



# STRANDS OF FATE

Mike McConnell

*An aging gunslinger seated on his horse scans the town below...*

*The brash young pilot guns his craft through the asteroid field...*

*A professor scours the dusty book shelves for the ritual of summoning...*

*An assassin holds his breath as he gently squeezes the trigger...*

## **STRANDS OF FATE**

**...contains everything you need to tell stories of adventure, action, horror, and intrigue set in any genre. Whether it's classic fantasy, urban mystery, dashing super heroes, or far future action, this book is your guide.**

**Strands of Fate utilizes the FATE roleplaying game system and provides the Game Master with all the tools he needs to get any campaign, of any genre or power level, off the ground and running in minutes.**

**It features...**

- + Rules for creating and playing stories about average people, over the top heroes, or virtual gods.**
- + A system of Advantages that provide you with fully functional magic, psionics, mutations, cybernetic enhancements, or any other strange power you can imagine.**
- + Rules for creating and playing with vehicles, from pirate ships to star ships to ten story tall battle mechs.**
- + Support for non-human races or even transhuman characters.**
- + A system for creating and controlling units and organizations, and using them to play out regional or world spanning conflicts.**
- + Antagonists and equipment to challenge and aid your characters, whether they're knights, modern soldiers, or star hopping androids.**

V O I D   S T A R

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# STRANDS OF FAITH

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# Chapter 1

## The Basics

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### What is a Roleplaying Game?

Telling stories is a tradition we've shared since the earliest men learned to talk. Everyone gathers around and the storyteller avails the listener with tales of adventures, mystery, action or terror.

Role playing games (RPGs) were born of this tradition. But instead of a single storyteller telling the story and playing the part of all the characters, role playing games spread the work around a bit.

To play a role playing game you need at least two people, though three or four is preferable. One person usually has some sort of title, we call him the Game Master (or "GM") and the other participants are simply called Players.

Each player makes up a character. Like a character in a book or movie, the character should have an interesting background, quirky habits, views and beliefs and other traits that makes the character well-rounded.

But unlike a book or movie, the character is assigned statistics and traits that are defined by the game system. These attributes tell the player, and others, how capable the character is at performing certain things.

It is the GM's job to come up with some sort of plot outline for the story as well as playing all the other characters that appear. He is also the final arbitrator of the rules, and may even supersede the rules of the game if it suits his story.

So when the game starts, the GM describes to the players where their characters are and what is going on around them. And then he'll ask "What are you going to do."

Each player will, in turn, describe what actions they wish to take. Using the rules of the game, the players and GM determine what happens when the players attempt their actions and whether or not they succeed.

And that's role playing!



## What is the FATE Game System?

The book you hold in your hands uses a heavily modified version of the FATE (Fantastic Adventures in Tabletop Entertainment) game system compiled and revised to allow the GM to run a game set in just about any genre he can imagine.

FATE is the award-winning role-playing system that gives you all the tools you need to tell stories of great adventure, terrible tragedy, super heroics or bone chilling horror set in the genres of fantasy, modern, or science fiction.



## Things You Should Have

In addition to this book you'll need a few supplies to play the game. Here's a list of mandatory items as well as some recommended ones.

### You'll Need

- A set of Fudge dice, which can be purchased at several online hobby stores. Alternatively, you can use two six-sided ("d6") dice, preferably of differing colors, for each player and the GM.
- Some copies of character sheets or at least blank paper to record characters. (You can download character sheets from the Void Star home website.)
- Writing implements.
- Friends. For running a game, the sweet spot's somewhere between two and four.

### You'll find useful:

- A set of poker chips or glass beads (to use as Fate Points).
- Index cards or "sticky notes" to pass notes and to make notes on things that come up in play.
- Snacks.



## Rolling the Dice

When you want your character to perform an action your GM may call on you to roll the dice. Do so, and add any relevant modifiers to find the total result of the roll. Usually a roll will call for you to add a specific Ability to the roll. For instance, if you were told to “roll your Agility”, you’d roll the dice, add your Agility rating, and then add any other relevant modifiers to find the total. The total is then compared to a difficulty rating set by the GM to determine success or failure.

FATE uses Fudge dice, a set of four six-sided dice marked with a “+”, “-“ and “o” (or blank) on each side. You roll the four Fudge Dice and total them up. Each plus counts as +1, each minus counts as -1, and a blank (or o) counts as 0. The average result of the die roll is 0 but can sway as far as -4 to 4.

Once you’ve determined the result of your dice roll, add the result (or subtract if it was negative) to any other modifiers you might have such as your relevant Ability Rank.

For example if your Ability is Rank 2 and you roll a +,-,0,+ (a dice roll of +1), the total is 3.

If your total is equal to or higher than the difficulty you succeed at your task. And if you beat the difficulty by 3 or more you’ve generated “Spin”. This means you not only succeeded but you did so in spectacular fashion. See pg. 254 for more on Spin.

So when a character wants to do something that requires a roll, he follows this simple formula to determine how well he does:

### ***4dF + Ability Rank + Other Modifiers vs. Difficulty***

Modifiers can be anything from bonuses granted from Aspects to those provided by Advantages (see below).

### **Probability of 4 Fudge Dice**

Result	% Chance
-4	1.23
-3	4.94
-2	12.35
-1	19.75
0	23.46
1	19.75
2	12.35
3	4.94
4	1.23

## Will these regular six sided dice work?

Yes they will.

Whether you don't have any Fudge dice, or you just prefer slightly less predictable results, you may use two six sided dice.

There are two ways to do this. The first method is to use four of them just like Fudge Dice, counting 1-2 as "0", 3-4 as "-", and 5-6 as "+".

The other option is to take two different colored six sided dice and decide which will be the "negative" die before you roll. Roll the dice and subtract the "negative" dice from the other dice result and add the total to your Ability Rank.

Note that using this method of randomization will have a tendency to create much more varied results.

## Probability of d6-d6

Result	% Chance
-5	2.78
-4	5.56
-3	8.33
-2	11.11
-1	13.89
0	16.67
1	13.89
2	11.11
3	8.33
4	5.56
5	2.78



## Ranks and Difficulty

Just about every quantifiable value in FATE is given a Rank. Abilities are given a Rank that determines how good you are at performing certain tasks, equipment is given ranks (called Equipment Ratings) to determine how much it aids you, etc.

Difficulties are given ranks just like everything else. For instance, it might be a Rank 0 difficulty to jumpstart a car, but a Rank 3 difficulty to repair that same car after a serious breakdown.

Guidelines for setting difficulties are found later in this book (pg. 252), but the rule of thumb is thus: "The average person succeeds at a difficulty 2 task a little more than half the time."



## Taking Action

Dice are used in one of four types of situations:

- ✦ **Simple Actions:** Where the character spends his turn rolling against a fixed difficulty. If your total is equal to or higher than the difficulty, you are successful. (See page 257.)
- ✦ **Contests:** Two or more characters roll to perform competing simple actions. The character whose dice roll plus modifiers has the highest total wins. (See page 257.)
- ✦ **Conflicts:** When two or more characters act in direct opposition to one another, but where resolution is not as simple as a contest. (See page 205.)
  - **Physical Conflict** – A fight with fists, knives, guns, etc.
  - **Mental Conflict** – An argument, debate, or confrontation with something that potentially changes or damages your mind.
  - **Social Conflict** – A public conflict that can change or damage your reputation and/or legal status.
- ✦ **Extended Actions:** When you are performing a complicated task you cannot complete in a single turn. You roll each round, adding up the result of your rolls (plus modifiers) until you eventually hit a set difficulty. (See page 258.)



## Character Aspects

More than any other attribute, Aspects are what make the character who he or she is. An Aspect can be any phrase or quote that tells you and the GM something about your character. Typically, an Aspect will relate to some event or important person from the character's past, an item of importance to the character, a part of his personality, or a goal. They should not, however, relate directly to his proficiency in a particular Ability. That's what Specialty Aspects are for (see below).

### Some Sample Character Aspects:

*Trained by Corporal Frank Sheppard*  
*Always Underestimated*  
*"Soon this city will belong to me!"*

*"Always on the run"*  
*"Nobody gets left behind!"*  
*Never Forgets an Insult*

Aspects may be "invoked" for a benefit to the player. This means the player spends a Fate Point and gains a benefit in situations where his Aspect is relevant.

Aspects may also be "compelled". This means the character suffers in some way because he has that Aspect, but he is rewarded with a Fate Point for his troubles.





## Abilities and Specialty Aspects

Abilities represent what a character can do, or rather, how well they can do it. They are ranked starting at 0 and get better as the rank increases. A rank of 0 means very little natural ability and/or no training. A rank of 5 means you are one of the best in the world with that Ability.

So while a character with a Strength rank of 0 may occasionally have trouble getting around in day-to-day life, a character with a Deception of 5 is among the greatest liars and con-artists on the planet.

Ability Rank	What that means...
-1*	You have a handicap or disability that often makes your everyday life a challenge.
0	Almost handicapped. You may have some trouble in day to day life.
1	Below Average. People note your deficiencies.
2	Average. Most people have an Ability rank of 2.
3	Above Average. You are noticed for your talents.
4	Well Above Average. You are one of the most talented people for hundreds of miles.
5	Peak Human. Few people on the planet have this level of an Ability.

\* Characters default to a rating of 0, so the only way to get a -1 is by taking the Weakness Advantage found on page 203.

## Abilities

### Physical

Agility  
Endurance  
Perception  
Strength

### Mental

Knowledge  
Reasoning  
Willpower  
Craft

### Social

Deception  
Empathy  
Persuasion  
Resources



Abilities are very broad generalizations, and while they can give you a good idea of what a character is capable of, they don't tell the whole story. To get a better idea of what a character is exceptionally good (or bad) at, you need to look at his Specialty Aspects (and Advantages, but we'll get to them later).

Like Character Aspects, Specialty Aspects illustrate things that are important to the character. However, unlike Character Aspects, which are very broad in their scope, Specialty Aspects should be more focused on a particular Ability.

**Some Sample Specialty Aspects:**

*Expert Marksman (Agility)*

*Sickly and Slow to Heal (Endurance)*

*"I hacked the DoD Database in less than 7 minutes!"  
(Knowledge)*

Remember, Abilities are very broad. So don't think you need to have a high rank in an Ability to be very good at some specialty that falls under it. For example, a talented chemist would probably have his Knowledge Ability at Rank 2 or 3 with a Specialty Aspect that can grant a bonus to chemistry like *Recites the Periodic Table in His Sleep*.

See page 21 for more on Specialty Aspects.



## Refresh Rate ("Refresh")

All characters start with a predetermined Refresh Rate set by your GM. This is the number of Fate Points the character begins each game session with. Regardless of how many FP you had at the end of the previous session, you start the next game session with a number equal to your Refresh Rate.

This Refresh Rate is often more simply referred to as your character's "Refresh".

Note that the GM may decide not to allow a Refresh at the beginning of a session if the previous session ended abruptly, or he may offer a Refresh at other times if appropriate; such as when hitting a milestone in a story arc.



## Advantages

Advantages represent additional training or special abilities a character might have. You “purchase” Advantages with Advantage Points (AP) and they come in three “tiers”.

In the first tier we find the Expert Advantages. These are common among all people and are used to describe some degree of training. For example, a character with a Craft of 2 might also have the Gear Head Advantage, which grants a bonus to work on vehicles and implies some mechanic training.

The second “tier” is made up of the Heroic Advantages. These are the special, more cinematic, traits that push your character “over-the-top”. Heroic Advantages belong to action heroes like the bouncer who can take down a room full of drunken brawlers or the investigator who can fashion powerful explosives out of the stuff you’d find in most kitchens.

The third “tier” holds the Power Advantages. These are the magical spells, psionic powers, mutant gifts, cybernetic augmentations or other unnatural powers that characters may obtain.

What Advantages are available for you to choose from depends largely upon your GM, the genre of the game you’re playing, and the specific setting you’re using for your game.

Advantages are also meant to represent the unique abilities that a given genre/setting may allow for your character to indulge in – mechanical wonders made possible by super science, arcane secrets of undocumented ancient civilizations, super-human capabilities, the unlocked power of an enlightened mind, you name it - these Advantages are meant to distinguish a character as something unique within the setting of the story.



## Stress and Consequences

Bullets and claws rend flesh, the mind reels in the face of an unnamable abomination from beyond or at the sight of a dead loved one. The hero walks alone; outcast, banished, hungry, homeless, poor, and broken. Not all heroes are welcomed with open arms, but they do the job anyway.

When you suffer stress from an attack, the amount you suffer is marked off your stress boxes. Once all the stress boxes in a row are marked, you must take a Consequence. Once you have taken four Consequences (one each of Minor, Major, Severe(P), and Extreme(P)) you are in danger of being Defeated(P).

Consequences are essentially temporary Aspects that describe an effect of the stress you have taken. And like other Aspects they can be compelled, or even sometimes invoked. For example, a Minor Physical Consequence might be a *Sprained Ankle*, while a Severe(P) Social Consequence may be *Wanted Dead or Alive*.

In addition, the first invoking or compelling of a Consequence is free and the Severe(P), Extreme(P), and Defeated(P) Consequences are considered “persistent”, allowing you to always invoke or compel them for free.

Note that Extras are often unable to take the full allotment of Consequences.

See Chapter 6 for more on conflicts, stress, and Consequences.

### Awesome vs. Realism

Unlike many other game systems, FATE does not try to simulate reality. Instead, the focus here is on telling a story, a shared narrative between the GM and players.

Often times what makes for a good story isn't always realistic. When playing games using *Strands of Fate*, remember to think of it as a play, novel, comic book, or movie. The players can use their Fate Points to take over some control of the story, bringing to the forefront the different aspects of the unfolding story and its characters that they think are cool.

While this may not always create a perfectly *realistic* result, it should always create an *interesting* one. “That was awesome!” is almost always more fun than “That was realistic.”

## Glossary

**Ability:** Your Abilities paint a very broad picture of your character, defining his innate aptitude in performing certain tasks. When creating your character, you will give him ranks in his Abilities. The average person has a rating of 2 in each Ability. See Chapter 4 for more.

**Advantage:** These attributes further define what your character can do. If Abilities cover your character's natural ability, Advantages help represent what your character has learned over the years. See Chapter 5 for more.

**Advantage Points (APs):** Characters are given a number of Advantage Points at character creation with which to purchase Advantages.

**Affinity Ability:** An Ability that describes your aptitude for controlling your Power Source. Usually rolled when using Power Advantages. See pg. 92 for more.

**Aspects:** An Aspect is a word, phrase, quote, or sentence that describes some particular trait of a person, place or thing. You can spend a Fate Point (FP) to draw attention to a particular Aspect, or gain a FP when an Aspect harms you. This is called invoking or compelling an Aspect.

Aspects are generally written in *italics* in this book.

See Chapter 3 for more.

**Assessment:** You may use your Perception, Reasoning or Empathy to study a person, place or thing in an effort to discover Aspects it may have. See pg. 63 for more.

**Armor Rating (AR):** Armor, shields, and some Powers grant an Armor Rating. If you are successfully hit with an attack, your AR is subtracted from the amount of stress you suffer.

**Campaign:** A series of game sessions strung together to form a shared and evolving story.

**Campaign Power Level (CamPL):** A rating determined by the GM that sets the tone of the campaign. Your Campaign Power Level determines the number of Ability ranks, Advantage Points, etc; that starting characters have. See page 15 for more.

**Character Aspect:** An Aspect that describes who a character is. It answers the question of where he is from, his outlook on life, his guiding principles, etc.

**Compel (an Aspect):** Spend a Fate Point to make an Aspect impact a character in a negative way. You gain a Fate Point any time one of your own Aspects are compelled. See pg. 55 for more.

**Concession:** You may choose to end a conflict on your terms. If you offer a Concession to your opponent and it is accepted, you gain a FP. If he refuses and the offer was a fair one, he loses a FP. See pg. 208 for more.

**Consequences:** If you suffer too much stress on your Stress Track, you must take a special kind of Aspect called a Consequence. There are four types of Consequence - Minor, Major, Severe(P) and Extreme(P). As you take Consequences, and they are compelled, you become less and less effective at performing tasks until you are eventually Defeated(P). See Chapter 6 for more.

**Declaration:** You may roll your Knowledge or Reasoning to declare that a person, place, or thing has an Aspect you get to specify. The more interesting the Declaration, the higher the chances are of success. See pg. 65 for more.

**Defeated:** The exact nature of Defeat depends largely on what type of conflict you lost. For a physical conflict, it could mean a coma or even death. A mental conflict could reduce you to a gibbering vegetable, while a social conflict could land you in prison or exiled for life. See Chapter 6 for more.

**Defining Aspect:** The Character Aspect that best defines your character's concept. See pg. 19 for more on Defining Character Aspects.

**Determination:** The "armor" used in mental conflicts. Determination ratings derive from motivation and morale on the part of the defender. See pg. 222 for more.

**Difficulty (Diff: X):** The number that your roll plus modifiers must meet or exceed to successfully perform an action.

**Edge:** The "weapon" used in mental conflicts. Edge ratings are granted from exceptional role-playing or cleverness on the part of the attackers. See pg. 222 for more.

**Equipment Rating (ER):** The bonus a piece of equipment grants you when using it to aid you in performing an action. See pg. 299 for more.

**Experience Points (XPs):** At the end of each game session, the GM will reward you experience points. These points are spent to improve your character's traits.

**Extra:** Extras are the faceless masses of characters the PCs might interact with, but do not play a major role in the story. It may be the bartender, the crossing guard, or one of the local farmers. They tend to have simplified statistics and are Defeated much easier than PCs or GMPCs.

**Fate Point (FP):** Fate Points are used as narrative currency. They can be spent to turn the spotlight on a particular person, place or thing's Aspects by



way of invoking or compelling. They can also be used to activate some Advantages. See Chapter 3 for more.

**Game Master (GM):** Also called Narrator, Judge, Referee, Story Teller, etc. in other games. The GM helps the group tell a story, devises the plot, background, setting and enemies, plays the roles of NPCs and enemies when you encounter them, and is responsible for knowing the rules and making sure the players have a great time.

**Game Master Played Character (GMPC):** These NPCs are the other major characters in the story that have a name as opposed to Guard #3. They are important figures in the story; such as a player character's boss, a major ally, or enemy.

**Initiative:** A roll that takes place at the start of a conflict that determines the order in which the acting characters get to take their turns. See pg. 210 for more.

**Invoke (an Aspect):** Spend a Fate Point to make an Aspect impact a roll in a positive way. See pg. 53 for more.

**Leverage:** The “weapon” used in social conflicts. Leverage ratings are granted from collecting evidence against your target, publically humiliating him, or undermining his base of power. See pg. 233 for more.

**Maneuver:** An action taken to place an Aspect on yourself, another character, an object, or the scene. See pg. 255 for more.

**Melee Attack:** An attack made against an opponent with your fist, feet, knives, spears or other hand held weapons.

**Non-Player Character (NPC):** They're the cast of people on the fringe of the story, people met along the way, all briefly played by the Game Master to enhance your experience. NPCs are either Extras or GMPCs.

**Persistent Aspects (“(P)”):** Denoted with a “(P)” at the end of the Aspect's name. These Aspects impact a person, place, thing or scene to such a degree that it can be invoked or compelled for free. It does not cost a Fate Point to invoke a persistent Aspect and no one gets a Fate Point if it is compelled. Note, however, that invoking or compelling a persistent Aspect for effect still costs a Fate Point. See pg. 59 for more.

**Player:** One of the people playing in the game that is not the Game Master.

**Player Character (PC):** That's the imaginary person you will play in the game. You create them from your imagination using the rules found in this book as a guide. Once created, you will control this character, making decisions for him or her that will help them overcome their obstacles.

**Popularity:** The “armor” used in social conflicts. The more the public cares for the defender, the more difficult it is to get a social attack to “stick”. See pg. 233 for more.

**Power Source:** The source of power from which you gain access to your Power Advantages. See pg. 91 for more.

**Ranged Attack:** An attack made with a bow, crossbow, pistol, assault rifle, thrown spear or any other type of ranged weapon.

**Refresh Rate:** Your Fate Point budget—how many Fate Points you get at the start of each session. Often just called “Refresh”.

**Round:** A round consists of about three seconds of in-game time. And during that time, each character in the scene gets a turn. Each character gets to take their turn in order of initiative.

**Scene:** FATE breaks up the action into scenes, much like a movie. You have interaction scenes, action scenes, chase scenes, etc. The exact length of a scene varies but generally begins and ends when there is a significant shift in the story’s focus or a change in the setting.

**Scale:** The scope of a conflict. Scales are rated as Personal, Skirmish, and Campaign Scale. See pg. 287 for more.

**Session:** A game session. The time you and your friends devote to playing the game on a given day.

**Specialty Aspect:** An Aspect that describes what a character is good (or bad) at. They are narrow in focus and are associated with an Ability to better define its intended meaning. Note: Resource Specialty Aspects can be items or Facilities and Persuasion Specialty Aspects can be allies and contacts. See page 21 for more.

