or a penalty equal to observer’s margin of failure on his Forward Observer skill roll.

In communication with a fire direction center: +3.

Weapon fixed and sited: +2.*

* The gunner has established his *own* location precisely in relation to the target. This takes 2 minutes and a Navigation roll. Both firer and target must be stationary.

Observed Fire

Usually, a “forward observer” (FO) provides firing coordinates to the gunner. He can shout over short distances, but a telephone or a radio is normally required. If the FO can observe the fall of shot with respect to the target, he can also provide the gunner with *corrections* on the second and subsequent shots.

The FO locates the target and reports its coordinates to the gunner. This takes 2d+5 seconds. The gunner then fires a shot at

those coordinates, at the usual -15. The FO observes the results and reports a correction to the gunner. This takes another 2d+5 seconds and a second Forward Observer roll. The gunner fires a second shot, this time at only -5, modified by the FO’s margin of success or failure on his Forward Observer roll. The process of shooting and correcting continues until the gunner is on target. Apply the following modifiers to Forward Observer skill:

After first shot: No modifier.

After second shot: +4.

After third or later shot: +8.

FO lacks binoculars: -1.

FO lacks map: -3.

FO lacks binoculars and map: -5.

Distance between FO and target: -1 per 500 yards (tripled if FO does not have binoculars).

The gunner’s modifier to hit is based on the FO’s most recent Forward Observer roll. As this ultimately receives a +8 bonus, the gunner will usually end up with a bonus to hit after a few shots.

Forward Observer skill can also be used to select the fuse needed for an air burst at a specific altitude. Use the rules above, but in this case, the “target area” includes a vertical dimension.

Battery Fire

Once an indirect-fire weapon has been fired and corrected for accuracy, any identical weapons located nearby (GM’s decision) can be fired with the same to-hit modifier, provided their crews are in direct communication with the crew of the spotting gun.

Pre-Planned Fire

An indirect-fire weapon can be fired and corrected for accuracy – “registered” – on a pre-planned target before battle begins. Apply the rules above. When the action starts, the gunner gains the benefits of observed fire as soon as he starts firing upon the pre-planned target, without the need for a FO.

Machine-Gun Fire

When MGs are fired indirectly, the bullets disperse over a “beaten zone” 1 yard × the range modifier long by 1 yard wide. Anyone in this zone has a 9 or less chance of being struck by a bullet. A successful Gunner roll will center the beaten zone on the target area. Observed fire works as above, but the observer is at -1 per 100 yards from the target, and can send one correction *per second*.

Explosions

Explosives do *concussion damage* and *fragmentation damage*. Both are *doubled* for any living creature in contact with the explosive when it goes off. PD has no effect on either type of damage, and no active defense is possible against an explosion.

Concussion: Damage due to the shock wave. This is applied to *everything* nearby. Most WWII grenades do about 2d concussion damage; TNT does 6d×2 *per pound*. For blasts up to 6d×20, apply full damage to anyone within 2 yards. More distant targets divide damage by 4 per 2 yards range (1/4 at 2 yards, 1/16 at 4 yards, and so on). Each tenfold increase in the amount of concussion damage doubles the increment at which damage is quartered. A vehicle or structure’s DR, but *not* that of WWII personal armor, is *squared* vs. explosions that aren’t a direct hit. Toughness protects normally.

Fragmentation: Most explosive munitions are designed to produce lots of metal fragments. Fragmentation damage is given in square brackets after concussion damage; e.g., 2d [3d] means “2d concussion, 3d fragmentation.” An explosion projects fragments to a distance of 5 yards times the dice of concussion damage.

A hit is automatic at “ground zero.” At 1 yard from the blast, a hit occurs on a roll of 17 or less. At 2 yards, the roll is 16 or less, and so on. When this roll reaches 3, it stays at 3 to the limit of fragment range. Apply the target *Situational Modifiers* from p. 201 to this roll – but against explosives bursting in the air any cover must be overhead and lying prone doesn’t help!

DR (including any from cover) protects normally against fragmentation. Fragmentation damage is considered cutting damage.

