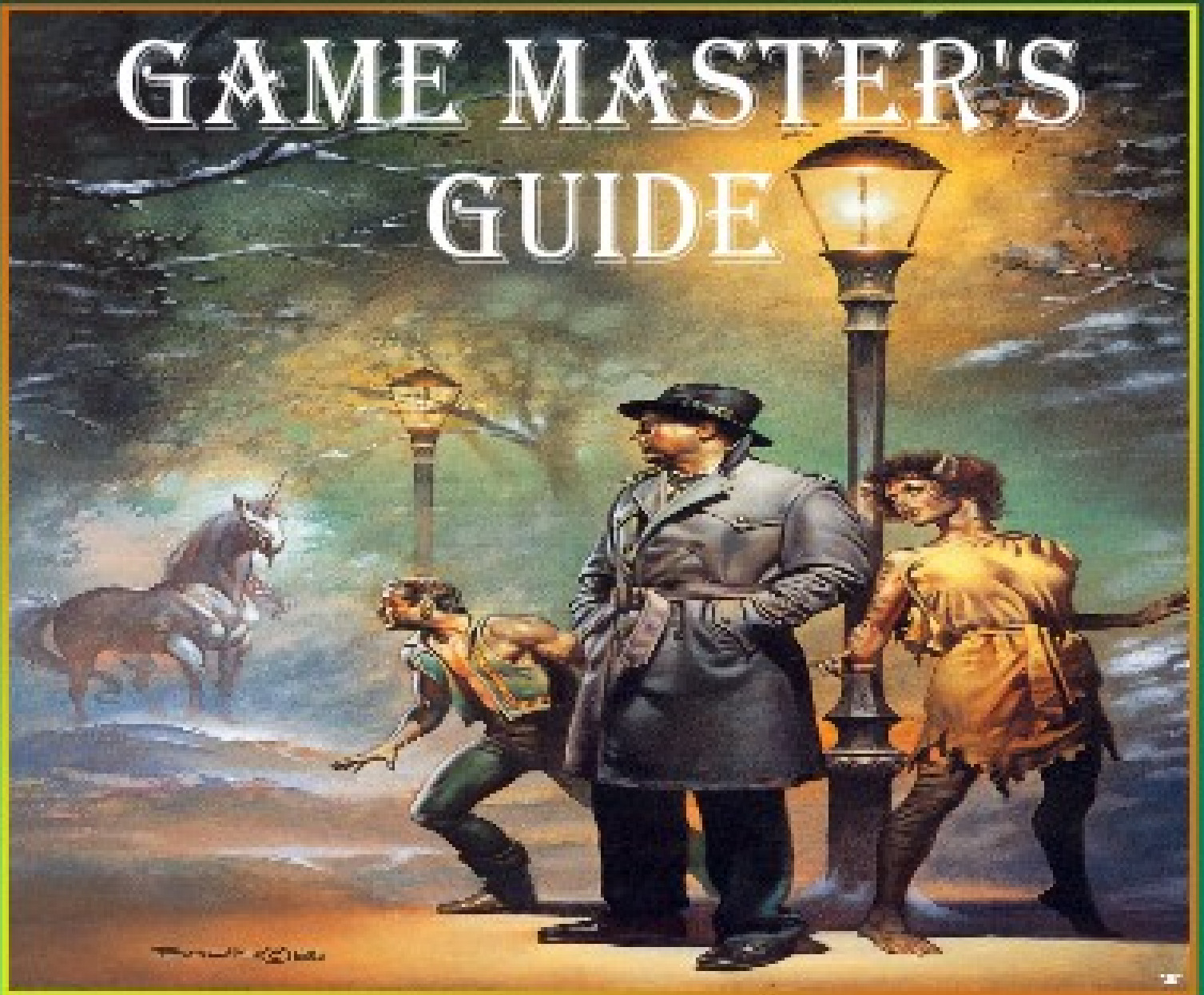


# Beyond Heroes

Core Rules BH2

## GAME MASTER'S GUIDE



The Role Playing Game for all Genres

# The Beyond Heroes Roleplaying Game Book VII: The Game Master's Guide

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## Foreword

The Beyond Heroes Role Playing Game is based on a heavily revised derivative version of the rules system from Advanced Dungeons and Dragons 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. It also makes extensive use of the optional point buying system as presented in the AD&D Player's Option Skills and Powers book. My primary goal was to make this system usable in any setting, from fantasy to pulp to superhero to science fiction.

This is the second version of my GM's Guide with additional material.

One of the toughest challenges facing a Game Master is keeping his game sessions fresh and exciting. Your job is not an easy one. It requires wit, imagination, and the ability to think and act extemporaneously. A really good Game Master is essential to a good game.

One of the principles guiding this book from the very beginning, and which is expressed throughout is this: The GM has the primary responsibility for the success of his campaign, and he must take an active hand in guiding it. That is an important concept. If you are skimming through this introduction, slow down and read it again. It is crucial you understand what you are getting into.

The GM's "active hand" extends even to the rules. Many decisions about your campaign can be made by only one person: you. Tailor your campaign to fit your own style and the style of your players. Follow the rules as they are written if doing so improves your game. But by the same token, break the rules only if doing so improves your game.

Being a good Game Master involves a lot more than knowing the rules. It calls for quick wit, theatrical flair, and a good sense of dramatic timing—among other things. Most of us can claim these attributes to some degree, but there's always room for improvement. Fortunately, skills like these can be learned and improved with practice. There are hundreds of tricks, shortcuts, and simple principles that can make you a better, more dramatic, and more creative game master.

## 1. The Players' Goals

### 1. Define the goal for the players as clearly as possible.

This is essential. If the players don't have a clear idea of where they are going, they may just dither, or even strike out in frustration at the nearest likely looking target. Not only should you convey the goal at or near the beginning of the adventure, you must also take care to give a clear minor goal in each scene of the adventure. The heroes may know they are supposed to stop Doctor Doom's plot to shrink Manhattan to the size of a grapefruit, but if they don't know how to start looking for him, you haven't clearly defined the first scene's goal.

### 2. Convey to the players the consequences if their PCs fail to reach the goal.

If the consequences of failure don't seem serious, and preferably drastic, rethink the goal. Make it important! "Important" does not always mean world-shaking. The consequences can be completely personal. For instance, if failure in the adventure means that Aunt May dies, a good Spider-Man player will be just as motivated to reach the goal as he would if failure meant the downfall of America. In assessing a goal's importance, be aware that in a role-playing context, threats against a PC's well-being are functionally identical to threats against the city, nation, or the entire world. Both are equally serious. They both involve the players' emotions to the highest degree. This principle is useful when you want to run an adventure with potentially disastrous consequences, but you don't want to materially alter the campaign world. Even though life goes

on, a single death in an adventure can be a disaster.

### 3. Establish paths to the goal that every PC can use.

If one PC is a sharp detective, a la Daredevil, and another plays a powerhouse like Hercules, give both of them ways to be useful. This is fundamental to all good scenario design. But the heroes should be able to succeed in the goal even when a particular PC is missing, unconscious, or otherwise indisposed. If the PCs can't win without that one character, something is wrong. Ideally, each individual PC could be the key to victory, with the others working as backup and support.

### 4. If possible, link the goal to distinctive features of the scenario's setting and villain.

This is really just chrome, a way to increase the players' sense of place. You can run a fine generic adventure that has nothing special to do with the setting; you just miss an opportunity, that's all. And some stories work regardless of the ultimate bad guy. The villain's psychology and peculiar motivation are unimportant; he or she is just an opponent to beat up in the last scene. This kind of story is not wrong or inherently bad. It just doesn't take advantage of many colourful possibilities of storytelling.

### **Clear his Name**

Someone has framed a hero or NPC for a dreadful crime. While the accused hero evades public brickbats or the NPC languishes in jail, the heroes must find the responsible villain. Then they must bring back satisfactory evidence of the frame-up, sometimes the trickiest part of the mission. In a continuing campaign,

keep in mind some outcome in case the heroes fail the mission. The accused must stand trial or the group's reputation is ruined. This can give the campaign a new direction for a while. But eventually, of course, you allow the heroes to discover new evidence to clear themselves.

### **Explore**

Not many places on Earth remain unexplored, but there are always the ocean, Subterranea, outer space, and other dimensions. No one can get there but super beings, so a scientist or research society asks the PCs to look around. The heroes must journey there and come back alive. Often the heroes must bring back some legendary artifact associated with the location. Most likely a villain is using the destination as a headquarters or is plotting to strand the heroes at the destination. Whether or not foul play ensues, play up the sense of wonder, the idea that the PCs are heading "where no one has gone before."

### **Find escaped villain**

A prison calls. "Uh, don't exactly know how to explain this, but remember that arch-nemesis you dragged in last month? Well-" A clue or two, of a kind only the PCs can decipher, puts the heroes on the escaped criminal's trail. This goal is straightforward and to the point, and especially suitable when the heroes have a personal grudge against the escaped villain.

### **Help a friend**

A fellow hero, dependent NPC, or childhood friend seeks out a hero's help. The NPC is being menaced by some side effect of the villain's plan. The heroes must quash the plan to get the friend out of trouble. If you prefer to increase the

paranoia level of your campaign, the "friend" could traitorously lure the heroes into the villain's deathtrap. But once stung this way, players will never regard their friends with open-hearted fellowship again.

### **Personal gain**

Super beings are, as a rule, above monetary pressures. But "gain" doesn't have to mean just money. The adventure goal might be procuring advanced technology for a hero's fancy power armour-but the needed gadget was just stolen by the adventure's villain! Alternatively, the heroes might be looking for information about their mysterious past, or legendary magic spells or treasures. Or they might be trying to "build their rep" as heroes so they can apply for an Avengers franchise.

### **Protect**

The PCs must guard a valuable person or item, such as a witness to a Maggia killing, a priceless Lemurian artifact, the US President and the Soviet Premier during a summit meeting, and so on. Another simple, straightforward goal, protecting something puts the heroes in a passive role until someone tries to do damage to the protected item. So plan on either a slow start to the adventure, or just cut immediately to the exciting scene: "You were called on to guard the ambassador, and for three days, all has gone well. But suddenly—"

### **Rescue**

A ransom note, a whispered phone call that is suddenly cut off, a broadcast appeal by the Mayor- anything can let the heroes know someone has a person or item that the PCs must get back. Usually they know the villain's identity

from the start, but must find the bad guy's stronghold, enter stealthily or invade in full force, and get out alive. (Most self-respecting heroes don't try to get out until they've thoroughly trashed the place.) Often the villain is expecting the heroes and has a deathtrap or two waiting. Only forethought and skillful entry can keep the PCs out of the trap. This goal also appears when the PCs have messed up the "Protect" goal above. "You let this mess happen," some authority figure tells them, "so get out there and make up for your mistake!"

### **Solve the mystery**

Colonel Mustard has been found dead in the drawing room, and a bloody lead pipe lies beside the body. Who did it? Murder mystery plots don't often work well in super-hero stories. Their complicated structures of motive, method, and opportunity call for heavy thinking. Many PC heroes aren't built for that kind of endeavour; or they may have powers that solve the whole case in one turn. For a more appropriate genre example, who turned the Eiffel Tower upside down, and why, and how? How did that minor villain become so powerful? What are those strange rumblings issuing from that new IRT subway tunnel? This kind of mystery suits a heroic campaign much better. The heroes immediately see courses of action. They can solve the mystery through physical means (getting to the end of that subway tunnel, for example) and confront the responsible villain in battle. This is the heroic equivalent of a mystery, and it works well in a scenario.

### **Thwart the plot**

The quintessential goal. The Master has just mind-controlled all of Wall Street and threatens the Western world with

economic chaos. The Loa is turning an entire student population of a downtown high school into drug addicts. Doctor Destroyer has planted nuclear weapons underneath every state capital building. And so on. The heroes must find the bad guy, punch his or her lights out, and destroy all equipment vital to the plot. You can't find a purer version of classic comics than this.

## 2. Preparing the players

During a campaign, the heroes will spend a lot of time together, so you have to make sure they can work well as part of a team. Examine each PC with following points in mind.

### **Motivations:**

What does this hero want to do? Do you, as Judge, find that interesting, let alone suitably heroic? Does that goal match (or at least avoid conflict with) those of other PCs in the campaign?

### **Power level:**

Assess the character's abilities, powers, and talents. Are the attacks far more powerful, or less powerful, than other PCs' attacks? Is the character invulnerable to your villains' attacks, or will the character get blown away by the first punch? In the comics, heroes of widely differing power levels work together without a problem; think of Thor and Captain America in the Avengers. But that is because comic writers give every hero careful attention and adjust the story to let them all show off. You can't control your PCs the way the writer controls heroes in the comic books. If your Mega OCC player decides to hog the limelight and wipe out every bad guy in sight, the Vigilante OCC player just has to sit back and watch. Work hard to ensure that all the PCs have about the same power level.

### **Stepping on other characters:**

Every character should have a power, skill, or "flavor" unique to the team. Don't bring in another character who can do the same thing, only better. The first player will feel useless. Also, watch out for the hero who can do virtually anything, the real jack-of-all-trades. Every well- designed character has

weaknesses and lacks, as well as strengths; this makes the character interesting, because overcoming those weaknesses is heroic. Make sure your players understand that.

### **Psychological profile:**

Is this hero not to be too blunt-crazy? Can the other PCs trust the hero? Is the hero going to kill somebody, or go berserk, or just fail to get along with teammates? If so, have the player rethink this character. You won't regret it.

### 3. Preparing villains

The opponents your PCs face can be conveniently divided into four categories: major villains, villain groups, organizations, and nuisances.

#### **Major villains:**

Every super-hero campaign needs one of these, a villain who creates mind-shattering schemes and drives your heroes to their greatest exertions. Choose this villain with care, and with an eye toward getting PCs to build really personal grudges against him or her. Perhaps the villain is connected with the origins of one of the team members or directly opposes the heroes' goals. Pick a villain that the PCs' powers uniquely qualify them to face. If they can't stop him (or her or it), nobody can. For instance, if your PCs are magicians, choose a magical villain like Tyrannus. If the PCs are experts in robotics, choose a machine intellect that wants to exterminate humanity. Et cetera. Naturally, the villain should be powerful enough to push around an individual PC with ease, and give a good fight against the entire group. You should also keep a couple of lesser villains on hand for variety's sake. Sometimes you can turn a minor villain into a major force just by looking at the character in a new way.

#### **Villain groups:**

If one villain is bad news, six will be even worse. The villain group lets you showcase bad guys who, individually, wouldn't stand a chance against your PCs. If he didn't have backup bad guys, any self-respecting hero could squash him in a round. A well-designed villain group operates as an efficient team, with code signals and pre-rehearsed tactics that should catch your PCs off guard. For example, at a leader's signal, the

team's strongest member could grab a non-flying PC, throw the hero high into the air, and all of the villains with ranged attacks could simultaneously fire on the helpless hero. If your PCs don't practice teamwork, a well-oiled group of villains can easily take them out, even when the individual villains are far less powerful than individual PCs. But after one or two of these humiliating defeats, players will get the idea and begin developing their own team tactics. Bravo!

The weakness of any villain group, of course, is the clash of gigantic bad guy egos. Play this up over the course of the campaign. If the heroes take advantage of it, they can manoeuvre the villain group into smashing itself more effectively than the heroes ever could. These groups are hard to design well. Fortunately, you need only one or two really sharp villain groups as a campaign gets rolling.

#### **Organizations:**

What would the old SHIELD stories have been without HYDRA and AIM? In the campaign, bad-guy organizations serve two good purposes:

1. They employ lots of normal-level agents for the heroes to beat up on. A combat between a hero and a slew of ordinary people proceeds much differently from a standard slugfest between super types.

2. Organizations create high-tech equipment, which provides interesting story ideas. "Our Global Encephalizer Satellite will turn Earth's entire population into helpless slaves!"

You should design or adapt two or three organizations as the campaign begins,



each with its own style, goals, and scale. "Scale" means the dimension of its operations. For example, the Maggia wants to make money through crime; but HYDRA wanted to conquer the world! These differing scales mean the organizations fulfill different roles in scenarios.

#### **Alien races:**

This is really a subgroup of "Organizations." Are your PCs the types who could handle an invasion from space, the sea, or Subterranea? Aliens can be slightly tougher than ordinary agents, and they use even more exotic technology than HYDRA.

#### **Nuisances:**

Finally there are the bozo villains. No campaign is complete without the occasional would-be hotshot, the mischievous sprite, and the idiot musclemen. Players exuberantly trash these punks. They provide laughs, relief from grim world-endangering plots, and a chance for the players to feel really superior to lowlife scum. Don't overdo it, but keep one or two of these clowns waiting in the wings when you need a break between serious adventures.

## 4. Preparing NPCs

This section deals with the role of NPCs in a campaign. There are two important rules:

1. NPCs should not be better than PCs at their chosen pursuits, unless there is a very good reason. Players like to feel that their characters are experts, indispensable to the situation at hand. If you bring in an NPC who can do what they do, but better, the players will wonder why they bothered to show up at all. And next session, they won't make the same mistake again! These heroes' abilities have been established so well that your players can hardly grouse that their characters aren't as good as these hero NPCs. What's more, you have the power to keep these titans out of the campaign, so your heroes don't have to feel upstaged. But other NPCs, the lesser lights should not be superior to the PCs. Think carefully before you give an NPC Ultimate Skill in anything the PCs can do.

2. The NPCs in a hero's life should have some role in the campaign besides their relationship to the hero. In the comics, many heroes have friends, loved ones, or relatives who occasionally figure in adventures usually as hostages, victims, or targets. These "dependents" are often a part of your PC heroes' lives, too. They serve a valuable plot function: By endangering the dependent, you can get the heroes emotionally involved in your adventure, just like in the comics. But here is where comics and games part ways. A hero in a comic is emotionally attached to the dependent and has a stake in the NPC's fate. This emotional attachment is much rarer in a role-playing situation. Players just don't relate to you, the Judge, as they would to

an aunt or husband. The dependent's plot function becomes nakedly obvious. What is the solution? Give the dependent a legitimate function in the campaign. Make the NPC genuinely useful to the heroes, perhaps as a doctor, detective, scholar, or regularly visited source of information. Then when something happens to endanger the NPC, the players' alarm will be genuine, not just role-playing. The NPC should be able to do something the heroes can't or aren't interested in doing. Good jobs to give an NPC include Daily Bugle reporter, FBI agent or government liaison, financial advisor, stoolie, and vehicle pilot. But make sure the NPC isn't better than the players

## 5. Character Types

First off here is a guide to the different player types you may encounter. However keep in mind that some players may be a combination of different types.

### **The Builder**

This player wants to have an impact on the world; to clean up a city, to change things. If your campaign never changes he won't be happy, he must have some lasting successes or will end up frustrated.

### **The Buddy**

This player is present because his friends are. He'd rather be doing other things but so long as his buddies are there so is he. He usually won't be deeply involved or interested and won't cry if the campaign suddenly shut down. You have 2 options; try to find out what he likes and give this to him to draw him in or if he really doesn't like roleplaying, ignore him. It's not like he's really contributing.

### **The Soldier**

This player wants to fight and each session must have some sort of battle.

### **The Copier**

This player expects his character to be as good or as respected as the hero he is copying.

### **The Expert**

This player creates characters who must be the best at what they do whether it be in combat, strength, piloting or science.

### **The Psycho**

This player spends a long hard week at work or school and when he gets to the game all he wants to do is kill. When confronted by a villain he kills him. If the villain uses a hostage as a shield the

player shoots right through the hostage to kill the villain. When a cop gives the hero lip, the player kills him.

If all your players are maniacal killers this is no problem but if some of them want to roleplay and not be hunted down then there's going to be problems.

### **The Thinker**

This player loves outwitting the villain. This is good in that he offers interesting solutions to problems which require analytical deduction. Its bad in that the GM has to work hard to keep up and come up with new puzzles each time.

### **The Romantic**

This player is interested in personal relationships and more heavily into the roleplaying side.

### **The Munchkin**

This player wants to create characters which bend and exploit the existing rules.

### **The Rules Lawyer**

Everything must be done according to the existing rules, the player wont deviate in any way or allow any deviation by any of the other players or the GM. He is the exact opposite to the Munchkin, he will always challenge all decisions.

### **The Showoff**

This player needs the spotlight on him all the time and will always try to upstage other players. Unless he changes there's going to be a lot of conflict with other players and you. He has to go.

## **6. Lethality**

If you feel the killings are getting out of control with even minor shoplifters then have the player confronted by the victims family or his own or face the consequences of being hunted by the police, fellow heroes and worse associates of the villain who may go after his family.

Or how about having a member of his family drugged and dressed up as a villain, then involved as part of a group combat killing everyone including the family member. Or even the stray shot which takes out a bystander.

## 7. Running the Campaign

### Getting started

Now that you have a PC hero group, a master villain or two, a couple or three organizations, functional NPCs, and all the bozo villains your players can stand, you are ready to start playing. Or, as often happens, the campaign just grew, and you have been making all of this up on the fly, in the thick of the game. Either way, it is time to discuss matters that arise as play progresses.

Any campaign begins best with an "origin adventure," the scenario that establishes its premise, introduces its characters (and, if necessary, the players) to one another, and explains why these heroes are banding together.

Origin adventures can have unusual power, because they evoke a sense that these characters' lives are changing forever... that nothing will ever be the same again. An ongoing campaign can't sustain that feeling, and shouldn't try. Players would soon get worn out!

When you design an origin adventure, aim for a dramatic statement of the campaign's essential peril, the danger that the heroes have joined forces to combat. A major plot by the campaign's master villain is an obvious and excellent choice.

The PCs may not be together, and perhaps they even don't know one another, as the adventure begins. In any case, a beginning adventure (unlike most comic-book stories) does not have to start out with a dramatic incident. It's better to spend a leisurely 10 or 15 minutes per PC, establishing the character's current life, attitudes, and perhaps powers. This nonthreatening

"trial period" helps a player get the feel of the PC before the real action begins.

In the origin adventure you can play around with players' expectations in a way that takes them by surprise. For example, if the player wants the PC to have a dependent in the campaign, you might establish one early in the origin—but then the master villain disposes of that dependent in horrible fashion!

The adventure later presents a new dependent, the one you intended all along. Meanwhile, the PC has formed a royal personal grudge against the bad guy.

But be careful. Avoid sheer ruthlessness... unless that's the campaign tone your players expect.

### Subplots

Though this may sound to outsiders like some repulsive medical condition, GMs know this is the way to foreshadow future conflicts, new villains, and amazing changes in the heroes' powers. This foreshadowing builds suspense and keeps players coming back to the game. Here are several intriguing kinds of subplots.

#### **Mysterious appearances:**

Enigmatic notes in the mail or messages on the answering machine at HQ. Enigmatic manifestations of psychic power by a dependent. Enigmatic weather, or animals lurking in an alley, or surveillance drones. The common element is mystery. You need not have a culprit in mind when you introduce the mystery. Listen to the players speculate, and try to pick up on what they find most intriguing. Then, several episodes later, it turns out they were right-sort of!

Throw in a devious twist to keep the players off guard.

**Relations with the law:**

Some new inspector or precinct captain has it in for super-powered vigilantes. The official makes life hard for the heroes in their every criminal investigation, and attacks them in the media. But does the official have an ulterior motive in the attacks? Is there some darker figure behind the scenes, manipulating public opinion?

**Increasing insanity:**

This tricky and risky episode requires a player's cooperation if you want to initiate it; or the player's character may already be heading overboard, and you decide to capitalize on the mounting craziness. The hero begins to part ways with the group. The PC's attitude becomes dangerous. At last a specially designed adventure faces the PC with the worst consequences of this new attitude. Probably the hero gets the opportunity to kill a hated foe, or the foe discovers the hero's secret identity and ruins his or her life. At this critical juncture, the hero either gives way to base impulses, or refuses to do so, thus setting the stage for a dramatic return to sanity. If you want to keep the PC in the game, make very sure the player in question is inclined to choose recovery. Otherwise, the corrupted PC should be phased out of the campaign or become a villain's henchman

**Criminal trials:**

A valued NPC (or even a PC hero!) is on trial for some frame-up. While the trial proceeds, good guys search for evidence to clear the accused, and bad guys plant more. The verdict is by no means certain. If the accused goes to prison, the

heroes may consider drastic actions to free him or her. When this subplot is resolved, the campaign may head in a new direction, with the heroes (at least for a time) on the wrong side of the law.

Character Development

The fascination of campaigning comes in watching relationships appear and mature, people come and go, stories begin and end. This section talks about some of the developments that arise in a successful campaign.

**Player characters:**

A story is inherent in almost every good character conception. Does the character have a particular goal, such as vengeance or atonement, or wiping out a given organization? Has the PC been troubled by an ongoing psychological problem, such as a fear of intimacy or a berserker rage? Is there some mystery in the PC's past, such as his or her origin, or the identity of the character's parents? All of these imply an eventual resolution to the problem, over the long term of the campaign.

The PC achieves the goal, overcomes the psychological hangup, or solves the mystery. The conflict is resolved. For example, the Human Torch, after years of dead-end romances, finally found true love with Alicia Masters and married her. The Silver Surfer found a way to leave Earth and return to the universe at large. Doctor Strange became Sorcerer Supreme. When a PC achieves the culmination of his or her story, that doesn't mean it's time for the character to retire. By that time, the PC has probably become so entrenched in the campaign that he or she takes on a kind of "elder statesman" role as an experienced hero, perhaps a leader, although his powers

shouldn't be out of balance with the other PCs. Over the course of the campaign, try to develop the PCs' stories. You won't ever have time to resolve them all, but their ongoing progress will give your stories the appeal of the Marvel comics and the players the feeling that they really matter to the campaign.