**Spin:** When the total of your roll plus all modifiers beats the difficulty by three or more, you are said to have generated “Spin”. Spin indicates that not only did you succeed but you did so with finesse, precision and/or flare. See pg. 254 for more.

**Stress Track:** A Stress Track is used to track the amount of stress you have taken measured in stress boxes. Once all the stress boxes in a row are filled you must take a Consequence. Additional stress is then taken on the next row, which when filled, requires you to take another Consequence; and so on until you are Defeated or Concede. See Chapter 6 for more.

**Tech-Level (TL):** The general level of technology featured in the campaign. The higher the number, the more sophisticated the technology the average person has access to. See pg. 300 for more.

**Temporary Aspect:** An Aspect that goes away with time. “Fragile” Aspects go away when compelled or invoked or after the round is over. “Sticky” Aspects go away after they are intentionally removed or something happens to remove them. See Chapter 3 for more.

**Turn:** Your chance to act during a round.

**Weapon Rating (WR):** Weapons and some Powers have a Weapon Rating. After you have landed a successful attack on your enemy, this bonus is added to the amount of stress your target suffers. See pg. 299 for more.

**Zone:** The area in which a physical conflict takes place is divided into zones by the GM. Zones usually have clearly defined boundaries, such as walls or changes in elevation, and are sized based on the scale of the conflict. See pg. 297 for more.



# Chapter 2

## Character Creation

### Steps of Character Creation

1. Determine your Campaign Power Level (CamPL) and Tech-Level (TL)
2. Think about your character concept and pick out a cool name
3. Select five Character Aspects
4. Purchase Abilities
5. Select five Specialty Aspects
6. Purchase Advantages
7. Purchase starting equipment

### Step #1: Campaign Power Level and Tech-Level

Before you begin creating your character, the GM should set a Campaign Power Level (CamPL). The Campaign Power Level, simply put, tells you how “epic” your campaign is going to be. Will you be fighting gangsters in a back alley or dragons in the realm of gods?

The table below suggests several common Campaign Power Levels but don’t be afraid to make up your own. If you feel you want to run a campaign where the characters have the Abilities of a “Hero” but the Advantages of a “Super Hero”, go for it. Just remember that the Campaign Power Level will have a drastic affect on your game, so think about it carefully.

**Tech-Level:** Determine the campaign’s TL as it will impact how some Advantages are used and what equipment is available. See pg. 300 for more.

**Aspects:** Regardless of the CamPL, all characters begin with five Character Aspects and five Specialty Aspects.

Character Aspects define who a character is, while Specialty Aspects define the character’s proficiency in skills, his personal items, or interesting relationships.

**Abilities:** All characters begin with a rank of 0 in all Abilities. Depending on your starting CamPL, you gain additional ranks to distribute among your Abilities as per the table below. So placing 3 ranks in Empathy nets you an Empathy rating of 3.



The number in parenthesis is the highest rank you can start with in a single Ability, though it may be increased later by spending Experience Points.

**Refresh:** All characters start with a Refresh Rate determined by the campaign's Power Level as per the table below. This is the amount of Fate Points the PCs will start each game session with.

**Advantages:** Unlike Aspects, Advantages offer a constant bonus to a specific use of an Ability, such as sneaking or telling lies, or allow you to perform some special action.

Characters start with a number of points, depending on your CamPL, with which to purchase Advantages. However, some Advantages are only available at higher Power Levels and cannot be purchased no matter how many Advantage Points (APs) you have. The table below shows the suggested number of starting Advantage Points characters should get based on the Power Level of the campaign. The number in parenthesis is the maximum number of APs the character can put into a single Advantage, though he may add more later by purchasing APs with Experience Points and devoting them to improving his Power(s).

The different types of Advantages and what they are for are described later in this chapter.

Note that the GM may decide to allow Power Advantages to Experts or Heroes if they are playing in a setting where Advantages can be purchased with Resources, such as a futuristic setting featuring cybernetics. See pg. 90. Also, the GM may consider allowing Commoners and Experts to purchase the Heroic Advantage called Experienced (pg. 103).

Campaign Power Level	Refresh	Abilities (Max)	Adv. Points	Available Advantages
Commoner	4	24 (3)	1 (1)	Expert only
Expert	5	24 (3)	3 (1)	Expert only
Hero	6	25 (3)	6 (2)	Expert and Heroic only
Action Hero	7	25 (4)	9 (2)	Expert and Heroic only
Mythic Hero	8	26 (4)	12 (5)	Expert, Heroic and Powers (No Super Powers)
Legendary Hero	9	26 (5)	15 (7)	Expert, Heroic and Powers (No Super Powers)
Super Hero	10	27 (5)	See Below	See Below
- Metro Class	--	--	20 (10)	- All, Metro Class Super Power Only
- World Class	--	--	30 (12)	- All, Up to World Class Super Powers Only
- Galaxy Class	--	--	40 (14)	- All, Up to Galaxy Class Super Powers Only
- Cosmic Class	--	--	50 (16)	- All, Up to Cosmic Class Super Powers Only
- Infinity Class	--	--	60 (18)	- All

- + You have a number of Physical stress boxes equal to your Strength + Endurance + Modifiers.
- + You have a number of Mental stress boxes equal to your Reasoning + Willpower + Modifiers.
- + You have a number of Social stress boxes equal to your Persuasion + Resources + Modifiers.

# Dr. Jacob Lawson, Occult Investigator

**CamPL:** Mythic Hero; **Tech Level:** 3 (Renaissance Era)

**Refresh:** 8

Last descendant of a long line of scholars of the occult, Dr. Jacob Lawson learned from an early age the basics of the mystical mathematics which allow him to manipulate time and space. Like many other members of his family, his insatiable curiosity often leads him into far more dangerous situations than necessary.

## Abilities

**Physical:** Agility: 2; Endurance: 2; Perception: 2; Strength: 1

**Mental:** Craft: 1; Knowledge: 3; Reasoning: 2; Willpower: 2

**Social:** Empathy: 2; Deception: 1; Persuasion: 2; Resources: 3

**Affinity:** Mystical Mathematics 3

## Character Aspects

- + **Defining:** *Mystical Scholar and Occult Investigator*
- + *Seek and Destroy the Dark Forces*
- + *Discovered the Universal Equation during a Math Test in School.*
- + *"Earth is a spot of light in a cold, dark universe... And I intend to keep it that way!"*
- + *"You know, curiosity killed the cat... But hey, let's have a look, anyway!"*

## Specialty Aspects

- + *"Math has always bored me with its simplicity, unlike history, which I find endlessly fascinating. (Knowledge)*
- + *"Forget the ritual; this is Lawson we're dealing with!" (Persuasion)*
- + *Staff of Hashansha (See Below for Effects) (Resources)*
- + *Friends all over the World (Persuasion)*
- + *Not the strongest man in the world (Strength)*

## Advantages

**Power Source:** Mystical Mathematics

**Ritual** (*Mystic Theorems*) (10 Ritual Points or RP)

- + **Barrier** (*Reality Asserting Field*); Hardened (+1); Spatial Lock (+1) (5 RP)
- + **Repel Creature** (*Field of Stable Reality*); repels creatures from other planes alien to the human consensual reality; Strenuous (+0); Potent (+1); Destructive (+1) (3 RP)
- + **Sense** (*Sees Alterations in the Fabric of Reality*); Improved Sensitivity (+1) (2 RP)

**Power Attack, Ranged** (*Telekinetic Lance of Force*); Effortless (0)

**Weakness** (+2 AP): Needs to reassert his control of reality by solving a complex series of mathematical theorems every day. Otherwise, he loses his powers until he can solve the theorems. This takes about an hour.

**Geek Speak; Genius at Work; Gut Feeling; Headquarters** (Quality 4; Library + Mathematics Lab);

**Soft Style x 2** (+2 bonus to Agility when defending against melee attacks); **Well Known**

## Starting Equipment

The Staff of Hashansha (Power Item), a tool created by the scholar warriors of ancient Mu; Potency 5 (Cost 10). Can be used as a normal quarterstaff in combat (WR +2, *Large*) and provides Lawson with the following effects: Affinity Focus (+1 to his Affinity rolls); Astral Doorway (*Reality Rift*) AP Cost 5 (Act. Diff 8). Requires to spend 1 FP to activate and can only be used once per day;

Heavy Revolver (WR +4; range 2; TL 3; cost 4; *Reliable, Limited Ammo, Small*), Ammo x 2

Duster, Old Cowboy Hat, 1978 Station Wagon, Big Old Cell Phone, Pen Light, Bag of Ritual Gear



# Raniel the Earth Scorcher, Pyromancer

**CamPL:** Legendary Hero; **Tech Level:** 3 (Renaissance Era)

**Refresh:** 9

The flames within Raniel awakened the day his village burned. A warlord from the north invaded his home, looted it, and killed most of the townsfolk; including Raniel's family. The shock of his loss brought forth his innate magical ability and he used it to track down and burn the invaders to death as they slept in their camp the following night.

Eventually Raniel's gift for fire magic led him into an apprenticeship with the old and somewhat unstable Wizard Council. But like the flames themselves, Raniel was not suited for the rigid structure of the Council, and he chafed under its general position of aloof selfishness. Eventually he helped form the Brotherhood of the Cleansing Flames; a hidden faction inside the Council that seeks to help protect those who cannot help themselves.

## Abilities

**Physical:** Agility: 2; Endurance: 3; Perception: 1; Strength: 2

**Mental:** Craft: 1; Knowledge: 3; Reasoning: 2; Willpower: 2

**Social:** Empathy: 1; Deception: 1; Persuasion: 2; Resources: 2

**Affinity:** Pyromancy: 3

## Character Aspects

- + **Defining:** "I am called the Earth Scorcher. Remember that while you watch your twisted kingdom burn."
- + The fire makes everything cleaner, clearer...
- + "I was afraid of Fire, and the fear lies there still; fueling my Power!!"
- + The strong understand only one language; Strength!
- + Feats of excessive force, with extra dash of bravado!

## Specialty Aspects

- + Vast Intellect Fueled by a Burning Heart (Knowledge)
- + "Those fools on the Council and their damned illusions!" (Persuasion)
- + "A warlock of my caliber must dress for the part my dear". (Resources)
- + Founding Member of the Brotherhood of Cleansing Flame (Persuasion)
- + "Mercy? If you want mercy you'll have to grovel better than that." (Empathy)

## Advantages

**Power Source:** Elemental Magic

**Control** (Magical Control of Fire, Fire Domain), Summon From Nothing +2.  
Rote examples: Flaming Snakes Dart from his Eyes, His cloak turn into flames and he uses it as a flame whip, Ring of Flames produce white hot ring around him making the air flicker, He conjures great ball of flames and light that hovers and moves at his command.

**Custom Stress Track** (Mana); **Genius At Work** (Knowledge); **Opportunist**; **Promise of Pain**

## Starting Equipment

Dashing clothing with flame inspired decorations, fine hose with decorative barding, medallion of silver and gold intervened in form of flame, hard boots with metal lines and tip giving a nice 'cling', red notebook with heavy leather cover.

# Gabriella Cross, Adventurer

**CamPL:** Action Hero; **Tech Level:** 4 (Modern Day)

**Refresh:** 7

Daughter of infamous international art and artifact thief Marcel Cross, Gabriella was educated and trained to be his perfect companion in crime. But during an operation gone sour, she was captured and spent two years in a third-world prison before she could escape. Contacted by the World Archeological Society, she decided to use her talents to discover and preserve the world's forgotten archeological marvels. Angry at her father for not busting her out of prison, she now takes great pleasure in spoiling his plans.

## Abilities

**Physical:** Agility: 3; Endurance: 2; Perception: 2; Strength: 2

**Mental:** Craft: 2; Knowledge: 3; Reasoning: 2; Willpower: 2

**Social:** Empathy: 2; Deception: 3; Persuasion: 2; Resources: 2

## Character Aspects

+ **Defining:** *Adventurer and Thief*

+ *"My father left me to rot in that prison and I will never forgive him"*

+ *The Best Education Money Could Buy*

+ *"There are many wonders out there, just waiting to be discovered... and then sold to the highest bidder!"*

+ *Stubborn and Independent*

## Specialty Aspects

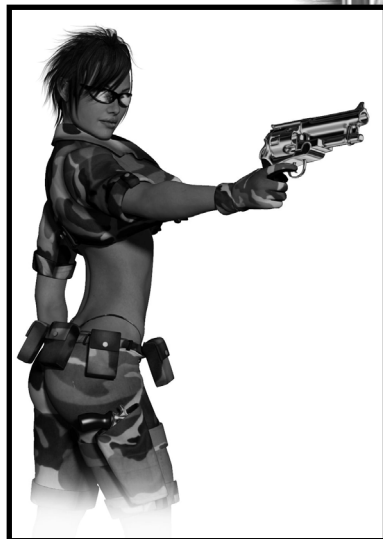
+ *Acrobatic Skills and Grace that can Only Come from Training (Agility)*

+ *Branded as a Traitor by Marcel Cross and his Organization (Persuasion)*

+ *Twin Heavy Pistols (Resources)*

+ *Member of the World Archeological Society (P) (Resources)*

+ *Rude and Crude, but Sexy Enough to get Away with it (Persuasion)*



## Advantages

**Experienced** (20 additional XP; used to purchase Abilities); **Acrobatic Exploit**; **Guns**

**Akimbo**; **Persistent Specialty** (Gun Toting Member of the World Archeological Society);

**Hard Style** (Expert Advantage taken twice; +4 WR to fists and feet)

## Starting Equipment

Twin Heavy Pistols (each of them is WR +4; Range 2; TL 4; Cost 4; *Small*), Extra ammunition x 2, Knife (WR +2, Range 1 TH; TL 1; Cost 0; *Small*), Ammo x 3, Set of field clothes selected at least partially for sex appeal, Backpack, Trail Rations, Radio.

Other items might be provided by the World Archeological Society as needed.



# Lily White (White Lily), Mutant Telekineticist

**CamPL:** Super Hero (World Class); **Tech Level:** 4 (Modern Day)

**Refresh:** 10

Lily White ran away from home at the age of 16 after she started displaying telekinetic powers. If her parents had known that their quick witted and pretty little girl was actually the infamous hacker “The White Lily” they could have accepted that, but not the mutation. So, she left.

She eventually hooked up with the Nova Select, a group of young super heroes dedicated to lounging in the trendiest clubs and fighting super villains. Lily supports the team by hacking systems and gathering critical information, and by smashing the enemy with her awesome telekinetic might.

## Abilities

**Physical:** Agility: 2; Endurance: 1; Perception: 2; Strength: 2

**Mental:** Craft: 3; Knowledge: 2; Reasoning: 2; Willpower: 2

**Social:** Empathy: 2; Deception: 3; Persuasion: 2; Resources: 1

**Affinity:** Mutation 4

## Character Aspects

+ **Defining:** Mutant Telekineticist and Computer Hacker

+ Just Wants a Quiet Place to Code and Chill with Her Closest Friends

+ “I didn't need my lame-ass parents and I don't need you either.”

+ Borderline Anarchist

+ “This is boring, let's do something else.”

## Specialty Aspects

+ “Hacking is fun ‘cause it's hard. Smashing people is easy.”(P)(Craft)

+ “We won! They're in jail. What's the cops' problem?” (Empathy)

+ Knows Where to Go for the Best Hardware (Resources)

+ The White Lily is a Legend in the Hacker Community (Persuasion)

+ “Punch him?! I might break a nail!” (Strength)

+ Absolutely Gorgeous “Girl-Next-Door”(P) (Persuasion)

## Advantages

**Power Source:** Mutation

**Telekinesis** (World Class, Psionic Mind over Matter) Visible Force, Agile x 4; Strong x 4;

**Armor** (Telekinetic Shield ), AR: 14 Insulating; Improved Armor x 8

**Absolutely Stunning**

**Persistent Specialty** - “Hacking is fun ‘cause it's hard. Smashing people is easy.”(P)

**Razor Tongue**

**Black Hat**

**Fast Talker**

**Experienced** (Purchased Affinity from rank 2 to 4)

## Starting Equipment

Portable Personal Computer (Rank 3), Specialized Intrusion Software (Rank 2), Form Fitting Body Suite, Motorcycle, Cutting Edge Smart-Phone, Sunglasses, Backpack, Set of Casual Clothes



# Chapter 3

## Fate Points and Aspects

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### Fate Points

At the beginning of each game session, each player starts with a number of Fate Points equal to their Refresh Rate. These are “use-them-or-lose-them”. You can’t carry Fate Points over from one game session to the next, so don’t hoard them! However, if the GM left things at a cliffhanger, he is entitled to say that no Refresh has occurred between sessions. By the same token, if the GM feels that a substantial (i.e., dramatically appropriate) amount of downtime and rest occurs in play, the GM may allow a Refresh to occur mid-session.

But what are Fate Points and what can you do with them? Simply put, Fate Points are used in conjunction with Aspects to purchase some level of control over the story by granting their character bonuses or letting the player take over the role of GM for a brief moment.

They may also be used to activate some Advantages, but those are covered later in Chapter 5.

### The NPC Fate Point Pool

So how many Fate Points do the NPCs get? Well, they don’t really get any as individuals. Any time an NPC needs to spend a Fate Point, it comes from the GM’s NPC Fate Point pool.

The GM starts with a number of Fate Points in his NPC pool equal to the Refresh set by the Campaign Power Level (pg. 15), plus one per PC. This pool is used for all of his NPCs for the session, and as NPCs appear in a scene they add a number of Fate Points to the NPC pool. The number of FPs added depends on the relevancy of the NPC, and is discussed more on pg. 409.

As NPCs spend FPs, they are subtracted from the GM’s pool. As PCs spend Fate Points to compel Aspects to harm NPCs, FPs are added to the pool.

Note that the number of FPs the GM may have in his NPC pool is not concrete. Some GMs may prefer a few more or even a few less FPs for their pool. If you feel like your game is better because you use more or less, then feel free to do so.

## Aspects

Character and Specialty Aspects both serve one primary purpose: they help define the character. More than anything else, Aspects are a player's most explicit way of telling the GM "This is the stuff I want to see in the game". If the player picks an Aspect like *Death-Defying Daredevil*, then the GM should try to put him in death defying situations. GMs should want players to use their Aspects; players should pick the ones they want to use, and GMs should encourage them to choose Aspects that will be both interesting and useful.

Once a player decides on an idea for an Aspect, he needs to figure out what Aspect name best describes what he intends. There are usually many possible names for a desired Aspect, which can make this choice somewhat difficult. However, most of the time, an Aspect is going to be (or include) a phrase, a person or a prop; usually featuring three or more words.

A phrase can be anything from a descriptive phrase (*Could Have Been a Rocket Scientist*) or even a literal quote ("You wouldn't like me when I'm angry."). Phrase Aspects come into play based on how well the situation matches them; a colorful phrase adds a lot of flavor and innately suggests several different ways to use it. This potentially makes phrase Aspects some of the most flexible tools in the game.

An Aspect can also be a person who is important to the character. A friend, an enemy, a family member, a sidekick, a mentor... these all make excellent Aspects. A person Aspect is most easily used when that person is in the scene with the character, but the Aspect can come up in other ways depending upon the person's history and relationship with the character. For example, if a character has his mentor as an Aspect (*Trained by Master Sgt. Frank 'Give-em-hell' Baker*), that Aspect might be useful for things his mentor would have instructed him in.

Finally, Resource Specialty Aspects can be gear (see pg. 86). Gear Aspects are things, places, or even ideas, anything external to the character that isn't a person. A gear Aspect can be useful if it's something the character always has with him or if it's the crux of a conflict. But it may also imply things about the character or even be useful in its absence (if only I had My Custom Hotrod!).

These three categories of Aspects aren't hard and fast. An Aspect like "*Captain Reynalds Needs Us Now!*" has elements of both a phrase and a person and that's just fine. We've just provided these categories to help provide a way to think about how to frame Aspects.

A character may invoke or compel (see below) an Aspect as a free action at any time. He may use any number of Aspects in a turn, but may not use the same Aspect more than once in the same turn.

## Fate Point Expenditure Limits

In the interest of maintaining a certain level of stability, GMs may want to institute a limit on the number of Fate Points a player may spend in a round.

For characters of the Commoner or Expert power levels, it is recommended that a player not be able to spend more than two FP on a single roll. For “Heroes”, you might increase that limit to three, and for “Super Heroes”, you might top out at four.

### Scope

Another approach to the same concept is with the inclusion of “scopes”. When using this optional rule, a character may invoke or compel only one Aspect per scope per turn. So the character could invoke a Character Aspect and a Specialty Aspect in a turn, but not two Character Aspects.