Shaped Charges: These special explosives have an “armor divisor” in parentheses after their damage. On a direct hit, divide DR by this number; e.g., 6d×2 (10) means “apply 6d×2 to 1/10 DR.”

Unarmed Combat

Anyone can engage in unarmed combat, but Boxing, Brawling, Judo, or Karate will make you more effective at it.

Punching

A punch is an attack. Your “skill” for a punch is the best of DX, Boxing, Brawling, or Karate. Damage is thrust-2 crushing damage, determined from your ST using the table on p. 192. *Example:* With ST 12, your thrust damage is 1d-1, so your punch does 1d-3.

Punching damage is +1 for a rock in the fist, +2 for brass knuckles. Also add a bonus equal to the *best* of 1/5 Boxing, 1/5 Karate, or 1/10 Brawling, rounded down, to your damage with a punch.

Kicking

A kick is an attack at DX-2, Brawling-2, or Karate-2. It does thrust crushing damage, +1 if wearing heavy boots, plus a bonus equal to the *higher* of 1/5 Karate or 1/10 Brawling, rounded down. On a *miss*, you must make a DX or skill roll to avoid falling down!

Parrying Barehanded

When fighting barehanded, you may parry a *kick* or *punch* with your hands. Your Parry is the best of 1/2 your DX or 2/3 your Boxing, Brawling, Judo, or Karate skill, rounded down. A Boxing parry is at -2 vs. kicks.

If you parry a *weapon* barehanded, you are -3 unless the weapon is a thrusting weapon or you are using Judo or Karate. A failed parry means the weapon hits; the attacker may choose to hit where he was aiming, or to hit your arm! If your arm takes more than HT/2 points of damage, it is *crippled* (see below).

INJURY, ILLNESS, FATIGUE

Wounds and other injuries cause bodily damage, or “hits.” Your HT score tells how many hits you can take. A character who goes down to 0 hit points will soon fall unconscious. It is possible to survive with a negative hit-point total.

Lost Hit Points

Someone who is wounded repeatedly will eventually weaken and collapse, even if no single injury is very great. Record hits on your character sheet. The effects of lost hit points are:

3 or less hit points left: Your Move and Dodge are cut in half; you are reeling from your wounds.

0 or less hit points left: You are in immediate danger of collapse. At the beginning of each turn, roll against your basic HT, plus or minus Strong or Weak Will. A success means you may take your turn normally. A failed roll means you fall unconscious.

-HT hit points: You must make your HT roll (use basic HT) or die. Another roll is required after each further loss of 5 hit points.

-5×HT: Automatic death. You have lost a total of 6 times your original hit points; no one can survive that much injury.

Shock

When you are injured, your DX and IQ, and any skills based on DX and IQ, are reduced by that amount, *on your next turn only*. *Example:* If you take 3 hits of injury, your IQ, DX, and skills will be at -3 on your next turn. Active defenses are *not* reduced.

This subtraction will most often affect weapon attacks – but *any* use of IQ, DX, or skills is affected. Therefore, on the turn after you are badly hurt, it may be a good idea to try flight, All-Out Defense, or the like, rather than counterattacking instantly.

This is only a temporary effect due to shock. On your following turn, your skills are back to normal.

Knockdown

Anyone who takes damage *greater than* half his HT in one blow must immediately roll against his basic HT. If he fails the roll, he *falls* and is *stunned* (see below). If he makes his HT roll, he keeps his footing, but he is still stunned.

Stunning

Someone will be “stunned” if he takes damage *greater than* half his HT in one blow. If you are stunned, all your active defenses are at -4 until your next turn. At that time, roll against basic HT to see whether you recover. A successful roll means you can act normally *on that turn*. A failed roll means you are still stunned and stand there mindlessly . . . The “stunned” state continues until you can make your HT roll and snap out of it. You may act again on the turn you roll successfully and shake off the daze.

Mental Stun: Someone who is surprised or shocked may also be *mentally* “stunned.” The effects of this sort of stunning are just the same, but you must make your IQ roll, rather than your HT roll, to snap out of it. You’re not *hurt* – you’re *confused*.