### **NPCs:**

These, too, can develop in stories. The boyfriend breaks up with the heroine and leaves town, or dies, or marries the PC. The sidekick gets corrupted by the master villain, but redeems himself with a dying gesture that defeats the bad guy. The helpless sister learns to fend for herself, opens a business, and becomes a financial success and a respected citizen. Generally, such an NPC, unlike a PC, exits the campaign at this point. The character simply doesn't inspire stories any more. But he or she may return for guest spots now and then.

### **Villains:**

One of the most interesting aspects of the campaign is the gradual metamorphosis of the heroes' opponents. Master villains are reduced to annoyances, while minor henchmen take over and grow strong. Organizations are destroyed, but their agents go freelance and make further trouble. Just as your PCs have stories, the campaign villains also pass through life-changing events and emerge from them changed. You need not worry about this for the first year or two of play, but don't overlook these possibilities as the campaign progresses.

### Aging

If your campaign goes on long enough, eventually age becomes an issue. In

Marvel comics, characters age slowly or not at all. This is one of the conventions of the genre. If heroes aged normally, the comics would eventually grow as old and tired as they do. Who could believe a 55 year old hero leaping across the rooftops? Some heroes have authentic explanations for their eternal youth. Dragoon and the Eternal Warrior don't age because they are immortal. Valhalla and Thor are demigods. In general, heroes who start out young age to a kind of "ideal point" that allows the most interesting stories. Then the aging stops, and instead the heroes' past history is revised and updated to make the current version plausible. In the campaign, you and your players can choose to (a) ignore the whole issue; (b) play an adventure that gives a plot justification for retarding or stopping the PCs' aging; or (c) specify, by Judge's fiat, a rate of aging you all can live with—one game-year per year of real time, one game-year per three or six real years, or no aging at all.

### NPCs

The heroes are not alone in their world. Give them interesting people and creatures to interact with. The NPCs can help heroes achieve their goals, put obstacles in their path, or just stand on the sidelines looking pretty. But all have a function in the story. Every NPC has a use, even a spear-carrier that the hero defeats in a couple of blows.

The great mass of NPCs are "0-level" (zero-level) characters. They can gain in wisdom and skill, but they do not earn experience points for their activities. These common folk form the backbone of every world, doing the labor, making goods, selling cargos, sailing oceans, building ships, cutting trees, hauling

lumber, tending horses, raising crops and more. Many are quite talented in the various arts and crafts. Some are even more proficient than player characters with the same training. After all, 0-level characters earn their livings doing this kind of work. For player characters such proficiencies are almost more of a hobby.

For the vast majority of 0-level NPCs you create and use in your game, all you need to know is a name, a personality, and an occupation. When the characters deal with the blacksmith or the innkeeper, there's no need to create ability scores, THACO, to-hit adjustments, Armor Class, and the like. This does assume, of course, that your player characters don't go attacking every blacksmith and innkeeper in sight. If they do, you need to know a little more about 0-level characters.

Ability Scores range from 3-18. At best, a 0-level character will have one weapon proficiency, if that character's profession reasonably allows for it. For example, a blacksmith could be proficient with a warhammer and an innkeeper might be allowed skill with a club (the axe handle under the bar...), but there's little chance a clerk is going to be skilled with any type of weapon. In nonweapon proficiencies, 0-level characters have as many as are needed (and reasonable) given their profession and age.

Thus, a blacksmith might be quite accomplished at the forge, having spent several proficiencies on the slot. Novices and incompetent craftsmen have the bare minimum training and skill. Typical journeymen spend two or three slots on their main skill. Experts and brilliant artists usually devote all their ability to a

single proficiency. Masters, who watch over the work of journeymen and apprentices, are normally no more accomplished than journeymen but have additional proficiencies in other business areas. The majority of people have from 1-6 hit points. Dwarves and gnomes average from 1-8 hit points. Adjustments can be made for occupation or condition as indicated on Table 10, below.

In your adventure, think about the characters the heroes will meet while pursuing their goal. Try to make the most important ones interesting and memorable. Make this one funny looking, that one talk with a lisp or an accent, the one over there a tourist from some foreign land.

Each important NPC has beliefs and objectives in his or her own right. Nasty NPCs have motives and methods like those of the scenario's master villain, but on a smaller scale. Friendly NPCs may share the same emotional involvement in the adventure that the players have. Neutrals just want to make a buck, observe, or be left alone. Perhaps they're just acting as inadvertent conduits for information. Your players enjoy interacting with these various personalities, and you'll have fun impersonating them. Just as important, you can use the NPCs as tools for your story. They provide many functions:

- Information sources, as with a captured thug or stoolie;
- Skilled people, such as a cryptographer who can break coded messages for a price;
- Incentives, as with the rich movie star who offers a huge donation to charity if your heroes will serve as his bodyguards on a trip through dangerous territory;

Humour or atmosphere, as with the street urchin who won't leave your gruff hero alone;

Or conflict. Sometimes the players just want to pound on something. That's fine. Throw them a minor villain or a gang of his henchmen and let them blow off a little steam. But bring in these foes for a reason, in a plausible manner, and adjust their strength to that of the player characters. These "random" encounters should not produce serious damage or otherwise obstruct the plot. Remember the earlier advice about not letting the dice mess up your story.

Following are a few general roles NPCs often play in super-hero adventures:

### The Authority Figure

Heroes usually loathe, but often respect, the NPC who has some kind of power over them. This NPC serves as an information source, an obstacle in touchy situations (meaning all those that expose the NPC's own agency), and in some cases a genuinely useful contact. But try to restrict a useful NPC's role. If the NPC always cooperates and has plenty of pull, adventures could move along much too easily for the PCs. And where is the heroism in that?

Here are several time-honoured authority figures:

#### **Government observer:**

Usually a royal pain, this man (it is practically always a man) insists on adequate supervision of all the heroes' activities. Otherwise, they lose their government clearance, and probably a lot of nifty devices like satellite communication links, jets, and even their headquarters. Whatever it may say about

our society, in practice government observers are often hostile and troublesome.

#### **Law enforcement official.**

These include officers on the beat, plainclothes detectives, precinct captains, commissioners, and FBI and CIA men (again, they are nearly always male). An international adventure could feature agents of Interpol or intelligence services of other countries. Any of them can be friendly or hostile.

Friendly officials bring heroes into troublesome cases, provide deep background information, and alert heroes to actions by hostile officials. Often a friendly official is impatient with the usual law-enforcement channels and wants to see justice done, even if not "by the book."

A friendly official is a likely NPC target for a villain's plot, providing a strong adventure hook to involve the PCs.

Hostile officials harass the heroes and stonewall PCs who want information.

If you include a hostile official in the story or campaign, establish a reason why the official doesn't make the heroes' lives even harder (for instance, by arresting suspect PCs on the spot). Perhaps the official's superior is friendly to the PCs, or the PCs have official government jurisdiction to investigate cases.

#### Lawyer.

Heroes may run afoul of the law, or at least the fringes of the law, whenever they haul someone to the police station, accidentally destroy property, break into a criminal's office, or fail to heed the



summons of a police officer. All of these things happen all the time.

Other lawyers can be mere nuisances. These ambulance-chasers may try to harass the heroes into settling out of court for "molesting" their clients, who are innocent until proven guilty of bank robbery, muggings, or whatever the heroes caught them doing.

Then there is the truly crooked lawyer, who springs villains on technicalities and casually commits perjury to frame a hero. For example, Caesar "Big C" Cicero has become so successful as a mob lawyer that he is the probable successor to leadership of the of the Maggia.

### The Friend with a Dark Secret

Here are two general varieties:

Childhood friend. This NPC, usually not a recurring cast member, knew one of the PCs in the old days, usually before the hero began his or her heroic career. You and a player can establish some retroactive reason why the PC cares about the NPC, no doubt rooted in some childhood event. Perhaps one saved the other's life.

The childhood friend returns suddenly, possibly in suspicious circumstances. Though still friendly at first, the old acquaintance soon betrays the heroes, steals something vital, harms an informant, or otherwise shows that the friend is working for a bad guy.

The friend might really be evil, or the master villain might be extorting the friend's cooperation. The bad guy holds a hostage, or the friend is just weak-kneed and buckles under to the villain's orders.

Inevitably, the interested hero must confront the childhood friend, perhaps in battle. The friend can be converted to the good guys' side or may be irredeemably treacherous. Either way, the friend usually dies at the end, at the hands of the master villain another good way to develop personal animosity between a hero and villain.

### Relative or romantic interest.

Functionally much the same as the childhood friend, but this variety of NPC can easily be a regular member of the campaign's supporting cast. A hero cares deeply about the NPC and would go to great lengths to protect him or her.

This kind of NPC never turns out to be evil, but is often temporarily mind controlled or coerced into betraying the hero group. When the villain's plan is smashed, the NPC begs forgiveness. Depending on the circumstances, the heroes may welcome him or her back, or abandon the NPC to a solitary life outside the campaign.

Note that in a campaign, NPC relatives or lovers should have some useful role in addition to the emotional tie to a PC.

### The Guest Star Hero

Although guest stars work in the comics, because a reader finds all the heroes equally interesting, in a game the guest hero is just another NPC. And above all, NPCs must never make the PCs look bad! Note that the guest hero should not solve the adventure's main problem, rescue the PCs from a deathtrap before they've tried to rescue themselves, or otherwise steal the PCs' thunder.

### The Hero Worshipper

Publicly known heroes may have fan clubs, or just one or two groupies. A groupie can be a fun way to stroke a player's ego, or the NPC can be a pest who demands autographs at inopportune times, hangs around the headquarters, and interferes during battles with villains. Worst of all, the hero-worshiper can be emotionally disturbed.

### The Lunatic

The NPC could be crazy. There is ample precedent for this in the comics. Often the loony knows something significant to the adventure, and the heroes have to put up with his or her babbling to get the clue.

### The Scientist

This NPC type is often not far removed from the previous one, but the expert doesn't froth at the mouth—at least not publicly. The heroes must humour this NPC's eccentricities because of his or her valuable knowledge. Beware of making the NPC an expert in one of the PCs' chosen fields. If this is so, the NPC should be less qualified than the hero, or not given to hogging the stage and showing up the PC. Alternatively, a scientist's researches may have gotten him or her into really deep trouble, and it's up to the PCs to extricate the "expert."

### The Snoopy Reporter

A classic NPC. This journalist knows that uncovering a secret identity or a skeleton in the closet would be the scoop of the decade. In modern times newspaper reporters are being supplanted by hair-sprayed TV "reporters" who slept through their Ethics in Journalism classes. But media

outlets can always serve as a source for the more traditional type of snoop.

### The Stoolie

Every streetwise hero maintains a network of informants. Those who don't may meet stoolies through the police department, or the stoolie may seek out the heroes to deliver some especially hot information. These characters are all different, often have very colourful personalities, and can be either tough guys or comic relief. If they come across some really dangerous information, they can end up dead-or, that is, start an adventure by dying in a hero's arms.

### Stats for average NPCs from ancient, modern and future eras.

#### **Average Civilian**

STR	9	CON	9	CHA	9
	DEX	9	INT	9	
	WIS	9			
MR	9	HPs	4	AC	10
	Thac0	20			

#### **Average Military Officer**

STR	10	CON	11	CHA	10
	DEX	10	INT	10	
	WIS	10			
MR	11	HPs	6	AC	10
	Thac0	19			

#### **Average Police Officer**

STR	10	CON	11	CHA	10
	DEX	10	INT	9	
	WIS	9			
MR	11	HPs	6	AC	10
	Thac0	19			

#### **Average Soldier**

STR	10	CON	11	CHA	9
	DEX	10	INT	9	
	WIS	9			

MR 11 HPs 6 AC 10  
Thac0 19

### **Average Thug**

STR 10 CON 10 CHA 9  
DEX 10 INT 9  
WIS 9

MR 10 HPs 6 AC 10  
Thac0 20

## Creating a Non Player Character

### **Alignment (D10)**

1. lawful good
2. lawful neutral
3. lawful evil
4. neutral evil
5. chaotic evil
6. chaotic neutral
7. chaotic good
8. neutral good
9. neutral
0. neutral

### **Possessions (or wealth) (D10)**

1. none
- 2-3. scant
- 4-7. average
8. above average
9. exceptional
10. superabundant

### **Age (D10)**

1. young
2. youthful
3. youthful
4. mature
5. mature
6. mature
7. mature
8. middle-aged
9. old
0. ancient

### **General (D10)**

1. dirty
2. clean

3. unkempt
4. immaculate
5. rough
6. ragged
7. dandyish
8. foppish
9. non-descript
10. imposing

### **Sanity (D10)**

1. very stable
2. normal
3. normal
4. normal
5. normal
6. normal
7. neurotic
8. unstable
9. insane\*
0. maniacal\*

\* Roll again, and if either insane or maniacal is indicated a second time, the character then conforms to that sanity level; in all other cases the second roll stands in place of the first.

### **General Tendencies (D20)**

1. optimist
2. pessimist
3. hedonist
4. altruist
5. helpful/kindly
6. careless
7. capricious/mischievous
8. sober
9. curious/inquisitive
10. moody
11. trusting
12. suspicious/cautious
13. precise/exacting
14. opinionated/contrary
15. violent/warlike
16. foul/barbaric
17. fanatical/obsessive
18. servile
19. cruel/callous

20. practical joker/prankster

**Personality (D8, D8)**

1-5 Average

1. modest
2. egoist/arrogant
3. friendly
4. aloof
5. hostile
6. well-spoken
7. diplomatic
8. abrasive

6-7 Extroverted

1. forceful
2. overbearing
3. friendly
4. blustering
5. antagonistic
6. rude
7. rash
8. diplomatic

8 Introverted

1. retiring
2. taciturn
3. friendly
4. aloof
5. hostile
6. rude
7. courteous
8. solitary/secretive

**Disposition (D10)**

1. cheerful
2. morose
3. compassionate
4. unfeeling
5. humble
6. proud/haughty
7. even tempered
8. hot tempered
9. easy going
10. harsh

**Intellect (D10)**

1. dull
- 2-3. average
- 4-5. active
6. dreaming
7. ponderous
8. anti-intellectual
9. scheming
10. brilliant

**Nature (D6)**

1. soft-hearted
2. forgiving
3. hard-hearted
4. unforgiving
5. jealous
6. vengeful

**Materialism (D6)**

1. aesthetic
2. intellectualist
3. average
4. covetous
5. greedy
6. avaricious

**Honesty (D8)**

1. scrupulous
2. very honorable
3. truthful
- 4-6. average
7. liar
8. deceitful

**Bravery (D8)**

- 1-3. normal
4. foolhardy
5. brave
6. fearless
7. cowardly
8. craven

**Energy (D8)**

1. slothful
2. lazy
- 3-5. normal

- 6-7. energetic
- 8. driven

### **Thrift (D8)**

- 1. miserly
- 2. mean
- 3. thrifty
- 4-5. average
- 6-7. spendthrift
- 8. wastrel

### **Morals (D12)**

- 1. ascetic
- 2. virtuous
- 3-4. normal
- 5-6. lusty
- 7. lustful
- 8. immoral
- 9. amoral
- 10. perverted\*
- 11. sadistic\*
- 12. depraved\*

\* Roll again; if perverted, sadistic, or depraved is again indicated, the character is that; otherwise, the second roll tells the true morals, and the first roll is ignored in favor of the second.

### **Piety (D12)**

- 1. saintly
- 2. martyr/zealot
- 3. pious
- 4. reverent
- 5-8. average
- 9. impious
- 10. irreverent
- 11. iconoclastic
- 12. irreligious

### **Interests (D20)**

- 1. religion
- 2. legends
- 3. history
- 4. nature
- 5. horticulture
- 6. husbandry

- 7. exotic animals
- 8. hunting
- 9. fishing
- 10. handicrafts
- 11. athletics
- 12. politics
- 13. wines & spirits
- 14. foods & preparation
- 15. gambling
- 16. drugs
- 17. community service
- 18. altruism
- 19. collector
- 20. none

## The Villain's Motives

Motives tell what drives your story's villain, the goal his or her plots try to achieve and (often) weaknesses that the heroes can exploit. For example, a villain motivated by greed can be tempted away from his target if the heroes create a convincing illusion of greater gain elsewhere. And a villain who is just crazy has many weak points. Here are some sample motivations. Some are expressed as goals that the villain strives to achieve.

### **Corruption**

This sinister, often horrific villain works to debase all that is good in humanity. His methods are customarily subtle and insidious. A single defeat does not spell the end of this villain's threat. Such villains may not necessarily be very powerful, but are truly as evil as they come.

Example: Mephisto

### **Evading Capture**

The bad guy has already seen Ryker's Island or Stronghold and has no desire to visit it again. This motive is usually transitory, lasting for an adventure or

two until the bad guy reestablishes a headquarters and begins plotting afresh.  
Example: Baron Zemo

### **Ideology**

This catch-all category describes villains who do bad things for reasons of personal belief, derangement, or just pure nastiness.

The belief can be a twisted version of an accepted ideology, such as Nuke's super-patriotism. Or the belief can be straightforward hostility to human beings' continued existence, as with Tyrannus.

This category also includes those under the authority of higher agencies that support a specific ideology. For example the Force of July is nominally controlled by the US Government, and the Crimson Storm usually follow the Kremlin's orders. Note that super-powered villains are independent types who seldom follow orders without question.

An ideological or crazy villain works best in one of two ways:

1. A horrific expression of man's darker side. The villain throws away all notions of civilized conduct and the brotherhood of man because of a narrow, distorted doctrine. Play the fanatic carefully; keep him or her scary, not Oust) contemptible.
2. A total bozo. Some of these guys can be funny, in a twisted way. In a humorous adventure, you stress the bad guy's distance from reality, instead of his or her potential threat. Don't let the bad guy kill anybody, or the adventure suddenly turns grim.

### **Mischief**

Life is boring! Time to pep it up a little. And those PC heroes-they're such stiff-necked popinjays. Maybe they should have their lives stirred up a little, or a lot ... just for laughs.

Examples: Mr Myxlplyx

### **Power**

These villains all want to conquer the world, the universe, or at least a part of New York City. In general they have the power to reach their goals, and a single-minded drive that motivates them to remove potential obstacles to conquest. Such as the PCs.

Examples: Dr Doom

### **Pride**

The villain with this motivation thinks he or she is the best in the world at a chosen pursuit. Anyone in the PC group who shows ability of the same kind becomes vulnerable to this villain's challenge.

Examples: Titania

### **Scouting for Invasion**

This bad guy is just the point man (or point thing) for a whole lot of similar bad guys. They all want New York, or America, or Earth, but they want to see how tough the opposition is. When the PCs fight an invasion scout, they must defeat the villain decisively, or the invasion force will just send in another scout later.

Examples: the Super Skrull

### **Self Preservation**

Some villains do what they do just to survive. This sometimes, though not always, lends them a tragic air-that usually depends on how much the bad guy enjoys his or her work. Remorseful villains can arouse heroes' compassion

even as the two sides square off. Frequently the general public is unaware of, or not sympathetic to, the villain's self preservation motive. This can mean that, once the immediate threat is defused, the heroes end up protecting the villain from an enraged mob.  
Examples: Vampires

### **Suicide**

This extremely offbeat motive makes for a tragic, downbeat adventure. For some reason the villain is unable to die. Tormented by existence and longing for release, this villain dupes the heroes into attacking, in the hope that they can marshal enough force to kill him or her.

### **Vengeance**

The all-purpose villain motive. Every bad guy the heroes have ever fought... enemies of NPC heroes that have turned to fighting the PCs as a kind of dress rehearsal for their revenge on their NPC nemeses ... figures from the forgotten past, attacking friends of the PCs for some barely remembered offense. All of these long-held grudges are typical of the villain mentality. Anyone who gains power and decides to throw it around becomes bitter and vengeful when that power is foiled.  
Examples: Anybody!

### **Wealth**

Almost as much an all-purpose villain motive as vengeance (above), this indicates that the bad guy is just greedy for money, treasures, equipment, Van Gogh paintings, or what ever the villain views as necessary for the good life.  
Examples: Speed Demon

## The Villains' Methods

These are some of the paths a villain may take to achieve his or her goal.

### **Extortion**

The villain has power over some person or agency, and will use it unless the victim pays up by a given deadline. Usually an urgent summons by the victim brings the heroes into the adventure, but sometimes the flashier villains make their threat known over public airwaves.

### **Kidnap and Ransom**

The victim can be any person of wealth or relative of such a person, but it can instead be a valuable object, such as an objet d'art, a rare chemical isotope, or urgently needed medicine. This scheme has special emotional significance if the heroes desperately need the person or object in question to satisfy another goal. For example, a hero might need medicine to save a dying NPC.

### **Manipulation**

The villain does not care to soil his or her own hands doing the deed, and instead enlists some third party, perhaps an unwitting or mind-controlled dupe. It can send the heroes on a wild goose chase for the longest time. By the time they find out who is really behind the scheme, they should be ready to thrash the villain soundly.

### **Mass Destruction**

Especially suitable for insane or vengeful villains, this method demands extreme power. The source of power can be a giant monster or robot, a nuclear reactor, or that old standby, the atomic bomb. The heroes learn about the scheme just hours or days before it will occur, and the tension builds as they try to find the villain's headquarters or destructive machine and destroy it, or stop the monster before it achieves widespread destruction.

**Murder**

Direct and to the point. The motives for murder coincide with those of mass destruction (above), but this is suitable for less powerful villains.

**Provocation**

The villain tries to achieve his or her ends—a war, perhaps, or a battle between two equally despised heroes by arranging a fraud. The fraudulent scheme lays blame on one innocent party for an attack on another's interests. The heroes often are too late to prevent the scheme itself from being activated. But they can search for evidence to implicate the villain, or find the villain and force him to confess, just moments before the provocation leads to ultimate disaster.

**Theft**

The standard villain scheme. An early adventure in every campaign is the bank robbery, and attempted thefts of valuables continue on a regular basis thereafter. The players understand their goal and have no trouble telling right from wrong. And virtually no villain is above an ordinary burglary or robbery.

**Vice Peddling**

The standard method of the corruption-motivated villain. Gambling, racism, envy, lechery—the usual catalogue of sins are all profitable to the criminal element. The heroes may believe the villain's goal is mere wealth... until a more sinister pattern emerges.

**Deathtraps**

You should never kill player characters arbitrarily. But it's perfectly all right to make it look as though you will arbitrarily kill them. A deathtrap, naturally, threatens the heroes with death. This is useful in a super-hero

story, because the heroes are ordinarily invulnerable to most damage and seldom fear death. A good deathtrap hits them where they live. But judging a deathtrap is tricky. There must be an escape, since an ugly death in a trap is neither heroic nor dramatically appropriate. But the escape can't be too obvious, or the threat vanishes. But the heroes have to find the way out, or they're dead meat. This is a fine balance to strike. Still, you have many tools to keep things under control. For example:

1. The villain's motives. Despite the term deathtrap the bad guy may not want to actually kill the PCs. Perhaps he or she just wants to find out more about the heroes' powers, or toy with them, or preoccupy them while a crucial part of the villain's scheme takes place. When the deathtrap turns out to be non-fatal, play up the narrative surprise.

2. Coincidence. An accident can cut power to the deathtrap just as the heroes are about to die. A PC ally, separated from the deathtrap victims earlier in the story, can discover them just in time to stop the trap. And so on.

3. NPCs. Generally it is too cheesy to have an NPC release the heroes from a trap. But if necessary, a repentant henchman of the bad guy can work a deal with the heroes in return for freeing them. Or a rival villain may rescue the heroes—so he or she can kill the heroes him- or herself! Out of the frying pan . . .

**Means of Escape**

What ways can the heroes use to escape the deathtrap? They will nearly always think of something you hadn't, but here are some avenues you may consider:



**1. Heroic effort.**

This traditional method relies on the idea that the villain doesn't have a clear idea of the hero's power level.

Doctor Destroyer may know a PC is incredibly strong, but that does not mean Destroyer knows specifically that the hero has Super Strength. Perhaps the heroes can snap their bonds with ease. But next time Destroyer puts them in a deathtrap, their bonds will be stronger!

**2. Cleverness.**

Ideally, the hero responds to the deathtrap with brain power, not brute force. Observation, deduction, and improvisation should show a way out.

For example, suppose a detective hero is covered with honey and tied up on a termite mound beneath the blazing sun. The hero could work loose the magnifying glass in his or her belt, then focus the sun's rays to burn through the ropes.

If the players prove unable to see the deathtrap's solution, you can break down and give them an IQ roll to see an escape route. But this makes players feel bad unless you handle it carefully.

**3. Trickery.**

If the villain is gloating over the trapped heroes, they may try some elementary trick such as, "If we die, you'll never find out the identity of your greatest foe." The villain may rightly sneer at feeble lies. But the players, often a clever lot, may come up with a bluff that really does sway the villain.

The deciding factor should be the degree of admiration and hilarity the bluff produces in the players. If everyone

thinks the idea is brilliant, then it probably is. The players enjoy themselves more when they think they've put you on the spot—even if you are secretly cooperating in being put there.

**Staging Deathtraps**

A few points to remember:

1. Be serious! This is no laughing matter. Avoid dumb puns, unless that is a gloating villain's style.

2. Keep the heroes conscious. One would think the ideal time to spring a deathtrap would come when the heroes are kyoed and can't free themselves. But villains like to see the heroes sweat. So if they have knocked out the heroes, they shouldn't activate the deathtrap until the heroes start to wake up.

3. Move things along—but not too fast. The heroes may have scant seconds to think their way out of the trap, but give the players a little more time than that. Answer their questions, and tell them about whatever they could observe. Don't let them take forever, but a few minutes of suspense won't hurt.