The following is a list of the most common scopes likely to come up during play:

- + Character/Organization/Unit/Vehicular Aspects
- + Specialty Aspects/Asset/Roster
- + Consequences
- + Another Character’s Aspects
- + Aspects Created by Maneuvers
- + Scene Aspects
- + Zone Aspects
- + Equipment Aspects
- + Power Aspects

## Invoking an Aspect (Spending Fate Points)

You may spend a Fate Point to gain a bonus on rolls in a situation that relates to your Aspect. This is called “invoking” an Aspect. Essentially, you are declaring that your Aspect will matter in this scene. By spending Fate Points you make it important (or at least relevant) to the scene in a way that benefits you.

Specifically, before or after you roll, you may spend a Fate Point to invoke your Aspect. Doing so grants you one of the following benefits:

- + +2 Bonus on the Dice Roll
- + Reroll the Dice
- + Invoke for Effect

You may also spend a Fate Point without invoking an Aspect but in those cases it merely grants you a +1 bonus.



For example, you could spend a Fate Point to invoke your *Big Dumb Ox* Aspect, granting you a bonus on a Strength Ability roll. Likewise, you could spend a FP to invoke “*Soon this city will be mine!*” and gain a bonus on just about any action that directly relates to your attempt to take over the city.

In addition to bonuses to rolls, you may also invoke Aspects for effect, gaining some measure of narrative control. In essence, you may be allowed to sit in the GM seat for a moment and describe events that are affected by your Aspect. For example, you may spend a Fate Point and invoke *Trained by Corporal Frank Sheppard* upon meeting a fellow soldier to declare that this soldier also served under Corporal Sheppard and that you two know each other. However, any such effect must be approved by the GM who always has veto rights.

Aspects that aren’t brought into a scene via invoking or compelling just sort of fade off into the background. Yeah the character is a *Big Dumb Ox*, but unless the player spends the FP and invokes the Aspect, you can assume that your character’s size and strength weren’t really relevant to his actions during the scene. Even in a tavern brawl, every punch isn’t going to be dependent solely on the attacker’s Strength. Maybe he was throwing glancing blows and was having a hard time getting his hands on his opponent. It isn’t until the player spends the FP and invokes the Aspect that he declares “right now, being a big ox matters”.

### **Sample Aspect: Captain of Charlie Company**

#### **Possible Invoked Result**

- + [Bonus] Gain a +2 bonus (or reroll) on rolls to attack with typical military small arms.
- + [Effect] The soldier you just met is an old friend from the service.
- + [Bonus] Gain a +2 bonus (or reroll) on rolls to lead men in distress.
- + [Effect] Get noticed by a high ranking general.

### **Wording vs. Intent**

When a character takes an Aspect, he generally has some specific intent in mind in regards to how it will be used. For example, a character who takes the *Surgeon at 300 Yards* Aspect to demonstrate how good a sniper he is, should not also be able to invoke that Aspect when trying to grant medical attention to an ally. Just because the Aspect contains the word “surgeon”, doesn’t mean the character knows anything about real surgery.

The only way he knows how to open a heart is with a high powered rifle.

## Compelling an Aspect (Earning More Fate Points)

Aspects aren't always used to grant you benefits, bonuses, and special privileges, sometimes they can get you into trouble. And this is a good thing!

The effect of a Compel is pretty much the exact opposite of invoking an Aspect. You suffer one of the following effects and gain a Fate Point for your troubles:

- + -2 Penalty on Your Dice Roll
- + You are Forced to Reroll the Dice
- + Something bad happens.

(Note that you do not gain a Fate Point when a persistent Aspect is compelled, and you must always pay a Fate Point to reject the compel.)

Regardless of which of the three options you are forced to take, compels tend to come about in one of two ways, either actively or passively.

**Active Compels** – During the game something might happen that relates to one of your Aspects. In these situations, the GM may offer you a FP to “compel” that Aspect. Alternatively, you as the player may suggest to the GM that you have an Aspect that could be compelled.

When an Aspect is compelled, something detrimental comes to pass because of your Aspect. This might be as simple as a penalty you suffer on a roll or it may trigger some event that plays out in a way that endangers or inconveniences your character.

The precise details of a compel are usually up to the GM but the player may also offer suggestions. Regardless of the specifics, the GM must agree that the effects of the compel was worth the FP. Players may always refuse the compel (and the offered Fate Point), but the GM has the option to “escalate” the compel.

So, for example, the GM may offer you a Fate Point and compel your *Big Dumb Ox* Aspect when you are in a situation where quick thinking is a must. Let's say the character is on the run from the cops and the player decides he is going to try to outrun them in his get-away car. As the character is rushing to the car, the GM holds up a token representing a Fate Point. He informs the player that because he is a “dumb ox”, he forgot the keys back at the bar.

In this situation, the player may refuse the offered FP and have his character proceed to jump in the car and race to safety or he may accept the FP and run back for the keys or possibly abandon the car altogether.

However, there is also the possibility of escalation. Let's say the player rejects the offered FP. The GM could then offer a second FP and ask him if

he's sure. Or the character could get in the car and only get a half mile before the GM offers two FP and suggests maybe the character forgot to fill up the tank before leaving.

A bit of advice for the GM though don't badger the player. If you offer a second FP to the player and he still says no, let it go.

**Passive Compels** – Occasionally the GM may plot the story ahead, taking the PCs' Aspects into consideration as he does.

In these cases, it's not uncommon for an Aspect to be compelled simply by the way the story plays out.

For example, your character may have an Aspect of *Lives at Home with Mom*. Now, over the course of the story the bad guy goes back to the character's house and takes his mother hostage.

This is effectively a compel since the character's Aspect has had a negative effect on him, and the GM should toss him a Fate Point for his troubles.

### **Sample Aspect: Captain of Charlie Company**

#### **Possible Compel Situation**

- + [Effect] While on guard duty, your friend puts his hand on you. Surprised, you punch him before realizing who it is.
- + [Penalty] The general you just met remembers a time you disobeyed orders and calls you out in front of everyone, causing you to suffer a -2 penalty (or reroll) on a Persuasion roll this round.
- + [Effect] Now an outlaw, the government can use its records of you to better track you down.
- + [Penalty] During a firefight, you have a flashback to a previous conflict that distracts you, forcing you to suffer a -2 penalty (or reroll) on your defense roll.

### **No Pain, No Gain**

As a GM, you always want to avoid awarding the Fate Point prematurely. In general, you don't want to hand the Fate Point over until the Aspect actually impacts the player.

Something can always happen between the time the compel is agreed upon and the point that the effects of the compel actually impact the player. So always make sure the player has earned that Fate Point before handing it over, don't just award the FP because a player is playing to his Aspects.

If they don't really hurt him, he didn't really earn it.

## Cutthroat Compels

Sometimes a GM may feel that a compel relates so strongly to a character's Aspect that instead of just letting the player choose to accept the Fate Point or not, he actually *charges* the player a Fate Point to decline the compel. This is a good way to influence a player to stay true to his character but be careful. There is a fine line between "influencing" and "bullying".

Note, however, that when a persistent Aspect is compelled it is always a "cutthroat" compel.

## Invoking or Compelling other Aspects

Many things can have Aspects. The PCs have Aspects, the NPCs have Aspects, even their equipment and the scene itself can have Aspects. Players and NPCs can use their Fate Points to invoke (or compel!) Aspects on other people, places, and things. This works a lot like invoking or compelling your own Aspects, except the Aspect doesn't belong to you.

As a rule of thumb, invoking or compelling someone or something's Aspects requires a little more justification than invoking one of your own Aspects. For scene Aspects, it should be some way to really bring in the visual or theme that the Aspect suggests. For Aspects on opponents, the player needs to know about the Aspect in the first place and then play to it.

Also, Fate Points and Aspects are inherently "selfish". They are about your character, and how or when the spotlight shines on him. Thus, you may only invoke or compel Aspects that relate to you in some way.

For instance, in a zone with the *Shadowy* Aspect on it, you may invoke that Aspect to gain a bonus on rolls to hide or compel that Aspect to make an enemy suffer a penalty to shoot at you in the dark. But you may not invoke it to directly grant a bonus to an ally or compel it to make an enemy, who is not shooting at your character, suffer a penalty.

Also keep in mind that a single Aspect may only be invoked or compelled by the same character once per turn. So you could not for example, invoke an Aspect to both gain a bonus to attack an enemy and compel that same Aspect to force him to suffer a penalty to defend.

### Examples of Invoking other Aspects

*Foggy* – During a chase, you duck into a fog bank to lose your pursuers, invoking the *Foggy* Aspect for a +2 bonus (or re-roll) on your roll to hide.

*Small* – You have a weapon that is *Small*. You invoke it to give yourself a +2 bonus (or re-roll) when attacking an enemy in very close quarters.

*Slick Ride* – Trying to attract a date for the night, you pull up to the curb in your *Slick Ride*, invoking that Aspect for effect to state that one of the pretty young ladies nearby really digs your car.

## Compelling other Aspects

The GM isn't the only one that can compel Aspects. Characters (PCs and NPCs) can spend their Fate Points to compel each other's Aspects.

When a player or NPC compels another character's Aspects, the player offers the GM or player of the other character a Fate Point and picks one of the following results to inflict on his target:

- + -2 Penalty on the Character's Dice Roll
- + Force the Character to Reroll the Dice
- + Compel for a negative effect on the Character. (Note that you still have to spend a Fate Point when compelling persistent Aspects in this way.)

If it is an NPC who is being compelled, as the GM you should use your best judgment in regards to whether or not the NPC accepts. If you're unsure, look to the "rule of cool" and go with the more interesting option. If the NPC accepts the compel, the offered Fate Point is added to the NPC pool.

The first two options are rather simple. The enemy suffers a -2 penalty on a dice roll or is forced to reroll.

The "compel for effect" option requires a bit more thought however. Effectively, the person offering the compel gains a bit of control over the other character's destiny. The exact nature of the compel can be anything, but as always, it is subject to GM approval.

Below are some Aspects another character might have and examples of how they may be compelled. Remember that any Aspect is subject to being compelled, even temporary Aspects like those caused by Maneuvers or Consequences.

## Examples of Compelling other Aspects

**Drowsy** – Player compels this Aspect for effect and states that the drowsy guard falls asleep.

**Bad Tempered** – At the noble's ball, the player insults one of the local lords, compelling his *Bad Tempered* Aspect to force the lord to suffer a -2 penalty (or reroll) on his Willpower roll to defend against a mental attack.

**Off Balance** – After having *Off-Balance* placed on him by an ally's successful Maneuver, you compel that Aspect to cause your foe to suffer a -2 (or reroll) on his roll to defend against your attempt to push him into the adjacent zone.

**Poor Quality** – After an enemy attacks and rolls poorly, the player compels this Aspect and states that his foe's old rusty sword breaks as it clashes with his own.



## Persistent Aspects

The GM might decide an Aspect is persistent if it is a major component of a person, place or thing; and has an effect that is almost impossible to ignore or get around. So a floor with a light dusting of snow might be *Slippery*, but if the room is covered in a fine sheet of ice and you can't walk on it without slipping, the zone Aspect might instead be *Covered in Ice!*(P). And if it is *really* slippery, it may have both the *Slippery* and *Covered in Ice!*(P) Aspects.

The two Aspects work much the same way and both can be invoked or compelled for a bonus/penalty or reroll. However, when invoking or compelling the *Covered in Ice!*(P) Aspect you need not spend a Fate Point. You need only declare that you are invoking it.

Note that you must still pay a Fate Point any time a persistent Aspect is invoked or compelled for effect. The bonus/penalty or reroll is free, but you still have to pay to influence the story.

When using a regular and persistent Aspect with similar meanings, as in the case above where a room has both a regular Aspect (*Slippery*) and a persistent Aspect (*Covered in Ice!*(P)), you would need only pay one FP to invoke or compel both Aspects for a +4/-4, two rerolls, or a combination of a bonus/penalty and reroll the two.

Unlike standard Aspects, you do not gain Fate Points when a persistent Aspect is compelled. And to refuse the compel you must pay a Fate Point. In this way, compelling persistent Aspects is much like performing a “cutthroat compel”, as described on page 57.

Note that the Severe(P), Extreme(P), and Defeated(P) Consequences are also persistent, and work the same way as a persistent Aspect.



## Temporary Aspects

Temporary Aspects that arise in play or are created by Maneuvers (pg. 255) are usually “fragile”. A fragile Aspect only exists for a single invoke or compel and may even be cleared away by a simple change of circumstances.

In addition, the first use of an Aspect created by a Maneuver is free. It doesn't cost a Fate Point for the first invoking or compelling but subsequent uses cost FP as normal.

Consider someone who uses a Maneuver to take aim at a target, placing an *In My Sights* Aspect on the target. Once the shot's taken, the Aspect goes away; this is clearly fragile. But it could get lost even before the first shot if the character who has the Aspect on him manages to break line of sight or make a sudden unpredictable move. Fragile temporary Aspects are usually much easier to justify and pass muster with the GM.

## Fate Point Debt

Sometimes a character needs to invoke an Aspect, or maybe activate an Advantage that requires a Fate Point, but he has run out. Usually this means the character simply cannot perform the action he wants to perform. Not enough FPs? Too bad.

However, some cases may arise where this simply doesn't make sense. For example, a character has a Specialty Aspect called *My Daddy's Revolver* (Resources), which refers to a gun he typically carries wherever he goes. Now let's say that in the previous scene the character needed to spend all of his Fate Points. And now, without any Fate Points to invoke his Aspects, he finds himself face to face with an armed gunman. The character needs his gun. But his gun is an Aspect. And he has no Fate Points remaining.

Now the GM (or player) should make an effort to come up with some interesting reason as to why the character suddenly doesn't have the use of the gun he always carries. Maybe he drops it down a large drain and will need to retrieve it later. Maybe he's just out of ammo.

But sometimes such explanations seem contrived or just silly, and in these cases the GM may instead allow the player to invoke the Aspect anyway and go into Fate Point Debt.

Fate Point Debt should only be used when not having a FP keeps the character from doing something he should be able to do or from having something he should have in a way that either just doesn't make sense or would ruin the player's fun.

Players can pay back their debt on a 1 for 1 basis, but until they have paid their debt, they have an extra Character Aspect of *Unlucky*. And of course, the GM and other characters may compel this Aspect like any other.

Some Aspects that result from Maneuvers can be "sticky". (Aspects that result from Assessments or Declarations, explained on pages 63-64, are also usually sticky.)

Sticky Aspects don't go away after they're first invoked or compelled, allowing people to spend Fate Points to continue to use them. The GM is encouraged to be much more picky about whether or not to allow a sticky Aspect to result from a Maneuver.

In many cases, the GM may require that the Maneuver attempt be successful enough to generate Spin (see pg. 254) before declaring an Aspect as sticky. Sticky Aspects may be easier to place on a location or scene than on another character, especially when they potentially offer complications to everyone present on both sides, such as a Maneuver to tip over a barrel of oil and add *Slippery Floor* to the zone.

Similarly, it may also be possible to remove a sticky Aspect via a successful Maneuver.

# Chapter 4

## Abilities & Specialty Aspects

### What are Abilities?

Characters have Abilities, like Agility, Knowledge or Persuasion; which are given ranks. The higher the Ability's rank, the better. Abilities can also be enhanced for specific uses with the addition of Specialty Aspects and Advantages.

Simply put, Abilities give you a very broad and general sense of what your character can do, and how well he can do it. When a player rolls the dice, he is usually making an Ability roll against a set difficulty. This Ability roll can be made to take a simple action, perform a Maneuver, an Assessment, or make a Declaration.

For an Ability roll, you roll four Fudge dice (or two six sided dice if you prefer that method). Then add your Ability rank and any other relevant bonuses. So a roll result of 1 using an Ability with a rating of 2 results in a total of 3. Your total needs to meet or exceed the difficulty of the roll, assigned by the GM. So if the difficulty of the action was 2, you would have succeeded. And if you had succeeded with a 5, you would have generated Spin! (See page 254 for more about generating Spin.)

Nearly every action that the character may undertake is covered by his Abilities. If you didn't put points in an Ability, you may still use it. You just add 0 to your dice roll. And in some cases, such as the less than 0 ranked mental Abilities of animals, Abilities can be negative and should be subtracted from the roll.

This chapter is focused on getting an idea of what each Ability covers.



### Combining Abilities

Sometimes the character needs to perform a task that really requires using two or more Abilities at once. You never know when a character is going to need to carry a heavy weight (Strength) while balancing on a spinning log (Agility) or when he's going to need to explain pop culture (Knowledge) to an other-worldly horror (Willpower).

In those situations, the GM calls for a roll based on the main Ability being used (the primary thrust of the action), but modified by a second Ability. If the second Ability is of greater value than the first, it grants a +1 bonus to the roll; if the second Ability is of a lesser value, it applies a -1 penalty. If they are the same, the secondary Ability provides no modifier.

So, for example, let's say you have an Agility of 3, and a Strength of 1. On a roll that uses Agility as the primary Ability, and Strength as the secondary, you'd suffer a -1 penalty.

It's important to note that combining Abilities can never be done to perform two full actions at once – if that's the goal, it should take two turns. When Abilities are used in combination, one Ability is almost always going to serve a passive role, as the thing the character needs to be able to do in order to be able to perform the other Ability. If a character is trying to lift a great weight while balancing on a spinning log, Strength is the main Ability rolled. But Agility restricts this roll, because without it, the character falls off the log. Similarly, if the character is gibbering before an ancient horror, his Knowledge Ability is simply not going to help him.

The difference between an action that combines Abilities and a supplemental action (pg. 261) is not always obvious. In general, if both components of the action are something you'd expect to roll for if they were done separately, then it's time to combine Abilities. If the lesser part of the action is something that normally doesn't require a roll, just handle it as a supplemental action. Sometimes, an action will be both supplemental and modified – maybe the character is moving a little (supplemental), but is using his Agility Ability to get an edge (modifying the primary roll).

## **Complementing Abilities**

When combining Abilities, and the second Ability can only help the first (which is to say it can only provide a bonus), it complements the Ability. A complementing Ability never applies a penalty, even if it's lower than the primary Ability. This usually happens when the character has the option of using the secondary Ability, but doesn't have to bring it to bear.

## **Restricting Abilities**

When combining Abilities and the secondary Ability comes into play only to hold the primary Ability back, it restricts the Ability; meaning it can only provide a penalty or nothing at all. A restricting Ability never applies a bonus, even if it's higher than the primary Ability. Often Abilities like Endurance or Willpower are restrictive Abilities – as you get more tired, you won't get better, but if you're resolute, you may not get worse.



## Multiple Secondary Abilities

In very rare circumstances, a primary Ability may be affected by more than one secondary Ability – say, a situation where a character needs to climb a wall (Agility as primary), but is tired (Endurance restricts), but the wall is part of a building the character has been studying in order to burglarize (Perception complements).

In such cases, no matter the number of Abilities in play, the most the combination can produce is one +1 and one -1. This is actually very quick to reason out. First, look at all of the Abilities that modify or complement; if any of them are higher than the primary Ability, a +1 is applied. Next, look at all of the Abilities that modify or restrict; if any of them are lower than the primary Ability, a -1 is applied. This may mean that multiple Abilities all affecting a roll will result in no modification at all – both a +1 and a -1!

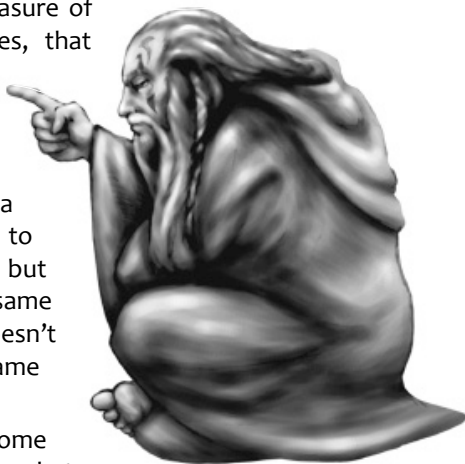


## Specialty Aspects

While Abilities are a general measure of your character's basic capabilities, that doesn't mean that because two characters both have 3 ranks in Agility that they are both equally good at gymnastics and tennis. Likewise, a historian and a computer hacker are both going to want a good Knowledge Ability, but just because they both have the same number of ranks in Knowledge doesn't mean they have the exact same understanding of both fields.

That's where Specialty Aspects come in. Specialty Aspects tell you what specific areas of an Ability you are good (or bad) at. Like Character Aspects, Specialty Aspects need be neither good nor bad. Some might describe a particular affinity for a job (*Masters in Electronic Engineering from MIT* (Knowledge)), while some might point out a particular weakness (*Been Hit with the Ugly Stick* (Persuasion)).

As with all Aspects, Specialty Aspects can be invoked and compelled. What separates them from Character Aspects is their close association with an Ability. The majority of the time, Specialty Aspects will be invoked or compelled in conjunction with an Ability roll that includes the Ability it is





associated with. However, it may sometimes be possible to invoke or compel a Specialty Aspect associated with one Ability while actively rolling another.

