

Heroes3D6

Core rules

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Opening words

A player's character is their representative in the world of *Heroes3D6* and such should be a personal and fully customisable thing; allowing the player's creativity free reign and not limiting them with too many rules and class attributes etc. This is what *Heroes3D6* tries to do, liberate your role playing experience from restrictive parameters but still maintain some semblance of an ordered and enjoyable system.

Heroes3D6 depends almost as much on the imagination of the players as it does upon the Game Master. The players are given little or no instruction as to how to fulfil any role within a group and how well they do this will ultimately decide how much fun the game is.

This is a simple system to pick up, as it applies a central set of mechanics across the board, but is complicated enough to please even the most hardcore of gamers, due to the depth and freedom of its mechanics, should you choose to delve into them. The system itself is very open to interpretation and lots of work is required by the Game Master to make this work, as they must make many decisions on the spot as to how the rules apply in a given situation. Other than that, just read and play.

This weighty tome encompasses all the essential rules needed to play a game of *Heroes3D6* independent of setting, other books merely contain rules for playing the game within a famous/iconic world or setting, all these other books require these Core Rules, but do occasionally over-ride them when necessary.

This rule book is open-source ¹: you can redistribute it and/or modify it under the terms of the GNU General Public License as published by the Free Software Foundation, either version 3 of the License, or any later version (see <https://www.gnu.org/licenses/>).

1.2 The core system

1.2.1 Players and the game master (GM)

Games of Heroes are run by a player designated as the Game Master (GM). The remaining participants are simply termed as players. Each of the players controls a character and together they will take part in an adventure supervised by the GM. The Game Master acts as a narrator, they drive the story and is in control of the world and environments inhabited by the player characters. Additionally, they create and control any people or monsters that the characters will encounter in the course of their adventures.

These rules for the structure of the game are deliberately loose, as the freedom of players and GM to collectively shape an adventure is the magic that makes pen-and-paper role-playing games worthwhile.

1.2.2 Actions and dice rolls

An element of randomisation is introduced into the game by the players rolling dice whenever their characters wish to perform non-trivial actions. These rolls tend to be modified by how good the character is at the particular action (making them more or less likely to succeed). Things like breaking down doors, persuading a guard to let you into a locked door, picking a lock, fighting an enemy, noticing someone hiding in the bushes, climbing a tree/wall/ladder/rope, swimming, jumping a gap, riding, or picking pockets are all examples of actions that would require the player to make a roll to see if their character succeeds. Because the system is based on rolling 3 six-sided dice, the resulting non-linear probability distribution means we can also decide upon the degree of success in a manner that is far more realistic than one resulting from rolling a single dice.

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How good a character is at a particular action is decided by two things, firstly their natural capabilities (Chapter 2) and secondly their learned or acquired skills (Chapter 4). Deciding whether or not a skill or natural attribute is appropriate to a particular task is a matter of common sense and the players and GM can come to a consensus for any contentious tasks. For example: tasks that rely only on the characters strength (actions like breaking things) will not be resolved through skills. However, actions like riding horses, tying or climbing ropes, and picking locks are all things that are greatly enhanced by experience and thus will depend on more than just the character's raw personal ability when resolving such actions.

How success and failure are determined is explained in the Section 1.2.2 below.

Dice notation

The notation “requires a 3d6 roll of 16+” means that a total score of 16 or greater, on three six-sided dice (3d6), is needed for the given action to succeed. Similarly “5–” means 5 or less. When no dice code (3d6, 2d6, etc) is given, then 3d6 is considered the default dice set.

Opposed rolls and difficulty checks

The core of this 3d6 system is the **Difficulty Check**, any task can be assigned a **Difficulty** by the Game Master and then is performed successfully if the character scores equal to or greater than the **Difficulty** on a roll of 3d6. To this roll you add the relevant **Attribute/skill** score; for instance when making a climbing check you add your **Athletics** score to the roll. The second core mechanic is the **Opposed Roll**, this represents a contest between two or more opponents, as such each creature contesting the roll adds the given **Attribute/skill** score to a roll of 3d6. The victor is the one whose resultant score is the highest. In the case of a tie, the tied parties simply roll again.

Critical success/failure

If you succeed/fail on a check by 4 or more you have achieved a **Critical Success/failure**. For example, if you need to beat **Difficulty** 11 to succeed, then 15+ is **Critical Success** whereas 7– is **Critical Failure**. Some effects scale with how many multiples of 4 you succeed or fail by.

Rounding conventions

When the division of an integer score results in a non-integer number (i.e. it is not a whole number) then the convention is to round up, unless otherwise specified.

Edge

Some circumstances confer great advantage or disadvantage on a character. This is referred to as having an **Edge**. When rolling 3d6 with an **Edge** bonus (**Edge+**), a character rolls 4d6 and chooses the highest 3. In contrast, an **Edge** penalty (**Edge-**) makes the character roll 4d6 dice and choose the lowest 3. Example: I roll 3d6 to make a check to see if I jump over a crevasse, luckily I have **Edge+** and thus roll 4d6 scoring 3,4,2, and 3. I keep the highest 3 and total 10. If this was **Edge-** I would have totalled 8.

Edge- cancels out **Edge+** if character is subject to both, e.g. if your character is suffering two **Edge** penalties but has one bonus, they are effectively experience **Edge-**. If a character has 2 or more **Edge** bonuses/penalties simply add extra dice to the number being rolled, i.e. **Edge++** means a 3d6 roll becomes 5d6 and choose the best 3. The general pattern is: when rolling $nd6$ and having m **Edge** bonuses/penalties, you instead roll $(n + m)d6$ and choose the highest/lowest n dice.

1.2.3 Heroic statistics

Any heroic/villainous character will also possess an attribute called **Heroism/villainy**, which can be spent to perform feats of exceptional skill and daring. The central premise of this statistic system is to set heroic characters apart, allowing them to occasionally avoid the vagaries of chance inherent in dice rolling games.

1.3 Useful notes for the GM

Here we will discuss an important topic: how we assign **Difficulty** scores to feats characters wish to perform. This is non-trivial if you are used to systems that use a single die for rolls, i.e. 1d20 being rolled for skill checks etc.

1.3.1 Assigning difficulties

The trickiness of **Difficulty** assignment arises from the fact that 3d6 have a non-linear probability distribution, meaning that some scores are far more likely than others. Whereas, on 1d20 every score has an equal chance of occurring. Thus, the GM should be careful, as an increase of 1 **Difficulty** can make a task far more difficult than you would anticipate. To help with this task, I will outline some useful principles in choosing difficulties. The very nerdy reader can look to the appendices for fun things like probability distributions.

I will divide tasks into 3 groups: easy, moderate, and hard. In order to view these in a vaguely concrete framework, I will sort **Difficulty** scores into these groups assuming there are no bonuses or penalties on the roll. In this situation, a **Difficulty** of lower than 9 is easy, and greater than 13 is rather hard.

Note that requiring 11+ on 3d6 is a 50% probability of success, so this would correspond to something an unskilled character is equally likely to fail or succeed at. A **Difficulty** of 13 would only imply success 25% of the time (assuming no bonuses). In contrast, a **Difficulty** of 9 results in a chance of 75% of succeeding. These examples should give you sufficient idea of how to assign **Difficulty**. Things that an average man would struggle to achieve should be **Difficulty** 13 or higher whereas simple tasks can assigned 9 or lower. In this 9 to 13 range each increase or decrease in **Difficulty** by 1 results in the same probability shift, for lower or higher difficulties the distribution becomes more extreme.

Chapter 2

Character attributes

A character in *Heroes3D6* is represented by a set of **Natural Attributes** and their **Heroism/villainy**. The former detail the character's innate abilities while the latter represent their calibre as a potential hero or villain. Natural attributes are: **Might**, **Cunning**, **Wit**, and **Resolve**.

Natural attributes can be used to determine a character's success in certain actions (examples are given in the sections below). As such, success is determined by making a **Difficulty Check** with the given attribute.

2.1 Natural attributes

These reflect the inherent predispositions of the character, based on their personality. There are five attribute statistics and a character's scores are determined following the character creation rules, found in Chapter 3.

2.1.1 Attribute modifiers

Each attribute contributes to many different skills or activities, its influence on dice rolls is direct, just add it to the result of a relevant roll.

2.1.2 Might

Might is the aggression or assertiveness of the character. A character can make might-checks to, through sheer bloody-mindedness, break objects, bash in doors, or move large objects. The **Difficulty** of breaking objects can be found under the rules for **Cover**, Section 5.8, in the Combat rules. **Difficulty** for lifting or moving heavy objects can be found in Section 7.2 in Baggage and Encumbrance. **Might** also dictates a character's ability to inflict damage in combat.

2.1.3 Cunning

Cunning is the craftiness of the character. **Cunning** can be used to bluff convincingly, make feints in combat, trip people up, or get out of the way of harm. It also contributes to the **Stealth**, **Disguise**, **Deceive**, **Slight Of Hand**, and **Survival** skills.

2.1.4 Wit

Wit is a character's ability to rapidly adjust to changing circumstances. It affects a character's aim in combat as well as the **Awareness**, **Mechanical**, and **Knowledge** skills. **Wit** checks would be made if the character had to rapidly assess a situation or react quickly to imminent danger. **Wit** also decides how difficult it is to deceive or confuse the character.

2.1.5 Resolve

Is a measure of the character's determination and force of character. **Resolve** checks can be used to flatter, distract, or to taunt/enrage a target into attacking the character. These checks involve an opposed roll with the target's **Wit** score. **Resolve** is also involved in the **Persuade**, **Leadership**, **Healing**, **Insight**, and **Perform** skills. Finally, it regulates a character's ability to resist debilitating effects (magic, drugs, poisons) by pure will.

2.2 Perks & proficiencies

Perks are talents learned or gained by a hero through the course of their adventures, they can be purchased via the expenditure of experience points. A character can have at most 3 active and 3 passive **Perks** equipped at once (only equipped **Perks** can be used). A character can make only one change to which **Perks** are equipped each day.

Proficiencies are more general skills gained by the character. These are always in effect and never occupy either passive or active **Perk** equipment slots. A list of **Perks** and **Proficiencies** can be found in Chapter 6.

2.3 Heroic attributes

2.3.1 Heroism/Villainy

Heroism is what sets your character apart from their more ordinary brethren, it represents a hero's capacity to make decisive and daring actions under pressure. The distinction between **Heroism** and **Villainy** points is one of flavour, villains have **Villainy** while heroes get **Heroism**. Generally, if a rule refers to **Heroism** it still pertains to **Villainy**, unless otherwise stated.

Heroism/Villainy may be spent to raise the success level of a single action by 1 (i.e. a **Critical Failure** becomes plain failure, success becomes **Critical Success**, and **Critical Success** goes to level 2 **Critical Success**). Additionally, **Heroism** may be spent to perform daring feats of valour while **Villainy** may be used for vile trickery; this grants the character access to a single **Perk** of their choice for 6 seconds (1 round in combat). There is no need for the character to have bought the chosen **Perk** or have it equipped (it also bypasses limits on **Perk** numbers).

If a character has no **Heroism/villainy** when resting, they may regain 1 point. Otherwise, such points are awarded by the Game Master on the spur of the moment for any deed that is appropriately heroic/villainous.

Moment of glory

A *Moment Of Glory* awards the character with a single **Heroism/villainy** point they can spend within the next round only.

Optional rules

An alternative way to use **Heroism** is to allow characters to make special actions they invent on the spot. The Game Master must decide the consequences of any such actions made.

2.4 Experience points

Each time the Game Master decides to reward the heroic achievement of a character, or each character in the group, then the relevant characters gain 1 experience point. This guideline is very qualitative and this is because heroism is a qualitative thing, so advancement is very much a case of the application of GM judgement, informed by basic guidelines laid down here.

Simple guidelines for experience: a point can be earned by actions demonstrating some heroic calibre, such as: single handedly over-coming many foes or performing reckless feats of strength and daring that save the day. Or perhaps by feats of magic or deeds accomplished through strength of will and force of personality. Experience can also be awarded for devious acts of deceit, or from victory through wit and intelligence rather than blade and boot. Note that these achievements are not combat exclusive, heroism is format-independent after all.

Experience points can be spent on purchasing new **Perks** and **Proficiencies**, the costs of these is detailed in Chapter 6. Note that experience cannot be spent in high pressure or active situations, only during periods of rest and contemplation.

2.4.1 Advancing attributes

Natural attribute points can only be increased in a limited fashion, so choose wisely! The only way to do so is via the **Hero/villain** proficiency from Chapter 6.

2.5 Reputation

Any hero or villain has a reputation, be it as a magnanimous defender or a scheming thief; so to can characters develop a reputation and even, by great deeds, have their names known and talked of by thousands of admirers/policemen.