Crippling Injuries

In some cases, such as booby traps or botched hand parries, the GM will rule that damage is taken to a particular limb. A hand or foot is crippled if it takes damage *greater than* 1/3 your HT. An arm or leg is crippled if it takes damage *greater than* 1/2 your HT.

A crippled arm or hand cannot be used. For the effects of a crippled leg or foot, see the *Lame* disadvantage (p. 185). Make a HT roll for each crippled limb. On a success, the limb will work again once the victim has regained *all* his lost hit points. On a failure, the limb will remain crippled for 1d months. A critical failure indicates that the limb is *severed* or otherwise rendered permanently useless.

Bleeding

Cutting, impaling, and bullet wounds *bleed*, causing continuing HT loss. At the end of every minute after being wounded, the victim rolls against HT, at a -1 per full 5 points of damage he has taken. If he fails, he bleeds for 1 point of damage. On a critical failure, he bleeds for 3 points of damage. On a critical success, the bleeding stops. On an ordinary success, he does not bleed this minute, but must continue to roll every minute. If he does not bleed for three consecutive minutes, the bleeding stops for good. A First Aid roll to stop bleeding takes 1 minute, and comes *before* the bleeding roll. Once first aid has been successfully administered, no more bleeding rolls are made.

First Aid

Most of the HT loss from an injury is due to shock rather than actual physical damage. Therefore, prompt treatment after a fight can restore some of the lost hit points.

Simple Bandaging: Basic, unskilled bandaging will restore 1 lost hit point per fight – but no more, no matter how bad the injury. This takes 30 minutes per victim.

First Aid: A successful First Aid skill roll will restore 1d-1 lost hit points. On a critical success, the victim regains the maximum: 5 hit points. On a critical failure, the victim *loses* 2 hits, and bandaging will not help. Barring critical failure, a minimum of 1 point is always restored. First aid is *not* cumulative with simple bandaging. This takes 20 minutes per victim.

Natural Recovery

Natural recovery will cure any number of hits. At the end of each day of rest and decent food, the victim may roll against his *basic HT*. A successful roll results in the recovery of 1 hit point. The GM may modify the roll downward if conditions are bad, or upward if conditions are very good. A victim under the care of a competent Physician (skill level 12+) gets +1 on all healing rolls.

Recovering From Unconsciousness

If your HT is still positive, roll vs. HT every hour to awaken (or, if you have lost no more than 2 HT, roll every 15 minutes).

If your HT is negative, but not *fully* negative, you will become conscious in as many hours as your HT is negative, or a maximum of 12 hours. *Example:* Your HT is -8 after the battle. You will wake up (still with -8 HT) in 8 hours. When you awaken, you can call for help or even try to drag yourself to shelter.

If your HT has gone *fully* negative – e.g., HT of -10 or worse for someone with a basic HT of 10 – you are in bad shape. If you can make a roll on basic HT, you will awaken (as above) after 12 hours, and can try to help yourself. If you fail the roll, you stay in a coma and die unless you are helped within HT hours.

Other Hazards

Adventurers often face other dangers, including . . .

Falling

When you fall, roll for damage as follows:

1 or 2 yards: (1d-4) damage per yard

3 or 4 yards: (1d-3) per yard

5 or more yards: (1d-2) per yard

If you land on something soft, subtract 1 point per yard fallen. A successful Acrobatics roll will reduce the effective distance of your fall by 5 yards. Terminal velocity – the maximum speed a falling object can achieve – varies for humans, but is normally reached after 3 or 4 seconds of falling. Therefore, treat any fall of more than 50 yards as only 50 yards.

Armor protects against falling damage at *half* its usual DR.

Falling Objects

A *hard* falling object does damage as follows: round its weight to the nearest 10 pounds, and the distance it fell to the nearest 10 yards. Multiply the number of 10-pound and 10-yard increments, and take that many dice of damage. Treat any fall of more than 200 yards as 200 yards. *Example:* A 20-lb. rock falling 30 yards does (2×3)=6 dice of damage. Any weight or distance of 2 or less should be treated as 10 – but halve the final damage. *Soft* objects (living things, for instance) do half damage for their weight.