**Deathtrap Examples****Arena**

This deathtrap works best in some exotic land, planet, or dimension, one with a different culture and denizens. The heroes get thrown into an apparently inescapable arena. After them comes a variety of opponents: formidable warriors, hungry monsters, or squads of normal-level gladiators. For drama, have a hero face the adventure's master villain in a duel to the death. The chosen hero should be one with a deep, personal grudge against the villain (or vice versa). The cruelest stroke forces the heroes to

fight each other. However, most heroes simply refuse to do so, no matter what the cost. They get to be noble, but the deathtrap loses a lot of impact. Drastic coercion, such as holding a beloved NPC hostage, should be frowned upon unless your bad guy is truly nasty. In certain circumstances, such as in a primitive culture, the heroes can become gladiator heroes, lead a revolt of their fellow slaves, and overthrow the government. However, this is a time-consuming process.

### **Demolition Zone**

The villain places the heroes, bound and probably gagged, in some building or other site scheduled for imminent destruction. Often this is the villain's own headquarters, about to be sacrificed. The villain may destroy the headquarters to conceal evidence or because his or her latest evil scheme involves its destruction. For instance, a rocket carrying a mind-control satellite is due to launch soon, and the exhaust will destroy the launch site.

Really crazy villains will sacrifice themselves and their HQs to kill their longtime foes. The Red Skull did this many times in repeated attempts to bump off Captain America. Of course, he always had a concealed escape route. However, the typical villain will tie up the heroes, gloat a little, then run off to avoid the upcoming calamity. Since the villain seldom sticks around, the heroes' escape and reappearance may take the villain by complete surprise.

### **Exploited Weakness**

Many super-powered heroes have a secret weakness. For example, the Shi'ar warrior Gladiator, one of the most powerful mortals in the universe, can be

harmed by an unidentified form of radiation. Other vulnerabilities can include mental attacks (these work well on the Juggernaut), particular chemicals, or strange magic. In this deathtrap, the villain has learned of the hero's weakness, and the trap is loaded with whatever causes it. Details of the trap vary according to the weakness exploited, but the trap can be quite deadly according to how much the substance weakens the hero. Sometimes the only way out is to have a non-vulnerable teammate rescue the susceptible hero.

### **Murder by Buddy**

Often seen in the comics, this deathtrap is a favorite of villains because one of the heroes own teammates killed them. In one version, all the heroes are wired into the same murderous gimmick, like a multi-slot guillotine or parallel electric chairs. Any one hero can get free without a problem-but the action triggers the device to kill all the other heroes. Coordination and cooperation are the keys to success. (Before you run this trap, be sure everybody caught in it cares about everyone else!).

Another version puts all the heroes except one in a totally escape-proof trap. They're helpless. A villain mind controls the one free hero into triggering the deathtrap. Naturally the hero by tremendous spiritual exertion, breaks free of the mind control, belts the villain, and frees his or her friends in time for the grand finale showdown.

### **Natural Disaster**

Avalanches. Volcanic eruptions. Tidal waves. Earthquakes. The bad guy leaves the heroes in a spot where their powers can't help, and Mother Nature is about to

do something awful. Not much time left; what do the heroes do?

### **Old Style**

The walls that close in, the sharpened scythe that swings lower and lower, the heavy block poised to crush the life out of the hero beneath, the sawmill blade, the chamber that slowly fills with water or gas, the Burmese tiger trap. .. all of these classics can be made fresh with a new slant on them. But be sure the slant is genuinely new, or at least new to your players. Nothing gets old faster than a routine deathtrap.

### **Pinball**

This is a favourite pinball or video game blown up to larger than life size.

### **Running the Gauntlet**

Perfect for the villain who toys with his or her prey. A gauntlet is technically a double line of armed warriors. An unarmed person, either a criminal or an applicant to the warriors' ranks, must run between the two lines while the warriors beat him or her with their weapons. The term now applies to any severe trial or ordeal. This starts out as one of the deathtraps described above, but there is one obvious escape route. This leads straight into another deathtrap. That leads into another, and so on, for as long as you want to run it.

Perhaps, while trapped in the slowly filling lava pit, the heroes spy an air vent and crawl through it. The vent's bottom suddenly drops away, and the heroes plummet down a long slide into an alligator pit. Leaping to the rim, the heroes find a boulder rolling down at them. Evading it, they dodge into a room filled with poison gas. The traps may really be lethal, but the villain does not

count on it. Generally, he or she is observing and taunting the PCs at every step. When the heroes emerge from the gauntlet, ragged and exhausted, the villain and all his or her henchmen are waiting there for a huge battle.

## Reasons why a Villain may not kill a Hero

Despite what some people may think not all villains will attempt to kill every hero they meet. There are a number of differing reasons for this;

### **1) Hunted:**

There was an issue of Batman where he was fighting the new Checkmate. One of the Checkmate operatives asks the head why they don't just kill Batman. Their leader replies "Because Batman has friends, a whole league of them, some of whom can destroy mountains with their bare hands. Do you really want people like that coming after us for revenge"? So then here is the first reason for why not to kill a hero; other masks will hunt you down. And if the hero was popular then law enforcement agencies may join in too, and it will be relentless. Not good if you're trying to run a secret organisation.

### **2) Live to fight another day:**

There was an issue of the Punisher which was entirely about a group of thugs who were trying to escape him. In their desperation they kept trying to find Spiderman in order to surrender to him, because they knew Spiderman wouldn't kill them. They kept missing him and the Punisher eventually found and killed them all. Thus the second reason; by not killing a non lethal hero you can always surrender and escape later. Bump off all the normal heroes and you may be left with only killer ones or may traumatize

the remainder into becoming killer types, thinking its the only way for them to survive.

### **3) The Challenge:**

Some villains thrive on the challenge of coming up with evil plots and watching as the heroes scramble to defeat them. They enjoy having outwitting the hero and proving their mental superiority.

### **4) Unwitting Helper:**

The hero is doing a damn good job of putting all the villain's rivals into the jail. In effect the hero eliminates the villain's competition without him having to do anything.

### **5) Honour:**

Some villains have a code of honour and will not kill a helpless opponent. Indeed they may not kill period, seeing it as beneath them.

### **6) Lighter Sentence:**

The villain may be in it just for the money and doesn't want to get the chair if caught.

Now this certainly does not apply to people like street gangs or the Mexican mafia who have no regard for any life, and see life as being 'live fast, die young'. They may even see it as a major feat to have killed a hero and expect to go out in a glorious battle. But for most supervillains, especially masterminds lethality would probably be avoided.

## 8. Telling Stories

GMing means you create, not just a series of fights, but a storyline with a beginning, middle, and end; giving PCs a clear goal and a struggle against villains with conflicting goals; and featuring a supporting cast of NPCs who can hinder or help the players.

### The Genre

A genre refers to a distinctive kind of story, such as mysteries, Westerns, romances, or fantasy, usually used to distinguish it from general, or mainstream fiction. Readers of these genres quickly point out that there is wide variety within each one. But there are certain similarities among them that are worth discussing here. Why is this important? Because to tell stories you should understand the rules by which they work.

### Elements

How do you turn all of these ideas into an adventure? How do you mix elements of plot, characters, settings, surprises, and goals, present them to your player characters, and turn their responses into an exciting story?

### **Premises:**

These are the springboards for stories or adventures. A premise provides a situation, a goal, and reasons to try to reach the goal.

### **Goals:**

In a story, the player characters work toward genuine goals. "Find the evidence that will clear a PC hero of this murder charge." "Locate and rescue the Mayor." There are many goals, all of them having real effects if the heroes reach them or fail. Make your story's

goal one the characters care about, and that motivates them to act heroically.

### **Settings:**

In a story, the environment is important. It can determine the course of the plot, and it does more than anything else to establish the tone and atmosphere of the story. Think about Times Square. Or Congress Hall. These aren't just maps with numbered rooms, they're places where people live or work, with unique features that set a mood. A low, smoke-stained ceiling with shreds of paint still clinging at the corners.

Hot, bright incandescent lights hanging low over green baize tables that smell of grease and dust. The cue ball clicks against the shiny black 8. Big guys in cammo vests or flashy suits look for shots. Now and then a police siren wails across town, and half the players start, looking suddenly guilty. Mumbled bets, crinkling bills, ice cubes clacking in shot glasses, hazy warm air. If you give your players these details, they'll know more about this story than if you said, "There you are in a sleazy pool hall."

### **Conflict:**

It's not a story unless something prevents the heroes from achieving their goal with ease. Maybe bad guys are chasing them, only a stretched footstep behind. Maybe the person they're sent to find doesn't want to be found, or works to sabotage the heroes, or has been kidnapped. Or a tremendous disaster has endangered the city, so the heroes must spend valuable time rescuing innocents. Obstacles to success make exciting adventures. They come not just from villains and henchmen, but from the environment, misunderstandings, or neutral NPCs with conflicting goals. And not all obstacles

can be removed with a haymaker or repulsor ray. Suppose your heroes need to catch a taxi to Queens, so they can warn their aunt that a villain is headed her way.

The only taxi around is occupied by a stuffy rich guy who wants no truck with rowdy muscular guys in funny suits. He's got bodyguards and powerful connections; he can probably outbid the heroes; and if they punch him out, they'll ruin their reputations. This conflict forces PCs to think around a problem. Even though nobody has swung a fist or destroyed a building, the story is exciting and involving. Try to put many kinds of conflict in stories.

Non-player characters (NPCs): Some NPCs are interesting allies or villains, with their own skills and goals. Others are faceless threats, like thugs or monsters, who are just there for the heroes to overcome. Both kinds fill essential roles in your plot.

### **Surprises:**

What comic reader doesn't like a good twist in the narrative? When players are acting without much thought, because they think they know what's coming next, make sure they're wrong. Any story offers chances to make the players have to readjust their expectations with a sudden lurch. Maybe the heroes are trying to rescue an ambassador's teenage daughter, who has been kidnapped by terrorists. The PCs cross the city to the terrorist hideout, sneak in, silence the lone guard, and wake the young woman.

She lets out a screech and calls for the terrorists! It turns out she's allied herself with them to rebel against her father and create a new life without him. The

players, having proceeded without thinking, must suffer the consequences. But when the players are alert, think matters through, and plan intelligently for likely turns of events, don't shove in an arbitrary surprise just to mess them up. If the plan they offer would work as you have arranged matters even if it isn't the way you had figured it would be-it deserves to succeed. In this way you reward intelligence, and players don't start thinking, "Why bother planning when we're going to get blindsided anyway?" Sometimes when the heroes execute a plan flawlessly, with no drawbacks, the success itself surprises the heroes more than any failure you could invent.

### **The grand finale:**

A story's excitement should build to higher levels, and then be resolved in a single dramatic confrontation. More often than not, this is a slugfest with the main villain. In this climax, the main story elements should be resolved, main goals reached or lost, and most important characters dealt with in some fitting fashion. Maybe the chief villain escapes, surviving to fight again ... but for now, no one has to worry about him or her for a while. You can't always know your story's climax when you design the adventure, because players can act unpredictably and send the plotline careening off in new directions. But as you judge the adventure, be alert for ways to resolve the story in a dramatic final scene.

## Storytelling

### **Length:**

Have a rough idea of how long the whole adventure should take. Of course, players always do unexpected things that affect the length of time a story takes to

complete. They take a few days off to earn money or date their girl/boyfriends, or they accidentally stumble on the high-tech item that destroys the villain in one turn. You can't plan for this, but you ought to have some notion of how many evenings everyone will have to keep open to finish the adventure.

A short scenario, with an immediate goal and one or two obstacles, can take a few hours-one play-session. An extended adventure, lasting many days of game-time or ranging across a wide area, with lots of fights or chases, can take many sessions of several hours each.

In planning an extended adventure, try to break down the story into session-length "episodes" or installments. Each episode should offer certain features in its own right, such as action and an opportunity for each player character to do something useful. Otherwise, the adventure may drag, and some players can grow dissatisfied. Episodes are discussed further below.

In a campaign, it is often a good idea to alternate extended, multisession adventures with shorter, "one-shot" stories. The short breaks provide light relief from the rigors of a lengthy adventure, in the same way you might take a break from reading multi-part graphic novels to browse a short story.

### **Getting underway:**

First, make sure you have all the game materials you need, such as pencils, dice, and "paranoia notes" (slips of paper the players use to pass private messages to the GM). And set out plenty of food, role-playing is hungry work! Then everything is ready.

Before the adventure begins, get each player to introduce his or her character to the others. The player should describe the character's appearance and perhaps some background.

Starting an adventure can be a problem. The goal is not only to present a situation, but to involve the players in it to get them emotionally committed. The "Adventure Hooks" section later in this chapter gives specific ways to pull players into the story.

But here is one point of general advice:

Consider starting the heroes right in the middle of everything. Tell the players that their characters received an urgent summons from a police stoolie; when they went to rescue him, they stumbled into a Maggia ambush. The gunmen are firing. What do the PCs do?

Already players can make interesting choices, they're headed in a clear direction, and you begin to establish the tone for this adventure. When the action lets up for a moment or two, convey the premise and goal of the story, and let the heroes charge onward.

### **Pacing the story:**

Once they're charging, how fast do they get where they're going? As fast as possible, of course. Keep things rolling along, and don't get bogged down in detail. If you are not sure about a rule, invent something reasonable and continue; then you can check later, and reverse your earlier ruling if it's still necessary and feasible.

And players shouldn't make things drag with rules questions, either. Their characters don't have time to flip through

rulebooks in the midst of heated exertion, so the players shouldn't either. If you make it clear to players that you will treat them fairly and that a finicky rules question won't govern the success or failure of their mission, they should be willing to surrender to the moment and play the roles, not the rules.

### Narration

Use many senses. Describe what the PCs see and hear, but also include interesting smells, the temperature, when it's useful, and the way the scene makes the characters feel: "The Hudson River is wide, slate gray, and smells like the oil in an old gas station. A stiff, cool breeze blows toward you. A few derelicts are staggering along the waterfront. You feel as desolate as they look."

Use sound effects. As mentioned above, don't hesitate to "bang! kaboom! zam!" all you like. Don't be shy-you're the Judge, so you can do anything you want. If the players make fun of you, throw an incredible superpowered villain at their characters. That should hush them up!

Design dramatic entrances and exits. A major character's appearance or departure is worth playing up. It's okay to say, "There's Doctor Destroyer, and he springs to the attack." But you increase suspense and interest if you say, "The only sound in the warehouse is the buzzing of a fly. It flies down in front of you-and suddenly a metal tentacle lances down and grabs it out of the air! Overhead, Doctor Destroyer shouts, 'I have you now!'"

Melodramatic entrances and exits can be overdone, so be careful. Listen to your players. If they sound primed to expect a big splash, consider catching them off-

guard by having the villain slip in quietly. "You searched the city for the Beetle, but you found nothing. After several hours, you get tired and go back to headquarters. You head for the kitchen to make a cup of coffee ... and he's waiting for you at the kitchen table."

Describe powers vividly. If your PCs fire power bolts of Amazing intensity, make them sound amazing. "Orange fire builds around your fingertips. For half a second you wonder, as usual, whether this time the power really will incinerate your hand. The energy builds before you can blink your eyes, and you launch the fireball in a blaze of yellow light." This makes players feel super human in a way that "You hit him with your flame bolt" just can't.

## Episodes

When you create a long story that players can't complete in one session, give thought to breaking up the plot into episodes. Each session of play should be interesting in its own right. Otherwise, after a dull stretch, the players might not come back for the next one.

And it's a good idea to break off a session either (a) at some natural pause, such as after a big fight, when the players and their characters would naturally unwind; or (b) at a dramatic, cliff-hanging moment, such as just before a big fight, when your players can hardly wait to see what comes next. This way you know they'll come back for the next session.

An exciting episode of your story should include a lot of the ingredients of the whole story: a clear goal, interesting characters, maybe some mystery, And

the episode involves specific plot elements, such as (one or more of) these:

- fighting
- a chase
- high-tech superscience or magic
- investigation, if the story is a mystery, or if the goal isn't clear
- comedy, such as interaction with NPCs or weird twists of the plot. Don't let the laughs undermine the importance of the fight against evil; but don't get so solemn that nobody has a good time.

The most important rule: In plotting an episode of your story, think about all the players and their characters. Ask what each character can do in this episode. Each player should feel his or her involvement is important. Maybe only one character speaks the language of your important NPC, while another knows how to infiltrate a villain's master computer. A third is the only one who can detect that magical trap, while the fourth has a weapon perfect for foiling an ambush.

Make sure everybody gets to show off at least once. That's one of the prime attractions of roleplaying.

## Finishing the Story

So the game is going along famously. Eventually, however, like any story, it must end.

### **The Story Climax**

In theory, your adventure has set the heroes a particular goal, and they have been opposed by one or more main adversaries or obstacles. In the climax, try to draw together the heroes, the adversaries, and the goal. Either the heroes reach the goal, or they fail conclusively; the bad guys are



overcome, or escape, or triumph (for the moment).

One way to analyze your story and design the climax is to visualize an event that changes the situation, obviously and permanently. Somebody dies; a hero's (or item's) latent power is activated; the object the villains seek is destroyed; a hero and heroine fall in love; the setting burns down or explodes.

### **Dramatizing**

As the story reaches its end, the players should not lean back to watch the show. You must dramatize the action. That doesn't mean waving your arms dramatically as you describe the ending; it means you involve the PCs as key actors in the drama. The heroes must take action to achieve success.

If the climax of the adventure is an exciting battle, that's fine, and certainly not without precedent. Another interesting type of dramatization requires characters to make a choice, then act on that choice. Then they must deal with the consequences of the choice.

For example, the villain may kidnap a guide who helped the characters on their adventure. At the climax, the villain appears with a knife at the victim's throat. Do the heroes let the villain get away?

Or a spy who's been reporting to a villain on the PCs' movements turns out to be the daughter of an important NPC, perhaps the characters' patron. Do they arrest her on the spot?

Perhaps players will have no trouble with these decisions, but making them agonize isn't the point. The choices they make define their characters and

determine the course of the story. There is a whole section about these "dilemmas" later in this chapter.

You manipulated the sequence of events to bring about the story's climax. But once you reach it, major manipulation is uncalled for. You can have a villain miss his FEAT roll or fail to see a brilliant tactic, if it would make for a dramatic defeat (see below). But in general, the actions the player characters take of their own accord should decide the story's outcome. Otherwise, the players feel like they're watching events, not shaping them.

If they fail completely, the failure need not be permanent or fatal.

### **Dicing with Danger**

The heroes corner your master villain, confront him with his crimes, deliver their impassioned speeches, and hit him with overwhelming force. Everything's set up for his defeat; he'll stagger a few steps, shake his fist in impotent rage, and drop into a bottomless pit. All they have to do is hit him. You roll his Dodge and he evades their blow with ease. The moment is lost. The PCs resort to a long, tedious battle of attrition, wearing him down into unconsciousness so they can kick him while he's down.

What went wrong? You let your dice do the thinking for you, that's what. The dice don't tell the story, you do! If their results interfere with a fun, satisfying adventure, what do you gain by slavishly obeying them? The reason you're all playing is to have fun, and "having fun" and "following each and every rule, without exception" don't always mean the same thing.

You might ask, "But isn't this cheating?" Sure, but only to help the players have a good time. That's the rule that precedes all other rules. So if you think a scene would flow better if your villain rolled low instead of high-he did! (Just make sure you roll the dice out of the players' view, so they don't know you're fudging.)

It makes a good story. It doesn't hurt anybody, except the villains. And they won't complain.

### **Victory**

The heroes won or lost. But maybe it's not that clear-cut. They rescued the hostages, but the villain escaped. Or, they defeated the radioactive monster, but it managed to destroy midtown Manhattan beforehand. In designing an adventure, think about levels of victory. The major goal may include certain minor or accessory goals, and the PCs may achieve some but not others.

Most importantly, the heroes' victory may not be conclusive. If they overlook clues, don't take all the right actions, or suffer a string of awful luck, the villain may get away. Or they catch the bad guy, but the building the heroes were guarding gets destroyed in the process. Not good for the reputation.

These inconclusive victories sow the seeds of future adventures. The villain vows revenge, or the site must be rebuilt and looters chased away, and so on.

### **Defeat**

Beyond the foggy land of inconclusive victory lies the swamp of utter, dismal, unconditional failure.

Superheroes don't often blow it in major, permanent ways. Both in comics and in game scenarios, they come out on top. And a good thing, too; given the high stakes in a superhero adventure, the heroes' failure may mean the end of life on Earth as we know it.

So are you forced to put PCs on a railroad track to success? No. Failing a mission need not mean the death of everyone involved, nor the triumph of evil. If the players fumble, there are less extreme ways of ending the adventure and letting them know they blew it.

They can lose weapons or devices. If your characters are forcibly parted from their possessions, they'll hunger to track down the bad guys and retrieve them. Another adventure!

Or you can let the enemy capture the player characters. Then the heroes escape in the next scene and try to pull together the remnants of their mission. And remember, after a failure the goal should somehow be harder to achieve.

Other penalties include scathing editorials and the scorn of the characters' peers.

A bad way to handle the players' failure is to bring in an NPC to make things right. This galls the players and makes them feel useless. An important part of role-playing is the illusion that the player's character can, and must, influence events. If an NPC is always waiting in the wings to patch up mistakes, a player will think (justifiably) that he or she could have stayed home.

The ultimate penalty is death. In a story, death is important and, usually, final.

Don't let your characters die pointlessly in some random gunfight. Their deaths should serve the plot (but not—note!—be vital to it). A hero's death should be a dramatic, emotional moment in the story. Try to stage it as part of a climax, or vice versa, and be sure to give the character a chance for a few poignant (or defiant) last words.

Failure happens. Reasons are not important, after the fact. Be ready to salvage the situation and set the stage for another adventure, in which the heroes have a chance to redeem themselves.

### **Rewards**

The good guys usually win. After a long and hard-fought battle, the PCs want to know their efforts have been appreciated. That appreciation usually takes the form of XP awards, but there are also other ways to reward heroes.

Equipment, for example. A rescued millionaire or grateful bank president could give them a spiffy limousine or private aircraft. Or the heroes might crib a magic ring or high-tech gizmo from the villain's headquarters. (Not only does this work as a reward, it can also trigger a future adventure.)

Intangible rewards can be just as useful: the friendship of a more powerful or experienced hero; favours earned from the mayor or chief of police; a contact at a newspaper; even the grateful tears of an old widow.

What about the rewards for handling really world-shattering events? Depending on the heroes' reputations and standing with the police, city officials could arrange a ticker-tape parade up Fifth Avenue. Filthy rich or

influential people could build an entire headquarters for the heroes. National news shows broadcast the PCs' heroism. Of course, that means every gunslinging super-powered villain hot to make a reputation will target the PCs!

Every reward should sow the seeds of future adventures. The story grows into a campaign.

## 9. Campaign Problems

As the campaign proceeds, certain problems may appear. Here are some traps to watch out for.

### Bad feelings between player characters

Even though your players are getting along fine outside the game, their characters may regard each other with cool hatred. Perhaps one has vowed to protect all life, whereas another is ready to kill any criminal. These two have to get on one another's nerves. In the comics, this friction can produce deeper characterization and interesting rivalries. It can in your game, too ... if that is to everyone's taste. Take care that other players don't become uncomfortable with the fractious pair, and keep the combatants from stabbing one another in the back. That's hardly heroic!

A certain amount of squabbling is entertaining. But carried too far, it can drive the group apart. If you prefer not to risk this, make sure your PCs are all on the same wavelength about important campaign issues before play begins. These "ground rule" issues include:  
Whether and when to kill;  
Relations with law enforcement officials;  
And whether PCs should trust one another with their secret identities.

### New players

Great! That is, as long as the newcomers know the campaign's ground rules: ways to behave, power level, overall goals, and how to uphold the team's reputation. It's hard to make sure a new player isn't going to do something rash and cause permanent disaster.

### Too many players

Some GMs, who struggle to find enough interested parties to put together a play session, would love to have this problem. But having too many players is far worse than having too few.

The problems: the GM can't keep track of everybody's actions; players don't get into the spotlight often enough; and to challenge the larger and more powerful PC group, bad guys have to be still more powerful and that makes adventures deadlier for individual PCs. In gming a game, the maxim is not "The more, the better," but "Everything in moderation." Aim for an optimum group of four to six players. If you have many more than this, consider splitting off the group into two separate campaigns.

### Changing direction

After you have run all the adventures you can think of, you may want to rejuvenate the campaign by shifting its scene, premise, or goals. This is fine, but talk to your players first. If a player enjoys playing a wealthy industrialist in the Financial District, he or she may not enjoy being flung back in time to 18th-century Haiti or into a post-holocaust future. If the players object strongly to your proposed change, think it over. If they don't object, but don't think their characters belong in the new campaign, let them create new PCs. Or ask them to play NPCs in your adventures until the campaign returns to the earlier mode. Remember, players just want to have fun.

### Bad Gamemastering

or 11 steps to ruining your campaign  
1) Never let the players be the best at anything: Always have an NPC around who's better than the players in terms of

their skills and professions. When the players are overwhelmed by enemies have your NPCs save them every time. Also common grunts should always be the equal of the players regardless of experience.

2) Make sure the plot is more important than the players: Given a chance the players will come up with totally unexpected plans which could ruin yours. Don't let them! Remember if the players weren't around your NPCs could do it for them but probably better.

3) Force your players into roles they hate: Don't let them choose the archetype they want and ignore any requests. If he wants to be respected frame him for murder. If he wants to be happy kill his family, and don't forget scarring or crippling him.

4) Use genres your players hate: If you want to run a romance and they don't go right ahead. If you want them to be fugitives do it.

5) Always obey the dice: If at the end of an adventure the player has come up with a brilliant way to defeat the villain and all the others have pitched in and everyone's ready to go home and after all this he screws up the roll, bad luck. The fight goes on and make sure that unconscious villains revive.

6) Drone: Always use narration instead of interaction and dialogue. Describe everything down to the tiniest detail.

7) Keep changing the rules: Even in mid combat. Make it up as you go along. Don't even bother preparing for the session.