2.5.1 Reputation level

Reputation is gained by performing important deeds or actions that get you talked about. Saving the mayor's daughter or preventing bandits from robbing a group of farmers, that kind of thing. Cheating lots of people out of their money, swindling a local lord, or even robbing a bank are also good examples of reputation gaining actions. Each character has a personal reputation, which is that of the group but modified by personal actions, and the group as a whole has a reputation based on group actions. Characters start at 0 reputation.

2.5.2 Reputation rating

This indicates whether your reputation is good or bad, it starts at 0 normally, but depending on your Game Master, it can start at -1 or +1. If you gain reputation for "bad" actions you get -1 reputation rating, "good" actions get +1, so a negative reputation makes you infamous while positive makes you well-liked.

Chapter 3

Making a character

Simply follow these steps to create a character:

- First browse the species available in the campaign setting and choose yourself one, you may wish to select this based on the modifiers applied to members of that group, or simply on a whim. The default human option would allow you to spend an extra 2 points when choosing **Perks** and **Proficiencies** at character creation.
- Now create a **Background** following Section 3.1.
- Select at least one **Conviction** for your character from 3.2 or invent your own.
- Come up with the **Flaw** in your character's personality, with examples in Section 3.3 (you may have two flaws at most).
- Decide the **Goals** that drive your character to pursue adventure.
- What **Relationships** link the character to other group members, organisations, or people in their past?
- Now we come to the most important part of character creation: deciding what kind of person they are. Use the **Convictions**, **Flaws** and **Goals** you chose as a skeleton. You need to define a character you are comfortable to play as, but also one who is believable as a real person. Lets face it, its not much of a role playing game if everyone is just a faceless killing machine.
- Choose one **Attribute** to have the value 2, and another to have 1. Set all other **Attributes** to 0 (try and make your choices align with the character's personality). Set **Heroism/villainy** to 1.
- Select 3 weapon or skill **Proficiencies** (in any combination you choose). Try to match these up to your **Background**.
- Spend up to 3 experience points choosing **Perks** (Chapter 6) for your character.
- Now you may select starting equipment, either from a list supplied by the Game Master or from a budget.
- Calculate your combat statistics (see Section 5.2).

3.1 Character backgrounds

The character's background is their history before adventuring and dictates the set of associated skills they can choose on character creation. To create a background simply decide on your character's past and choose what kind of skills this would make them proficient in. Here we will list a few examples to give you ideas, if you use any of these you should flesh them out and make them more detailed.

3.1.1 Soldier

The character is a hard-bitten veteran of fighting. Having seen their fair share of blood spilt on the orders of others, they now turn their hand to adventuring instead. Soldier encompasses many possible histories. Some examples might be: army conscript, mercenary, city guard, bandit, or gang enforcer. Skill suggestions: Healing, Survival, Ride, Athletics, Leadership.

3.1.2 Guttersnipe

The character was born into a life of poverty, scrounging, stealing, and fighting for scraps in back-alleys. This background lends itself to producing street-smart characters who grew up in harsh environments. Such a character is used to being on the wrong side of the law, sometimes even through no fault of their own. Skill suggestions: Stealth, Slight of hand, Deceive, Insight, Athletics, Awareness.

3.1.3 Wanderer

The character lives the life of a vagrant or vagabond. They move from place to place seeking opportunity, profit, or just thrills. However, many people are suspicious of such a lifestyle and regard the character with suspicion or outright hostility. Wanderer is suited to a character who likes wild places and is resentful or suspicious of petty authority. Skill suggestions: Survival, Athletics, Stealth, Awareness, Animals, Plants.

3.1.4 Silver spoon

The character was born into old money, nobility, or some similar high social station. They received an expensive education and live an expensive lifestyle. As such these characters are used to political manoeuvrings that go along with high society. Skill suggestions: Persuade, Deceive, Insight, Leadership, Ride, History, Religion.

3.1.5 Artist

The character has trained in the creative arts, being a musician/bard, actor, dancer, sculptor, painter or something similar. Such a character often has a near obsessive devotion to their art form and a tendency to grandiosity. Skill suggestions: Perform, Athletics, Insight, Persuade, Disguise, History, Religion.

3.1.6 Barbarian

The character is born into a culture deemed savage and backward by other societies (civilisation is often in the eye of the beholder). As such, 'sophisticated' individuals tend to view the character with a mixture of terror and revulsion. However, a 'barbarian' has their own perspective on what it means to be civil. Skill suggestions: Survival, Athletics, Awareness, Ride, Animal, Plant.

3.2 Convictions

Convictions are your character's ideals and principles. Their moral code and the truths they believe in. These are suggestions and serve as a guideline for creating your own.

3.2.1 Might makes right

The character believes that strength justifies everything. The weak being preyed upon by the strong is just how the world works.

3.2.2 Nothing for nothing

The character believes that everything has to be earned, charity only creates dependence.

3.2.3 Something for nothing

The character knows that the destitute need protection, mutual support strengthens everyone. The character believes strongly in charity and doing what they can to help anyone.

3.2.4 Words before weapons

The character will always try to talk before resorting to violence, they are a dedicated pacifist.

3.2.5 Kill or be killed

The character has no qualms about violence and resorts to it often, the non-violent don't last long enough for their principles to matter.

3.2.6 Make your own justice

The law is not be trusted, you have to claim justice for yourself rather than waiting for a court.

3.2.7 The law is the law

Rules exist for a reason and should be obeyed as closely as possible.

3.2.8 Power always corrupts

No one can be trusted with power. All authority should be looked upon with suspicion as the powerful are the enemy.

3.2.9 The ruled need rulers

People are sheep and need a shepherd. Conveniently, you are just the person for the job.

3.2.10 Serve a greater good

There are things more important than any one individual, such a cause drives your actions (make up a suitable one).

3.2.11 Knowledge is power

Knowledge is vital, curiosity and the drive to learn are fundamental to civilisation. The character will always aim to ferret out secrets.

3.2.12 Honour is paramount

You cannot control how others behave but you can always choose to do the right thing. The character assiduously follows a code of honour (make up a suitable one).

3.3 Flaws

Flaws are what make your character the imperfect creature they are. These are suggestions and serve as a guideline for creating your own.

3.3.1 Jenkins

The character is impulsive and will not hesitate to act while their comrades debate the best course of action.

3.3.2 Clumsy

The character is not the sharpest tool in the shed, in fact you will be lucky if they don't burn the shed down by accident while searching for tools.

3.3.3 No diplomat

The character has a habit of saying the first thing to come into their head, regardless of how inappropriate it is to the current situation.

3.3.4 Dipsomaniac

The character is a borderline addict to a chosen substance and will go out of their way to consume it.

3.3.5 All about me

Such a character will see themselves as the centre of events at all times and will seldom acknowledge the efforts and contributions of others. This can manifest in anything from a tendency to self-importance to a narcissistic view that any praise is their due and any criticism levelled against them is out of pure jealousy.

3.3.6 Better with animals

This character is a rough soul who prefers life in the thick of nature to a bustling city. As such they tend to be a bit brusque with “soft” city dwellers and contemptuous of petty authorities like watchmen and mayors.

3.3.7 In it to win it

The character takes competitive to the extreme, and has to be the best at everything they do. Their pride is greatly wounded when this is not the case.

3.3.8 Driven

The character has a guiding obsession that they will seek to pursue regardless of more pressing matters (pick a suitable obsession).

3.3.9 Scarred

The character has been both mentally and physically scarred by exposure to violence or trauma. This may manifest as anything from flash-backs or violent outbursts, to long boring stories about events of the character’s past. The severity can be chosen based on the character’s history.

3.3.10 Out of touch

The character is absorbed in day dreams and speculation, often being more concerned with knowledge and thought than real events. As such, the character tends to appear forgetful and oblivious and can often cause touchy individuals to take offence (as they might feel ignored).

3.3.11 Money grubber

The character is greedy and always looks to profit regardless of the situation.

3.3.12 Temper temper

The character angers quickly and is prone to outbursts of anger when pushed.

3.3.13 Arrogant

The character is assured of their superiority to others and is often condescending.

3.3.14 Paranoid

The character sees a conspiracy in every shadow and a threat around every corner. They would sleep in full plate if they could.

3.3.15 Too trusting

The character can’t help but expect others to be as nice as they are. Thus, they implicitly trust everyone who doesn’t seem outrageously shifty.

3.3.16 Domineering

The character is used to getting their own way. They don’t take questioning of their authority well, expect everyone to do their bidding, and may be unwilling to listen to the ideas of others.

3.3.17 Touchy

The character has a sense of pride that can be easily bruised. They feel the need to have their usefulness affirmed often.

3.3.18 Master debater

The character can’t help but argue. They will challenge any assertion they can and will pursue arguments relentlessly.

3.4 Relationships

These are your character's links to other people or places, it is often sensible to select relationships that link your character to at least one other in the adventuring group. These can be things like old friends, family links, or an organisation that your character is part of or linked to. This can be a powerful tool for making your character a part of the world you adventure in, so it should be carefully considered.

3.5 Goals

Everyone has an ambition, something that motivates them to wake up every morning. Goals are what motivate your character to adventure. These can be things like fame, riches, public office, honours, or secret knowledge. Other suggestions could be revenge or the finding of lost friends/relatives. Think about choosing your goals as selecting an initial objective for your character, an opening arc to their story.

Chapter 4

Character skills

There are several skills available to aid your progress through adventures.

4.1 Skill proficiency

When using a skill, characters add the synergy attribute to associated rolls. This attribute usually follows the skill name. Characters without **Proficiency** in the skill incur **Edge-** on the roll. A character can either be trained in a skill (requires 20 hours of training) or spend 3 experience to gain **Proficiency**.

4.2 Using a skill

A skill check is made whenever it is deemed appropriate by the Game Master, for instance an athletics check must be made when a character wishes to jump over a precipice or to climb up a building. Further examples of when skills might be used are listed in their descriptions.

When using a skill the character must exceed the **Difficulty** of the task on a roll of 3d6, adding their synergy attribute. The **Difficulty** of a task is at the Game Master's discretion. If the roll equals or exceeds the required **Difficulty** score, then a **Success** is achieved. However, if the roll exceeds the **Difficulty** by 4, or more, a **Critical Success** is achieved. Failing a check by 4 or more results in **Critical Failure** (with suitably enhanced consequences chosen by the GM). Note that the advantages/penalties stemming from **Critical Success/failure** should scale with the number of multiples of 4 by which the role exceeds/fails the **Difficulty**.

4.2.1 Failure and pressure

If there is no consequence to failure, a character may claim success without rolling. If they roll instead, they have **Edge+** but must accept the result.

4.2.2 Multi-stage checks

Sometimes a character wishes to accomplish a long and daunting task. Some examples might be swimming across a lake/wide river, climbing a cliff, galloping over rocky ground on a mount, or following tracks. To represent this the GM should choose to split the task up into two or three separate checks. To complete the task, the character must achieve a matching number of successes. The bullet-point list below explains how each check should be made. The “unpleasant consequence” being appropriately chosen, i.e. drowning when swimming, falling off when climbing, etc.

- Make a check
- Success means the check is complete
- **Critical Success** by-passes the next check as well
- Failure means you must re-try
- **Critical Failure** results in some unpleasant consequence

4.3 Skill list

Here are some sample skills, each setting/world may add or remove from this list as appropriate.

Table 4.1: Skills (synergy attributes in brackets)

General	Social	Knowledge
Athletics (M)	Perform (R)	Animals (W)
Slight of Hand (C)	Leadership (R)	Plants (W)
Awareness (W)	Deceive (C)	History (W)
Stealth (C)	Disguise (C)	Religion (W)
Healing (R)	Persuade (R)	Arcana (W)
Mechanical (W)	Insight (R)	
Pilot (C)	Intimidation (M)	
Survival (C)		

4.4 General skills

These skills don't fall into any unifying category.

4.4.1 Athletics (Might)

This skill determines your ability to perform acrobatic feats, swim, climb, jump long distances or keep your balance. Any task of this nature is given a **Difficulty** by the Game Master, the degree of success or failure should be noted by the Game Master for purposes of describing your heroic leap or clumsy stumble into a precipice. This skill can be used to:

- Climb
 - **Difficulty** should scale with available hand-holds and height of the climb
 - A short climb should require only one success
 - Longer climbs should be multi-stage checks (see 4.2.2)
 - Climb speed is increased by **Critical Success**
 - Failure results in pausing the climb to get better grip, must re-try to continue
 - **Critical Failure** results in falling off
- Jump long distances (more than half body height)
 - **Difficulty** should scale with distance (e.g. 7 for half height, 11 for full height)
 - Add 2 for vertical jumps
 - Failure means the jumper falls short (potentially into a crevasse)
 - Additionally, **Critical Failure** by X thresholds results in the jumper suffering X **Damage Checks**. These hits have **Power** 0.
- Swim long distances or in difficult waters
 - **Difficulty** should scale with how rough and deep the water is (7 for still, 14 for a flowing torrent)
 - A short swim should require only one success
 - Longer swims should be multi-stage checks (see 4.2.2)
 - **Critical Success** increases swim speed
 - Failure results in struggling to stay afloat, must re-try to continue
 - **Critical Failure** by X thresholds means the character must pass a **Resolve** check with **Difficulty** 9 + X or drown.