So keep in mind that just because Specialty Aspects are generally tied to a specific Ability, that doesn't mean it can't sometimes be used for other types of rolls when it is relevant.

*For example; Robert is attending his High School reunion. He's always been a bit of a geek, and the fact that he has the Aspect Been Hit with the Ugly Stick (Persuasion) never helped his social life, though his Razor Tongue (Persuasion) often came in handy. And after graduating, he made a good life for himself and recently picked up the Aspect Masters in Electronic Engineering from MIT (Knowledge).*

*While at the party Robert runs into Alice. The former prom queen always thought she was better than everyone else and doesn't hesitate to compel Robert's Been Hit by the Ugly stick to make her belittling remarks sting a little worse. But Robert snaps back with a witty retort backed by his Razor Tongue Aspect and puts her in her place.*

*Later he runs into a few of his old friends, some fellow nerds from the chess team, and tries to make a good impression. In this situation he rolls Persuasion and invokes Masters in Electronic Engineering from MIT (Knowledge) and uses the bonus to successfully charm them; adding the bonus to a Persuasion roll despite the fact that this Specialty Aspect is associated with his Knowledge Ability.*



## Ability Listings

The Abilities used in *Strands of Fate* are listed in greater detail below, organized by type. Each entry tells you what the Ability is commonly used for. In addition, each entry contains the following:

**Sample Specialty Aspects:** Here you'll find a series of sample Specialty Aspects that you might use to better define your character. These are very simple Aspects, and you probably want to spice your own up a bit.

**Special Rules:** Each Ability lists a number of special rules for different situations in which these Abilities play an important part. These rules are listed along with page numbers, which you can use to find the appropriate entries for them later in the book.

# Physical Abilities

## Agility

This Ability is the measure of your character's balance, hand-eye-coordination, manual dexterity, speed, reflexes and generally just conveys the level of control the character has over his own body. It is used for the majority of physical rolls that do not depend on brute strength (Strength) or your body's ability to resist effects (Endurance).

Agility covers running, jumping, climbing, swimming, and other broadly physical activities you might find in a track and field event.

Characters with high Agility include athletes, soldiers and outdoorsmen.

Agility is often the "when in doubt" physical Ability, and it can get a lot of use. There's sometimes confusion as to when to use Agility and when to use Strength. As a rule of thumb, Agility is used to move yourself, Strength is used to move other things and people. When an action calls for both, they may modify one another. If there is no clear indication which should be primary, default to Agility as primary and Strength as the modifying Ability.

Don't ask the players to roll their Agility Ability if it's to do something mundane – like climbing over a low wall, unless they're being chased or need to quickly get to cover to avoid an impending explosion.

### Sample Specialty Aspects

*Deft Hands*

*Gold Medal Winning Sprinter*

*Butter Fingers*

*Trained Tight-Rope Walker*

*"My arthritis acting up again."*

*Master Martial Artist*

*"One Shot, One Kill"*

### Special Rules Related to Agility

Ambushing (pg.262), Attacking and Defending in a Physical Conflict (pg.211), Avoid Explosions (pg.270), Climbing (pg.265), Foot Chases (pg.275), Hiding & Shadowing (pg.279), Jumping (pg.280), Movement (pg.283), Riding (pg.287), Swimming (pg.293)

## Endurance

Endurance is the ability to keep performing physical activity despite fatigue or injury. It's also a measure of the body's resistance to shock and strain. In addition to fatigue, Endurance measures how well a character shrugs off poisons, disease and supernatural afflictions. Characters with a high Endurance include explorers, athletes, and sailors.

Endurance is a passive Ability. Players will very rarely need to ask to roll Endurance; instead, the GM will usually call for rolls when appropriate.

Endurance can particularly come into play in long-term actions, as a secondary, restricting Ability; where the character's need to keep performing at his peak is limited by his capacity to overcome fatigue and pain. This is why top athletes have their Endurance on par with (or better than!) their Agility. Someone without a solid Endurance may be a good sprinter, but will find themselves winded and falling behind in a marathon. See page 70 for more on restricted Abilities.

Endurance is also used to determine the number of Physicals stress boxes the character has for each Consequence (see pg. 211).

### Sample Specialty Aspects

*Long Winded*

*Conditioned to Resist Poisons*

*"Sorry... My allergies are acting up."*

*Always a Bit Sickly*

*Short of Breath*

*"I want you to hit me as hard as you can."*

*Never Took a Sick Day*

### Special Rules Related to Endurance

Encumbrance (pg.289), Healing Physical Consequences (pg.237), Endure Falling (pg.273), Resist Disease (pg.269), Resist Environmental Hazards (pg.274), Resist Poison & Drugs (pg.285), Survive Explosions (pg.270)

# Chapter 5

## Advantages

### What are Advantages?

For the most part, Advantages are what separate the heroes from the masses. They are similar to Specialty Aspects in that they go a step beyond Abilities in an effort to better define what your character can do, but unlike Specialty Aspects, they are always a benefit to you.

Advantages come in three tiers; Expert, Heroic and Power.



### Expert Advantages

Expert Advantages are the special skills possessed by ordinary individuals. They represent some measure of training and/or natural talent. They cost one Advantage Point (AP) each and usually grant one of the following benefits:

- + **+1 bonus on rolls to a certain type of action, no matter what Ability is used.** When rolling to perform a task, such as engaging in a mental conflict to seduce another character, you gain a +1 bonus.
- + **+2 bonus on specific uses of an Ability.** This bonus should only apply to very specific uses of an Ability that's likely to only occur rarely, such as a +2 bonus to Perception when attempting to read lips.
- + **Substitute one Ability for another in specific situations.** A character's training in one Ability may bleed over into a field normally associated with a different Ability. For example, a martial artist may use Agility instead of Strength to attack unarmed or with melee weapons.
- + **Special.** Any small benefit the character may have, such as not forcing you to suffer the -1 penalty for taking a certain action as a supplemental action. These benefits should be small and function without the need of an Aspect.

Later in this chapter you will find a laundry list of suggested Expert Advantages. However, this list is far from complete and you are encouraged to think up your own Expert Advantages using the guidelines mentioned above.



## Heroic Advantages

The lone cop battling terrorists in a burning sky-scraper, the cave diving archeologist braving deadly traps for ancient relics, the lone soldier waging a one man war behind enemy lines; these are the people with Heroic Advantages.

Heroic Advantages allow you to perform special actions or grant larger bonuses than those gained from Expert Advantages. Some of the more powerful effects generated by Heroic Advantages cost a Fate Point to activate.

Heroic Advantages cost two Advantage Points to purchase, and you will find a list of several such abilities later in this chapter. And as with Expert Advantages, you will likely think up some more special abilities you think would make for good Heroic Advantages.

As a guideline, Heroic Advantages tend to provide some of the following benefits, usually to grant the character some style or “flavor”. They are also usually accompanied by some limitations to keep them balanced and interesting.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+ Provide a +2 bonus to a broad use of a given Ability or a +3 bonus to a very limited, specific use of a given Ability in exchange for 1 FP</li><li>+ Make a Specialty Aspect you already have into a Persistent (P) Aspect or gain a new non-physical Persistent (P) Specialty Aspect</li><li>+ Spend a FP to make a scene or zone Aspect into a Persistent (P) Aspect for you only</li><li>+ Add 2 additional boxes to a given Stress Track. Can be taken multiple times, each time adding 1 additional box</li><li>+ Reduce the amount of stress which overflows to the next row of a given Stress Track by 2</li><li>+ Get a special benefit after generating Spin in a roll.</li><li>+ Attack a foe by spending 1 FP if you generate Spin in a defense roll.</li><li>+ Infinite ammo</li><li>+ Acting first in any combat</li><li>+ Gain a benefit for using two weapons in combat</li><li>+ Perform a Maneuver as a free action in exchange for 1 FP if you generate Spin on an attack roll</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+ Breaking or ignoring a specific game rule in exchange for 1 FP.</li><li>+ Being able to ask your GM for clues</li><li>+ Not having to roll for obtaining a specific benefit (making friends, buying equipment, etc.)</li><li>+ Make an Assessment when you normally wouldn't be able to,</li><li>+ Delaying the effects of Defeat in a specific type of conflict.</li><li>+ Granting extra XP to improve other traits.</li><li>+ Increasing your Refresh Rate.</li></ul> |
|--|--|

### Sample Limitations:

- + Limiting the use of the Advantage to once per roll, turn or scene
- + Advantage activates after taking a Consequence
- + Advantage activates after generating Spin
- + Advantage activates only on the first attack/defense roll
- + Advantage activates only in specific situations (social, outdoors, when driving a vehicle, in business meetings, etc.)



## Power Advantages

Power Advantages (or just “Powers”) grant special abilities beyond the grasp of normal men. Be they magic spells, psychic powers, cybernetic implants or strange abilities granted from exposure to nuclear arachnids. Powers set the characters that have them apart from all others. The option to take Power Advantages at character creation is up to your GM, and you should take some sort of Character Aspect that relates to the origins of your Powers, probably your Defining Aspect.

Several sample Powers are detailed in this chapter, both to serve as Powers you can pick and choose from; and examples of those you can make on your own.

It should also be noted that the various supernatural Powers listed here are “effect based”, meaning that what is described is the end result, and not necessarily the means of getting there. For example, let’s take the Power called Power Attack, Ranged. This Power could be the result of a dragon’s fiery breath, a wizard’s magical spell, or a crazy pyrokinetic psychic.

While the trappings for each may differ, it’s the end result that we are concerned with here in the rules. The trappings impact the rules in the form of Aspects that come with the Power.

For example, the Armor Power may be the result of hardened skin, a psychic shield, cybernetic plating, a magical barrier, etc. The basic mechanical effect remains the same for each, but can be differentiated with Aspects like *Psychic Barrier* or *Durasteel Plating*.



### Purchasing a Power

When you purchase a Power, there are a few things you need to do, some of which may not be necessary depending on the Power.

1. Pay the Power’s base cost in Advantage Points.
2. Select a Power Aspect to define the trappings of your Power.
3. Determine how the Power is activated. Some Powers require a roll, others a Fate Point, and some are activated for free. If need be, determine what Stress Track the Power is associated with.
4. If the Power requires, determine the Power Source and Affinity Ability you have associated with this Power.
5. Determine the variables of the Power, such as how much stress it deals with an attack, what form you can change into, etc.
6. Decide on and purchase any Power Modifiers you may want.
7. Consider how this Power may be used in conjunction with a “Meta-Power”.
8. Record any additional Aspects granted to you by the Power, if any.

## Power Aspects

Each time you select a Power, you need to determine a Power Aspect for that Power. This Aspect describes how the Power works, and like any other Aspect, you can spend a Fate Point to invoke or compel this Aspect any time the Power is used.

Here are some samples of Power Aspects, and how they might be used:

**Armor (*Magic Barrier*)** – Compel this Aspect when the character needs to be able to make physical contact with an object, but must deactivate his armor at a dangerous time to do so.

**Enhanced Sight (*Cybernetic Eyes*)** – An enemy might compel this Aspect to affect your vision with electromagnetic interference.

**Flight (*Angelic Wings*)** – Compel this Aspect to hamper or make flight impossible in enclosed areas.

**Illusion (*Psychic Impressions*)** – An enemy might compel this Aspect to gain a bonus to pierce your illusions if he has some sort of psychic resistance.

**Lifeless (*Undead*)** – Invoke this Aspect as a bonus on rolls to hide from thermal sensors since you do not produce your own body heat.

**Power Attack, Ranged (*Magic Lightning from the Hands*)** – Invoke this Aspect to attack two enemies (instead of one) that are both standing in the same puddle of water.

**Power Attack, Melee (*Touch of Death*)** – Compel this Aspect if another sorcerer sees you using death magic in a setting where such magics are illegal.

**Emotion Switch (*Psychic Conditioning*)** – Invoke this Aspect to gain a bonus or reroll to defend against a fear-based mental attack.

**Extra Limb (*Prehensile Tale*)** – You could invoke this Aspect for effect to say that you slam the door shut behind you without taking a supplemental action.

**Terrify (*Mind Magic*)** – This Aspect might be compelled if the person you are affecting runs into some sort of anti-magic zone, causing your Power to fail.

## Purchasing Advantages with Resources

You may decide that some Advantages can be purchased with money. Cybernetics are the most common case, but you may think of others.

If you allow an Advantage to be purchased with money instead of AP, the Cost of the item needs to be determined.

A good baseline for the Cost Rating is twice the AP cost (minimum 4), but it could vary depending on the setting.

## Invoking Power Aspects for Effect

Like any other Aspect, you may spend a Fate Point to invoke the Power Aspect associated with your Power for effect.

For example, you may have a Power that allows you to shoot beams of fire from your eyes (Power Attack, Ranged). But perhaps you are fighting a lot of opponents and would like to attack every foe in a zone instead of targeting just one.

In this case, you can spend a Fate Point to invoke your Power's Aspect (*Laser Eyes*) to state that you have the ability to narrow your eyes and widen your beam, allowing you to strike more than one opponent at a time.

Like any time an Aspect is invoked for effect, the GM has veto power. And it's also up to him to determine the effects of your unusual Power usage.

In the "laser eyes" example above, the GM might determine that you can indeed attack everyone in the zone at once, but your Power's Weapon Rating is reduced by -2 because the beam is unfocussed.

Remember that you don't want one PC to steal the show. If a player wants to use his character's Power in a way that takes the spotlight away from another PC, such as mimicking that PC's Power or just stealing his moment, the GM should not hesitate to veto.



## Power Sources

Many Power Advantages require you to describe an associated Power Source. Some sample Power Sources are "Arcane Energies", "Supernatural Mutation", "Pact with a Demon", "Power of the Mind", "Magical Creature", etc.

This Power Source is simply a way to explain where your Powers come from, and how they are controlled. It also plays a large role in describing the trappings of your Powers and should somehow strongly relate to one of your Character Aspects.

The Power Source serves no real mechanical function in the game, but helps the player and the GM best determine how some Powers may or may not affect each other, or how they are related. In most campaigns, characters with the same Power Source will also share the same Affinity Ability.

## Bonus Stress Boxes

Some Advantages temporarily grant you bonus ranks in Abilities that are used to determine how many stress boxes you have.

The temporary stress boxes resulting from the Ability increase are added in front of your normal stress boxes, meaning stress is applied to the new stress boxes first. When this Ability boost goes away the additional stress boxes gained, and any stress that may have accumulated in them, are cleared.



## The Affinity Ability

In addition to selecting a Power Source you will also need to purchase ranks in an Affinity Ability for some Powers. This Ability functions like any other (Strength, Willpower, etc.) and describes your measure of control over your Power Source. Many Powers will require you to roll your Affinity to activate a Power or to determine how effectively they are used.

You'll need a separate Affinity Ability for every Power Source you have access to. And like other Abilities, Affinity Abilities default to a rating of 0 and can be improved at character creation using the same pool of ranks with which you purchase your other Abilities. And, of course, you can improve your Affinity Ability with XP the same as other Abilities.

Like Power Sources, the Affinity Ability itself can have many different names. It might be called "Arcana", "Psyche", "Inner Strength", etc. There are as many Affinity Abilities as there are Power Sources, and like other Abilities, Affinity Abilities can have Specialty Aspects.

So if the description of a Power tells you to "roll your Affinity", this is the Ability it is referring to.

### Other Affinity Ability Uses

In addition to being rolled for a Power's activation or to otherwise help determine how effective your Powers are, an Affinity Ability may also be used in place of some other Abilities when dealing with your Power Source.

For example, a sorcerer might use his "Arcane" Affinity Ability instead of Perception to detect and analyze magic; or instead of Deception when trying to hide magical effects or auras.

### Standard Abilities as Affinity Abilities

There may be some cases where you want your Affinity Ability to be the same as a regular Ability, such as the psychic whose powers stem from his Willpower.

In such cases, the GM should feel free to charge more XP to increase that Ability. In this case, the XP cost to increase the Affinity Ability is 15 instead of 10.

Another option would be to increase the AP cost of all Advantages that use that Ability by +1.

Or you may decide to both increase the XP cost of the Affinity Ability and the AP cost of related Advantages.



## Activation Difficulty and Power Stress

Many Powers are tied to one of your Stress Tracks. These Powers are draining, potentially exhausting the character in some way each time they are used. Most Powers will affect either your physical or mental Stress Track, and which track you use should be decided on between the player and the GM prior to purchasing the Power.

Each time you use a Power with an activation difficulty, you roll your Affinity Ability against the listed difficulty. If you succeed, you activate the Power and suffer no stress to your associated Stress Track.

If you fail, unless the specific Power says otherwise, you still successfully activate the Power. However, you suffer the difference between the result of your roll and the difficulty as stress on the relevant Stress Track.

Some Powers require you to roll to activate the Power with each use, while some may only require you to activate the Power once, and then it stays active for the rest of the scene. Unless the Power states otherwise however, you must roll for activation each time the Power is used.



## Fate Point Cost

Some Powers require you to spend a Fate Point to be activated. Remember that Fate Points do not represent effort on the part of the character, but reflect the player's ability to turn the "spotlight" on his character. In other words, some Powers are just plain cool or powerful, and Fate Points are used to balance those Powers against others.

Powers most often have Fate Points costs when the Advantage needs some sort of limiting factor, but stress just doesn't make sense.



## Power Modifiers

When purchasing a Power, first look to the "base cost" of the Power. You may then, depending on the Power, be able to purchase the Power at a higher or lower Advantage Point cost in exchange for a more potent, weakened, or simply different effect. Note that modifiers may never reduce the cost of an Advantage below 1. These Power Modifiers are listed at the end of the Power's entry and might be written as something like "+1 (Improved Potency)". This means that by paying one additional AP when purchasing that Power, your Power is modified in the way described.

Unless otherwise stated, you may purchase a Power Modifier multiple times to get increasingly more potent effects.



## Aspects from Advantages

Some Powers grant you additional Aspects when the Power is purchased, or after the Power is used. This Aspect can be invoked or compelled like any other. The Aspect may remain forever, until certain conditions are met, or it may disappear if the Power is “switched off”.



## Range and Targeting

Unless otherwise specified, Powers have a Range rating equal to its associated Affinity Ability’s rank. This Range rating functions exactly like the Range rating of ranged weapons (see pg. 300).

You may only affect a target you can see or touch unless you have some way of knowing EXACTLY where your target is.



## Activation Time and Duration

The amount of time it takes to activate a Power, and how long its effects last once activated, varies from Power to Power. You can find this information in each Power’s entry.

Note that some Powers have an activation time of “One Turn”; this means that activating the Power is all a character can do on his turn. He may not move or perform any supplemental actions.



## Meta-Powers

This sub-group of Power Advantages work differently than the rest, actually granting you more Advantage Points or modifying the way other Powers work. And in some cases, such as with Control or Ritual Power, the Meta-Power may completely change the way you use Powers altogether.

The Meta-Powers are described at the end of this chapter.

### “Metro”, “World”, “Galaxy”, “Cosmic” and “Infinity”

Remember that Super Heroes should not be allowed to purchase Powers at a level higher than their class. For example, even if they have the AP to do so, a Metro Class Super Hero should not be allowed to purchase World Class Super Strength.

These varying “levels” of a power are listed after the main entry along with their base costs and additional effects.

## Sample Expert Advantages

**Acrobatic** – You gain +1 on rolls related to surviving falls and negotiating a difficult environment.

**Alertness** – You gain a +2 on any rolls to detect and avoid an ambush.

**Ambush Predator** – You gain a +2 bonus on physical attacks made against an ambushed opponent.

**Animal Empathy** – You gain +2 on rolls to discern the motives of animals and to make Assessments related to animals.

**Architect of Death** – Whenever making a Craft roll involving the creation or repair of implements of war, such as weapons or combat vehicles, you gain a +2 bonus.

**Artist** – You are an authority in a specific artistic field, be it painting, sculpting, singing, dancing, etc. You gain a +2 on all rolls related to your specified field of artistic creation or performance. You may take this Advantage multiple times, each time gaining another specialty.

**Black Hat** – You gain a +2 on Knowledge rolls to hack into a secure computer system.

**Book Worm** – Gain a +2 bonus on all rolls to research information about a specific person, place, or thing using a library.

**Con Man** – Substitute Deception for Empathy when trying to perform an Assessment to discover what Aspects a person could have.

**Criminal Mind** – Substitute Deception for Perception when investigating a crime scene.

**Deadly Grace** – You may substitute Agility for Strength when fighting unarmed or using a melee weapon.

**Demolitionist** – If you have time to properly place and set an explosive, the explosion's force rating is increased by 3 because you know how to place the bombs at the target's weak points.

**Digital Spider** – Gain a +2 bonus on all rolls to research information about a specific person, place, or thing on a computer network.