8) Treat them like dirt: Find out what your players most want and deny it to them. Make their plans fail. Kill off any romantic interests just as it gets to a high point. If they like to fight make them have to think their way through everything.

9) Have all the enemies they encounter instantly know all the players weaknesses and be prepared for them or better yet expose their secret IDs.

10) Kill off their characters repeatedly.

11) Last but by no means least ignore all complaints: Who's game is this anyway?

## 10. Dilemmas

In a dilemma, the heroes have to make a choice between two unpleasant alternatives. Draw the consequences of each choice as clearly as possible, and (if circumstances permit) allow the players as much time as they want to debate the question. As stated earlier in this chapter, the point here is not to make the players wrack their brains in anguish... though that is certainly entertaining. Instead, by making these decisions, the heroes define and display their characters in dramatic fashion. Here are some sample dilemmas, starting with the one most often seen in super-heroic adventures:

Breaking the law

With great power comes great responsibility. Will the heroes take the responsibility of breaking the law, if they believe it means a greater good? The obvious context for this dilemma arises when the heroes have the chance to kill a truly powerful, truly evil villain. Kill, and violate every claim to civilized conduct? Or let the villain survive to pillage, plunder, and (often) kill again? Every hero has faced this issue. In nearly all cases they decide not to kill, because "that would make me no better than the villain - " This is true. Pragmatically speaking, a hero who kills is also hounded by the police and press, and loses Karma and popularity.

Warning to the GM: If you present the heroes with this dilemma and they disagree on what to do, the next session may turn into an extended policy meeting on the topic "To kill or not?" And the schism may well split the group apart. If you want to protect against this, make sure all the PCs take the same

view about killing before you begin the campaign.

### **Conditions**

Many stories have some kind of gimmick. Perhaps the heroes must work under a condition that changes their usual way of operating. Or the resolution of the story thrusts a hero, or the entire player group's heroes, into a choice between unpleasant alternatives. This section discusses these conditions and dilemmas. Don't overuse these gimmicks. If you tell too many stories that rely on them, your players will feel put upon and frustrated. But if you run an ongoing campaign, throw in a condition or dilemma every third or fourth adventure to keep players on guard and explore new ways of playing.

### **Deadline**

This common condition puts a time limit on the resolution of the adventure. If the heroes don't achieve their goal within a certain time, specified at the start of the adventure, then disaster will fall. The city may blow up, or a slow-acting poison will kill one of the characters. If the heroes seem to be moving smoothly toward success long before the deadline is reached, you can give them a nasty surprise by revealing that the adventure's villain was lying, and that the time limit actually expires much sooner than the PCs believed. But this often appears too blatantly manipulative, so be careful. Powers don't work right

This one always puts a scare into the players, or at least disturbs them. Some malign agency has tampered with their powers, so they don't work quite the way the heroes expect-or, often, not even remotely as they expect. Possible causes include passage to another dimension

where natural laws work differently; a mutagenic agent that alters the PCs' body chemistry; or sabotage of the heroes' favourite gadgets. The adventure's climax should include a way to restore the powers to normal. Or a PC, discovering he or she likes the new powers, decides to continue with them without further change.

### **Switched identities**

This classic comic-book plot device puts one character's mind in another's body, and vice versa. It can easily work with and lead into the "Mistaken Identity" adventure hook (see that section). This gimmick works well in a comedic adventure, as one hero tries to learn how to control the other's powers. It also has a sinister side, though, especially if a switched hero finds himself in his arch-foe's body and is hunted by the foe's own enemies!

### **Villain immunity**

The heroes have the goods on the bad guy, and they know his or her location and weaknesses. But for some reason they just aren't allowed to lay a glove on the villain. Reasons could include diplomatic immunity (see "The United Nations" in Chapter 3 of the Campaign Sourcebook), or a close relationship between the villain and a hero or friendly NPC. Or a psychic villain might possess the body of a young child. Will the heroes blast the child in order to hurt the villain? Of course not. This is a frustrating turn of events, so play it up for one adventure, then never use it again until the players have gotten over the sting of it-or avenged themselves on the immune villain in some satisfying way.

### **Wanted**

A frequent turn of events in the comics frames the heroes for some crime, and they must go through the adventure while fighting or evading law enforcement officials. Spider-Man has had to live with this for years.

### **Destroy own item**

Many heroes derive powers from devices, magic rings, swords, amulets, animal familiars, and so on. In this dilemma, one of these devices proves to be the source of the adventure's problem. For example, a magic ring may be gradually possessing the hero's mind and forcing him or her to commit mayhem. A villain may have found a way to install a doomsday device in the hero's armour, only the armour's destruction will save the day. Or a mind-controlled animal familiar may turn savage and bestial.

The hero must decide whether to destroy his or her own device in order to solve the problem. Or another hero may destroy it without consulting the owner, a situation that would certainly lead to tension between the two from then on. The item should not be permanently destroyed. A hero can rebuild a gadget, though usually at some inconvenience and with a delay of an adventure or two. Unique devices, especially magical ones, should require the heroes to undertake an entire adventure to replace them.

### **Leave the group**

When the group's outlook and methods become distasteful to a hero, the hero and group may part ways. Most often this is a consequence of divergent views on the issue of killing. Another cause of this dilemma may be the discovery of a hero's dark secret. When a player is

cooperative, you can introduce a subplot wherein that player's hero leaves the group, allegedly for one of these reasons. In fact, the hero is operating solo for a secret reason, perhaps to undertake a dangerous mission without endangering the group. The player plays a different character while the departed hero is gone. Or, for a twist, the player can introduce a "new" character that is really the "departed" hero in disguise.

### **Reveal secret identity**

This one is a killer. A PC must decide whether to tell his or her true identity to another or even, perhaps, go public. You usually have to do a lot of groundwork to set up this dilemma. For instance, establish a condition in which, for this adventure, the hero cannot appear in his or her secret identity. Perhaps the PC is wanted by police in that identity (the "Mistaken Identity" adventure hook lends itself to this development). Then, by a chain of circumstances, a valued NPC friend is accused of the murder of the PC! The hero can clear the friend of all charges instantly, just by revealing that he or she still lives. But will the hero do this? Note: Never put a PC in the dilemma of having to reveal another PC's identity. This just creates bad feelings no matter what action is taken.

### **Work with a bad guy**

Another dilemma that will have players scratching each other's eyes out (and maybe yours, too). The heroes must enlist a hated foe's aid in order to dispatch a still deadlier bad guy. The villain agrees to help either because (a) the deadlier bad guy is cutting in on his act ("You can't conquer the world! I'm conquering the world!"), (b) the villain wants to spy on the heroes, learn more about them, and look for a chance to

shoot them in the back, or (c) mutual survival.

The real dilemma may come when the fight is over. The common enemy defeated, do the heroes (probably weakened) try to capture their erstwhile ally? What if the ally is unconscious, is it honourable to reward his or her aid with capture?



## 11. Finding Crimes

So just how does your hero go around detecting crimes in progress?

One common element is keeping an ear to the police band - both Batman and the Flash do this, with presumably a few other heroes, too. For the Flash, this pretty much means that the moment a crime's reported, he's on the scene. Any crime in progress is going to come to a halt, right quick, as will most crimes that are still in getaway mode. If you are closer or faster, you can trump the cops. Besides, often time a crime fighter will "back up" a suspicious police call. The crime fighter will catch the escaping felon (or follow him back to his "lair" OR will be "right there" in case it is a special crime needed a cape.

Another comment element to Batman stories is that he really doesn't stop crimes - he solves them. More than a few Batman stories involve him coming on the scene after a murder or occasionally a theft or other crime. The hero gets to the scene of the crime, goes over the evidence, follows it up, and nabs the baddies. This occasionally might involve a raid into police files and their evidence locker.

Batman also has various listening devices to help him, much in the same way that Superman and Daredevil can do this naturally. Of course, the investigative angle isn't exactly beyond the police to do. But when you're in a corrupt city with a compromised force, a little vigilantism becomes a bit more necessary. Or when you're just plain smarter than the police, that investigative work is likely to mean a bit more.

Then there are heroes that just make themselves publicly known and available. Yeah, a hero might have no idea that a plane is crashing over the airport as we speak, but if one of the air traffic controllers can just call him at his office, well, that certainly works, now doesn't it? Mostly, it is tips and contacts that lead you to stake out places that could be targets (and if your intel is good, will be).

Once you start getting away from street-level supers, finding crime becomes less of a problem, anyway - most of the baddies are likely blasting holes through buildings or otherwise making a big, dumb obvious show of themselves. That or they just happen to come upon something untoward going on during a patrol.

Then there are super-senses. Or just dealing with villains that are too tough for the police to handle, never mind their ability to follow up on an investigation. Enhanced sense, including spider senses, are handy in finding crime that the police miss or have not caught.

Finally you can just do a general patrol all night, hitting areas that you think will have a higher rate of crime. Because most vigilantes, will be more mobile and in "odd places" when compared to a policeman in a patrol car, they will catch criminals who are going places to avoid being seen by patrol cars. So this does cause an issue with car bound vigilantes. Most of the time in the comics, Batman is looking for a specific criminal or modus operandi. One or two crimes of a given type create a pattern that he begins to search for.

In a "realistic" world, there is only so much crime at a given time. So there would be a super battle, lets say once a month or even once a year, with a crime that "only the hero can solve" happening once a week to once every few months. I mean how many super villains are there? And are they really stupid enough to operate in a city of a known super hero, unless their goal is to mess with the hero... rather than get rich. Please keep in mind the actual rate of crime, especially in a place where they know a vigilante, will be lower than you would expect.

## 12. Urban Warfare

Super melee combat in the city by A.J. Pickett

Things to keep in mind while engaging in deadly combat with super powered foes is that in a densely populated city, there are always innocent bystanders; walls don't always stop bullets, energy blasts or even bodies, and when things fall off buildings, there is a good chance those things are going to hit someone down below. Also, while everyone will cheer when Captain Freedom defeats the evil Professor Malignant, someone has got to foot the bill for all the broken glass, damaged gutters, torn up roofing, smashed brickwork, broken doors and overturned cars!

While it is oh so easy to get caught up in the thrill and chaos of melee combat, there is always the very real and very serious risk of harming innocents or destroying public and private property. One brick on the head of one person can land a hero in the very same jail as the arch nemesis they put there last week. So keep in mind, the 'mega powerful, shoots through armour like a hot knife through butter, super damaging ultra blaster' your character is so proud of is probably the absolute worst thing a hero could use in a city, next to indiscriminately hurling incendiary grenades or trying out their new EMP pulse weapon. Fighting in an urban setting requires skill and care, not brute firepower.

Remember, negligent homicide is a serious crime with 1-5 years jail time, and one smashed window on a high rise building can cause a shard of glass to kill someone down on the street below.. that's negligent homicide.. picking up a car and throwing it at your enemy.. that's

as good as Car Theft (larceny) and Assault with intent to maim or murder, plus destroying private property and then there's disturbing the peace and littering! Of course, the police probably wouldn't even charge a hero with the crimes as long as some heavy duty, good reason is involved.. such as saving many lives or a great deal of public property.. but the hero will still be expected to be accountable for any lawsuits brought against them by private parties concerning private property.. so think twice before throwing that car at your enemy.. do you think they have insurance, or that it covers super hero damage?

Character shoots and misses badly, the blast may bounce off an object and hit a bystander! I suggest the GM considers the odds of the shot heading toward a bystander and rolling a percentile (taking into account the proximity, location and number of bystanders, the odds should always be less than 60%), if the result is yes, then the player must roll to strike again, no bonuses and -1 to Thac0, the object the shot ricochets off takes D6 damage, and the bystander takes D6 less damage than the full blast.. roll damage and pray for low numbers!

Bystanders caught within range of a sonic boom take D6 damage and will be stunned for 2D4 melee rounds (-6 to initiative, -6 to Thac0) and will be slow, shocked and upset. Yelling at them to get out of the way or do this or that will not do much good as they will just stagger around wondering what just happened and why they can't hear anything but a ringing noise. Glass will shatter and air will kick up dust and paper close to a sonic boom, and it is much more damaging in a confined

space (such as inside a skyscraper, where the glass windows are liable to shatter quite spectacularly!).

Flying Objects/debris : Same strike chances but multiple chunks of masonry or similar will have a much higher chance of hitting a bystander.

Tiny objects - under .45 kg - D4 damage

Small objects - under .9 kg - D6 damage

Moderate objects - under 1.9 kgs - 2D4 damage

Medium objects - under 4.5 kgs - 3D4 damage

Large objects - under 11.3 kgs - 3D6 damage

Big objects - under 18.1 kgs - 4D6 damage

Hurled/falling Objects and People :

Chances of hitting bystanders are reduced for large, hurled objects and thrown people, but it can happen, with some deadly results.

Person thrown into another person - 5D6 + STR damage to thrown person and double damage inflicted on bystander, plus they will be knocked down and stunned (and injured!).

Person tossed aside - 4D6 if relatively gently, D4x10 tossed a short distance, D6x10+6 if thrown up to 100 ft or more (very likely to kill an ordinary human being).

Super throw - hurling a person hard will inflict 2D4x10 + STR damage and definitely kill an ordinary human being!

Getting hit by a small car - D4x10 damage

Getting hit by a typical car - D6x10 damage

Getting hit by a Desk, table, couch, bed, etc - 3D6 to 5D6 damage

Getting hit by a mail box, metal trash can or telephone booth - 3D6 damage

Getting hit by a Lamp post or tree - 6D6 damage

Getting picked up and smacked into something else - 2D6 + STR damage

General damage from Heavy Objects - D6 + D6 points per every 20 lbs (9 kg)

Damage from Velocity - Add D6 to 2D6 per 10 mph (Varies with circumstances)

Damage from Falling - D6 per 10 ft, this falling damage is ADDED to the damages listed above for objects 10 lbs (4.5 kg) or heavier, to reflect the added velocity and force of the blow from falling objects.

### 13. Traumatic Injuries

Your character's just taken a nasty wound. Now just how dangerous is it? A great many injuries will induce hypovolemic shock, a complex set of reactions evolved to compensate for loss of blood pressure. In shock, blood is diverted from skin and muscles to vital organs, and platelet aggregation is increased. Note that septic shock has essentially the same symptoms.

#### **Mild to Moderate Shock:**

10%-25% of blood lost. The patient will be pale, have rapid, shallow breathing and have a high heart rate, will sweat and will feel quite weak. He will be thirsty, his extremities will be cool and his senses will start to cloud. Even the most stout of heroes will start to feel a rising panic from purely physiologic hormonal reactions.

#### **Severe Shock:**

(30%-50% of blood lost). Platelet aggregation in the lungs will lead to respiratory failure. Failure of cellular processes will lead to sequential systems failure, frequently starting with the heart and kidney. Basically you stop breathing, your heart stops, everything else fails and you die. This can take anywhere from hours to days after the initial injury.

#### **Extremities:**

Arms and legs. Minor damage will make the extremity painful or difficult to use; major damage will make it impossible to use. Major blood vessels may be damaged, leading to heavy haemorrhage. Joints can be dislocated, bones broken, muscles and tendons cut. Note that damage to the shoulder blades or clavicles will make the arm nigh on unusable.

**Sepsis:**

Fever, shock, decreasing mental status can easily lead to death if untreated. A common problem especially with poor medical care in the days and weeks after injury.

**Unconsciousness:**

What makes you fall unconscious is either direct injury to the brain, or inability to feed it enough blood or oxygen. If you lose all blood supply to the brain you fall unconscious in seconds. Massive haemorrhage can lead blood pressure to drop fast enough that unconsciousness follows in seconds to minutes. If you lose oxygen supply, you fall unconscious in 4-30 minutes, depending upon how restricted your air supply is. Poisoning as from sepsis can also cause unconsciousness.

**Chest (Thoracic) Injuries**

Trauma that is inflicted on the chest can result in damage to the chest wall, lungs, trachea, major bronchi, oesophagus, thoracic duct, heart, diaphragm, mediastinal vessels, and spinal cord. Any combination of these injuries may occur.

**Abdominal and Pelvic Injuries:**

The principal immediate danger resulting from abdominal and pelvic trauma is profound hemodynamic instability resulting from injury to the spleen, pancreas, liver, kidney, or tributaries of the aorta. Most abdominal injuries result in poorly localised and non specific pain, nausea and reflex vomiting. In general blunt injuries to the abdomen are more dangerous than penetrating injuries.

**Aorta and Arteries:**

With modern medical care, 85% of patients with multiple aortic ruptures will die at the scene, 20% of the survivors die within six hours, and 72% of the remainder will die within a week.

Massive hemothorax and loss of blood pressure are the most common symptoms for penetrating injury. However for blunt injury initial manifestations are pain behind the sternum or between the shoulder blades, difficulty in swallowing, hoarseness, and difficulty breathing, leading to a left hemothorax and increasing levels of shock.

**Blood Vessels:**

Injury to major blood vessels in the abdomen may cut off the blood supply for the legs, making it impossible to stand in very short order. Depending upon where they're damaged, they make drain into the upper legs, causing extreme swelling.

**Collar Bone or Shoulder Blade****Fractures:**

Until it's splinted; pain in moving at all, inability to use the arm effectively, pain in attempting to use the arm. Can't really be fatal.

**Diaphragm:**

A penetrating chest wound at or below the level of the nipple is likely to enter the chest, pierce the diaphragm, and enter the abdominal cavity. Since the diaphragm is the muscle you use to breathe, injury to the diaphragm results in respiratory distress, often associated with hemothorax, pneumothorax and shock.

**Flail Chest:**

The ribs or the sternum are broken in such a way that breathing moves air from one part of the lungs to another, rather than in and out. This will usually result in unconsciousness from low oxygen in fifteen minutes to an hour, but not death.

**Heart:**

Damage to the heart may result in massive blood loss, heart failure, and death in short order. However, less severe injuries can result in bleeding into the pericardial sack. When this fills up with blood it will put pressure on the heart, making it more difficult to beat, lowering blood pressure. The patient will initially feel very tired, leading to increasing stages of shock shortly.

**Intestines:**

Abdominal pain and peritonitis. Peritonitis is an inflammation of the tissue that lines the abdominal cavity. Starting a day or so after the injury, it will lead to severe abdominal pain and distention, fever, vomiting, thirst, and if left untreated death in a week or two. It is easily treatable. Injury to the duodenum leads to more severe symptoms (severe abdominal tenderness in the upper right quadrant, severe vomiting), rise of fever within hours, and may have hemodynamic instability with time.

Note that evisceration isn't automatically fatal. In the absence of major haemorrhage, especially if the intestines aren't otherwise damaged, but that with poor medical care sepsis will probably be a killer.

**Pelvis Fracture:**

Besides making it impossible to stand, it is likely to cut one of the major blood vessels leading into the legs. Pelvis fractures are commonly associated with massive haemorrhage.

**Pulmonary Parenchyma:**

Lacerations of the lungs may cause pneumothorax as well as bleeding into the lungs. Contusions (blunt damage) will cause swelling of interstitial tissues and bleeding into the small airways. In either case, the patient will have difficulty breathing and will probably be coughing blood or exhaling blood. If this is severe enough low oxygen may lead to unconsciousness and death.

**Rib Fractures:**

The main symptom of rib fractures is that it hurts to breathe which will make exertion difficult. The amount it hurts depends on how many ribs are broken (a broken sternum is especially painful). Beyond this unless the patient has flail chest, hemothorax, the ribs have damaged the lung, or the ribs are displaced to such an extent that their motion damages surrounding tissue, the ribs will probably be held in place by the surrounding muscle and are largely ignorable.

**Spleen or Liver:**

Abdominal pain in the upper left (spleen) or upper right (liver) quadrant, severe haemorrhage rapidly leading to increasing shock and death. The mortality rate without intervention is near 100% for splenic injuries and almost as high for blunt injuries of the liver. Sepsis (inflammation or infection) is a major postoperative complication for liver injuries. Splenic rupture can also occur up to two weeks after the initial

injury, as an initial clot dissolves, or the splenic capsule ruptures under pressure of an initially small haemorrhage.

**Stomach Muscles:**

Damage to the stomach muscles will make it difficult or impossible to stand.

**Sucking Wounds:**

A person inhales by moving a muscle called the diaphragm, creating a vacuum in the chest, which pulls air in through the mouth down into the lungs. However if there is a hole in the chest wall, air can enter through that hole instead, preventing air from entering the lungs. The patient will feel short of breath, air will visibly be being sucked in through the hole in the chest wall. The resulting low oxygen will usually result in unconsciousness in fifteen minutes to an hour, but is unlikely to be fatal on a short time scale.

**Tension Pneumothorax:**

Sometimes, a hole in the chest wall acts as a one way valve, letting air in, but not out again. Sometimes the lung is punctured without the chest wall being punctured ( from a broken rib, for instance ). Alternatively if a wound that punctured both the chest wall and the lung is treated with a tight compress, air will still escape from the lung but not from the chest cavity. In these cases the increasing air pressure in the chest cavity will cause hyperinflation of the chest, preventing the patient from breathing.

The patient will have rapid, shallow breathing. He will fall unconscious from low oxygen in fifteen minutes or so, and will probably suffocate if left untreated. Tension Hemothorax is a similar problem but in this case it results from blood filling up the chest cavity. The

patient will probably be suffering from shock, as well as suffocation. This will usually result from multiple rib fractures damaging internal tissues. Frequently seen together with tension pneumothorax.

**Urinary Tract:**

Abdominal pain, back or flank pain, inability to void or blood in the urine. Some kidney injuries will result in massive haemorrhage, but others will not. In the long term, damage to the kidney may lead to renal failure (this can also be caused by shock and sepsis.) The course of renal failure can last weeks to months. This is fatal more than 50% of the time.

**Face:**

All sort of bones can be broken in the face; the face plate, sinuses, cheekbones, the orbits of the eye, and of course, the nose. There are a wide variety of possible symptoms, but severe facial injury usually results in progressive swelling, resulting in difficulty breathing, inhalation of blood, frequently eventually (1 hour) completely closing off the airways, resulting in suffocation. There may also be numbness or paralysis in some part of the face. Facial injuries can also lead to extreme haemorrhage and shock.

**Jaw:**

A broken jaw is associated with numbness, bleeding from tooth sockets, fractured or missing teeth, inability to close the jaw properly (teeth don't come together right), pain on moving the jaw, and sometimes with bleeding from the ear. Fractures of the jaw also allow the tongue and other soft tissues to intrude into the airway, leading to suffocation.

**Scalp:**

Scalp wounds bleed copiously, making it a major source of haemorrhage and shock. They may also be incidental to damage to the skull.

**Skull:**

Skull fractures in different places have rather different effects, but symptoms include one or more of the following; a mixture of blood and cerebrospinal fluid leaking from the ears, nose, or throat, blood in the whites of the eyes, loss of the sense of smell, loss of vision in one eye, a dilated, fixed pupil, a worsening in the patients level of consciousness.

These last symptoms are indicative of pressure on the brain, caused either by swelling of the brain or bleeding into the skull. Swelling of the brain can cause serious damage or possibly death on its own, but has the advantage that its self-limiting (and in a modern setting, usually controllable with drugs). On the other hand, haemorrhage will almost always lead to continued degradation and death if left untreated.

The patient may have a headache localised at the injury. He may be lucid for a period after the injury, but this will rarely be a period of normalcy. He will usually feel drowsy, and may thereafter slip into a coma. The patient will lose one set of reflexes after another. He may gradually lose the use of one of his arms or legs, or become completely paralysed on one side of the body.

This will happen gradually as pressure increases starting with a slurring of speech and clumsiness. His breathing may become uneven, and some part or all of his body may begin shaking uncontrollably (seizure activity.)

The time course for these degradations can be hours or days and the condition can worsen dramatically in minutes.

Even the most minor head injury will result in the character being stunned for D4 rounds (all abilities halved).

**Neck Injuries**

There are a lot of important things passing through the neck, including the spinal cord, larynx and trachea, phrenic nerve, brachial plexus, carotid artery, jugular vein, cranial nerves, oesophagus and pharynx, thyroid gland, and stellate ganglion. Of course, many of these may be damaged simultaneously. Possible symptoms for damage to each of these are listed below. Not all will necessarily be present.

Brachial Plexus: numbness and/or partial paralysis in an arm.

Carotid artery: decreased level of consciousness, heavy bleeding (which may compress the trachea causing difficulty breathing), and hypovolemic shock.

Cranial nerves: inability to shrug a shoulder or rotate chin to opposite shoulder, paralysis of the tongue, hoarseness, and difficulty in swallowing.

Jugular vein: heavy bleeding, hypovolemic shock.

Larynx and trachea: spitting blood, a sucking neck wound, hoarseness, difficulty breathing, high pitched, noisy respiration.

Oesophagus and pharynx (connects to your stomach): difficulty swallowing, bloody saliva, sucking neck wound.



Spinal cord: partial or total paralysis.

Stellate ganglion: dilated pupil.

Thyroid gland, phrenic nerve: no special short term effects. Also, damage to the muscles in the neck will mean that the patient is unable to hold his head upright.

## 14. Secret Identities

Watch any of the countless detective shows on television like CSI or Law and Order. It is not difficult to find someone in the information age. So how hard is it for a hero to maintain his secret identity?

Can someone get a picture of the heroes? Masks are probably not going to be very effective, and don't disguise height, build, or race. Add descriptions of prominent facial features, hair colour, voice and you've enough for a profile. Run it on TV and the heroes won't want to go outside. Maybe they search driver's license registrations too.

Also, one would assume the heroes need specialized services or goods. Gunfight between heroes and villains? The cops will start checking emergency rooms and clinics. Your costume got shot up? There has to be some place you'd get it fixed or replaced.

Even worse if the law gets a hold of any identity information: address, phone number, name. Now they can find your credit information, credit card purchases, phone calls, etc.

Then, there's simple detective work. Plot where the Crusader has been spotted. Maybe he lives somewhere in that area?