4.4.2 Awareness (Wit)

Is how observant and alert a character is, this skill allows you to spot secret doors and notice hidden enemies or traps. This skill can be used to:

- Search an area for concealed objects/people
 - **Difficulty** for an object is decided by the Game Master. Otherwise see **Stealth**.
 - Success means you notice the object or creature while you search

- The amount of detail revealed should scale with the number of critical thresholds the **Difficulty** is exceeded/failed by
- **Critical Success** also means a searched for creature doesn't detect that they have been spotted
- **Critical Failure** causes **Edge-** on subsequent checks

4.4.3 Healing (Resolve)

A healer is one who is skilled in speeding the recovery of their allies through strictly medical/surgical means (potions are the province of the chemist), a healer can employ their healing skill to remove injuries inflicted to an ally. The kind of healing actions are:

- Cure the **Wounded** status
 - **Difficulty:** 10
 - Cannot re-attempt healing for 1 day
 - **Critical Failure** increases healing **Difficulty** for that target by 1 for 3 days
 - **Critical Success** also restores 1 **Endurance** per critical threshold
- Reduce **Badly Wounded** to **Wounded**
 - **Difficulty:** 12
 - Cannot re-attempt healing for 1 day
 - **Critical Failure** increases healing **Difficulty** for that target by 1 for 3 days
 - **Critical Success** also cures the **Wounded** status
- Reduce **Mortally Wounded** to **Badly Wounded**
 - **Difficulty:** 14
 - Cannot re-attempt healing for 1 day
 - **Critical Failure** increases healing difficulty for that target by 1 for 3 days
 - **Critical Success** reduces this to **Wounded** instead
- Identify poison or disease
 - The **Difficulty** should scale with the rarity of the condition or the healers familiarity with it
 - Failure means the healer doesn't know
 - **Critical Failure** means they get it wrong
- Analyse wounds (what caused them etc)
 - The **Difficulty** should scale with the rarity of the type of creature/weapon or the healers familiarity with it
 - Failure means the healer doesn't know
 - **Critical Failure** means they get it wrong

4.4.4 Mechanical (Wit)

Mechanical skill represents how mechanically minded a character is, allowing them to build, modify, sabotage or disable mechanical devices such as traps or siege weapons. A character can use this skill to:

- Repair broken mechanisms
 - **Difficulty** should be based on the complexity of the machine being worked with
 - Success allows you to get the device working temporarily (for 30 seconds or so)
 - **Critical Success** means the mechanism is fully repaired
 - Failure means that parts will need to be replaced to fix the mechanism
 - **Critical Failure** results in the mechanism being permanently broken
- Disable mechanisms

- **Difficulty** should be based on the complexity of the machine being worked with
- Success allows you to disable the device temporarily (for 30 seconds or so)
- **Critical Success** means the mechanism can be disabled as long as you wish
- Failure means that device remains active
- **Critical Failure** results in the mechanism being triggered
- Pick locks
 - **Difficulty** should be based on the complexity of the lock being worked with
 - Success allows you to open the lock but it is obvious it was picked (scratches, damage etc)
 - **Critical Success** means the picking left no trace
 - Failure means that the lock remains locked
 - **Critical Failure** results in breaking a lock pick

4.4.5 Pilot: X (Cunning)

This skill governs how well the character deals with mounts and/or vehicles of type X. The skill can be used to:

- Stay mounted moving through rough or dangerous terrain (see Section 5.7)
 - **Difficulty** 8 - 12 (rough) and 11 - 16 (dangerous)
 - Frequency of such checks should depend on speed, walking speed makes this unnecessary
 - Over longer distances use multi-stage checks (see 4.2.2)
 - **Critical Failure** means a dismount plus the rider suffering X **Damage Checks**, where X is the number of critical thresholds failed by. These hits have **Power** 0.
- Execute special manoeuvres that might risk being dismounted while moving
 - **Difficulty** should be based on how complex the manoeuvre is (7 is easy, 16 is very very hard)
 - **Critical Success** grants **Edge+** to associated actions
 - Failure results in completing the manoeuvre and falling off
 - **Critical Failure** additionally results in the rider suffering X **Damage Checks**, where X is the number of critical thresholds failed by. These hits have **Power** 0.
- Make ranged weapon attacks while mounted
 - **Difficulty** should be determined by the speed and bumpiness of the motion
 - **Critical Success** grants **Edge+** to **Aim**
 - Failure incurs **Edge-** on **Aim**
 - **Critical Failure**, by X thresholds, results in being dismounted and automatically failing the **Damage Checks** of X projectiles

4.4.6 Slight of hand (Cunning)

This skill is related to the character's dexterity, it covers the ability to perform simple actions quickly without attracting notice. This skill can be used to:

- Perform conjuring tricks
 - Opposed roll against the audience's collective **Wit**
 - Success completes the trick impressively
 - **Critical Success** could allow an additional skill action like picking an audience member's pockets
 - Failure results in the trick being unimpressive
 - **Critical Failure** results in the audience seeing how the trick is being done
- Pick pockets
 - Opposed roll against the victim's **Wit**

- Success acquires one item from pocket
- **Critical Success** allows an extra item to be filched
- Failure results in the character acquiring nothing
- **Critical Failure** results in being detected by the victim
- Take or exchange items unnoticed
 - Opposed roll against highest potential observer's **Wit**
 - **Edge-** is applied if the item is being actively guarded
 - Success completes the task unnoticed
 - **Critical Success** means the theft/replacement won't be noticed for some time
 - Failure results in the character acquiring nothing
 - **Critical Failure** results in being detected

4.4.7 Stealth (Cunning)

Stealth has two functions: to move about unnoticed or to conceal yourself while stationary. Thus, this skill can be used to:

- Move silently without being noticed
 - Opposed roll vs any observers **Awareness** skill
 - Bonuses may be gained by being in cover (see Table 5.3) and **Edge+** is granted by being in shadows
 - Success means you are undetected
 - **Critical Success** grants you **Edge+** on your next **Stealth** check
 - Failure results in potential observers searching for you (you can try hide from them)
 - **Critical Failure** additionally incurs **Edge-** on subsequent hide checks
- Hide and avoid being noticed
 - Opposed roll vs the highest **Awareness** skill of anyone trying to find you
 - Bonuses may be gained by being in cover (see Table 5.3) and **Edge+** is granted by being in shadows
 - Success means you are undetected
 - **Critical Success** grants you **Edge+** on your next **Stealth** check
 - Failure means searchers notice your presence
 - **Critical Failure** results in being noticed (but you don't realise this)

4.4.8 Survival (Cunning)

Survival covers wilderness survival skills, knowing the signs to follow to find water, being able to track animals or people and knowledge of shelter-building.

- Follow tracks
 - Low **Difficulty** for soft ground and distinctive marks, high **Difficulty** in hard ground or in a busy location
 - Success keeps you on the trail, longer trails should be multi-stage checks (see 4.2.2)
 - **Critical Success** means you can rapidly follow the trail
 - Failure means you lose the trail but can try again
 - **Critical Failure** means you lose the trail entirely
- Find water
 - **Difficulty** based on water abundance in area
 - Success means you find a water source
 - Failure means you find nothing
 - With **Critical Failure** you find contaminated water but don't realise this

- Tame a wild creature (or calm a frightened creature)
 - **Difficulty** determined by wildness/fright-level
 - Success calms a creature down
 - **Critical Success** needed to tame a wild creature
 - Failure means the animal stays wary/frightened
 - **Critical Failure** means the animal bolts or attacks (as appropriate)
- Command a tamed creature
 - **Difficulty** ranges from 7 for an action the animal would perform of its own volition, to 18 for something that would be totally opposed to the animal's nature or obviously highly risky for the animal
 - Success means the command will be followed
 - **Critical Success** grants the creature **Edge+** on commanded actions
 - Failure results in refusal to obey
 - **Critical Failure** results in the beast attacking or bolting (as appropriate)

4.5 Social skills

These skills all deal with interpersonal interaction.

4.5.1 Deceive (Cunning)

This is a skill that can be used to lie convincingly, it works in the same way as **Persuade** but relies on the fact that you are persuading the target of something you do not believe is true, or making a bargain that is not what the target believes it to be (selling them a fake or stolen artwork for instance).

4.5.2 Disguise (Cunning)

This skill represents your character's ability to obfuscate their appearance, using carefully chosen clothing, make-up or apparatus like moustaches and wigs. To use the skill you do the following

- Concoct your disguise
- The GM assigns **Edge** \pm as appropriate (based on how well the disguise could work)
- Make a **Disguise** check and record the score
- An observer makes an **Awareness** check against your recorded score
- If they fail they are fooled by the disguise
- If they succeed they are suspicious
- Their **Critical Success** means they see through you immediately

4.5.3 Insight (Resolve)

Is how well a character can read the motives and feelings of others. This skill can be used to:

- Determine someone's motives
 - Opposed roll versus target's **Deceive** skill (if they are deceptive)
 - Otherwise **Difficulty** is decided by how obvious their motives are
 - The amount of detail revealed should scale with the number of critical thresholds the **Difficulty** is exceeded/failed by
- Detect deception
 - Opposed roll versus target's **Deceive** skill
 - Success means you identify if the person is hiding something
 - The amount of detail revealed should scale with the number of critical thresholds the **Difficulty** is exceeded/failed by

4.5.4 Intimidation (Might)

This is a skill that can be used to “persuade” someone via threats, either explicit or implicit.

- In ordinary conversation
 - Formulate your threatening words/actions
 - The GM assigns **Edge**± as appropriate (based on how well this could work)
 - Make your **Intimidation** check opposed to the target’s **Resolve**
 - Success means they are cowed into following your suggestion
 - **Critical Success** means they are too frightened to defy you further
 - Failure means they are annoyed
 - **Critical Failure** means they are now hostile towards your suggestions
- In combat to intimidate enemies (1 action point)
 - Opposed roll versus target’s **Resolve**
 - Success means target suffers **Edge-** on their next action

4.5.5 Leadership (Resolve)

Leadership gauges the character’s ability to inspire others to follow them, or to bring out the best in each of their companions. This skill can only be used on creatures who can understand you. This skill can be used to:

- Make a creature “snap out of it”
 - This negates a condition affecting a target
 - The allowed conditions: **Stagger**, **Stunned**, **Immobilized**, **Knock-Down**.
 - The **Difficulty** is given by 11+ the **Power** of the condition
 - **Critical Success** allows you to use this action again for no action points
- Direct an action
 - Give an order to an ally
 - Make a check with your **Leadership** vs **Difficulty**
 - **Difficulty** determined by the directed action
 - If you succeed, and the ally obeys, the action has **Edge+**
 - **Critical Success** grants an extra **Edge+** per threshold
- Command and be obeyed
 - Issue a single sentence command to a target
 - If you win an opposed check with your **Leadership** vs a chosen target’s **Resolve** they obey the command
 - Target’s cannot be overtly hostile for this to work and must be able to understand the command
 - **Critical Success** grants **Edge+** to the next command to the same target
 - **Critical Failure** means the target has **Edge+** versus further orders
- Restore **Endurance** to others
 - Choose a single ally to inspire
 - Make **Leadership** check against 10 + target’s missing **Endurance**
 - Success restores 1 missing **Endurance**
 - **Critical Success** restores extra **Endurance**.
- Grant a reaction point to an ally
 - Choose a single ally to put on alert
 - Make **Leadership** check against 13 - target’s **Cunning**
 - Success grants the target 1 reaction point for 1 round
 - **Critical Success** allows you to choose an extra ally to benefit from this.

4.5.6 Perform (Resolve)

This skill represents practice and talent in some form of performance, be it poetry, acting, song, or playing music. A character with this skill can perform their art by rolling this score opposed to the **Difficulty** of the performance they are attempting, this **Difficulty** is related directly to the beauty or skill of the performance. If a character seeks to perform with an instrument they have no experience with, they suffer **Edge-** on perform checks with the unknown instrument.

A general guideline would be that an “average-joe” performance has **Difficulty** 8, but no one would pay to watch this.

The amount of audience appreciation/fruit-throwing also scales with the number of critical thresholds the **Difficulty** is exceeded/failed by.

4.5.7 Persuade (Resolve)

This is a skill that can be used to weedle favours out of people, convince them of your trustworthiness (or some other fact), and for bargaining and bartering. This skill cannot be used to convince a person of something that is untrue (you can't lie while using it) and also cannot involve either explicit or implicit threats.