Flame

Walking through fire does 1d-3 damage per second; actually *standing* in fire does 1d-1 damage per second. Armor protects completely against ordinary heat or flame for a number of turns equal to 3 times its DR. After that, it still protects against flame, but the wearer must roll vs. HT every turn to resist the heat of the fire. A failed roll costs 1 point of fatigue (p. 205).

The above rules assume “ordinary” flame. White phosphorus grenades (p. 98) and flamethrowers (p. 99) are far deadlier.

Illness

Anyone encountering a disease carrier is in danger of contracting the disease, unless he has the Immunity to Disease advantage. Most diseases allow a HT roll to resist, made in secret by the GM. Roll against HT once per day; a failed roll means you catch the disease. From the table below, choose the least advantageous roll:

Avoided all contact with possible victims: HT+4

Entered dwelling or shop of victim: HT+3

Spoke with victim at close quarters: HT+2

Touched victim briefly: HT+1

Used victim’s clothes, blankets, and so on: HT

Ate victim’s cooked flesh (animal, we hope!): HT

Ate victim’s raw flesh (ditto!): HT-1

Prolonged contact with living victim(s): HT-2

Kissing or other intimate contact with victim: HT-3

The GM may require a harder roll for a virulent plague, or an easier one for a less contagious one.

Symptoms

Disease symptoms usually appear at least 24 hours after the disease is caught. Most diseases aren’t contagious until after symptoms appear. Typical symptoms include daily HT loss (which may endanger the victim) for several days; loss of ST, DX, or IQ; fatigue; sneezing, coughing, spots, sores, or rash. Severe symptoms could include delirium, unconsciousness, blindness, etc.

Diagnosis

When symptoms of a disease are apparent, the GM should roll against the character’s Diagnosis skill, or IQ-6, in secret. Success means he identifies the disease.

Recovery

Typically, a disease sufferer must make a daily HT roll (possibly at a penalty). This roll, and the effects of failure, vary with each illness. For a “generic” disease, a failed roll might mean you lose 1 HT; a success would let you regain 1 HT.

When you have recovered all HT lost to an illness, you are cured. If your illness allows HT rolls to attempt to recover, a roll of 3 or 4 means the disease has vanished (lost HT must be recovered in the normal fashion). For some diseases, recovery will be aided by use of appropriate drugs. For most diseases, a physician’s care (as for injuries) will aid attempts to recover.

Infection

An “infection” is caused by a microorganism that attacks open wounds. It is handled just like any other disease, but the roll to avoid it is made under different circumstances:

Dirt in the wound: HT+3

As above, in area with special infection: HT

Dung-coated spike (e.g. “punji stakes”): HT+1

As above, in area with special infection: HT-2

Fatigue

Fatigue represents lost ST, just as injury represents lost HT. If your ST is 10, you can lose 10 “fatigue points” before falling unconscious from exhaustion. Fatigue does not affect HT at all.

You will suffer fatigue at the end of each battle that lasts more than 10 seconds; the amount is equal to your encumbrance, plus 1. Other causes for lost fatigue are listed below.

While your ST is reduced due to fatigue, *any* use of ST will be made at the reduced ST score. Likewise, your score in any ST-based skill will be reduced by the amount of your fatigue. *The basic damage you do with hand weapons is unchanged. This is for playability, to avoid constant re-figuring of weapon effects!*

Likewise, your Move score is not affected by fatigue *until your ST reaches 3*. At that point, cut your Move in half, rounding down.

If fatigue reduces your ST to 0, you fall unconscious and automatically rest until your ST reaches 1 and you awaken. You cannot have “negative” fatigue or a “negative” ST.

Sample Fatigue Costs

Marching: Each hour of road travel costs fatigue equal to your encumbrance level +1. Add 1 more in hot climates.

Running or Swimming: After each 100 yards traveled, roll vs. HT. A failed roll costs 1 point of fatigue.

Overexertion: Carrying more than 20 times ST, or pushing or pulling a very heavy load, costs 1 fatigue per second.

Losing Sleep: A night without sleep costs 5 fatigue. Losing a half-night of sleep costs 2 fatigue.