Along more homeland security lines: recently they've tested software that matches face-shots from security cameras (ubiquitous nowadays) with mug-shots of known criminals. In fact if you were to be completely realistic, I suspect your players would give up in frustration. So just choose some clever methods, allow the players to foil a few, and hand wave the rest away.

There aren't cameras everywhere but probably more than you think. Traffic lights, ATMs, stores, some apartment buildings. Then there are the ones that will be mounted on police helicopters, dashboards of patrol cars, etc. If you're really determined, you'll start plotting his activities and lying in wait where he's likely to be.

You can pretty much count on eventually figuring out someone's skin colour and maybe eye colour. Once you've got that, if he has a driver's license, all you need is time. And forensics will tell you a lot. Blood and even sweat reveals a lot of information. It won't necessarily point you to the suspect, but it will let you identify him for sure once you have him. Triangulation is also your enemy.

It would take between probably one and six months to figure out where a superhero is based if he hangs out mostly in one area. Basically, short of some really weird cases (like being physically transformed such as with a Mystically Bestowed character) it's just about impossible to maintain a dual identity in the modern world.

That said, here are a few dodges you might take:

- Sympathetic Officials: If the Mayor, the Chief of Police, or some other major figure is secretly on the heroes' side, he can deflect some of the trouble they would get in. Files are "misplaced." DNA results are "inconclusive." The heroes have some measure of protection as long as they don't mess up too bad.

- Mission Impossible: Maybe the Paranormal Enforcement Bureau, or whatever isn't totally committed to

shutting down supers. Maybe super terrorism and super crime is so epidemic that they (at least under the table) are recruiting them to act as deniable assets.

- Untraceable: This one's pretty hard, but if your group has the means to wreck detection methods they'll have some breathing room. You'd need someone who can disrupt electronics to knock out the surveillance cameras, someone who can "cloud men's minds" or some such to make sure any eye witnesses are unreliable, and some way to acquire medical care, fresh spandex, and whatever equipment they need under the table (which means they'll all be criminals).

Does it really matter what Captain Liberty thinks about the Red Demon if police refuse to investigate him, grand juries refuse to indict him, and judges will throw out cases against him on the slightest technicality?

Don't forget if the heroes create enough commotion, the press is going to get involved. Press helicopters following the heroes along on their attempt to escape make it even harder.

If they make the description public, then someone is going to call the police on their cell phone when they see him, or someone like him, in costume or out. Just another thing making the police's job easier. Somebody might even try to make a citizen's arrest creating a whole new dilemma for the hero.

You might take the tack of The Fugitive: one elite group whose mission is to track down the supers. But they're a small group and there are numerous supers to hone in on, which means they have to

carefully allocate their time and resources. So you ask yourself: are they going to go after the villains or the vigilantes first? Also, the government is going to want these supers as friendlies since there's this war of terrorism thing going on.

Or you might take the direction that the government is after these metas (because they can't control them), but there's another group of non metas who provide smoke and mirror cover for the good supers. They like having vigilantes out there to clean up the streets, etc. Maybe the metas know about this support group ... maybe they don't.

A lot of supers also have super genius friends (or members). That means that, whatever technology one might use to film and identify supers can be thwarted. White noise generators that are powerful enough to affect cameras, ad nauseum. Maybe there's even one super intelligent hero who's made it his hobby to hide superheroes from information technology.

And finally, let the people who are playing the supers figure out how they're going to evade the law. If the law is a factor you're going to put into the game, then your players will need to know that up front and figure out how to deal with it. Just keep in mind: if you make the law too big brotherish (too large, too technological, too powerful) then you'll be in danger of sucking the life out of the hero side of the game.

Also, don't do dumb stuff. Your civilian identity should not be the person most identified with the hero. You should have people who can legitimately cover for you and you should have good

excuses ready. Your Hero Identity should work in specific areas other than where he lives or specifically work to spread the busts out to avoid making a pattern. Only don the mask when needed, and do detective work in disguise, never in costume or in your mundane identity. Break into the police communication system.

Have a movement superpower that will allow you to elude helicopters and a dozen police cars at a time. Have a way to get to a home base that is not traceable. Take advantage of the unreliability of witnesses. Use decoys, simple disguises, and move quickly, quickly, quickly. Mouths are pretty distinctive, so either cover your mouth or wear lipstick.

There are certain things to keep in mind when dealing with Law enforcement; The first is jurisdiction. City officials have far less resources than the average Federal agency. State agencies have a lot of resources, but even those have limits. Federal agents have access to a vast array of resources (though there are hierarchies in their departments) but there are priorities and pecking orders within each of these agencies. Are they just 'low level' FBI agents, X-files level or ultra secret director elite level?

The second is political. This is always a very complex thing, and can make the campaign interesting; indeed there could be a whole web here the characters do not even know about. For example; what is the ultimate motivation/ attitude of the local DA vs. Superheroes? What about the mayor? Are these separately elected positions? What about the governor? What about the President?

The third is practical. Noting the above two questions (which basically entails that if you're serious about this on a complicated level you should populate the city, state and local federal officials and their various attitudes)...what do the characters do? How many supers are there?

If there are at least a hundred masked crime fighters in every major city, the government simply won't have time to track them all down properly. It will focus on the flashy ones, the ones that cause the most property damage, and the ones that are the most likely to get them prestige in the news media (in that order). Flashy being easy to find (less work), property damage causing the most complaints, and prestige in the media equals more budget for their department.

If the hero's don't hang around and give interviews but disappear into the night, descriptions will be *\*very\** bad ("He was 12 feet tall, sir!"). People get it wrong all the time. They might even finger the wrong dude ("The Crimson Avenger saved me!" when really it was the "Red Devil"). If a known, registered, trusted hero vouches for you, the authorities back off.

## 15. Adventure Hooks

You grab your players' interest in an adventure by appealing to the psychology of their characters. For instance, a character obsessed with locating his or her true parents will obviously respond well to an enigmatic note found in the attic of the hero's ancestral home. If you involve one hero in the scenario, the rest of the group will probably tag along just to be friendly. But beware of activating their own contrary psychological traits (in the example above, a hero who says, "I refuse to help you dredge up past scandals!").

Here are a few tried-and-true adventure hooks:

### **The Challenge**

A remote-controlled plane writes smoky letters in the sky above Manhattan: "TRICKERY CANNOT HELP THIS TIME, (name of hero group). MEET TONIGHT AT OUR LAST BATTLE SITE OR ADMIT YOUR COWARDICE"—and, of course, the skywritten note is signed by your archvillain. The challenge leads all the evening newscasts and makes the front page of the paper's evening edition. Maybe the heroes don't feel like walking into a trap just at that moment, so they pass up the challenge. But the next day the skywriting challenge gets nastier. And the day after that ...

The heroes become laughingstocks. Sooner or later they get fed up with the humiliation, and they launch themselves into your scenario, ready to pummel the taunting villain.

Obviously, the challenge can take some form besides skywriting. Each form

varies in its public exposure, nastiness, and allure. Aim for the dramatic.

### **The Dying Delivery**

A hero is on patrol, appearing at a posh charity function, or just lounging around the public HQ. In staggers a mysterious figure. The man (or woman or child or alien) mumbles a few words, hands the hero a clue, and perishes. The clue or dying words should tell the hero where to start investigating this mystery. The victim may have named his or her killer, or the assassin's employer, or maybe a loved one who should be informed of the death.

For a twist, the victim might have a completely wrong idea of the killer's identity. This leads the hero on a wild goose chase to the wrong villain, but the chase uncovers another evil scheme. By defeating that scheme, the hero group somehow uncovers evidence that points to the victim's true killer. Complicating the investigation, whoever killed the victim now wants the clue in the hero's possession. Naturally, he or she will stop at nothing to get it....

### **Enigmatic Figure**

Create an NPC who is sure to fascinate your heroes. The NPC shows up from time to time (perhaps in earlier adventures) for no apparent reason, manifesting strange powers—perhaps powers identical to a hero's! The hero group, intrigued, looks into the mystery and discovers a villain's plot. Who is the NPC? Some ideas:

1. The villain's agent, luring the heroes to their doom. Heroes should become suspicious of the NPC's actions before that doom strikes.

2. The villain's hostage, who keeps escaping-but never quite long enough to get to the heroes.

3. A freelance hero, fighting against the villain and trying to warn the hero group about the scheme.

4. The ghost of one of the villain's victims. This option is best suited to heroes who have psychic or magic powers.

5. The villain's ally or dependent, who is caught between love or duty and worry over the villain's scheme. This character either dies at the villain's hands by the grand finale or is rescued by the heroes and becomes a dangling subplot for future adventures.

### **Evidence is Uncovered**

After some lengthy time, new evidence in an important criminal case has appeared, or a key witness has blown back into town. The statute of limitations runs out in an absurdly brief time, so contacts in law enforcement enlist the heroes' aid to locate and protect the witness or evidence. It goes without saying that some evildoer has also learned of the new evidence and works to prevent the heroes from achieving their goal. One way to give this hook some emotional momentum is to make the evidence capable of freeing a hero's long time friend or childhood buddy from unjust imprisonment. Conversely, the evidence might put away a hero's long time foe for good.

### **A Friend is Imperilled**

This adventure hook resembles the "Help Friend or Ally" in the Goals section. Here the friend's predicament is easily handled, but proves to be a lead-in

to a larger plot. In campaign terms, this hook gives you an excuse to bring in a recurring NPC, perhaps to foreshadow a major later development.

### **Grim Necessity**

"Get involved or die!" A longtime foe has poisoned the heroes, cursed them, or framed them. If they don't achieve the adventure's goal, it's curtains for the heroes and maybe the free world.

### **Heroes for Hire**

The heroes may be employed to prevent the villain's plot, or working a job that is directly endangered when the scheme is sprung. Most hero groups don't need to take odd jobs to make ends meet. But your heroes may be willing to take on a particular job for reasons besides money. For example:

**Compassion.** The heroes must carry a vital donor organ to a dying patient far away. Nobody but the heroes can make the journey fast enough.

**Prestige.** An extremely high-brow embassy party will attract the movers and shakers of world government. The heroes may volunteer to guard against terrorists just so they can make connections with partygoers and get their pictures on the Daily Bugle's society pages.

**Glamour or recreation.** The heroes might play bodyguards to rock star Lila Cheney or another celebrity on a world tour. Who wouldn't take a job like that? Similarly, many high security courier jobs take the heroes to the world's most luxurious watering holes. This is a good hook if you want to take your players to some exotic foreign locale.

**Social duty.** Suppose a touring exhibition of priceless artwork is arriving at the Met or another museum. Somebody has to guard them while the exhibits are set up. Can your heroes refuse a heartfelt request from the museum's curator?

### **Mistaken Identity**

In this classic adventure hook, the hero is seen robbing banks, mugging old ladies, sabotaging public events, and acting generally discreditable. Of course, the real miscreant is an impostor, and the impersonation is all part of an evil plot. But no one believes it except the hero's group. The hero gets a lead when someone in the villain's employ mistakes the hero for the impostor (confused?). The henchman drops a clue to the hero, and that is the avenue into the adventure.

The villain often turns out to be the hero's oldest enemy. By ruining the hero's public image, the villain takes gloating revenge for past defeats.

And who is the impostor? Perhaps a robot. Perhaps an ordinary agent with high-tech gadgetry that simulates the hero's powers. Perhaps another hero with similar powers, whom the villain has kidnapped and brainwashed.

### **Pushing their Buttons**

When all else fails, bluntly manipulate the heroes' beliefs and emotions. Find out what one of the PC heroes hates above all else—killing innocents, for example, or persecuting mutants, or beating children. Then have a villain do that very thing, right before the hero's eyes. Inevitably the hero pursues the villain right into the adventure.

## 16. Quick Roll Adventures

For when you're struggling for an idea or for just a one shot game session.

### **A. Who is the villain?**

- 01-05 Mind controlled or possessed NPC
- 06-10 Established NPC
- 11-15 Alien monster
- 16-20 Alien spy or scout
- 21-25 Alien scientist
- 26-30 Undead
- 31-35 Maniac
- 36-40 Mad scientist
- 41-45 Occultist
- 46-50 Fanatic extremist
- 51-55 Evangelist
- 56-60 Witch Doctor
- 61-65 Witch
- 66-70 Government agent
- 71-75 Deluded scientist
- 76-80 Lycanthrope
- 81-85 Spirit
- 86-90 Mobster
- 91-95 Vampire
- 96-00 Demon

### **B. What is the villain's plan?**

- 01-08 Sacrifice
- 09-16 Corrupt
- 17-24 Summon
- 25-32 Mind control
- 33-40 Manipulate
- 41-48 Abduct
- 49-56 Murder
- 57-64 Steal
- 65-72 Cast spell on
- 73-80 Experiment on
- 81-88 Feed on
- 89-96 Replace with double
- 97-00 Frame

### **C. What is the villain after?**

- 01-07 Meteorite
- 08-14 Mystic locale
- 15-21 Relative of a player

- 22-28 Friend of a player
- 29-35 Player
- 36-42 Magic item
- 43-49 Alien device
- 50-56 Information
- 57-63 Formula
- 64-70 Important document
- 71-77 Important evidence
- 78-84 False item of power
- 85-92 Spell
- 93-00 Monster

### **D. What is the villain's motive?**

- 01-06 Nihilist
- 07-12 Lonely
- 13-18 Sociopathic
- 19-24 Battle of wits
- 25-31 Drug or alcohol influenced
- 32-38 Love or lust
- 39-45 Revenge
- 46-52 Knowledge
- 53-59 Power
- 60-66 Wealth or profit
- 67-70 Following orders
- 74-80 Hatred
- 81-87 Believes its right
- 88-93 Obsession
- 94-00 Religious reason

### **E. Where is the villain's hideout?**

- 01-05 Other dimension
- 06-10 Mystic site
- 11-15 Wilderness
- 16-20 Mine
- 21-25 Cabin
- 26-30 Mobile
- 31-35 Lab
- 36-40 Abandoned house
- 41-45 Home
- 46-50 Temple or church
- 51-55 Public building
- 56-60 Military base
- 61-65 Government building
- 66-70 Sewers
- 71-75 Factory
- 76-80 Subway

81-85 Mountain  
 86-90 Undersea  
 91-95 Cave  
 96-00 Virtual Reality

## 17. Running an Invasion

The invasion can come from other worlds, the ocean bottom or a distant dimension. Most are wrapped up quickly with no lingering effects. The incident that sparks an invasion can range from trespassing into sovereign territory to a slip in etiquette. The reason can be internal rather than external. Instead of a fear or passion driving them, the invaders might themselves need something, like food or hosts for their young. A leader might decide the only way to keep his position is to start a war with a national enemy. The earth might just be a waypoint on the way to the real enemy with necessary resources.

The GM needs to decide what the invaders want and why are they invading? Any justification for invasion is fine so long as it offers a possible solution to the invasion or a mystery to solve if the invaders aren't talking. Not all invaders are evil however. Some may feel they are liberating the earth. Other questions the GM needs to ask himself include; How long has the invasion been planned? What is the trigger for the invasion? At what stage do the players get involved and can they somehow prevent the invasion?

### Diary of an Invasion

Once the invasion starts it usually goes through a fairly standard sequence of events. Each event is broken into 2 parts; an open and a secret invasion. A open invasion is known to the general public, while a secret invasion is one which only a few people know about.

#### **1. Preventing the Invasion**

If the players have a way of knowing the invasion is planned and have a way to intercept it, they might try. They can



even succeed so long as there is no grand invasion scenario. This could involve a galaxy spanning adventure or a stealthy border crossing to obliterate some vital supply dump without which the invasion cannot proceed.

## **2. The Arrival**

Open: The invader hopes that the flagrant display of force will crush the defender's will to resist.

Secret: The invader will be working to terrorize the population or arrive in secret to arrange for a massive assault later. The invader could design ships and equipment that looked vastly different than their standard fare and send down agents thus equipped to find the locals. The standard troops could make very convincing efforts to destroy the agents before they make landfall.

They may even sacrifice a party or two, just to lend authenticity. The agents could tell the locals that they represent another faction, one dedicated to the destruction of the invasion forces. The agents would organize rebel cells, provide medical aid and supplies, and once they were trusted, offer a plan to oust the invaders. That plan would succeed brilliantly, since it's all a ruse. Then with the trust and cooperation of the populace, the invader agents would take over the world.

## **3. Build up of Invasion forces**

Open: The invaders will forcibly conquer territory for central bases and any areas with materials needed to complete the invasion plans.

Secret: The invaders in a secret arrival may have to assemble the war machines, gain power sources, and study the invasion target.

## **4. The Invaders take ground**

Open: Open warfare with pitched battles and subjugation of territory. The invaders must win some ground in this event or they will not be perceived as a credible threat.

Secret: Terrorism is used to destroy the defender's will to defend himself.

## **5. Invader Reinforcements arrive**

The initial invasion is going well for the invaders, when things get better still. The reinforcements may come from home or could be locals who have turned traitor or are forced to serve. These reinforcements may be identical to earlier invaders or they could be a special force. The new force can cause trouble among the initial invaders as well as for the defenders.

The new forces can include individuals who don't like or even hate the leader or other members of the original cadre. The second force may even install a new leader which could in turn cause widespread dissension in the ranks. This new force may also be independent of the first and will go about its own missions as it pleases. In a secret invasion the invaders may seek native troops for reinforcements.

## **6. The Heroes get organised**

The players and their associates get better organised and make contact with other groups who are also fighting the invaders. The new associations will have benefits and perhaps drawbacks.

## **7. New Technology**

The players get the chance to create or assist in the creation of a weapon that is especially useful against the invaders. The invaders might also reveal some new weapon at this point.

### **8. The Heroes strike back**

The players fight and start to win more battles than they lose. This could be due to a new weapon, more efficient organisation, knowledge of the invader's capabilities or dissension among the victorious invaders. Unknown to the players the invaders may begin to fight amongst themselves. Moreover the leader could be killing those who now displease him, some of his cadre could rebel or the leader may be replaced, causing organisational chaos.

### **9. The Invaders get desperate**

The invaders are pulling out all the stops and try to crush the heroes in one stroke. It may not be well considered, but it will be big and may be combined with a new weapon.

### **10. The Grand Finale**

Everyone's last cards are laid on the table. This is often tied to the invaders' big plan, so that in stopping the plan the invaders will be completely defeated.

### **11. Aftermath**

What has been lost or destroyed in the fighting? What has been gained? Are there prisoners of war to deal with? How badly were the invaders beaten? Will they have the ability to invade again some day? If they escaped, where did they go? Has new tech or magic been introduced?

### Command Structure

How does the leader get his orders down to his troops? Do the invaders have a strict hierarchy or is it informal? Can the cadre argue with the leader or do they follow his orders mindlessly? Are the troops allowed to give opinions? Does the leader really command or is he a front for the cadre?

### **The Leader**

The strength and distinction of any invasion should come from its ultimate source of guidance; its leader. The players may never meet the leader of the invasion but the personality of this individual is very important. The leader of the invasion force can be a bigger, stronger, more impressive version of his troops or he can be completely different. The leader can be an average person commanding an army of super strong morons, a trooper who rose through the ranks or a gladiator champion of champions. If the leader is loved, respected or feared by his troops then his army will work well for him. If the leader is weak, stupid or uncaring then the army will often be too disorganised to be an effective invasion force.

### **Lieutenants**

These are the lesser leaders who direct the troops personally and may become personally involved in combat. The cadre could like the leader, the troops, a combination of both or something completely different. The troops could be loyal to their lieutenant rather than their leader. Over the course of the invasion the GM should take notice of the rivalries that being developed between players and the lieutenants.

### **Foot Soldiers**

Aside from selected individuals the rest of the troops should be mostly faceless grunts. New troop types can be added when reinforcements arrive. How many types of warriors do the invaders have?

## 18. What you would find in a Supervillain's lair?

You've defeated your archenemy, either having banished him elsewhere or slain him. Now what interesting things has he left lying around in his main abode?

There are two different tables. A scientific one for modern campaigns and a magical one for ancient of fantasy campaigns. Of course there's no reason you cant use both tables regardless of the era.

### Roll Type

01-50 Scientific

51-00 Magical

### Scientific

- 01-03 A device to make clones.
- 04-06 A device to make robotic duplicates.
- 07-09 A vial of D20 tablets which give temporary specific powers.
- 10-12 A vial of D20 tablets which give temporary random powers.
- 13-15 D20 syringes with a drug which gives temporary specific powers.
- 16-18 D20 syringes with a drug which gives temporary random powers.
- 19-21 A device which duplicates powers.
- 22-24 An Arcane land Vehicle.
- 25-27 An Arcane air vehicle.
- 28-30 An Arcane water vehicle.
- 31-33 An Arcane space vehicle.
- 34-37 An Arcane star vehicle.
- 38-40 D20 robot servants.
- 41-43 D10 robot warriors.
- 44-46 An Arcane Vehicle warsuit or exoframe.
- 47-49 The main part of the lair is mobile, capable of VTOL flight.

- 50-54 A precious jewel horde; with a value of D100 x 1 million dollars.
- 55-57 A device which can fabricate buildings.
- 58-60 A device which can fabricate vehicles.
- 61-63 A device which can fabricate weapons.
- 64-66 A device which can fabricate equipment.
- 67-69 An extraterrestrial alien prisoner.
- 70-72 An extradimensional alien prisoner.
- 73-75 A time displaced alien prisoner.
- 76-78 Schematics or research notes for an Arcane Artifact.
- 79-81 A machine which allows travel through time.
- 82-84 A machine which allows travel between dimensions.
- 85-88 D6 heroes who had disappeared D20 years ago cryogenically frozen.
- 89-91 D6 extinct animal species.
- 92-94 D6 extinct plant species.
- 95-97 D6 half grown clones of current heroes.
- 98-00 D6 dead bodies of current supervillains or heroes who seem to be alive in the outside world.

### Magical

- 01-04 An artifact to make magical clones.
- 05-08 An artifact to create golem duplicates.
- 09-12 An artifact to give temporary specific supernatural powers.
- 13-16 An artifact to give temporary random supernatural powers.
- 17-20 An artifact to give temporary specific spells.
- 21-24 An artifact to give temporary random spells.
- 25-27 A device which duplicates spells.

- 28-30 A mythological land steed.
- 31-33 A mythological air steed.
- 34-36 A mythological water steed.
- 38-40 A mythological space steed.
- 41-43 A mythological star steed.
- 44-46 D20 imp servants.
- 47-49 D10 demon or supernatural warriors.
- 50-52 An Arcane Artifact magical warsuit or juggernaut.
- 53-55 The main part of the lair is mobile, capable of teleporting spatially.
- 59-61 A precious jewel horde; with a value of D100 x 1000 dinari.
- 62-64 An artifact which fabricates buildings.
- 65-67 An artifact which fabricates vehicles.
- 68-70 An artifact which fabricates weapons.
- 71-73 An artifact which fabricates equipment.
- 74-76 An extraterrestrial supernatural prisoner.
- 77-79 An extradimensional supernatural prisoner.
- 80-82 A time displaced supernatural prisoner.
- 83-85 Schematics or research notes for an Arcane Artifact.
- 86-88 A previously unheard of grimoire or scrolls full of spells.
- 89-91 The Necronomicon or some other famous artifact.
- 92-94 D6 heroes who had disappeared D100 x10 years ago magically frozen.
- 95-97 D6 extinct supernatural races from D100 x10 years ago magically frozen.
- 98-00 An extinct monster from thousands of years ago magically frozen.

## 19. Fear and Phobias

Fear is defined as a “justified fright of a known external cause for worry”. It is a normal response to an external threat, and usually produces disturbances manifested in the sufferer's action and bodily changes. These disturbances are felt by the person and visible to others. Humans react to fear in three ways: fight, flight or freeze.

We may muster up courage and fight the source of danger (fight); we may feel terrified and flee frantically to escape (flee); or become immobilized, motionless and mute (freeze). Fear is different from one person to another (sometimes leading to phobias) and if not properly handled could lead to social problems. Someone in fear might lose consciousness of mind and might do stupid and dangerous acts.

Terror refers to a pronounced state of fear, where someone becomes overwhelmed with a sense of immediate danger.

Paranoia is term to describe a psychosis of fear, related to perception of being persecuted. This perception often causes one to change their normal behaviour in radical ways, after time their behaviour may become extremely compulsive.

Fear may be triggered by internal or external events, conditions, or situations that signal danger. The threat may be physical or psychological. Fear may also be triggered by the presence of something threatening or the absence of something that provides safety and security.

Roll Effects

- 01-30 Victim is wary and suffers a -3 to strike for the remainder of the melee.
- 31-50 50% chance that the victim flees the scene. If he stays he may only parry.
- 51-65 Victim flees as rapidly as possible away from the source of his or her terror.
- 66-75 Victim becomes totally catatonic (as if stunned).
- 76-80 Victim flies into a berserk rage and immediately attempts to attack the object of his rage. He will charge if possible and attempt to grapple. All strike chances against him are +1 and all strike chances he makes are +1.
- 81-85 As before but will attack anything (including allies) that come within striking distance.
- 86-90 Victim becomes hysterical and will continue to stand in place and scream until snapped out of it (GM may determine how this occurs).
- 91-94 The victim becomes subject to terror and curl up into a gibbering ball, counting as prone target.
- 95-97 Victim faints dead away (collapsing to the ground). He remains unconscious for d +6 minutes.
- 98-99 Victim suffers a heart attack. The target cannot move about under his own power for the remainder of the day and suffers -2 in all physical attributes until he has spent one month resting in bed.
- 00 Victim suffers a heart attack and must have medical attention within one minute or die. If he does survive all subsequent rolls

on the Fright Table are increased by 20% this day.

Victims fleeing the source of their fright will do so for 1 minute or until they can no longer see the source of their fright.

Long term effects of prolonged trauma

If the character is experiencing at least five of the following then he may be developing long term trauma;

Intrusive recollection of the event while awake.