- In ordinary conversation
 - Formulate your persuasive words and/or actions
 - The GM assigns **Edge** \pm as appropriate (based on how well this could work)
 - Make your **Persuade** check opposed to the target's **Wit**
 - Success means they are convinced
 - **Critical Success** means they also regard you trustingly
 - Failure means they are dubious
 - **Critical Failure** means they are now suspicious of your intentions

4.6 Knowledge skills

All of these skills follow a similar template.

4.6.1 Knowledge (Wit)

This represents the character's knowledge about a given subject area. It can be used to:

- Recall information
 - **Difficulty** given by how obscure the subject is
 - Degree of success determines how much is remembered
 - **Critical Failure** can result in incorrect remembering
- Identify objects and properties
 - **Difficulty** given by how obscure the subject is
 - Degree of success determines how much is remembered
 - **Critical Failure** can result in incorrect identification

Chapter 5

Combat

Combat is divided into rounds, each combatant has a chance to act during each round. This chapter covers all the factors that influence combat and detail the normal actions that may be performed during the fighting.

5.1 Combat structure

Combat is typically a battle between two opposed sides. Both sides will declare actions/intentions first. After this, which side acts first will be determined and then that side's actions are all resolved at the same time.

5.1.1 Start of combat

When fighting breaks out all participants must decide which (if any) of their available weapons they immediately reach for.

5.1.2 Action points

Action points are the basic currency of combat, each combatant has two available per round. Most actions cost 1 point, however, some cost 2 points or more. A cost of 3 or more indicates that it takes more than 1 round to finish the action.

Losing action points

Some effects cause a creature to lose action points. Note that this is **always** to a minimum of 1 and applies on/from the victim's **next** turn, as during action resolution they have spent their points already.

5.1.3 Reaction points

These are similar to action points. However, they control the number of actions you can make in response to certain circumstances. A character has 1 reaction point each round.

Losing reaction points

If an effect reduces a character to negative reaction points, i.e. $-X$, they lose the next X points they would normally gain.

5.1.4 Action declaration

At the beginning of a combat round each fighter declares what action they intend to make this round (go clockwise from the GM for instance). A fighter may not declare actions in response to other declarations (as this information exists only within the mind of each fighter). Once all fighters have declared their intended actions, the combat moves on to initiative and action resolution. Fighters must spend action points to declare their actions. Reactions do not need to be declared at this stage, they can freely interrupt the order of combat.

Changing actions

Any character can spend a reaction point (before their actions are resolved) to change their actions from what they had previously declared.

5.1.5 Initiative

Each side rolls a single 1d6, the higher score has the initiative and will have their actions resolve first. In the case of a tie, simply resolve everything at once.

5.1.6 Action resolution

For the side with the initiative, each fighter gets a chance to make their declared actions (these all happen at the same time), followed by all the fighters on the other side. If some of the fighter's actions could benefit their team if successful (e.g. knocking a target to the ground or disarming them), these should be resolved first during their team's turn.

5.1.7 A round of combat

A round of combat is complete once all actions are resolved.

5.2 Combat statistics

These are the statistics that govern your combat prowess, all can receive bonuses independently of their parent statistic:

5.2.1 Power

This is the power of a strike or shot and therefore affects its chances of breaching a target's armour. **Power** is the character's **Might** plus a bonus or penalty conferred by the weapon or ability being used.

5.2.2 Deflect

This reflects reaction time and ability to mitigate incoming blows, allowing a character to deflect or dodge attacks made against them. The value is given by their **Cunning** score, but can be modified in various ways. For instance, **Deflect** can be reduced by wearing cumbersome armour or raised by using a shield.

5.2.3 Aim

This reflects the ability to successfully penetrate a foe's defences and land telling blows. **Aim** is given by the character's **Wit** score plus any bonuses/penalties from their equipped weapon.

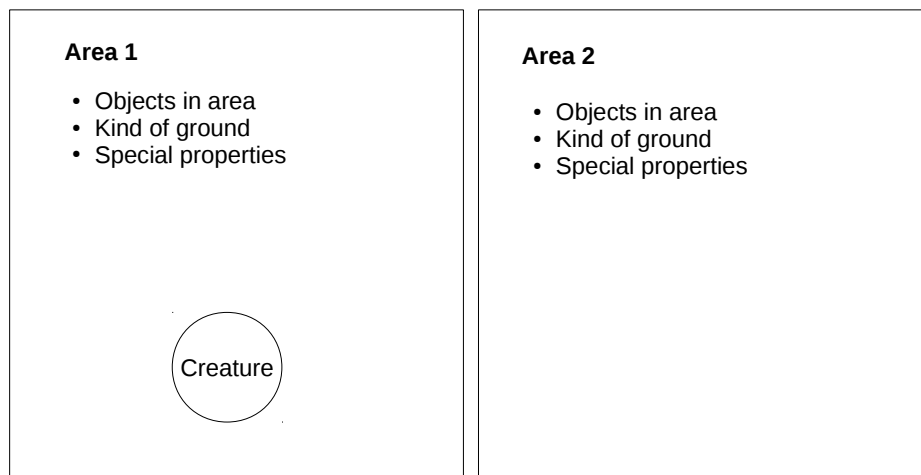
5.2.4 Toughness

Reflects the character's resistance to physical harm. Characters have a base **Toughness** of 8, this score is increased by the armour they wear.

5.2.5 Endurance

This represents the character's ability to take a beating and keep fighting. A character has 2 + **Resolve** points of **Endurance**, these are used to absorb damage without suffering serious injury. Think about **Endurance** loss as representing taking bruising or minor cuts. Once this is depleted the character is tired and can no longer avoid suffering more direct hits from attacks.

5.3 The basics of combat



5.3.1 Combat areas

In the diagram above we can see a basic schematic of a battle scenario, you can make these out of cardboard for your own games. It consists of two areas, here just called 1 and 2. Each area will obviously have a more descriptive name in an actual fight, and have actual properties detailed on it. The type of terrain should be noted so that players know how hard it is to move around the fight, and whether there are objects or circumstances they can take advantage of (like boulders they push down a hill, or a river they can knock enemies into). Creature tokens can be used to represent which players or enemies are currently in which area. Leaving a combat area that contains enemies results in a **Moment Of Weakness** (see Section 5.10.4).

5.3.2 Distances and radii

In this system you measure a distance as the number of area boundaries crossed. So from one area to its neighbour is a distance of 1 (around 15 m). To determine if an enemy is in range of a shooting attack you must count how many area borders the projectile must cross and compare it to the weapon range.

A radius of 1 would cover a single area and ALL neighbouring areas. An effect that is called *Adjacent*, or radius 0, applies to a single combat area, which has a radius of ~ 5 m. See Table 5.1 for more details about a default system for distance conversions. You can, of course, adjust the distance scale when considering things like spaceship battles etc. The area system means the mechanics can remain the same regardless of the chosen distance scale.

Area distance	True distance
0	< 5 m
1	15 m
2	25 m
3	35 m

Table 5.1: Example distance conversions for combat between individual fighters. The distance from one combat area to another is 5 m (radius 0) plus 10 m per area boundary crossed.

5.3.3 Movement

Most creatures may transfer between combat areas that share a boundary unless otherwise noted or modified by terrain. Movement actions cost 1 action point if the character wishes to change combat area. Normal movement in this manner is thus said to have a range of 1.

5.3.4 Attacks

Attack-type actions represent making attempts to injure an enemy, they come in two varieties: ranged attacks, which are made with bows, guns, etc., and close-combat attacks which are made with swords, fists, etc. Successful attacks represent breaking through the target's guard and thus grant an opportunity to inflict damage (more on this later). Declaring an attack costs 1 action point. During resolution the attacker and their target make

an **Opposed Roll** with **Aim** and **Deflect** respectively. If the attacker wins, then they get the opportunity to roll **Damage Checks** with the weapons they currently wield. A character can only make one attack-type action per turn. If an attacker is not **Proficient** with their weapon, they have **Edge-** on **Aim**.

Penetrating hits

If an attacker wins their **Opposed Roll** of **Aim** vs **Deflect** by 4 or more, then they have achieved a **Penetrating Hit**. This allows associated **Damage Checks** to gain one **Edge+** per **Critical Success** threshold.

Close-combat

A character can make close-combat attacks against any creature within the same combat area as they are (range 0).

Ranged

A character armed with a ranged weapon can often attack enemies that are in different combat areas to itself. How far it is allowed to do so is defined by the weapon's range score. A range of 1 would allow shots to be fired at a target in any adjacent area to that of the firer. To determine the required range to a target, simply draw a straight line between it and the shooter then count the number of area boundaries it passes over.

These weapons are divided into two types: shooting and throwing. Throwing a weapon/object without the **Throw** property incurs **Edge-** on **Aim**. Firing a shooting weapon at a target within range 0 incurs a similar penalty.

All-out attack

The character channels all their energy into aggression. This attack action can be made with any weapon that has no **Reload** rule, it costs 2 action points but grants **Burst + 1** to the attack (for one of the character's weapons if attacking with two).

Unarmed attacks

A character can attack their opponents with fists and feet, or other appendages. Unarmed characters may make a single punch/kick for 1 action point, this fighting style has its own weapon proficiency.

Multiple weapons

If the character is using a weapon in each hand, they may attack with both for 1 action point. Only one **Opposed Roll** of **Deflect** vs **Aim** is made, but, each weapon gets a separate **Damage Check**. If the character wishes to divide their attack between opponents then make separate **Deflect** vs **Aim** checks for each target.

Character's without certain **Perks** (**Two-Weapon Mastery Perk**) suffer **Edge-** on **Aim** when attacking with two weapons at once. If either weapon has a **Reload** rule, the reload time is increased by 1 action point. Finally, a character with **Two-Weapon Fighting Proficiency** may swap two weapons at once for a single action point.

5.3.5 Damage checks

This represents whether or not a telling blow penetrates your target's armour.

This is a **Difficulty Check** with your **Power** against the victim's **Toughness**. If not **Proficient** with their equipped weapon, the character suffers **Edge-** on these checks. If the check succeeds then the victim loses **Endurance**. How many points are lost depends on the **Lethality** of the attack (see table 5.2). Once a character has no **Endurance** left (minimum is 0), further damage is accumulated as actual injuries which are tracked via **Wound** effects. If a character would be reduced to negative **Endurance**, the lost points beyond zero are converted to wounds (i.e. -1 to **Wounded** or -2 to **Badly-Wounded** following table 5.2).

If a **Wounded** character has their **Endurance** restored to values > 0 there is no effect on their **Wounds**, the latter can only be remedied by the **Healing Skill** or time.

Critical hits

If a character succeeds on a **Damage Check** by 4 or more, the attack's **Lethality** is upgraded by 1 level per 4 they exceeded it by.

Table 5.2: Lethality table

Lethality	Endurance loss	Wound
Normal	1	Wounded
Crushing	2	Badly Wounded
Devastating	3	Mortally Wounded
Vorpal	5	Instant death

Wounded

This represents a moderately serious flesh-wound and inflicts **Staggered** on the victim (see 5.12) until healed.

A character who receives two **Wounded** effects replaces them with a **Badly-Wounded** effect.

Badly wounded

If a character suffers a successful **Damage Check** from a weapon with **Crushing Lethality**, or accumulates two **Wounded** effects, they become **Badly-Wounded**. This results in **Edge-** on all rolls until remedied.

A man-sized character subject to further damage when **Badly-Wounded** becomes **Mortally Wounded**.

Mortally wounded

If a character suffers a successful **Damage Check** from a weapon with **Devastating Lethality**, or accumulates enough **Wounded** effects, they are **Mortally-Wounded**. Such a character cannot make actions and will die in three days unless they receive some medical attention. This status can only be removed by active healing. If a **Mortally Wounded** character is healed, change this effect to **Badly Wounded**.

If a **Mortally Wounded** creature dies if it suffers any damage. If your character dies then you need to make a new one.

5.3.6 Armour

Armour provides protection bonuses in the form of additional **Toughness**. A character's total is 8 plus armour bonuses. However, protection comes at a price and weighty armour makes certain tasks more difficult, like dodging, climbing, and swimming.

Light armour

This does not have adverse effects on the wearer, as it is light and flexible.

Medium armour

Medium Armour applies **Edge-** to **Athletics** and **Stealth**.

Heavy armour

Heavy Armour applies **Edge-** to **Athletics**, **Stealth**, and **Deflect**. Characters in **Heavy Armour** also have to spend an extra action point to stand up after being **Knocked Down**.

5.4 Other actions in combat

5.4.1 Anticipate

A fighter can try and predict their opponent's next move. This costs 1 action point but grants the character a bonus reaction point that lasts until the next round ends.

5.4.2 Change weapon

To swap a currently held weapon a character must spend 1 action point. To swap two wielded weapons it thus costs 2 action points.

5.4.3 Defensive stance

This costs 1 action point. The character gains **Edge+** to **Deflect** the next attack made against them.