**Direction Sense** – You almost always know which direction is north. In situations where you need to roll to keep from getting lost, you gain a +2 bonus.

## Sample Heroic Advantages

These Advantages always cost 2 AP to purchase and sometimes require a Fate Point to activate. Unless otherwise specified in the Advantage's description, Advantages that require a FP to activate require the cost to be paid each time it is used.

### Absolutely Stunning

You are so astoundingly beautiful and graceful others have a hard time disagreeing with you. You gain *Absolutely Stunning(P)* (Persuasion) as a persistent Specialty Aspect.

### Acrobatic Exploit

Any time you generate Spin on an attack roll you may move into an adjacent zone as a free action.

### Adaptive Mastery

When disguised as another person, you gain a +2 bonus on any Ability roll that would be strongly associated with the role you are playing. For example, you'd gain a +2 bonus on rolls related to carpentry if you were disguised as a carpenter.

### Animal Ken

Animals are naturally inclined to like you. Hostile animals tend to grow calm in your presence, and you have a gift for training them. Spend a Fate Point to gain a +3 bonus on any roll required to interact with an animal in a non-violent way.

### Assassin Strike

You know how to strike, using a melee weapon, to deal the most damage to your opponent. You know how to get around armor, anticipate your target's movements, and strike at their weak spots like vital organs and pressure points.

Once per scene, when attacking an ambushed target (see pg. 262) with a melee weapon, you add a +3 bonus on your attack roll.

### Constant Vigilance

You are always on the lookout for trouble so you get a +1 to any initiative roll. In addition, if you are ambushed, you may spend a Fate Point to defend yourself normally.

<b>Power</b>	<b>Base Cost</b>	<b>Pg.#</b>	<b>Power</b>	<b>Base Cost</b>	<b>Pg.#</b>
Absorption	V	111	Insubstantial	6	141
Affliction	2	112	Invisibility	3	142
Animate Dead	3	112	Leach	3	143
Armor	1	113	Lifeless	3	143
Astral Doorway	5	114	Machine Submersion	1	144
Astral Passage	6	114	Mindlink	1	145
Astral Perception	1	115	Mind Probe	4	145
Astral Projection	3	117	Mind Wipe	3	147
Augmented Movement	1	117	Morph	2+	149
Awe	2	118	Morph Living	5	151
Barrier	3	119	Multiply	2	151
Binding	2	120	Night Vision	1	153
Blessing	2	121	Nullify	1	153
Body Weaponry	1	121	Photographic Memory	2	154
Breathless	2	122	Poison	1	155
Chameleon	1	122	Possession	5	155
Clairensentience	3	124	Postcognition	4	157
Computer Implant	1	125	Power Attack, Melee	2	159
Echolocation	1	126	Power Attack, Pulse	3	161
Elasticity	2	126	Power Attack, Ranged	3	163
Emotion Switch	1	126	Precognition	4	166
Enhanced Hearing	1	127	Read Emotions	2	167
Enhanced Senses	3	127	Read Thoughts	2	168
Enhanced Sight	1	128	Repel Creature	1	169
Enhanced Smell	1	129	Regeneration	2	170
Enhanced Speed	1	129	Resistance	1	171
Enhanced Reflexes	3	130	Sense	1+	171
Environmental Protection	1	131	Shapeshifting	9	173
Extra Limb	1	131	Shrink	1	174
Flight	3	131	Sleepless	2	175
Gestalt Mind	3	133	Summon Creature	2+	175
Grow	1	134	Super Agility	6+	176
Heal	2	135	Super Endurance	3+	177
Hidden Compartment	1	136	Super Strength	4+	178
Illusions	2	137	Telekinesis	3	179
Imbue Armor or Shield	3	138	Teleport Other	4	180
Imbue Weapon	3	139	Teleport Self	4	181
Influence Thoughts	3	139	Teleportation Portal	6	182

<b>Power</b>	<b>Base Cost</b>	<b>Pg.#</b>	<b>Meta-Power</b>	<b>Base Cost</b>	<b>Pg.#</b>
Terrify	2	183	Conditional Trigger	Varies	188
Thermal Vision	1	184	Control	5+	189
Transmogrification	4	184	Craft Power Item	1	197
Trans. Matter or Energy	5	185	Limitation	Special	199
Wall-Walker	2	186	Linked Advantage	Special	200
Weapon Mastery	2	187	Ritual Power	1 per 5 RPs	201
X-Ray Vision	2	187	Weakness	Special	203





## Affliction

**Sample Power Aspects:** *Infected Sweat, Sickening Curse*

**Base AP Cost:** 2

**Activation:** Fate Point

**Activation Time:** Activates with touch, Simple Action

**Requires a Power Source and Affinity Ability**

You have the ability to spread disease. With a touch, you expose your target to some sort of non-contagious disease. In a conflict, this is resolved as a normal physical attack, using your Agility (defended against by Agility) to touch your target. Armor may make this more difficult.

If you successfully touch your target, he has become Afflicted. The disease has a Potency equal to your Affinity. See pg. 269 for more on diseases.

### Modifiers

**+1 (Improved Potency):** The potency of your disease is increased by +2.

**+2 (Contagion):** Victims of your Affliction are contagious.



## Animate Dead

**Sample Power Aspects:** *Necromantic Spell, Otherworldly Radiation*

**Base AP Cost:** 3

**Activation:** Fate Point

**Activation Time:** Simple Action

**Requires a Power Source and Affinity Ability**

You can infuse the body of a dead creature with some sort of animating energy, restoring it to a mockery of life. The dead creature is a mindless automaton directed by your will. All of its Physical Abilities remain unchanged, but its Mental Abilities are reduced to -1 and its Social Abilities are reduced to -3. The creature's Stress Tracks may need to be adjusted to account for these new Ability ratings.

You can issue commands by voice as a free action, or telepathically as a standard or supplemental action. The creature will obey your commands to the best of its ability, but its limited mental capacities leave very little in the way to adapt to changing circumstances. Animated creatures have the Lifeless Advantage (pg. 143) with a persistent Character Aspect of Undead(P).

The animated creature also has an Aspect that defines their body's general health, such as Rotting Zombie or Skeletal Remains. All recently risen undead can only suffer a number of Consequences equal to your Affinity -1 (min 1). The total number of undead you can create and maintain at once it is equal to your Affinity Ability. You may slay any undead you control as a free action.

### Modifiers

**+1 (Fortified):** For every additional AP you spend on this Power, you increase any Physical Ability possessed by a creature you animate by 2 ranks.

**+1 (Smart):** For every additional AP you spend on this Power, you increase any Mental Ability possessed by a creature you animate by 2 ranks.

**Armor**

**Sample Power Aspects:** *Marble Flesh, Psychokinetic Shield*

**Base AP Cost:** 1

**Activation:** Fate Point

**Activation Time:** Free Action

**Duration:** Scene

You have the ability to instantly wrap yourself in some form of protection. This may be hardened skin, natural armor plating, a reinforced skeleton, etc.

When activated, this Power grants a natural Armor Rating of 2 + the setting’s Tech Level for the duration of the scene. If the setting uses multiple TLs, use the highest.

Unlike most bonuses, the Armor Rating provided by this Power does not stack with that provided by wearing actual armor. If you have this Power and also wear armor, you use the greater of the two Armor Ratings provided.

**Modifiers**

- +1 (Improved Armor):** For every additional AP you spend on this Power, the Armor Rating provided is increased by 2.
- +1 (Insulating):** The armor created is not directly connected to your body, such as with a force field. Subject to the GM’s ruling, some attacks that normally ignore armor may still be hampered by this Power.
- +1 (Light Compatibility):** You may stack up to 2 points of the granted Armor Rating from this Power with that of worn armor.
- +2 (Heavy Compatibility):** You may stack up to 4 points of the granted Armor Rating from this Power with that of worn armor. You may not also purchase Light Compatibility.
- +2 (Passive):** Your armor is “always on” and need not be activated.

**Super Armor**

Super Hero Class characters can purchase a more powerful version of this Power. The super versions of this Power function exactly the same as the normal version, but have a higher base AP cost in exchange for an increased AR.

The following chart lists the AP cost for each class, and the AR provided by this Power at that level:

Class	Base AP Cost	AR
Metro Class	3	TL + 7
World Class	5	TL + 12
Galaxy Class	7	TL + 17
Cosmic Class	9	TL + 22
Infinity Class	11	TL + 27



# Chapter 6

## Conflict and Consequences

### The Basics of Conflict

No matter what sort of conflict you are involved in, be it physical, mental, or even social; the basics of the system are essentially the same.

An attack is rolled as a contest, with the attacking character (the attacker) attempting to beat the defending character (the defender) in a contested Ability roll. The Abilities used depend on the type of conflict.

The difference between the attacker's attack roll and the defender's defense roll is suffered by the defender as stress of the appropriate type.

Physical attacks generate physical stress, mental attacks generate mental stress, and social attacks generate social stress. Characters have multiple sets of stress boxes for each of the different types of stress, and if a set is filled up, the character must take a Consequence.

Consequences are arranged in order of severity as "Minor", "Major", "Severe(P)" and "Extreme(P)", each with an accompanying set of stress boxes. The last set leads to "Defeated(P)". What these Consequences are, and what it means to be Defeated, differs depending on the type of conflict the characters are engaged in and are described later in this chapter.

Regardless of the type of conflict however, stress is tracked the same way. When a character first suffers stress, he finds the stress boxes associated with his Minor Consequence and checks off a number of boxes equal to the amount of stress he suffered. As he suffers more stress, he checks off more boxes.

Once that set of stress boxes has been filled, he must take a Minor Consequence. If he suffers more stress, that stress is checked off the stress boxes associated with the next available Consequence in the sequence, in this case, Major.

If you suffer so much stress that you fill up a set of stress boxes, and still have some left over, this remaining stress "overflows" into the next available set.

And if you have been in a conflict previously, and have a row of stress boxes that is already full (and a Consequence), further stress is checked off starting in the next open box.

For example, John attacks Bobby with a punch. He rolls his Strength to attack. Bobby rolls his Agility to defend. John's gets a total of 4 on his attack. Bobby defends with a total of 2. So the total stress John inflicts is 2.

So Bobby marks off his first 2 stress boxes, changing his Stress Track from this:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Minor:</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Major:</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Severe(P):</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Extreme(P):</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Defeated(P):</b>	_____

To this:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Minor:</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Major:</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Severe(P):</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Extreme(P):</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Defeated(P):</b>	_____

During the next round, Bobby is attacked again. This time John rolls his Strength to attack and gets a 1. Bobby however, rolls poorly and generates a defense of -2. So he takes another 3 points of physical stress, and now he has to take a Consequence. He decides that he's been doing well at avoiding punches, but the fight is wearing on him, so takes a Minor Consequence of Fatigued.

And now his Stress Track looks like this:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Minor:</b>	<u>Fatigued</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Major:</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Severe(P):</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Extreme(P):</b>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Defeated(P):</b>	_____

Bobby is in trouble now. On the next round, John invokes Bobby's Fatigued Consequence (which he can do for free this time because it is the first time this Consequence has been invoked or compelled) and gains a +2 bonus on his attack roll.

He rolls well and gets a total of +6 on his attack. Bobby only defends with a 1 so he suffers another 5 points of stress.



He has to take another Consequence and now his Stress Track looks like this:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Minor:	<u>Fatigued</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Major:	<u>Broken Nose</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Severe(P):	<u>                    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extreme(P):	<u>                    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Defeated(P):	<u>                    </u>

Bobby decides he's had enough, and concedes the fight. John accepts the concession and lets him walk away.



Clearing Stress Boxes

At the end of the scene, assuming the character can take a few minutes to rest and clear his head, all the stress boxes in a set that doesn't feature a Consequence are cleared.

In addition, your Minor Consequence (and its stress) clears after a five minute rest.

So five minutes later, Bobby's Stress Track looks like this:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minor:	<u>                    </u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Major:	<u>Broken Nose</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Severe(P):	<u>                    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extreme(P):	<u>                    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Defeated(P):	<u>                    </u>

The other stress boxes will remain checked until he is able to heal his Major Consequence. See pg. 237 for more on healing Consequences.

However, should he get in another fight before his Major Consequence gets a chance to heal, any stress he suffers starts getting checked off with his recently cleared Minor stress boxes, and once they are filled, he takes a Minor Consequence and starts filling in his Severe(P) check boxes.

So if Bobby took another 6 stress a few hours later, his Stress Track might look like this:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Minor:	<u>Sore and Bruised</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Major:	<u>Broken Nose</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Severe(P):	<u>                    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extreme(P):	<u>                    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Defeated(P):	<u>                    </u>



## Concessions

Any time a character takes a Consequence, he also has the option of offering a Concession. A Concession is essentially equivalent to surrendering, and is the best way to end a fight before someone is Defeated (short of moving away and ending the conflict).

The character inflicting the damage can always opt to reject the Concession, but doing so is a clear indication that the fight will be a bloody one (literally or metaphorically). If the GM declares that the Concession was a reasonable offer, then the character who offered it gains one Fate Point, and the character who refused it loses one.

The Concession is an offer of the terms under which the character concedes the fight. If the Concession is accepted, the conceding character must immediately take the actions he proposed in the Concession.

Many conflicts end with a Concession when one party or the other simply does not want to risk taking Severe(P) or Extreme(P) Consequences as a result of the conflict, or when neither party wants to risk a Defeated result that might come at too high a price.

A Concession may consist of a character literally laying down his weapon and begging for his life, or maybe he works out a deal with his opponent during the conflict. In a mental or social conflict, the Concession may be a course of action such as giving in to your enemy's demands or stepping down from a position of power.

However, it could also be an out of character deal struck between players or the player and the GM.

So, to sum up...

- If you offer a Concession that is accepted, you get a Fate Point and your opponent must abide by the terms of the Concession.
- If you offer a Concession that is rejected, and the GM thinks it was a fair one, your opponent loses a Fate Point.
- If you offer a Concession the GM doesn't think is fair, nothing happens.

*For example, John's character, The Blue Baron, has been ambushed in his home base. His nemesis, Shady Jack, has invaded with a small army of his best warriors.*

*The fight breaks out, and after a few rounds, it is clear to John that The Blue Baron isn't going to make it out alive. So he offers a Concession to the GM. The Blue Baron will place an explosive on his hideout's main reactor, destroying his base to buy him time to escape.*

*The GM decides this is reasonable since The Blue Baron will lose the use of his home base. So he accepts the Concession and allows John to describe how the explosion provides his means of escape.*

## Called Shots

Sometimes a character wants to attack an opponent (physically, mentally, or socially) in such a way as to provoke a specific result. This is especially useful when trying to stake a vampire, blow the head off a zombie, or make an enemy react a certain way to your threats.

When using the “Called Shots” optional rule, any time a player generates Spin with an attack roll and the enemy is forced to take a Consequence, the *attacker* may spend a Fate Point to describe that Consequence instead of the defender.

As always, the Consequence described must make sense with the type of attack performed, and the GM may over-rule it. Also, the defender has the option to spend a Fate Point to veto the description and come up with his own as per a normal attack.

## Running Conflicts

Before a conflict begins, follow these simple steps:

1. Frame the Scene
  - a. Reveal Aspects
  - b. Determine Zones
2. Establish Initiative
3. Determine Actions

### Conflict Phases

A conflict is broken up into the following phases:

**Turn** – When it is your chance to act, it is your turn. Every acting character gets a turn. On your turn you can perform one simple action and any supplemental actions your GM allows.

**Round** – A round equals around 2-3 seconds of game time. A round is over once everyone has had their turn.



### Framing the Scene

Before the conflict begins, you will want to give the players an accurate description of the surrounding area. You may call for Perception checks if there are hidden Aspects or other elements of the environment that may not be immediately obvious.



## Optional Stress System: Thresholds

This option removes the stress boxes, replacing them with a Threshold. If you suffer an amount of stress equal to or greater than your Threshold, you suffer a Consequence. Consequences work the same way they do with the standard system, and your Threshold is equal to the number of stress boxes you would normally have, -1.

So if a character has a Strength of 2, an endurance of 3, and a Size of 0, he has a total Physical Threshold of 4 ( $2 + 3 + 0 - 1$ ).

When using Thresholds, a conflict is resolved the same way it is with the default system. However, instead of checking off stress boxes, the total amount of stress you suffer from an attack is compared to your Threshold. If it is equal to or greater than your Threshold, you suffer a Consequence.

So if your Threshold is 4, and you are hit with 5 stress, you must take a Minor Consequence. If you are later hit with another attack that results in a Minor Consequence, since you already suffer a Minor from the previous attack, the new Consequence is upgraded to Major.

In addition, for every multiple of the defender's Threshold the attack succeeds by, the resulting Consequence is upgraded. So if you have a Threshold of 4, and suffer 8 stress, you must take a Major Consequence, even if you have not already taken a Minor.

*For example, John attacks Bobby with a punch. He rolls his Strength to attack. Bobby rolls his Agility to defend.*

*Johns gets a total of 5 on his attack. Bobby defends with a total of 2. So the total stress John inflicts is 3.*

*He compares this to Bobby's Physical Threshold, which is 2, and since the amount of stress John dealt was higher than that, Bobby must now take a Minor Physical Consequence.*

*Now it's Bobby's turn. He makes his attack roll and John tries to defend. John rolls poorly however, and the total from Bobby's attack results in 4 stress. John's Physical Threshold is only 2. Now since the attacker's attack roll results in an amount of stress equal to twice as much as the defender's Threshold, the Consequence John has to take is upgraded. So instead of suffering a Minor Consequence, he instead takes a Major.*

*It's John's turn again and he manages to get a total of 3 over Bobby's defense. Bobby's defense is still only 2, so 3 stress causes him to take another Consequence. But since Bobby already has a Minor Consequence from John's first attack, this new Consequence he must take is upgraded to Major.*

Now Bobby has his chance at revenge. He attacks John and generates a total of 3 over John's defense. Since John has a Physical Threshold of 2, Bobby succeeds in forcing him to take another Consequence. Though his first attack against John resulted in a Major Consequence for John, this isn't as impressive and only yields a Minor.

This systems cuts down on some of the record-keeping in play since nothing really happens unless a Consequence is scored. However, some players may feel dissatisfied when they are fighting a superior foe and find themselves unable to overcome the foe's Threshold.



In this case, the PCs need to turn their attentions to setting up Maneuvers. Maybe a couple of the PCs can try to place hindering temporary Aspects on the target while their best warrior invokes or compels those Aspects for the bonuses he needs to overcome the Threshold.

Note also that Mental and Social conflicts can also use the Threshold system, or if you like, you could even use the default system for one type of conflict and Thresholds for another. The rest of this book has been designed to be “agnostic” towards whichever stress system you choose.

Note that Advantages that normally increase the number of stress boxes a character has instead increase the character's Threshold.

### Threshold Adjustments

If you like this system, but find it is either too deadly or too safe for your tastes, you can easily adjust it by changing the “-1” modifier in the formula to determine character Thresholds.

If you want characters to be tougher, you could simply change the “-1” to -0 or even +1. Feel free to adjust this number as needed to get the “feel” of the campaign you desire.



## Optional Stress System: Single Set

This option functions like the default stress system except you only have one row of stress boxes for each type of stress (Physical, Mental & Social), and when that row is filled, you are Defeated.

However, as you suffer stress, you may elect to suffer a Consequence to reduce the amount of stress you take. The amount of stress each type of Consequence negates is listed below:

**Minor:** Negates 2 points of stress

**Major:** Negates 4 points of stress

**Severe(P):** Negates 6 points of stress

**Extreme(P):** Negates 8 points of stress

Note that you must take the Consequence at the time the stress is delivered. You may not later remove stress from your Stress Track by applying a Consequence.

Also you may never have more than one Consequence of the same type per Stress Track, and you may only take one Consequence per attack.

So, for example, if you have six stress boxes and suffer five points of stress, you can either:

- + Take the five points of stress and check five stress boxes. This means that you can only take one more point of stress before being Defeated(P).
- + Take a Minor Consequence to reduce the amount of stress you suffer from five to three.
- + Take a Major Consequence and reduce the amount of stress you take from five to one.
- + Or take a Severe Consequence and reduce the amount of stress you take by six, effectively negating all of the stress taken.

### Alternate Option: Upgrading Single Set

When you take stress, instead of filling in all the stress boxes in the row up to the amount you suffer, you instead only mark the single box associated with the amount suffered.

For example, if you suffered 3 points of stress, you'd only check the third box in the row. The first and second boxes would remain unchecked. But if you suffered another 3 points of stress later, you'd instead check the next open box, and so on.

Once you check off the last box in the row, no matter how many other boxes are unchecked, you are Defeated(P).