Recurrent dreams of the event.

Distress as a result of any reminder of the event.

Attempts at avoiding any thought or feeling about the event, or avoiding activities that remind him of the event.

Diminished interest in meaningful activities.

Detachment from others.

Sense of impending doom.

Difficulty sleeping.

Irritability or increased anger.

Concentration and attention disorders.

Paranoia.

Increased response upon being startled.

Depression.

Sexual dysfunction.

Guilt.

Obsession.

Addiction (substance abuse).

Campaign Use

Long term trauma is probably best used in a campaign where a particularly long and difficult battle has occurred, specifically one in which the character was severely beaten or people the character knew died gruesomely. At the very least, this kind of trauma would make a character a little twitchy. At worst, it could make the character incredibly difficult to be around. There is also a disorder that certain professions

such as doctors, nurses and soldiers acquire after working in difficult environments (such as the emergency room or in wartime). This disorder makes the victim need that kind of stimulation again. People with this disorder are unable to find any excitement in anything that isn't as fast and furious as whatever they used to do (ER, wartime work, other kinds of adrenalin-rush occupations).

### Common Phobias:

Acarophobia -- fear of skin infestation by mites or ticks.

Acousticophobia -- fear of noise.

Acrophobia -- fear of heights.

Aerophobia -- fear of fresh air.

Agoraphobia -- fear of open spaces.

Agyrophobia -- fear of crossing streets.

Aichmophobia -- fear of pointed objects.

Ailurophobia, Aelurophobia, Elurophobia -- fear of cats.

Alektorophobia, Alektrophobia -- fear of chickens.

Algophobia -- fear of pain.

Amathophobia, Koniophobia -- fear of dust.

Amaxophobia -- fear of being or riding in vehicles.

Ancraophobia -- fear of wind.

Androphobia -- fear of men.

Anginophobia -- fear of quinsy or other forms of sore throat.

Ankylophobia -- dread of stiff or immobile joints.

Anthophobia -- fear of flowers.

Anthropophobia -- fear of people, especially in groups.

Antlophobia -- fear of floods.

Apeiophobia -- fear of infinity.

Apiphobia, Apiophobia -- intense fear of bees.

Arachibutyrophobia -- fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of the mouth.

Arachnophobia -- fear of spiders.

Asthenophobia -- fear of weakness.

Astraphobia, Astrapophobia -- fear of lightning.

Ataxiophobia, Ataxophobia -- fear of disorder.

Atelophobia -- fear of imperfection.

Atephobia -- fear of ruin.

Aulophobia -- fear of flutes.

Aurophobia -- dislike of gold.

Automysophobia -- fear or dislike of being dirty.

Autophobia -- fear of being egotistical, of referring to oneself; fear of being by oneself; fear of oneself.

Bacillophobia -- fear of missiles.

Bacteriophobia -- fear of bacteria.

Barophobia -- fear of gravity.

Bathmophobia -- dislike or fear of walking.

Bathophobia -- intense dislike of bathing; fear of depth.

Batophobia -- fear of passing high buildings.

Batrachophobia -- fear of frogs and toads.

Bdellophobia -- fear of leeches.

Belonephobia -- fear of pins and needles.

Bibliophobia -- dislike for books.

Blennophobia, Myxophobia -- fear or dislike of slime.

Bogyphobia -- dread of demons and goblins.

Bromidrosiphobia -- fear of having unpleasant body odour.

Brontophobia -- fear of thunder and thunderstorms.

Cainophobia -- fear or dislike of novelty.

Cancerphobia, Cancerophobia, Carcinomophobia, Carcinomatophobia, Carcinophobia -- fear of cancer.

Cardiophobia -- fear of heart disease.

Cathisophobia -- fear or dislike of sitting down.

Catoptrophobia -- fear of mirrors.

Celtophobia -- intense dislike of Celts.

Cenophobia, Kenophobia -- fear of crowds.

Chaetophobia, Trichophobia -- fear of hair.

Cheimaphobia, Cheimatophobia -- fear or dislike of cold.

Cherophobia -- fear of gaiety.

Chinophobia -- fear or dislike of snow.

Cholerophobia -- fear of cholera.

Chrematophobia -- fear or dislike of wealth.

Chrometophobia -- fear or dislike of money.

Chromophobia -- fear of colours.

Chronophobia -- discomfort concerning time.

Cibophobia -- fear of food.

Claustrophobia -- fear of enclosed spaces.

Clinophobia -- fear or dislike of going to bed.

Cnidophobia -- insect stings.

Coitophobia -- fear of sexual intercourse.

Cometophobia -- fear of comets.

Coprophobia -- fear of excrement/faeces.

- Coulrophobia -- fear of clowns.
- Cremnophobia -- fear of precipices.
- Cryophobia -- fear of ice or frost.
- Crystallophobia -- fear of glass, crystals.
- Cyberphobia -- fear of computers.
- Cymophobia -- fear of waves.
- Cynophobia -- dread of dogs.
- Cypridophobia -- fear of venereal disease.
- Defecaloesiophobia -- fear of painful bowel movements.
- Deipnophobia -- fear or dislike of dining and dinner conversation.
- Demonophobia -- fear of spirits, demons.
- Demophobia -- dislike of crowds.
- Dermatophobia -- fear of skin disease.
- Dextrophobia -- fear of objects on the right side of the body.
- Dikephobia -- fear or dislike of justice.
- Dinophobia -- fear of whirlpools.
- Diplopiaphobia -- fear of double vision.
- Dipsophobia -- fear of drinking.
- Domatophobia -- fear of being in a house.
- Doraphobia -- fear of contact with animal fur or skin.
- Dysmorphophobia -- dread of deformity, usually in others.
- Ecclesiophobia -- fear or dislike of church.
- Ecophobia, Oecophobia, Oikophobia -- fear of or aversion to home surroundings.
- Eisoptrophobia -- fear of mirrors.
- Eleutherophobia -- fear of freedom.
- Emetophobia -- fear of vomiting.
- Enetophobia -- fear of needles or pins.
- Entomophobia -- fear of insects.
- Eosophobia -- fear of the dawn.
- Ergasiophobia -- fear or dislike of work.
- Ergophobia -- hatred of work.
- Erotophobia -- fear of sexual feelings and their physical expression.
- Eurotophobia -- fear of the colour red or fear of blushing.
- Febriphobia -- fear of fever.
- Galeophobia -- fear of sharks.
- Gamophobia, Gametophobia -- fear or dislike of marriage.
- Gephyrophobia -- fear of crossing a bridge.
- Gerascophobia -- fear of growing old.
- Geumophobia -- fear of tastes or flavours.



Glossophobia -- fear of speaking in public or of trying to speak.

Graphophobia -- dislike of writing.

Gymnophobia, Nudophobia -- fear of nudity.

Gynophobia, Gynophobia -- fear or hatred of women.

Hadeophobia, Stygiophobia -- fear of hell.

Hagiophobia -- dislike for saints and the holy.

Hamartophobia -- fear of error or sin.

Haptophobia, Haphophobia,  
Thixophobia -- fear of touch.

Harpaxophobia -- fear of robbers.

Hedonophobia -- fear of pleasure.

Heliophobia, Solophobia -- fear of sunlight; abnormal sensitivity to the effects of sunlight.

Helminthophobia -- fear of being infested with worms.

Hemaphobia, Hematophobia,  
Haemaphobia, Hemophobia -- fear of the sight of blood.

Herpetophobia -- fear of reptiles.

Hierophobia -- fear or dislike of sacred objects, fear of priests.

Hippophobia -- fear or horses.

Hodophobia -- fear or dislike of travel.

Homichlophobia -- fear of fog.

Homilophobia -- hatred of sermons.

Homophobia -- fear of homosexuality.

Hydrophobia -- fear of water.

Hydrophophobia -- fear of rabies.

Hygrophobia -- fear of liquids in any form, especially wine and water.

Hylephobia -- dislike for wood or woods.

Hypengyophobia -- fear of responsibility.

Hypnophobia -- fear of sleep.

Iatrophobia -- fear of going to the doctor.

Ichthyophobia -- fear of fish.

Iophobia -- fear of poisons.

Isopterophobia -- fear of termites.

Kakorrhaphiophobia -- fear of failure or defeat.

Katagelophobia -- fear or dislike of ridicule.

Keraunophobia, Ceraunophobia -- fear of thunder and lightning.

Kinetophobia -- fear or dislike of motion.

Kleptophobia, Cleptophobia -- fear of thieves or loss through thievery.

Kopophobia -- fear of fatigue.

Kopophobia -- fear of mental or physical examination.

Lachanophobia -- fear of vegetables.

Laliophobia -- fear of talking.

Lepraphobia -- fear of leprosy.

Levophobia -- fear of objects on the left side of the body.

Ligyrophobia -- fear of loud noises (such as popping balloons).

Limnophobia -- fear of lakes.

Linonophobia -- fear of string.

Logophobia -- fear or dislike of words.

Lunaphobia -- fear of the moon.

Lyssophobia -- fear of becoming insane.

Mechanophobia -- aversion to or fear of machinery.

Merinthophobia -- fear of being bound.

Metallophobia -- fear of metals.

Meteorophobia -- fear of meteors or meteorites.

Microphobia, Microbiophobia -- fear of microorganisms or germs.

Misanthropy -- a hatred of mankind; pessimistic distrust of human nature expressed in thought and behaviour.

Misophobia -- fear of dirt, especially of being contaminated by dirt.

Misogynism, Misogyny -- extreme dislike of females.

Misosophy -- hatred of wisdom.

Molysomophobia -- fear of infection.

Monopathophobia -- fear of sickness in a specific part of the body.

Monophobia -- fear of one thing.

Musicophobia -- dislike of music.

Musophobia -- fear of mice.

Mycophobia -- fear or aversion to mushrooms.

Mythophobia -- fear of making false statements.

Necrophobia -- fear of death; fear of corpses.

Neophobia -- fear of new things.

Nephophobia -- fear of clouds.

Noctiphobia -- fear of the night.

Nosophobia -- fear of contracting a disease.

Numerophobia -- fear of numbers.

Nychtophobia, Achluophobia, Scotophobia -- fear of darkness or the night.

Obesophobia -- fear of gaining weight.

Ochlophobia -- fear of crowds.

Ochophobia -- fear of vehicles.

Odontophobia -- fear of teeth, especially those of animals.

Odynophobia -- fear of pain.

Oenophobia, Oinophobia -- dislike of or hatred for wine.

Olfactophobia -- fear or dislike of smells.

Ombrophobia -- fear of rain.

Ommetaphobia -- fear of eyes.

Onomatophobia -- fear of a certain name (or a set of names).

Ophidiophobia -- fear of snakes.

Optophobia -- fear of opening one's eyes.

Ornithophobia -- fear of birds.

Panphobia, Pantophobia -- a nonspecific fear; a state of general anxiety; fear of everything.

Papaphobia -- fear or dislike of the pope or the papacy.

Paralipophobia -- fear of neglect of some duty.

Paraphobia -- fear of sexual perversion.

Parasitophobia -- fear of parasites.

Paraskavedekatriaphobia -- fear of Friday the 13th.

Parthenophobia -- aversion to young girls.

Pathophobia -- fear of disease.

Peccatiphobia -- fear of sinning.

Pediculophobia -- fear of lice.

Pedophobia -- fear or dislike of children.

Peladophobia -- dread of baldness.

Peniaphobia -- fear of poverty.

Phagophobia -- fear of eating.

Pharmacophobia -- fear of drugs.

Phasmophobia -- fear of ghosts.

Phenogophobia -- fear of daylight.

Philophobia -- fear of love or of falling in love.

Philosophobia -- fear or dislike of philosophy or philosophers.

Phobophobia -- fear of fear itself.

Phonophobia -- fear or dislike of noise.

Photalgiphobia -- fear of photalgia, pain in the eyes caused by light.

Photophobia -- fear of light.

Phonemophobia -- fear of thinking.

Pneumatophobia -- fear of incorporeal beings, spirits.

Pnigophobia, Pnigerophobia -- fear of choking or smothering.

Pogonophobia -- fear or dislike of beards.

Poinophobia -- fear of punishment.

Politicophobia -- dislike or fear of politicians.

Polyphobia -- fear of many things.

Ponophobia -- fear of fatigue, especially through overworking.

Potamophobia -- fear of rivers.

Potophobia -- fear of drinks (beverages).

Psychophobia -- fear of the mind.

Psychophobia -- fear of the cold.

Pteronophobia -- fear of feathers.

Pyrexiphobia -- fear of fever.

Pyrophobia -- fear of fire.

Rectophobia -- fear of rectum.

Rhabdophobia -- fear of being beaten; fear of magic.

Rhyphobia -- fear of filth, defecation.

Sciophobia -- fear of shadows.

Scoleciphobia -- fear of worms.

Scopophobia -- fear of being looked at.

Scotophobia -- fear of the dark.

Selaphobia -- fear or dislike of flashes of light.

Sesquipedalophobia -- fear of long words.

Siderophobia -- fear of the stars.

Specrophobia -- fear of spectres or phantoms.

Spermatophobia -- fear of loss of semen.

Stasibphobia -- fear of standing or walking; conviction that one cannot stand or walk.

Symmetrophobia -- fear or dislike of symmetry.

Tabophobia -- fear of a wasting sickness.

Tachophobia -- fear of speed.

Taphephobia -- fear of being buried alive.

Tapinophobia -- fear of small things.

Taurophobia -- fear of bulls.

Telephonophobia -- fear of the telephone.

Teratophobia -- fear of monster or of giving birth to a monster.

Thaasophobia -- fear or dislike of being idle.

Thalassophobia -- fear of the sea.

Theatrophobia -- fear of theatres.

Theophobia -- fear of God.

Thanatophobia -- fear of death.

Thermophobia -- fear or dislike of heat.

Tocophobia, Tokophobia -- fear of childbirth.

Tomophobia -- fear of surgical operations.

Topophobia -- fear of certain places.

Toxiphobia, Toxicophobia -- fear of being poisoned.

Traumatophobia -- excessive or disabling fear of war or physical injury.

Tremophobia -- fear of trembling.

Triskaidekaphobia -- fear of the number 13.

Tyrannophobia -- fear or hatred of tyrants.

Urophobia -- fear of urine.

Vaccinophobia -- fear of vaccines and vaccination.

Venereophobia -- fear of venereal disease.

Venustraphobia -- fear of beautiful women.

Verminophobia -- fear of germs.

Vermiphobia -- fear of worms.

Xenophobia -- fear or hatred of foreigners and strange things.

Xerophobia -- fear of dryness and dry places, like deserts.

Zelophobia -- fear of jealousy.

Zoophobia -- fear of animals.

## 20. Not Quite Dead Yet

This table may be used in a humorous way after a player has died, to determine if they're really dead...

<u>Roll</u>	<u>Result</u>
01-04	Transported to the future instead.
05-08	Transported to the past instead.
09-12	Trapped in the Astral plane until a body is found.
13-16	Trapped in another dimension or reality until can find a way back.
17-20	Revived by aliens.
21-24	Revived by a futuristic machine.
25-28	Revived by a bored god.
29-32	Revived by an idiot pan dimensional entity by accident.
33-36	Revived as a demon.
37-40	Revived as a vampire.
41-44	Revived as a werewolf.
45-48	Revived as a wraith.
49-52	Revived as a golem.
53-56	Clone was killed instead.
57-60	You are the clone.
61-64	Not sure who was the clone but someone died.
65-68	Wound wasn't really fatal.
69-72	Got better.
73-76	Really a mutant with a healing factor.
77-80	Really an Immortal. Grab a sword and a trenchcoat and run around yelling 'there can be only one!'
81-84	Replaced by a younger chronally displaced version from the past.
85-88	Alien shapeshifter was killed instead.
89-92	Have 25 heart attacks and 13 strokes, then feel better.
93-00	Really, well and truly, dead.

## 21. Travel Time

### **Maximum Land Speed**

Method	Foot	Horseback	Horse, wagon, modern vehicle
Dense Forest	3kph run, 1.5kph walk	24kph gallop, 16kph walk	Not possible
Heavy Vegetation	8kph run, 4kph walk	38kph gallop, 19kph walk	16kph gallop, 8kph walk
Plains, Road	11kph run, 6kph walk	48kph gallop, 24kph walk	40kph gallop, 20kph walk
Rocky Terrain	5kph run, 2kph walk	20kph gallop, 10kph walk	16kph gallop, 8kph walk
Swamp, Marsh	1.5kph run, 1kph walk	10kph gallop, 5kph walk	Not possible
Woods	6kph run, 3kph walk	32kph gallop, 16kph walk	32kph gallop, 16kph walk

Mounted movement cross-country is affected by a number of factors. The two principal ones are the movement rate of the mount and the type of terrain traversed. Under normal conditions, all mounts are able to move a number of miles per day equal to their movement rate. Terrain, such as roads or mountains, can alter this rate.

When determining overland movement rates, remember that most riders spend as much time walking their mounts as they do riding them. The real advantage of riding is in the extra gear the mount can carry and its usefulness in combat. Thus, while an unencumbered man can go about the same distance as a heavy warhorse across clear terrain (24 miles as opposed to 30), the man must travel with virtually no gear to move at that rate. Were he to carry an assortment of arms, a suit of chain mail armor, and his personal items, he would find it impossible to keep up with a mounted man similarly encumbered.

A mount can be pushed to double its normal daily movement rate, but only at the risk of lameness and exhaustion. Any creature moving overland at double speed (or any fraction thereof) must make a saving throw vs. death. If the saving throw is successful, the creature is unaffected. If the saving throw is failed, the creature is lame or spent; it can't travel any farther that day. Thereafter, it can move only at its normal movement rate until it is rested for at least one day. For each successive day a horse is ridden at double movement, a -1 penalty is applied to the saving throw. Overland movement can be increased to triple the normal rate, although the risks to the animal are even greater. When moving at triple the normal rate, a saving throw vs. death must be made with a -3 penalty applied to the die roll. If the saving throw is failed, the creature collapses from exhaustion and dies. If the saving throw succeeds, the creature is merely spent and must be rested—not ridden at all—for D3 days.

When a creature goes lame, exhausts itself, or is ridden too hard, there is no way of knowing just when the creature will collapse. Player characters can't be certain of traveling the full double or triple distance. The GM should determine where and when the

creature collapses. This can be a random place or at some point the DM thinks is best for the adventure.

### Maximum Water Speed

Method	Rowing	Sail
Canoe, Rowboat	10kph	None
Fishing Trawler	10kph	25kph
Galley	20kph	32kph
Warship	32kph	48kph

For each 20% of total hit point damage suffered by the ship, lose 8 kms per day. Some Hull damage can cause reduced speeds, but this depends upon the exact nature of the damage and such reductions are left to the Game Master. Modern vehicles travel at the speed listed under their entry.

One of the fastest and easiest ways to get somewhere is to travel on a river. It's hard to get lost; a large amount of equipment can be easily carried; it is faster and easier than walking; characters can even do other things (mend clothes, learn spells, cook meals) while traveling on smooth waters. River travel is not without its risks, however. Eddies, snags, sandbars, rapids, and dangerous waterfalls can make a journey quite exciting. Fortunately, most of these hazards can be avoided by knowledgeable characters.

The rate of movement on a river is determined by two factors: the type of boat and the flow of the current. If the boat is traveling downstream (in the direction of the current), add the speed of the current to the speed of the boat. If the boat is traveling against the current, subtract this amount from the boat's speed.

When sailing downstream, characters must be wary of unexpected hazards. While a good map can show the location of waterfalls and rapids, only a knowledgeable guide or pilot knows the location of hidden sandbars, snags, and dangerous eddies. While these are easy to avoid when traveling upstream (all one need do is stop paddling), unprepared boaters can quickly be swept into them going downstream. Once characters find themselves in a dangerous situation, they must make a Wisdom check (modified for seamanship proficiency, if this is used) to prevent capsizing. Capsized boats and goods are swept downstream, although hazards like waterfalls and particularly strong rapids will smash most craft.

Weather Condition	Sailing Modifier	Rowing Modifier
Adverse	x $\frac{1}{2}$	x1
Becalmed	NA	x1
Favourable (average)	x2	x1
Favourable (strong)	x3	x1*
Gale	x4*	x $\frac{1}{2}$ *
Hurricane	x5**	x $\frac{1}{2}$ **
Light breeze	x1	x1
Storm	x3*	x $\frac{1}{2}$ *

\* A seaworthiness check is required.

\*\* A seaworthiness check with a -45% penalty is required.

### **Ocean Voyaging**

Ocean journeys are a dangerous business, especially in a fantasy world. Sea serpents, incredible maelstroms, and other imaginary horrors that filled the maps of medieval navigators really can lurk in the deeps of the game's oceans. Not that they are really necessary pirates, storms, hidden shoals, and primitive navigational techniques leave the typical sea captain with more than enough danger to cope with.

Without navigation equipment only a few ships venture into open water beyond the sight of land. Ship-building skills are not fully up to the needs of deep-sea sailing. Most ships are easily swamped by the stormy waters of major oceans, while their small size prevents crews from carrying adequate supplies for long voyages. Even the skills of sail-handling are in their rudimentary stages.

However, these limitations are not serious in a fantasy world. Those with wealth can cross oceans by other, more practical, means: flying mounts, undersea dwellers, and teleportation are all available, at least to the rich and powerful. (The vast majority of the population does not have access to these forms of travel.) Also, magical transport is impractical for moving large cargoes. The need to move goods and the scarcity of magical transport make sailing a valuable and necessary art.

To determine the movement of a ship per round (in rare occasions where this is necessary), multiply the current speed times 30. This is the metres traveled per round.

Emergency move is the top speed of the vessel in emergency or combat situations. For sailing ships, emergency

speed is gained by putting on every yard of sail possible. Galleys and other oared ships rely on the strength of their rowers. This speed can only be maintained for short periods of time. Too long and rowers will collapse; masts, yards, and sails will break.

More than other methods of travel, ships (especially sailing ships) are subject to the whims of wind and weather. While it can be assumed that sailing weather is normally good, there are times when storms, favorable winds, or freak currents can increase or decrease a ship's speed. Weather conditions are generally fairly consistent within a single day. (This is an obvious simplification to keep the game moving.)

The exact conditions for a given day can be chosen by the DM (perhaps by using the weather outside) or it can be determined randomly. Adverse winds are determined by rolling 1d6. On a 5 or 6, the winds are unfavorable. When adverse winds are storm strength or greater, the ship will be blown off-course by at least half its movement under those conditions, regardless of whether it is a sailing ship or galley.

### Terrain Costs for Overland

#### Movement

Overland movement is much more affected by terrain than single-round movement. Thus, a wide variety of terrain types slow or, on very rare occasions, increases the character's rate of movement. Overland movement is measured in kilometres. It is possible for characters to cross several different types of terrain in a single day. To say that characters must take the worst terrain modifier for all movement is ridiculous. Imagine telling players they



have to travel at the mountain movement rate when they are crossing the plains just because they spent their first hour in the mountains. Furthermore, in round movement the GM can see where a character will be at the end of the round and what terrain he had to cross to get there. In overland movement, it is very hard to predict all the different terrain types characters will enter during the course of a day.

These are listed as points of movement spent per mile of travel through that terrain type. When a character or creature moves through the listed terrain, that number is subtracted from the total movement available to the character or creature that day.

<u>Terrain Type</u>	<u>Movement Cost</u>
Barren, wasteland	2
Clear, farmland	½
Desert, rocky	2
Desert, sand	3
Forest, heavy	4
Forest, light	2
Forest, medium	3
Glacier	2
Hills, rolling	2
Hills, steep (foothills)	4
Jungle, heavy	8
Jungle, medium	6
Marsh, swamp	8
Moor	4
Mountains, high	8
Mountains, low	4
Mountains, medium	6
Untraveled plains, grassland	1
Scrub, brushland	2
Tundra	3

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Movement</u>
Darkness	1/3*
Heavy brush or forest	2/3
Ice or slippery footing	1/3*
Rugged or rocky ground	1/2
Soft sand or snow, knee-deep	1/3
Water or snow, waist-deep	1/2
Water or snow, shoulder-deep	2/3

\* Faster movement is possible.

### **Terrain Modifiers**

The movement point costs given above assume the best of conditions even in the worst of terrain. The mountains are assumed to be free of cliffs; the woods have no high-banked streams; rains haven't turned the plains to mud; the tundra hasn't been blanketed in snow. However, poor traveling conditions do occur, and when they do travel is slowed. The table lists common obstacles and situations that slow movement.

The modifiers for these are listed as either additional movement point costs or multipliers. When additional movement costs are listed, these are added to the cost of the surrounding terrain. Thus, crossing a ridge in the high mountains costs nine movement points for that mile instead of the normal eight. Multipliers increase the movement cost by the amount listed. Snow, for example, doubles the cost of crossing the plains. Indeed, severe weather or torrential rains—can actually bring all travel to a halt.

<u>Situation</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
Chasm*	+3
Cliff*	+3
Duststorm, sandstorm	x3
Freezing cold**	+1
Gale-force winds	+2
Heavy fog	+1

<u>Situation</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
Ice storm	+2
Mud	x2
Rain, heavy	x2
Rain, light	+1
Rain, torrential	x3
Ravine	+½
Ridge	+1
River***	+1
Scorching heat**	+1
Snow, blizzard	x4
Snow, normal	x2
Stream***	+½

\*These assume the player characters find a route around the obstacle.

Alternatively, the GM can require the characters to scale or span the obstacle, playing out this encounter.

\*\*These extremes must be in excess of the norm expected of the character or creature. Thus, a camel is relatively unaffected by the scorching heat of a desert and a yak barely notices the cold of high mountains.

\*\*\*This cost is negated by the presence of a bridge or ford.