5.4.4 Disarm

Even the mightiest warrior can be flummoxed by the loss of their precious sword. This modifies an attack action: replace a **Damage Check** with an **Opposed Roll** between yourself and the target using **Wit**. Should you win, the target cannot use their current weapon without either spending 1 action point or suffering a **Moment Of Weakness** to retrieve it. Weapons with the **Disarm** rule cause damage on a **Critical Success**.

5.4.5 Feint

A feint costs one action point and requires an **Opposed Roll** between yourself and the target using **Cunning**. Success allows you **Edge+** to **Aim** this round, while **Critical Failure** results in a **Moment Of Weakness**. This has no effect with ranged weapons unless otherwise modified.

5.4.6 Grapple

You can attempt to wrestle your foe into an immobile state at the cost of 1 action point (provided you have at least one free hand). You and your target make an **Opposed Roll** with **Might**. If you win, the target is now **Grappled**. However, if you score a **Critical Failure**, you suffer a **Moment Of Weakness**. A **Critical Success** makes your target lose 1 action point in the next round. It costs 1 action point each round after the first to maintain a grapple.

Grappled creatures cannot make any movement actions until they break free of the **Grapple**, this costs 1 action point and requires that they win a **Might**-based **Opposed Roll** with the grappler. If they are forced to move by some external effect then the grapple breaks automatically. All participants have **Edge-** on **Aim**, unless using **Small** or natural weapons.

5.4.7 Prepared actions

A **Prepared Action** is one that the character does not wish to make immediately. Instead, they specify the actions they wish to make and spend action points as normal. In addition, they must specify a condition to trigger the prepared actions. Such as: they will make their actions in response to a specific action made by an enemy, or to an environmental event, like a wall collapsing. Having specified their prepared actions, the character then waits and executes the prepared action when the condition is met (at a cost of 1 reaction point). If the condition is not met by beginning of the next action declaration, then the prepared action is not performed and the fighter may act as normal.

5.4.8 Run

A character can run, at a cost of 2 action points, they then add 1 to their movement range and gain **Edge+** on **Deflect** until the round ends.

5.4.9 Retreat

At a cost of two action points the character can make a normal move, while leaving an area occupied by enemies, and not suffer a **Moment Of Weakness**.

5.4.10 Shove

This costs 1 action point and involves an **Opposed Roll** between yourself and the target using **Might**. If the shover is successful, the target is either knocked down or moved into an adjacent combat area (at the shover's discretion). **Critical Failure** results in the shoving character experiencing a **Moment Of Weakness**. **Critical Success** results in the victim suffering a **Damage Check**.

5.4.11 Trip

Attempt to entangle your foe's legs with your weapon's haft, or pointy bit built for tripping. This modifies an attack action: replace a **Damage Check** with an **Opposed Roll** between yourself and the target using **Cunning**. Should you win, the target is **Knocked Down** (see Section 5.12). Weapons with the **Trip** rule cause damage on a **Critical Success**.

5.5 Reactions in combat

These are the default reactions available to all combatants. Numerous additional reactions can be acquired by buying **Perks**.

5.5.1 Desperate effort

This costs 1 reaction point and can be used when the character fails an **Aim**, **Deflect**, or **Power** check. This allows the character to re-roll the check, they must accept the result of this re-roll. This cannot be used if the character has any **Edge** bonuses on the roll.

5.5.2 Exploit weakness

This costs 1 reaction point and can be used when an enemy within range 0 experiences a **Moment Of Weakness** (see Section 5.10.4). This allows the character to make a single close combat **Damage Check** against the enemy. This reaction can only be used once for a single **Moment Of Weakness**.

5.6 Recovery and healing

Endurance is recovered completely if the character can rest for 8 hours. Otherwise, a short rest of around an hour restores 1 **Endurance**.

A character that has suffered wounds can be healed via use of the **Healing Skill** or by a non-player healer. Without healing, a character recovers from the **Wounded** effect after 3 days. It takes 6 days before the **Badly-Wounded** effect is reduced to **Wounded**.

5.7 Combat areas - terrain

5.7.1 Open terrain

Grass, sand, tiles, gentle slopes or terrain that offers otherwise firm-footing is open terrain. This confers no bonuses or penalties to movement over it.

5.7.2 Rough terrain

This includes: loose rocks, tree roots, rubble, tables and chairs, obstructions of about knee or waist height, and surfaces that are unstable/moving/irregular. Moving through **Rough Terrain** costs 1 action point more than normal.

For characters riding or driving, moving in **Rough Terrain** requires a ride/drive check versus a **Difficulty** (chosen by the GM) between 8 and 12 (depending on how rough the terrain is) to avoid being unseated or losing control.

5.7.3 Dangerous terrain

Marsh-land, fast-flowing water, quicksand, thin ice, brittle rock, pools of acid or hot mud; these sorts of things are **Dangerous Terrain**. Any character entering, occupying, or moving through this terrain takes a hit with **Crushing Lethality** that causes damage on a 9+ regardless of **Toughness**. **Rough Terrain** movement restrictions apply here as well.

For characters riding or driving, **Dangerous Terrain** requires a riding/driving check versus a **Difficulty** (chosen by the GM) between 11 and 16 to avoid being unseated.

5.8 Combat areas - cover

If a combat zone offers cover then any creature within the zone may claim a bonus to **Deflect**. Cover is divided into three categories and examples will be given below.

5.8.1 Soft cover

Good examples of soft cover are: small trees, bushes, wooden crates, soft furnishings and other such items that provide little protection but may conceal you from your enemies, and so, grant **Edge**+ on any rolls to hide in them. Objects that provide soft cover can be broken with a **Might/Power** check against **Difficulty** 6-9.

Table 5.3: Cover table

Cover type	Deflect bonus	Hide bonus
Soft	-	Edge+
Medium	Edge+	Edge+
Heavy	Edge++	Edge+

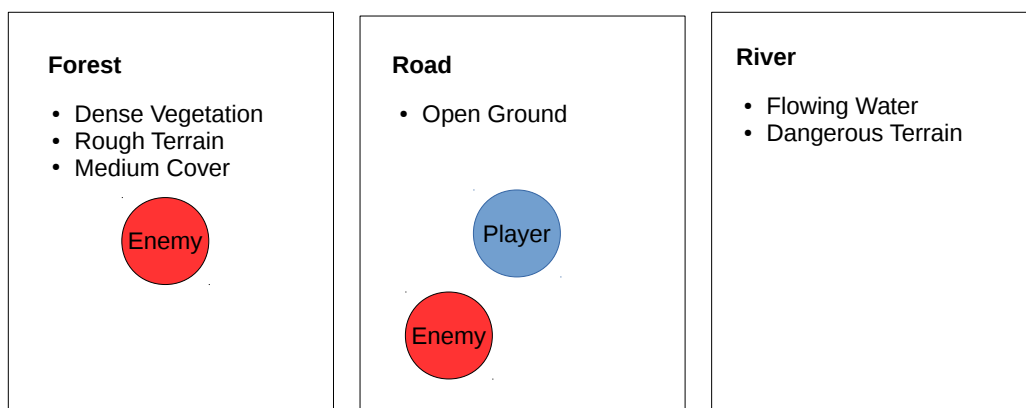
5.8.2 Medium cover

Sandbags, hedges, low walls, small rocks, solid furniture. These kind of things provide a moderate amount of protection and concealment from enemies and **Edge+** to rolls to hide in the cover. Objects that provide medium cover can be broken with a **Might/Power** check against **Difficulty** 9-13.

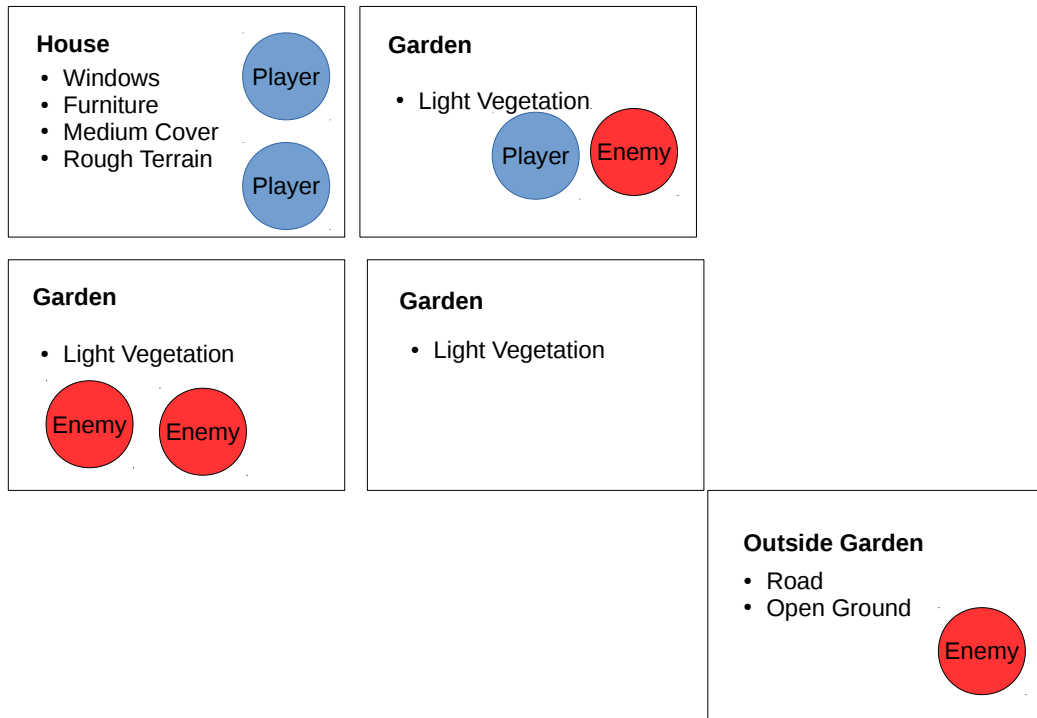
5.8.3 Heavy cover

Battlements, Large walls, trees, big rocks, barricades, serious furniture (made of stone or steel). These things are built to provide a lot of cover and protection and also grant **Edge+** to rolls to hide in the cover. Objects that provide heavy cover can be broken with a **Might/Power** check against **Difficulty** 13-20.

5.9 Combat areas - examples



In our first example we see a fight with three combat areas. We can see it also has three participants, one player character and two enemies attacking them. The first area is the forest, which is **Rough Terrain** and provides medium cover. The road is open ground that confers no effects. Finally there is a river which is fast-flowing and thus **Dangerous Terrain**. We can see that in the road the player and enemy will be able to attack each other with any weapons. While the baddy hiding in the forest will be able to claim a cover bonus but will need a range 1 weapon to strike at the player.



Our second example has a far more complex layout consisting of 5 areas. One is a house occupied by two player characters. The house provides medium cover to its occupants and they can attack out of the windows. Additionally, because it is a good defensive position it is labelled **Rough Terrain**, so enemies have difficulty moving into/through it. The garden has no special effect on combat and neither does the distant road. The players in the house will need range 1 weapons to hit the foes in the garden and range 2 to target the one out on the road. The player and enemy within one garden block can engage in either close-combat or fire ranged weapons at each other.

5.10 Situational modifiers

5.10.1 Light and darkness

The lighting of an environment greatly influences the difficulty of fighting within it. There are three types of lighting: **Full**, **Low**, **Dark**. **Full** lighting has no effect, **Low** incurs **Edge-** on **Aim** and **Awareness**, and **Dark** means the character cannot see at all outside of 5 m (radius 0) and also incurs **Low** light penalties.

5.10.2 Sneak attacks

A target that does not know of your presence, aggressive intent, or is otherwise fully engaged in combat with someone else (the target must have been unaware of your combat participation, if not your presence) is vulnerable to **Sneak Attacks**.

The victim of a **Sneak Attack** has **Edge--** on **Deflect**. Such attacks gain **Edge+** to **Damage Checks** when made with **Small** weapons, such as daggers, or with specialist tools, such as garrotte wire. Multiple **Perks** can improve **Sneak Attacks**. **Small** weapon bonuses are lost on **Huge Creatures** or larger targets.

5.10.3 Rage

Many cultures hold that great warriors are capable of being consumed by a battle rage. In such condition a warrior is legendarily hard to stop, they can suffer wounds that would kill a normal man and still continue to fight with unbridled savagery. However, this rage makes them reckless, hurling themselves heedlessly into the enemies' ranks.

The mechanics below detail how this berserker fury affects characters and how they can initiate such a state.

Becoming enraged

A character becomes **Enraged** if under extreme emotional strain while fighting, although particularly volatile personalities may become **Enraged** more easily. Otherwise a character with the **Berserker Perk** can **Enrage** in the heat of battle.

When enraged

An enraged character is immune to **Fear** and **Terror** effects and seeks to enter close combat with the nearest enemy at all times and cannot take prisoners, they go only for the kill. If wielding a firearm-type weapon, they may fire it at range (while moving as required). Enraged characters have **Edge-** on **Deflect** and but **Edge+** on **Damage Checks**.