# Chapter 7

## Playing the Game

### How to Do Things

This chapter covers most of the things a character may want to do that isn't covered in the previous chapter as part of a conflict. Or, at least, it provides rules for several things they can do. In truth, no book will be able to cover every possible action a PC can take. GMs who need to come up with impromptu rules sub-systems should look to this chapter for examples and inspiration.

For most of the things characters do, there's no real need for rules. They can stand, walk, talk, go swimming, and otherwise do normal things without needing to roll dice. They can even take actions that use their Abilities, like driving to work, without worrying about the dice. The dice only come out when there is an interesting challenge with the probability of a meaningful outcome. On the simplest level, when a player rolls the dice, if he matches or exceeds the difficulty, his character succeeds; if he doesn't, he fails. When the issue is simple this may be all that's necessary, but sometimes you also need to know how well a character did or did not do. For instance, if a character rolls four higher than the difficulty, that's better than rolling only one higher.

If the total of the roll plus any relevant modifiers is below the target difficulty, it's a failure. If a roll matches the target difficulty, or is greater, it is a success. If it beats the difficulty by 3 or more, it has generated Spin. See page 254 for more on Spin.



### On Your Turn You Can...

A round lasts for about 3 seconds of in game time and consists of all characters getting one turn. On your turn you can perform a single simple action and any number of supplemental actions your GM allows, such as moving into another zone or draw a weapon.

You take a -1 penalty to your primary action for each supplemental action you take, though some more complex supplemental actions may require a larger penalty.



## “Stacking” Bonuses and Penalties

Whether through invoking Aspects or by purchasing Advantages, there are a lot of ways to get bonuses and penalties applied to a roll.

In *Strands of Fate*, almost everything “stacks”. This means that if you get a +2 bonus from one source and a +1 bonus from another, you may add those together for a total of a +3 bonus.

So unless it is clearly stated otherwise, you can assume any bonuses or penalties you have stack with any others.

## Setting Difficulties

Before you – the GM – call for a die roll, it is critically important that you stop and do two things:

1. Imagine Success
2. Imagine Failure

It sounds simple, but it can make a critical difference.

Success is usually the easy part, but failure can be bit trickier. You want to make sure that both outcomes are interesting, though interesting certainly doesn’t need to mean good.

If you cannot come up with a way to handle either outcome, you need to rethink the situation.

It’s as simple as that, because there are few things more frustrating to a player than making an Ability roll and getting told that it nets them no new knowledge, no suggested course of action, no new development for the story, and so on. If it doesn’t mean anything, why roll it?

So, whenever you call for a roll, be absolutely certain you understand what failure or success entails.

Again, if one or the other result does not suggest a course of action, then calling for a roll is probably a bad idea. Now, that said, every roll does not need to have high stakes. Failure should always have some negative effect, but there are degrees of negative effects, and minor setbacks may be overcome for a larger success.

If there is a large issue on the table, try not to have it hinge entirely on one roll – spread it out across the scene. Bad rolls happen from time to time and you don’t want your campaign to fall apart because of a few bad tosses of the dice.

The whole point of the potential failure offered by the dice is to keep players engaged. It makes the rolls really mean something. And that fact is

the ultimate informer on how you want to set difficulties. The goal is to make any roll satisfying.

With that in mind, as a general guideline difficulties should be set low (with a few exceptions we'll cover in this chapter). If you leave difficulties at the default rating of 0, then characters will almost always succeed. But there is still a chance of failure unless the odds are strongly stacked in favor of success. What this means is that characters will rarely fail, but failure is still a possibility in most circumstances. You can increase difficulties from that, but always stop and think about why you want to do that. The answer should always be "because you want failure to be more likely" – hopefully because failure's cool too.

As a general rule of thumb, assume the average person will succeed against a difficulty of 2 half the time.

Difficulty	Action
0	Requires little effort or even thought.
1	Requires a small amount of effort.
2	A simple task, but requires a little effort. The average person will succeed about half the time.
3	A moderately difficult task.
4	Usually requires some training or for you to get lucky.
5	A difficulty task. You need to be really good to pull this off.
6	You'd better be an expert if you hope to succeed.



If you are tempted to make a roll so difficult that failure is almost certain, make sure you've got a solid reason why that's so, and why you're calling for a roll.

With difficulties set low, the question is not "will they succeed?" but rather "how (or how much) will they succeed?". It means that the margin by which the result of your roll exceeds the difficulty becomes the yardstick you can use to frame how something turns out. The bottom line here is that every roll should be fun, whether it succeeds or fails; but a success by 5 points over the difficulty is really something special!

Effect	Description
Success by 0	Minimal success – The character pulled it off. It's neither pretty nor graceful, but it works, at least for now.
Success by 1	Notable success – This is a clear-cut success. The character's result is solid, reliable, and while it may not be inspired, it is absolutely workmanlike.
Success by 3	Significant success (Spin!) – The success is sufficient enough to be noticeably well done, and will be of fine quality, very reliable and so on. A significant or better success is said to have generated Spin (see below).
Success by 5	Potent success – Not only is the quality of the success remarkable, it may have some unexpected secondary benefits, such as a deeper insight into a problem at hand.



## Spin

In its broadest sense, Spin is a special effect that occurs whenever the total result of a roll exceeds the difficulty the character is rolling against by 3 or more. That special effect may simply be color – it may mean the character looked particularly cool, or is due some recognition for excellence. In some cases, as outlined in Abilities and elsewhere, generating Spin can result in an actual game effect.

In conflict, if a character gets Spin on a defense roll, he can add a +1 bonus to his next action attack roll against his attacker.

Other applications of Spin, found throughout this book, exist as well. But in general, it serves as an easy way of making note that a character has done particularly well on a roll. Whenever characters roll well enough to generate Spin, it's time to sit up, pay attention, and spice up the details.



# Chapter 8

## Equipment and Technology

This chapter deals with defining pieces of equipment in game terms. Pieces of equipment not given stats in this chapter are either too insignificant to need stats, or have been left up to the GM to create them himself using the existing items as guidelines.

Most all items will have one or more of the following statistics:

### Weapon Rating (WR)

A weapon's Weapon Rating is added to the amount of stress inflicted on a successful attack. If the attack misses however, the Weapon Rating has no effect.

### Armor Rating (AR)

The Armor Rating for armor and shields indicates the amount of stress it negates from a successful hit. For instance, if you have an AR of 2, and you are hit for 3 point of physical stress, you'd only check off one stress box.

If you are ambushed or for some other reason unable to bring your shield up to defend yourself, you may not add the Armor Rating provided by a shield.

### Armor Stress

When attacked in a physical conflict, you may elect to divert any stress you suffer to your armor instead. However, once all of the armor's stress boxes are filled, it takes a Consequence of *Damaged*. This stress clears at the end of the scene, but the *Damaged* Aspect remains until it is repaired. See pg. 267 for more on repairing *Damaged* armor.

### Explosive Rating (ExR)

Explosives allow you to make an attack against everyone in the target zone, and the explosive's Explosive Rating is added as a bonus to the attack roll.

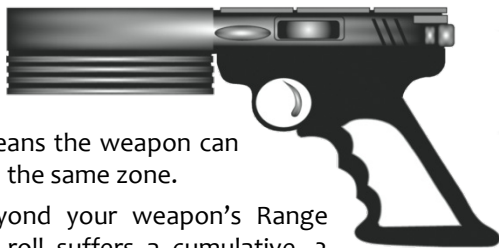
### Equipment Rating (ER)

The Equipment Rating for tools indicates the bonus gained on an Ability roll when that tool is used with an associated Ability in a relevant way.



## Range

A weapon's Range is the maximum number of zones away the target can be without causing the attacker to suffer penalties. A range rating of 0 means the weapon can only be used to attack enemies in the same zone.



For every additional zone beyond your weapon's Range rating the target is, the attack roll suffers a cumulative -2 penalty up to a maximum number of zones equal to twice the weapon's Range rating.

Ranges marked with "TH" indicate that the item must be thrown. An "EX" indicates that the weapon is explosive, and an attack is made against everyone in the target zone.



## Tech-Level (TL)

This rating is a rough estimate of the level of technology a setting needs to have to feature an item. This is a very general scale and the GM is of course the final arbiter in regards to what has, and has not, been invented yet in his game world.

**TL 1** – Sticks and stones. People of this TL are very primitive and at best probably just tie sharpened rocks to the end of sticks to make crude spears.

**TL 2** – The people of this era have discovered basic metal working and have put it to use. Weapons of this time include swords and crossbows, and medicine consists of herbal remedies.

**TL 3** – The early to late Renaissance era. This TL features the building blocks of modern day tech ranging from complex metal armors, to the first muskets, up to the early internal combustion engines and printing presses.

**TL 4** – This is the "modern day". People have automatic weapons, computers, and cars.

**TL 5** – In this TL, much of the "modern day" technology has evolved into more fantastic forms. Coil guns, powered armor, star ships and fully immersive virtual reality are all possible.

**TL 6** – Compared to "modern day" TL 4 technology, the tech of TL 6 would be considered magic. Man portable beam weapons, force fields, digital uploading of the conscious mind, faster than light travel... all of these things may be possible in TL 6 settings.



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# Cost Rating

An item's Cost is the measure of the average value of an item. Generally the Cost is about 4x more expensive than an item of the next lowest Cost. So with that in mind, in a modern setting Costs would work out something like this:

Cost Rating	Estimated Value in Modern US Dollars
0	Around \$5
1	Around \$25
2	Around \$100
3	Around \$400
4	Around \$1,600
etc...	etc...

Note that GMs may decide to adjust the Cost of an item depending on the setting Tech-Level, how much demand there is for the item, whether or not its legal to own, how hard it is to purchase or transport, etc.

The Costs for items listed in the tables later in this chapter are based on the Cost of the item during the Tech-Level in which it was introduced. For example, a Light Pistol was introduced in TL 4, so the Cost listed is based on a TL 4 campaign. In later TL campaigns, it might be cheaper since more advanced weapons are commonplace or maybe even more expensive if it is viewed as an antique. Get with your GM to determine exact pricing.

To purchase an item you need simply roll your Resources. If the result of your roll is equal to or greater than the Cost of the item, you may purchase it. If you fail, you may not attempt another purchase of that item, or an item of equal or greater Cost, this session. GMs may, however, allow you to attempt another purchase if your character comes into some money during the session.

For a more detailed method of handling purchases, see the optional Wealth Stress Track on pg. 242.



# Equipment Modifications

Accessories and modifications may be made or added to various weapons, armor or other equipment. These provide the items with an Aspect or Advantage. For example, adding a scope to a rifle may add the *Scoped* Aspect, while powered armor may feature the *Enhanced Strength* Aspect.

Adding an Aspect to an item increases it's Cost by +1 for every Aspect added. Adding an Advantage increases the item's Cost by an amount equal to the Advantage Point value of the Advantage added.

The total AP cost of any single Advantage added to an item may not exceed the setting's TL.

The GM may also allow you to add primarily negative Aspects, such as *Rusted*, to an item to decrease the total Cost by -1.

## Other Notes

**Beam Weapon** – These weapons fire a constant stream of focused energy. You may use “beam weapon” special attacks. See pg. 263.

**Full Auto** – These weapons feature extremely high rates of fire. You may use “full auto weapon” special attacks. See pg. 277.

**Gravitic** – Using advancements in gravity manipulation, these electronic melee weapons amplify and redirect the natural gravity imparted on the weapon, delivering it to the target when struck. Thus the weapon’s impact is dramatically increased with an extra helping of pure kinetic force. Such weapons are powered with a compact power cell which is good for about 100 kinetic surges.

**Mono-Edged** – These bladed melee weapons are created with an almost infinitely sharp edge. At the very tip of the edge, a single carbon nanotube runs the length of the blade. This tube is approximately 1/50,000<sup>th</sup> the width of a human hair and is harder than diamond. Such weapons never need to be sharpened, but over time it may need to have its leading edge, the nanotube “wire”, replaced. Despite the advanced technology required to build them, mono-edged weapons are not, themselves, electronic.



## Ammunition

When you purchase a ranged weapon, you get one “unit” of ammunition for free. This might be a single magazine, six rounds for your revolver, a quiver of arrows, etc. The amount of ammo in a “unit” is intentionally vague since FATE isn’t about tracking every bullet or arrow fired.

However, should you ever run out of ammo (see pg. 284), your current unit is spent and you’ll need to reload with a new one.

Additional units of ammo have a Cost rating of 1, though special ammunition may cost more. See pg. 319 for special types of ammo. For example, if you purchase three extra units of ammo, the extra ammo is recorded on the character sheet as “Extra Ammo x 3”. If you run out and have to reload, it simply becomes “Extra Ammo x 2”.



## Item Aspects

Aspects on items such as weapons or armor can be invoked or compelled just like normal Aspects; you have the Aspect just by wielding the weapon, wearing the armor, or holding the item. They're a way to inject some realistic-feeling tactical detail into combat. So if you're using a dagger, and you get into close combat with a great sword wielder, you might invoke their sword's *Huge(P)* Aspect to get a bonus to attack or defend against them.

Aspects are listed in *italics* to separate them from other notes.

Common weapon and armor Aspects are as follows, with some advice on how to use them:

***Anti-Vehicular*** – These weapons are specifically designed to be able to deal damage to vehicles and hardened equipment. This Aspect might be invoked for effect to allow you to potentially damage the vehicle. See pg. 404 for more on attacking vehicles.

***Armor Penetrating*** – Rounds fired from these weapons move extremely fast and fragment little, packing enough focused kinetic energy to penetrate even the toughest armor. But since these rounds tend to fragment less and usually pass cleanly through the body, they are often less damaging than rounds that break up and/or get stuck in the body.

***Bulky*** – This item is heavy, cumbersome, and unbalanced. It can often be compelled to hinder movement or balance and is tiresome to carry or wear for long periods of time.

***Energy Blade*** – This weapon consists of a handle or haft that emits a “blade” of condensed and contained energy. The blade itself is weightless and it can cut through most anything, though it can be blocked or parried with another energy blade.

***Flexible*** – Flexible weapons such as whips or flails. While a bit more difficult to control, they are better able to get around the enemies defenses. They may be compelled to make them harder to attack with, but they may also be invoked to better bypass an enemy's defenses.

***High Capacity*** – Weapons with this Aspect tend to hold a lot of ammo. You can invoke this Aspect when using full auto maneuvers to help avoid running out of ammo.

***Huge(P)*** – These weapons are massive in size, are very heavy, and next to impossible to hide. They deal tremendous damage, but do not work well for precision work. You might invoke this Aspect for intimidation, or it may be compelled when trying to avoid collateral damage when fighting in close quarters or striking at targets very close to you. This Aspect can also be compelled by others to give them an advantage in initiative or to force a penalty any time a weapon this big is used with one hand.

***Large*** – These weapons are awkward and heavy. While they offer substantial damage potential, they are cumbersome. Typically this Aspect is compelled by others to get an initiative advantage against you, or it can be compelled when you try to hide such weapons. This Aspect could also be compelled any time you use a weapon this big with one hand.

**Limited Ammo** – These weapons have small capacity magazines and need to be reloaded more frequently. Compels on this Aspect usually require the character to roll to see if he is out of ammo, or to make such a roll more difficult. See pg. 284 for more on running out of ammo.

**Long** – These melee weapons are very long and allow you to attack enemies at a greater distance than most. The GM may allow you to invoke this Aspect to attack enemies in an adjacent zone or even to gain a bonus on initiative against an opponent who must get by your weapon to get to you.

**On Fire!** – See page 274 for information on burning targets and zones. If you have this Aspect placed on you, you are effectively exposed to an intensity 6 fire and will continue to take damage until it is removed.

**Reliable** – These weapons feature simple mechanisms that almost always work properly. When subjected to an attack or situation in which most such weapons would fail, weapons with this Aspect usually keep working if the Aspect is invoked.

**Restricting(P)** – Armor with this Aspect tends to be so heavy and/or cumbersome that mobility is pretty much constantly hampered.

**Shotgun(P)** – Weapons with the Shotgun Aspect fire a blast of pellets, or some other projectiles, in a cone shaped pattern. This Aspect may be invoked at close range a more damaging attack, or compelled a range of a few zones for a lessened effect.

**Slow Firing** – For whatever reason, this weapon takes a while to fire. Invoking or compelling this Aspect may mean the weapon is unable to be used two consecutive rounds in a row, or it may cause them to act at a lower initiative.

**Small** – These weapons are small enough to be hidden on the body and works well in close quarters combat. You might invoke this Aspect for a bonus on initiative rolls or attempts to hide the item. However, their small size and light weight mean they don't fare well when defending against larger weapons.

**Unreliable** – These weapons tend to jam or misfire. Accepting a compel on this Aspect means you have to spend the next round clearing the weapon and making it ready to fire again.

## Size-Related Aspects for Weapons

Many weapons have Aspects that relate to their size, weight or length; such as *Small*, *Large* or *Huge(P)*. These Aspects can be invoked or compelled for a bonus on the attack roll, but this should only be allowed in certain situations. Generally, GMs should not permit invoking a *Large* or *Huge(P)* weapon's Aspect for a bonus on the attack roll just because the weapon is big, or compelling a small weapon's *Small* Aspect just because it is small. That's already factored into the weapon's WR.

These sorts of Aspects should be invoked or compelled for a bonus or penalty on the attack roll only if they offer some distinct advantage or disadvantage based on the current situation. For example, small weapons are effective in a grapple or very close combat, while larger weapons are harder to use in confined spaces. In a stand up fight in an open area, neither of those Aspects are likely to come into play for standard attack rolls.



## FIREARMS

<b>Pistols</b>	<b>WR/ExR</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>TL</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Notes and Aspects</b>
Matchlock Pistol	+3	1	3	3	Slow Firing(P), Unreliable, Small
Light Revolver	+3	2	3	3	Reliable, Limited Ammo, Small
Heavy Revolver	+4	2	3	4	Reliable, Limited Ammo, Small
Light Pistol	+3	2	4	3	Small
Heavy Pistol	+4	2	4	4	Small
Light Gauss Pistol	+5	2	5	3	Armor Penetrating, Small
Heavy Gauss Pistol	+6	2	5	4	Armor Penetrating, Small
Light Laser Pistol	+6	3	6	3	Beam Weapon, Small
Heavy Laser Pistol	+7	3	6	4	Beam Weapon, Small
<b>Submachine Guns (SMGs)</b>	<b>WR/ExR</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>TL</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Notes and Aspects</b>
Light SMG	+3	2	4	4	Full Auto
Heavy SMG	+4	2	4	5	Full Auto
Light Coil SMG	+5	2	5	4	Full Auto
Heavy Coil SMG	+6	2	5	5	Full Auto
Light Laser SMG	+7	3	6	4	Beam Weapon
Heavy Laser SMG	+8	3	6	5	Beam Weapon
<b>Assault Rifles</b>	<b>WR/ExR</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>TL</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Notes and Aspects</b>
Carbine	+5	3	4	4	Full Auto, Armor Penetrating, Large
Heavy Assault Rifle	+6	3	4	5	Full Auto, Armor Penetrating, Huge(P)
Coil Carbine	+7	3	5	4	Full Auto, Armor Penetrating, Large
Heavy Coil Assault Rifle	+8	3	5	5	Full Auto, Armor Penetrating, Huge(P)
Gauss Carbine	+8	3	5	4	Armor Penetrating, Large
Heavy Gauss Assault Rifle	+9	3	5	5	Armor Penetrating, Huge(P)
Laser Carbine	+10	4	6	4	Beam Weapon, Large
Heavy Laser Assault Rifle	+11	4	6	5	Beam Weapon, Huge(P)
<b>Shotguns</b>	<b>WR/ExR</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>TL</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Notes and Aspects</b>
Light Shotgun	+4	2	3	3	Large, Shotgun(P)
Heavy Shotgun	+5	2	3	4	Large, Shotgun(P)
Light Gauss Array	+6	2	5	4	Armor Penetrating, Large, Shotgun(P)
Heavy Gauss Array	+7	2	5	5	Armor Penetrating, Large, Shotgun(P)
<b>Rifles</b>	<b>WR/ExR</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>TL</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Notes and Aspects</b>
Musket	+4	2	3	4	Huge(P), Slow Firing(P), Unreliable
Light Sniper Rifle	+6	4	4	4	Huge(P), Scope
Heavy Sniper Rifle	+7	4	4	5	Anti-Vehicular, Huge(P), Scope
Gauss Light Sniper Rifle	+9	5	5	4	Anti-Vehicular, Armor Penetrating, Day/Night Scope, Huge(P)
Gauss Heavy Sniper Rifle	+10	5	5	5	Anti-Vehicular, Armor Penetrating, Day/Night Scope, Huge(P)
Light Laser Sniper Rifle	+11	6	6	4	Anti-Vehicular, D/N Scope, Huge(P)
Heavy Laser Sniper Rifle	+12	6	6	5	Anti-Vehicular, D/N Scope, Huge(P)



## Transhumanity – TL 6

The concept of “transhumanity” stems from the idea of humanity reaching a level of technological advancement that opens the door to forced evolution and virtual immortality through the digitization of the mind.