### **Roads and Trails**

The main purpose of roads and trails is to provide a clear route for wagons, carts, and other forms of heavy transport. It is impossible for such vehicles to cross any terrain that has a movement point cost greater than 1 unless they are following a road or trail. In addition, roads and trails normally go somewhere, so it is hard (but not impossible) for characters to get lost while following them.

Trails are by far the most common cleared track found in fantasy game worlds. Often little more than narrow game trails, they are the natural result of traffic moving from one point to another. Though not roads (in that they are not

maintained), they tend to be fairly open pathways. Still, characters may have to see to the removal of fallen trees and stones or the clearing of brush—all things that can be accomplished by the occasional traveler.

Trails normally follow the path of least resistance, avoiding difficult obstacles such as chasms, cliffs, and unfordable rivers. While this may increase the distance characters must travel, it usually results in an overall saving of time and effort.

When traveling along a trail, the movement point cost is half normal for the terrain type traversed by the trail. Following a trail through the heavy forest, for example (movement cost of four), costs only 2 movement points per mile. An unencumbered man on foot would be able to march 12 miles through such terrain without exerting himself. Trails through settled farmland offer no improvement, since these areas are easy to travel through already.

Roads are costly to build and maintain, so they were very rare in the Middle Ages. Only the largest and best organized empires can undertake such ambitious construction programs. In areas of level or rolling ground, such as forests and plains, roads reduce the movement cost to one-half point per mile. In areas of mountainous ground, roads are no better than trails and reduce movement costs accordingly. A road traveling through high mountains is only four movement points per mile.

### Care of Animals

Although player characters should not be forced into the role of grooms, all animals do have some basic needs that must be provided for. However, each

animal is different, so the requirements for each are listed separately.

### **Horses:**

While strong and fast, horses are not the hardiest creatures for traveling. Horses need around ten pounds of forage and fodder a day. Furthermore, good quality mounts should be fed grain, such as oats. A heavy war horse can't survive the rigors of travel by grazing on grass. Characters who can't provide enough food of high enough quality will watch their horses weaken and die. Horses must also have water every day. This can become particularly difficult in the desert.

During daily travel, horses must be allowed to stop and rest with regular frequency. During these stops the mount should be unsaddled or all packs removed. If this isn't done, little profit is gained from the rest. At night horses should be hobbled or tethered on a long rope so they can graze. If one or two are tied, the others will generally not wander off. Horses need not be shod, unless they walk mostly on hard-surfaced roads or rocky ground. Horseshoes should be replaced about once a month.

### **Ponies, Donkeys, and Mules:**

These animals have much the same needs as the horse. One of their main advantages is their ability to survive by grazing. Well accustomed to grass, there is no need to provide them with separate fodder. Their happiness is such that saving throws vs. death made for double movement gain a +2 bonus. This does not apply to triple movement. The other great advantage of these creatures is their sure-footedness. They can travel through rugged terrain at one less than the normal movement cost. Thus, low

mountains cost only three movement points.

### **Camels:**

Camels are either suited to sandy deserts (as in the case of the dromedary) or rocky deserts (the bactrian camel). It's worth nothing that dromedaries are ill-suited to rocky deserts, and bactrian camels aren't appropriate mounts in sandy deserts! Dromedary camels reduce the movement cost of sandy desert by 1 point. Bactrian camels have the same effect in rocky deserts. All camels march better by night, when it is cooler. Dromedary camels are able to withstand a few days of cold weather (the temperature drops drastically in the desert at night); and some bactrian camels actually live in freezing and mountainous deserts.

Although camels can manage for long periods of time without water, they must be fed every day. They do not need special fodder so long as grazing is possible. On the average they should have water at least every four days, although they can be trained to do without for longer periods, even up to several months if green grass or leaves are available for grazing. Like horses, camels should be hobbled or tethered to prevent them from wandering off.

### **Dogs:**

Particularly tough breeds can be used to pull sleds and sledges. Some are suited to cold weather and will withstand a great deal of hardship. They require at least a pound of meat a day, so characters should pack dried meat for the dogs. If necessary, one dog can be killed to feed the others, but this is not recommended. Beyond the needs of feeding, sled dogs tend to care for

themselves fairly well, although the characters may have to keep certain animals separated to prevent fighting.

### **Elephants:**

As can be expected, elephants eat a prodigious amount of fodder every day. In thickly forested areas, this can be supplied without reducing the beasts' already slow speed. Elephants can also be found in sparsely forested plains, though. Here, if left to graze for itself, the beast will move at ° its normal movement rate. Except for the carrying capacity of the beast, the characters might as well walk at these speeds!

Elephants should bathe (or be bathed) every day and will avail themselves of dust baths to keep biting flies away. It should also come as no surprise that elephants can't negotiate cliffs. They can bound down steep slopesóindeed, it is the only time they go fastóbut only at great peril to themselves and their riders. If the beast fails a saving throw vs. breath weapon (used for general tests of dexterity), it stumbles, falls, and rolls the rest of the way down the slope. The fall may kill or severely injure the elephant; the choice is left to the DM. Elephants are affected only by the deepest mud, so the movement penalty for mud is ignored.

### **Yaks:**

Yaks are suited to the cold regions of high mountains. While slow, they are sturdy, unaffected by the cold. Their sure footing allows them to reduce all mountain movement rates by one. They can survive by grazing on a meagre amount of grass. Yaks also provide meat and milk for travelers. They live in cool regions and cannot survive long in

warmer climates since they are prone to collapse from heat exhaustion.

### Vehicles

While animals are useful for getting around in the wilderness, they are seriously limited by the size of the load they can carry. Peasants and merchants often use wagons and carts for trade in civilized areas. Chariots are favored by the wealthy and in times of war, but are not normally used for long-distance travel. Sledges and dog sleds are handy in snow and ice-bound regions. Player characters may find all these vehicles necessary during the course of their adventures.

Carts are small two-wheeled affairs. They can be pulled by one or two animals, but no more than this. Wagons are four-wheeled and can hitch anywhere from two to 12 (or even more!). The movement rate of a horse or other animal is automatically reduced by half when hitched. Additional animals do not increase the speed.

However, the standard load the beast can carry is tripled. The weight of the cart or wagon and driver is not considered for this, only the cargo. Each additional animal adds its tripled capacity to the total load hauled. Thus, a wagon pulled by eight draft horses could carry 6,420 lbs., or slightly over three tons worth of cargo (260 x 3 x 8). Of course, traveling will be slow—only 12 miles a day on a level road.

Chariots are intended more for speed, comfort, and their usefulness in warfare, than for their ability to haul loads. Chariots can hitch one to four horses (or other creatures), but no more than this. A horse can pull its normal load (the

weight of the chariot not included) at its normal movement rate.

Each additional horse in the hitch either increases the cargo limit by the horse's standard load or increases the movement rate by a factor of 1. The chariot can't have more movement points than the creatures pulling it would normally have. A chariot pulled by four medium war horses could have a movement rate of 15 or pull 880 lbs., enough for four large or armored men. It could also have some combination of the two (movement rate of 13 and a cargo of 660 in the above example).

The greatest limitation on all these vehicles is terrain. Wagons, carts, and chariots are restricted to level or open ground unless traveling on a road or the best trails. While a wagon can cross a mountain range by staying to the open valleys and passes, it just can't make good progress in a thick forest. This problem generally restricts wagons to travel between settlements, where roads and paths are common.

Sledges and dog sleds can be used only in snow-covered or ice-coated lands. Sledges (pulled by horses or the like) are roughly equivalent to carts. No more than two horses can be hooked to a sledge. Horse-drawn sledges are effective only on hard-packed snows and ice and can ignore the penalties for these. Deep snow merely causes the horse to flounder and the runners of the sledge to sink, so no benefit is gained in these conditions.

Dog sleds are normally pulled by seven to 11 dogs. When hitched, a sled dog's movement is reduced by ”.

However, each additional dog adds one movement factor to the sledge, up to the maximum of movement of the animal. Thus a dog sled with seven dogs would have a movement of 13”. Each dog can pull 80 lbs., not including the weight of the sledge. Due to their lighter weight and the sledge design, dog sleds can cross all types of snow and ice without penalty.

### Aerial Movement

Aerial movement rates are handled according to the normal movement rules, with clear sky being treated as clear terrain. A detailed system of aerial movement during the round can be found in Chapter 9 : Combat. The only special consideration that must be given to aerial movement is the weather condition. Weather is, for all practical purposes, the terrain of the sky. As with sea movement, the weather for any particular occasion can be chosen by the DM or determined randomly. If determined randomly, the GM should first roll a wind condition. Next, the DM rolls D6 to determine precipitation (although storms and hurricanes have automatic precipitation).

During summer and winter, a 6 on the die indicates rain or snow. In spring and fall, a 5 or 6 is rain. Clearly the GM must adjust this according to the terrain of the region. There is little need to make precipitation checks when flying over a desert, for example. Be aware that this is only a very simple method for determining the weather, and judgment should still be used. These modifiers are cumulative. Thus strong winds and rain are the equivalent of a storm, while a gale with rain is worse than a storm. Flight during a hurricane is just about

impossible without some type of magical protection.

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
Hurricane	Not possible
Gale	$x^{1/4}$
Storm	$x^{1/4}$
Rain or snow	$x^{1/2}$
Strong winds	$x^{1/2}$

## 22. The Weather

Weather is the state of the atmosphere as measured on a scale of hot or cold, wet or dry, calm or storm, clear or cloudy. Most weather phenomena occur in the troposphere, just below the stratosphere. Weather refers to day-to-day temperature and precipitation activity whereas climate is the term for the average atmospheric conditions over longer periods of time.

Weather occurs due to density (temperature and moisture) differences between one place and another. These differences can occur due to the sun angle at any particular spot which varies by latitude from the tropics. The strong temperature contrast between polar and tropical air gives rise to the jet stream. Weather systems in the mid-latitudes such as extratropical cyclones are caused by instabilities of the jet stream flow.

Because the Earth's axis is tilted relative to its orbital plane sunlight is incident at different angles at different times of the year. On Earth's surface temperatures usually range 40 °C (100 °F to -40 °F) annually. Surface temperature differences in turn cause pressure differences. Higher altitudes are cooler than lower altitudes due to differences in compressional heating. The atmosphere is a chaotic system, so small changes to one part of the system can grow to have large effects on the system as a whole.

There are several good indicators of climatic changes. Birds and insects fly lower to the ground than normal in heavy, moisture-laden air. Such flight indicates that rain is likely. Most insect activity increases before a storm, but bee activity increases before fair weather. Clouds come in a variety of shapes and

patterns. A general knowledge of clouds and the atmospheric conditions they indicate can help you predict the weather. Slow moving or imperceptible winds and heavy, humid air often indicate a low-pressure front. Such a front promises bad weather that will probably linger for several days.

You can smell and hear this front. The sluggish, humid air makes wilderness odours more pronounced than during high-pressure conditions. In addition, sounds are sharper and carry farther in low-pressure than high-pressure conditions. Smoke rising in a thin vertical column indicates fair weather.

Low rising or flattened out smoke indicates stormy weather. You can determine wind direction by dropping a few leaves or grass or by watching the treetops. Once you determine the wind direction, you can predict the type of weather that is imminent. Rapidly shifting winds indicate an unsettled atmosphere and a likely change in the weather.

Rain is liquid precipitation as opposed to non-liquid kinds of precipitation such as snow, hail and sleet. Rain requires the presence of a thick layer of the atmosphere to have temperatures above the melting point of water near and above the Earth's surface.

On Earth it is the condensation of atmospheric water vapour into drops of water heavy enough to fall often making it to the surface. Moisture moving along three-dimensional zones of temperature and moisture contrasts known as weather fronts is the major method of rain production.

If enough moisture and upward motion is present, precipitation falls from convective clouds (those with strong upward vertical motion) such as cumulonimbus (thunderstorms) which can organize into narrow rainbands. In mountainous areas heavy precipitation is possible where upslope flow is maximized within windward sides of the terrain at elevation which forces moist air to condense and fall out as rainfall along the sides of mountains.

On the leeward side of mountains desert climates can exist due to the dry air caused by downslope flow which causes heating and drying of the air mass. The movement of the monsoon trough or intertropical convergence zone brings rainy seasons to savannah climates. Rain is the primary source of freshwater for most areas of the world providing suitable conditions for diverse ecosystems.

A character caught out in the open during a hailstorm may suffer damage from being pelted by the rocklike clumps of ice, but a well-prepared or well-armoured character can often avoid any difficulties. A character who is wearing splint mail, banded mail, or any other armour with a natural armour class of 4 or better can avoid damage entirely by taking the simple precaution of squatting or rolling into a ball and covering his head. (Of course, this makes the character a much easier target to hit in a combat situation.)

A character can also protect himself by squatting or rolling into a ball and covering himself with a large shield. Partial or total protection may be afforded by draping a large skin or canvas over a couple of handy tree

branches and taking refuge beneath this makeshift tent. A character who is not suitably protected has a 50% chance of suffering damage on a round-by-round basis, depending on the type of armour he is wearing and the size of the hailstones. Most hailstones will only do 1 point of damage but may do up to D4.

A lightning storm presents no special hazard to characters who take simple precautions. However, the word “simple” in this context is an expression of complexity and not necessarily a measure of difficulty. For instance, it may not be at all easy for a character to find somewhere to hole up during a lightning storm if he’s in the middle of a flat, featureless plain that extends for hundreds of metres, or kilometres, in every direction. The most important precaution to take against being struck by lightning in the outdoors is to get rid of, and get away from, any metal armour, weapons, and equipment.

If time permits, it is a good idea to scatter individual pieces of metal (the parts of a suit of armour, for instance) over an area at least several yards in diameter to minimize the possibility of lightning hitting the armour and gear. Heaping everything up in a pile for easier access later is asking for trouble, especially if the top of the pile is higher than any surrounding terrain. Second, if solid cover is not available, get as low as possible, either by dropping flat on the ground or lying in a ditch or depression.

Lightning is not immediately absorbed into the ground after it hits; the electrical force may travel some distance (up to several hundred metres, if the stroke is very powerful) along the ground before dissipating, and along its route it will

seek out gullies, ruts, and other such low spots.

Thus, someone lying in a ditch is not entirely safe, but this course of action is still better than presenting oneself as a target above ground level. (Contrary to popular belief, lightning does not travel from the clouds to the ground but rather in the opposite direction; even so, we tend to speak of lightning “hitting the ground” because of the visual impression created when a strike occurs).

Even an apparently safe place, such as a rock overhang, is not necessarily the best place to be. If lightning strikes on a ridge above the overhang, it may travel downward and into the enclosure as described above. Still, an alcove of this sort is much more preferable than a more exposed position.

Taking cover under a lone tree is not a good course of action at all; if the tree is taller than the surrounding terrain, it is a prime target for lightning - and even if the electrical force of the lightning stroke does not travel down through the tree, a character is still vulnerable to damage from falling debris (at the DM’s discretion) if the tree is hit.

Standing beneath a thick cover of trees of equal height is perhaps the best precaution one can take against lightning in the outdoors when no better cover is available. Of course, if an enclosed structure is within running distance, that is the place to head for. If lightning hits the structure, the electrical charge will ground itself through the roof and walls. A structure with an earthen floor is the safest of all, since the ground provides additional insulation against any



electricity that may leak through the structure.

The chance of a character being struck by lightning is a very small one, even considering the possibility of normal foolish behaviour, such as standing out in the open while wearing a suit of plate mail. In contrast, abnormal foolish behaviour is rushing to the only tall tree in sight, climbing to the top, and thrusting your sword toward the heavens.

The suggestions that follow do not take abnormal behaviour into account; the Dungeon Master is free to arbitrate such occurrences, and it is strongly recommended that if a character voluntarily and knowingly engages in such behaviour, he be given exactly what he appears to want the jolt to end all jolts.

### Wind

Roll on the following table to determine current wind speed.

Day	Night	Speed
01-10	01-10	No wind; no movement unless have oars.
11-20	11-20	Light Breeze; -48 kms per day.
21-30	21-30	Light Wind; -32 kms per day.
31-40	31-40	Minor Wind; -16 kms per day.
41-70	41-50	Moderate Wind; no change to speed.
71-80	51-70	Strong Wind; +10 miles per day.
81-90	71-85	Major Wind; +20 miles per day.
91-00	86-00	Gale; +30 miles per day.

The type of sail a ship lofts affects the direction it may travel with respect to the wind. Ships that loft square rigged sails may only travel with the wind from beam to beam and may never head into the wind. Other sail types allow ships to tack the wind.

## Precipitation

### Rain and winds

- 01-19 Clear, Calm, 1 kph  
 20-29 Partly cloudy, Breeze, 4-10 kph  
 30-39 Mostly cloudy, Light Wind, 11-21 kph  
 40-49 Cloudy, Windy, 22-27 kph  
 50-59 Misty/Drizzle; Maximum duration 14 days. Heavy Wind; Maximum duration 6 days. 28-33 kph  
 60-69 Rain/Sleet; Maximum duration 10 days. Gale; Maximum duration 3 days. 34-55 kph  
 70-79 Thunderstorm/Snow; Maximum duration 6 days. Cyclone/Tornado; Maximum duration 6 hours, also fast-moving phenomena. 64-85kph  
 80-89 Deluge/Blizzard; Maximum duration 6 hours, also fast-moving phenomena. 74-105kph  
 90-00 Hurricane/Monsoon; Maximum duration 1 day. 84-120kph

<u>Semi Arid</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Autumn</u>
D4mm	01-20	01-10	01-20	01-10
D12mm	21-30	11-20	21-40	11-20
D20mm	31-90	21-40	41-50	21-80
D20 +20mm	91-00	41-00	51-00	81-00

<u>Sub Arctic</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Autumn</u>
D4mm	01-50	01-40	01-40	01-00
D12mm	51-00	41-50	41-00	

<u>Sub Tropical</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Autumn</u>
D4mm	01-20	01-10	01-10	01-20
D12mm	21-40	11-20	11-20	21-70
D20mm	41-90	21-30	21-40	71-90
D20 +20mm	91-00	31-00	41-00	91-00

<u>Tropical</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Autumn</u>
D4mm	01-70	01-30	01-20	01-30
D12mm	71-80	31-50	21-50	31-40
D20mm	81-90	51-80	51-70	41-50
D20 +20mm	91-00	81-00	71-00	51-00

## 23. Getting Lost

Monsters, bandits, evil wizards, and villainous knights can all make travel in the wilderness dangerous. But none of these is the greatest hazard characters will have to face. Getting lost is equally dangerous and far more common. Once characters are lost, almost anything can happen. There are two ways of getting lost: There's just lost and then there's hopelessly lost. Each is quite different from the other.

### **Just Lost**

Sometimes, characters are lost because they do not know how to get to a specific place. They know where they have been (and how to get back there), but they don't know the correct route to reach their goal. This occurs most often when following a road, a trail, a map, a river, or a set of directions. Under these circumstances, there is a reasonable certainty that the player characters will wind up somewhere.

After all, roads go from place to place and rivers start and end somewhere. Whether this is where the player characters want to go is another matter entirely. No particular rules are needed to handle these situations, only some confusing forks in the road and the wit (or lack thereof) of the players.

### **Hopelessly Lost**

Hopelessly lost is another matter altogether. This happens when player characters have no idea where they are, how exactly to get back to where they were, or which way to go to get to where they want to be. Although it can happen, player characters seldom get hopelessly lost when following some obvious route (a road or river). Trails do not guarantee safety since they have a maddening habit

of disappearing, branching, and crossing over things that look like they should be trails (but aren't).

The chance of getting hopelessly lost can be reduced by sighting on a landmark and keeping a bearing on it, or by hiring a guide. Darkness, overcast days, thick forests, and featureless wastes or plains all increase the chance of getting lost. Checks for getting hopelessly lost should only be made when the player characters are not following a clear road, river, or trail. Checks should be made when following a little-used trail or when a river empties into a swamp, estuary, or delta.

Checks should also be made when moving cross-country without the aid of a trail, river, or road. One check should be made per day. To make the check, find the entry that best matches the type of terrain the characters are in. This will give a percentage chance to become lost. From this, add or subtract any modifiers. Roll percentile dice. If the die roll is less than the percentage, the characters are lost.

### **Dealing With Lost Characters**

Once a group is lost, no further checks need be made—they're lost until they get themselves back in familiar territory (or until they get lucky and happen upon someone who can help them out. Don't tell players when their characters are lost! Let them continue to think they are headed in the right direction. Gradually veer them away from their true direction. Player characters should realize for themselves that they're no longer heading in the right direction. This generally comes when they don't get to whatever point they hoped to reach.

Remember that the best defense against getting lost is not to try to go anywhere in particular. There is little point in checking to see if characters get lost if they don't have a goal. It is perfectly possible for characters just to strike out "to see what can be seen." If one has no place to be and no concern about ever getting back, one cannot get lost.

### Condition    Modifier

Featureless (no distinguishable landmarks)*	+50
Darkness	+70
Overcast	+30
Navigator with group	-30
Landmark sighted	-15
Local guide	Variable**
Poor trail	-10
Raining	+10
Directions	Variable**
Fog or mist	+30

\* This would apply, for example, when the characters are sailing out of sight of land.

\*\* The usefulness of directions and the knowledge of a guide are entirely up to the DM. Sometimes these are very helpful but at other times only manage to make things worse.

## 24. Corporations

In order to create a corporation the GM can either assign a set amount of points or allow the characters to use their XP points to buy what they need. There are different levels of corporations;

**Fake:** The business exists as nothing more than a piece of paper used as a front for the players' other activities.

**Small Business:** The business is just something that the players do in their spare time every so often. It has 1+D4 employees.

**Medium Business:** 5 +D10 employees.

**Large Business:** 10 +2D10 employees and has a second location (usually not more than 30 kilometres away).

**Minor Corporation:** 20 +4D10 employees over 1 +D4 locations across the country.

**Medium Corporation:** 40 +8D10 employees over 2 +D8 locations. It may even have an international office. This business exists as a major player in it's own country, examples including department store chains.

**Major Corporation:** 80 +(D10 x20) employees and multiple chains across the globe. May have a franchising agreement. Examples include world wide fast food restaurants.

**Mega Corporation:** 200 +(D10 x40) employees. The corporation dominates it's industry and has a pretty good say in other areas almost to the point of being able to hold entire governments to ransom if it should wish to do so. Examples include Microsoft.

**Ubiquitous Corporation:** 1000 +(D10 x100) employees. Has offices in other planets or dimensions. Examples include “Wolfram and Hart”.

## 1. Corporation Type

Before getting to the creation part there are some essential questions you need to answer about your corporation;  
Are you creating your own business, acquiring an existing one or purchasing a franchise?

What is your business? What products and/or services will it produce? Who will be your customers? How will you advertise? Who are your competitors? What kind of special skills - if any - do your workers need? Where will you get your supplies and or raw materials? What equipment do you need to start your business? What income do you have to make to break even each month? How much money do you need to set up and run for one month?

## 2. Financing

There are several methods of acquiring funds;

1) The players own the business, have all the powers and responsibilities. There is no distinction between their assets and those of the business.

2) The players are shareholders but have no more than 50% of the stock combined, at least when starting the game. They split the profits according to the number of shares held. Legally they are each equally responsible for the obligations the business may have. Any major activity by the corporation requires a shareholder vote.

3) Limited partnership consisting of two groups, general and special partners.

Special partners provide most of the financial backing and then quietly collect their share of the profits. General partners usually provide the idea behind the business and most of the work to run it.

The first two methods may then be financed through personal savings, gifts and loans from friends and relatives (if you have to pay this back, there will usually be no interest rates - it is a simple loan with no legal strings), a loan from a bank or credit union, government assistance (possibly in the form of tax breaks) or venture capital (loans from independent investors, usually at higher rates than from banks).

Most banks and credit unions will typically require you to have 10 % of the needed start up capital. Then the bank will lend you the rest. You will of course have to pay off the loan with interest. Independent investors may not require as much of a down payment, but they will charge higher interest rates.

## 3. Resources

The resources the business can bring to bear in any given week. This can be used to make purchases for the company, e.g. new plants and machinery, a corporate jet, an office building, etc.

### Cost Notes

1	Up to D10 x1000 dollars available.
2	Up to D10 x10,000 dollars available.
5	Up to D10 x100,000 dollars available.
10	Up to D10 x1,000,000 dollars available.

20 Up to D10 x10,000,000 dollars available.

#### 4. Contacts

What outside contacts and allies does the organisation have? Multiple types may be combined.

##### Costs Notes

1	A newspaper reporter.
1	A friendly cop.
1	A TV producer.
1	A lab technician.
1	A private detective.
1	Someone of low rank in one of the armed forces.
1	A local council member.
2	A member of the federal police.
2	Someone of medium rank in one of the armed forces.
2	A member of the state government.
2	Someone important in correctional services.
2	A low rank member of an intelligence agency.
5	A magazine publisher.
5	Someone of high rank in one of the armed forces.
5	A popular radio DJ.
5	A medium rank member of an intelligence agency.
10	A famous and powerful mage.
10	A famous and powerful metahuman.
10	An important member of the supernatural community.
20	The head of an intelligence agency.
20	The leader of a country.
20	An important extradimensional or extraterrestrial alien.

#### 5. Vehicles and Maintenance

Does the corporation have any transport and the facilities to maintain them?

Multiple types may be combined. GM's discretion applies to military vehicles.

##### Cost Notes

1	Per standard new car, van or ute which belongs to the group.
2	Per new sports car or truck which belongs to the group.
3	Per new construction or other heavy machinery vehicle which belongs to the group.
1	Per standard new motor boat which belongs to the group.
2	Per standard new yacht which belongs to the group.
3	Per new large boat which belongs to the group.
10	Per new super large boat which belongs to the group such as a cruise liner or freighter.
5	Per new civilian submersible which belongs to the group.
10	Per per new small military boat which belongs to the group.
15	Per per new medium military boat which belongs to the group.
20	Per per new large military boat which belongs to the group.
10	Per per new military submersible which belongs to the group.
2	Per standard new small plane which belongs to the group.
5	Per standard new civilian jet which belongs to the group.
5	Per standard new civilian helicopter which belongs to the group.
10	Per new military helicopter which belongs to the group.
20	Per new military jet which belongs to the group.
40	Per new orbital shuttle which belongs to the group.