5.10.4 Moment of weakness

These are moments when an opponent opens their guard or shows vulnerability, allowing an attacker to strike unhindered. A creature subject to a **Moment Of Weakness** is open to being targeted by the **Exploit Weakness** reaction 5.5.2.

5.10.5 Resisting effects

Some attacks/powers have special effects. These should always be mitigated via **Resist**. This involves an **Opposed Roll** between the **Power** of the effect and most appropriate choice from the victim's attributes. For instance, resisting poison might use **Resolve**, whereas avoiding being hypnotised would require **Wit**.

5.11 Enemies and monsters

Enemies come in several categories, ranked according to their defining characteristics.

5.11.1 Mundane enemies

These are generally creatures of humanoid or smaller size, this category is largely composed of humanoid soldiers, wolves or similar beasts.

Abilities and attributes

Mundane enemies have no **Heroism/villainy**, they can have **Aim** bonuses ranging from -1 to +1, -1 being an inexperienced impromptu fighter and +1 being a well trained soldier. Such foes are likely to have zeros for most attributes, although the more experienced combatants may have one attribute at level 1.

Tactics

These enemies are followers, they need to be lead. Without a leader to direct them, they are likely to be easily demoralised by powerful opponents or to simply attack the enemy they feel is the most threatening. Such behaviour is over-ridden in the presence of a leader. Mundane enemies suffer the **Panic** effect (see section 5.12) if they run out of **Endurance** or suffer a wound effect. Enemies who believe in their cause, or are mindless, have immunity to this. When being lead, a mundane creature may use its leader's leadership score to make **Panic** checks.

5.11.2 Elite enemies

These are generally creatures who are extremely proficient combatants or are enhanced by some magical or technological power.

Abilities and attributes

Such fighters are likely to have above average attributes, e.g. two at level 1, with **Aim** of at least +1. Elite enemies do not have any heroic attributes but may have multiple combat proficiencies.

Tactics

Such enemies are independent, they do not need to be lead, but are more effective with a leader to direct them. These foes are unlikely to be easily demoralised or intimidated by powerful opposition and will coordinate and work together to defeat stronger opponents. Elites still suffer the **Panic** effect (see section 5.12) if they run out of **Endurance** or suffer a wound effect. Enemies who believe in their cause, or are **Mindless**, have immunity to this. When being lead, an elite creature may use its leader's leadership score to make **Panic** checks.

5.11.3 Enemy leaders

These are generally creatures who are proficient combatants but are also skilled at directing the actions of underlings.

Abilities and attributes

Leader enemies are similar to elites in attributes but also have leadership proficiency.

Tactics

Such enemies co-ordinate their allies, using their leadership skill to enhance their fighting prowess and allowing lesser allies to adopt more sophisticated tactics. Leaders will attempt to avoid combat unless they are heavily reinforced. In other regards they behave similarly to elite enemies.

5.11.4 Heroic enemies

These enemies are powerful heroes, much like the player-characters, except that they oppose the heroes for whatever reason that the GM decides should motivate them.

Abilities and attributes

These enemies are individually as capable and powerful as player characters, sometimes more-so, and thus follow the same rules for heroic attributes and determining combat statistic scores. Heroic foes have attributes generated in a similar manner to players, although the Game Master may decide to give them more, or less, attribute points.

Tactics

Such enemies are leaders, they direct lesser foes in ways that will maximise their own advantage within a fight, they will also use their heroic attributes to the maximum possible effect. The presence of such enemies inspires and emboldens lesser enemies, making them less susceptible to intimidation and fear. Heroic enemies may surrender if they are severely injured or near death but are more likely to try and escape.

5.11.5 Monsters

These are enemies that are usually at least **Large Creatures** and often **Huge** or **Titanic Creatures** (see Section 5.12). However, enemies that possess incredible supernatural powers or extreme natural abilities might fall into this field as well.

Abilities and attributes

Such creatures have access to unique abilities or methods of fighting that might not need to depend on heroic attributes, monsters generally have low **Aim** bonuses, as many monsters are large and have trouble making rapid manoeuvres. However, they have immense strength and aggression, larger creatures having high **Power** to represent this. They may also possess heroic attributes, but this is not needed, they are quite often mighty enough as it is.

Tactics

These enemies are hugely dangerous and will simply exploit the powers, size or strengths that make them monsters in order to win. They attack enemies that seem the easiest prey, or those that otherwise attract their attention, unless they have the opportunity to get more than one foe at once. Some monsters may be extremely stupid, this limited intelligence can be exploited by players to distract or confuse such foes, such monsters may need a handler to direct them and counteract their innate lack of quick wits. Monsters do not know the meaning of surrender or fear.

5.12 Universal special rules

This is a collection of special rules that apply in all campaign settings and always mean the same thing regardless of context.

5.12.1 Conditions

These are negative statuses that a character can become subject to.

Bleeding

This state represents severe bleeding. It lasts 2 rounds, each round the victim must make an opposed check: their **Resolve** against the **Power** of the effect. Their failure results in the loss of 1 **Endurance** (this does not scale with levels of **Critical Failure**).

Blind

A *Blind* creature has **Edge--** on both **Aim** and **Deflect** for the effect's duration. In addition, it must randomise direction if it wishes to move.

Cursed

A *Cursed* creature is afflicted by a malignant magical effect sapping its luck and increasing the chance of misfortune. **Critical Success** on any roll is reduced by 1 level. **Curse** lasts until removed.

Fear

If a character is afflicted by this effect they must make a **Resolve** check against a **Difficulty**, chosen by the GM, based on how scary the situation is. Should the character fail, they suffer **Edge-** on **Aim**, each subsequent turn the character may try to pass the check again.

Immobilised

An *Immobilised* creature cannot move, either due to some magical malaise or due to having suffered damage to its legs. In addition, they suffer **Edge-** on **Deflect**.

Knocked down

A creature that is *Knocked Down* loses its footing and falls over. Such a creature has **Edge-** on **Deflect** until it can stand up. Standing up can be done only in your own turn. This costs 1 action point. Characters in **Heavy Armour** must spend 2 action points.

Panic

A non-hero creature may *Panic* if it suffers considerable injury. If an elite or mundane enemy runs out of **Endurance**, or receives a **Wound** effect, it must make a **Resolve** check vs **Difficulty** 13. Should it fail, it flees or surrenders. In general, intelligent creatures will surrender, but this is up to the Game Master's choice. Note that the presence of a commander or leader will prevent weaker creature from giving up so easily. In this case the creature may add its leader's **Resolve** to **Panic** checks.

Poisoned

Poisoned is a state that results from harmful chemicals being introduced into the victim's system. A poisoned attack that injures a creature, poisons that creature if it fails a **Resolve** check versus a **Difficulty** associated with the virulence of the poison and the size of the dose. A **Poisoned** character has one fewer action point in combat (to a minimum of 1) for 3 days or until cured of the poison.

Staggered

The shock of injury is a difficult thing to ignore and can incapacitate even the most hardened fighters. A **Staggered** creature loses 1 reaction point. If this reduces a character to negative points, i.e. $-X$, they lose the next X points they would normally gain.

Stunned

The sudden shock of a well-placed blow can often neutralise retaliation. If a *Stunned* creature attempts to make attacks in its next turn these cost 1 more action point than normal.

Terror

If a character is afflicted by this effect they must make a **Resolve** check against a **Difficulty**, chosen by the GM, based on how scary the situation is. Should the character fail, they must spend each turn cowering in fear. Each subsequent turn the character may try to pass the check again.

Vulnerable

A powerful blow can sometimes open up a fighter to being easily finished off. The next attack directed at the victim benefits from **Edge+** to **Damage Checks**.

5.12.2 Additional weapon effects

Burst X

(X is an integer) *Burst* represents attacks that explode, spray, splash, or carve into a wide area of flesh. An attack with **Burst X** causes $1 + X$ **Damage Checks** on a successful hit, rather than just one.

Cleave X

(X is an integer) An attack with *Cleave* is one that can sweep in great arcs, cutting through many hapless foes with each swing. Such an attack may target up to X enemies at once. The attacker rolls once with their **Aim** and each defender rolls with their **Deflect**.

Cumbersome

Weapons with this rule are either massively heavy or just awkward to manoeuvre. They cost an extra action point to make attacks with.

Penetration X

(X is an integer) A weapon with *Penetration* is designed to deal with heavily armoured opponents, sliding into weak-points or just inflicting blunt trauma through armour. Attacks from this weapon count the target's **Toughness** as reduced by X, but cannot reduce it below 12 in this way.

Reach

Reach represents the ability of close-combat weapons, like pikes, to attack from a longer distance. A character with a **Reach** weapon can make close combat attacks at range 1.

Rending X

(X is an integer) A well-placed blow from a *Rending* weapon rips deep into the target. **Penetrating** hits from **Rending** weapons benefit from $+X$ **Power**.

Small

Small weapons represent dagger-sized implements. These can be used with great speed and easily concealed. Thus, they gain **Edge+** when used as part of **Slight Of Hand** checks. These weapons also receive additional bonuses during **Sneak Attacks** (see Section 5.10).

Throw

Weapons with the **Throw** rule are finely balanced for use as projectiles. Thus, weapons without this rule confer **Edge-** to **Aim** when thrown.

5.12.3 Creature-type rules

Large creature

A creature is declared large if it exceeds 3 m in the main dimension (height, length, width depending on creature geometry). Thus, such creatures can only hide in medium or better cover but gain **Cleave 2** on all close-combat attacks. A **Large Creature** has an innate bonus of +1 **Power**. Such a creature has at least 4 **Endurance** points.

Huge creature

Such vast beasts barely notice the damage inflicted by even the largest weapons a man can wield. In consequence they have at least 6 **Endurance** points. Their colossal might means that these creatures also have **Cleave 3** on all close-combat attacks. **Huge Creatures** have an innate bonus of +2 **Power** and the size threshold to be declared huge is a requirement of least 6 m in the main dimension (height, length, or width depending on monster geometry).

Titanic creature

These behemoths are all but inured to the attacks of normal weaponry. In consequence they have at least 8 **Endurance** points. **Titanic Creatures** have **Cleave 4** on all close-combat attacks and **Edge+** on **Damage Checks** against smaller targets. **Titanic Creatures** have an innate bonus of +3 **Power** and the size threshold to be declared titanic is a requirement of least 12 m in the main dimension (height, length, or width depending on monster geometry). Such beasts have range 1 on their close-combat attacks.

Small creature

Diminutive creatures are easily missed, even by the most vigilant of larger things. Consequently they get + 1 **Deflect**.

Mindless

Mindless creatures have no thoughts, emotions, fear or creativity. Because of this, **Mindless** creatures are immune to many occult powers, as well as the **Fear**, **Terror**, and **Panic** effects. These creatures cannot use any advanced combat rules (no **Flanking**, **Sneak Attacks** etc.) apart from **Grapple** and **Shove**. Mindless creatures are destroyed when they run out of **Endurance**.

Chapter 6

Perks

These are skills and talents learned or gained by a hero through the course of their adventures. They can be purchased through the expenditure of experience points with their cost given in square brackets. Note that upgrades change their parent **Perk**, they do not occupy a new **Perk** slot.

6.1 Proficiencies

These do **not** occupy equipment slots for passive or active **Perks**, their benefits are always available.

6.1.1 Heavy armour [3]

The character has experience moving and fighting in **Heavy Armour**. Thus, they no longer experience **Edge-** on **Deflect** when wearing it.

6.1.2 Hero/Villain [0]

(Requires **Reputation** level 5) The character has become famous, their praise is much sung, or vile deeds whispered of, in local taverns. The character may increase one **Natural Attribute** by 1 point.

6.1.3 Instrument proficiency: X [2]

(Where X is a musical instrument type) The character has learned to play a chosen type of musical instrument (X) and no longer suffers the unknown-instrument penalties when playing this type of instrument.

6.1.4 Language: X [2]

(X is a language) The character has complete fluency in the chosen language.

6.1.5 Skill mastery: X [6]

(Requires **Skill Proficiency: X**) The character has achieved mastery of their art. Any check for the mastered skill X benefits from **Edge+**.

6.1.6 Skill proficiency: X [2]

(Where X is a skill) The character is **Proficient** with skill X, see Section 4.1 for details. This increases its cost by 1 each time a character takes it.

6.1.7 Two-weapon fighting [2]

The character may swap two weapons at once for a single action point.

6.1.8 Weapon proficiency: X [2]

The character is **Proficient** in the class of weapons X. Classes should be chosen on similarity of use, e.g. for a medieval setting: swords, bows, daggers, blunt, axes, crossbows, firearms, and pole-arms. One type that is always available is unarmed. If not **Proficient** with a given weapon, the user suffers **Edge-** on **Aim** and **Damage Checks**.

6.2 Defence

These **Perks** are oriented towards surviving damage in combat. They must occupy an equipment slot for active/passive **Perks** to be usable.