Weather: Above 80° Fahrenheit, roll vs. the better of HT or Survival (Desert) skill every 30 minutes, at -1 per 5° over 90°. A failed roll costs 1 fatigue; when ST reaches 3, begin losing hit points, instead. In temperatures below 32°, roll vs. the better of HT or Survival (Arctic) skill, at -1 per 5° below 0°; light clothing imposes up to a -5 penalty while winter clothing (see p. 87) provides a bonus.

Starvation: Active people need three meals per day. A missed meal costs 1 fatigue point until ST reaches 3, then lose hit points, instead. Only rest with plenty to eat will restore this; each rest day with three full meals restores 3 fatigue points lost to starvation.

Dehydration: A person need 2 quarts of water daily, 3 if it's hot, 5 in a desert! Each day without adequate water costs 1 fatigue point and 1 hit point. *Double* the losses if on less than half rations. If ST or HT reaches 0, you become delirious and die within a day if no help arrives. A day of rest with ample water will restore the fatigue.

Recovering from Fatigue

“Normal” fatigue can be regained at 1 point per 10 minutes of rest, involving *nothing* more strenuous than talking and thinking.

Fatigue due to *lost sleep* is regained only by getting a *full* night of sleep! This restores *all* fatigue from lost sleep.

Recovering fatigue from lack of food or water is described above. Any lost hit points are recovered normally; see p. 204.

CAMPAIGNS



JOBS

Jobs, such as those on p. 67, are defined by five things:

Description: The job's title, and exactly what the job entails.

Prerequisite Skills: The skills (and possibly advantages) needed to do the job, and the minimum required level in each skill.

Job Success Roll: Specifies a prerequisite skill (and often a penalty to it) for the working character to roll against at the end of each month. Anything but a critical success or critical failure simply collects the *monthly pay* (below). On a critical success, you get a 10% permanent raise. Results of a critical failure vary; lost income or even loss of the job is typical, but an on-the-job injury is possible at a dangerous job. The GM should be creative!

Monthly Pay: The money earned on a successful roll.

Wealth Level: Each job has a *wealth level*, which can be *poor*, *struggling*, *average*, *comfortable*, or *wealthy*. This is the minimum level of wealth the *character* must have if he holds that job. Very Wealthy and Filthy Rich characters get “wealthy” jobs, but Very Wealthy people take home twice the listed pay for any job, and the Filthy Rich get 10 times the listed pay!

GAME TIME

Game time is the time that passes in the game world. The GM is the judge of how much time has passed.

Small-unit combat is played out in “slow” time. One combat turn equals one second. It may take a minute or more of real time for each combat turn.

Conversations, attempts to pick locks, escape attempts, and similar situations are played in “real” time. If the players spend 10 minutes discussing how to best approach an NPC quartermaster . . . their *characters* spent 10 minutes talking outside the supply depot.

Routine travel, and so on, is handled in “fast” time. Tell the players when they encounter an interesting NPC, or when they arrive at their destination. Just compress the rest of the time.

In a continuing campaign, you also need to keep track of time between adventures. This can always be the same amount of time, or the GM and the players can simply agree on a “logical” time to pass between the end of one adventure and the beginning of the next. It is often a good idea to let a month or two go by, to allow time for healing, earning money at “ordinary” jobs, etc.

Of course, no game time at all has to pass between *sessions*, if you can't finish an adventure in one session.

TECH LEVELS

A *Tech Level* (TL) is a general description of a culture's highest achievement in technology. It is possible for a locale to have widely varying TLs in different subjects. Standard Tech Levels are:

TL0 – Stone Age: fire, lever, language.

TL1 – Bronze Age (Athens): wheel, writing, agriculture.

TL2 – Iron Age (Rome): keystone arch.

TL3 – Medieval (pre-1450): steel weapons, math with zero.

TL4 – Renaissance/Colonial (1450-1700): gunpowder, printing.

TL5 – Industrial Revolution (1701-1900): mass production, steam power, telegraph.

TL6 – World War I & II (1901-1950): cars, airplanes, radio.

Many skills are different at each Tech Level. These skills are indicated by a /TL after the skill name. When you take this skill, supplement the TL with the Tech Level at which you learned the skill; e.g., Guns/TL6.

Being from a lower TL than most other characters is a disadvantage; see *Primitive* (p. 186).