- |    |  |   |  |
|----|--|---|--|
| 20 | Per standard new civilian mecha which belongs to the group.  | 5 | Per complete mecha bay facility for storing and maintaining one small mech. Can be rebought multiple times either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles. |
| 40 | Per new military mecha which belongs to the group.   | 1 | Per car mechanic at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each mechanic's level.  |
| 1  | Per complete garage facility for storing and maintaining one ground vehicle of up to rig size. Can be rebought multiple times either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.                                | 1 | Per boat mechanic at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each mechanic's level.   |
| 2  | Per complete dock facility for storing and maintaining one boat of up to small yacht size. Can be rebought multiple times adding either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.                             | 1 | Per aircraft mechanic at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each mechanic's level.   |
| 5  | Per complete hangar facility for storing and maintaining one air vehicle of up to small prop plane or helicopter size. Can be rebought multiple times adding either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles. | 1 | Per shuttle mechanic at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each mechanic's level.  |
| 10 | Per complete hangar facility for storing and maintaining one small spaceship vehicle. Can be rebought multiple times adding either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.                                  |   |  |
| 20 | Per complete hangar facility for storing and maintaining one small starship vehicle. Can be rebought multiple times adding either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.                                   |   |  |

### Optional Monthly Trading Checks

This table may be used if desired to keep track of how the corporation is doing. A few disastrous rolls could turn into an adventure for the player to discover why he is losing money.

- 01-08 One of the company's headquarters buildings have been blown up by terrorists. If this is a one-location company, it's base of operations must be replaced in some form or the company ceases to exist. 10D10% of the money currently invested in the business is lost. This could result in some serious debts.
- 09-16 A member of the public has been killed due to the actions of the company (poisoned by company-produced food, run over by a

- delivery truck, whatever).  
Reduce the company's finances by 7D10%.
- 17-24 Malady and poor business decisions made in your stead have hurt the firm. 5D10% of the value of investments is lost.
- 25-33 A slow season, nothing to panic about, but D20% of all money invested is lost.
- 34-43 There is a regular turnover of funds but little advancement. No money is lost this month but no profits are gained.
- 44-52 The company gains the option to purchase a new headquarters building at a cut price. Pick an appropriately sized building from the chart and offer it to the character at half cost.
- 53-60 Business is livelier, the funds invested in the company increase by D20%.
- 61-68 The company has absorbed a smaller company near its headquarters, including all of its customers, buildings, and employees. This may have happened through a corporate buy-out. In the case of a small freelance operation, a local competitor has closed down and its trade has come to this company. Double its resources and contacts.
- 69-76 Business is quite good, the funds invested in the company increase by 3D10%.
- 77-84 A particularly good batch of products gets a favourable review in a consumer magazine. Increase funds by 5D10%.
- 85-92 Business is excellent, your goods are delivered into the hands of the needy at the exact moment that they are willing to pay for them. Money invested in the company increases by 10xD10%.
- 93-00 The company has been responsible for saving a life somewhere. Perhaps it paid for an essential operation to a family member of one of its employees. This has been heavily publicized, resulting in a boost of 20xD10% to finances.



## 25. Creating your own Headquarters

Adventures in roleplaying game campaigns often involve travel across dangerous territory, fights in exotic locales, quests to destroy evil artifacts of great power, and other activities that take a character far from home. But ultimately a character needs a home — a place of safety and refuge that he can return to between adventures, that he can defend from enemies and invaders, and where he can store all his stuff.

A character's home, be it a castle, a space station, a secret headquarters, a nice little condo over on the west side, or something else, is a headquarters. These rules describe how characters create Headquarters, whether they're medieval castles, space stations, the sprawling underground headquarters of a supervillain, or even more bizarre installations.

In order to create an organization the GM can either assign a set amount of points or allow the characters to use their XP points to buy what they need.

### 1. HQ Location

The first thing to consider in building a base is where is it located? A base might be in a city, or it might be located on the outskirts a safe distance from the city. The base could be some distance from major cities and towns. Such a location provides more privacy but makes the base less accessible.

Of course, the base could be even more distant: deep underground or underwater, or hidden away in a distant place like Antarctica or Tibet. It might not even be on Earth, located in orbit, on

another planet or even in a distant galaxy.

Generally speaking, hero bases tend to be closer to the people the heroes work to protect, and are accessible to the public in some way. Some heroes prefer to keep a low profile and don't publicize the location of their base but they remain close to places where they're likely to be needed. Villain bases are usually hidden or located in distant places where they can't easily be found or attacked. Multiple types may be combined.

### Cost Notes

- | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Notes</u>   |
|-------------|--|
| 1           | A public, open building which anyone can find.   |
| 2           | A warehouse or other large building which appears decrepit or indistinct on the outside.   |
| 5           | A secret mountain or underground facility.   |
| 10          | A remote location such as an undersea station with submarine or an orbiting space station with shuttle. Must be made of armoured steel option. |
| 20          | A pocket or adjutant dimension.  |

### 2. HQ Structure and Size

Once the location of the base is chosen, ask what is its structure? Is it some fairly ordinary structure like a house, mansion or office building, or is it something more elaborate like a castle or underground complex, or even an orbiting satellite, moon base or Dyson sphere?

The GM should consider the abilities and resources of the owners of the base. Could they create or acquire such a base? The designer of the base (the player or GM) may wish to draw a map of the base to get a better feel for the

structure and layout, as well as what other features might go into the base.

What is your headquarters is made of? Combinations may be used, such as Armoured Steel with a Wooden exterior for disguise.

Cost	Notes
1	Per square metre of Wood; 75 HPs per square metre.
2	Per square metre of Brick or Rock; 150 HPs per square metre.
5	Per square metre of Concrete; 200 HPs per square metre.
10	Per square metre of Armoured steel; 400 HPs per square metre.
+10	Per square metre of auto sealing. The walls have an automatic sealing system, comprised of two separate layers of resin under high pressure. When the layers are breached the substances expand and mix to form a very durable foam-like patch.

### 3. HQ Security

How secure is the headquarters? Can just anyone walk in or is near impregnable? Multiple types may be combined.

Cost	Notes
1	Per self locking door of 20 HPs. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each door's HPs by +20 each time.
1	Per room which has an alarm system with manual turn off using a six digit code.
1	Per room which has a video monitor.
1	Per large stall, cage, roost, veterinary tools, and anything else used to take care of animal occupants. A headquarters with this feature has facilities

specially built for the care, feeding, and housing of animals. The animal quarters can hold one creature of up to 3 metres size, but taking this feature additional times can be used to either add more quarters or increase the size of existing facilities.

1	Per guard room with video and computer facility links (if have any).
2	Per room which has a metal detector, bomb and weapon detectors, and a dosimetre.
5	Per specially prepared room which has a super-heavy door, reinforced walls, an independent air supply, and food and other perishables. The walls and door of the safe room have a hardness double that of the walls of the headquarters. The safe room has one week of food and water. The safe room is 3 metres x 3 metres in size, though this may be doubled by selecting this feature multiple times.
5	Per escape tunnel. The area surrounding the headquarters is riddled with escape tunnels, allowing easy escape from the headquarters from a number of locations. The headquarters has one escape tunnel each time this is bought and these tunnels pass either underground or through nearby buildings, ending up to one kilometre away.
5	Per room which has a computerised fingerprint or palm scan.
5	Per room which has a computerised retinal scan.
5	Per room which has a computerised voice scan and verbal pass code.

- 10 The headquarters is surrounded by some sort of physical barrier that makes it difficult to reach, such as a moat, high wall, steep cliff, a lava filled moat or a wall of thorns.
- 10 Per room which has an Electrified floor (does D10 electrical damage), Retractable laser Rifle mounts in the walls (3D10 damage), Sleep Gas dispensers (fall asleep for 30 minutes) and Force Fields (these cannot be crossed unless disabled first).
- 20 For a suite of radar and passive sensors which can detect radar, laser, microwave, radio, and all other electromagnetic frequencies within one kilometre. Each time rebought the range is doubled.
- 40 For a suite of Electronic Counter Measures which causes the detonation of all incoming missiles within one kilometre. Each time rebought the range is doubled.
- 20 Per anti aircraft gun and short range anti personnel weapon at any entrances.
- 20 The headquarters is equipped with sliding walls, hidden compartments and other such devices that, when engaged, allow the building to appear perfectly normal both inside and out. As a full action one of the residents of the headquarters can change the exterior appearance, the interior appearance, or both.
- 30 The headquarters is equipped with a number of inflatable flotation devices or is naturally buoyant, even if not specifically designed to be waterborne. The

headquarters will float easily if it enters water and will quickly rise to the top if forcibly submerged. Only damage to the flotation system will cause the headquarters to sink. This feature is mainly for flying or land based headquarters that might accidentally end up in water occasionally, not to represent waterborne headquarters.

- 30 The headquarters is equipped with a number of parachutes, antigrav generators or similar precautions that allow it to fall from a great height without suffering any damage. The headquarters sinks to the ground at a rate of 3 metres per round.
- 40 The headquarters is equipped with some manner of explosives or power overload that will completely destroy the headquarters. When this device is activated, which normally requires a specific pass word, key or similar security precaution, a predetermined countdown begins. This countdown may or may not be audible to the headquarters at large. Once the countdown is over the base explodes, destroying itself and everyone inside it.

#### 4. HQ Electrical Systems

What computer and communication systems does the facility have? Multiple types may be combined.

##### Cost Notes \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 For a standard telephone network.
- 1 For a standard CB radio network including VHF and UHF identical to that used

- by the police, taxis and buses.
- 1 For a standard intercom system throughout the entire base.
- 1 For standard broadband internet connection.
- 5 For the base's own encrypted satellite network and telephone exchange dedicated solely to use by its people.
- 10 For an interplanetary communication device which broadcasts a combined picture and voice message that travels at the speed of light. It is useful over a relatively short distances in space, and when communicating between points on a planet or from an orbiting vessel or station to the planet. A videocom message takes one second to travel 300,000 kilometres.
- 20 For a subspace radio which is used for sending messages between distant planets and star systems. Subspace communicators send coded tachyon beams that must be broadcast from very carefully aimed dish antenna to hit their target planet or system. A subspace message crosses 1 light year per hour.
- 1 For an average modern computer or laptop network with all the peripherals like a printer, scanner, etc.
- 2 For an advanced computer network with files on various superhero, villain, terrorist and law organizations.
- 5 For an A.I. system the entire headquarters is wired to which monitors and maintains everything within.

## 5. HQ Power

How is the headquarters powered? Multiple types may be combined.

<u>Cost</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1	To be hooked up to the standard electricity grid.
1	For each backup gasoline generator.
2	For a set of solar panels which provides all the HQ's needs.
10	For the HQ's own nuclear plant.
20	For the HQ's own power plant which uses something previously unknown on earth. GM's discretion.

## 6. HQ Holding Cells

Does the HQ have its own prison facilities? Multiple types may be combined. See the security section for buying guards.

<u>Cost</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1	Per Standard holding cell with bars, a bed and toilet designed to incarcerate one prisoner. May be rebought multiple times.
2	As before but also includes a security monitor and the gate has an electronic lock. May be rebought multiple times.
20	As before but negates any magical spells or devices from working within that cell.
10	Per Cryostasis chamber for one person. May be rebought multiple times.

## 7. HQ Infirmary

Can the HQ treat any injured? Multiple types may be combined.

### Cost Notes

- 1 Per standard first aid kit, bed and a table.
- 10 Per fully equipped medical facility for treating one person for injuries, illnesses and other maladies. It may be rebought multiple times and can treat one additional person each time.
- 10 Per operating theatre.
- 10 Per fully equipped analysis lab.

## 8. HQ Firefighting

Is the HQ able to survive a fire? Multiple types may be combined.

### Cost Notes

- 1 For each room to have a smoke alarm.
- 1 Per each room which has an automated sprinkler.
- 2 Per each room which has a foam system.

## 9. HQ Vehicles and

### Maintenance

Does the group have any transport and the facilities to maintain them? Multiple types may be combined. GM's discretion applies to military vehicles.

### Cost Notes

- 1 Per standard new car, van or ute which belongs to the group.
- 2 Per new sports car or truck which belongs to the group.
- 3 Per new construction or other heavy machinery vehicle which belongs to the group.
- 1 Per standard new motor boat which belongs to the group.

- 2 Per standard new yacht which belongs to the group.
- 3 Per new large boat which belongs to the group.
- 10 Per new super large boat which belongs to the group such as a cruise liner or freighter.
- 5 Per new civilian submersible which belongs to the group.
- 10 Per per new small military boat which belongs to the group.
- 15 Per per new medium military boat which belongs to the group.
- 20 Per per new large military boat which belongs to the group.
- 10 Per per new military submersible which belongs to the group.
- 2 Per standard new small plane which belongs to the group.
- 5 Per standard new civilian jet which belongs to the group.
- 5 Per standard new civilian helicopter which belongs to the group.
- 10 Per new military helicopter which belongs to the group.
- 20 Per new military jet which belongs to the group.
- 40 Per new orbital shuttle which belongs to the group.
- 20 Per standard new civilian mecha which belongs to the group.
- 40 Per new military mecha which belongs to the group.
- 1 Per complete garage facility for storing and maintaining one ground vehicle of up to rig size. Can be rebought multiple times either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.
- 2 Per complete dock facility for storing and maintaining one boat of up to small yacht size. Can be rebought multiple times adding

- either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.
- 5 Per complete hangar facility for storing and maintaining one air vehicle of up to small prop plane or helicopter size. Can be rebought multiple times adding either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.
- 10 Per complete hangar facility for storing and maintaining one small spaceship vehicle. Can be rebought multiple times adding either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.
- 20 Per complete hangar facility for storing and maintaining one small starship vehicle. Can be rebought multiple times adding either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.
- 5 Per complete mecha bay facility for storing and maintaining one small mech. Can be rebought multiple times either adding additional facilities, or doubling the size of the existing one each time allowing for larger vehicles.
- 1 Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
- 1 Per game room which has a pool table, video games, etc for up to 8 people. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
- 10 Per holographic danger room capable of creating various threats and traps for training and testing purposes for up to 8 people. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
- 1 Per standard gymnasium with physical fitness equipment, change room and showers for up to 8 people. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
- 1 Per standard size swimming pool with 2 lanes and a change room. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.

## 10. HQ Recreation

Are there any facilities for eating and relaxing? Multiple types may be combined.

### Cost Notes \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 Per cafeteria eating area accommodating up to four people, includes kitchen area.

## 11. HQ Utilities

This includes such things as stairs, sleeping areas, showers, etc. Multiple types may be combined.

### Cost Notes \_\_\_\_\_

- 5 Per workshop with facilities for one person. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
- 5 Per research laboratory with facilities for one person. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
- 5 Per room which can have its environment adjusted to suit alien lifeforms. Each room of the headquarters may be sealed off and the environment of that room changed to meet a number of different needs, such as flooding

	rooms for aquatic creatures or changing the dominate gas in a room to methane for methane breathers. Generally changing a room’s environment takes one minute and can be done from the room affected or from any major computer terminals in the headquarters. This feature can also be used to make a room deadly to its inhabitants, such as removing all the oxygen from a room.		atlases, dictionaries and other common scientific and geographic references. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
		+5	The library now also includes D6 x6 rare books with real information on the aforementioned topics. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
1	Per bedroom with bed and wardrobe for one person. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.	+10	The library now also includes D4 x2 ancient books, original manuscripts or alien literature. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.
1	Per bathroom with bath, shower and mirror for one person. Can be rebought multiple times doubling its size each time.	10	For each room of the headquarters which is warded against travellers from the astral realm, blocking them from seeing inside or attempting to gain entry.
3	Per passenger elevator which can hold up to 1500kgs or cargo elevator which can hold up to 2500kgs. Can be rebought multiple times.	20	For each room of the headquarters which is warded against interdimensional travellers and gateways, preventing any incursion from another dimension.
1	Per toilet area with up to 2 cubicles. Can be rebought multiple times.	40	A headquarters with this feature is built on a place of special mystic power such as ley lines, granting extra mystical powers to those who are attuned to these energies. Characters that live in the headquarters are assumed to already be attuned to the energies of the Mystic Locale, but other characters may attune to the mystic locale after D4 +4 hours . Those attuned to the Mystic Locale may spontaneously cast any spell using Sorcery once per hour without becoming fatigued. This feature allows the headquarters to exist in multiple locations at once. The
1	Per set of stairs. Can be rebought multiple times.		
2	Per escalator or travelator. Can be rebought multiple times.		

## 12. HQ Mystical Facilities

What kind of supernatural and mystical knowledge does the facility have?

### Cost Notes

1	Per library of D10 x10 popular books on the occult, the paranormal, ghosts, legends, UFOs, mysterious happenings, supernatural, metapowers, magic and newspaper clippings. Also included are several recent world
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headquarters may exist simultaneously at up to one location each time taken. The headquarters may be interacted with normally at each location and has the same appearance at each location. Characters interacting with the outside world, including leaving the headquarters, may mentally specify which location of the headquarters they seek to interact with. The appearance of the headquarters can be made to differ in each instance it appears to blend in with its surroundings.

50 This feature allows the headquarters to relocate from one place to another, but it is not as capable as a vehicle in that regard. Generally speaking, moving the installation is a significant undertaking that can only occur (at most) once per game session, and probably less often than that. This may be due to the need to charge powerful batteries, make complex calculations, wait for the right alignment of mystic energies, or any number of other reasons. The key point is that the installation isn't particularly useful for getting from place to place within the context of a single adventure, although it may move between adventures, and even serve as a primary means of conveying characters to adventures, such as shifting from dimension to dimension, with each dimensional shift heralding a new locale and a new adventure.

### 13. HQ Personnel

Bases often have (semi-)permanent employees/residents or other personnel who work for the characters, oversee the proper functioning of the HQ, and so on.

#### Cost Notes

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Per dedicated firefighter at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each firefighter's level. |
| 1 | Per dedicated IT specialist at first level. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each specialist's level.                             |
| 1 | Per groundskeeper/gardener at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each one's level.        |
| 1 | Per receptionist/office staff at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each one's level.     |
| 1 | Per car mechanic at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each mechanic's level.             |
| 1 | Per boat mechanic at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each mechanic's level.            |
| 1 | Per aircraft mechanic at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each mechanic's level.        |
| 1 | Per shuttle mechanic at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each mechanic's level.         |
| 1 | Per trained arcane researcher at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple   |



- times to increase each researcher's level.
- 1 Per lab technician first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each technician's level.
- 1 Per chef at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each chef's level.
- 1 Per cleaner at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each cleaner's level.
- 1 Per dedicated nurse at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each nurse's level.
- 1 Per trained security guard at first level. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each guard's level.
- 2 Per dedicated doctor at first level who is stationed in the base. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each doctor's level.
- 10 Per metahuman security agent at first level. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each guard's level.
- 10 Per Robot security agent at first level. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each guard's level.
- 10 Per Mage or Supernatural security agent at first level. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each guard's level.
- 10 Per other class security agent at first level. Can be rebought multiple times to increase each guard's level.

### 13. Personnel Equipment

What clothing and equipment is available to the members? Multiple types may be combined.

<u>Cost</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1	All players and employees receive a standard uniform and replacements free.
2	Players have a wide range of civilian clothes, disguises and foreign uniforms available free.
5	Players have a wide range of standard armour, protective clothes, pilot suits, scuba gear, etc available free.
5	Players have a wide range of standard equipment available for their use free.
10	Players have a wide range of expensive equipment available for their use free.
20	Players have a wide range of James Bond type gadgets available for their use free.
5	Players have a wide range of standard weapons and ammo available for their use free.
10	Players have a wide range of exotic weapons and ammo available for their use free.

### 14. Contacts

What outside contacts and allies does the group have? Multiple types may be combined.

<u>Cost</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1	A newspaper reporter.
1	A friendly cop.
1	A TV producer.
1	A lab technician.
1	A private detective.
1	Someone of low rank in one of the armed forces.

- 1 A local council member.  
 2 A member of the federal police.  
 2 Someone of medium rank in one of the armed forces.  
 2 A member of the state government.  
 2 Someone important in correctional services.  
 2 A low rank member of an intelligence agency.  
 5 A magazine publisher.  
 5 Someone of high rank in one of the armed forces.  
 5 A popular radio DJ.  
 5 A medium rank member of an intelligence agency.  
 10 A famous and powerful mage.  
 10 A famous and powerful metahuman.  
 10 An important member of the supernatural community.  
 20 The head of an intelligence agency.  
 20 The leader of a country.  
 20 An important extradimensional or extraterrestrial alien.

## 27. Mining

When a character locates minerals while mining, consult the Mining Products Table below and continue on to the successive tables

### Mining Products Table

01-30 Copper

31-40 Tin

41-66 Lead

67-84 Iron

85-92 Silver

93-95 Gold

96-97 Platinum

98-99 Gemstones

00 Mithril

Mithril exists deep under the earth, in dense metamorphic formations. The actual presence of Mithril must be confirmed by checking the Mithril Formation Table. If gemstones are indicated, check the Gemstones Table.

### Mithril Formation Table

01-05 Silver (highest quality)

06-08 Gold (highest quality)

09 Platinum (highest quality)

10 Mithril

### Gemstones Table

01-25 Ornamental

26-50 Semi-precious

51-70 Fancy

71-90 Precious

91-94 Gems

95-96 Jewels

97-99 Roll twice on this table

00 Roll three times on this table

### Ornamental Stones

01-08 Azurite

09-16 Banded Agate

17-24 Blue Calcite

25-32 Eye Agate

33-40 Hematite

41-48 Lapis Lazuli  
 49-56 Malachite  
 57-64 Moss Agate  
 65-73 Obsidian  
 74-82 Rhodocrosite  
 83-91 Tiger Eye Agate  
 92-00 Turquoise

### Jewels

01-25 Diamond  
 26-50 Emerald  
 51-75 Ruby  
 76-00 Sapphire

### Semi-Precious Stones

01-07 Bloodstone  
 08-15 Carnelian  
 16-23 Chalcedony  
 24-31 Chrysoprase  
 32-39 Citrine Quartz  
 40-47 Jasper  
 48-55 Moonstone  
 56-59 Onyx  
 60-67 Quartz Crystal  
 68-75 Rose Quartz  
 76-83 Sardonyx  
 84-91 Smoky Quartz  
 92-00 Zircon

### Fancy Stones

01-12 Alexandrite  
 13-25 Amber  
 26-38 Amethyst  
 39-51 Chrysoberyl  
 52-64 Fluorite  
 65-77 Jade  
 78-90 Jet  
 91-00 Tourmaline

### Precious

01-25 Aquamarine  
 26-50 Blue Spinel  
 51-75 Peridot  
 76-00 Topaz

### Gems

01-25 Garnet  
 26-50 Jacinth  
 51-75 Opal  
 76-00 Red Spinel

### Ore Quality Table (Roll D10)

If the yield of the mine is a metal, it will probably be in the form of ore (metal-bearing rock). While pure nuggets may be discovered occasionally, a character with the smelter proficiency must separate the metal from the ore. The quality of the ore is equal to the number of coins that can be produced from it by a single miner in one week. A copper mine, with a rating of 200 cp would mean that a single miner working for one week produces a pile of ore that can yield 200 cp of copper when smelted. The amount of coinage indicates how much is produced not that coins must be produced. One-thousand coins of iron for example equal one suit of plate armour, 100 spear heads, or 500 arrowheads. To determine the quality of the mined ore, roll D10 and compare it to the result for that metal on the Ore Quality Table. This equals the coin equivalent produced per week per miner.

Metal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Copper	100	200	250	300	350	400	500	750	1000	2000
Iron	200	300	500	700	900	1200	1600	2000	3000	4000
Silver	25	50	100	200	300	400	500	750	1000	2000
Gold	10	25	50	100	200	300	400	500	750	1000
Platinum	5	10	20	40	75	100	250	400	800	1000

If a 10 is rolled, roll D10 again. If another 10 results, the mine is a pure vein of the highest quality and requires no smelting. If 1-9 results the metal must be smelted.

### Gemstone Quality Table

Newly mined gemstones are not nearly as valuable as they are after finishing. Gemstones are rough and even unrecognizable when first discovered. Characters with the Mining or Gem Cutting proficiencies can correctly identify a stone after D6 rounds of study. The quality of a gemstone mine depends on the number of stones in each find and the value of the stones. The number of stones is that which one miner can excavate in one week. The value of the stones is the average value for an uncut stone, which is 10% of its cut value. To realize the full amount from the gemstones, a miner needs to employ a character with the Gem Cutting proficiency. Some stones are more or less valuable than this amount, but the average is as accurate as we need to get to calculate the income from the mine. The output of a gemstone mine does not remain constant, it is rolled each week to determine the worth of that week's output. The number of miners at work each week is determined before the dice are rolled.

<u>Class of Stone</u>	<u>Amount per miner per week</u>	<u>Average Uncut Value</u>
Ornamental	4D10	1 Sestertii
Semi-precious	3D6	5 Sestertii
Fancy	D12-1	10 Sestertii
Precious	D10-1	50 Sestertii
Gems	D6-1	100 Sestertii
Jewels	D4-1	500 Sestertii

In addition to the base value of the stones mined in a given week, there is a 1% chance per week of operation that a miner will discover an exceptional stone. If an exceptional stone is found, its value is equal to the base value of the mine's stones multiplied by a

D100 roll. For example, an exceptional stone found in a semi-precious stone mine is worth 10 Sestertii (the average value of an uncut, semi-precious stone) x D100. Players may also consult the Type of Stones Table to determine the exact types of stones found.