6.2.1 Evasive [3]

Passive Perk. It's hard to pin you down. This grants the character + 1 **Deflect** provided they wear **Light Armour** or are unarmoured.

6.2.2 Fighting retreat [2]

Passive Perk. You are categorically not running away. The retreat action now costs only a single action point.

Upgrade: Rear-guard action [3]

(Requires **Fighting Retreat**) And neither are your friends. The benefits of **Fighting Retreat** also apply to all allies adjacent to your character at a cost of 1 reaction point.

6.2.3 Hardy [4]

Passive Perk. **Hardy** characters are mighty and indefatigable, they have an extra point of **Endurance**.

6.2.4 Indomitable [3]

Passive Perk. Don't tell me what to do. This allows the character **Edge+** on **Resist** checks against effects that would inflict **Staggered**, **Stunned**, **Immobilised**, or **Knocked-Down**.

Upgrade: Juggernaut [3]

(Requires **Indomitable**). Now they are just making you angry. This grants a free movement action after successfully passing a check against an effect that would inflict **Stunned**, **Immobilised**, or **Knocked-Down**. This movement cannot trigger a **Moment Of Weakness**.

6.2.5 Interdiction [3]

Active Perk. The character can spend a reaction point when an adjacent ally is hit with an attack, causing the **Damage Checks** to be resolved against themselves instead.

6.2.6 Reactive defence [4]

Active Perk. The character can spend a reaction point to gain the effect of **Defensive Fighting** when they are targeted by an attack.

6.2.7 Set to defend [3]

Passive Perk. When the character uses **Defensive Stance**, they have **Edge+** on **Deflect** for the next 2 attacks.

6.2.8 Sixth sense [2]

Passive Perk. The character is so sharp they can evade even unseen attacks at the very last minute. This allows the character to only suffer **Edge-** on **Deflect** against **Sneak Attacks**.

6.2.9 True grit [4]

Active Perk. Pain is just information. When the character is reduced to 0 **Endurance** they can spend a reaction point to regain 1 **Endurance**.

6.2.10 Your mother was a hamster [3]

Passive Perk. The character has great knowledge of insults and is a master of taunting jibes. The character has **Edge+** on **Resolve** checks intended to taunt or provoke a target into attacking them.

6.3 Offence

These **Perks** are oriented towards dealing damage in combat. They must occupy an equipment slot for active/passive **Perks** to be usable.

6.3.1 Adrenaline rush [3]

Active Perk. A surge of adrenaline can grant a fighter great power in times of danger. If the character loses **Endurance** to a **Damage Check**, they can spend a reaction point to gain **Edge+** to their next **Damage Check**.

Upgrade: Savage reprisal [3]

(Requires **Adrenaline Rush**) Whenever the character triggers **Adrenaline Rush** they may make a single, free, close-combat **Damage Check** against their assailant (provided it is within reach). This attack may also claim the benefit of the bonus granted by **Adrenaline Rush**.

6.3.2 Aimed shot [5]

Active Perk. This costs two action points and allows the character to make a ranged attack with a single **Damage Check** only. This benefits from **Edge+** on **Aim** and the **Damage Check**.

6.3.3 Berserker [4]

Active Perk. You mad, bro? The character can quickly be overtaken by the pulse of battle, they can spend a reaction point to **Enrage** if they take or deal any damage.

Upgrade: Berserkergang [2]

(Requires **Berserker**). The character unleashes their inner fury in a remorseless hail of attacks. When **Enraged** the character can spend a reaction point to grant **Burst** + 1 to an attack that hits.

Upgrade: Seething rage [3]

(Requires **Berserker**). The character's rage is turns them into a highly focussed killer, inured to all but the worst blows. When **Enraged**, reduce the **Lethality** of any damage suffered by one level, to a minimum of normal.

Upgrade: Endless rage [3]

(Requires **Berserker**). The character's rage makes them indefatigable. They gain 1 **Endurance** (up to their usual maximum) if they inflicted any damage in a given turn while **Enraged**.

6.3.4 Butcher's blow [3]

Active Perk. The character aims their strikes to maim the target. This is an attack action that costs 2 action points. Should the attack cause damage, the target is subject to the **Stunned** and **Staggered** effects. This effect applies only to creatures a maximum of 1 size category larger than the character.

6.3.5 Executioner [3]

Passive Perk. The character has learned to deal death swiftly when the chance arises. As such, when striking an opponent with 0 **Endurance**, the character's attacks benefit from a **Lethality** upgrade. This effect applies only to creatures a maximum of 1 size category larger than the character.

6.3.6 Furious assault [4]

Active Perk. A risky manoeuvre, the fighter replaces a considered attack with a hail of furious strikes. When declaring an attack the character may elect it to be a **Furious Assault**, granting **Burst** + 1. However, the character suffers **Edge-** to **Aim**. This cannot be used if the weapon requires **Reload** actions.

6.3.7 Guard breaker [3]

Active Perk. This attack knocks the foe off balance. The character may declare this special attack for 2 action points. If the attack causes damage then the target suffers **Edge-** on **Deflect** in the next round.

6.3.8 Merciless [4]

Passive Perk. The character shows no mercy, dispatching the weak with even greater abandon. **Damage Checks** against **Bleeding**, **Staggered**, or **Stunned** targets gain a **Lethality** bonus.

6.3.9 Power attack [4]

Active Perk. Enemy not dying? Just hit it harder! The character can declare a close-combat attack as a “power attack”. This incurs **Edge-** on **Aim**, but grants **Edge+** to associated **Damage Checks**.

6.3.10 Reckless attack [4]

Active Perk. The character can declare a close-combat attack to be a “reckless attack”. This has **Edge+** to **Aim** but the character incurs **Edge-** on **Deflect** for one round.

6.3.11 Schadenfreude [4]

Passive Perk. The character gets **Edge+** to **Aim** versus enemies who suffered damage in the last round.

6.3.12 Splatter [3]

Active Perk. The violence of your blows causes the blood of your foes to stain the soil. This can be used when declaring an attack, the cost is increased by 1 action point. Should the attack cause damage, the target is subject to the **Bleeding** effect.

6.3.13 The ol’ one-two [3]

Active Perk. A close quarters manoeuvre where a quick blow with a fist, or the weapon itself, is used to make room for firing a ranged weapon. This special attack costs 2 action points. Make an unarmed attack, if it hits you may perform **Damage Checks** for both the unarmed hit and for a shooting-type, ranged weapon you are wielding.

Upgrade: A new one-two [2]

(Requires **The Ol’ One-Two**). You can make any close-combat attack in place of the required unarmed one.

6.3.14 Whirlwind of steel [3]

Active Perk. Danger, sharp objects. The character lashes out around them, striking all too slow to escape. This costs 2 action points and allows the character to make an attack action with their close-combat weapons that has **Cleave + 1**.

Upgrade: Steel tornado [2]

This adds an additional **Cleave + 1** when using **Whirlwind Of Steel**.

6.4 Martial arts

These **Perks** are oriented towards unarmed combat. They must occupy an equipment slot for active/passive **Perks** to be usable.

6.4.1 Dragon kick [3]

Active Perk (Requires **Weapon Proficiency: Unarmed**). The character may make an unarmed attack in the form of a flying kick. This costs 2 action points and the character must move a distance of 1 (ignoring terrain effects) and then make an unarmed attack. Such attacks that succeed on their **Damage Check** also inflict **Knocked-Down**. The **Knock-Down** effect applies only to creatures a maximum of 1 size category larger than the character.

6.4.2 Extension of self [3]

Passive Perk (Requires **Weapon Proficiency: Unarmed**). The best weapon is you. This extends the effects of **Snake Fist**, **Shatter Strike**, and **Dragon Kick** to a single chosen close-combat weapon type.

6.4.3 Iron hand [3]

Active Perk. The character's blows are capable of tossing enemies aside like a child's toys. This is a special attack action that costs of 2 action points. If the attack hits, it inflicts no damage. Instead, the target is knocked flying, up to a distance of range 1 in a chosen direction, while also being subject to a **Knocked-Down** state. The victim suffers no damage unless they collide with an obstacle (i.e. enters **Rough Terrain** or cover). This effect applies only to creatures a maximum of 1 size category larger than the character.

Upgrade: Fist of steel [3]

(Requires **Iron-Hand**) As long as the character is unarmed, **Iron-Hand** attacks inflict damage in the same manner as normal unarmed attacks, in addition to their special effects.

6.4.4 Professional wrestling [4]

Passive Perk. The character gains **Edge+** on **Grapple** and **Shove** actions.

6.4.5 Shatter strike [2]

Active Perk (Requires **Weapon Proficiency: Unarmed**). The character gathers all their strength and makes a single unarmed attack, with only a single **Damage Check**, at a cost of 2 action points. If this attack causes damage then its victim is **Vulnerable** to the next **Damage Check** it suffers.

6.4.6 Snake fist [3]

Passive Perk (Requires **Weapon Proficiency: Unarmed**). The character has learned to unleash a volley of strikes with hands and feet. Unarmed attacks make an extra **Damage Check**. This does not incur **Dual-Wielding** penalties.

6.4.7 Spontaneous brawler [2]

Passive Perk. This allows the character to treat any weapon or improvised projectile as though it had the **Throw 2** rule.

6.4.8 Take-down [2]

Passive Perk. If you make a **Shove** action against a target you have **Grappled** they are slammed to the ground. This causes a successful **Shove** to deal damage with **Normal Lethality** in addition to its usual effects.

6.4.9 Turn the tables [4]

Active Perk. If the character is targeted by a **Grapple** or **Shove** attempt that fails, they can spend a reaction point to successfully use this effect on the grappler/shover.

6.5 Mastery

These **Perks** are oriented towards utility and skill in combat. They must occupy an equipment slot for active/passive **Perks** to be usable.

6.5.1 Best offence [3]

Active Perk. Is a good defence. When the character scores **Critical Success** on **Deflect**, they may spend a reaction point so that the attacker suffers a **Moment Of Weakness**.

6.5.2 Bull-headed [2]

Passive Perk. Now the bulls run from you. The character has learned to enter combat with unstoppable momentum. If the character moves in the same turn, or made a **Run** action last round, they have **Edge+** on **Shove** actions (see Section 5.10) this round.

Upgrade: Stampede [2]

(Requires **Bull-Headed**). The character's **Bull-Headed Shove** actions may be made against 2 + **Might** targets at once.

Upgrade: Trample [3]

(Requires **Bull-Headed**). The character may make a **Damage Check** against one victim of their successful **Bull-Headed Shove** actions.

Upgrade: Pain train [3]

(Requires **Bull-Headed**). Choo! Choo! The character may choose for their **Bull-Headed Shove** to knock the target(s) flying (distance 1) as well as knocking them down. If a victim hits an obstacle (entering **Rough Terrain** or **Cover**) they suffer a **Damage Check**, with **Power** equal to the character's **Might** and **Normal Lethality**.

6.5.3 Combat improvisation [2]

Active Perk. When the character hits with a close-combat attack they may spend a reaction point to change the attack into a **Trip** or **Disarm** action.

Upgrade: Flourish [2]

(Requires **Combat Improvisation**). When using **Combat Improvisation**, the character's weapon(s) gains the benefit of both **Trip** and **Disarm** rules.

6.5.4 Counter attack [5]

Active Perk. The character may spend a reaction point when they successfully **Deflect** an attack. This allows them to make their own in retaliation (this gains **Edge+** on **Aim** with **Critical Success** on **Deflect**).

6.5.5 Crusader [4]

Passive Perk. When your ammunition is righteousness you seldom run out. Each time the character defeats an enemy they can regain a point of missing **Endurance**. A defeated enemy is either: killed, knocked out, surrendering, or fleeing.

6.5.6 Duelist [3]

Passive Perk. Elegance, advantage, and a free hand to make sweeping gestures; what's not to love? Fighting with a single weapon only, that does not require two-hands for effective use, allows for much more precise weapon control. Fighting in such a manner grants 1 bonus reaction point each round. Example: fighting with only a single rapier, or a longsword in only one hand (common theme is there is a free hand).

Upgrade: Buckle your swash [2]

(Requires **Duelist**). While fighting with a single weapon (as detailed in **Duelist**), the character may spend a reaction point to gain **Edge+** to their next **Deflect** after scoring a **Penetrating Hit**.

Upgrade: Swash their buckle [2]

(Requires **Duelist**). While fighting with a single weapon (as detailed in **Duelist**), the character may spend a reaction point to gain **Edge+** on the next **Aim** roll after they **Deflect** with **Critical Success**.

6.5.7 Eagle-eye [3]

Passive Perk. You don't need glasses. The character adds 1 + **Wit** to the range score of all shooting and throwing weapons they employ.

6.5.8 Leverage [3]

Passive Perk. **Trip** and **Disarm** actions also **Stagger** their victims.