Most games in the transhuman genre take place in very late Tech-Level 5 or 6 campaigns. See pg. 300 for more on Tech-Levels.

This is a genre that changes the way you traditionally play an RPG. The main difference being that characters can save themselves in much the same way you might save a file on a hard drive. Once killed, a backup of their mind can be brought online and placed within a new body, which may or may not even be human.

In these sorts of games, death is a speed bump instead of a final destination. And because of these strange concepts we’re giving the genre some special consideration in this section in an effort to help GMs get started with their own transhuman themed campaigns.

The exact methods of digital uploading and transference may differ from setting to setting, but the general concepts remain the same.

### The Digitized Mind

This is the single most dramatic difference between a standard human and a “transhuman” character.

These types of characters feature an implanted computer system set up to constantly scan and monitor the subject’s brain. This tiny computer network can perform basic computing functions as well as interface directly with the mind of its “host”.

The implanted system functions as a personal computer, media player, augmented reality interface, alarm clock, positioning and mapping system, file storage system, social networking client, messaging program, etc. And all of these functions are controlled purely by thought alone.

The interface allows the computer to project any sensation directly into the mind of the host, allowing him to see, hear, touch, taste, and even feel artificially generated stimuli.

The wireless connectivity of the system generally has a range of about ten miles and sports cutting edge counter intrusion software. It also features medical sensors that monitor hundreds of different factors regarding the host’s health.

# Chapter 9

## Vehicles

### Steps of Vehicle Creation

1. What is the Vehicle?
2. Determine the Vehicle's Size.
3. Select three Vehicular Aspects.
4. Purchase the Vehicle's Abilities.
5. Select three Specialty Aspects.
6. Purchase Vehicular Advantages.



### Step #1: What is the Vehicle?

When designing a vehicle, the first question you must ask yourself is “What is this thing for?”

If your vehicle is purely for transportation, it needs to be fast and agile. If it's for hauling cargo, it needs to be big and strong with plenty of storage area. If the vehicle is a weapon of war, it needs to be protected, and it needs to have the armament to get the job done.

You'll also need to determine what the Vehicle's Technology Level (TL) is, as that is used to determine several factors as explained later in this chapter. More information on technology levels can be found on pg. 300.

Also, despite the use of the term “Vehicle”, this system can also be used to create immobile structures, from simple houses to command bunkers or impregnable fortresses.



### Step #2: Size

Size plays an important part in designing a Vehicle, determining such factors as its Base Cost, its Abilities, and the amount of modifications it can be equipped with, which take the form of Advantages.

In addition, a vehicle's Size is also a major factor in vehicular conflicts since bigger vehicles tend to have larger weapons, better electronic systems, more crew members, and thicker armor.



Size	FP Refresh	Abilities (Max)	Base Cost	Adv. Points	Sample Vehicles
1	2	3 + TL (3)	5	-2 + TL	Motorcycle, Jet Ski, Horse Drawn Carriage
2	2	5 + TL (3)	6	-1 + TL	Car, Small Boat, Single Engine Aircraft
3	3	7 + TL (4)	8	0 + TL	Shipping Truck, Tank, Fishing Boat, House
4	3	9 + TL (4)	11	4 + TL	Airliner, Battleship, Cargo Ship, Mansion
5	4	11 + TL (5)	15	8 + TL	Aircraft Carrier, Industrial Complex
6	4	13 + TL (5)	18	16 + TL	Space Station, Military Installation
7	5	15 + TL (6)	22	24 + TL	Planetoid Sized Orbital Space Port

\* The vehicle has a number of Structural stress boxes equal to its Size + Structure + Modifiers.

\* The vehicle has a number of System stress boxes equal to its Size + Systems + Modifiers.

\* The vehicle has a number of Crew stress boxes equal to its Size + Crew + Modifiers.

## Step #3: Vehicular Aspects

Like characters, Vehicles are created with a Defining Aspect and two other Vehicle Aspects. These Aspects tend to answer the following questions:

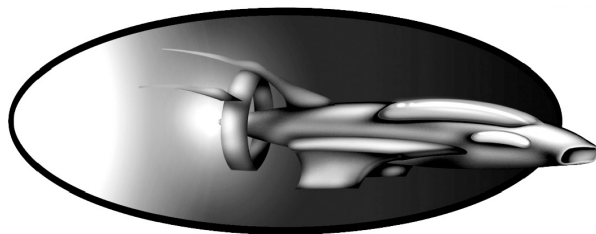
1. What does it do?
2. Where did it come from?
3. How it is seen by the public?

### Sample Defining Vehicle Aspects

- + *Tramp Freighter*
- + *Noble's Carriage*
- + *Family Sedan*
- + *Interplanetary Cruise Ship*
- + *Nuclear Submarine*

### Other Sample Vehicle Aspects

- + *Standard Four Wheeled, Four Door Sedan*
- + *Massive Bipedal War Machine*
- + *"This thing is a status symbol."*
- + *Created in Secret by the Rebels*
- + *Designed for Recon and Surveillance*
- + *Often Associated with Having Poor Owners*





## Step #4: Abilities

Vehicles only have seven different Abilities. These Abilities serve the same function for machines as they do for characters.

Note that vehicles pulled by animals, such as a horse and carriage, may use the animal's Abilities instead of the vehicle's Abilities in many cases.

### Vehicle Abilities

**Crew** – for vehicles with a crew, this Ability is the measure of their general competence. It is the bonus added to any action performed by NPC crew members.

**Maneuverability** – this measures how quickly the vehicle can turn, dodge, and perform high speed maneuvers

**Structure** – the amount of physical punishment the vehicle can take. This may be aided by armor and/or just plain good engineering

**Sensors** – the eyes and ears of the machine, such as long range detection and analysis sensor suits

**Speed** – the measure of the vehicle's top speed

**Systems** – the capabilities and amount of punishment the systems can take from electronic attacks, hacks, viruses and the like

**Weapons** – the potency of the vehicle's onboard weapons, such as guns, missiles, lasers, etc.



## Step #5: Specialty Aspects

As with Specialty Aspects for character's, Vehicles have Specialty Aspects that better define their Abilities. These Aspects might represent some special system or modification or just be a natural product of the design.

Or, in the case of Vehicles manned entirely by NPCs, the Vehicle may have Aspects that reflect the specialties of the crew.

Vehicles are created with three Specialty Aspects.

### Sample Specialty Aspects

- + Particle Acceleration Cannons (Weapons)
- + Advanced Counter-Intrusion Software (Systems)
- + High Resolution Sensor Array (Sensors)
- + "What a Bucket of Bolts" (Structure)
- + Can Turn on a Dime (Maneuverability)
- + Fastest Ship in the Galaxy (Speed)
- + Dr. Elizabeth Halstad (Crew)



## Star Ship, Interceptor

**Cost:** 8                      **TL:** 5  
**Size:** 2                      **Refresh:** 2

### Vehicle Aspects

- + One Person Fighter Craft
- + Short Range Spacecraft
- + Works Well with Other Interceptors

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<b>Crew</b>	0
<b>Structure</b>	2
<b>Speed</b>	3
<b>Weapons</b>	2
<b>Maneuverability</b>	3
<b>Sensors</b>	2
<b>Systems</b>	2

---

<b>Structural Stress</b>	4
<b>System Stress</b>	4
<b>Crew Stress</b>	N

### Specialty Aspects

- + Rail Cannons with High Density Rounds (Weapons)
- + Redundant Environmental and Safety Systems (Systems)
- + Turns/Inverts on a Dime (Maneuverability)

### Notable Advantages:

- **Space Flight** – The craft is capable of flying through space.
- **Armored** – Vehicle gains an Armor rating of 2.
- **Intuitive Interface** - Moving the Vehicle does not count as a Supplemental Action when performing other tasks.
- **Onboard Computers** – Has onboard Rank 2 computer system.
- **Network Connectivity Suite** – Wirelessly connects to local networks.
- **Auto-Cannon** – Weapon Rating: 4, can spend a FP to attack every enemy in a zone, but the cannon's WR is not added.
- **Upgraded (x4)** – Adds 4 additional Ability ranks.

## Star Ship, Light Freighter

**Cost:** 10                      **TL:** 5  
**Size:** 3                      **Refresh:** 5

### Vehicle Aspects

- + Small Cargo Transport Craft
- + Long Range Spacecraft
- + "This is my home."

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<b>Crew</b>	2
<b>Structure</b>	4
<b>Speed</b>	2
<b>Weapons</b>	1
<b>Maneuverability</b>	1
<b>Sensors</b>	2
<b>Systems</b>	3

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<b>Structural Stress</b>	7
<b>System Stress</b>	6
<b>Crew Stress</b>	5

### Specialty Aspects

- + Extra Reliable Cargo Containment and Shielding (Structure)
- + Redundant Environmental and Safety Systems (Systems)
- + Slow and Clumsy (Maneuverability)

### Notable Advantages:

- **Space Flight** – The craft is capable of flying through space.
- **Armored** – Vehicle gains an Armor rating of 2.
- **Onboard Computers** – Has onboard Rank 2 computer system.
- **Crew Quarter** – The ship provides living space for its crew.
- **Network Connectivity Suite** – Wirelessly connects to local networks.
- **Cargo Hold** – A Vehicle can usually carry two items of a Size category one smaller than itself.
- **Upgraded (x3)** – Adds 3 additional Ability ranks.
- **Fated(x2)** – Vehicle's Refresh is increased by +2.

# Chapter 10

## Organizations

### This Chapter and the Fate Fractal

The concept that has come to be known as the “Fate Fractal” is thus; everything can be created using the same (or very similar) processes as creating a character. This also means that conflict involving things created in this manner can be resolved in a similar way.

As with the vehicles in Chapter 9, in this chapter we will be applying this concept to create groups of individuals that behave, according to the game rules, similarly to a single character.

If there is something in these chapters that have you confused, remember to try to think of these groups of people and vehicles like a single character. Often what works for one will work for the other.



### What is an Organization?

An Organization is a group of several individuals who act to further the same goals. This might be the local police, a corporation, an army, a town, a city or even an empire. It consists of both the people who make it up and its physical presence in the form of land, buildings and other assets.

Actions taken by the Organization as a whole are generally dealt with on the Campaign Scale.

### Steps of Organization Creation

1. Think about your Organization’s concept and pick out a cool name for it.
2. Determine the Organization’s Influence Level
3. Select five Organization Aspects.
4. Purchase the Organization’s Abilities.
5. Select a number of Asset Aspects equal to its Influence +2



	FP	Abilities	
Influence	Refresh	(Max)	Sample Membership
0	--	--	Individual Character
1	--	--	A Unit, ranging from 4 to 12 individuals
2	3	18 (3)	A small local company, large club, town-wide cult or minor noble house
3	3	20 (4)	A small national company, influential noble house, small town
4	4	22 (5)	A national club or regional organized religion
5	4	25 (6)	A national corporation, world-spanning cult, port city
6	4	28 (7)	A national capital or large international conglomerate
7	5	31 (8)	A multi-continent spanning empire, or multi-world corporation
8	5	35 (9)	A world government, or system spanning mega-corporation
9	5	39 (10)	A multi-system spanning empire or mega-corporation
10	6	45 (11)	A galaxy-spanning empire

## Step #1: The Organization's Concept

Just like with a character, the first step in creating an Organization is to sit down and think of a solid concept. And as with a character, this will depend largely on the setting you are going to be playing in and the genre(s) you're taking inspiration from.

In a fantasy game, you might have knightly orders, secret cabals of witches, merchant guilds, small towns, trading hubs, or the like. While a lack of mass communication tends to result in smaller non-governmental Organizations, it's certainly possible to have continent spanning empires.

In a sci-fi or modern game, your Organizations might be the local police, a street gang, an organized criminal syndicate, a corrupt corporation, a global government or a system spanning empire.



## Step #2: Influence

An Organization's Influence fills a bit of the same role in creating Organizations as the Campaign Power Level fills in creating individual characters. It establishes a baseline for the Abilities, Aspects, and Advantages the Organization has. In addition, the Organization's Influence is also used to determine the number of people involved with the Organization. See the table above for more.

Also, in the case of an individual attempting to take on an Organization, the individual is considered to have an Influence of 0. Units, which we will cover later in Chapter 11, have an Influence of 1.





# The City of Brightspring

Brightspring is a moderately sized city built predominantly of granite and defended by thick walls. It is well known for its lavish mausoleums and for being a bastion of Imperial influence in the region.

Most of its revenue comes from trade and taxes, which is aided by the fact that it is built upon a ley line and gets regular visits from members of the High Order of Arcanis.

**Organization Aspects:** **Influence: 5, Refresh: 4**

- *A Center of Trade and Imperial Power*
- *“Obey the laws, and you shall remain safe and protected.”*
- *Grew from a Small Town into a Bustling Center of Trade*
- *Center of Law and Order in the Region*
- *Malevolent Factions Lurk in the Shadowed Alleys*

Physical		Mental		Social	
Logistics:	2	Craft:	2	Connections:	2
Perception:	2	Knowledge:	3	Relations:	3
Security:	4	Morale:	3	Resources:	4
Stress Track:	9	Stress Track:	8	Stress Track:	8

**Asset Aspects:**

- *Imperial Guard (Security)* – The Imperial military defends the city and acts as its law enforcement.
- *Prisoners in their Homes (Morale)* – The constant presence of overly zealous law enforcement keeps people in line, but also limits their personal freedoms.
- *Alliance with the High Order of Arcanis (Connections)* – Because a ley line runs through the city, a number of wizards of the Order pass through regularly. The city tries to maintain a good relationship with the wizards and encourages the exchange of favors between the city and the Order’s members.
- *“There is a tax on that.” (Resources)* – The city makes the majority of its money by taxing the merchants who sell within its walls. The tax is higher than in most places, but the merchants pay it because they usually see high sales here.
- *Lord Jonna Endar (Relations)* – The local Lord of Brightspring is a villain to most of the city folk and to the people of neighboring regions. They believe that he has sold his people out to the merchants, the Empire, and the Order in exchange for personal power, money and favors.
- *Brightspring Bank (Resources)* – The Brightspring Bank is a large, heavily fortified, building that houses the majority of the wealth in this region. The bank also holds a lot of influence among the nobility.
- *Father Ulik’s Flock (Morale)* – The local temple of the Host, led by Father Ulik, is a common place of worship and source of hope to the people of Brightspring.

# Talos Systems

Talos Systems began as several different companies that eventually merged into one mega-corp during the Corp Insurrection Wars of 2097. It now provides software, hardware, weapons, ships and biotech to all of the Sol system and the majority of the colonies in the Alpha Centauri system.

### Organization Aspects:

Influence: 7, Refresh: 5

- Multi-World Spanning Mega-Corporation
- “The company can provide you with everything you need.”
- Formed During the Corp Insurrection Wars
- Expansion, Colonization and Monopolistic Domination
- “We will not give Alpha Centauri to the Orion Group without a fight!”

Physical		Mental		Social	
Logistics:	4	Craft:	4	Connections:	2
Perception:	3	Knowledge:	3	Relations:	4
Security:	4	Morale:	2	Resources:	5
Stress Track:	11	Stress Track:	9	Stress Track:	11

### Asset Aspects:

- Private Jump Gate Network (Logistics) – Talos Systems owns and operates its own network of jump gates: one on Luna, one on Mars, and one on the *Segunda Casa* space station in orbit around Centauri 3.
- Demetrius Crawly (Relations) – Recently elected CEO of the company, he is smart, creative, and gives new hope for many who have lost faith in the company.
- Critical Patents in Hybrid-Morph Production (Craft) – Hybrid-Morph production has been a strong field for Talos for several decades. They hold a number of patents that allow them to integrate a sub-dermal structure designed for modular augmentations.
- “Serial Number Rt-983! You’re on the fast track for promotion!” (Morale) – The corporate structure of Talos tends to pay well and promote quickly as the company expands, but it is also very impersonal.
- Dr. Ramon Camberg (Knowledge) – Dr Camberg is one of the best physicists in all of occupied space. He is responsible for many of Talos’ recent successes.
- Partnership with Nova Swift Transports (Relations) – Talos has a very good working relationship with Nova Swift. Talos provides equipment to Nova Swift in exchange for cheap transport of goods and materials.
- Talos Rapid Response Units (Security) – Talos employees a specially trained unit of rapid response soldiers. These soldiers spend a lot of time as infomorphs awaiting download to pre-prepared high-end hybrid-morphs. They can usually be uploaded to a facility in another system, downloaded, briefed and deployed in less than an hour.
- Intervention (Security) – The *Intervention* is a massive Leviathan Class star ship owned and operated by Talos as a security measure. It has a reputation for being heavily armed and nigh indestructible.
- The Rat’s Nest (Perception) – This is a small group of employees who are tasked with reporting on the activities of fellow employees and sometimes gathering information about the competition.

# Chapter 11

## Units and Large Scale Conflict

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### What is Large Scale Conflict?

Large scale conflict is used to allow players and the GM play out events that are generally a lot more “epic” than typical Personal Scale conflicts.

For example, Duke Sunsplitter is a young farmer on a distant planet. In time he is approached by a powerful sorcerer who tells him that he has the potential to wield great power, and that he must help the budding rebellion overthrow the evil king.

Duke and the sorcerer eventually hook up with some like-minded miscreants and engage in a number of Personal Scale conflicts on their way to rescue Princess Marla, the daughter of the evil king and now leader of the rebellion.

As thanks, she conscripts Duke and pals as officers in her growing rebel force. They are given their own retinue of soldiers and lead them on a number of Skirmish Scale assaults against her evil father’s army.

As time passes and Duke proves himself a capable general, he is eventually given control of the entire army. Now he plans the assaults, manages the rebellion’s resources, and generally leads the way in Campaign Scale conflicts between the rebellion and the king’s forces.

This chapter provides you with the tools to change the scope of your campaign, “zooming in” to focus on the events of a select few or “zooming out” to see how their decisions impact thousands.



### Skirmish and Campaign Scale

Up until now, most of this book has dealt with conflicts that take place on the Personal Scale. This chapter deals with resolving conflicts at a higher level, whether by directing the actions of Units and Vehicles on a battlefield, or the Organizations that back them from a local, national, global, or even intergalactic viewpoint. See pg. 287 for more on Scales.

## What is a Unit?

A Unit is a group of characters (or one or more vehicles) that function as a single character (or vehicle) in a Skirmish Scale conflict.

### Steps of Unit Creation

1. Determine the characters (PCs or NPCs) that make up the Unit.
2. Determine the Unit's Refresh Rate.
3. Determine the Unit's Defining Aspect.
4. Determine the Unit's Size and Abilities.
5. Determine the Unit's Roster Aspects.
6. Determine the Unit's Stress Tracks.



### Step #1: The Characters that make up the Unit

The general effectiveness of a Unit is determined by the number and general power level of the characters that make it up.

When you build a Unit, you need to get a clear idea of what kind of characters it is comprised of and what their capabilities are.

Also, while some Units are comprised of several different characters, it is possible that all the characters involved may share the same basic stats such as a swarm of giant insects or an angry mob. In such cases, the GM generally won't care about how one member of the Unit differs from another.



### Step #2: Determine the Unit's Refresh Rate

The Unit's Refresh Rate is determined by finding the average Refresh Rate of all the characters in the Unit (round up) and adding an additional bonus equal to the Unit's Size.



### Step #3: Determine the Unit's Defining Aspect

A Unit gets a Defining Aspect. This Aspect fills the same role as a single character's Defining Character Aspect. This Aspect tells you what the Unit is, or what it does.

#### Sample Unit Defining Aspects

- + Marine Infantry Unit
- + Swarm of Zombies
- + Contingent of Archers
- + Goblin Hunting Party
- + Cloud of Locusts



# Chapter 12

## Antagonists

### Types of NPCs

#### Extras

Extras are the nameless masses of people your characters will encounter on a day-to-day basis. For the vast majority of them, these characters don't even need a name, much less stats.

When you need to introduce a new character, simply start with a blank character sheet and fill in a few critical pieces of data – their best Ability, the Aspects that jump out at you as most important – and leave the rest blank. When a situation arises where the Extra needs to roll an Ability or use an Aspect you haven't written down, go ahead and write it down, then roll appropriately. This results in Extra's getting fleshed out over time without needing to invest a lot of time or effort up front.

The number of stress boxes an extra has per Consequence is calculated the same as it is for PCs. However, extras do not have the full complement of Consequences. They are not an important part of the story, and in a conflict, they are quickly Defeated.

The three types of Extras, the amount of stress they can suffer, and the number of Fate Points they add to the GM's NPC Fate Point pool upon entering a scene are described below:

**Trivial Extras** are nameless guards, bartenders, village commoners, etc. They have two sets of stress boxes and can suffer only two types of Consequences Severe(P) and Defeated(P). Trivial extras do not increase the NPC FP pool upon entering the scene.