6.5.9 Plan B [3]

Active Perk (Requires **Duelist**). Whenever one of the character's attacks is **Deflected**, while in **Duelist** mode, they may spend a reaction point to draw and throw/fire a **Small** weapon (this doesn't suffer penalties for close range).

6.5.10 Suppressing fire! [4]

Active Perk. The character fires an indiscriminate volley of projectiles, forcing enemies and allies alike to get their heads down. This costs two action points, the character chooses a target enemy and makes a normal attack action against them. In addition, moving into, through, or out of the target's combat area costs 1 extra action point until the end of the next round. This cannot be used with a weapon that requires action points be spent to reload it between shots.

6.5.11 Two-weapon mastery [8]

Passive Perk. This allows the character to fight with two weapons simultaneously without **Edge-** on **Aim** checks.

6.5.12 Warrior's grace [5]

Passive Perk. The character may attack with **Cumbersome** weapons at the cost of both an action and reaction point (rather than 2 action points).

6.6 Miscellaneous

These **Perks** don't fit into the other categories. They must occupy an equipment slot for active/passive **Perks** to be usable.

6.6.1 Call in a favour [2]

Passive Perk (Requires **Background: Silver Spoon**). The character can leverage their social connections to obtain a favour from a local noble, banker, crime-lord, warlord, or oligarch. This **Perk** can only be chosen at character creation. This can only be used once per week.

6.6.2 Decisive leadership [3]

Active Perk. The character can spend a reaction point to use a **Leadership** action at any time during combat.

6.6.3 Deeds, not words [3]

Active Perk (Requires **Skill Proficiency: Leadership**). Any time the character defeats a foe in combat they may make a leadership action, that would otherwise cost 1 action point, for free. Defeat is defined by the enemy fleeing, surrendering, being incapacitated, or dying. This only triggers if the character's own action resulted in the target's defeat.

6.6.4 Favoured enemy: X [4]

Passive Perk. Everyone hates something. The character is skilled in the killing of a chosen creature type (X). Against targets of type X the character has **Edge+** on **Aim**. X must be specific, "humanoids" is too broad for instance, but "humans" is fine in a cosmopolitan fantasy setting. If the setting is mostly human then "human" is still too broad and it must be further narrowed down to a group, "pirates" or "ninjas" for instance.

6.6.5 Favoured environment: X [4]

Passive Perk. The character is skilled at moving and fighting in the chosen environment (X). This grants them **Edge+** to stealth, as well as **Survival** checks while in this setting. The character is also not affected by **Rough** or **Dangerous Terrain** associated with this environment.

6.6.6 Inspiring oratory [4]

Passive Perk (Requires **Skill Proficiency: Leadership**). Whenever the character succeeds on a **Leadership** check in combat they can restore 1 **Endurance** to an ally within range 0.

6.6.7 Pack animal [3]

Passive Perk (Requires Wanderer background). This **Perk** can only be chosen at character creation. The character brings their hunting companion wherever they go. This grants them a sympathetic animal companion that understands simple verbal commands and hand signals. The creature must be, at maximum, roughly equivalent to a dog in size and mass. **Survival** checks can be made to get the animal to perform more complicated actions, like stealing a particular object, or distracting someone's attention. The creatures attributes are species specific. If you are **Proficient** in **Survival**, add 1 to all the combat statistics of your companion. A companion can be replaced, once dead, only at a cost of 5 experience.

Creature	Might	Cunning	Perception	Resolve	Proficiencies
Canine	0	0	0	1	Survival
Big cat	1	0	0	0	Stealth
Bird	0	0	1	0	Awareness
Reptile	0	1	0	0	Stealth

6.7 Mobility

These **Perks** are oriented towards movement in combat. They must occupy an equipment slot for active/passive **Perks** to be usable.

6.7.1 Acrobatic movement [3]

Active Perk. Sometimes walking is just too boring. The character can spend a reaction point so that their **Move** actions out of, or through, a combat area containing enemies do not incur a **Moment Of Weakness**.

Upgrade: Elegance [2]

(Requires **Acrobatic Movement**). When using **Acrobatic Movement** the character also ignores all the effects of **Rough** or **Dangerous Terrain**.

6.7.2 Hit and run [3]

Active Perk. The character can spend a reaction point after resolving a close-combat attack that hits. This allows them to make a normal move action that cannot trigger a **Moment Of Weakness**.

6.7.3 Moving target [3]

Passive Perk. When mounted/driving and moving, the character has **Edge+** to **Deflect**.

6.7.4 Nimble [3]

Passive Perk. *Nimble* characters are quick and agile. Their movement actions have +1 range while unarmoured or wearing **Light Armour**.

6.7.5 Quick off the mark [3]

Passive Perk. The character can spend reaction points, in place of action points, to make **Run** actions.

6.8 Sneaky tricks

These **Perks** are oriented towards sneaky tricks in combat. They must occupy an equipment slot for active/passive **Perks** to be usable.

6.8.1 Always carry a spare [2]

Active Perk (Requires **Skill Proficiency: Perform**). It pays to be prepared. The character can produce a single extra dagger (or other **Small** throwing weapon) in an emergency. This can only be used once per day.

6.8.2 Arrow to the knee [4]

Passive Perk. A careful shot to the leg can topple the most stable foes. The character can make **Trip** actions with ranged weapons (these count as having the **Trip** rule).

6.8.3 Blind side [3]

Passive Perk. A deft feint allows the character enough room to fire their ranged weapons against close-combat assailants. When using a ranged weapon against a target within range 0 you may feint as though you were using a close-combat weapon.

6.8.4 Chink in the armour [3]

Active Perk. Close-combat attacks against enemies who are **Knocked Down** or **Grappled** gain **Penetration** + 2 at a cost of 1 reaction point.

6.8.5 Choose your targets [3]

Passive Perk. The character's **Sneak Attacks** versus stationary (not actively moving or in combat) or **Immobilised** targets gain **Penetration** + 2.

6.8.6 Cunning plan [3]

Passive Perk. Better than other plans. When making **Sneak Attacks**, the character gains a **Power** bonus of 1 plus their **Cunning**.

6.8.7 Desperate mechanisms [3]

Active Perk. The character may spend a reaction point to reduce the **Reload** action point costs of ranged weapons by 1.

6.8.8 Kick 'em while they're down [4]

Active Perk. For 1 reaction point, attacks this round against **Knocked Down** targets become **Sneak Attacks**.

6.8.9 Low blow [5]

Passive Perk. Uncool, man. The character may also make **Sneak Attacks** against enemies who have half, or less, of their **Endurance** remaining, even if they don't meet any other pre-requisites for **Sneak Attacks** (see Section 5.10.2).

6.8.10 Lightning fast [4]

Active Perk. The character reacts so quickly that they may seize the initiative for their side at a cost of 1 reaction point and 1 **Heroism**. This effect can only be used during action declaration in combat.

Upgrade: Swift as death [2]

(Requires **Lightning Fast**) The character has **Edge+** on **Aim** and **Damage Checks** during a turn when they have triggered **Lightning Fast**.

6.8.11 Made you look [4]

Passive Perk. If the character succeeds on a **Feint** action, then any associated attack actions are **Sneak Attacks**.

6.8.12 Now you see me, now you don't [5]

Active Perk (Requires **Skill Proficiency: Stealth**). The character may attempt to use the **Stealth** skill while in combat for 1 action point, fading seamlessly into the background. **Critical Failure** results in a **Moment Of Weakness**. All attacks made after hiding are **Sneak Attacks** but reveal the presence of the character. While hidden, the character only incurs **Moment Of Weakness** penalties due to movement if they are detected.

6.8.13 One step ahead [3]

Passive Perk. The character can convert action points into reaction points when declaring actions.

6.8.14 On the hunt [4]

Active Perk. The character zeros-in on their prey. The character may select a target against which they gain **Edge+** on **Aim** and **Deflect**. However, they suffer a similar penalty against all other targets. A new target may only be nominated once the present target is dead, defeated, or hostilities cease.

6.8.15 Pistol whip [3]

Active Perk. When using a ranged weapon that can be wielded in one hand the character may make a “Pistol Whip”. This is a close-combat attack that knocks the target down if it succeeds in causing damage. If used as part of a **Sneak Attack**, the victim must roll **Resist(R)** versus the **Power** of the attack, failure means they are rendered unconscious. These effects apply only to creatures a maximum of 1 size category larger than the character.

6.8.16 Poisoner [2]

Passive Perk. The character has knowledge of poisons and toxins. As such, they can poison a weapon given a few herbs (value 1 d per use). This will inflict **Poison** with **Difficulty** 9 the each time the weapon causes damage within the next hour. It costs 1 action point to apply the poison but it takes 10 minutes to prepare a dose.

Upgrade: Skilled poisoner [2]

(Requires **Poisoner**) You may add 1 + your **Might** to the poison **Difficulty**.

Upgrade: Master poisoner [3]

(Requires **Skilled Poisoner**) The character has suspiciously good knowledge of poisons and toxins. Any poison effects used by the character cause the victim to lose 1 **Endurance** when they fail a **Resolve** check against them.

6.8.17 Quick draw [2]

Passive Perk. The character can draw/change weapons at a cost of 1 reaction point instead of an action point.

Upgrade: Deceptive draw [3]

(Requires **Quick Draw**) The character's attacks, after making a surprise **Quick Draw** of **Small** weapons are **Sneak Attacks**. This bonus cannot be claimed unless the character also changed weapon type (i.e. swapping from a dagger or unarmed to a pistol).

6.8.18 Too hot to handle [4]

Passive Perk. A precisely placed shot causes the target to drop their weapon. The character can make **Disarm** actions with ranged weapons (these count as having the **Disarm** rule).

Chapter 7

Baggage and encumbrance

Even a hero can only carry a limited amount of armour, weaponry, supplies, ladders, ropes, lanterns and the myriad of other things an adventurer might need. The Game Master need not police this too strongly, though don't let it get too silly. Some situations do call for some penalties, such as carrying a heavy pack while wearing heavy armour.

7.1 Load penalties

Carrying too much around can make moving or fighting rather difficult. To reflect this, characters carrying a large back-pack, or wearing heavy armour, suffer **Edge-** to deflect.

7.2 Carrying, lifting & dragging loads

A character cannot carry more than a heavy load ($20\text{ kg} + 5 \times \text{Resolve}$) for any real distance, but they can lift up to four times the weight of a heavy load, though only a few inches off the floor. A character can push or drag up to 6 times a heavy load on smooth surfaces, but, on rough or difficult ground, they can push or drag only up to twice a heavy load. A character can lift any load lighter than twice their heavy load limit above their head. However these limits assume the character has lots of time to lift or move the heavy objects. If a character wishes to move or lift something rapidly they must make a **Might** check, the **Difficulty** is given by 8 for objects less than 15 kg, + 1 **Difficulty** per additional 5 kg. If successful, a lifting check like this takes 1 action (3 seconds) to perform. For an object dragged via a **Might** check, the **Difficulty** is given by 8 for objects less than 20 kg, + 1 **Difficulty** per additional 5 kg. Success allows the object to be dragged at the character's movement speed for two action points (6 seconds duration).

Appendix A

Probability distributions

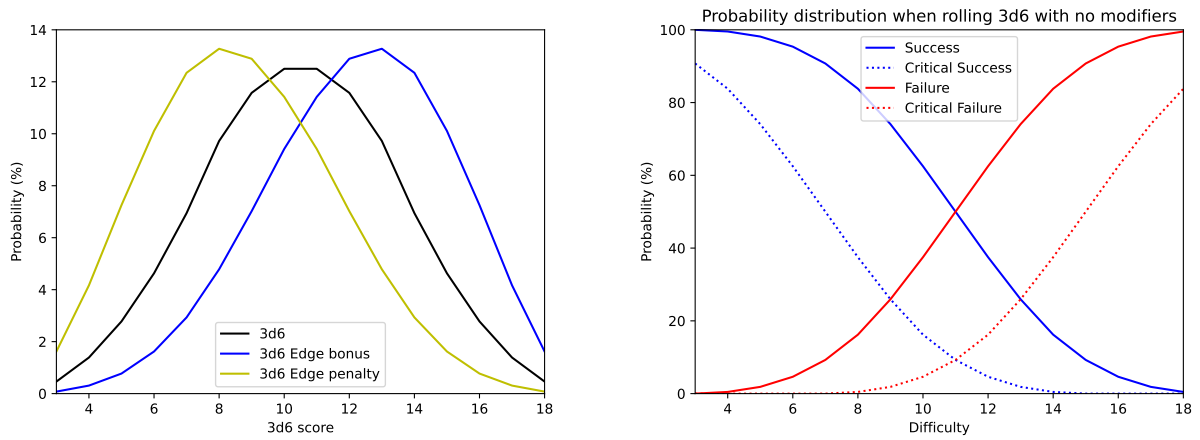


Figure A.1: Left: the probability distribution for scores on 3d6. Right: chances of success and failure for different difficulties on 3d6.