**Vital Extras** are equally nameless individuals, but serve a greater role in obstructing the PCs and challenging them. They have three sets of stress boxes and Consequences: Major, Severe(P) and Defeated(P). Upon entering a scene for the first time, Vital Extras provide the NPC pool with two additional Fate Points.

**Units** are a special type of Extra. They are actually a large number of individual characters that are treated as one character as far as the rules are concerned. And like other character, they can be designated as “Trivial” or “Vital”.

A Unit generally provides a number of additional Fate Points equal to its Size to the NPC Fate Point pool. So a Size 3 Unit that is considered a Vital Extra would add 5 FPs to the NPC pool. If the Unit were Trivial, it would only add 3.

See pg. 394 for more on Units.



## Game Master Played Character (GMPCs)

These characters are the most important characters in the game that aren't your PCs. They fill the role of the big bad guy or maybe a beloved mentor.

GMPCs should be approached with the same level of care as a new PC and have the full assortment of Aspects, Abilities, Advantages, Consequences, equipment, etc. When entering a scene for the first time, a GMPC usually provides the NPC Fate Point pool with 5 additional FP.

However, if the GMPC would have a higher than normal Refresh for some reason, you may add these additional FP as well.



## Antagonist Entries

The following information is contained in the entry for each antagonist.

**Stress Track:** The number of stress boxes the creature has for each type of Stress Track.

**Notable Advantages:** The character may have several Advantages that are already factored into the character's stats and are not listed. Advantages listed here are those of particular note.

**Total Physical Defense Modifier (AR):** This is the bonus typically added to the character's dice roll when defending against physical attacks. The number in parenthesis is the character's Armor Rating.

**Attack Modifier (WR):** This is the bonus typically added to the character's dice roll when attacking with the listed weapon. The number in parenthesis is the weapon's Weapon Rating.

This is the typical medieval city guard, an upstanding member of the community and employee of the local lord. His job is to patrol the city, acting as police and security.

**Size: 0**

- | Physical      |   | Mental        |   | Social        |   |
|---------------|---|---------------|---|---------------|---|
| Agility:      | 2 | Craft:        | 2 | Deception:    | 1 |
| Endurance:    | 3 | Knowledge:    | 2 | Empathy:      | 3 |
| Perception:   | 2 | Reasoning:    | 2 | Persuasion:   | 2 |
| Strength:     | 3 | Willpower:    | 3 | Resources:    | 2 |
| Stress Track: | 6 | Stress Track: | 5 | Stress Track: | 4 |

- Some training with the Halberd (Strength)
- Easily Bored (Willpower)
- Eye for Crime (Perception)

 $+2(+2)$ 

Physical Attack	Att. Mod. (WR)	Def. Ability	Range
Halberd	+3(+5)	Agility	0
<i>Long, Huge (P)</i>			
Baton	+3(+1)	Agility	0

This is the typical small unit of four medieval city guards.

**Size: 1**

- |                  |   |                |   |                |   |
|------------------|---|----------------|---|----------------|---|
| <b>Physical:</b> | 4 | <b>Mental:</b> | 6 | <b>Social:</b> | 4 |
|------------------|---|----------------|---|----------------|---|

- City Guard x 3
- Officer

Troll

This is the bestial big faerie troll.

Character Aspects: Size: 1  
• Bestial Giant Nocturnal Faerie

Physical		Mental		Social	
Agility:	2	Craft:	2	Deception:	2
Endurance:	3	Knowledge:	2	Empathy:	1
Perception:	1	Reasoning:	1	Persuasion:	1
Strength:	6	Willpower:	2	Resources:	2
Stress Track:	10	Stress Track:	3	Stress Track:	N

- Specialty Aspects:
- Oversized Ears and Nose (Perception)
  - Gullible (Reasoning)
  - Violent manners (Persuasion)
  - Big, Mean and scary (Persuasion)
  - Tough Bastard (Endurance)

- Notable Advantages:
- **Hide in Plain Sight** - Trolls gain +2 on rolls to hide in a stationary position.
  - **Keen Smell** - Trolls gain +2 on rolls to smell
  - **Wrestler** - Trolls gain a +2 bonus to grappling related rolls, such as when attempting to put Aspect such as *Grabbed*, *Thrown Down* or *Pinned* on enemies in hand-to-hand combat.
  - **Weakness** - Trolls are paralyzed in sunlight.

Total Physical Defense Modifier (AR): +2(+3)

Physical Attack	Att. Mod. (WR)	Def. Ability	Range
Fist	+6(+1)	Agility	0
Large Club	+6(+4)	Agility	0
Huge(P)			





Security Drone, Heavy

A large, heavy duty security drone, bought from some military surplus store. It seems to mean business and nobody is certain if the old Black Chip is de-activated permanently.

Character Aspects:

Size: 0

- Computerized Drone(P)
- Virtually Intelligent

Physical		Mental		Social	
Agility:	2	Craft:	N/A	Deception:	-4
Endurance:	5	Knowledge:	1	Empathy:	-4
Perception:	5	Reasoning:	2	Persuasion:	N/A
Strength:	8	Willpower:	4	Resources:	N/A
Stress Track:	13	Stress Track:	6	Stress Track:	N

Specialty Aspects:

- Big-F'n Arm-Mounted Lasers (Agility)
- Build to Take a Beating, and Then Some! (Endurance)
- "Access Denied!" (Willpower)

Notable Advantages:

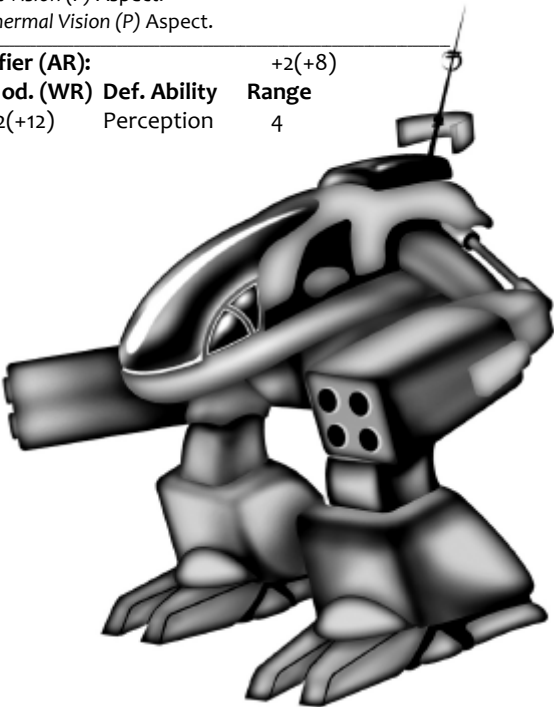
- Guns Akimbo - Gains the Aspect Guns Akimbo (P)
- Night Vision - Gains the Night Vision (P) Aspect.
- Thermal Vision - Gains the Thermal Vision (P) Aspect.

Total Physical Defense Modifier (AR): +2(+8)

Physical Attack      Att. Mod. (WR) Def. Ability      Range

Built in Laser x 2      +2(+12)      Perception      4

Beam Weapon, Huge (P)



# Chapter 13

## Game Mastery

What follows is a series of short articles intended to provide new and veteran GMs with advice on running *Strands of Fate* campaigns. And much of the same advice can carry over to other RPGs as well.



### Change it!

If you take nothing else away from this chapter, remember this: This entire book is really just a book of advice. We promise, Void Star Games isn't going to send a team of ninjas after you if you don't play exactly by the rules printed in this book.

Don't like the Campaign Power Levels we came up with? Change them! Want to use a different set of stress and conflict rules from another FATE game? Go for it!

The GM has the right to change each and every rule in this book to suit his campaign, so long as it doesn't violate the most sacred of rules...



### The “Rule of Fun”

As a GM, any time a rules dispute arises or something happens that isn't clearly addressed in this book; ask yourself one thing before deciding on a solution: “Is this solution fun for everyone?”

More than anything else, the goal of any game is to have fun. The rules provide a framework for the game but they should never violate the “rule of fun”. If a rule in this book is keeping you or the players from having the most fun they could have with this game, scrap it. Or, change it as needed. Likewise, if a player has a character that is behaving in a way that ruins the fun for another player, the issue needs to be addressed.

The most common type of fun ruining character behavior is when one character is disproportionately more “powerful” than the other characters.



# Chapter 14

## Appendix

This chapter covers a number of topics that have arisen since the first printing of *Strands of Fate*. These are additions, clarifications, and bits of errata that couldn't fit elsewhere.



### The Strands of Fate Principles of Design

#### 1. Use Aspects when Possible

When creating a new rules sub-system or game mechanics, first try to determine whether or not the existing rules for Aspects and Fate Points model your intent well enough. Any rule that could easily be forgotten, and/or may only apply in specific situations, are a good candidate for Aspects.

#### 2. Do not use Aspects when they are not a good fit.

Aspects fulfill three functions. They provide a bonus or penalty to a die roll, allow or require a reroll, or allow a player to gain some measure of narrative control. These functions are clearly defined and demonstrate the limits of what an Aspect can do.

If you need to model something about the game world, and a +2/-2, reroll or narration doesn't adequately provide the mechanic you need, do not use an Aspect. Instead consider an Advantage.

Remember that Aspects alone do not provide a numerical quantity, nor can they cause stress by themselves. And an Aspect has no affect on the game unless it is invoked or compelled, which typically costs someone a Fate Point.

*Example: While you may place the "On Fire!" Aspect on someone, it doesn't deal stress by itself. Likewise, a creature with the Aspect of "Fire Immunity" isn't immune if he has no Fate Points.*

#### 3. Limitations on "Invoke for Effect"

The option to invoke an Aspect for effect makes Aspects the most powerful traits in the game. However, be aware that they are not all-encompassing. As a general rule, invoking for effect should affect the narrative of the game, not the game mechanics. Avoid invoking for effect to deal stress or modify the amount of stress dealt with an attack in any way except for the standard +2 or -2. Instead, invoking for effect could remove the option to make an attack, or result in instant Defeat of an opponent.

# Campaign Worksheet

Campaign Power Level	Refresh	Abilities (Max)	Adv. Points	Available Advantages
Commoner	4	24 (3)	1 (1)	Expert only
Expert	5	24 (3)	3 (1)	Expert only
Hero	6	25 (3)	6 (2)	Expert and Heroic only
Action Hero	7	25 (4)	9 (2)	Expert and Heroic only
Mythic Hero	8	26 (4)	12 (5)	Expert, Heroic and Powers (No Super Powers)
Legendary Hero	9	26 (5)	15 (7)	Expert, Heroic and Powers (No Super Powers)
Super Hero	10	27 (5)	See Below	See Below
- Metro Class	--	--	20 (10)	- All, Metro Class Super Power Only
- World Class	--	--	30 (12)	- All, Up to World Class Super Powers Only
- Galaxy Class	--	--	40 (14)	- All, Up to Galaxy Class Super Powers Only
- Cosmic Class	--	--	50 (16)	- All, Up to Cosmic Class Super Powers Only
- Infinity Class	--	--	60 (18)	- All

**Campaign Premise:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Campaign's Power Level** \_\_\_\_\_

Variations from Standard CamPL (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

**Campaign's Tech-Level** \_\_\_\_\_



Characters required to be built using the Aspect Alphabet.( pg. 17) Yes/No

Will character be built collaboratively? (pg. 28) Yes/No

Allow trading Refresh for Advantage Points? (pg. 24) Yes/No

Allow purchasing Advantages with Resources (pg. 90) Yes/No

Deviating from the standard Character Advancement Rules? (pg. 29) Yes/No

If "yes" explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Using an Organic Growth Method? (pg. 30) Yes/No

Allowing Non-Human Races? (pg. 44) Yes/No

If "yes", which ones?: \_\_\_\_\_

Imposing a Fate Point Expenditure Limit? (pg. 53) Yes/No

If "yes" explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Allowing Fate Point Debt? (pg. 60) Yes/No

Does the Campaign have a Theme Aspect? (pg. 64) Yes/No

If "yes" what is it?: \_\_\_\_\_





## Power Sources/Affinity Abilities (pg. 89)

Power Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Affinity Ability: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Power Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Affinity Ability: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_



## Stress/Conflict Resolution System

☐ Default System (pg. 205) Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Thresholds (pg. 247) Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Single Set (pg. 248) Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Allowing Called Shots? (pg. 209) Yes/No

Using the Social Stress Track? (pg. 232) Yes/No

Using the Wealth Stress Track? (pg. 242) Yes/No

Using the Mana Stress Track? (pg. 245) Yes/No

Using another Stress Track? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes/No

Formula to Determine number of Stress Boxes: \_\_\_\_\_

Related Affinity Ability: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Recovery: \_\_\_\_\_



## Equipment

Tracking Ammunition? (pg. 302) Yes/No

Using the Simplified Weapons/Armor/Equipment Options? (pg. 321) Yes/No

If “yes” explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Eliminating Armor Stress? (pg. 321) Yes/No

Using the Simplified Vehicle Options? (pg. 321) Yes/No

Requiring Maintenance Costs? (pg. 324) Yes/No



**Additional Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Skills

This section offers a system of more specifically defined Skills you can use instead of the more broad reaching Abilities. This option is useful for GMs and players who want to de-emphasize the role Aspects play in defining a character, and shift some of that character definition to more static traits.

Skills are similar to Abilities in that they are rated 0 to 5, with 2 being average. And as with Abilities, this rating is added to the result of a die roll and compared to a difficulty.



## When you should use Skills instead of Abilities

Using Skills instead of Abilities, in conjunction with the proposed Aspect Reduction guidelines on page 472 for removing Specialty Aspects during character creation, can simplify character creation somewhat. This means that the player need decide on fewer traits during character creation.

It might also be worth noting that some GMs and players find Skills to be more flavorful or evocative since the names for the Skills are more specific when compared to the more generic names of the Abilities.

## When you should use Abilities instead of Skills

The Abilities work equally well for just about any genre. And as a result, once you get comfortable with them, you do not need to relearn them when switching between campaigns. If you like this consistency, the broad ranging coverage of Abilities, and Specialty Aspects, you should probably just stick with Abilities.



## Using Skills

As stated before, Skills work just like Abilities as far as the basic rules of the game are concerned. Roll the dice, add your Skill, compare your result to a difficulty or other character's result.

This means that where other rules reference an Ability, you will instead roll an appropriate Skill. Below you will find a number of Skill entries that describe the Skill in question, and provide advice for when it should be used.

In addition, the relevant rules from Chapter 7 will also be referenced, with notes about which Skills should replace which Abilities. So when reading those rules, and you are called upon to use an Ability, simply reference this section to determine which Skill you should use instead. This may sound like a lot of work, but more often than not, the choice is obvious and you won't need to look it up.

## Skills in Character Creation

Characters using the standard character creation process, though instead of purchasing ranks of Abilities, you will select Skills. The Skills defined in this book are listed below:

**Academics** - Academics measures the character's "book learning". Any knowledge that would not explicitly fall under another Skill falls under Academics.

**Alertness** - Alertness is a measure of the character's passive level of awareness, his ability to stay on his toes and react to sudden changes in his environment.

**Assets** - Assets represents the character's ability to call upon, and manage, money. This can be actual cash, gold, or credit; or it may take the form of investments or property.

**Athletics** - Athletics covers lifting, running, jumping, climbing, swimming, riding animals, and other broadly physical activities you might find in a track and field event.

**Brawl** - This is the ability to hold one's own in a fistfight, with no weapons available but one's hands, feet and fighting spirit.

**Computers** - The computer Skill is used any time a character wants to do anything with a computer, be it with software or hardware.

**Contacts** - Contacts is the general quality and quantity of your character's social contacts.

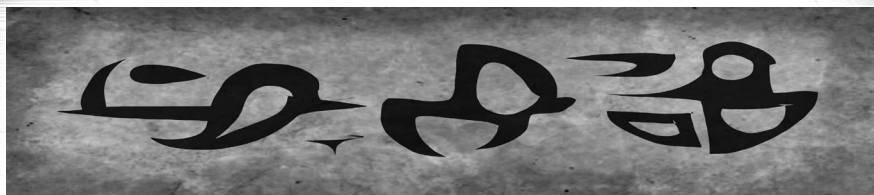
**Engineering** - Engineering is the understanding of how machinery works, both for purposes of building it and taking it apart.

**Firearms** - Firearms is used to cover attacks with any type of TL:3+ firearm, from revolvers to automatic rifles to laser blasters to heavy weaponry like rocket launchers.

**Fortitude** - Endurance is the ability to keep going despite fatigue or injury. It's also a measure of the body's resistance to shock, poison, radiation, sickness, etc.

**Guile** - Guile is the ability to lie, be it through word or deed.





**Insight** - Insight is best described as mental reflexes or “common sense”. It is also the ability to make quick and accurate decisions based on unexpected or incomplete information.

**Intimidation** - This is the Skill for interrogation (as opposed to interviewing) as well as scaring the crap out of someone.

**Investigation** - Investigation is the ability to actively look for things and, hopefully, find them.

**Lore** - Lore functions as a catch-all Skill for supernatural knowledge.

**Projectiles** - This Skill covers attacks with bows, crossbows and even slings. It covers any projectile weapon of TL 2 or less, as well as thrown weapons such as spears or knives.

**Rapport** - The flipside of Intimidation, this is the ability to talk with people in a friendly fashion and make a good impression; and perhaps convince them to see one’s side of things.

**Stealth** - This is the ability to remain unseen and unheard. Directly opposed by Alertness or Investigation, this ability covers everything from skulking in the shadows to hiding behind a door.

**Survival** - Survival is a very broad Skill covering virtually every sort of outdoor activity from wilderness survival to animal handling.

**Resolve** - Resolve is a measure of a character’s self-mastery, as expressed through things like courage and willpower.

**Weaponry** - This is the Skill for fighting with melee weapons, from swords to knives to axes to clubs to whips and energy swords.

**Affinity Skill [Special]** - Affinity Skills represents your connection to, and mastery of, a Power Source. See pg. 471 for more on Affinity Skills.



The Skill Pyramid

First, the GM determines the Campaign’s Power Level. This will determine which Pyramids the players may choose from. Once the Pyramid style has been selected you may begin filling in your Skills.

Once the Pyramid is full, any unassigned Skills default to a rating of 0.

Commoner or Expert	Hero	Action Hero	Mythic Hero
3,3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1 0,0	3,3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1 0	4 3,3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1 0,0	4,4 3,3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1 0,0,
Or	Or	Or	Or
3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1 0,	3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1	3,3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1	4 3,3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1
Legendary Hero		Super Hero	
5 4,4 3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1 0,0	Or 4,4,4 3,3,3 2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1	5,5 4,4 3,3 2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1 0,0	Or 4,4,4 3,3,3 2,2,2,2,2,2 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1



Purchasing Ranks

Instead of using the Skill Pyramid, GMs may allow you to purchase Skill ranks in the same manner you would purchase Ability Ranks.

If you are using this method, characters begin play with a number of Skill Ranks to distribute among their Skills. The number of ranks they get are determined by your CamPL, as shown below:

## Aspect Reduction

Some players and GMs feel overwhelmed with the standard starting allotment of a Defining Aspect, 5 Character Aspects and 5 Specialty Aspects. If you feel your game would be improved by having a lesser number of Aspects in play, consider using this option.

You start by removing the Defining Character Aspect. And instead of character getting 5 Character Aspects and 5 Specialty Aspects, they instead gain only 6 Character Aspects. To make up for the loss in Aspects however, they begin with 3 free Expert Advantages to help round out their character.

Consider also using this alternate Aspect Alphabet:

### Alternate Aspect Alphabet

**“A” is for Approach** – How do you go about overcoming obstacles?

- *Smuggler with a Heart of Gold*
- *“I never met a system I couldn’t crack.”*

**“B” is for Belief** - What do you believe in? What philosophies guide your Actions and make you the person you are?

- *“God will grant me Strength”*
- *“I’d lay down my life for the Queen.”*

**“C” is for Connection** – What people, places or things define you? These might be friends, allies, enemies, family heirlooms, hidden bases, etc.

- *Former Member of the Rippled Helix*
- *“She’s the fastest ship this side of the Kuiper Belt”*

**“D” is for Desire** - What are your character's goals and ambitions? What drives him to put his life, reputation and sanity on the line ?

- *“I’ll make captain one day!”*
- *Feels Undead Are Souless Husks*

**“E” is for Experience** – What important event helped define who you are as a person? This could cover anything from where you grew up, to who your parents were, to your previous professions.

- *Grew up on the Streets of Olympus*
- *Survivor of the Battle of Tellerius*

**“F” is for Flaw** – Why haven’t you achieved your goals already? What weaknesses, addictions, compulsions or challenges stand in your way?

- *Soft Spot for the Damsel in Distress*
- *Crippling Fear of Space Travel*